POST-REVOLUTIONARY IRAN'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD THE UNITED STATES: A HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF STATE TRANSFORMATION AND FOREIGN POLICY

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ABSTRACT

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STATES: A HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF STATE
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This study aspires to analyze Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and its foreign policy toward the United States in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution. The dissertation adopts Historical Sociology (HS) as a conceptual framework and assesses its merits and likely contributions for analysis of state transformation and foreign policy. It proposes HS as a research tradition and methodology to transcend what it characterizes as the three major axes in foreign policy articulations built on the dichotomies between inside-outside, agency-structure and interest-identity. In order to develop a historical-sociological analysis of foreign policy, the dissertation underlines the need to render a historical sociological reflection of the state and the international. Such a reflection draws upon the theme of co-constitution of the international and domestic and substantiates the continuous transformation of state through formative challenges

emanating both from its society and the international domain it is embedded in. The study conceptualizes foreign policy as the agency of the state through which it transforms its domestic and international environment.

Bringing insights derived from HS, the rest of the study sheds light on the trajectory of state, state-society and state-international relations in post-revolutionary Iran through a historical, processual, multicausal and multispatial analysis. It discusses the formative role that the US has played in the transformation of modern Iran both before and after the revolution through institutions, ideology and political economy of the state; it looks into the changing patterns of relations with the revolution and scrutinizes Iran's agency vis-à-vis the US during successive historical epochs of Revolution and War (1979-1989); Reconstruction and Reform (1989-1997 and 1997-2005) and Confrontation (since 2005 until the second half of 2012) in the context of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation.

Keywords: Historical Sociology of foreign policy, post-revolutionary state and society in Iran, Iran-US relations, Iran's US Policy (1979-2012).

ÖZ

DEVRİM SONRASI DÖNEMDE İRAN'IN ABD POLİTİKASI: DEVLET DÖNÜŞÜMÜ VE DIŞ POLİTİKANIN TARİHSEL SOSYOLOJİK BİR ANALİZİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı İran'ın devrim sonrası dönemde yaşadığı dönüşümü ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'ne karşı sürdürdüğü dış politikasının temel unsurlarını tahlil etmektir. Kavramsal çerçevesini Tarihsel Sosyoloji (TS) tasavvuru üzerine kuran çalışma bu yaklaşımın devlet dönüşümü ve dış politika tahlillerine sunacağı katkıları araştırmaktadır. TS, çalışmanın dış politika tahlillerinin üç temel ekseni olarak tespit ettiği iç-dış, özne-yapı ve çıkar-kimlik ikilemlerinin getirdiği kısıtları aşacak bir tasavvur biçimi ve yöntem olarak önerilmektedir. Dış politikanın tarihsel sosyolojik analizi için öncelikle devlet ve uluslararası alanın tarihsel sosyolojisinin yapılması gerektiğini savunan tez, böyle bir yaklaşımın iç ve dış'ın birbirini kurucu ve dönüştürücü rolünün anlaşılması ile mümkün olacağını iddia etmektedir. Çalışma bu bağlamda devletin yapısal olarak içkin olduğu toplum ve uluslararası alanın devlet dönüşümündeki rolünü incelemekte ve dış politikayı devletin bu alanları dönüştüren özneliğinin bir parçası olarak kavramsallaştırmaktadır.

Çalışmanın ikinci bölümü TS tasavvurundan hareketle devrim sonrası dönemde İran'da devlet içinde, devlet-toplum ve devlet-uluslararası alan ilişkilerinde yaşanan dönüşümün tarihsel, süreçsel, çok-nedenli ve çok-uzamsal bir analizini sunmaktadır. Tez modern İran'ın şekillenmesinde ABD'nin gerek devrim öncesinde gerek sonrasında devletin kurumları, ideolojisi ve siyasal iktisadı üzerinde oynadığı rolü tartışmakta, devrim ile değişen ilişkileri tahlil etmekte ve İran'ın ABD'ye karşı izlediği dış siyaseti Devrim ve Savaş (1979-1989); Yeniden Yapılanma ve Reform (1989-1997 ve 1997-2005) ve Karşılaşma Dönemi (2005'ten 2012 yılının ikinci yarısına dek) olarak adlandırdığı, birbirini izleyen tarihsel dönemlerin özgün koşulları içinde ele almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dış Politikanın Tarihsel Sosyoloji'si, devrim sonrası İran'da devlet ve toplum, İran-ABD ilişkileri, İran'ın ABD siyaseti (1979-2012).

To My Beloved Parents and Sister

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On February 10 2013, the Islamic Republic of Iran celebrated the 34th anniversary of its revolution that has toppled Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi from the Peacock Throne in 1979. The crowds gathering in *Azadi* (Freedom) Square in Tehran of 2013 chanted the slogans of "God is great!", "Down with the United States" and "Death to Israel", which persisted since the inception of the Islamic Republic.[1] The banners held by demonstrators read as "We resist forever" in Persian, English and even in Spanish because of Iran's growing diplomacy with Latin America and they were meant to give a message to the "enemy" about Iran's steadfastness and determination to go after its "inalienable" national rights. President Mahmood Ahmadinejad addressing the crowds told that the Iranian nation never succumbed to pressure and "will not relinquish an iota of their fundamental rights."

Since the early 2000s Iran's protracted crisis with the West over its nuclear programme has brought Tehran into a collision course with the United States and worsened its relations with Europe. Iran has taken the path of defiance with continuous uranium enrichment and advances in nuclear research against diplomatic pressure and mounting unilateral and multilateral sanctions. Concerns and suspicions over the *military* nature of Iran's nuclear programme, despite Iran's firm insistence on its peaceful nature, became the new "Persian Question" of our times.[2] Iran's defiant posture was magnified by the radical rhetoric of President Mahmood Ahmadinejad which deviated from the moderate

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[1] See "Photos: 34th Anniversary of Islamic Revolution marked in Iran," reported by *Tehran Times*, photos by *Mehr News Agency* and *Islamic Republic News Agency*, February 10, 2013. The following information about the celebrations is also from the same photo-essay coverage.

[2] Ali M. Ansari, "Iran and the US in the Shadow of 9/11: Persia and the Persian Question Revisited", *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 39, No.2, 2006, pp. 155-170.

and balanced discourse of previous presidents. For some spectators, Iran's discourse and policies raised the specter of a radical Iran reminiscent of the 1980s. For those who portrayed Iran as a "rogue" and "backlash" state in the 1990s, Iran's confrontational policy only confirmed that Iran remained as a radical and perilous state with not much change since its inception.

Indeed, beneath this defiant powerhouse of the Middle East lies a history of post-revolutionary transformation since 1979 within which Iran has gone through disruptive social change through revolution, tumultuous war with Iraq for eight years as well as socio-economic, ideological and political challenges of post-war development and reconstruction, which deeply shaped the state, society and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic in the last three decades. If the 1980s were radical times imbued with revolutionary change and war for Iran's international affairs, the 1990s were fraught with considerable moderation in Iran's foreign policy. However, notwithstanding the positive changes that helped Iran to mend fences with the world, Iran-US relations remained largely antagonistic in the absence of normalization. The steady growth of deadlock over nuclear negotiations and critical regional developments in the early 2000s resulted in even more contentious affairs that embroiled not only Iran and the US, but regional geopolitics and international diplomacy. In this context, understanding Iran's foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States is as essential as analysis of American policy towards Iran and the region. Moreover, understanding Iran's US policy beyond the nuclear crisis and looking Iran beyond its frozen image of "irrational", "mad mullahs" country is highly substantial.

This dissertation aims to analyze Iran's post-revolutionary foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States and offers Historical Sociology as a conceptual framework to shed light on the trajectory of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and evolution of its foreign policy towards the United States through a *processual, multi-spatial, multi-causal* and *holistic* perspective. Drawing on the growing ties between the discipline of International Relations and Historical Sociology as a research tradition that has carved up a space for

itself both within the disciplines of History and Sociology and lately in International Relations (IR), this study aspires to apply the insights derived from historical sociological analysis of IR into the subfield of foreign policy studies and offer a research systematique that brings forth historical sociological sensitivities and elaboration to foreign policy analysis. The dissertation, in this regard, investigates the merits and potentials of Historical Sociology in rethinking the hitherto established boundaries between inside and outside, agency and structure, as well as interest and identity within the context of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and foreign policy. As will be elaborated in the review of the existing literature, approaching foreign policy from a historical sociological perspective constitutes a novel approach that waits for substantiation.

1.1. Literature review

Carlsnaes argues that foreign policy analysis, as a subfield of the discipline of International Relations has remained relatively under-theorized, while the discipline witnessed exponential growth in theorization.[3] Nevertheless, in recent years, there have been numerous attempts by IR theory to engage with foreign policy both conceptually as well as through case studies.[4] From the 1990s onwards, different frameworks have also been proposed for comprehending and conceptualizing foreign policies of the Middle East states.[5] Among them, Fred Halliday's comprehensive piece *The Middle East in*

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[3] Walter Carlsnaes, "Foreign Policy," in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and B. A. Simmons (eds.), *Handbook of International Relations,* (London: Sage, 2002), p. 331.

[4] The most salient examples that this study will be making extensive use comprise Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, Tim Dunne (eds.), *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* (eds.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) and Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, (London: Palgrave, 2003).

[5] To name but few of these studies, Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States: The Challenge of Globalization*, (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2008); Michael N. Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (eds), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2002). These works drew on the role of regional context, intersubjective norms, balance of threat,

International Relations published in 2005 offered Historical Sociology (henceforth HS) as a framework to understand and analyze foreign policies of the regional states.[6] Given the scope of his book addressing regional politics organized under analytical themes of war, ideology and political economy, Halliday did not specifically apply his proposed framework to a single case study, other than drawing a framework for future research. The merits of Historical Sociology came under further attention in Raymond Hinnebusch's article which proposed HS to explain different regime trajectories and processes of state formation in the Middle East.[7] This study aims to substantiate Fred Halliday's proposal for historical-sociological analysis of foreign policy in the context of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and foreign policy toward the United States.

As the following chapter on analytical framework of this study will examine in greater detail, HS has been in growing engagement with IR theory since the 1980s together with the growth of contributions from critical theory, constructivism, post-modernism and feminism.[8] Long before this engagement, Historical Sociology emerged as a research tradition devoted to the analyses of social structures and processes of change "concretely situated in time and space" as well as "interplay of meaningful actions and structural contexts."[9] The origins of the tradition lied in the "great transformation" of the 19th century; as early historical sociologists such as Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emilé

the combination of external and internal variables in a loose realist framework scrutinized the foreign policies or a particular foreign policy behavior of regional states.

[6] Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[7] See Raymond Hinnebusch, "Toward a Historical Sociology of State Formation in the Middle East", *Middle East Critique*, Vol. 19, No. 3, 2010, pp. 201-216. Hinnebusch covers a broad array of regime trajectories in the Middle East and accounts for divergence and convergence through Historical Sociology.

[8] Each of these theoretical strands possessed diverse perspectives within, notwithstanding their general titles. For a comprehensive overview of theoretical advances in IR theory, see Scott Burchill et al, *Theories of International Relations,* (New York: Palgrave, 2009); Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski (eds.), *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), and Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, (London: MacMillan, 1994).

[9] See Theda Skocpol, *Theory and Vision in Historical Sociology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 1-17.

Durkheim, the founding fathers of Historical Sociology, were all concerned with understanding the dynamics of capitalist modernity.[10] Since then historical sociological works proliferated tracing the footsteps of the founding figures and responded to the conceptual and empirical challenges of their times. In this regard, Skocpol's edited volume *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology* demonstrates a highly diversified and enriched tradition both in scope and methodology by analyzing the historical sociologies of Marc Bloch, Karl Polanyi, Samuel Eisenstadt, Reinhard Bendix, Perry Anderson, E. P. Thompson, Charles Tilly, Immanuel Wallerstein and Barrington Moore Jr.[11] Delanty and Işın's more recent compilation named *Handbook of Historical Sociology* provides us with an up-to-date overview of the broad array of issues that the HS scholarship has so far addressed.[12] This diversity confirms that HS is not a monochrome and entails different strands to theorize social phenomenon.

Addressing the theoretical and methodological diversity of HS mentioned above and writing from a perspective of Historical Sociology of IR (henceforth, HSIR), George Lawson calls Historical Sociology an "open society", arguing that it is "as much a part of world history, institutional analysis and development economics, as it is a sub-section of sociology, IR and comparative politics."[13] Yet, notwithstanding its diversity, he argues, the essence of historical sociological research is to provide "historically sensitive, yet generally applicable account of the emergence of capitalism, industrialization, rationalism, bureaucratization, urbanization and other core features of

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[10] A detailed analysis of these approaches is beyond the scope of this study, even though this study will make extensive reference to Weberian and Marxist contributions to Historical Sociology while reflecting on the ontology of state and state-society relations. For an elaborate reflection on the works of founding fathers see Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982); Gerard Delanty and E. Isın (eds.), *Handbook of Historical Sociology*, (London: Sage, 2003).

[11] See Theda Skocpol, *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*.

[12] Gerard Delanty and Engin F. Isin (eds), *Handbook of Historical Sociology*, (London: Sage, 2003).

[13] See George Lawson, "Historical Sociology in International Relations: Open Society, Research Programme and Vocation", p. 4; see also John Hobson, George Lawson and Justin Rosenberg, "Historical Sociology" in R. Denmark (ed.), *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, (UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2010).

modern world."[14] Against criticisms portraying Historical Sociology as a "catch-all term for any work that contains historical, sociological and international sensitivities", Lawson maintains that any research rooted in the *diachronic* understanding of the international realm, looking at how social action and social structures co-constitute one another and how social facts emerging out of this interaction change over time, can be legitimately considered as a historical sociological work.[15]

HS has made its first inroads to IR from the mid-70s onwards through the works of prominent sociologists such as Theda Skocpol, Michael Mann, Charles Tilly, Immanuel Wallerstein and Anthony Giddens, who scrutinized social revolutions, state formation and wars, world economy, nation-state and violence.[16] The engagement of IR scholars in historical sociological endeavor particularly in the last 20 years resulted in a blossoming of historical sociological work in International Relations. Since the 1990s with the end of the Cold War, theoretical landscape of IR has expanded further. Lawson enumerates a wide range of historical sociological research produced within IR, covering up studies on the origins and varieties of international systems over time and space by Watson, Spruyt, Buzan and Little; the challenges posed to the "myth" of Westphalia by works of Osiander and Teschke; analysis on the non-Western origins of the contemporary world system by Wallerstein, Gills and Hobson; works on the co-constitution of the international realm and state-society relations in the process of radical change, revolutions by Halliday and Lawson; examination of the social logic of international

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[14] George Lawson, "Historical Sociology in International Relations: Open Society, Research Programme and Vocation", p. 2.

[15] Ibid., p. 3 and 5.

[16] See Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power Vol. I*: *A History of Power from the Beginning to AD 1760*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Vol. 2: The Rise of Classes and Nation States, 1760-1914*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Charles Tilly, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, (Princeton University Press, 1975); Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States AD 990-1992*, (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992), Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the World Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, (New York: Academic Press, 1974); Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985).

financial orders by Seabrooke and exploration of the international dimension of the modernity itself by Rosenberg.[17]

Besides, Banks and Shaw's edited book *State and Society in International Relations* and Shaw's *Global Society and International Relations: Sociological Concepts and Political Perspectives* were pieces that brought significant sociological insights into IR in the early 1990s, as their names suggest.[18] Stephen Hobden's *International Relations and Historical Sociology: Breaking Down the Boundaries* (1998) and his co-edited book with John Hobson, *Historical Sociology of International Relations* (2002) stand as pieces addressing the grounds and possible outcomes of theoretical engagement between HS and IR.[19] These reflections underlined the need for "international sociology"[20] or "historicized world sociology"[21] in an attempt to transcend disciplinary boundaries.[22]

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[17] George Lawson, "Historical Sociology in International Relations: Open Society, Research Programme and Vocation", International Politics, p. 2. The cited works are as follows: Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society*, (London: Routledge, 1992); Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Barry Buzan and Richard Little, *International systems in world history: remaking the study of international relations*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Andreas Osiander, "Sovereignty, International Relations and the Westphalian Myth", *International Organization*, Vol.55, No.2, pp. 251-287; Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*, (London: Verso, 2003); Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism with Capitalist Civilization,* (London: Verso, 1995); Barry Gills, "World Systems Analysis, Historical Sociology and International Relations: The Difference a Hyphen Makes", in Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); John M. Hobson, *The Eastern Origins of Western Civilization*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Fred Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, (London: Macmillan, 1999); George Lawson, *Negotiated Revolutions: The Czech Republic, South Africa and Chile*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Leonard Seabrooke, *The Social Sources of Financial Power*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society*, (London: Verso, 1994); Justin Rosenberg, "Why is there no international historical sociology?", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.12, No. 3, 2006, pp. 307-340.

[18] M. Banks and Martin Shaw (eds), State and Society in International Relations, (Exeter: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991); Martin Shaw, *Global Society and International Relations: Sociological Concepts and Political Perspectives*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994). Banks and Shaw's edition contains one of the pioneering theoretical investigations on IR and Historical Sociology by Faruk Yalvaç. See Faruk Yalvaç, "The Sociology of the State and the Sociology of International Relations", in M. Banks and Martin Shaw (eds), *State and Society in International Relations*, pp. 93-114.

[19] Stephen Hobden, *International Relations and Historical Sociology: Breaking down boundaries*, (London: Routledge, 1998); Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[20] Fred Halliday, "For an International Sociology", in Stephen Hobden and John Hobson (eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations,* pp. 244-264.

As Andrew Linklater claims, Historical Sociology first and foremost posed a challenge against the "presentism" and "anarchocentrism" of neorealism, which has assumed almost a hegemonic status in IR theory.[23] Similarly, John Hobson characterizes historical sociological scholarship as a remedy for "chronofetishism" and "tempocentrism" of conventional IR theories.[24] HS through its perspective of change aims to replace the "continuity problematic" of neorealism, which argues for "the striking sameness in the quality of international life through the millennia."[25] Indeed, since the 1980s, ontological, epistemological and methodological foundations of neorealism were under frontal attack with the flourishing theoretical perspectives in IR. These critiques challenged neorealism for lack of sociological vision, perspective of change and role for agency; its reification of the state and the international system as well as reproduction of the inside/outside distinction.[26] Taken in broader terms,

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[21] John M. Hobson and Stephen Hobden, "On the road towards an historicised world sociology", in Stephen Hobden and John Hobson (eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations,* pp. 265-285.

[22] However, Lawson warns "not to get too carried away with openness and fluidity within and between two disciplines." See George Lawson, "Historical Sociology in International Relations: Open Society, Research Programme and Vocation", p.7.

[23] Andrew Linklater, "Historical Sociology", in Scott Burchill et al, *Theories of International Relations*, p. 136.

[24] Hobson defines "chronofetishism" as "a mode of ahistoricism which leads to three illusions of reification, naturalization and immutability of the present. "Tempocentrism" is a mode of a-historicism that reifies and naturalizes the present and views the past in the image of the immutable present. See John M. Hobson, "What is at stake in 'bringing historical sociology back into International Relations?' Transcending 'chronofetishism' and 'tempocentrism' in International Relations" in Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 10.

[25] Kenneth Waltz, "Reflections on *Theory of International Politics*: A response to my critics", in Robert O. Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism and its Critics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p 53; see also John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*, p. 174.

[26] See Robert O. Keohane (ed.), *Neorealism and its Critics* for a broad array of critics from different theoretical positions. The constructivist critiques of neorealism comprise Wendt (1989), John Ruggie; The Marxist and post-modernist critiques of neorealism and realism include Robert Cox, (1981); Richard Ashley (1984); Rosenberg (1994); Benno Teschke (2003), Weber (1995), Walker (1993).

Historical Sociology as an "imagination" as Mills would put it, was part and parcel of IR's sociological reorientation and historical "return."[27]

The broadening theoretical horizon of IR theory also touched upon foreign policy analysis. Smith, Hadfield and Dunne's edition *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases* enumerates realism, liberalism and constructivism, besides Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) which has grown on its own, somehow detached from theoretical perspectives of IR.[28] Webber and Smith provide a broader list composed of realism, neorealism, pluralism, dependency and globalist approaches.[29] Postmodernist approaches are also engaged with foreign policy studies particularly through the growing salience of discourse analysis, genealogy and hermeneutic method.[30] Indeed, the "third debate" in IR theory between positivist and post-positivist approaches also shaped foreign policy analysis introducing the challenges of constructivist and post-modern emphasis on the significance of norms, ideas and values into the rather materially conceived positivist

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[27] Stephen Hobden argues that until the advent of neorealism, IR was more historical and qualitative. Neorealism's quest for parsimony and grand theory did not leave much room for historical variability and qualitative and interpretative analysis. In this regard, the emphasis of HS for historical reflection was a return to "traditional" IR. See Stephen Hobden, "Historical Sociology: back to the future of international relations?", in Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (eds)*, Historical Sociology of International Relations*, p. 56. Obviously one needs to make a distinction between the historicism of traditional IR which rested on diplomatic history and historicism of scholars like Eric Hobsbawm and Michel Foucault. This study aspires to attend to "social history" as Hobsbawm put it. It aspires to intgeate the history of society which is intrinsic to the inter-state history. Moreover, in our global age, it is even of further significance to adopt a holistic understanding. See Stephen Hobden, "Historical Sociology: back to the future of international relations?", in Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (eds), *Historical Sociology of International Relations*, p. 56.

[28] See Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, Tim Dunne (eds.), *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*; see also Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories", *Foreign Policy*, (Spring 1998), pp. 29-46.

[29] Mark Webber and Michael Smith et al., *Foreign Policy in a Transformed World*, pp. 21-26.

[30] See Roxanne Lynn Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 3, (September 1993), pp. 297-320.

vision of the dominant realist paradigm.[31] The major theoretical implication of IR theory for foreign policy studies has been the identity versus dichotomy debate.

Iran's post-revolutionary foreign policy has been studied by a number of perspectives including realism, constructivism and post-modernism. Rohoullah Ramazani, one of the most veteran scholars of Iranian foreign policy (IFP) analyzed post-revolutionary foreign policy through pragmatism versus ideology duality and argued for increasing role of pragmatism in foreign policy despite revolutionary rhetoric.[32] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch in their co-edited volume have formulated a "modified form of the realist theory" for foreign policy analysis. Ehteshami's analysis of IFP in that volume hence attended to domestic variables but conceptualized them mostly as intervening variables, arguing that it was the prerequisites of power politics that determined IFP in the last instance.[33] In the 1990s, particularly in the second half of the decade, scholars residing in Iran made use of realist analyses along with Iran's growing moderation through acceptance of norms of inter-state system and adoption of a developmentalist agenda built on defusing geopolitical tensions.[34] As of recent writings

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[31] See Yosef Lapid, "The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 3, (Sep., 1989), pp. 235-254.

[32] Rouhullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1988).

[33] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "The Foreign Policy of Iran" in Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (eds), *The Foreign Policies of the Middle East States*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), pp. 283-310.

[34] Publications of the Institute for International and Political Studies (IPIS), established under the auspices of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic in 1983, especially in the 1990s were marked by growing attention to Iran's national rather than transnational interests which approximated analyses to cost-benefit calculus of the national state. Kayhan Barzegar's pieces on Persian Gulf security, Iran's regional foreign policy can be counted among strategic analyses that point out the prevalence of strategic logic over ideological disposition. For Barzegar, identity and strategic interest do serve one another, particularly during the foreign policy of President Ahmadinejad. Iran's Expediency Council's Center for Strategic Research hosts scholars like Dr. Vaezi and Prof. Sariolghalam who are representatives of more strategy-based and interest-focused research on foreign policy. A particular choice for a foreign policy theory may perfectly relate to the domestic political and academic climate and the political/ideological significance of the issue in question. In this regard, it is important to emphasize that in Iran, the notion of national interest, enjoying prominence in the 1990s also gained a negative connotation in the eyes of the regime for they understood it as a retreat from revolutionary values. Therefore even the elites pursuing

on Iran's foreign policy, there is a discernible emphasis on the relevance of constructivism as a framework for IFP particularly in the articles of Iran-based scholars.[35] The new directions in IFP studies also utilize critical and post-modernist approaches built on genealogy and discourse analysis.[36] These studies emphasize the role of "foreign policy culture" as constitutive of foreign policy practice. Arsin Adib-Moghaddam for instance argues for a "utopian-romantic" meta-narrative which constitutes Iran's foreign policy culture since the late 1970s based on radical cultural and political independence, economic autarky, ideological and diplomatic mobilization against Zionism and resistance against American interference in regional and domestic affairs.[37] According to him, Iran's foreign policy culture created a mentality that penetrates into the strategic thinking of the political elites.[38] The role of culture and civilization, albeit an integral part of almost all explanations, is in fact an ongoing debate. Scholars like Ansari calls for a qualified argumentation on culture in explaining social phenomenon by drawing on the impact of material experience shaping cultures as well as the role of different and competing cultures in shaping of foreign policy, as the multiplicity of Iran's constituent cultures suggests.[39]

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strategic interests that are at odds with regime's principles combine it with a revolutionary and religious justification.

[35] In this regard, see Mahdi Mohammad Nia, "Holistic Constructivism: A Theoretical Approach to Understand Iran's Foreign Policy", *Perceptions*, (Spring-Summer 2010), pp. 1-41. Nia advocates that post-revolutionary Iran's foreign policy should be understood in the discursive context (p. 13); as the "prevailing trend" in IFP is "based more on revolutionary values and ideological perspectives than the logic of nation-states" (p. 2). In Iran, he observes the "continuing persistence of its revolutionary and ideological nature" (p. 5).

[36] See Ahmad Sadeghi, "Genealogy of Iranian Foreign Policy: Identity, Culture and History", *The Iranian Journal of International Affairs,* Vol. XX, No. 4, (Fall 2008), pp. 1-40; Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, "Islamic Utopian Romanticism and the Foreign Policy Culture of Iran", *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.14, No.3, 2005, pp. 265-292.

[37] Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, "Islamic Utopian Romanticism and the Foreign Policy Culture of Iran", p. 266.

[38] Ibid., p. 267.

[39] See Ali M. Ansari, "Civilizational Identity and Foreign Policy: The Case of Iran", in Brenda Shaffer (ed.), *The Limits of Culture: Islam and Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006), pp. 241-262.

Iran-US relations on the other hand have been analyzed through a vast and growing literature composed of scholarly works of both Iranian and American scholars alongside others as well as policy papers, briefs, newspaper columns and analysis. This study will make extensive use of these resources in its analysis of the evolution of Iran-US relations after the revolution. Among these studies, the nature of the conflict and historical background of this enmity found much reflection. For instance, Ali Ansari analyzed the historical roots and evolution of the deep "mistrust" pervading broken relations, which is widely acknowledged by policy-makers and scholars alike as a major stumbling block against attempts at normalization.[40] William Beeman called Iran-US relations a "post-modern conflict" built on mutual discourse of demonization[41], whereas scholars like James Bill characterized relations as "clash of hegemonies" over the Persian Gulf.[42] It can be asserted that especially after the eruption of nuclear crisis and heightened confrontation between the two states, Iran has come under even further extended focus. This was also because of its growing regional influence in the early 2000s. The analysis on nuclear crisis tend to reflect more on military dimensions of Iran-US affairs and analyze Iran's changing military capabilities and the likely repercussions of its nuclear programme on regional geopolitics.

Indeed, studies on Iran-US relations focused on American foreign policy toward the Islamic Republic. As Mohsen Milani rightly puts it, "hardly anything comprehensive has been produced about Iran's policy toward the United States."[43] Reflecting on Iran's foreign policy vis-à-vis the US is equally important to account for one of the most

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[40] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Roots of Mistrust,* (London: Hurst & Company, 2006).

[41] William O. Beeman, *The "Great Satan" vs. the "Mad Mullahs": How the United States and Iran Demonize Each Other*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).

[42] James Bill, "Iran and the United States: A Clash of Hegemonies," *Middle East Report*, No. 202, (Autumn. 1999), pp. 44-46; James Bill, "The Politics of Hegemony: The United States and Iran", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 8, No.3, 2001, pp. 89-100.

[43] Mohsen M. Milani, "Tehran's Take: Understanding Iran's US Policy", *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2009), pp. 46-62.

critical issues of regional politics particularly in the last decade as well as a necessary component of any analysis on Iran-US relations. Moreover, trying to grasp Iran's foreign policy either through strategic perspectives by bracketing out enduring influence of normative dynamics or through emphasis on the role of norms and ideas by bracketing out Iran's strategic concerns is not adequate to attain a holistic perspective that would address the role of both strategic concerns and normative factors. These analyses, albeit important, fail to conceptualize the state in its complexity and do not provide adequate reflection on the agency of the state to balance contending dynamics. As the analysis will demonstrate in Iran's foreign policy both ideology and pragmatism retained its role, even though their importance varied with the multiple contexts that the state was situated in. The intended historical-sociological analysis aims to take the state to the center of analysis and analyze notions of interest, identity within the context of complex domestic and international dynamics that structure the state. As Halliday succinctly puts it, it is "through the state, it becomes possible to assess the role of other formative factors such as economic ideas and social forces, and to analyze particular countries and specific events in a creative, comparative, but not straitjacketed, manner."[44] In this regard, this study will analyze Iran's US policy by focusing on the sociology of the state; that is the institutional and social constituents of state power and state structure in post-revolutionary era and by relating foreign policy to the political, socio-economic and ideological contexts that shape the state within different historical conjunctures.

The main reason for depicting Iran-US relations as a case study for historical sociological reflection is because of the intrinsic role that the United States has played in the structuring of modern state, state-society relations and state's relations with the international. In the absence of diplomatic relations, the United States remain as an enduring and central component of politics, development, state-society relations as well as Iran's international affairs. Moreover, particularly history of the 20th century Iran through revolutions, war, consolidation of the modern state and social movements is

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[44] Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*, p. 71.

fraught with watershed processes that Historical Sociology has been studying since the 19th century. This study at a deeper level aims to relate foreign policy to structural changes and underlying patterns of transformation in order to move beyond the behavioral focus of strictly strategic analyses.

1.2. Research questions

Analytically, this study aims to construct a historical-sociological research systematique for analysis of foreign policy and investigates the likely contributions of HSIR to foreign policy analysis. Drawing on the theme of "mutual constitution of the domestic and the international", it looks through the constitutive linkages between the two realms and reflects on how the state-society complex and the international transform one another. In this regard, it analyzes the constitutive role that the "international" plays in restructuring of the state and state-society relations as well as the formative role of the domestic over regional and international through foreign policy of the state. The research seeks to substantiate the merits of HSIR as a meta-theoretical approach and a method for foreign policy studies through rethinking over the ontology of the state and the international and reflecting on the historical trajectory of state, state-society and state-international relations.

Regarding Iran-US relations and Iran's US policy, the research attempts to analyze post-revolutionary change in Iran and the evolution of Iran's foreign policy toward the United States within the context of its transformation in the aftermath of the revolution. In this regard, the study examines how the state-society complex in Iran is being transformed through forces emanating from the international and the domestic and how this change is reflected on the agency of the state to structure its regional and international environment, while itself being shaped by the outcomes. Foreign policy in this regard is conceptualized as the agency of the state, which is played out by various and contending agents of the state. Through the perspective of co-constitution, the research scrutinizes the role of the United States in transformation of post-revolutionary Iran, the major

motives behind Iran's foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States, the agency of the Islamic Republic in shaping its regional and international environment and the consequences of these moves for Iran-US relations. The study also aims to delineate the patters of change and continuity in Iran's US policy through its historical perspective.

1.3. Methodology and the scope of the study

This study will analyze Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and foreign policy toward the United States through successive epochs with each epoch corresponding to different historical conjunctures marked by decisive events, processes and constellations at domestic, regional and international environment of the Islamic Republic. This methodology will offer a diachronic approach, which will attend to state transformation and the evolution of Iran's foreign policy towards the US within the historical specificities of each era. It will assess changes in political configuration, institutions, political economy and ideology of the state as an outcome of the co-constitutive interaction between the domestic and the international. Looking through the state will provide a holistic and integrated perspective highlighting state's embeddedness in the international and the domestic; hence incorporate the relevant sociological and international dynamics into analysis and assess the impact of both "inside" and "outside" in carving up the structural context of the state and the agents for state's foreign policy.

Rather than picking up a particular epoch in Iran-US relations, this study has chosen to focus on the entire history Iran's post-revolutionary affairs with the United States since 1979 in order to account for a processual perspective that HSIR proposes, which will help us comprehend patterns of change and continuity in Iran-US affairs and Iran's US policy throughout successive epochs. Reflecting on the trajectory of state transformation and Iran's post-revolutionary international affairs, the research will lay greater emphasis on the latest epoch, analyzed under the title of epoch of confrontation and offer an in-depth and up-to-date analysis of deepening crisis in Iran-US relations as well as growing regional and international agency of the Islamic Republic and how this conflict-ridden

environment continues to structure state and state-society relations in Iran. These successive epochs however will not be conceptualized as strictly separated time frames that start and end at definite points in post-revolutionary trajectory of Iran.

This study relies on data derived from primary and secondary sources. It makes extensive use of official statements and documents of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America, a vast literature of scholarly books, journal articles and newspapers as well as reports and policy briefs produced by Iranian, American and European research institutions. The research also utilizes information and insights attained from interviews with academics, political analysts, former diplomats and ordinary citizens of the Islamic Republic of Iran during a field trip made to Tehran in September-October 2010, beside interviews conducted with several Iranian scholars residing in the West. The data is compiled through a meticulous analysis of the findings of these interviews with official discourse reached from a review of statements by key political elite and bureaucrats of Iran. The chapters also rely on publications in *Farsi* that are obtained from bookstores and libraries in Tehran. Extensive literature produced by scholars of Iranian origin in English most of the time compensated the limited access to *Farsi* resources.

1.4. Structure of the thesis

The dissertation is structured on analysis of different historical epochs in the post-revolutionary history of the Islamic Republic. Prior to the analysis of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and evolution of Iran's foreign policy toward the US since 1979, the following chapter will discuss the likely contributions and merits of historical sociology to analysis of foreign policy and draw the analytical framework of the study by formulating a research systematique for historical-sociological analysis of foreign policy. The chapter will elaborate on the notions of state, international, agency and structuring and attempt to relate foreign policy to broader discussions in social theory by

drawing on the insights from burgeoning ties of the discipline of International Relations with Historical Sociology.

The third chapter will offer a historical overview of Iran-US relations before the Iranian Revolution and shed light on the formation of modern state and the intrinsic role that the United States played in politics, economy and military build-up of the Pahlavi monarchy besides Iran's integration into capitalist relations and Western security schemes in the context of Cold War geopolitics. The chapter intends to mirror the vested material relations between Iran and the United States and reveal how the revolutionary rupture has impacted upon the material and ideational constituents of this relationship.

Chapter four, five and six will focus on transformation of state, state-society and state-international relations in Iran in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution and trace the evolution of broader Iran-US relations and Iran's US policy during the epoch of revolution and war; the epoch of reconstruction and reform and the epoch of confrontation respectively. The fourth chapter, named as the epoch of revolution and war will examine the first decade of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation marked by revolutionary turmoil and war with Iraq and analyze how post-revolutionary state is carved out by mutually constitutive interaction between the domestic and international. It will scrutinize the implications of revolutionary change for international orientation and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic toward the United States. The chapter will shed light on the role of the US in the reconfiguration of the new polity and draw upon the strategic and ideological dimensions of the radical rupture taking shape between the former allies. It will argue that this epoch is foundational not only for Iran's post-revolutionary order, but also Iran-American relations and Iran's US policy in the aftermath of the revolution.

The fifth chapter will analyze the epochs of reconstruction and reform in conjunction, for they are both marked by Iran's quest for reintegration into world capitalist and political relations, as it embarked upon reconstructing itself in post-war, post-Khomeini

and post-Cold War environment. It will highlight the challenges of change, contestations within the state and growing discord between Iran's goal of building bridges and its increasing entitlement to policy of containment and sanctions. It will assess the role of the United States in the re-making of political and social order and the successes and failures of Iran's agency in the region and toward the United States. It will analyze the evolution of Iran's US policy in the face of major international and regional events including 1990-91 Gulf War, Middle East Peace Process, neoliberal structuring of states in post-Soviet world, September 11 attacks and American interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The sixth chapter, named as the epoch of confrontation, focuses on politics, society and international affairs of contemporary Iran and analyzes the growing tensions and confrontation in Iran-US relations and Iran's foreign policy since 2005. The era also corresponds to increasing strains in state-society relations with the state's transformation into an authoritarian shield, an ensemble of securitized social relations at home and a national-security state with the rising political role of the military in decision-making and implementation. The chapter will assess the role of the international in the securitization of state-society relations as well as Iran's extended agency and influence in the Middle East in the light of favorable geopolitical developments, growing oil wealth and changes in global power configurations. The chapter in a sense constitutes the gravity of the dissertation and provides an analysis of growing complexity of Iran's relations with the US and the multi-spatial and multi-causal background of Iran's foreign policy. It focuses on dynamics of Iran's diplomacy in nuclear crisis and Iran's agency in the Persian Gulf, Levant, as deterioration of relations with the US risks bringing the two states into a collision course.

The seventh chapter will sum up the major arguments discussed in the analytical framework and throughout the chapters examining the post-revolutionary transformation of Iran and its foreign policy toward the United States. Reflecting on the historical trajectory of state and Iran-US relations, it will draw up a processual perspective of

Iran's foreign policy, how it pertains to change in state and state-society relations and how the United States shapes and structures Iran's foreign policy decisions. The chapter will conclude with future prospects and challenges confronting Iran and Iran-US relations.

As will be articulated in greater depth in the analytical framework, the analysis intends to move beyond solely strategic analysis and attend to deeper structural transformation that take place through the mutually constitutive interaction of state-society complexes with the international. In this regard, this study will reflect on the consequences of Iran's affairs with the US for domestic power configuration, socio-economic development and political identity of the state. It will demonstrate how in each epoch domestic, regional and international events carve up new structural contexts for state action and empower different state agents with different capabilities. Through historical sociological insights, the chapters will also reflect on the dichotomies of "inside versus outside"; "agency versus structure" and "interest versus identity", which fail to grant a holistic and accurate analysis of foreign policy and the processes which inform state agency. It will demonstrate the dynamics of co-constitution, structuring and the mutual constitution of interests and identity and the role of agency in framing of interests and identities.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

Articulating on the major conceptual assessments introduced in the first chapter, this chapter aims to provide the analytical framework and methodology of the dissertation. It intends to analyze possible contributions of HSIR as a framework for foreign policy analysis and build up a research systematique to structure the following chapters on Iran's post-revolutionary foreign policy toward the United States. Following the insights of Historical Sociology, the chapter will discuss the major themes of mutual constitution of the domestic and international, the process of structuring together with an in-depth analysis of what agency and structures denote in the context of state and foreign policy. The chapter will respond to several questions, which constitute an important part of the questions that this research aspires to answer. These analytical questions comprise: What is the likely contribution of HSIR to studies of foreign policy? How do the international and domestic co-constitute each other? How does structuring transform the state? What is the impact of state transformation on foreign policy? In what ways does the state shape international through its foreign policy? How does agent-structure debate relate to state and foreign policy?

Philip Abrams in his seminal text *Historical Sociology* asserts that the aim of HS is to understand the relationship between human agency and the process of social structuring.[45] For Abrams, it is the "problem of structuring" that lies at the heart of both

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[45] Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, pp. ix-x and xiii.

history and sociology and invalidates their disciplinary separation. Instead, it unites them in purpose, as both disciplines seek the answer of "how do we, as active *subjects* make a world of objects which then, as it were, become subjects making us their objects."[46] From the earlier works of Marx, Weber and Durkheim, Historical Sociology blossomed as a part of both the disciplines of History and Sociology.

Elisabeth Özdalga in her review of the state of historical sociology within the discipline of sociology probes whether HS has evolved into a "school of thought" and argues that it has rather remained fragmented, not because of the diversity of its subject-matter comprising state formation, nationalism, social classes, intellectuals, bureaucracy, colonialism, imperialism, religion, gender, family, ethnicity and famine; but because of the lack of a thematic unity in the works produced that would have helped building an integrated "historical sociological" imagination.[47] Nevertheless, she concludes that it is still possible to identify common characteristics of historical sociological work, which comprise concern for (1)understanding transformation and change, (2) positing change and continuity in a contextual setting comprising macro/meso and micro levels, (3) examining interdependencies and interrelationships within which structuring takes place and (4) highlighting relations of power which make up an essential part of structuring

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[46] Ibid., p. xiii. Similar to Abrams, scholars like Anthony Giddens, Pierre Bourdieu, Fernand Braudel and Eric Hobsbawm adhered to the idea that history and sociology are what Braudel dubbed "one single intellectual adventure." On the other hand, scholars like Goldthorpe were opposed to the merging of disciplines and advocated maintaining disciplinary boundaries. For Goldthorpe, sociology shall be concerned with seeking the most generalizable explanations of social structures and process, while history shall relate to a specific time and place. See Craig Calhoun, "The Rise and Domestication of Historical Sociology", in Terrence J. McDonald (ed.), *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences: Essays on Transformations in the Disciplines,* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), p. 310; Stephen Hobden, *International Relations and Historical Sociology: Breaking down boundaries*, (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 22-24. Gerard Delanty and Engin F. Isin define HS as a "post-disciplinary discipline" which does not mean exclusively sociology or exclusively history, but rather a changing postulation of either a more sociological HS or a post-disciplinary HS and falls short of a total integration. See Gerard Delanty and Engin F. Isin, "Re-orienting Historical Sociology", in *Handbook of Historical Sociology*, pp. 5-6.

[47] Elisabeth Özdalga, "Bir Tasavvur ve Ustalık Olarak Tarihsel Sosyoloji", in Elisabeth Özdalga (ed.), *Tarihsel Sosyoloji*, (Ankara: DoğuBatı, 2009), p. 27.

through struggles between different levels and units of social organization and institutions.[48] These criteria indeed constitute the ontology and methodology of the HS.

It would be convenient to argue that IR and HS have been organically linked, for the processes of transformation studied by Historical Sociology constituted the very foundations of modern international relations. The literature review demonstrated that it was mainly Historical Sociological reflection that has produced an in-depth analysis of state and international system. However, similar to the separation of history and sociology, IR and sociology were also subjected to disciplinary compartmentalization. Linklater argues that academic division of labor in the 19th century has limited the subject matter of sociology only to change *within* societies, while theorization of the inter-state realm would be the task of IR in the next century following the emergence of the discipline after devastation of societies by total wars.[49] This separation arguably detracted from both disciplines; as IR steadily became a-sociological and ahistorical with the dominance of neo-realism modeled on micro-economics and rational choice theory, while social theory, as Benno Teschke contends, lacked a proper theorization of the "international", as it failed to theorize the impact of the international on internal development.[50] Therefore, the international remained a contingent element rather than a "constitutive component of any theory of history."[51] Recent studies particularly by Political Marxists underlined that IR's growing engagement with HS was likely to benefit IR and social theory alike, by granting IR a perspective of development and

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[48] Ibid., pp. 10-22.

[49] Andrew Linklater, "Historical Sociology", in Scott Burchill et al *Theories of International Relations*, (New York: Palgrave, 2009), p. 138.

[50] See Benno Teschke, "Bourgeois Revolution, State Formation and the Absence of the International", *Historical Materialism*, Volume 13, No. 2, 2005, pp. 3–26.

[51] Ibid. See also the theoretical discussion in Kamran Matin, "Uneven and Combined Development in World History: The International Relations of State-Formation in Premodern Iran", *European Journal Of International Relations*, Vol.13, No. 3 (September 2007), p. 420.

social theory a perspective of the state of development in multiple co-existence of different societies.[52]

Given the fact that HSIR has touched upon a wide array of issues in the discipline of IR since the 1980s, this dissertation aims to question what could be argued of the relationship between HSIR and analysis of foreign policy as a subdiscipline of IR. This chapter will lay out the analytical grounds of the following chapters by thinking foreign policy through the themes of sociology of state and agency-structure problematique. It will attempt to relate state and foreign policy to major debates in social theory rather than confining them into a strictly defined realm of state autonomy.

2.2. Foreign Policy and Historical Sociology

Christopher Hill in his book *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* underlines the challenge of studying "foreign" policy in a world of blurring boundaries.[53] The state of foreign policy in a "transformed world" has been debated in recent years through discussions of globalization and the fate of the nation state vis-à-vis the growing de-territorialization or global problems demanding global response.[54] Notwithstanding the mounting analytical and empirical challenges, the state proved resilient alongside proliferation of non-state actors and remains as an analytical and empirical reality that should be reckoned with. As Hill contends, foreign policy analysis remains a significant topic, for it sheds light on how agency can be understood in the modern world. In this

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[52] Relying on Trotsky's "theory of uneven and combined development", these scholars drew on the theme of development. This perspective will be further elaborated in the following parts of the chapter in the context of attempts at theorization of the international.

[53] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 16.

[54] See Mark Webber and Michael Smith, *et al*, *Foreign Policy in a Transformed World*, (Edinburgh: Prentice Hall, 2002).

regard "[t]he challenge is to re-constitute the idea of political agency in world affairs and to rethink the relationship between agency and foreign policy."[55]

As stated in the literature review, there has been growing engagement from different IR theories with studies of foreign policy. This study argues that analytically it is possible to organize their standpoints into categories which will be referred as "the axes of foreign policy articulations." These axes, not necessarily an exhaustive and complete categorization, mainly comprise inside-outside; agency-structure and interest-identity dualities and they bring about a number of ontological, methodological and epistemological issues against which possible contributions of HSIR will be assessed. The next part provides a brief introduction to these dichotomies. The contributions of HSIR scholarship will be articulated in broader discussions of the state, international and agent-structure problematique in the following sections of the chapter.

2.2.1. The three axes of foreign policy articulations

2.2.1.1. The inside-outside axis

Rob Walker succinctly asserted that IR as a discipline has shown "a distinct penchant for framing its concepts and debates within very sharp dichotomies."[56] The inside-outside axis has been one of these pervasive dichotomies. The divide got deepened with the dominance of neorealism which strictly separated international politics from domestic politics. Kenneth Waltz in his search for parsimonious and scientific theorization of IR isolated domestic politics and features of the state and state-society relations from analysis of international politics, which was centered on the "organizing principle of

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[55] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 19.

[56] He exemplifies some of these dichotomies between "high" and "low" politics or between international political theory and political theory of civil society. See R. B. J. Walker, "Realism, Change and International Political Theory", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No.1, (March 1987), p. 69.

anarchy."[57] Waltz in a response to his critics would argue that neorealism was a theory of international politics, not a theory of foreign policy.[58] Regarding inside-outside dichotomy, Waltz's analysis ended up reinforcing the ontological separation between domestic and international beside lack of theorization of domestic dimension of social reality in international politics.[59] The "domestic" seemed either contingent or simply irrelevant to grand theories of International Relations.[60]

Carlsnaes argues that the divide between domestic and international ended up with the entrapment of foreign policy studies into a dichotomy of *realpolitik* and *innenpolitik*.[61] Domestic politics and international politics were analyzed through different "levels", as "level of analysis" problem has demonstrated.[62] Accordingly, foreign policy belonged to the unit-level, whereas IR was concerned with the systemic level.[63] Excluded from system-level theorizing, Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) relied on modest and middle-range theories or single case studies by working on the "domestic sources" and "internal settings" of foreign policy.[64] Its main focus was on "behavior", decision-making

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[57] Kenneth Waltz, *The Theory of International Politics*, (Reading, Mass.:Addison-Wesley, 1979).

[58] Kenneth Waltz, "A response to my critics" in Robert O. Keohane, *Neorealism and its critics*, p. 386.

[59] See Colin Wight's analysis of Waltzian structuralism in *Agency, Structures and International Relations*; Faruk Yalvaç, "Uluslararası İlişkiler Kuramında Yapısalcı Yaklaşımlar" in Atila Eralp (ed.), *Devlet, Sistem Kimlik: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Yaklaşımlar,* p. 152.

[60] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 161.

[61] Walter Carlsnaes, "Foreign Policy," p. 331.

[62] See J. David Singer, "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations", *World Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 1, (Oct., 1961), pp. 77-92; see also Vendulka Kubálková (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, p. 18.

[63] Vendulka Kubálková (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, p. 5.

[64] Vendulka Kubálková in Vendulka Kubálková (ed.), *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), p. 18. Kubálková lists middle-range theories, "domestic sources of foreign policy" and "internal settings of foreign policy" as the three main theoretical approaches to FPA. For a review of the past, present and future of foreign policy analysis, see Valerie Hudson and Christopher S. Vore, "Foreign Policy Analysis Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow", *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 39, No.2, 1995, pp. 209-238; Valerie Hudson, "Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and

processes and decision-makers; for it assumed behavior as the objective ground of analysis, which could provide factual evidence that can be "measured" and theorized.[65] FPA just like IR carried the stamp of positivist epistemology and behavioralist methodology. As will be analyzed thoroughly in the following parts of the chapter, dealing with conceptualization of state, the analysis on *innenpolitik* by foreign policy analysis remained confined to "decision-making" without an integrated understanding of the state and state-society relations.

The above-mentioned dichotomy therefore shed no light on what "inside" and "outside" or "domestic" and "international" correspond to and how they evolve and transform each other. The territorialization of world politics has divided analysis of the "social" into spatially demarcated units which paved the way for a misleading ontological separation between inside and outside. This study argues against strict ontological distinction between the two realms. It will argue that the domestic is equally capable of constituting or shaping the international, even though this may not be as powerful as the impact of various dimensions of the international upon the constitution of the domestic. Secondly, inside-outside distinction could only serve as a methodological distinction not as an ontological one, given the mutual constitution of both realms as HS argued. Regarding the ontology of the state in this divide, proposals such as Marjo Koivisto's argument of "multi-scalar constitution of the state" seem to be of more help particularly for ontologizing state through its multi-spatiality.[66] In this regard, the state shall be posited in a unique space with its embeddedness in its society and international system of states which is in growing transformation of forces of global capitalism.

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the Ground for International Relations" *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol.1, Issue 1, 2005, pp. XX; Valerie Hudson, in Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, Tim Dunne (eds.), *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*.

[65] Vendulka Kubálková, *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, p. 18. See also Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, London: Palgrave, 2003); M. Fatih Tayfur, "Dış Politika" in Atila Eralp (ed.), *Devlet ve Ötesi: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Kavramlar*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), pp. 73-107.

[66] Marjo Koivisto, "State Theory in International Relations: Why realism matters", in Jonathan Joseph and Colin Wight (eds.), *Scientific Realism and International Relations*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), pp. 69-87.

2.2.1.2. The agency-structure axis

Another dichotomy that has permeated IR theory and foreign policy analysis is between agency-centric and structure-centric explanations. In contrast to Historical Sociology's emphasis on structuring that account for indispensability of social action and structures, different theories in IR remained either agent-centric or structuralist. Until the advent of neorealism in the 1970s, classical realist paradigm in IR was agent-centric, as realist scholars such as Hans Morgenthau focused on the state as the main actor in international politics and asserted that states struggled for maximization of their "interests defined in terms of power."[67] According to Morgenthau, politics is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature", a view that has made his account individualist as well.[68] With the advent of neo-realism, there was a marked shift to structuralism in the realist paradigm. Kenneth Waltz argued that "realists cannot handle causation at a level above states because they fail to conceive of structure as a force that shapes and shoves units."[69] Waltz in his *Theory of International Politics* highlighted the causal determinacy of the structure of anarchy over the behavior of the units; as anarchy compels states to perform the same functions by "socializing" their behavior to power politics whereby they seek survival through amassing military power.[70]

In the 1970s, Immanuel Wallerstein's world systems theory came up as another structuralist account, which defined structure in terms of world economic system rather

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[67] Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), pp. 1-15.

[68] Ibid., p. 4. See also Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations*, pp. 72-77 for analysis of his individualist perspective against structuralist challenges.

[69] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 34.

[70] Ibid., pp. 88-128.

than inter-state anarchy.[71] In his theory, states were bound by their positioning in the world economy as core, periphery or semi-periphery states rather than their military power. The way IR theories approached agency and structure had direct implications for analysis of foreign policy. As Hill argues structuralist theories bracket out foreign policy by placing international political or economic structures in a determinate position over the way states act and avoid analysis of the complex domestic environment within which states formulate their foreign policy.[72]

Meanwhile, FPA produced agency-centric analysis focusing on actors, decision-making processes and implementation of decisions. Valerie Hudson argues that there has been a shift from "abstract, actor-general analysis examined through "macro-constraints imposed by the bipolar, quasi-zero-sum rivalry of the system" into what she calls as actor-specific analysis with the end of the Cold War.[73] The actor-specific theorization of foreign policy focused on the human decision makers singly or in groups and focused on the role of these human agents construction of meaning and framing of situations, change and learning, construction of national role conception, acting as leaders.[74] However, this perspective, albeit important for providing what Hudson calls the "micro-foundations" of actor-general IR theory, remains committed to agential analysis and arguably does not offer the necessary and balanced incorporation of structural accounts into theorization.

Colin Wight argues that it was the inadequacies of both structuralist and individualist approaches that culminated in increasing attention to agent-structure problematique in

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[71] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the World Economy in the Sixteenth Century*.

[72] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 161.

[73] Valerie M. Hudson, "Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations", p. 13.

[74] Ibid, pp. 14-19.

IR.[75] As stated earlier, the emphasis on structuring and attention to social action and structures that constrain and enable social agency has been a definitive feature of Historical Sociological works in various disciplines. In the following sections, this study will elaborate on the notions of agency, structure and the process of structuring to substantiate the claim of HS on mutual constitution of the domestic and international as well as relate foreign policy with broader discussions taking place in social theory.

2.2.1.3. The interest-identity axis

As Rezaei argues "interest versus identity" dichotomy became a major discussion in foreign policy analysis, which in fact represents a debate informed by realism and constructivism.[76] Scott Burchill in one of the rare conceptual studies on the notion of national interest in IR asserts that the notion has become a generic term in different strands of IR theory and foreign policy studies for its "important subjective utility", although it was devoid of "substantive objective content.[77] Accordingly, classical realists talked of national interest as permanent and fixed and argued that it is the pursuit of national interests that should determine the conduct of foreign policy.[78] Waltzian neorealism conceived national interest as a systemic given, not a matter of the discretion

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[75] Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations*, p. 77.

[76] See Rezaei's remarks in Ali Akbar Rezaei, "Foreign Policy Theories: Implications for the Foreign Policy Analysis of Iran", in Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri (eds.), *Iran's Foreign Policy: From Khatami to Ahmadinejad*, (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2008). Alexander Wendt however does not see the divide unbridgeable. For his take on the issue, see James Fearon and Alexander Wendt, "Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View", in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons (eds.), *Handbook of International Relations*, pp. 52-73.

[77] See Scott Burchill, *The National Interest in International Relations Theory*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 1-30 and pp. 206-211.

[78] Ibid., p. 11.

of statesmen as Morgenthau saw it.[79] Accordingly there was little room for debate over its content, as Burchill asserts.[80]

Constructivism challenged the realist vision of "exogenously given" interests, arguing that interests are constructed by identity and through interaction.[81] Alexander Wendt underlines that material practices shall be analyzed within the social and normative context that gives meaning to them.[82] Wendt in search for a social theory of international politics highlighted the "intersubjective" rather than material structures of the international system and argued that identities and interests of the states were in important part shaped by these ideational structures.[83] His accent on "inherently relational" nature of identity prompted him to define identity intersubjectively, as he does not conceptualize it as a "unit-level quality" and acknowledges that "understanding of the Self depends on the Other's understandings and representations of it."[84] According to Wendt, identities inform us of "who or what actors are", whereas interests are mainly about "what actors want."[85] In this context, identities presuppose and construct interests.

Constructivism significantly contributed to meta-theoretical thinking in IR for its emphasis on the causal significance of norms and values as well as the subjective and

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[79] Ibid., p. 43.

[80] Ibid. For a comprehensive and comparative analysis of realism, see also Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[81] See Christian Reus-Smit, "Constructivism" in Scott Burchill et al., *Theories of International Relations*, pp. 212-237.

[82] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[83] See Alexander Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State," *American Political Science Review* Vol. 88, Issue 2, 1994, p. 385.

[84] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, p. 224.

[85] Ibid., p. 231.

constructed dimension of social world. However, constructivism has also been criticized for several reasons. One of these criticisms pertains to the accent over the formative impact of identity over interest, which failed to reflect on the other side of the coin, which is the transformative impact of interests over identity and their dynamic interrelations.[86] Praised for its critical contribution for drawing on norms and ideas, constructivism was also criticized for taking it too far at the expense of material factors.[87] Moreover, the notion of "identity" is also prone to reification, so long as it is detached from historical and social context. Regarding state-society complexes, rather than a single identity, it is convenient to talk about multiple identities depending on the historical constitution of state and specificities of its society.

Related to the second axis of agency versus structure as well, constructivism has also been criticized for lack of agency in its analysis. Jeffrey Checkel asserts that "it overemphasizes the role of social structures and norms at the expense of the agents who help create and change them in the first place."[88] Therefore, it is the contention of this study that analysis of foreign policy while paying attention the notions of interest and identity has to shed light on how interests and identities transform one another and the agency that chooses among contending identities and interests and redefines and reframes them when necessary. This argument demands a historical perspective to track change and continuities and a deeper analysis of the state and the contestations between various agencies within the state.

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[86] Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 127.

[87] See Colin Wight, *Agency, Structures and International Relations*; Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests*, p. 130.

[88] Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Review Article: The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory", *World Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 2, 1998, p. 324-348. A similar point is also made by Burchill. See Scott Burchill, *The National Interest in International Relations Theory*, p. 210.

2.3. Building up a Historical-Sociological Perspective of Foreign Policy

Most of the historical sociological studies focused on processes of large scale change and macro structures. In IR, HS provided a fertile ground for what Hendrik Spruyt names "systems theorizing"[89] as much as it did for historical analysis of state formation. The idea of utilizing HSIR as a framework for foreign policy analysis was proposed by Fred Halliday, as stated in the literature review of this study.[90] However, in his account on the international relations of the Middle East, a research systematique that would specifically apply HSIR to foreign policy cases was not adequately provided. Moreover, given the rather macro focus of historical-sociological works, micro-level studies dealing with foreign policy remained scarce and the existing studies rather focused on a single institution through analysis of historical institutionalism.[91] This dissertation aims to build up a research systematique that examines foreign policy through the ontological, methodological and epistemological insights of historical sociology. Ontologically it will focus on the mutual constitution of the domestic and the international as inseparable

[89] See Hendrik Spruyt, "Historical sociology and systems theory in international relations", *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 5, No.2, 1998, pp. 340-353.

[90] See Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*.

[91] In this regard, Bryan Mabee examines the context, process and politics of the constitution of the National Security Council in United States and renders a historical sociological perspective of the establishment and evolution of a foreign policy institution. See Bryan Mabee "Historical Institutionalism and Foreign Policy Analysis: The Origins of the National Security Council Revisited", *Foreign Policy Analysis,* Vol. 7, No.1, 2011, pp. 27-44; Bryan Mabee, "Levels and Agents, States and People: Micro-Historical Sociological Analysis and International Relations" *International Politics*, Vol. 44, 2007, pp. 431-449. This thesis aims to reflect on the state as a whole, as a complex ensemble of institutions and site for power struggles rather than a single institution of foreign policy. It does not specifically focus on decision-making but the political processes that shape foreign policy and strategizing of the state. Similar to Mabee's efforts, adopting this rather micro-oriented perspective to foreign policy means finding a proper balance between large scale processes of change and their formative impact on state and its domestic structure and the agency of state-society complex. Yet, the intended analysis will not exclusively focus on a single institution; which is due to two reasons: one is methodological, and the other is related to the specifities of the case. This research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of foreign policy and institutions make-up only a certain part of it. Moreover, granted the opacity of Iran's politics and difficulty of access to information on strategic institutions, the study may not have adequate assessment; besides placing too much focus on institutions may miss informal, non-institutionalized, structural relations and elements of politics. This remark is concerned with particularities of Iran again; as informal and semi-formal networks of power and politicking of the regime demands a perspective that would comprise but also move beyond institutions.

parts of the "social." It will reflect on how "international" as a domain structures state and state-society relations and how the state through its foreign policy in return exerts agency to shape regional and international structures in conjunction with its domestic transformation.

This study will argue that analyzing foreign policy through HSIR has significant insights to offer against the three axes of foreign policy articulations stated above. First, as a response to inside-outside axis, HSIR aims to bridge the divide by addressing the mutual constitution of the domestic and the international. This accent on co-constitution is qualitatively different from mere *interaction* of international, regional and national/sub-national levels, for this approach aims to show the *formative* influence of each upon the others, which leads to structural changes that crystallize in time and both constrain and enable different agents within the state.[92] Secondly, contrary to agent-centric or structural accounts that shaped foreign policy likewise IR, Historical Sociology aims to provide a balanced account through emphasis on structuring rather than purely agent-determinate or structure-determinate analysis. The theoretical elaboration of structuring will be rendered in the following parts of the chapter. Thirdly, regarding the interest versus identity axis, historical sociological analysis of these generic concepts opens up their potential to change as well as transform each other. It is the contention of this study that these notions shall be analyzed through *the sociology of the state* which takes state in its complexity and analyze the significance of both identity and interests in the formation and reproduction of a particular state order at a particular historical era.

This study contends historical sociology of foreign policy first of all requires a historical sociological reflection on the state and the international. It challenges the perspectives that reduce foreign policy into a decision or mechanical response to the requisites of international anarchy. Instead, it will attempt to ground foreign policy to structural build-up of the state and the contestations of various agencies, and reflect on the politics

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[92] For a discussion of the issue, see Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*.

of foreign policy. The following parts of the chapter will reflect on the evolution of the sociological theorization of the state and the international in the discipline of IR and substantiate the ontological, epistemological and methodological position of this study vis-à-vis analysis of state and its foreign policy. It will provide analytical assumptions over the co-constitutive linkages between international and domestic that shape state and its foreign policy. Consequently, it will draw up a research framework with a brief guideline for the following chapters that would focus on post-revolutionary transformation of Iran, its foreign policy toward the United States.

2.3.1. Theorizing the state

It is ironic to observe how under-theorized the concept of "state" has remained in IR, despite its centrality in the discipline.[93] Curiously, until the beginning of the 1980s, the state has been analytically taken for granted without much articulation over what it is and how it shall be examined.[94] According to Ole Wæver, the concept became the "organizing center of political science" and it was believed to give coherence to the emerging discipline of IR.[95] IR thus followed the discipline of political science by embracing the centrality of state in politics, equating the "political" with the state and outlawing any possibility of social change other than those brought, managed and engineered by the state.[96] The state was assumed to be a rational, unitary actor both in

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[93] Fred Halliday, "State and Society in International Relations: A Second Agenda", *Millennium-Journal of International Studies*, Vol.16, 1987, p. 217. See also Halliday's *Rethinking International Relations,* Chapter 4. For recent reviews of the "state" in the discipline of IR, see John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Faruk Yalvaç, "Devlet" in Atila Eralp, (ed.) *Devlet ve Ötesi: Uluslararası İlişkilerde Temel Kavramlar*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), pp. 15-51.

[94] Faruk Yalvaç, "Devlet", p. 16.

[95] Wæver asserts that this has happened despite preference of American classics for the notions of "government", "civil polity and "civil society". See Ole Wæver, "The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations", p. 713.

[96] Ibid., p. 17.

realism and neorealism, either envisioned through its "statesmen"[97] or as a legal-territorial unit, a "territorial container."[98] It became a "national-territorial totality" as Halliday puts it, "a conceptual form, what is denoted visually on a map, namely the country as a whole and all that is within it: territory, government, people and society."[99] Ontologically as Wight argues, IR theory used state as an "instrumental device aimed at facilitating explanation" and treated state "as if it existed, as a vital explanatory abstraction from other social objects."[100] The methodological challenge of this totality was how to deconstruct it without disintegrating the state altogether.[101]

On the other hand, foreign policy analysis has been more adamant to look inside the black-box of the state and highlight bureaucratic and inter-organizational struggles, as well as the hazards of groupthink and misperception in decision-making processes.[102] By doing so, it problematized the notions of rationality and national interest and broke down realism's monolithic perspective of the unitary state and instrumental rationality of

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[97] Hans Morgenthau was inherently individualist in his approach to the IR in his *Politics Among Nations* (1951). Morgenthau was seeking generalizable laws of politics rooted in the evil human nature which was reduced to "will to power." International politics was no different, a likewise struggle for power derived from individuals' lust for power. His position as Wight argues would make IR redundant "as we already know the causes of international outcomes and they are outside the realm of social enquiry." See Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, and Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations*, p. 77.

[98] Anthony Giddens defined state as a container of domestic society. See Anthony Giddens, *Nation-State and Violence*; Martin Shaw's reflection on Giddens in *Global Society and International Relations*, John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*; Peter F. Taylor, "The State as Container: Territoriality in the Modern World-System" in Neil Brenner, Bob Jessop, Martin Jones, Gordon MacLeod (eds.), *State/Space: A Reader*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 101-113.

[99] Fred Halliday, "State and Society in International Relations: A Second Agenda", p. 217.

[100] See Colin Wight, "State agency: social action without human activity?", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2004, pp 269-280.

[101] Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*, p. 30.

[102] See Graham Allison, *The Essence of Decision*, (Mass.: Little Brown, 1971); Graham Allison and Morton Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, (Washington D.C: Brookings, 1974); Irving Janis, *Victims of Groupthink*, (Mass.: Houghton-Mifflin, 1982).

rational choice theory.[103] But, as Fred Halliday contends, FPA has failed to develop a theory of the state, which was arguably related to its "narrow and fetished concern with decisions and sociologically naïve concept of the internal 'environment.'"[104] A similar point is also made by Hill, as he underlines the lack of a theory of the state in FPA that would elucidate "what a state does and what it is for."[105] At this point one of the most significant contributions of Historical Sociology to IR comes into picture, which entails studies that highlight processes of state formation in historical and social context.

Indeed, in the 1980s there were growing calls within the discipline of IR to formulate a social theory of the state, advocated by scholars of Critical Theory and Constructivism including Robert Cox, Andrew Linklater and Alexander Wendt.[106] These approaches attacked asociological perspective of neorealism that has left out the social from analysis and excessively relied on explanations built on anarchy and state's war-making capabilities. At the time, both scholars seeking a more sociological IR and sociologists making extensive analysis of the role of the international over domestic society contributed to state and state-formation debate in International Relations. In contemporary theoretical discussions over HSIR, the imprint of Weberian and Marxist approaches continue to shape the debate. This part of the chapter will render a brief overview of Weberian and Marxist perspectives on the state and respond to several questions as follows: How can we think of the state sociologically and internationally? What does sociology of state bring to analysis of the international and foreign policy that other theories and approaches have left out?

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[103] For a detailed review see Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*.

[104] Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, p. 194.

[105] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 30.

[106] For an extensive analysis of these theories see Scott Burchill et al., *Theories of International Relations*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

The first inroads of Historical Sociological research to IR came with the works of sociologists such as Charles Tilly, Michael Mann and Theda Skocpol. These scholars theorized state as an institution in its own right and challenged the society-centric approaches dominating the discipline of sociology, by "bringing the state back in."[107] Poggi argues that sociology for a long time remained indifferent to the notion of the state and took the distinction between the political and the social for granted.[108] These sociologists rejected the orthodox Marxist view of state as an instrument of the dominant class and made extensive reference to Max Weber's much acclaimed definition of the modern state as the "human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory."[109]

The implications of the Weberian perspectives for IR were twofold. One was related to the state and conceptualization of state-society relationship and the other pertained to the international-domestic nexus and the impact of geopolitical competition over state formation. Regarding the definition of the state and state-society relationship, the above-mentioned scholars advocated the autonomy of the state from social forces mainly because of its distinctive institutionalization. But their views on the boundaries of this autonomy differed. While Skocpol embraced a strictly institutionalist perspective by defining the state as "a set of administrative, policing and military organizations headed, and more or less well coordinated by, an executive authority"[110], Michael Mann adopted a more nuanced perspective by depicting the state as an *arena*, a key site where social power relations can crystallize in different forms.[111] According to Mann, it was the

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[107] This famous dictum was epitomized in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back in*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[108] Gianfranco Poggi, *Modern Devletin Gelişimi: Sosyolojik Bir Yaklaşım*, (Şule Kut, Binnaz Toprak, trans.), (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2007), pp. 9-11.

[109] Max Weber, "Politics as Vocation" in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, (London: Routledge, 1948), p.78.

[110] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, p. 29.

[111] See Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power Vol. I: A History of Power from the Beginning to AD 1760* and Michael Mann, *States, War and Capitalism*.

maneuvering space of the state, which constituted the very source of its autonomy and "the birthplace of state power."[112] Seabrooke argues that Mann's view of state autonomy is more in line with Weber's conception of the state-society complex with his recognition of social struggles over the state.[113] However, neo-Weberian scholars in general could not escape criticisms from society-centric approaches for reifying the state and leaving out the role of the social.[114] This study will mainly embrace the perspective of state as a *site*, as an *arena* of power struggles by adopting a balanced perspective between state's shifting autonomy and political challenges emanating from different social constituencies within the context of state-society relations in post-revolutionary Iran.

Aside from the issue of state autonomy, Skocpol, Tilly and Mann's contributions to IR were related more with the causal significance accorded to the international in their analyses of state formation and social revolutions. Interestingly, while their institutional perspective of the state challenged the national-territorial black box of neorealism, their explanation of state formation based on what Teschke names "geopolitical competition models"; that is the war-ridden, anarchical international system, much like it is portrayed in neorealism, resulted in reproduction of the neorealist perspective.[115] Their analysis

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[112] Mann elaborates on the sources of autonomous state power and asserts that the state's autonomous power resides in the "necessity of the state, multiplicity of its functions and its territorialized centrality. See Michael Mann, *States, War and Capitalism*, p.11 and 15.

[113] See Leonard Seabrooke, "Bringing legitimacy back in to neo-Weberian state theory and international relations", *Working Paper* No. 2002/6, Australian National University, Department of International Relations, Canberra, September 2002, p. 7, footnote 18 and p. 9.

[114] See Sandra Halperin, "Shadowboxing: Weberian Historical Sociology vs State-Centric International Relations Theory", *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1998, pp. 328-331.

[115] For a thorough analysis of the implications of Skocpol, Tilly and Mann's work for IR, see Stephen Hobden, *International Relations and Historical Sociology, Breaking Down the Boundaries*. Teschke's critique of geopolitical competition models is available in his piece entitled *The Myth of 1648*.

basically drew on the role of war-making, militarism and force in the emergence of the state.[116]

In time, a new strand of Weberian thinking in IR emerged. John Hobson names this strand as the "second wave" of neo-Weberian Historical Sociology. As a vocal representative of this perspective, Hobson argues that the second generation of neo-Weberians aims to develop "non-realist sociology of international relations."[117] In this regard, he focuses on the "agential" powers of the state in the international domain and challenges the first wave's "passive-adaptive state" conception vis-à-vis geopolitical challenges. Hobson postulates that neorealism possesses a "minimalistic" theory of the state, which derives the state from "systemic reproduction requirements of the anarchical state system."[118] Such a perspective yields what Hobson calls the "theory of the passive military-adaptive state", that hardly gives the state an ontological status and most of the time rips it of international agency.[119] Emphasis on agential power of the state seeks to remedy structural determination of the international. The second-wave scholars also re-formulated the notion of state autonomy, previously posed as strict separation of the state from society. The new generation attended to the "embeddedness" of state in its society and its implications for state power arguing that embeddedness in its society and co-optation of different social classes enhanced the powers of state.[120]

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[116] See Mann (1988) and Tilly (1975) in this regard. Later Charles Tilly has incorporated the role of capital in state-formation in Tilly (1992).

[117] John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*, pp. 63,64 and 192; Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (eds.), *Historical Sociology of International Relations*.

[118] John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*, p. 19.

[119] Ibid., p. 24.

[120] See Leonard Seabrooke, "Bringing legitimacy back in to neo-Weberian state theory and international relations", pp. 1-41; Joel S. Migdal, *State in society: studying how states and societies transform and constitute one another,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); and John M. Hobson-reference will be added. The notion of embeddedness will be developed further.

The second wave scholars argue that through incorporation of society into their perspective of state, they challenge both neorealism's portrayal of states as functionally undifferentiated units as well as its efforts to abolish "[state's] domestic relations with society as conceptual variables in international politics."[121] Such a perspective expectedly and at least theoretically makes the domestic an integral component of the international. It would be convenient to argue that Weberian analyses in IR are searching for a more balanced view of both state and society and hence getting away from the purely state-centric perspectives, *albeit* leaving state at the center.

It is important to reflect on the Marxist Historical Sociology and the evolution of its perception of the state and the international. In contemporary HSIR, major attempts to theorize the international mainly came from the Political Marxists, seeking to achieve a "sociological imagination" of the international, which has been hitherto understood and theorized in geopolitical terms.[122] This will be elaborated further in subsequent parts; before then, the following section highlights the important Marxist insights on the study of state and new directions that have contributed to historical-sociological understanding of the state.

The prominent Marxist theorist of the state, Bob Jessop argues that "It is precisely in the articulation between state and society, however that many of the unresolved problems of the state theory are located."[123] Indeed, the definition of the state has been a major

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[121] John M. Hobson, "Debate: The 'second wave' of Weberian historical sociology: The historical sociology of the state and the state of historical sociology in international relations", *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 5, No.2, (Summer 1998), p. 294.

[122] In this context, the chapter will mainly reflect on what can now be dubbed as "Sussex School" of Historical Sociology, composed of scholars like Justin Rosenberg and Benno Teschke producing extensively on incorporation of the international into social theory and therefore theorization of the international.

[123] Bob Jessop, *State Power: A Strategic-Relational Approach*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), p.7.

source of contention within sociology.[124] Since the early 1970s, the autonomy of the state and the base-superstructure dualism were highly debated amongst Marxist scholars. Challenging the orthodox position on the instrumentality of the state and determination of superstructure by the economic base, the neo-Marxist approaches[125] introduced a modified and nuanced perspective that no longer considered state as an instrument. In these perspectives, there was a growing recognition that the institutional separation of the state from economy resulted in the dominance of different and at times contradictory institutional logics and modes of calculation, and therefore culminated in the possibility that political decisions do not always serve the interests of the capital.[126]

Bob Jessop argues that with these debates Marxism started to analyze state as a "complex social relation" endowed with structural capacity to "impact on the ability of various political forces to pursue particular interests and strategies in and through access to and control over given state capacities-themselves always dependent on their effects on links to forces and powers beyond the state."[127] Accordingly, such a vision resulted in more complex studies of institutions, political capacities and struggles.[128]

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[124] A classic text by Bertrand Badie and Pierre Birnbaum explicates Marxist, Durkheimian and Weberian theories of the state. See Bertrand Badie and Pierre Birnbaum, *The Sociology of the State*, (Arthur Goldhammer, trans.), (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983).

[125] As Teschke argues the category of neo-Marxism, or any other category whatsoever does not mean a monolithic account. See Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*.

[126] See Bob Jessop, "Bringing the State Back in (Yet Again): Reviews, Revisions, Rejections, and Redirections", paper presented at *IPSA Conference*, Quebec, 2000, pp. 3-4. Jessop here draws on the major neo-Marxist works by Hirsch (1976), Offe (1984) and Poulantzas (1978). In the 1970s, neo-Marxist scholarship developed the notion of the "relative autonomy of the state" (mainly by Poulantzas, in *Political Power and Social Classes*, 1973) while preserving the "determination by the economic in the last instance." Accordingly the state could go against the short term interests of the bourgeoisie to secure the long term reproduction of the mode of social relations. Neo-Marxists argued that even though the state is relatively autonomous of social class interests, it is still economic interests which determine in "the last instance." For an elaboration of the issue, see John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*, pp. 125-128; Bob Jessop, *State Power: A Strategic-Relational Approach*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).

[127] Bob Jessop, "Bringing the State Back in (Yet Again): Reviews, Revisions, Rejections, and Redirections", p. 4.

[128] Ibid.

The recent articulations of state in neo-Weberian and neo-Marxist approaches point out a perspective, which synthesizes the institutional structure of the state as analyzed by Weberian approaches with the importance of social struggles over state power and state's strategizing against these struggles as detailed by Marxist and pluralist approaches.[129] Historical sociology of the state needs to attend to the complex structural composite of the state and its strategic choices by positing the state at the vortex of the international and the domestic and analyzing it historically.[130]

According to Jessop, state is "the site of a paradox" and this paradox arises because the state is

> just one institutional ensemble among others within a social formation, [while] it is peculiarly charged with overall responsibility for maintaining the cohesion of social formation of which it is a part. Hence, ironically, it is both part and whole of society.[131]

Given the difficulty of drawing a clear line between where the state ends and the society begins, envisioning state with absolute autonomy from its society becomes a fallacy. Therefore, analysis of the domestic shall refer to "state-society complexes" as has been utilized by both Weberian and critical approaches with the recognition of shifting boundaries of state autonomy and state's being a site for power struggles.

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[129] Hobson argues that recognition of "relative autonomy" of the state resulted in considerable convergence of neo-Weberian and neo-Marxist approaches, yet differences remain over the boundary of this autonomy and the underlying divide between state-centrism and society-centrism against efforts to transcend it. This issue has been raised by Jessop who argues that neo-statist approaches continue reifying the state. See John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*, p. 127; Bob Jessop, "Bringing the State Back in (Yet Again): Reviews, Revisions, Rejections, and Redirections".

[130] The expression of state's placement at the "vortex of the international and domestic" belongs to John M. Hobson. See his *The State and International Relations*.

[131] Bob Jessop, "Bringing the State Back in (Yet Again): Reviews, Revisions, Rejections, and Redirections", p. 31.

However, the state does not merely entail a domestic society. Its historical constitution by international processes and embeddedness in the international realm makes it "Janus-faced."[132] Accordingly, states were defined as "two-faced entities" that "look both inwards towards the society they seek to dominate, and externally, towards other states and/or societies with which they interact with the goal of strengthening their own internal positions."[133] For Skocpol, the phrase denotes its "intrinsically dual anchorage in class-divided socio-economic structures and an international system of states."[134]

State's embeddedness in international also raises the issue of state autonomy and international and regional constraints over state agency. As stated above, recognition of state's relative or partial autonomy from domestic forces endows it with agential power to act on behalf and sometimes at behest of its society. Regarding state's partial autonomy from the international, neo-Weberian HS argues that such autonomy from the international grants state "international agential power" resulting in "the ability of the state to make foreign policy and shape the international realm free of international structural requirements or the interests of international non-state actors."[135] This perspective saves the state from being a passive recipient of international and regional events.

The state becomes a site that is able to play off between the domestic and the international. Fred Halliday aptly asserts that state owes much of its autonomy to its

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[132] This perspective was brought by a number of scholars that incorporated state-society relations into state's relations with the international. Fred Halliday (1984), pp. 84-86; Hintze (1975), p.183; Theda Skocpol (1979), p.32; Michael Mann (1988); Andrew Linklater (1990); Robert Jarvis 1993 paid attention to this feature. These scholars are assembled by John M. Hobson, "Debate: The 'second wave' of Weberian historical sociology: The historical sociology of the state and the state of historical sociology in international relations", p.295.

[133] Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, p. 140.

[134] Theda Skocpol, "States and Social Revolutions", p. 32.

[135] See Hobson's comparative analysis of state's domestic and international agential power in different IR theories in John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*. The definition appears on pages 7 and 8.

embeddedness in the international and puts that it is important to investigate "why and how participation in the international realm enhances and strengthens states."[136] According to him, it was the relative autonomy of the state in the international realm that has opened up debate within Marxist scholarship for a revision of the strict base-superstructure modality.[137] The states through their autonomy are able to "act independently of their own society and each other, especially in international politics, for example by launching war, forming unpublicized alliances.[138] On the other hand, despite all the appearance of independence from social constraints, foreign policy analysis documents how choices that a particular state makes are framed by domestic and international contexts. Halliday proposes that a partial reconciliation of historical sociology and foreign policy analysis can provide a reflection on the boundaries of state autonomy in its choices.[139] It is of enormous significance to take neither state and its autonomy, nor the realms of domestic and international as unchanging.

2.3.2. Theorizing the "international"

Understanding and conceptualizing foreign policy equally requires conceptualizing the "international", for international becomes one of the constituents of state power, institutions and ideology. Justin Rosenberg defines the "international" as an intrinsic "dimension of social reality, which arises specifically from coexistence within it more than one society."[140] He argues that "international historical sociology" could emerge, only if the international is socially theorized by reintegrating geopolitics and society as

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[136] Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, p. 81.

[137] See Fred Halliday, "State and Society in International Relations: A Second Agenda", pp. 215-229.

[138] Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*, p. 42.

[139] Ibid., p. 43.

[140] Justin Rosenberg, "Why is there no international historical sociology?", p. 308.

the two dimensions of social reality.[141] Indeed, within Marxism, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of geopolitics that Marxist analyses neglected for a long time. The Marxist attention to geopolitics sprang from the need to theorize the social and historical origins of geopolitical orders through particular attention to the constitutive or "generative" role of domestic social orders on geopolitical structures.[142] HSIR of Political Marxist aspiration posed vocal critiques against the reification of the international by geopolitical vision of neorealism.[143] Their way of looking at geopolitical orders challenged systemic determinacy over the unit, as they historically accounted for how units played significant role in shaping the system. In this regard, Benno Teschke's analysis of Britain and its role in the expansion of capitalist system is informative.[144]

The recent engagement of political Marxism with Historical Sociology has culminated in a new direction for historical-sociological research in IR, which was inspired by Leo Trotsky's notion of "uneven and combined development" (UCD). According to John Hobson, the "neo-Trotskyist Debate" signifies the "third wave" of historical sociological discussions.[145] Scholars of Political Marxist persuasion such as Justin Rosenberg propose that the UCD offers a solution to the lack of social theorizing of the international and looks through development as a historical process that has combined

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[141] See Justin Rosenberg, "Why is there no international historical sociology?"; Justin Rosenberg, "Uneven and combined development: the social-relational subsratum of 'the international'? An exchange of letters" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol.21, No.1, 2008, pp. 80-85.

[142] See Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics and the Making of Modern International Relations*, (London: Verso, 2003) and Teschke's "Geopolitics", *Historical Materialism*, Vol.14, No.1, 2006, pp. 327-335; Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society: A Critique of the Realist Theory of International Relations*, (London: Verso, 1994).

[143] Justin Rosenberg, "Uneven and combined development: the social-relational subsratum of 'the international'? An exchange of letters", p. 81.

[144] Benno Teschke, "Theorizing the Westphalian System of States: International Relations from Absolutism to Capitalism" *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2002, pp. 5-48. See also Teschke's *The Myth of 1648*.

[145] John M. Hobson, "What's at stake in the Neo-Trotskyist Debate? Towards a Non-Eurocentric Historical Sociology of Uneven and Combined Development", *Millennum- Journal of International Studies*, 2011, pp. 1-20.

multiple societies in uneven ways.[146] The perspective approaches the international as an intrinsic characteristic of social development which is indeed a transhistorical phenomenon and argues that international does not denote a level above or a "space between societies", but rather corresponds to "a dimension of their being" reaching to the "domestic constitution of these societies themselves."[147] Therefore, this perspective reads the international through transhistorical process of development rather than inter-state anarchy. However, albeit important for bringing socio-economic development of societies under focus, the UCD is criticized for its shortcomings in addressing the role of agency because of its focus on development, besides tensions over the compatibility of search for a grand theory with historical variation.[148] The approach merits attention for its holistic reflection on the social and provides further insight for analysis of relations between states as uneven and combined interaction of their development trajectories.

With the theoretical advances bringing sociological and historical perspectives to IR, the "international" realm ceased to be seen solely as a realm of inter-state military competition. In this regard, for instance Rosenberg argues that the international does not merely comprise institutionalized relations between territorial states, but it entails a broader and "complexly interpenetrated social sphere of formal and informal relations."[149] In the 1990s, Alexander Wendt conceptualized the international as a

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[146] Justin Rosenberg, "Why is There No International Historical Sociology?", p. 325.

[147] Ibid., p. 327.

[148] Benno Teschke, "The Discipline of International Relations, International Historical Sociology and Historical Materialism", *Spectrum: Journal of Global Studies Conference: Historical Sociology, Historical Materialism and International Relations*, November 2, 2012, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey. See Justin Rosenberg's own reflection against the basic problems associated with the UCD. Justin Rosenberg, "Basic problems in the theory of uneven and combined developments. Part II. Unevenness and political multiplicity", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 23, No. 1, (February 2010), pp. 165-189. Allinson and Anievas also draw upon Rosenberg's take on UCD and pose a number of criticisms particularly about the "overextension" of the UCD. See Jamie C. Allinson and Alexander Anievas, "The uses and misuses of uneven and combined development: an anatomy of the concept", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 22, No. 1, (March 2009), pp. 47-67.

[149] See Justin Rosenberg, "Why is there no international historical sociology?"; Koivisto elaborates on Rosenberg's ideas in "State Theory in International Relations: Why realism matters", p. 75.

normative structure of intersubjective meanings and emphasized the constructed nature of anarchy by states.[150] Wallerstein's world systems theory and dependency school theorists saw an unjust, uneven capitalist economy which encapsulated the state-system, as they analyzed the international.[151] These works, despite their shortcomings related to the emphasis on structural determination at the expense of agency, nevertheless expanded the analytical boundaries of international imagination by highlighting its normative and economic constituents as well. International with all its complexity serves as what Fred Halliday calls "context and catalyst" for what takes place in state-society complexes.[152] Theorizing the international solely in terms of geostrategic interaction between states leaves out the underlying global capitalist relations, transnational movements and ideologies that shape the social world. This multi-faceted context is an inevitable transformer of domestic contexts, as it relates to both material and discursive structures of the state and the state becomes a transformer of its multi-faceted structural contexts through its agency. Foreign policy is a part of this agency.

2.3.3. Historicity, Transformation and "Emergence" of the State and the International

Historical theorization of the international, mostly in terms of emergence and evolution of inter-state system refuted the neorealist assumption of trans-historical continuity.[153] These studies highlighted the constitutive role of the international in state formation as

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[150] See the renown piece by Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics", *International Organization*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (Spring, 1992), pp. 391-425. For an articulation of constructivism, see Christian Reus-Smit, "Constructivism" in Scott Burchill et al., *Theories of International Relations*, pp. 188-212.

[151] See Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism with Capitalist Civilization*, (London: Verso, 1995).

[152] Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*.

[153] John Gerard Ruggie pioneered these studies in his well-known critique of neorealism's failure to explain transformation from feudalism to modern international relations. See John Ruggie, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis", *World Politics*, 35 (January 1983).

well as the formative role of the state and social formations in the constitution of the international.[154] Ontologically, these perspectives theorized the international as "emergent", not as a fixed or static realm.[155]

Likewise, the state itself shall be analyzed through an "emergentist" framework. Colin Wight has called the state as a "product-in-process", which indeed makes it quite difficult for analysis to seize a moment that could give a full account of its identity.[156] In this sense, it would be convenient to resemble the state to Bieler and Morton's articulation of "historical structures", which follows Robert Cox's analysis and the historicist epistemology of Giambattista Vico and Antonio Gramsci. Bieler and Morton argue that

> within an historical structure three elements reciprocally interact-*ideas* (understood in two ways as intersubjective meanings or shared notions of social relations, as well as collective images of social order), *material capabilities* (referring to more tangible resources) and *institutions* that are amalgams of the previous two elements."[157]

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[154] See John M. Hobson, *The wealth of states: a comparative sociology of international economic and political change*, (Cambridge: New York University Press, 1997); Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*, and Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society*.

[155] "Emergence" as Colin Wight defines it, refers to "the relationship between two entities, such that one entity arises out of the other, but is capable of reacting back on the first and is any event causally and taxonomically irreducible to it." He relies on Bhaskar's definition of emergence. See Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations*, p. 110; the original source he refers to is Roy Bhaskar, *Dialectic: Pulse of Freedom*, (London: Verso, 1993), p. 397.

[156] Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, p. 221.

[157] See Andreas Bieler and Adam David Morton, "The Gordian Knot of Agency-Structure in International Relations: A Neo-Gramscian Perspective", *European Journal of International Relations*, 2001, Vol. 7, No.5, p. 22. For Bieler and Morton, these three elements operate in three spheres of activity which comprise the social relations of production, forms of state and world order. This study in this section draws more on the analytical relation between structures and states.

Seen in this vein structural change is related with change in the constitutive parts of structures. This perspective provides vital insight for paying due attention for both normative and material dynamics in the constitution of structures as well as their change.

Koivisto's proposal for examining the "multiscalar constitution of the state" also offers significant insight to account for state's embeddedness at different "levels", which she prefers to name "scales" in an attempt to transcend the limitations of level of analysis perspective.[158] According to her, IR theory should focus on "the crystallization of state power in various local, national, international and global contexts."[159] This vision calls for a multi-spatial analysis and implies that the interaction between domestic, regional and international contexts most of the time entails *formative* influence on the state and its foreign policy; as it draws pathways and structures the choices of the state in its foreign policy. Seeing state in structural terms and in constant transformation calls forth a revisiting of the agent-structure debate to rethink over what agency and structures correspond to in IR, where does state fit in this picture and how does emergence take place, while the domestic and international co-constitute one another.

2.3.4. Revisiting the Agent-Structure Debate: Agents, Structures and Emergence

This chapter has mentioned agency versus structure as one of the axes of foreign policy articulations and argued that Historical Sociology through its emphasis on structuring bridges this artificial divide between the most fundamental components of social action. In this section, the study will shed light on the ontological meaning of agency, structure and structuring with a special attention granted to the state.

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[158] Marjo Koivisto, "State Theory in International Relations: Why realism matters", p. 81.

[159] Koivisto argues that the theories of state should rather explore "institutionalization and re-institutionalization of state power at various emergent levels of world politics (including national, regional and international levels)" rather than examining the behavior of "bounded" national states in world politics. Ibid., p. 77 and 81.

Colin Wight argues that IR has not grappled systemically either with the concept of agency or structure, despite their frequent appearance in the literature. Accordingly, **"**what agency is, what it means to exercise agency, or who or what might do so" is rarely clear and as to the notion of structure, even though it enjoys relatively favorable attention, it still remains "ambiguous and imprecise."[160] This negligence was partially compensated in the 1990s through articulation of the issue by Alexander Wendt and David Dessler in IR theory and Walter Carlsnaes in FPA.[161]

Agent-structure problematique became a major concern for a wide array of IR approaches ranging from critical theory to post-modernism; each attesting different meanings and explanatory power to agency and structures.[162] In this regard, recent scholarship built on *scientific realism* as a philosophy of science that diverges from positivist and post-positivist epistemologies provides significant insights to the way agents, structures and-to our concern- the state is conceptualized.[163] This study draws on

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[160] Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 123 and 178. Wight mentions two distinct structural traditions and different usages of structure in IR. These traditions comprise "the collective representations of social facts"and "morphological account of social facts"; the first one entailing a more subjectivist and qualitative treatment of structures, whereas the latter builds on constitutive feature of structuralism and is shaped by the ideas of Sigmund Freud and Ferdinand Saussure. (pp. 125-126) On the most common uses of the structure, Wight enlists four categories of structure taken from Douglas Porpora (1989: 195)which comprise patterns of aggregate behavior that are stable over time, -law-like regularities that govern the behavior of social facts, collective rules and resources that structure behavior and systems of human relationships among social positions; then adds a fifth category of relations of difference that constitute and define the properties of elements by drawing on Bashkar's vision and he criticizes Giddens' understanding for taking only "rules and resources" as structures (p. 127).

[161] Alexander Wendt, "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory", *International Organization*, Volume 41, No. 3, 1987, pp. 335-370; David Dessler, "What's at stake in agent-structure debate?", *International Organization*, Volume 43, No. 3, 1989, pp. 441-473; Walter Carlsnaes, "The Agency-Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.36, No.3, (September 1992), pp. 245-270.

[162] See Andreas Bieler and Adam David Morton, "The Gordian Knot of Agency-Structure in International Relations: A Neo-Gramscian Perspective"; Roxanne Lynn Doty, "Aporia: A Critical Exploration of Agent-Structure Problematique", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 3, 1997, pp. 365-392.

[163] Scientific realism is a philosophy of science that is built on the principles of "ontological realism, epistemological relativism and judgmental rationalism." Ontological realism denotes the belief in a reality independent of the minds of those who wish to know it; epistemological relativism acknowledges that all beliefs are socially produced and judgmental rationalism allows choice between competing theories

the promising collaboration of historical sociology and scientific realism in accounting for the ontology of the state, international and the process of structuring.[164]

Scholars like Wight and Jessop criticize the "state-as-agent" thesis, particularly Alexander Wendt's "states as persons" analogy through scientific realist analysis of the agent-structure debate. Wendt formulates the state as a social being defined by consciousness, collective intentionality and in possession of person-like features.[165] Jessop objects to this position arguing that states are "real", but they do not possess consciousness, because they are not persons.[166] Against the state-as-agent thesis, Wight stresses that states are "institutional structures constructed by human beings."[167] Following Andrew Collier, he names the state as a "structuratum"; that is a structure made up of structured entities, arguing that the state itself is constructed by "many structured organizational entities and institutions" and becomes the "totality of this

despite epistemological relativism. The approach is not a theory, but a meta-theoretical reflection that stresses the primacy of ontology over epistemological and methodological questions. It does not search for trans-historical truths, and its research and insights are historically located. In terms of theorization of the agent-structure problematique, the insights of scientific realism prove crucial; for it objects to positivism's disregard and mystification of the unobservable structures as well as post-positivism's dissolution of the agent into language and discourse. It takes agents and structures for real, yet in constant evolution. For an in-depth discussion of scientific realism, see Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, pp. 23-45; Jonathan Joseph and Colin Wight (eds.), *Scientific Realism and International Relations*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), pp. 1-29.

[164] See Steinmetz George, "Critical Realism and Historical Sociology: A Review Article", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.40, No.1, (January 1998), pp.170-186 for the need for scientific realism to evade both "radical constructivism" and "realist positivism" in historical sociological research.

[165] Alexander Wendt theorized state as a corporate agent, organism endowed with person-like characteristics. In his view, the state is a social being defined by collective intentionality and consciousness that helps state in decision-making and shaping outcomes. However, scientific realist ontology of Wight, Jessop and Koivisto doubts whether emphasis on collective consciousness reduces state to a collectivity or a group. Indeed Wendt also claims to have utilized scientific realism, but the personhood of state is criticized by other scientific realist approaches. For Wendt's analysis see Alexander Wendt, Social *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 193-243, for a critique, see Marjo Koivisto, "State Theory in International Relations: Why realism matters", pp. 78-79.

[166] Jessop's perspective is elaborated in Marjo Koivisto, "State Theory in International Relations: Why realism matters", in Jonathan Joseph and Colin Wight (eds.), *Scientific Realism and International Relations*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), p. 79.

[167] Colin Wight, "They shoot dead horses don't they? Locating agency in the agent-structure problematique", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 5, No.1, 1999, p. 128.

structured ensemble."[168] In this context, agency is not conceptualized merely as "the capacity to do" or what Buzan, Little and Jones argued to be "the faculty or state of acting or exerting power."[169] According to Wight, agency implied subjectivity, intension and responsibility and an agent shall have a status as "an agent of something" and requires "positioning of agents in social context."[170]

This perspective hence makes a distinction between state being the agent itself and the agency of the state accrued to it through the acts and practices of human agents structurally positioned in its ensemble. According to Jessop, "it is not the state which acts: it is always specific sets of politicians and state officials located in specific parts of the state system."[171] Wight concurs that the state rather "facilitates the exercise of power by agents. The powers of the state are only activated through the agency of structurally located political actors located in specific structural conjunctures."[172] As will be elaborated throughout the thesis, these agents work to reproduce the political, economic and ideological order and foreign policy is a significant component of state's agency undertaken by structurally positioned agents. The search for reproduction of domestic order constitutes the very ground for "common and coordinated action" that Wight mentions.[173]

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[168] See Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, pp. 218- 219. The term is originally used by Andrew Collier in his *Scientific Realism and Socialist Thought*, (Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), p. 85.

[169] See Barry Buzan, Richard Little and Charles Jones, *The Logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism*, (New York: Colombia University Press, 1993), p. 103. See the discussion in Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, p. 206.

[170] Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, p. 212.

[171] Bob Jessop, *State Theory: Putting the Capitalist State in Its Place*, p. 367.

[172] Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology*, p. 220.

[173] See Colin Wight, "They shoot dead horses don't they?: Locating agency in the agent-structure problematique", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 5, No.1, 1999, p. 128. Wight advocates that the denial of state-as-agent thesis does not mean that "there can be no common and coordinated action which is a bearer of causal powers greater than that possessed by individuals acting individually." But such a causal power comes out of "the cooperative practices of collectives."

In international politics, the "national-territorial" concept of the state historically became a convenient abstraction which has a real, yet limited explanatory power, as Halliday puts it.[174] The state as a "real-concrete" entity with its complex "structured institutional ensemble" noted above, at the same time holds a persistent discursive power, which reinforces its personification as an agent, as the bearer of nation against the "others."[175] Therefore, it becomes quite difficult to break the "state-as-agent" discourse. Nevertheless, scientific realism challenges the equation between state and personhood and analyzes different agents which activate powers and capacities of the state. It does not, however, deny that state with its distinctive structural features is entitled to "powers, properties and liabilities" and in a very limited sense it possesses "reason of state" and operational procedures.[176] Accordingly, the self-identification of human agents with the state and the political imagination which mobilize social forces around specific state projects help state gain collective agency.[177] But, the bottom line of scientific realist analysis is the awareness of multi-faceted nature of agency and the need to understand this plurality within the structured existence of the state and its varying autonomy from social forces, while examining foreign policy.

One of the arguments of this study is that historical sociology shall be engaged not only with state formation, but also with its "transformation", for the state has never been a completed project and its structuring is shaped by ongoing challenges and struggles. This has been succinctly expressed by Jessop, as he views the state "as an emergent, partial and unstable system that is interdependent with other systems in a complex social

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[174] Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*, p. 45.

[175] The quotations belong to Karl Marx. See Karl Marx, *Capital Vol. III*, (London: Lawrence Wishart, 1966). Colin Wight emphasizes state's discursive power besides its concrete entity, as he talks of state's "dual existence": both in concrete and discursive form. For scholars of postmodernism, the state is a "sign without a referent", it is a discourse. See Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State and Symbolic Exchange*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[176] Colin Wight, Agents, Structures and International Relations, pp. 223-224.

[177] Ibid., pp. 224-225.

order."[178] This emergentist perspective indeed sheds light on the changing constellation of political power, meaning and capabilities of the state in different historical conjunctures; hence reminds us of its historicity. Analyzing the processes of structuring through dynamic and dialectic interplay of the agents and structures is essential for understanding the pace, nature and outcomes of change taking place in state-society complexes. The chapter will now address the process of structuring and conceptualize where foreign policy resides within this process.

As discussed in the three axes of FP articulations, foreign policy analysis remained largely agent-centric, whereas IR theory remained predominantly structural under hegemonic influence of neorealism which viewed agential explanations as reductionism. This study argues that the compartmentalization of explanations along agential and structural lines impedes analysis of change and the processes of co-constitutive structuring, which inevitably shape foreign policy, as it does shape the state and its domestic and international environment.

As Carlsnaes underlines, understanding the process of structuring and change requires a dynamic synthesis of agency and structure.[179] In sociology and IR, it was mainly Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration that has left its imprint on the formulation of the relationship between agency and structure. Giddens underlined the mutual constitution of structure and agency and argued that they posed a duality that cannot be conceived separately from each other. Accordingly, human practices created structures which in turn enabled and constrained their actions.[180] However, his theory was criticized for several reasons.

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[178] Bob Jessop, "Bringing the State Back in (Yet Again): Reviews, Revisions, Rejections, and Redirections", p. 29.

[179] Walter Carlsnaes, "The Agency-Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis", p. 247.

[180] See Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984).

Margaret Archer criticized Giddens for relying on a "non-relational conception of structure", offered *morphogenetic approach* and purported that structure and agency shall be understood *independently* in order to make it possible for scholars to analyze their interrelations.[181] Archer theorized the formation of structures and agency at different time intervals by incorporating "the distinction between synchronic and diachronic structural and agential effects and/or influences."[182] Thus, her approach integrated analysis of time into agent-structure problem and pointed out the time gap between the original formation of structure, as a consequence of social action in the past, interactions later taking place within that structure and the emerging elaborated structure. Archer argues that "Once they [structures] have been elaborated over time, they are held to exert a causal influence upon subsequent interaction."[183] Archer's perspective conceived structuring or structuration "ever a process, not a product."[184] Regarding structural determinacy, in morphogenesis, social interaction is "structurally conditioned", but never "structurally determined", which preserves room for choice and

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[181] See Margaret Archer, *Realist Social Theory: the Morphogenetic Approach*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); "Agent-Structure Interaction", in George Ritzer and Douglas J. Goodman, *Sociological Theory*, (McGraw Hill, 2003), pp. 508-538; Colin Wight, "They shoot the dead horses, don't they?", p. 117.

[182] "Morphogenesis" corresponds to both inner and outer form of a structure as well as a process or developmental aspect of that structure. It refers to what Archer formulates as the "complex interchanges that produce a change in a system's given form, structure of state." Translated to what it means for state and society, Archer argues that society does not have a "pre-set form or preferred state" and "it takes its shape and is formed by agents, originating from the intended and unintended consequences of their activities." See Margaret Archer, *Realist Social Theory: the Morphogenetic Approach*, p. 5 and a comprehensive elaboration of morphogenesis in Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations*, p.70.

[183] Margaret Archer, *Realist Social Theory: the Morphogenetic Approach*, p. 90; Bieler and Morton also elaborate on Archer's morphogenetic approach in detail in "The Gordian Knot of Agency-Structure in International Relations: A Neo-Gramscian Perspective", pp. 8-10.

[184] Margaret Archer (1985: 60) is quoted in Andreas Bieler and David Morton, "The Gordian Knot of Agency-Structure in International Relations: A Neo-Gramscian Perspective", p. 24; Walter Carlsnaes, "The Agency-Structure Problem in Foreign Policy Analysis", p. 259.

agency.[185] Therefore both agents and structures do hold causal influence that needs to be taken into account in analysis.

Another criticism of Giddens' account was related to his conceptualization of structures as "rules and resources."[186] As Doty argued this has imbued his conception with subjectivism.[187] According to Wight writing from a scientific realist standpoint, his perspective granted social structures a stronger ontological status than the "virtual status" of structures in Giddens' account. Quoting Bhaskar, Wight defined structures as "internal and external social relations" and drew on the "concept-dependent; activity dependent and time-space dependent" nature of structures.[188] Walter Carlsnaes on the other hand criticized Giddens for "collapsing action into structure and structure into action" and failure for accounting "structuring over time."[189] He mainly followed Margaret Archer's morphogenetic analysis.

The growing analyses on agent-structure debate hence argued for the indispensability of agents and structures in a social outcome. As Wight contends in one of the most comprehensively articulated piece on agency and structures in IR, both of them must be taken into account, for agents and structures both exist in any social phenomenon. However, as Wight has strongly advocated; the impact of agency or structure on a specific outcome is not determinate or certain beforehand and there is no pre-conceived

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[185] See Andreas Bieler and Morton, "The Gordian Knot of Agency-Structure in International Relations: A Neo-Gramscian Perspective", p. 27. The original quotation belongs to Margaret Archer's *Realist Social Theory: the Morphogenetic Approach*, p.90.

[186] See Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*.

[187] See Roxanne Lynn Doty, "Aporia: A Critical Exploration of the Agent-Structure Problematique in International Relations Theory", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, 1997, p. 371.

[188] See Colin Wight, "They shoot the dead horses, don't they?", p. 117. Wight cites Bhaskar's *The Possibility of Naturalism: a Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences*, (Brighton: Harvester, 1979); and "Beef, Structure and Place: Notes from a Critical Naturalist Perspective", Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior, Vol. 13, No.1, 1983, pp. 82-95.

[189] Walter Carlsnaes, "The Agency and Structure in Foreign Policy Analysis", p. 258.

solution. Their respective impacts can only be assessed empirically; that is *historically*.[190] A resolution of the agency-structure problem demands "a perspective that is able to incorporate agents, structures and their interrelationships into one theoretical account of social activity."[191] Roy Bhaskar in this regard succinctly noted that "no general, transhistorical or purely philosophical resolution of these problems is possible."[192] Therefore historical reflections through events, processes gain enormous significance. In terms of the discipline of international, state's agency despite co-existence with other social forces and international actors retains its centrality to comprehend the processes of structuring. Foreign policy poses a crucial aspect of state's agency and takes part in the co-constitutive processes. The next part of the chapter analyzes the analytical linkages between structuring and foreign policy.

2.4. State Transformation and Foreign Policy as Agency

This chapter has so far articulated on the state as a complex institutional ensemble in possession of material and discursive power and partial autonomy from social forces. It also underlined that the state has been located in a multiscalar environment and shaped through processes emanating from these multiple environments it's situated in. The analysis looked beyond the traditional conception of the state in IR as a geostrategic unit, territorial container or an agent and brought forth deeper investigation of its structural nature and how agency of the state shall be conceptualized in this context. The analysis has emphasized the notion of emergence both for state and its international environment. For the state, emergentist analysis called for highlighting its multiscalar constitution which in essence invalidates the strict inside-outside distinction. The argument on emergence of the state implies that the structural composite of the state is

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[190] Colin Wight, *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology,* p. 256.

[191] Ibid., p. 131. To have a comprehensive sense of social reality, as Wight contends, both must be taken into account for they both exist in any social phenomenon. Furthermore there is not indeed pre-conceived solution to this problem and we need empirical case studies to see the varying roles of agency and structures.

[192] Roy Bhaskar (1983: 87) is quoted in Colin Wight, "They shoot the dead horses, don't they?", p. 115.

never static and ideas, institutions and material capabilities that are argued to be constitutive of structures also keep changing in time at varying degrees and pace as far as the state is concerned.

This last part of the chapter will discuss the analytical relationship between state transformation and foreign policy in the context of placing foreign policy within the change in structures and agency of the state in different historical conjunctures. A historical sociological analysis of foreign policy is inextricably linked to historical sociological analysis of the state which sheds light on the historical constitution of the state and its transformation through domestic and international dynamics. The transformation of state through its institutions, material capabilities and ideology shapes the material and normative context that foreign policy has to respond and operate within. The next section will briefly reflect on possible venues of structuring in the state and their analytical relationship to foreign policy.

2.4.1. Institutions and Crystallizations

One of the most salient indicators of structuring is through institutional change. States adjust and cope with the challenges and opportunities of new conjunctures through institution-building, which also encapsulates institutions that are primarily responsible for the formulation and conduct of foreign policy.[193] Charles Tilly argued that the state itself emerged as a war-making institution in Europe, as his famous dictum declared "the wars made the state and the states made the war."[194] Apparently, in contemporary world marked by globalization, it is not solely wars that demand institutional adaptation of the state. Global capitalism especially after the 1990s has been restructuring states and state-

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[193] In the HSIR literature, Bryan Mabee accounted for institutional structuring in the context of the establishment of National Security Council in the United States under the Truman Administration. See Bryan Mabee, "Historical Institutionalism and Foreign Policy Analysis: The Origins of the National Security Council Revisited."

[194] See Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States AD 990-1992*, pp. 67-95.

society relations alongside spread of global norms and ideas compelling states to come to terms with ideational dimension of the international. Michael Mann's analysis of different crystallizations of state power could be helpful in this regard. Mann's historical analysis has shown that state's existence in a "multi-power universe" results in different crystallizations of state power at the center of these complex networks and brings what he terms the "polymorphous state".[195] Mann does not single out any of them as primary and postulates that states may hold multiple identities.

2.4.2. Political Economy as State Order and Survival under Global Capitalism

The international domain does not merely restructure institutions; its impact over the domestic comprises the political economy of the state by creating new patterns and challenges for the material reproduction of the state, growth and development as well as configuration of social classes that the state resides over. In IR, insights from Wallerstein's world systems theory and the remarkable growth in studies of international political economy (IPE) largely drew on state's embeddedness in global capitalist system and particularly the IPE scholars focused on how capitalist restructuring transformed state-society complexes with the advent of full-fledged globalization. As Cerny argues states now faced a more complex and diffuse power structure in a globalizing world which has brought forth transgovernmental networks, transnational policy communities as well as pressure and interest groups, linked and interpenetrated markets and networks.[196] If we are to look beyond the state as a geopolitical unit, we grasp political economy as a state order through which the state maintains its administrative and coercive existence vis-à-vis social formations and reproduces itself. In this regard, this dissertation argues that ensuring reproduction of the state as a

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[195] See Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power, Vol. 2: The Rise of Classes and Nation States, 1760-1914,* pp. 75-88. These "higher-level crystallizations comprise capitalist, militarist, representative, national, ideological-moral and patriarchal forms of state power.

[196] See Philip G. Cerny, "Bridging the transatlantic divide? Toward a structurational approach to international political economy", in Mark Blyth (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of International Political Economy (IPE): IPE as a global conversation*, (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 145-148.

political economic order[197] is as important as geopolitical "survival" of the state in international system, which indeed introduces a duality to the notion of survival. It is crucial to note that capitalist restructuring takes place in a geopolitical context and geopolitical choices and processes also exert immense constitutive influence over the development of society and political economy of the state and shape the choices and objectives that foreign policy addresses.

2.4.3. Intersubjectivity, State's Discursive Power and Foreign Policy

The state's interaction with the international goes beyond material relations involving military and economic affairs; it also comprises state's existence in an intersubjectively constructed domain of the international as constructivism argues.[198] The ideational interaction has formative impact on the ideas that structure the state, define and legitimize its objectives and policies. Where does foreign policy stand in this interaction is well accounted by Christopher Hill, as he argues that "[foreign policy] is one way in which a society defines itself against the backcloth of the outside world.[199] This observation enables us to see the co-constitutive interaction between state's identity and international norms and values and enable us to reflect on the ideological functions and meaning of foreign policy. It becomes even more evident, if the state, as in the case of post-revolutionary Iran, takes an ideological position built on opposition to norms and principles of global order particularly immediately after the revolution.

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[197] See the discussions in Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, pp. 119-120.

[198] See Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it."

[199] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 5.

2.4.4. Agency, Autonomy and Strategy

This study argues that the constitutive processes could be identified through analysis of change in institutional, material and ideational structures of the state in different epochs, for each epoch is shaped by unique combination of domestic, regional and international contexts. These changes shape the actors, means, objectives and function of foreign policy.

The interaction between the state and international has repercussions for domestic power configuration either among the political elite or different social formations. As stated earlier, autonomy of the state from domestic and international forces is not absolute and as a site for contestation, the boundaries of state autonomy change. The changing boundaries of state autonomy may turn foreign policy into site of contestation just like the state, especially if a particular choice in foreign policy poses risks for political authority and its reproductive capacities which has been the case for the Islamic Republic of Iran vis-à-vis the United States.

Historical-sociological perspective of state looks through the state and recognizes multiple institutional and human agents within the integrity of the state, contrary to the FPA's lack of a theory of a state. This perspective allows theorizing agents whose powers and capabilities change, as the structure of the state changes. In this line of thinking, leaders or elites are viewed through their structured relationship to particular social formations rather than solely individuals or political personalities. Recognition of various agents of foreign policy and their linkages to power schemes in the state helps to identify what Hill dubs the politics of foreign policy, as he defines it as "who gets what out of foreign policy actions and what happens when the values of separate communities collide and what kind of action is possible within the structures of international

politics?"[200] Consequently, foreign policy denotes politicking of different structured relationships within the complex ensemble of the state.

Inside the black box of the state, we see trajectories of institution-building as well as struggles over state power, wealth and ideological hegemony, which directly bear upon state's agency, strategies and "interests." As constructivism has argued, interests of the state are not exogenously given; they are shaped through processes of contestation and negotiation. But this does not simply happen among states; the interests are also negotiated and contested within the boundaries of the state, between political authority and different social and political actors. This in essence testifies that state is an arena for competing political influences. Given the overt and covert linkages between foreign policy and multi-faceted structuring of the state, analysis of foreign policy shall be multi-causal attending not only to the strategic context lying beyond the state but within the state. Political, economic and ideological factors all have roles to play in foreign policy, given their constituent roles within the state, the degree and hierarchy is set by the historical context and the issue in question.

Methodologically, in line with the research tradition of HSIR, this study will adopt a *historical*, *multi-causal*[201], *multi-spatial*, *processual* and *problem-oriented* analysis[202], which places foreign policy within the processes of social and political change that structure state and its relations with its society and the international. It will locate the state in Iran in historical and multiscalar context and reflect on the transformation of state and foreign policy in different epochs framed by important events since the revolution. In each epoch, it will analyze who acts on behalf of the state, namely the

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[200] Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, p. 23.

[201] Abrams calls it "cumulative causation." See Philip Abrams, *Historical Sociology*, p. 314.

[202] C. Wright Mills envisioned in 1959 that HS as classic social theory is mainly about *problem-oriented research* and seeks *examination of substantive issues*; rather than adherence or advocacy of a single method or theoretical position. See C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).

agents of the state; changes in social formations, institutions, material and normative context and the meaning and function of foreign policy.

In its analysis of the state, the research aims to strike a balance between state-based and society-based approaches without ending up either by reification of the state in absolute autonomy from social forces or its dissolution into the society.[203] It does not solely rely on domestic variables or regional/international variables; it looks at the co-constitutive linkages, for the state is carved by confluence of both variables. HSIR as an imagination brings a meta-theoretical perspective for re-thinking the co-constitution of international and the domestic.

HS has been criticized for remaining Euro-centric for much of its existence.[204] In this regard, analysis of Iran brings historical-sociology inspired ontology and methodology into a non-Western context and extends the geographical focus of HS research.[205] It

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[203] Yalman argues that the institutional perspective of the state is underpinned by positivism which entrust it a proper scientific examination by highlighting an observable aspect of the state. Out of these attempts, the state eventually became a subject capable of holding interests and making decisions on its own as an autonomous entity from social relations. But theorizing state as such, as an independent variable, ended up locking the state in a black-box. See Galip L. Yalman, "Devlet", in Gökhan Atılgan and E. Attila Aytekin (eds.), *Siyaset Bilimi: Kavramlar, İdeolojiler, Disiplinler Arası İlişkiler*, (İstanbul: Yordam Kitap, 2012), pp. 69-85.

[204] See Gurminder K. Bhambra, "Talking among Themselves? Weberian and Marxist Historical Sociologies as Dialogues without 'Others'", *Millennium-Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 39, No.3, 2011, pp. 667-681. Bhambra argues that Euro-centrism has been the major defect of both approaches. The author criticizes both approaches for bringing up models that posit a world historical center from which developments diffuses outwards. In the Weberian strand, theories of multiple modernities allow modernity to be culturally heterogeneous and diverse, but it takes European modernity as the model against which other forms are measured. In Marxism the mode of production allows room for uneven global development or contingent association of non-capitalist forms, but it retains an account of the logic of capitalism derived from European experience. He proposes "connected histories" instead. See also John Hobson's critique of Michael Mann's Eurocentrism in John M. Hobson, "Eurocentrism and Neorealism in the "Fall of Mann": Will the Real Mann please stand up?", *Millennium-Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2, 2006, pp. 517-527.

[205] See Kamran Matin, "Uneven and Combined Development in World History: The International Relations of State-Formation in Premodern Iran", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.13, No. 3 (September 2007), pp. 419-447. Matin's work stands as a pioneering work that has examined the process of state formation in pre-capitalist Iran through the perspective of uneven and combined development advocated by political Marxism.

acknowledges that patterns of capitalism and modern state in Iran took shape within a particular social context and created a hybrid structure built on Western notions of state, republic and patrimonial and traditional structuration of power and authority over a vastly educated, literate and young society. This study aspires to grant a perspective that attends to general patterns of modern state and its embeddedness in global capitalist relations mostly because of its oil resources and the encounter of these institutional relations with historical, political and cultural context in Iran without succumbing into exceptionalism. As articulated throughout the chapter, HS and HSIR are built upon different traditions. While "thinking big" as Skocpol termed it, HS and HSIR do not seek grand theories or general laws. Indeed historical variation challenges grand theory, parsimony and unilinear progress scheme of modernization theory. HSIR perspectives rather look for patterning social phenomena by providing a historical and sociological perspective to think over the social origins and historical constitution of the state and as such offers IR a way to connect with social theory, while connecting IR with foreign policy.

2.5. Historical Sociological Analysis of Iran's US policy: An Overture

As outlined in the introduction and based on conceptual standpoints evaluated in this chapter, the rest of the study will apply historical sociological insights and methodology into Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and foreign policy toward the United States. It will focus on changes in the structural ensemble, state-society affairs and state ideology in post-revolutionary Iran and analyze the impact of the international through major events and processes which to a significant extent entail the policies of the United States upon the trajectory of state, society and politics in the aftermath of the revolution. The analysis will be conducted in a continuum of different historical epochs that focuses on specificities of each period for state-society and state-international relations and examines the dynamics of Iran's foreign policy and Iran-US relations within the multi-spatial and multi-causal context of each epoch. In each epoch, the chapters intend to reflect on the sociology of state and politics of foreign policy within the evolving

complexity of the state. Albeit complex, looking through the state and its various interests, identities and struggles brings a multi-causal perspective that HSIR hopes to achieve. The continuum of epochs allows for comparison and analysis of change and continuity and grants a processual perspective. As dealt above, the impact of structuring will be traced in state's institutionalization and political configuration of power, political economy and composition of social classes and ideology of the state. Each chapter then will analyze how change in the structural and ideational composite of the state reflects on its foreign policy which denotes agency of the state performed by its agents structurally posited in its structuratum.

CHAPTER 3

THE RISE OF MODERN IRAN AND IRAN-US RELATIONS BEFORE THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION

3.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to provide the historical background for the rise of modern Iran under the Pahlavi monarchy and evolution of Iran-US relations until the Iranian Revolution in 1979. It aspires to shed light on historical evolution of modern state in Iran in late 19th and 20th century by analyzing the passage from the Qajar rule into the Pahlavi monarchy and assess the patterns of interaction between state-society and state-international particularly during the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah which are argued to have set the stage for Iran's revolutionary transformation and the decisive shift in Iran-American relations. This chapter intends to provide both a historical overview and conceptualize it through the theme of mutual constitution of the domestic and the international. In its analysis of the international, the chapter looks upon the post-World War II context which is marked with the rise of United States, institutionalization of Western economic and security architecture and the Cold War politics and it aims to understand the constitutive linkages between international processes with the domestic transformation of state-society complex in Iran in this particular epoch. It scrutinizes the role of the United States along with broader international developments in the rise of modern Iran and constitution of the modern state by attending to transformation of its institutions and politics, contestations between state and society as well as patterns of development, as the state grapples with forces of geopolitics, global capitalism and domestic challenges. It will place Iran's foreign policy within this multi-scalar and multi-causal environment. This period of Iran's pre-revolutionary politics, development and foreign policy will provide the context to compare and contrast Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and

assess the patterns of rupture in Iran-US relations and Iran's foreign policy toward the United States.

3.2. From the Qajars to the Pahlavi's Iran

The rise of modern state in Iran started with the disintegration of the absolutist rule of the Qajar dynasty (1796-1925) in the second half of the 19th century.[206] During the Qajars, the state was a "nominal" entity lacking a functioning bureaucracy and standing army; as they failed to build viable and stable state institutions to tackle the domestic and international challenges to their fragile rule.[207] The imperial authority barely reached out of Tehran, the capital of the monarchy and centralization proved elusive in the face of a tribal society.[208] Ideologically, the legitimacy of the state as a site of "temporal power" was also contested by the Shiite clergy to whom the state extensively entrusted the bureaucratic functions. Abrahamian notes that the most prominent *mojtaheds* of the time were openly claiming that responsibility to guide the public resided in the religious establishment not the temporal power.[209] The state was in financial crisis which was perpetrated by its inability to extract resources from the society due to lack of state administration. The crisis in turn impeded reform attempts to modernize the army and bureaucracy to ensure the survival of the monarchy.[210]

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[206] See Homa Katouzian, *State and Society in Iran: The Eclipse of the Qajars and Emergence of the Pahlavis*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), pp. 1-25, Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 36-49, Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 8-33.

[207] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 38-39

[208] Ibid., p.40.

[209] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 40-41.

[210] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), p. 9.

Despite material and normative shortcomings of their power, the Qajars were able to govern by manipulation of local notables and politicking which helped them create communal strife and systematically weakened potential allies.[211] The politicking worked well so long as society remained disorganized and faction-ridden which constrained social actors from posing a coherent stance against the imperial authority.[212] Yet manipulation especially in between powerful tribes could not elude the disintegration of the absolutist state, as the disruptive geopolitical context in the middle of Anglo-Russian rivalry, was to have profound repercussions for politics and socio-economic development and hence for state-society relations in Iran.

Given its strategic location as a land bridge between Central Asia and the Middle East, great power interference has been a consistent challenge for Iran's politics and international affairs. From the Napoleonic Wars onwards, Iran became a focal point in geopolitical struggles. In the 19th century, the state faced encroachment by the Tsarist Russia and Great Britain which endangered territorial integrity, independence and imperial prestige of the state. While for Russia, Iran was the largest landmass separating it from the Persian Gulf, for Britain it was the land access and a strategic gate to its precious colony India.[213] In Iran, they saw a neutral buffer state which would prevent northward moves of Britain or Russian expansion toward India. They would eventually agree on dividing Iran into zones of influence with the 1907 Anglo-Russian Agreement through which Russia assumed the control over northern zone, while Britain was entitled to exert control over southern parts of Iran. The discovery of oil in early 1900s would raise Iran's strategic value and complicate its international affairs by creating an appetite for the imperial powers to seek oil concessions from the weakened central government of the Qajars.

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[211] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 33.

[212] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 47.

[213] Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), p.7.

Faced with mounting intrusion of foreign powers, yet devoid of their advanced military might and technology, the Qajars incurred heavy military defeats and could not prevent territorial contraction of the empire. The defeats were exacerbated by the peace treaties of Golestan (1813), Turkmanchai (1828) with Russia and Treaty of Paris (1857) with Britain which engrained the trauma of territorial loss in the Caucasus, confirmed the decline of imperial authority and imposed economic clauses to the detriment of Iran's economy.[214] Similar to the Ottoman experience, the Qajar rulers hoped to rejuvenate the monarchy and compensate military defeats through "defensive modernization"; nonetheless reforming the state was burdensome due to persistent financial crisis.[215]

The state's geopolitical conundrum and its attempts to overcome decline and defeats led to a re-structuring of socio-economic order and thereby state-society relations. The dissolution of Qajar despotism from the mid-19th century onwards was coupled by emergence of new social classes with independent resources of power and wealth in Iranian society.[216] The growth of foreign trade in the first half of the19[th] century has already prospered the merchant class with the consolidation of the Qajar rule and its contribution to commercial expansion and thus economic fortunes of Iranian merchants.[217] However, military defeats and following treaties in the second half of the 19th century left the *bazaar*[218] unprotected and disadvantageous due to state's

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[214] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 51.

[215] For reform and modernization attempts during the Qajar era, see Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 52-58.

[216] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 9.

[217] The geographic location of Iran and active petty commodity production made commerce a well-established economic activity in Iranian history and before geopolitical encirclement of Iran by European imperialism, Iranian merchants engaged in a large scale domestic and international trade linking Iran to India, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, Russia and Turkey. See Mansoor Moaddel, "The Shi'i Political Discourse and Class Mobilization in the Tobacco Movement of 1890-92" in John Foran (ed.), *A Century of Revolution: Social Movements in Iran*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Pres, 1994), p. 5.

[218] Bazaar which constitute the bulk of Iran's traditional middle class comprise merchants, craftsmen, artisans, shopkeepers, retailers, brokers and manufacturers.

concessions to foreign powers to manage the challenge of rising inflation and chronic economic crisis.[219] By the end of the 19th century the domestic markets were dominated by foreign companies; reminiscent of a forthcoming partitioning of Iran into zones of influence; as the Russians controlled the northern markets and the British merchants dominating the south. Without doubt, economic repercussions of geopolitical decline fueled resentment of Iran's mercantile community against the state and Iran's penetration by international capital and led to country-wide protests which constituted the early instances of social movements in Iran's modern history.[220]

The state's financial difficulties resulted in loss of control over its lands as much as over its domestic markets. In order to purchase weapons, the Qajars started to sell land which meant land's transfer from state to the emerging landed class in Iran.[221] Meanwhile the rising impact of the Western liberal thought introduced notions of constitutionalism, democracy, capitalism, socialism and imperialism into the political lexicon and thinking topography of the emerging Iranian intelligentsia (*roshenfikren*).[222] As liberal thought made inroads to Iran, the despotism of the Qajars seemed starker compared to what the intelligentsia realized was happening in the West. The decline in temporal authority also corresponded to the rise of the ulama's power. As Bashiriyeh notes, landed nobility, upper bourgeoisie and high ranking clergy constituted the power bloc of the late Qajar period and formed the backbone of social mobilization against political authority, especially against its disruptive economic policies favoring imperialist forces over domestic forces.[223] The Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 which curbed the arbitrary rule of the Qajars and achieved to establish a parliament (*Majles*) in Iran could

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[219] Ibid., p.7.

[220] For a detailed account of bazaar protests in the 19th century, see Mansoor Moaddel, "The Shi'i Political Discourse and Class Mobilization in the Tobacco Movement of 1890-92", p. 8.

[221] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 9.

[222] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, pp. 35-36.

[223] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 9.

happen with the coalition of intelligentsia, clergy and bazaar.[224] Yet despite its achievements, the Constitutional era would fail to materialize its objectives in the absence of a strong, centralized state to undertake reform and resist foreign encroachment which brought the end of the Constitutional Movement in 1911.[225] Nevertheless the ideals of democracy, freedom and constitutionalism continued to survive in social movements of Iran in the 20th and 21st century.

With the outbreak of the First World War, Iran faced devastation by being turned into theater of war in the midst of international struggles, in spite of its neutrality. After the Bolshevik Revolution, Russia ended the 1907 Anglo-Russian Agreement which prompted Great Britain for making a new agreement with Iran which culminated in the 1919 Anglo-Persian Agreement. If approved, it would have granted the British government complete control of the Iranian army and finances and turned Iran into a de facto colony of Britain.[226] The agreement was signed by Iranian authorities, in return for a bribe of 131,000 pounds sterling; however it was widely opposed by the Majles and social movements in Iran and was never ratified.[227] Iran was saved from the British due to financial weakness of the Empire, as it could not deal with the Soviets, unrest in Iraq, occupying Iran and subsidizing the government and withdrew its forces in 1921.[228]

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[224] See Said Amir Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 34-58, Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 50-101.

[225] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 35.

[226] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 114.

[227] Michael P. Zirinsky, "The Rise of Reza Khan", in John Foran (ed.), *A Century of Revolution: Social Movements in Iran*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), p. 48.

[228] Ibid., p. 53.

3.3. The Pahlavi Era: State, Society and the International

The 20th century has been a *longue durée* for Iran's social history fraught with revolutions, coup d'état with Iran's transformation from an empire into a nation-state and before the end of the century, from monarchy to an "Islamic Republic". It was an epoch of Iran's growing integration into global capitalist relations and international political system; a century of modernization with its advances and setbacks. At the heart of this transformation stands the emergence of the modern state in Iran under the Pahlavi monarchy which rose out of ashes of the Qajar era.

Reza Khan seized political power for Sayyid Zia al-Din Tabataba'i in February 1921 through a military *coup d'état* of the Cossack Brigade he commanded after the British forces withdrew from Iran. He soon sidelined Prime Minister Sayyed Zia and crafted his one-man-rule by consolidating his power. He was aided by a wide base of social support, *albeit* at different times of his power consolidation, comprising Democrats, Socialists, Communists, the intelligentsia, landowners, bazaaris and the 'ulama who perceived him a "savior" able to create a strong and centralized government and resist foreign influence.[229] To save Iran, Reza Shah had to tackle imperial politics, end secessionist movements and modernize the country.

In 1925, he founded the Pahlavi monarchy and declared himself the new "Shah" of Iran. Determined to sustain his rule and transform Iran, Reza Shah embarked on building a modern nation-state upon standing army and bureaucracy, which culminated in a real coercive and extractive apparatus of the state and transformed the nominal presence and capability of state institutions during the Qajar era.[230] Indeed Reza Shah was building a military regime within which the army constituted the hallmark of his dynasty and the

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[229] Michael P. Zirinsky, "The Rise of Reza Khan", pp. 56-69.

[230] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 135-136.

guarantee of his regime's survival against both domestic and international contenders.[231] Abrahamian notes that during 1921, the military totaled no more than 22,000 men, whereas the numbers rose to 40,000 troops by 1925 and reached to 127,000 men in 1941.[232] It was with the help of the expanding army that he was able to put down widespread tribal revolts of Kuchek Khan and the Jangalis in Gilan, Simku in Kurdestan, Khiabani in Tabriz and Sowlat al-Dowleh in Fars and overcome the greatest political obstacle to centralization of power.[233] Pahlavi bureaucracy, which constituted the second central pillar of Reza Shah's state also expanded rapidly during his reign and by 1941 comprised eleven full ministries employing more than 90,000 salaried civil servants.[234] With the re-organization of the Interior Ministry, the state's capability to administer the police, elections, internal administration and military conscription was enhanced which for the first time, in Iran's modern history meant that the state was able to reach out of capital into the provinces.[235] Alongside the modern state institutions, Reza Shah built a vast network of court patronage as the third pillar of his regime which grew into a "wealthy landed-military complex" delivering political and economic fortunes in return for loyalty to his regime.[236]

3.3.1. State-Society Relations during Reza Shah's power: Patterns in transformation

The state with its full-fledged institutions and enhanced outreach transformed its previously "ambiguous and amorphous" relations with the society conducted through

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[231] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 43.

[232] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 67.

[233] Ibid., p. 68.

[234] Ibid., p. 67.

[235] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 137.

[236] Ibid.

different tiers of government.[237] Reza Shah aspired to create a modern nation through his concomitant state-building project with an aim to transform Iran's traditional multi-communal society into a nation-state.[238] He "imagined" a modern nation, "a unified state with one people, one nation, one language, one culture and one political authority" and started building the nation through policies of compulsory conscription and language reform which introduced Persian as the official language over ethnically and linguistically diverse society [239] He sought to rebuild Iran in the image of the West, mostly in his own image of the West, as Abrahamian argues, free of clerical influence, nomadic revolts, ethnic differences and foreign interference.[240]

Deep beneath the making of new society and identity, Iran was transforming from a mainly agrarian-based country into a semi-industrial economy. The Shah wanted to create a modern economy with factories, banks, stores and communication networks.[241] In the absence of capital and national bourgeoisie to undertake capitalist restructuring, the state was the main economic actor to pursue industrial development in the 1930s by encouraging industrialization through raising high tariffs to protect fragile domestic economy, financing modern plants and extending low-interest loans to would-be factory owners through the National Bank.[242] Iran's oil industry which was established under the D'Arcy Concession in 1901 granted to the British and controlled by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company also grew steadily in the 1930s with the number of oil workers rising to

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[237] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, (London: Pearson Education, 2003), p. 36.

[238] In the making of nation-state, state's policies of compulsory conscription and language reform which introduced Persian as the official language over ethnically and linguistically diverse society were decisive for achieving national integration. See Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 148.

[239] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 142.

[240]Ibid., p. 140.

[241] Ibid.

[242] See Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p.147.

31,500.[243] However the growth in revenues and employment was overshadowed by the oil industry's lack of integration to the rest of the industrial sector.[244]

Modernization with industrialization of the economy was changing the class composition of Iranian society. With vast bureaucratization, a modern middle class came into existence, whereas industrialization led to the emergence of a working class and capitalist wage-labor relations. Nevertheless, until the land reform in the 1960s, Iran largely remained as an agricultural country within which pre-capitalist social relations persisted. Reza Shah championed himself as the guardian of the land-owning class and became the richest landowner in Iran.[245] Under those circumstances, he quelled any debate on land reform and Iran's pre-capitalist relations went on to survive together with the emerging capitalist social relations since the 1930s.[246] But he was careful to subordinate the landed class to the military and use land as a means of patronage to reward his clients or withhold benefits.[247]

The state's industrial orientation proved detrimental for the traditional petty bourgeoisie of Iran, the bazaar which had been facing a process of decline since the 19th century due to Western penetration and growing dependency.[248] Reza Shah's modernizing policies and secular outlook disturbed traditional sites of social order and strained his relations with traditional bourgeoisie. Notwithstanding the initial support of the clergy, an intrinsic component of traditional order and an organic ally of the bazaar, the Shah's

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[243] See Hassan Hakimian, "Industrialization: The Reza Shah Period and Its Aftermath 1925-53", *Encyclopedia Iranica*, Vol. XIII, Fasc. 1, pp. 105-110, online available at: http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/industrialization-i (accessed on July 22, 2012).

[244] Ibid.

[245] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 41.

[246] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution,* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p. 16.

[247] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 10.

[248] Ibid., p. 13.

relations with the *ulama* changed for the worse; as he pushed for secularization and rationalization of order through bureaucracy. Modern education, dress codes and secular laws challenged *ulama*'s central position in legal, educational, social and economic affairs.[249] Modern education and state bureaucracy deprived *ulama* much of its previous functions and particularly policies of unveiling of women and the "Pahlavi hat" and bazaari complaints of corruption in high offices and heavy taxes galvanized middle class opposition to the regime in 1935-1936, which was brutally suppressed leaving over one hundred Iranians dead.[250] Meanwhile a modern petty bourgeoisie composed of civil servants, lawyers, judges, teachers, engineers, doctors and clerks emerged with the modernization of economy and society. However, even among the modern classes he created, the Shah was unable to establish a firm class base to ensure social support.[251] He drew much of his power from coercive institutions of the regime, rather than on hegemony built on consent in a Gramscian sense.[252] His repressive methods alienated the intelligentsia who initially perceived him a *savior* of the "nation" from imperial encroachment.[253]

Reza Shah ruled Iran with "iron fist". He was an autocratic modernizer who concentrated political power in his hands and established full control over the parliament which he retained for symbolic purposes. It was him who determined the result of each election, hence the composition of the parliament, banned political parties, trade unions and closed all independent newspapers.[254] Coercion has been an indispensible element of his rule together with co-optation mechanisms established through his above-cited patronage network. Because of tremendous change brought by modernization to social

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[249] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 141.

[250] Ibid., p. 152.

[251] Ibid., p. 149.

[252] Ibid.

[253] See Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 32.

[254] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 138-139.

patterns of relations, modernization has been a contentious project for Iranians as elsewhere; however it would not be inaccurate to argue that it got even more contentious when it was pursued in an autocratic fashion by the Shah.

3.3.2. The Pahlavi State and the International during Reza Shah's Reign

As articulated in the analytical framework of this study, the state cannot be analyzed out of its international context, for the international plays a formative part in crystallization of state's complex ensemble. The geopolitical challenges and emergence of post-WWII liberal order shaped the constitution of modern state in Iran remarkably. The emerging state with its Janus face sought to establish order over society and resist foreign intrusion as well as sustain its survival and independence. As a nationalist, Reza Shah aspired to cleanse Iran from foreign influence and make it a truly independent nation; yet it proved a quite difficult task to achieve, given Iran's dependent capitalism and oil-based economy. He succeeded to abolish the 19th century capitulations given under the Qajars and transferred the right to print money to National Bank of Iran by taking the power away from the British owned Imperial Bank much to the dismay of the British.[255] He even changed the name of the country from Persia to "Iran" in 1935 arguing that Persia was reminiscent of a decadent past associated with the Qajars and new Iran would not be so.[256] But, he could not make a change in the exploitative control of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company over Iran's oil resources. In November 1932, he canceled the original 1901 D'Arcy Concession and demanded a renegotiated agreement that would provide a much fairer share of revenues and rectify the monopolization of oil industry by the British.[257] In the end, he had to concede to a new concession in 1933 which pledged Iran only 16 to 20 percent of its annual profits and demanded Iranian authorities to extend the

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[255] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 143.

[256] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 66.

[257] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 22.

concession for an additional 32 years from 1962 to 1993 and thus preserved the British monopoly over Iranian oil from production to shipment.[258]

Attempting to break Iran free from foreign penetration, Reza Shah's foreign policy sought a convenient namely a context-dependent "third power" to balance Russia and Britain. In the summer of 1921, Iran was asking the United States for loans, technical advice and investment for modernization of Iranian economy in addition or perhaps more in return for an oil concession in northern Iran, given the monopoly of the APOC in the southern oil resources of the country.[259] Negotiations for financial advice resulted in the State Department's recommendation of Dr. A. C. Millspaugh to reorganize the finances and taxation system of Iran, who would assume full control of budget and financial administration of Iran up until his expulsion by the Shah in 1926. Millspaugh's efforts would significantly help Reza Shah in paying his new army without depending on foreign subsidies and hence contribute to the rise and consolidation of his power.[260] More direct political, military and economic involvement of the United States was to await the forthcoming occupation of Iran by the Allied forces and its aftermath with the concomitant decline of the British power in Iran. Reza Shah's "third power" strategy also sought the support of the Nazi Germany against the Anglo-Russian forces which would bring his forced abdication in 1941.

3.4. The Allied Occupation: An Overture for Deepening of Iran-US Relations

Reza Shah's rein came to an abrupt end with Iran's occupation in 1941 by the Soviet, British and American armies to supply the Red Army with much needed logistical

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[258] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 144.

[259] Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, p. 83.

[260] Michael P. Zirinsky, "The Rise of Reza Khan", p. 69. However as Keddie argues Millspaugh's policies basically and not surprisingly aimed to attract American capital to Iran and prevent improvement of Iran's economic relations with Russia in accordance with the 1921 Russian-Iranian Treaty. No agreement over the issues of fisheries in the Caspian and tariffs could be reached in his presence. See Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, p. 84.

support against the Nazi Germany. He was forced to abdicate in favor of his crown prince and leave Iran shortly after the occupation. Under five-year occupation of the allied powers Iran found itself in the middle of another episode of international crisis now directly implicating its own territory. The occupation, departure of the Reza Shah and vulnerability of the crown prince resulted in the weakening of central authority and temporary suspension of Iran's sovereignty. With the abdication of Reza Shah started an interregnum in autocracy which has seen an unprecedented level of political pluralism and activism in domestic politics with the weakening of central authority vis-à-vis the society it suppressed during Reza Shah. In the meantime, the occupation also established future patterns of interaction between the emerging superpower, the United States and Iran. It was during the Allied Occupation and subsequent breakout of the Cold War on Azerbaijani Crisis in 1946 that a remarkable growth of the US influence over Iranian politics became obvious.

The occupation years marked the start of greater involvement of the US in Iranian and regional politics as its growing economic interests made its presence in this strategic, oil-rich geography imperative.[261] Previously distant and detached, the occupation brought physical presence and a reconsideration of US policy options in Iran. Before then, Iran was not considered central to the US national interests and according to Fawcett the US approach vis-à-vis Iran settled only gradually from an initially undecided position to a greater commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran particularly in the Azerbaijani Crisis of 1946.[262]

Indeed as early as 1940, a commission of American experts reported to then-US President Roosevelt about the shifting center of gravity of the world's petroleum output to the Persian Gulf and hence increasing significance of Iran for the US interests in the

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[261] Louise L'estrange Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 109.

[262] Ibid., pp. 108-140.

region.[263] It was with this growing recognition that the State Department resumed trade relations for political expediency and safeguarding of the interests of US oil companies in Iran. US bolstered its military mission, dispatched additional military experts and advisors to the Iranian government and upon the request of the Iranian government in 1943 sent a financial mission headed by Arthur C. Millspaugh to reorganize the Iranian financial system.[264] In 1944, the US raised its legation in Tehran to embassy status.

In pursuit of its vital economic interests in Iran, however, the US found powerful contenders in Great Britain and Soviet Russia. In the beginning of the occupation years, what concerned the US was its competition with Britain for Iranian oil which was reportedly fierce because of Britain's rather arrogant belief in its superior understanding of Middle Eastern affairs.[265] In 1944, US interests also clashed with those of the Soviet Union over oil shares, when two US companies, Standard Vacuum and Sinclair, sought to negotiate an oil concession from the Iranian authorities without informing the USSR and Britain beforehand. Moscow's reaction was demand of an oil concession for itself in the northern provinces of Iran under its occupation, which was according to Saikal, a prelude to oil crisis of the 1950s and could only be solved by Prime Minister Saeed's denouncement of oil concessions to any of the parties and postponement of talks until the end of the war.[266]

For the Persian Gulf, an increasing number of US officials came to conclusion that if Iran fell to communism, all Western economic and political interests in the region would become vulnerable to Soviet penetration.[267] By 1946, as the Soviet Union failed to fulfill

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[263] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 30.

[264] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[265] Louise L'estrange Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946*, pp. 113-115.

[266] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 33.

[267] Ibid. Fawcett argues that it was after the Moscow Conference at the end of 1945 that the anti-USSR attitude of the US became apparent and its position started to crystallize, marking a shift from its previous positions in Yalta and Potsdam Conferences closing with failure of Britain and Iran in convincing the US

its obligations under the Tri-Partite Agreement regarding the withdrawal of its troops from Iran President Truman declared that "Russian activities in threatened the peace of the world. If the Russians were to control Iran's oil directly and indirectly, the raw material balance of the world would undergo a serious loss for the economy of the Western world." [268]

The Soviet occupation of Azerbaijan thus turned into an international crisis and marked the first major crisis of the Cold War. The US was fully committed to restoring Iran's territorial integrity and denying Soviet Union any oil concession in the northern Iran. Great Britain, devoid of its once powerful status in Iran had to follow the US lead to secure its oil interests.[269] Suspicious of new Prime Minister Qavam's appeasement policies of the USSR, the US was building its strategy on alignment with the Shah to manage the 1946 crisis. Already by 1944, the US ambassador to Iran, Leland Morris was writing of his "good impression" of the Shah and suggesting the US Administration "strengthening of his hand" which would be "one of the roads out of the internal political dilemma that the country finds itself."[270] The US hence had found a reliable yet politically fragile partner sitting at the Peacock Throne and sharing its anti-Soviet sentiment compared to rather dubious orientation of the Prime Minister Qavam. The crisis was to herald an enduring alliance between the monarch and the US which would restructure state, politics, state-society relations besides Iran's international orientation and foreign policy.

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to take a tougher stance against the USSR. See Louise Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946,* p. 124.

[268] Henry Truman, *Memoirs, Vol. 2, Years of Trial and Hope 1946-52*, pp. 94-95, quoted in Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 33.

[269] See Louise Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946,* p. 129.

[270] Ibid. p.130.

3.4.1. The State and the "International" during the Occupation Years

In the heady days of occupation and proliferation of states seeking control of Iran's resources and territory, Iran was struggling to maintain its territorial integrity and sovereignty. During the Allied Occupation, there was a favorable attitude towards the Americans, as it was mainly the British and to a lesser degree the Russians that were held responsible for the mischief and ills of Iran.[271] The presence of the US and its interest in boosting the Shah's position provided the monarch a breath of life to survive and consolidate his power. Indeed, throughout the occupation years and the Azerbaijani crisis, the US was careful not to give the Iranians the impression that it had a quite similar stake in Iran likewise Britain and Russia; but its enhanced support of the Shah led to a loss of its disinterested image and prestige resulting in bitter criticism of the Leftist and nationalist politicians as active participants of interregnum politics.[272]

Even after the peaceful resolution of the Azerbaijani crisis with the withdrawal of Soviet troops adhering to the Iran-Soviet Agreement signed under the premiership of Qavam, Iranian politicians continued to favor US involvement to balance the much alive threat of the USSR, due to the existence of autonomous regimes in Azerbaijan Kurdestan and rising political influence of the Communist Tudeh Party. They viewed US military mission vital for tackling ongoing internal security threats among which integrating Azerbaijan regime back into the orbit of Tehran proved urgent.[273] The US in line with its global agenda stepped up its aid to Tehran through military and police advisory missions for re-organizing and equipping its security and military forces.[274] By empowering the army, it had supported the Shah's major social power base prior to consolidation of his

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[271] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Roots of Mistrust*, p. 24.

[272] See Louise L'estrange Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 129 and p. 133.

[273] Louise L'estrange Fawcett, *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946*, p. 132.

[274] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 35.

political control in the mid-1950s. Hence by 1946, a pattern of interdependence between the US and Shah was already formed. As we would see in the broader analysis of Iran's politics and international relations during the Cold War, US alliance with the Shah-military complex possessed an enduring appeal for its policy toward Iran.

3.4.2. The State and Society during the Occupation Years

To protect Western interests and survive, the Shah needed to improve his fragile political position in the face of ethnic unrest and political opposition to his throne. Reza Shah's educational reforms and bureaucratization were yielding its results in the 1940s culminating in a more articulate and multi-class society.[275] He had to tackle the mounting challenge of mass politics mobilized by secular ideologies of nationalism and socialism through political activism of the Communist *Tudeh* Party and the National Front (*Jabha-ye Milli*) but mostly of the first in the early 1940s. The Tudeh was the most organized challenge to the Shah's fragile rule with its outreach to rural parts of Iran and attempts to mobilize peasants and Iran's rising working class. Politicizing the rural meant transcending the urban centers as traditional sites of politics and integrating traditional segments of the society and their demands to the heart of political struggle which urged other political parties to follow the *Tudeh*'s footsteps.[276] In the face of rapid disintegration of the armed forces, the legitimacy of the monarchy and the army were seriously contested as different political groups blamed the state for apparent failure vis-à-vis the foreign powers [277] Among these groups, young socialists were at the forefront of the attacks on the army and monarchy which they deemed a traditional, outmoded and repressive institution.[278] In the weakness of central authority and freed from military control and patronage of Reza Shah, the landed class also re-gained its power and started

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[275] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After,* p. 77.

[276] See Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, pp. 78-81.

[277] Ibid., pp. 75-124.

[278] Ibid.

to dominate the parliament. Middle classes, despite their growing numbers were poorly represented in the Majles and did not have much weight in the cabinets.[279]

Foreign occupation stirred nationalism further by bringing society for the first time to such an intensive encounter with Westerners and Western culture in daily life. [280] Notwithstanding the formal assurances against any impingement on Iran's sovereignty, in real terms the resources of the country were exploited and put to the service of the Allied Powers at the expense of the needs of the population and their impact on the local economy.[281] Economic dislocation and rising inflation further fueled nationalist feelings as the society perceived foreign presence "contamination" of traditional Iranian values.[282]

The Shah was aware of his father's unpopular legacy and growing attacks on the institution of the monarchy. In this regard, he refrained from associating himself with the land-owning class and sought to "re-invent" himself as an aspirant of social reforms to get the support of the radical intelligentsia.[283] However he retained his organic bonds to the army which was demoralized by the occupation. It was through his command over army that he was able to portray his persona indispensible for any US strategy for Iran and strengthen his position domestically.[284] He would find his political fortunes turned

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[279] For composition, divisions and the content of the debates of the Majles in the interregnum years, see Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 170-172.

[280] Ansari underlines the importance of this previously under-appreciated social dimension of occupation. He asserts that up until the occupation, the "international" was to a great extent experienced by those who traveled abroad and mainly by the state elites through their contacts with the embassies and foreign institutions operating within Iran among which the AIOC held a salient place. See Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 98.

[281] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran: The Failure of American Foreign Policy and the Roots of Mistrust*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2006), p. 23.

[282] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 99.

[283] Ibid., p. 101.

[284] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 84.

with the army's successful crush of the secessionist movements in Azerbaijan and Mahabad after the withdrawal of Soviet forces. The regime's victory against secessionism would bolster the legitimacy and morale of the monarchy exalting it into a symbol of unity and independence of the country.[285] Nevertheless as the decade of the 1940s was closing, with hindsight it can be argued that the Shah was only at the very beginning of his plans to centralize power and establish his control over state and society. To do so he had to rebuild his support base among social classes, control vibrant mass political activism and stabilize and modernize Iran by taking over where his father left. Seemingly his political career was very much tied to the US global policy of containment of communism and support for anti-communist proxies in the Third World in the face of the massive leftist challenge at home. In the 1950s, a brand new episode for Iran-US relations was to unfold with the Oil Nationalization crisis and vigorous US involvement in pursuit of its capitalist and strategic interests in Iran. But the pattern of using the "international" as a source of social power and legitimacy vis-à-vis the restless society was already taking shape in the 1940s, only to be deepened in the coming decade of Iranian politics.

Iran's foreign policy was a culmination of response to the geopolitical challenges on the one hand and domestic political and social struggles on the other. It carried the tensions of Iran's transformation into a modern nation state under the initially fragile authority of the Shah and accompanying international context of the emerging Cold War. The survival of the monarchy depended on the development of the country, and the resources and protection for development laid in the "international". The foreign policy of the Shah first and foremost aimed at his own survival and later the interests of the state personified in his monarchy, once his regime consolidated. As the study will purport in the next section, Iran's foreign policy was an exemplar of state's response to integration into global capitalist and political relations and its disruptive impact on state-society relations. The state with its Janus face had to manage change both in its

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[285] See Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 35.

regional/international environment and its domestic realm to preserve its order and legitimacy.

3.5. The 1950s: State-Building and Foreign Policy amidst Autocracy, Modernization and the Cold War

Iran was at the center stage of emerging Cold War politics in the 1940s, as the United States and the Soviet Union, the two rival socio-economic systems, started their geopolitical struggle for influence. With the advent of the Cold War, the strategic context of Iran's international affairs was shifting from coping with the challenges of Anglo-Russian entanglement into Iran's pro-US alignment against its powerful communist neighbor in the north. Iran's pro-Western choice also revealed its aspiration to pursue capitalist development and further integration into the global capitalist relations. The 1950s would be a decade of Iran's incorporation into Western military and economic schemes particularly through its deepening relationship with the United States which played a decisive role in the empowerment of the Shah vis-à-vis his political contenders and deep-lying socio economic challenges. Iran-US relations and Iran's foreign policy toward the US thus shall be read through mutually constitutive interplay of the international; that is the territorial organization of global capitalist relations, and socio-economic and political development. In this interplay, the state resides as an "arena" within the "vortex of the international and national."[286] Understanding the interplay of the domestic and the international and assessing state's foreign policy as a response is possible thorough a grasp of *sociology of the state* which in Iran's case reveals a significant role and influence of the US in the making of the Pahlavi state and shaping of its state-society relations.

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[286] John M. Hobson, *The State and International Relations*, p. 230.

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3.5.1. The Pahlavi State in the Beginning of the 1950s

The institutions of the early Pahlavi state were created in the 1920s to cope with the challenge of disintegration in the face of Anglo-Russian struggle to partition Iran entangled with secessionist rebellions in the northern and southern parts of the country. In this regard, armed forces and militarism were seen as panacea to keep Iran independent and territorially intact. However society was suffering from capitalist disruption of economy and traditional social relations through Iran's integration into "periphery" in the second half of the 19th century and following semi-industrialization in the 1930s. Increasing penetration of Western capital and military presence was a grave source of tension between the state and society. Given socio-economically and politically precarious situation of the state, in the late 1940s, the US provided Iran with economic assistance through Point IV Economic Aid Programme in 1949 and arms under the Mutual Defense Aid Programme in 1950.[287] This was before the oil nationalization crisis in 1951-1953 whose "resolution" through a foreign orchestrated coup d'état in 1953 would start a new episode for Iran-US relations marked by consolidation of the state and constitutive role of the US aid and assistance in crystallization of a particular constellation of social forces under the Shah's authority.

3.5.2. The Oil Nationalization Crisis: "Enter America"

In the atmosphere of growing nationalism and political consciousness of the 1940s and early 1950s, the oil issue, that is control and management of oil resources by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) was a contentious matter. There was a bitter sense of inequality and injustice, as the revenues accrued to the Iranian state as the owner of the resources lagged behind the revenues enjoyed by the British government. According to BP figures, the British government earned an estimated £ 194,100,000 between 1932 and 1950, whereas the Iranian government received almost half of the British revenues

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[287] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 35.

an estimated £ 100,500,000 over the same period.[288] Within the society, the reportedly patronizing attitude of the AIOC personnel towards Iranians and its colonial lifestyle were a source of increasing resentment.[289] Nationalization of oil was already raised by the Tudeh in the early 1940s, and in the start of the new decade it was the National Front under the leadership of Dr. Muhammad Mosaddeq which transformed the struggle for nationalization of oil into a broad-based popular movement and an iconic moment for Iranian nationalism. Mosaddeq's inclusive mobilization of the masses stood in stark contrast to the elitist character of the Shah's dynastic nationalism and made him a more perilous political contender especially coupled with his political view on the curbing of the Shah's arbitrary powers through strengthening of the parliament. [290]

The rising tide of nationalism for oil nationalization was apparently threatening for the vested economic interests of Britain in Iran which was still recovering from the war and loss of its imperial sovereignty in India and struggling with postwar economic hardships.[291] It detested the idea of losing its monopoly of Iranian oil. Yet much against its protestations, the Majles and later the Senate approved the law of nationalization of oil industry on 28 April 1951 which was instantly ratified by the Shah who could not have challenged Mosaddeq on such a sensitive national issue to the detriment of his legitimacy.

The nationalization prompted the British to take the issue to the United Nations and International Court of Justice, practice "gunboat diplomacy" to put military pressure on Iran and withdraw its assets, advisors besides freezing Iran's conversion privileges of

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[288] Ferrier (1988:171) is quoted in Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921:The Pahlavis and After*, p. 110.

[289] Ibid., p. 108.

[290] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 107. For more on Mosaddeq's political views and career, see Homa Katouzian, *Mosaddiq and the Struggle for Power in Iran,* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1990).

[291] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 40.

deposits in the Bank of England.[292] In the course of the crisis, Britain succeeded to convince the Americans under Eisenhower Administration of the need for a more pro-active policy for "saving Iran for the free world" in the face of the rising "communist threat" inside Iran, besides convincing the Shah that continuation of the crisis would lead to a collapse of his rule.[293] The British measures resulted in an economic blockade of Iran bringing Iranian oil industry to a virtual standstill,[294] exacerbating the economic crisis and chances of much needed socio-economic reforms pledged by Mosaddeq.[295] Moreover Mosaddeq's hardening tone gradually alienated his supporters. Managing a diverse coalition in the midst of rising costs of his campaign proved elusive. His closer alliance with the Tudeh members disturbed his religious supporters among which Ayatollah Kashani and his *Mojaheden-e Islam* Party was decisive in bringing religious and traditional constituency to the ranks of oil nationalization struggle.

By 19 August 1953 (28 *Mordad* 1332) Mosaddeq's government was toppled with a military coup managed by collaboration of CIA and MI6. "The Operation Ajax" could not be realized solely by foreign machinations if they were not aided by domestic collaborators eager to see Mosaddeq gone. The Shah was obviously one of them and even though he refrained from publicly confronting Mosaddeq and dismissing him through his constitutional prerogatives, he sanctioned his ouster primarily managed by CIA and MI6 operation.[296] Ansari argues that for Mosaddeq had not lost his support base

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[292] Ibid., p. 41.

[293] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 123. For a comprehensive and acclaimed account of the 1953 coup, see Stephen Kinzer, *All the Shah's men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*, (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc. 2003).

[294] Iran's oil production dropped from 241.4 million barrels in 1950 to 10.6 million barrels in 1952.

[295] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 41.

[296] Even the *ferman* that the Shah needed to sign was prepared by the CIA. See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 35.

especially among the *'ulama*, no amount of foreign interference could have unseated him.[297]

The crisis was a striking historical moment within which the domestic and the international got entangled. During Dr. Mosaddeq's premiership, the oil nationalization issue was central to Iran's *foreign* policy as much as it was for domestic politics and power struggles. It cut across the domestic/international divide; entailing on the one hand Iran's quest for independence and complete control over its resources, fostered by rising nationalism, and on the other hand the vested interests of the Western powers. Mosaddeq was capable of fomenting strong political and mass support for nationalization, yet incapable of securing US support for his struggle against the AIOC and keeping his diverse coalition intact. The structural context of capitalist relations and strategic context of the Cold War were very much against Mosaddeq's struggle and so did turn the domestic context eventually. The "domestic" has challenged the international but the international resisted and responded with a direct involvement to restore the *status quo ante*.

With the *coup* we can discern the formative impact of the international on domestic politics, which started a new era for dependent pathway of Iran's domestic development upon the political, military and economic support of the United States. It is in this historical context that the next section will articulate the transformation of state, state-society complex and foreign policy of Iran.

3.5.3. State-building after 1953: Autocracy and Cold War politics

After the coup, a period of consolidation for monarchical power started alongside the consolidation of Iran-US relations. The coup was to have a decisive impact in shaping the path of political (underdevelopment) and economic development and international

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[297] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 124.

affairs of Iran. The remarkable rise of US involvement in Iran was one of the most obvious determinants of Iran's transforming political economy and foreign policy. The "international" was a significant component of change in the polity, in the words of Fred Halliday, the "context" and "catalyst" of change; as it shaped the institutions, ideology and economic base of the state, domestic configuration and balance of power between different political and economic actors; that said, state-society relations.[298] The "international" itself was being re-defined with the construction of post-war economic and political order under US auspices and in the shadow of the Cold War. In this context, the "US" in Iran-US relations was more than a state *per se*, but embodiment and symbol of the emerging post-WWII capitalist order. Iran-US relations hence entailed more than a bilateral relationship; as it comprised a much broader scope for Iran's integration into emerging geopolitical, economic and ideological order.

The impact of the "international" on the formation of domestic patterns of *power*, *wealth* and *norms* varied in different epochs of the Cold War depending on the conjuncture of global struggle swinging between confrontation and détente and the context of domestic struggles in the state. The state in Iran, as elsewhere has never been a completed project; it has always been dynamic, open to change through different agents seeking to seize state power to survive. Immediately after the 1953 coup, the state looked even more like an *arena* as Michael Mann puts it, whereby the Shah, saved from Mosaddeq's political presence had to compete with remaining influential political groups to consolidate his power and build up his hegemony. In this regard, materializing the pending reforms for the modernization of the country was of utmost significance.

3.5.3.1. The Pahlavi State and the United States in the Post-1953 Era

The evolution of state and state-society relations in the post-1953 era can not be analyzed without acknowledging the *constitutive* impact of the United States in politics, economy and political culture of Iran. Thus any analysis of the Iranian state after 1953

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[298] See Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations.*

shall focus on Iran-US relations with lasting impact not only on the sociology of the state, but also on broader international affairs of Iran.

Apparently the Cold War context was decisive in shaping the US policy toward Iran which viewed it as a buffer state as well as a reliable and stable ally to secure the interests of the "free world" against the communist threat. Yet as Panah argues integration of Iran into world capitalist relations was as important as its integration into military and security system of the West.[299] The US involved in Iran for securing Western markets and capitalism as much as denying the Soviet Union the control of this strategic geography endowed with vast oil and gas resources.[300] The 1950s was an epoch of constitution of Iran's global dependencies, both strategically and economically on the post-war Western world. In the post-1953 epoch, the US was seeking to enhance its long-term involvement in Iran through oil industry, economy, the armed forces and social reform.[301] The Shah on the other hand was seeking to rebuild his power through strengthening the coercive and administrative capacities of the state and developing its economy. In the aftermath of the oil nationalization crisis, the government was on the verge of bankruptcy and the Shah understood that the only way out of the dire straits was clinging on Iran's growing relations with the United States.

In the aftermath of the coup, the immediate challenge for the Iranian government under General Zahedi was reintegrating Iranian oil into a world system that was producing enough without Iran due to the AIOC's control over most of the fields in Kuwait and Iraq.[302] At the end of the negotiations with Western oil companies, in 1954 a new oil agreement was signed brought a 50 to 50 profit sharing agreement with the new oil

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[299] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 19.

[300] Ibid.

[301] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 48.

[302] Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, p. 136.

consortium. The monopoly of the former AIOC, now the British Petroleum was over which was according to the new agreement was entitled to a share of 40 per cent, while the rest 60 per cent would be shared by American and European oil companies.[303] The post-1953 era yielded its immediate results with the termination of British commercial dominance in Iran, likewise its strategic position; as it was replaced by the United States.[304] As Saikal puts it, the new oil agreement enabled the US for the first time to secure a key position in the leading economic sector of Iran which would bear significantly on the future course of economic development and political change of the country.[305] Through increasing centrality and high stakes of the US companies in the oil consortium, from then onwards, any event with direct or indirect effect on oil production and sale would concern the US.[306]

The 1954 Agreement was a setback for the oil nationalization movement by terminating oil nationalization law. But the Pahlavi state started benefiting from the new deal which increased oil revenues accruing to the state with due increase in Iran's share of royalties and profit. From 1954 onwards, the revenues grew steadily rising from $ 22.5 million in 1954, to $ 92.5 million in 1955 and totaling to $ 285 million in 1960.[307] The rising oil income of the state would constitute the backbone of its political economy and social development as the Shah would allot the money for his modernization programme as

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[303] The Iranian Oil Participants Ltd., commonly known as the Consortium and their shares of Iranian oil were as follows: British Petroleum (UK) 40 %, Royal Dutch Shell 14 %, Exxon (US) 7 %, Texaco (US) 7 %, Mobil (US) 7 %, Standard of California (US) 7 %, Gulf (US) 6 %, C.F.P (French) 6 %, Iricon Group of Companies (US) 5 %. See Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Nov., 1980), p. 316.

[304] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 130.

[305] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 49.

[306] Ibid.

[307] Ibid., p. 50.

well as channel it to his loyal clique through his patronage network imbued by a brand of corporatism and clientelism.[308]

Iran's rising oil industry started to reward the Western states by offering Westerners further opportunities of employment and investment besides what Fatemi dubs as "intangible" benefits from the Shah regime through secure supply of oil, moderating behavior in OPEC and willingness to sell oil to Israel and South Africa.[309] The employment and investment opportunities would rise in parallel to the quadrupling of oil prices in 1973 reaching to an estimated 1000 American personnel employed in oil industry-one third of the total foreign employment- and $ 457 million of total investment of American oil companies in the oil sector at the time of the revolutionary turmoil.[310] In the 1950s, Iran's rising oil revenues were still not sufficient to finance the pending socio-economic modernization of the country. It could allocate only 55 per cent of its oil revenues to development projects and it fell short of covering the Shah's ambitious yet mostly inefficient development projects.[311] Hence Iran became a major recipient of American aid and loans to undertake social reforms and build institutions and infrastructure of the state. According to Saikal, during 1953-1957, a total of $ 366.8 million reached Iran's budget through USAID and Export-Import Bank, $ 116.2 million of which was in loans and remaining $ 250.6 million was in grant-in-aid.[312] A large body of US officials, advisors, technical experts and employees of aid agencies and private investors accompanied the aid comprising more than nine hundred American experts in the early 1960s.[313] These agencies and advisors played significant roles especially in

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[308] On the theme of class support and control of the Shah regime, see Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 43.

[309] Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", p. 307.

[310] Ibid., p. 308.

[311] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 421.

[312] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 51.

[313] Ibid., p. 52.

stimulating the banking system in Iran through creation of the Industrial and Mining Development Bank in 1959 and ingraining of foreign direct investment in Iran, assuring that key economic projects went to American firms.[314] As Fatemi contends, the banking system revealed interdependence of both economies and the logistical dependence of Iran on the United States and served to facilitate the overall involvement of the US in Iran [315]

3.5.3.2. The Role of Military in Politics

In the beginning of the 1950s, the Shah was still politically weak and lacked his father's control over state and society. Immediately after Mosaddeq's overthrow, the new government received $ 45 million emergency loan from the United States which aimed to prevent government bankruptcy, bolster morale among royalists and inject confidence into the business community [316] As noted above, in the consolidation of the Shah's power base, strengthening of the army was of utmost importance and the US acted accordingly. Between 1953 and 1963 Iran received $ 535.4 million American military grant-in-aid under Mutual Security Act which enabled the Shah to extend his army from 120.000 men to 200.000.[317] The military budget rose from $ 80 million in 1953 to almost $183 million in 1963, subsidized also by the rise of oil revenues.[318] Meanwhile the number of US military personnel in Iran exceeded 10,000 and military groups started to entrench their operations in the country through different branches of ARMISH

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[314] Ibid.

[315] Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", p. 310.

[316] Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, p. 136; Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 419.

[317] See Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, p. 20 and Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 54. Iran in this era received the largest military grant that the US offered to a non-NATO country.

[318] Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, p. 20.

(United States Military Mission with the Imperial Iranian Army), MAAG (the Military Assistance Advisory Group), GENMISH (the US Military Mission with Imperial Iranian Gendarmerie).[319] The growth of army restored the coercive power of the monarchy and helped control and centralization of the Pahlavi state.

The state's increasing control of the society was ensured with the establishment of Iran's notorious secret service SAVAK (*Sazeman-e Ettela'at va Amniyat-e Keshvar*) in 1957.[320] As elsewhere, the US played a decisive role in the shaping of the organization. Together with the Israeli secret service MOSSAD, it assisted SAVAK in training of its staff and its intelligence and surveillance activities.[321] The organization would turn out to be the main instrument of regime repression particularly in the 1960s and '70s at the heyday of social and economic transformation of Iran and grassroots reactions to change.[322] SAVAK would mainly hunt down Iran's organized secular opposition, targeting the Tudeh members conceived by the US as a political tool of Soviet infiltration in Iran besides members of the National Front for their "perilous" anti-

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[319] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 54. The United States Army Mission Headquarters (ARMISH) was established in 1947 to provide the Ministry of War and the Iranian army with advisory and technical assistance for enhanced efficiency. With the agreement, Iranian officers started to get training in the United States. The US initiated its military assistance grant program to Iran in 1950 and established a Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) to administer the program. In 1962 the two missions were consolidated into a single military organization, ARMISH-MAAG, which remained active in Iran until the Islamic revolutionary regime came to power in 1979. For further details, see "Iran: Foreign Influences in Weapons, Training and Support Systems", online available at http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-6526.html (accessed on July 21, 2012).

[320] SAVAK was the main instrument of state's repressive methods against the opposition. Keddie argues that one part of the SAVAK was involved in jailings, beatings and tortures which became much rampant in 1960s and 1970s, whereas the organization also had educated operatives in "coats and ties" who persuaded people of the dangers of speaking or acting against the Shah regime. However SAVAK was not alone, Shah established other intelligent services including the Imperial Inspectorate and J2 Bureau partly to check SAVAK. See Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 134 and Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 436-437.

[321] See Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, p. 20.

[322] For a very vivid memoir of Shah's political repression and its residues on art and poetry, see Hamid Dabashi, *Iran: A People Interrupted*, (New York: The New Press, 2007), pp.105-136.

imperialist credentials which endangered the smooth continuity and security of global capitalist accumulation.[323]

After 1953 the interregnum was over and with the burgeoning autocracy, political underdevelopment was back anew.[324] In 1954 the Majles was opened but far from the political activism and debates of the interval years, it started to function as a nominal institution controlled by the Shah. The martial law was lifted in 1957 and political life was organized into a two-party political system same year under the *Hezb-e Melliyun* (Nationalist Party) and *Hezb-e Mardom* (People's Party) which were subordinates to the Shah and were mainly known as "yes" and the "yes, sir or "yes, of course" parties.[325] In line with the Shah's desire to control and manage politics, no political activities were allowed out of these two parties.[326]

3.5.3.3. Iran's Foreign Policy in the 1950s

Iran's *foreign policy* in the 1950s shall be understood within this backdrop of domestic and international survival. The Shah needed a strong state to rein supreme over his political rivals and society, whereas a strong state in Iran also mattered to cope with the challenges emanating from Soviet Russia. Foreign policy was a response to shifting conjunctures shaped by domestic, regional and international environment.

Iran after 1953 became intrinsically linked to the United States. As the regime domestically throve on US military and financial support, internationally its behavior also became more congruent with the grand strategic vision of the US in the Cold

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[323]See Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*.

[324] Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, p. 20.

[325] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 130.

[326] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 63.

War.[327] In the 1950s, the Shah aspired to improve his political position through his foreign policy choices.[328] Accordingly Iran's foreign policy in the 1950s was marked by important strategic decisions. The Shah took Iran into the Baghdad Pact in 1955 and adopted a pro-US reaction to the Suez Crisis to show his commitment to the United States.[329] Iran's decision to enter the Pact was particularly important for confirming Iran's place as an associate of Western system fighting against spread of communism.[330] The decision marked a shift away from Iran's traditional diplomacy of neutrality to alignment. Historically Iran refrained from alignment with great powers, either with its northern neighbor Russia or Britain and always chose to balance against their demands through a policy of equilibrium.[331] During the Mosaddeq era, Iran's foreign policy was based on a reformulation of the notion of equilibrium as he adopted "negative equilibrium policy" (*siyasat-e movazenehe manfi*) by denying privileges to the contending powers and effectively refusing to favor one over the other.[332]

The 1950s in this regard brought a new discourse and strategy to Iran's international affairs, which was increasingly dominated by the Shah's reading of international affairs. He criticized the ousted Prime Minister for pursuing "negative self-destructive

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[327] For authoritative sources on Iran-US relations during the Cold War era, see Richard W. Cottam, *Iran and the United States: A Cold War Case Study*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988), Mark Gasiorowski, *US Foreign Policy and the Shah: Building a Client State*, (Cornell University Press, 1991).

[328] See Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *Foreign Relations of Iran: Developing State in a Zone of Conflict*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 89-90.

[329] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, (London: Routledge, 1995), p.128.

[330] Ibid.

[331] Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, p. 23.

[332] Ibid. Mosaddeq rejected any foreign borrowing that would keep the country vulnerable for political demands in return. He wanted to maintain Iran's neutrality in international politics which, as Hunter argues, was rather an untenable and elusive aspiration given Iran's lack of sufficient economic and military strength coupled with restraints posed by the emerging Cold War bipolarity. Such a position was further compounded by the physical proximity of Soviet Union which compelled Iran to frequent engagement with northern superpower neighbor to avoid antagonizing it. Yet within the society the theme of resistance and independent foreign policy was profoundly popular.

nationalism" and instead offered his vision of "positive nationalism" as a response to the conceived weakness of Mosaddeq's strategy.[333] His nationalism allowed the Shah to develop "positive" relations with the West in order to receive much needed resources and technology for economic development as well as military aid. However, Iran's entry into the Baghdad Pact was widely opposed by Iranian public including not only nationalist neutralist political groups perceiving Iran's alignment with the West as a "serious derogation of independence", but also by the regime's high-ranking political elites like General Fazlollah Zahedi who succeeded Mosaddeq as prime minister in 1953.[334] General Zahedi would be replaced at least in part for his opposition to Iran's entry to the Pact by Huseyin Ala as the new prime minister.[335]

However entry into the pact could not relieve the Shah's fears and assure him of a US commitment to Iran's survival, in case it faced a communist attack. The US did not join the pact and instead held a weak "associate" membership which prompted the Shah to seek a bilateral framework to guarantee continued and formal US support for his regime.[336] By the end of the 1950s, disturbances in Jordan and Lebanon and revolution in Baghdad were further testimony to the inefficacy of the pact to guarantee the survival of the regimes. He urged the US to enter into a bilateral pact with Iran and requested more military and economic aid to finance restructuring of the army.[337] It was out of these efforts that by 1959, Iran and the United States signed a defense agreement.

Iran's alignment in the Western camp shaped its regional policies as well. After 1953, the Shah started to build up strategic relations with Israel despite domestic opposition

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[333] Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, p. 23.

[334] Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 89 and 93.

[335] Ibid.

[336] Ibid., pp. 92-95.

[337] Ibid.

and Arab concern for the enlargement of non-Arab Middle East.[338] Iran's recognition of Israel seriously disrupted Iran-Arab relations and forged a "Western-backed anti-Arab state" image for Iran in the eyes of the Arab world.[339] Relations with Israel also irritated leftist and religious pillars of the society.

3.6. The 1960s: State Building and Foreign Policy amidst Socio-economic Transformation, Dependency and Diversification

The 1960s started with domestic political and economic crisis for Iran. The rising oil revenues and American aid did not alleviate economic hardship and due to mismanagement, corruption and inability to undertake structural reforms economic situation relapsed. The economy showed signs of recession with high level of inflation, severe budget deficit and dramatic drop in productivity and economic activity.[340] By the turn of 1960s, Iran was mainly a feudal society with limited industrialization with 70 percent of its population-estimated to be 20 million in 1960-residing in the countryside. The income gap was widening in favor of the royal family, associated political elite and bureaucrats. The Shah's dictatorial control over parliamentary politics and close relationship with the US was fueling resentment and opposition to his regime. Strikes and anti-government demonstrations in the early 1960s were harbingers of the urgency of social and administrative reforms if monarchy was to survive.[341] It was in this volatile context of Iran's looming bankruptcy and chaos that the Kennedy Administration compelled the Shah to take necessary steps for structural reform and deal with chronic problems of corruption and inefficiency to evade a possible "revolution from below".[342] He had to concede to US demands for reform and appointment of Ali Amini, Iran's

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[338] Ibid. p. 127.

[339] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 127.

[340] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 73.

[341] Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, pp. 140-142.

[342] Ibid.

former ambassador to Washington as prime minister to implement reforms; since the US delivered the regime $ 35 million aid with these "special strings" attached.[343] Amini affair reminded the Shah of his dependent and weak position vis-à-vis the United States.

Prime Minister Amini introduced land reform in 1960 to complete Iran's integration into capitalist relations of production with the dismantling of feudal structures and he faced much obstruction from the Majles dominated by landlords. It was only after the Shah's dissolution of the Majles and with his royal decree that Amini and his agriculture minister Hasan Arsanjani could start the implementation of land reform until Amini's resignation due to insufficient US aid and the Shah's refusal to cut down military expenditure to spare resources for reform.[344] The Shah then onwards would seize the moment of reform by declaring his "White Revolution" through a six-point programme comprising the already started land reform, women's suffrage, nationalization of forests, sale of state-owned enterprises to the public, a worker's profit-sharing plan and creation of the Literacy Corps.[345] With the "White Revolution", the Shah aimed to widen his social base by co-opting peasants, women and workers as much as he aimed to reduce his dependence on the US.[346] In the end he wanted to engrain "democracy" and "Westernization", which he interpreted in an "Iranian context" by juxtaposition of modern ideas, values and institutions with "the Persian monarchical tradition."[347]

As he aimed to broaden his social base, he was losing ground among the landlords and religious groups whose vast *awqaf* (endowment) estates were threatened by land reform.

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[343] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 76.

[344] Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, p. 45.

[345] The reason why the Shah named it "white" was because it would be accomplished "through no order, no bloodshed; not even class hatred." See Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 80.

[346] Ibid.

[347] Ibid.

Indeed, Ayatollah Borujerdi, the highest ranking *ulama* of the time already declared land reform contrary to the principles of Islam in 1959. His death in 1961 also signaled the rise of a more radical strand of clergy aspiring to assume an active role vis-à-vis politics unlike the quietist tradition that Ayatollah Borujerdi stood for. To this radical clergy pioneered by Ayatollah Khomeini, land reform and women's suffrage were unacceptable and demanded firm objection. It was through June 1963 (*Khordad 15*) uprising, fuelled by Ayatollah Khomeini's harsh critique of the Shah and brutal suppression of protests of theology students and bazaar members through use of force that the state faced its severest confrontation with society prior to the 1978-1979 revolutionary movement.[348]

3.6.1. The Pahlavi State after 1963

With the declaration of White Revolution and repression of social unrest in 1963, a new epoch has started for full-fledged integration of Iran into capitalist social relations. As the 1950s were marked by the Shah's incessant attempts to strengthen his regime, in the early 1960s, he grew more confidant of his survival.[349] In 1963 Iran started to implement import substitution industrialization (ISI) which was backed by rising oil revenues and needed a politically stable environment.[350] With ISI, the regime was ending its liberal policy practiced since Reza Shah and in line with the IMF prescriptions it was shifting to a policy of strict control of foreign trade and emphasis on "internal production".[351] The new policy also signaled breakup of state's alliance with national commercial

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[348] The official government estimate was that 20 people were killed and 1,000 injured. However, according to the opposition, thousands were massacred. Milani writes that of those arrested and injured by the uprising, 27.6 per cent were skilled workers, 15 per cent ulama, 13.4 per cent retailers and shopkeepers and 11.9 per cent were students. For an analysis of the June 1963 uprising, see Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, pp. 50-55.

[349] After 1963 political stability was mainly brought by increasing harassment, imprisonment and torture of the political opponents of the regime through SAVAK operations.

[350] M. H. Pesaran, "The System of Dependent Capitalism in Pre- and Post- Revolutionary Iran", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 4, (Nov., 1982), p. 505.

[351] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 121.

bourgeoisie and emergence of a new alliance with the modern dependent industrial bourgeoisie.[352] This shift was tantamount to a change in the power bloc of Iran which previously rested on land-owning class, high ranking clergy and bazaaris.[353] The state thence began to intervene in the economy in favor of the industrial bourgeoisie protecting them through high tariff walls, fiscal concessions, easy loans, credits, subsidies, tax exemption and monopoly concessions. The restriction of foreign trade ensured high prices for local monopoly industries, while encouragement of foreign direct investment helped local firms to participate in joint-ventures with some two hundred foreign firms starting to operate in Iran.[354]

The bazaar and commercial bourgeoisie on the other hand were strongly opposed to state's increasing role in the economy and its pro-industry outlook. The ISI marked the end of open trade and tariff concessions of the post-war period much to the detriment of the commercial class; as an observer quoted by Hossein Bashiriyeh summarizes *bazaar* felt their traditional way of life attacked by new ideas, depicting bazaar "unclean and unsuitable", new beliefs depicting its religious values "decadent and superstitious", new business ethics and new banking procedures breaking its own system of finance.[355] Modernization was posing both material and spiritual challenges to the traditional sectors of the society.

Industrialization policies widened the working class which grew almost fivefold between 1963 and 1977 and made up the largest single class at the time Iran was on the verge of revolution.[356] In the 1960s, the Shah started to grant concessions to the working class through profit-sharing schemes and minimum wage policy and established

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[352] Ibid.

[353] Ibid.

[354] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, pp. 39-40.

[355] Ibid., p. 23 and p. 67.

[356] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 434-435.

corporatist control through imposing official organizations to prevent working class mobilization.[357] Modern middle class also expanded with the growth of public sector and expansion of bureaucracy to support the revolutionary agenda of the Shah.

In the 1960s, the state with its increasing economic involvement in favor of private enterprise and industrialization assumed the mantle of "development". Iran's foreign policy also reflected this "developmentalist" logic as the Shah sought to diversify international resources of Iran's socio-economic development.

3.6.2. Iran's Foreign Policy in the 1960s

Iran-US relations in the 1960s possessed different characteristics compared to the 1950s, even though these features did not amount to a fundamental change in the underlying pattern of relations; that is Iran's alignment with the West and the US commitment to political stability and economic development in Iran. However in the 1960s, the challenge of survival both for Iran at the international level and for the Shah at home seemed to vanish.

In the 1960s, the Shah was rather unsure about the value of Iran to the US.[358] Kennedy Administration's support for and imposition of Prime Minister Amini was a major disturbance for the Shah. Furthermore beyond Iran, lack of US support for another US ally Turkey over the Cyprus issue and failure of CENTO framework to resolve the Indo-Pakistani war in 1965 led the Shah to doubt seriously the US commitment to guard him off against domestic and regional challenges.[359]

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[357] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, pp. 43-44.

[358] Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, p. 17.

[359] Ibid. One of the strongest reasons for the Shah's doubt stemmed from an uncovered coup plot within the army. In 1958, SAVAK exposed a coup plan inside the army which was to be led by popular General Qarani with alleged support from the US. Despite US denials, the Shah was convinced of US complicity. See Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921*, p. 138.

He was also aware of the fact that his intense relations with the US administration were a source of liability for his regime which served to incite both secular and religious opposition.[360] In 1964, soon after the dust of the 1963 uprisings settled, the US demanded the ratification of the America Forces Immunities Bill which would give immunity for all its personnel and their families residing in Iran. The discomforted Majles realized that the US government was offering $ 200 million loan on the same day of the ratification which raised the specter of devastating capitulations of the Qajar era. The bill led many to conclude that the Shah sold the sovereignty of the country to the US with the most vocal and fierce critique cast by Ayatollah Khomeini.[361] Khomeini was resolute in his words declaring his objection to the United States and the Shah regime which led to his exile same year. He declared

> Our dignity has been trampled underfoot; the dignity of Iran has been destroyed. The dignity of the Iranian army has been trampled underfoot! ... If some American servant, some American's cook assassinates your *marja'* in the middle of your 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! ... 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 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. … Are we to be trampled underfoot by the boots of America because we are weak nation and have no dollars? … All of our troubles today are caused by America and Israel,

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[360] Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, p. 17.

[361] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 51.

Israel itself derives from America. … We do not regard as law what the claim to have passed. We do not regard this Majles as Majles. We do not regard this government as a government. They are traitors, guilty of high treason![362]

Moreover, the US decided to end its economic assistance to Iran in 1967 on the grounds that it was no longer a "less developed country", and questioned the necessity of armaments and military establishments particularly when it was paying the bills.[363] In the 1960s, the Shah pursued a policy of "disengagement" from a rigid pro-Western posture and formulated a new foreign policy which he dubbed as "independent national policy" (*siyasat-e mostaghele melli*).[364] The accent on independence aimed to relieve him from domestic critics as well as from the asymmetric power of the US on Iran.

It was in this context that the Shah normalized government to government relations with the Soviet Union in 1962 and pledged that he would not allow any foreign power to establish bases in Iran against the USSR.[365] He was careful to maintain his commitment to the Western bloc and opposition to communism, yet he distinguished his anti-communism from establishing bilateral economic relations with the USSR so long as this would provide Iran additional resources for development schemes in addition to bringing lessened Soviet support for Tudeh activities in Iran.[366] The Shah figured out that relying on both powers was a guarantee for a wider range of options satisfying Iran's requirements for military and economic supplies.[367]

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[362] Imam Khomeini, "The Granting of Capitulatory Rights to the US", October 27, 1964 in *Islam and Revolution*: *The Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, (trans. Hamid Algar), (London: Kegan Paul, 2002), pp. 181-188.

[363] Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict*, pp. 107-108.

[364] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[365] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 93.

[366] Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict*, pp. 89-90.

[367] Ibid., p. 7.

In the 1960s, he also reached out to Western Europe to create stakes in the rest of the West for his survival and economic development of Iran. Ansari argues that the Shah was buying shares in Western companies like Mercedes and Krupp (in Western Germany) to bind the West to the Pahlavi elite and ensure that Iran enjoyed financial and political leverage. [368] His reaching out to China also had a similar effect on the political organization of the Maoist groups in Iran as much as looking for a third power to balance against the US and the USSR.[369]

The regional context also gained prominence and prompted Iran to pursue an active policy. The 1960s were the zenith of Arab nationalism and subsequent Arab wars with Israel. Iran as a non-Arab, Shiite state and society faced the challenge of isolation at a time regional politics were being defined alongside transnational solidarity built on ethnic and linguistic commonality. Iran sought to break out political isolation in the region especially in the face of growing economic and military power of the Arab world.[370] Increasing pan-Arab activism concerned Iran especially in the politics of the Persian Gulf, as it led to the emergence of greater intra-regional linkages between the Persian Gulf and the Arab Middle East complicating Iran's political calculus and aspiration to control the Gulf.[371] The Shah's recognition of Israel and Iran's membership in the Baghdad Pact, which was redubbed as CENTO after Iraq's departure from the Pact with 1958 Revolution, created further tensions and challenges both for Iran-Arab relations and Iran's foreign policy. Nevertheless, the Shah was adamant in seeking cooperation with conservative Arab states to check the radicalization of regional states. He was also in contact with non-state actors like the PLO to terminate its assistance for

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[368] One of the most significant purchases of the Shah was nuclear technology. Great Britain and France were Iran's suppliers of nuclear power plants alongside Canada and the United States. See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, pp. 63-64.

[369] Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict*, p. 7.

[370] Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, p. 28.

[371] Ibid., p. 20.

the training of Iranian dissident guerilla groups such as *Mojahedeen-e Khalq*.[372] In the mid-60s, the Shah was seeking economic cooperation with Turkey and Pakistan through the Regional Development for Cooperation and even looking for its expansion to include Iraq and Afghanistan to create an Asian Common Market.[373]

In the same decade, it became much clearer that Iran's foreign policy was controlled by the Shah. As Chubin and Zabih argue the political system lacked formal decision-making process, interests groups, associations, lobbies and mass media that could influence the content and direction of foreign policy.[374] A close American confidant of the Shah, E. A. Bayne asserted that "Iranian foreign policy is largely personified in the king….[T]he Iranian foreign ministry is not a non-entity in the management of foreign relations although it must be regarded as an extension of the Shah's personal direction of policy."[375]

In the wider social background of foreign policy making, there was an emerging foreign policy consensus which stressed "independence, nationalism, development and glorification of Iran's past" as *sine qua non* principles of foreign policy.[376] Accordingly, so long as the Shah did not challenge these principles, argue Chubin and Zabih, he could

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[372] Ibid., p.18. Guerilla warfare has become a salient feature of opposition in the 1960s and 1970s especially after 1963 riots brutally repressed by the state authorities. Abrahamian argues that it was after these incidents that dissidents started to seek for other means to confront the state and began resorting to guerilla warfare. The main guerilla groups whose activities would be critical in the disintegration of the army and final victory of the revolutionary movement in February 1979 were Feda'i, the Islamic Mujahedeen and the Marxist Mojahedeen. See Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 482.

[373] Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, pp. 32-33.

[374] Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict*, p. 10.

[375] E. A. Bayne, *Persian Kingship in Transition: Conversations with a Monarch Whose Office is Traditional and Whose Goal is Modernization*, pp. 197-199, quoted in Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict*, p. 10.

[376] Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power Conflict*, p. 17.

sustain the "de-politicization of foreign policy."[377] However seen through Iran's broader engagement with international system and coupled with its domestic repercussions, even though political elite might have been de-politicized and co-opted by the Shah, the society at large was growing resentful of Shah's foreign policy choices. The 1970s would engrain resentment and disillusionment at a time the Shah grew even more confidant of his domestic and regional role.

3.7. The 1970s: *Pax-Iranica* and Socio-economic Crisis within the "Oil Empire"

3.7.1. The Pahlavi State in the 1970s

In March 1973, Iran finally enforced "control" over its oil industry from production to pricing with the Shah's abrogation of the 1954 Oil Agreement. As Saikal puts it, this was the finalization of Mosaddeq's goal of oil nationalization, and by assuming control besides "ownership" of its oil resources, Iran emerged as an "oil power."[378] The same year when the October War broke out, Tehran officially did not join the oil embargo, but in contrast to its stance in 1967 oil boycott, the regime refrained from raising its production not to dilute the political effectiveness of the Arab embargo. On October 16, 1973, Tehran together with the six Persian Gulf producers announced a 70 per cent increase in the posted prices of crude oil which amounted to quadrupling of oil prices

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[377] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

[378] See Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 100. During the 1960s, Iran was making persistent calls to oil companies via OPEC to increase oil production in order to receive more revenues for its White Revolution. However it was not accepted until the Arab boycott of oil in 1967 which led to a sharp decrease in oil supply with the closure of the Suez Canal. The Shah was quick to seize the moment and increase production by 20 per cent by the same year. The Shah also assured the West of Iran's commitment to oil production in an event of shortage. In the late 1960s, when OPEC was negotiating with the Western companies over income tax rates and oil prices, it was the Shah again who turned the issue one between the Western industrialized nations and the less developed countries. By 1973 with the Moritz Agreement he was able to take control of production and pricing of Iran's oil industry. See Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, pp. 97-131.

and meant a massive influx of oil revenues for Iran. Oil revenues which amounted to $ 885 million in 1971, climbed to $ 1.6 billion in 1972, reached to $ 4.6 billion in 1974 and skyrocketed to $ 17.8 billion in 1975.[379]

According to the statistics of Plan and Budget Organization 1357 (1978), with the influx of oil revenues, government expenditure increased by 12 per cent in 1974, whereas the budget expanded by 250 per cent.[380] From 1972 to 1977, GNP grew by 16 per cent reaching one of the highest growth rates of the world.[381] The new wealth altered the course and pace of economic development in Iran: the regime started to pursue trade liberalization, subsidization of essential foodstuff, free education and health services which served to raise the expectations of the population and posed "money" as a solution for all socio-economic ills of the society.[382] As many scholars of Iran contend, the regime's overhauled development schemes were beyond the absorptive capacity of the country and the society facing disruptive social change simply could not digest it.[383]

The rising financial wealth of the state crystallized class divisions further. The trade liberalization benefited the upper bourgeoisie which was composed of 150 families who controlled 67 percent of all industries and financial institutions; out of 473 industries 370 were owned by ten families.[384] These industrialists from the 1960s onwards were

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[379] Mark J. Gasiorowski, *US Foreign Policy and the Shah: Building a Client State in Iran*, pp. 102-103 quoted in Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict Between Iran and America*, (New York: Random House, 2004), p. 108.

[380] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 85.

[381] Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", p. 314.

[382] H. Pesaran, "The System of Dependent Capitalism in Pre- and Post- Revolutionary Iran", p. 508.

[383] Ibid..

[384] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 40. The most prominent entrepreneurial families of Iran before the Revolution included the Farmanfarmaian family, the Reazi family, the Khayami family, the Sabet family, the Lajevardi family, the Barkhordar family, the Iravni family, the Elqanian Jewish family, the Khosrowshahi family and the Vahabzadeh family.

promoted for their loyalty to the regime, backed by the royal family and rewarded by the Pahlavi patronage through channeling of oil revenues from the Oil Ministry via the Pahlavi Foundation.[385] They were members of what Pesaran dubbed as "dependent capitalism" who "depended" on the state and foreign capital to survive. Though the Shah let them prosper in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he also sought to control and to check their rising power in the system through anti-profiteering campaign and price controls and co-opt some of the major industrialists via clientelism.[386] Traditional bourgeoisie however was excluded from state patronage and did not benefit from state's preference for capital. In the 1970s, especially with economic crisis, they were the targets of anti-profiteering campaign and closure of their guilds.[387]

Meanwhile increasing wealth of the state did not touch the lower strata of the working class composed of laborers, peddlers, small factory employees and temporary workers; because they were under-qualified for social insurance and profit sharing schemes and excluded from the social welfare programmes.[388] For the "upper" layer, the earlier benefits of minimum wage increase policy were rebuffed by gradual increases of prices in the mid-1970s which led to labor strikes.[389] Illusory growth and wage increases were prompting mass migration of rural population to big cities where they would make up the urban poor, the "oppressed" of the looming revolution.

3.7.2. Wealth and New Dependencies in Iran's International Affairs

Ironically, the immense financial wealth of the state did not bring more independence as far its relations with the West and particularly with the United States is concerned.

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[385] H. Pesaran, "The System of Dependent Capitalism in Pre- and Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 510.

[386] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 43.

[387] See Arang Keshavarzian, *Bazaar and State in Iran: The Politics of the Tehran Marketplace*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 128-146.
[388] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 448.

[389] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, pp. 89-90.

Wealth created new dependencies. As Saikal succinctly puts it, in the 1970s there was "reinforcement of Iran's early dependence on the United States" *albeit* in a different form.[390] Boosted with wealth and perception of grandeur, the Shah's vision in the 1970s was to make Iran a "model country", a regional military and industrial power and to do so he needed the US to supply it with technology, capital-goods, know-how and modern weapons to develop Iran's economic and military infrastructure.[391] Thus the ground of dependence was no longer the survival of his fragile regime, but its transformation into a regional power.[392] This quest for advanced material capabilities sprang from Iran's new role as the regional guardian of Western interests in the Persian Gulf after the withdrawal of British forces in 1971 which will be analyzed in-depth in foreign policy section. Yet it perfectly fit with the Shah's aspiration for a greater regional and international power status paralleling rising wealth of his country.

Throughout the 1970s, three key sectors of the US business, that are armaments, oil and banking, possessed major stakes in the Iranian economy in addition to those US producers of high technology, grain, agricultural equipment and consumer goods with large sales also had enormous stakes in Iran.[393] The Shah's taste for power and interest in up-to-date and sophisticated weapon was matched by the Western zeal to sell him billions of dollars of military equipment that would be purchased by petro-dollars. In arms deals hence laid a fine way of recycling petrodollars and the fact that these arms would be used to preserve the security interests of the West in the Persian Gulf made the sales even more lucrative.[394] Regarding the oil industry, despite the political value of the

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[390] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 205.

[391] Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", p. 314.

[392] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 205.

[393] Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, p. 165.

[394] The Shah had placed new orders for another $ 12 billion worh arms to be delivered between 1978-1980 at a time Iran already possessed the largest navy and most up-to-date air force in the Middle East. Abrahamian also writes that the Shah had allowed $ 20 billion for a crash programme to build twelve

1973 agreement which granted Iran control over its oil resources, the country by then did not have the necessary capability to run its oil industry and markets on its own, a fact that sustained its deep commitment to close links and alliance with the West.[395]

In 1975, the US share of Iran's capital goods markets was 28 percent among which transportation and construction industries ranked first, together constituting more than 60 percent of the total market.[396] US export of consumer goods to Iran comprised mainly food exports due to unproductivity in the agricultural sector as a result of land reform and massive immigration of the rural poor into big cities. Iran used to purchase between 50 to 75 percent of its imported rice, wheat and cereals from the United States.[397] In the 1970s, General Electric, Northrop, Boeing, Cities Service, McDonnell-Douglas, RCA and Neill Price were among the major American companies operating in Iran which were implicated in court corruption by reportedly buying the influence of Iranian officials and royal family members through bribes, commission and pay-offs.[398]

The banking system was another sector which from the mid-1950s operated to systematize financial relations and deal with transactions of the US aid and loans Iran has been receiving. In the 1970s, with higher involvement of US capital in Iran, the system also throve. Fatemi asserts that at the time of the Islamic Revolution, there were 37 banks in Iran, 13 of which had foreign partners and the total book-value of foreign investment in the Iranian banks was estimated to be $ 75 million out of which $ 25

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nuclear plants in the course of the next decade, that is the 1980s if only he could stay in throne. See Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 436.

[395] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 121.

[396] Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", p. 312.

[397] Ibid., p. 314.

[398] The names of the above-mentioned companies alongside many others were cited in a US Embassy Report of June 1972, entitled "Corruption in Iran-A Problem for American Companies". See Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict Between Iran and America*, p. 110.

million were held by four American Banks: Bank of America, Chase Manhattan Bank, Citibank, and the Continental Illinois Bank of Chicago.[399]

3.7.3. Iran's Foreign Policy in the 1970s

With the tremendous rise of state revenues, the Shah grew more confident both domestically and regionally. From the 1960s, he was envisioning Iran as a modern, industrial nation and in the 1970s with the oil boom; he felt that Iran was much closer to the gates of the "Great Civilization" (*tamaddon-e bozorg*).[400] His notion of great civilization was also reflected in Iran's quest to be a self-confident regional power (*qodrat-e mentaqe'i*).[401] During the 1970s, the Shah repeatedly talked of his intentions to make Iran a "model country" through the footsteps of Cyrus the Great, the Emperor of ancient Achaemenid Empire.[402] His vision of a regional power encompassed Iran's transformation into a strong and prosperous monarchical state with the ability to guard and influence its region in line with its political and economic interests and to regulate its relations particularly with its neighbors from a position of strength.[403]

One dimension of this position of strength was obviously Iran's quadrupling of oil prices in 1973 oil crises which rendered the state enormous economic resources to fund its ambitious development plans at home, buy advanced weapons, luxurious consumer

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[399] Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", p. 311.

[400] The Great Civilization, for the Shah, symbolized a more glorious future for Iran than its past, surpassing the achievements of the historic Achaemenid, Sassanid and Parthian Empires, as much as surpassing the life standards in Europe and making Iran the world's most powerful fifth country after the US, USSR, China and Japan. See Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 131.

[401] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 128.

[402] The Shah's personal identification with Emperor Cyrus was quite strong. In 1971 with the participation of world leaders he celebrated the 2500th year of monarchy in Iran and his coronation took place in this rather flamboyant ceremony which served to alienate him further from the rest of the society. See Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921*, pp. 158, 176.

[403] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 137.

goods and high technology products while granting it a financial arm to utilize in its bilateral affairs.[404] In 1974-1975, Tehran declared that it allocated 6 percent of its GNP to aiding the less developed countries.[405] As Ramazani argues in the 1970s, oil industry became the foremost instrument in the hands of the Shah both in domestic and foreign policy.[406]

Another major determinant of Iran's increasing regional activism and international profile was a change in Britain's imperial policy in 1968. Britain's decision to terminate its "East of Suez" policy and withdraw its forces from the Persian Gulf by 1971 brought a new foreign policy role for Iran in its most strategic environment. The US, then embroiled in Vietnam, was reluctant to commit manpower and resources elsewhere, but it could not let any power vacuum to emerge in the Gulf either which would invite the Soviet Union to the strategic waters.[407] Moreover given the weakness of moderate Arab powerhouses to assume a responsibility for the security of Gulf, Iran qualified as the only reliable partner to assign the task of securing "free world's" interest in the Gulf.[408] The Shah was anxious to assume this role particularly due to its symbolic importance as Britain's decision meant an end to 150 years of British dominance in the Gulf and thought that Iran could reclaim its regional hegemony in line with his vision of Iran as a regional guardian countering Arab instability and radicalism at the height of the Arab-Israeli conflict.[409]

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[404] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 128.

[405] Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, p. 132.

[406] For the oil policy of the Shah, see Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1988), pp. 202-204.

[407] See İzzetullah İzzeti, *İran ve Bölge Jeopolitiği* (*Tahlili ber jeopolitiki Iran va Irak*), (Hakkı Uygur, Trans.), (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları), pp. 77-78.

[408] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 128.

[409] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 60.

Iran's dominance in the Gulf was portrayed as a "natural right" not only by Iran, but by the US as well.[410] Iran thus became central to what is known as the "Nixon/Kissinger Doctrine" which underlined the US decision to arm its Third World allies/clients to fight regional proxy wars on its behalf. Iran under this doctrine was entitled with the task of preserving peace and security in the Persian Gulf, a task which made Iran, what many in the country woefully dubbed, "the gendarme of the United States." This vision added to the critics of the Shah attacking him for subservience to Western interests in the region.[411] On the Arab side, even though Arab states, both within and out of the Western camp were disturbed by the growing assertiveness of Iran in the Gulf, for those positioned with Iran in the same camp, their concerns were quelled so long as Iran remained under Western tutelage and refrained from marring the status quo.[412] Iran until the end of the Pahlavi monarchy performed an active role for policing the Persian Gulf in conformity with its interests and the US policies. Tehran even involved in Oman to defend the Sultan Qabus regime against domestic opposition and reached out to the Horn of Africa and Indian Ocean to ensure the security of strategic waterways.[413] In the 1970s, Iran's power and security aspirations also led to straining of relations between Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) because of Iran's occupation of Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa islands in the Strait of Hormuz to which it laid long standing claims and achieved to seize after the withdrawal of the British troops.[414]

By 1977 Iran possessed the largest navy in the Persian Gulf and the fifth largest army in the world thanks to its dramatic military build-up since 1953 with the support of the US.[415] The US President Carter as late as 1977 was praising Iran as an "island of

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[410] Ibid.

[411] See Shireen Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, p. 34.

[412] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 128.

[413] See Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran From Autocracy to Religious Rule*, pp. 178-179.

[414] Ibid.

[415] See Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 435-436.

stability" amidst chaos and instability of the Middle East and this was exactly the image that the Shah arduously sought to craft for Iran through his discourse and strategy. However, the looming revolution would bring an abrupt and unexpected demise of the Pahlavi monarchy.

3.8. Growth and Its Setbacks: Social Implosion, Political Unrest and Iran's Coming Revolution

Notwithstanding the grandeur, wealth and regional activism of the Shah regime in the region, Iranian society was on the verge of implosion. During 1973 and 1978 Iran suffered from severe disruptions of rapid socio-economic modernization and rising repression of the Shah regime. The government did not have a policy of redistribution of wealth and income and acted with the assumption that over time wealth would naturally "trickle down" to benefit middle and lower classes.[416] However this was not the case and the gap between rich and poor grew so wide that the International Labor Office qualified Iran of 1970s as one of the worst countries of the world with unequal income distribution.[417] Moreover the adoption of liberal policy after the rise of oil prices resulted in production of luxury consumer goods and capital intensive industries which only increased Iran's dependence upon sophisticated foreign technology and know-how with little employment creating effect.[418] To make matters worse, abundance of oil revenues diminished the urgency of promoting and expanding non-oil industries besides undertaking "unpopular" tax reform in the face of government's non-tax revenues.[419]

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[416] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 140.

[417] Ibid., p. 141. According to the 1973-1974 survey of the Iranian Central Bank, top 20 percent of the population accounted for as much as 55.5 percent of the total expenditures, whereas the bottom 20 percent for as little as 3.7 percent and the middle 40 percent for no more than 26 percent. Growing inequality was worsened by heavy corruption within the upper classes which according to a Pentagon report in 1977 reached a boiling point. See Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 448-449.

[418] M. H. Pesaran, "The System of Dependent Capitalism in Pre- and Post- Revolutionary Iran", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 4, (Nov., 1982), p. 509.

[419] Ibid., p. 510.

The rapid rise of consumption and demand resulted in inflation skyrocketing to 500 percent in the price of land and 400 percent in rents of Tehran. The regime's expenditure on billions of dollars on arms and military technology caused resentment among the population. Economic hardship prompted the Shah to create a single party regime in 1975 with the Party of Resurgence (*Rastahkiz*) to ensure state's control of mass mobilization, especially of workers, peasants and youth who made up the primary victims of socio-economic imbalance.[420] Blaming the entrepreneurs for the economic crisis, the Shah also embarked on anti-profiteering campaign and price controls which hit the bazaaris hardest through imprisonment and fines.[421] Throughout the 1970s the regime was widening the social opposition by fueling the disillusionment and anger of different social classes. From the mid-1960s, a radical faction of the clergy under Ayatollah Khomeini was a vocal and fierce critique of the regime. Despite exile, ideas of Khomeini were in dissemination and his presence was very much alive in religious circles through his representatives. The *bazaar* besides suffering from constant decline since Iran's penetration by the Western markets in the 19th century, during the Pahlavi state faced marginalization and suppression through political pressure and economic policies of the state.[422] The repressive methods of the Shah through intensified SAVAK operatives and Iran's increasing embroilment in capitalistic and "subservient" relations with the West were radicalizing the intelligentsia as well.[423] In the 1970s, Ali Shariati was seeking the foundations of a new order on the basis of a re-thinking of Shiite Islam as a revolutionary political ideology through his synthesis of Marxist insights with the

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[420] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 92.

[421] Ibid.

[422] For responses of the bazaar vis-à-vis the "transformative agendas" of the state during the Pahlavi era, see Arang Keshavarzian, *Bazaar and State in Iran: The Politics of the Tehran Marketplace*.

[423] In the 1950s and 1960s, the notion of "*gharbzadegi*" which means Westoxification/ "plague from the West" was a prominent theme in Iranian political consciousness. Iran through its exposure to the Western might started to define it as an "Occidental other" which turned the "West" into a fundamental rubric of Iran's national identity. See Mehrzad Boroujerdi, "Gharbzadegi: The Dominant Intellectual Discourse of Pre- and Post-Revolutionary Iran" in Samih K. Farsoun and Mehrdad Mashayekhi (eds.), *Iran: Political Culture in the Islamic Republic*, (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 30-56.

idea of social justice in the Shiism. Yet his quest for "authenticity" and a "return to the self" did not envision an order entrusted to ulama's exclusive right to rule and guide the community; instead he was arguing that since people were the vicars of God on earth, any man could be the leader and Imam of his society if he was chosen so by his community.[424] Shariati and his ideas played a critical role in the revolution by spreading Islam as a revolutionary ideology among the intelligentsia, which would profoundly help Khomeini's leadership to reach out to the intelligentsia, no matter how much they differed in their understanding of Islam and the role of clergy.

Social protests which gradually turned into revolutionary fervor started in mid-1977. During May 1977-June 1978, the regime faced middle class protests organized mainly by the clergy and the *bazaa*r after the first occasions of anti-regime moves by the secular intelligentsia against political repression.[425] After June 1978, argues Abrahamian, the urban poor, especially construction laborers and factory workers joined the protests which changed the class composition and numeric strength of the demonstrations. The protests were kept alive through Shi'ism's seven and forty days of mourning rituals for "revolutionary martyrs" and religious days of Ashura as much as through the unsuccessful and sometimes brutal measures of the regime against the demonstrators, as happened in September 1978 in Jaleh Square massacre. The protests gained strength with widespread social participation and countrywide strikes. In October 1978, 30,000 oil workers, 5,000 bank clerks and 100,000 government employees went to strike and demanded higher wages, better life standards alongside making political demands which called for abolition of SAVAK, the lifting of martial law, the release of all political prisoners, the return of Ayatollah Khomeini and the end of tyrannical rule.[426] The strike of oil workers served to cripple the economy, while continuous bazaari strikes disrupted social life. The Shah was hesitant and unable to cope with the immense social

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[424] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 71.

[425] Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, pp. 496-510.

[426] Ibid. P. 518.

opposition. He could not prevent the alliance of the radicals and moderate forces, nor could he propose necessary political reforms on time.[427] His regime was to collapse when the army, the regime's guarantee for survival, started to disintegrate. On February 11, 1979, the Pahlavi monarchy was a past reality for Iran.

3.9. State-Society Relations and the "International": The Impact of Iran's Relations with the US on Society

Iran's integration into global capitalist relations and Cold War geopolitics transformed state and its changing society. As the chapter has demonstrated United States has been an integral part of Iran's political and socio-economic transformation during the Pahlavi monarchy especially with the advent of the Cold War. The Shah could reign supreme over his rivals and cultivate his dominance with the military, financial and political support of the United States in the aftermath of the 1953 coup d'état. However, *Mordad 28* was to leave a deep scar in Iranian consciousness reviving the historically strong resentment against external powers and their interference in Iran's domestic affairs. The fact that the coup happened at a time nationalism and anti-imperialism were quite prevalent in Iran resulted in a much stronger and engrained negative identification of the US.[428] Iranians, except for the Shah, felt "betrayed" and victimized" by the toppling down of their democratically elected government and started to see the United States as the primary source of Iran's mischief and social ills.[429]

As dealt throughout the text, from the 1950s onwards, the US was present in the very daily life of Iran with hundreds of military and administrative advisors, technicians and their families residing in the country. As Ansari succinctly asserts, with US capital and personnel came their lifestyle, consumer habits, products and cultural industry which

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[427] See Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982,* pp. 111-122.

[428] Ibid., p. 5.

[429] Ibid., p. 27.

disturbed both traditional pillars of society who perceived a cultural and economic challenge to their values and even those relatively open to contact with foreigners.[430] Iran's major development scheme, the "White Revolution", particularly its accent on land reform was encouraged and financed by the United States besides by Iran's rising oil revenues. The Shah, despite his convictions on the contrary, grew much more unpopular with his repressive policies, autocracy and megalomania. However his "subservience" to Western interests was also a potent critique which de-legitimized his power and provided his secular and religious nationalist contenders a common ground to unite. Marvin Zonis in his study on the political elite of Iran observed that especially the young and better-educated elite of the Pahlavi court were actively opposed to the Shah's association with foreign governments and their pervasive intervention in Iranian affairs.[431]

Many in Iran came to perceive the Shah as a client of the US, a feeling which grew in the 1970s with Iran's increasing commitment to Persian Gulf security. Indeed the Shah was not simply a puppet, devoid of any discretion or will. In the 1950s, he aligned Iran with the United States to guarantee the survival of his dynasty through strengthening of state institutions. In the 1960s, he was also unsure about US commitment which prompted him to diversify Iran's international partners and gain some independence from Washington, even though this was not a termination of Iran's alignment with the Western camp. His aspiration to pursue an "independent foreign policy" failed eventually in the 1970s, as Iran was once again dependent on the advanced technology, know-how, military equipments, capital and consumer goods from the US industries. Strategically it assumed a regional role as a central actor of the Nixon Doctrine.

What remained constant throughout these three decades was the dictatorial methods of the Shah over his society which in the end alienated his regime and led to its collapse.

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[430] See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 66.

[431] Marvin Zonis, *The Political Elite of Iran,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

The revolution showed that his corporatism could not ensure the support of even the modern constituency. Through aid and oil revenues, the Shah's main interest resided in the international which he used to build strength over his society, without embedding his regime within social classes. The collapse of the Shah regime was a testimony to the weakness of states which fail to achieve social embeddedness.[432]

The US together with its own grave misdoings in Iran came to be associated with the Shah's personal and unrelated mistakes as well. As Zonis argues even in the 1960s, the political elite in Iran were laying the responsibility for the major policies of the government on the United States.[433] Inside the country, the Shah was the only person to blame because of monopolization of political power in his hands and denial of meaningful political participation in an open political system. Yet the US with its vast and asymmetric involvement and penetration into politics and economy of Iran indeed had assumed the mantle of Britain with previous social resentment and hatred now reserved for it. The revolution would open up a new chapter for Iran-US relations and Iran's foreign policy towards the United States, as it would also radically alter the role US would play in Iranian politics. The following chapters will draw upon different moments of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation by highlighting change in state, state-society and state-international relations and analyze the evolution of Iran-US relations alongside change in politics, society and ideology of Iran.

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[432] See Leonard Seebroke, "Bringing legitimacy back in to neo-Weberian state theory and international relations", *Working paper*, No. 2002/6, Australian National University, Department of International Relations.

[433] Marvin Zonis, *The Political Elite of Iran,* pp. 314-325.

CHAPTER 4

THE EPOCH OF REVOLUTION AND WAR

4.1. Introduction

On January 16, 1979, the "invincible" Shah left Iran and Pahlavi monarchy eventually ended through what is perceived as an "unthinkable" popular revolution in Iran.[434] The starting era was foundational in many regards, for the Pahlavi state, state-society and state-international affairs were all in throes of revolutionary transformation, which would be shaped by revolutionary turmoil and the soon-to-start war with Iraq out of Iraqi aggression. This chapter under the themes of revolution and war examines the period starting from 1979 and reaches until the end of 1980s. It aims to analyze post-revolutionary change in Iran in conjunction with the trajectory of rupture in Iran-US relations which would become a definitive feature of Iran's post-revolutionary politics. The chapter will examine state transformation through the interplay of domestic revolutionary struggles for the new order and the role of the international on state transformation mainly through the formative impact of war and geopolitical crises and hence reflect on the co-constitution of the domestic and the international as HSIR suggests. In this context it will analyze change in Iran's foreign policy and assess Iran's agency in shaping regional politics and constituting itself as a revolutionary polity in its multi-spatial environment. In this historical process it will focus on the role of the

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[434] As of late 1978 a top-secret CIA analysis declared revolution in Iran as "unthinkable." Within few months, America's seemingly sound and stable ally Shah was overthrown. The Iranian Revolution still inspires debates and analytical reflection. See Charles Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*, (Harvard University Press, 2004) for multi-faceted analysis of events that paved the way for Iranians to "think the unthinkable."

United States in transformation of the state and state-society relations and how it relates to the foundation of a new order in Iran.

4.2. The Creation of the "Islamic" State: Social Struggles, Institutions and Politics

4.2.1. Social Struggles in Post-revolutionary Iran (1979-1982)

As articulated earlier in analytical framework of this study, the state as a site for social struggles has never been a completed project. Concerning Iran in times of revolutionary change, this statement is even more relevant. The Pahlavi monarchy was toppled by a popular revolution of diverse social coalition united against the Shah. However, the real struggle started, once the Shah was gone. In the aftermath of the revolution, the anti-Shah forces began to shatter in the face of clashing political and socio-economic demands. Right after the revolution, political power was seized by various social forces at the national and local level. At the national level, the power was divided between the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) headed by Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan and the Revolutionary Council, established in Paris in 1978 and dominated by Ayatollah Khomeini's influential clerical disciples.[435] Bashiriyeh argues that this duality indeed reflected one of the major axes of post-revolutionary political struggle, taking place between the liberal-constitutionalist opponents of the *ancien régime* and their Islamist contenders for power, as their anti-Shah alliance was dissolving in the new epoch.[436]

Mehdi Bazargan's government was the government of bureaucracy, judiciary, business circles and the large land-owners, that sought to preserve the existing capitalist social

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[435] The Revolutionary Council was composed of Ayatollah Beheshti, Ayatollah Montazeri, Ayatollah Mosavi Ardabili, Ayatollah Kani, Ayatollah Khamenei, Ayatollah Bahonar, Ayatollah Rafsanjani, Ayatollah Taleqani and Khomeini's non-clerical associates Bani-Sadr and Qotbzadeh.

[436] See Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 116.

order and structures, while only changing the political structure and deposing the repressive Shah.[437] It represented the interests the new petty bourgeoisie and in this sense, as Zabih argues, the composition and institutional foundation of the provisional government did not differ radically from the Shah era.[438] On the other hand, the Revolutionary Council or the "shadow government" as Abrahamian names it, mainly represented the interests of traditional petty bourgeoisie searching for a socio-economic and ideological order that favor traditional economic forces and values of the society.[439]

In post-1979 Iran, state-society relations were in flux and the country was degenerating into social strife and class conflict between peasants and landlords in the countryside, and between workers and industrialists in urban areas.[440] These were revolutionary social struggles searching for a real change in socio-economic structure in post-Pahlavi Iran. Peasants through peasant councils were increasingly involved in land seizures, while workers were claiming control over the management of factories through mobilization into workers' councils.[441] The merchants of the bazaar were meanwhile trying to fill the void left by the flight of capital, industrialists and bankers from Iran as much as by the expulsion of international capital.[442]

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[437] Ibid., p. 126.

[438] See Sepehr Zabih, *Iran Since the Revolution*, (London: Croom Helm, 1982), p. 25. Zabih argues that the only major difference initially after the revolution was the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice over the existing system. He maintains that this distinction was crucial for two reasons; first dealing with the prominent figures of the formal regime through revolutionary courts rather than normal judicial mechanisms and second and more important of all Islamization of the judicial system with increasing infusion of Islamic Sharia concepts into Iran's legal system.

[439] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*; Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 132.

[440] See Mansoor Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 317.

[441] Ibid.

[442] Ibid., p. 319.

Meanwhile the economy was inflicted by what Rahnema and Behdad name as an "economic crisis of the post-revolutionary type", marked by severe disruption of production and capital accumulation process.[443] This particular crisis, they assert, resulted from open social confrontation, which jeopardized sanctity of property rights and the legitimacy of capital, and it continued up until the institutionalization of state in full sense, so that it can assume its primary function of protection and maintenance of the economic order.[444] The Bazargan government aimed to restore economic order as smooth and fast as possible; however increasing activism of peasants and labor cited above were detrimental to this agenda. Given the decrease in production, the regime could no longer tolerate strikes and demonstrations and it started creating its counter-mobilization units through state's own workers' councils to curb the power of the leftist dominated councils which sprang from the strike committees of the revolutionary days.[445] Against land seizures, the PRG responded robustly by outlawing land expropriations and arming landowners, when necessary. The peasant question became more intriguing because of its association with communal conflict, particularly in peasant uprisings in Azerbaijan, Kurdestan and Turkoman-Sahra, hence posing both a social and "national" security challenge to the state with its inherent ethnic dimension.[446]

The PRG and the Revolutionary Council took a common position and prohibited these acts as unlawful and even punishable by death.[447] However, the clerical elite never dropped their reference to the cause of the *mostazafin.* Ayatollah Khomeini simultaneously argued that "the country belongs to the slum dwellers and the poor are the resources of this country", while Ayatollah Beheshti, secretary-general of the Islamic

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[443] See Farhad Nomani and Sohrab Behdad, *Class and Labor in Iran: Did the Revolution Matter?*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006), p. 4.

[444] Ibid.

[445] See "Bazargan says disruptive oil workers won't be paid" LD201548 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian May 20, 1979; see also Mansoor Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran"

[446] Ibid.

[447] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982,* p. 137.

Republican Party (IRP)[448] reiterated "the line of the revolution is anti-imperialism, anti-capitalism and anti-feudalism."[449] This rhetoric, as Moaddel purports, served to weaken the hand of the central government and raised the popularity of the *ulama* among the peasants.[450]

The divergence between the PRG and the Revolutionary Council pertained to their diametrically opposed agendas and expectations from the new era. In post-revolutionary Iran, Prime Minister Bazargan sought to normalize the revolution, stabilize the economy and establish a parliamentary democracy in Iran.[451] However, the Revolutionary Council wanted a "permanent" revolution, until they seized power and crystallized their preferred order. In this context, while the PRG was seeking to "demobilize" the masses, Ayatollah Khomeini sought to sustain revolutionary mobilization.[452] Though he remained opposed to social activism that was impeaching on private property, he was prompting the Bazargan government to pay attention to the problems of the "oppressed", the "barefooted" of the revolution and improve their living conditions.[453] The state with the dictum of empowering the downtrodden started to provide free water and electricity for the poor and through the establishment of *Mostazafin* Housing Foundation and Reconstruction Crusade, it helped the urban poor to find housing in urban centers in addition to its massive infrastructure projects and building of roads in the countryside.[454]

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[448] Shortly after his return to Tehran, Khomeini ordered the establishment of the Islamic Republican Party (IRP) which represented his political vision and participated in post-revolutionary political struggles alongside secular nationalist, leftists and radical leftist parties. For an elaboration of party politics, before most of them were banned by the clergy, see Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, pp. 125-132.

[449] Mansoor Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 321.

[450] Ibid.

[451] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 137.

[452] Ibid.

[453] Ibid.

[454] Mansoor Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 321; Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 180.

The clergy hence pursued a policy of enhancing its popularity and legitimacy in the eyes of revolutionary masses against their political contenders. At the backdrop of socio-economic struggles, the Pahlavi state was giving way to the "Islamic" Republic.

4.2.2. Institutionalization of the Islamic Authority: *Velayat-e Faqih* (Rule by the Supreme Jurist)

Valentine Moghadam argues that it is more convenient to call the revolution as the "Iranian" Revolution, since Islamization only followed afterwards.[455] Having led the Revolution and succeeded in ousting the Shah, Khomeini and his disciples were assured of their power and self-righteousness.[456] Ayatollah Khomeini emerged as an opposition figure of the Shah regime since the 1963 uprising with his vocal criticism, consequent arrests and eventual exile. By the time he was back in Iran as the leader of a successful popular revolution, he already possessed a vision of state, which was known inside religious circles through dissemination of his lectures taped in cassettes in the 1970s, but unknown to many; as he refrained from declaring them publicly.[457]

It was during his exile in Najaf in the 1970s that Khomeini's vision of an "Islamic" state and outward rejection of the monarchy began to crystallize, even though his search for a more truly Islamic government can be traced back to Iran's experience of repressive modernization under Reza Shah in the 1940s.[458] His lectures in Najaf were recorded,

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[455] See Val Moghadam, "Islamic Populism, Class and Gender in Post-revolutionary Iran", p. 192.

[456] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*.

[457] The fact that Khomeini's books had been banned during the Shah era alongside other "perilous" books mostly from the Marxist literature made it difficult for the society at large to understand the true nature of his political theology. See Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, p. 240; Abbas Milani, T*he Shah*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 438.

[458] Khomeini's political ideas in his *Kashf-al Asrar* (1943) were largely unformulated. He was proposing a supervisory (nezarat) role for the clergy rather than actual government or direct rule. Mehdi Moslem observes that Khomeini at first was not only conciliatory toward the Shah, he also recognized the Shah's rule as legitimate. He was then more in tune with the quietist and apolitical tradition of the Shiite political establishment under Ayatollah Borujerdi. He was asking for more respect for religion and greater

transcribed and published in a book entitled *Hokumat-e Islami* (The Islamic Government) in 1971. In *Hokumat-e Islami* Khomeini denounced monarchy as a "pagan" institution tantamount to idolatry and declared that all Muslims were duty-bound to reject and rise against the Shah.[459] While not offering a blueprint or guideline for what an Islamic state should look like, Khomeini nevertheless asserted that in the absence of Imam Mehdi, who had gone into occultation in the 9th century, it was the *fuqaha*, as the legitimate representatives of Imamate who shall fulfill the righteous government until his return.[460] Khomeini's vision was drawing on a political reinterpretation of the traditional and a-political Shiite notion of "*velayat-e faqih*" which historically meant legal guardianship of senior clerics over those who are deemed incapable of looking after their own interests, such as minors, widows and mentally deranged people.[461] According to this new formulation, as Abrahamian aptly puts it, "*velayat-e faqih* became jurisdiction over all believers, who are all in need of the sacred laws."[462]

In his book, Khomeini underlined the necessity of the establishment and maintenance of Islamic political institutions for subordinating political power to Islamic goals and criteria; the duty of the *fuqaha* to bring about an Islamic state to assume legislative, executive and judicial functions within it and the imperative of self-reform by the

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conformity of the state's laws with the sacred law. Abrahamian argues that by 1943 or even in the 1960s, "one would search in vain any discussion of revolution, martyrdom, oppressed and 'velayat-e faqih' in Khomeini's writings." His stance started to radicalize in the 1960s with the death of Ayatollah Borujerdi as much as because of disruptive social change threatening the clergy and bazaar. However even in 1963, Khomeini was not calling for a revolution and overthrow of the monarchy. See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics*, pp. 12-31; Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*, p. 21; Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State*, p. 111.

[459] Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism,* p. 24.

[460] See Imam Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*: *The Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, (Hamid Algar, trans.), (London: Kegan Paul, 2002), p. 40.

[461] Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism,* p. 24.

[462] Ibid., p. 25.

religious establishment to achieve foundation of an Islamic state.[463] According to Martin, Khomeini never doubted the necessity of state, as he conceived it indispensable for the well-being of man, establishment of good order and protection of religion.[464] The path of Prophet Mohammad was a proof of the necessity of government and it was only the *fuqaha* who could reinstitute legitimate rule.[465] Within the broad thinking of political Islam in the Middle East, North Africa and Southern Asia, Khomeini's thoughts were novel for entrusting the right to rule to the clergy.[466]

For Khomeini Islam represented an all-encompassing way of life so much so that there was not a single topic in human life for which Islam has not provided instruction and established a norm.[467] He believed that Islam was the panacea for Iran's chronic problems caused by the corrupt, tyrannical and illegitimate institution of monarchy and its imperial patrons. He rejected separation of religion and politics and envisioned "Islamization" of society and politics under the rule of "Government of God." The decisive moment for Islamization of politics came with the incorporation of the principle of *velayat-e faqih* into the Constitution of the Islamic Republic and its approval in December 1979.[468] Institutionalization of clerical rule was a contentious move, which was rejected not only by the Bazargan government, but also by the leading members of

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[463] See Imam Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, p. 25.

[464] See Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, pp. 103-105.

[465] Imam Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, p. 40.

[466] See Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*.

[467] Imam Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, p. 30.

[468] In March 1979, majority of the population voted in a national referendum which asked Iranians whether the new political system of Iran should be an Islamic Republic or not. The first draft of the constitution was presented on June 18, 1979 which was not markedly different from the 1906 Constitution except for creation of a strong post of Presidency. This very first draft ironically did not envision a political role for the clerics and if not objected by the leftist parties for procedural reasons, Khomeini would be submitting this version for national referendum. Its rejection opened a radically different path for its revision under a constituent assembly (Assembly of Experts) dominated by the clergy and members of the Islamic Republican Party who injected the principle of velayat-e faqih into the constitution. For the Constitutional process, see Asghar Schirazi, *The Constitution of Iran: Politics and the State in the Islamic Republic*, (trans. John O'Kane), (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), pp. 22-58.

the clergy including Ayatollah Mahmood Taleqani, Ayatollah Abu al-Qasim al-Khu'i and Ayatollah Hussein Shariatmadari who were opposed to excessive political involvement of the clergy and "infallible" image of Ayatollah Khomeini.[469] However in the midst of domestic and international crisis that will be explained below, Khomeini's vision of *velayat* would be injected into the Constitution by the end of the 1979.

4.2.3. Building of Iran's "Parallel" State: The Revolutionary Institutions

To institute Islamic order and control revolutionary mobilization, the clergy started to build parallel institutions alongside the institutions of the Pahlavi state, which were kept intact except for widespread purges of their personnel.[470] The state in post-revolutionary Iran was marked by a proliferation of revolutionary and populist institutions. At the local level, control and security of neighborhoods were taken over by revolutionary *komitehs* headed by the clergy, even before the revolution. Immediately after the revolution, Revolutionary Courts were established first in Tehran and then in provincial centers in order to try and punish the members of the former regime for carrying out political repression, plundering wealth of the country and allowing foreign exploitation of Iran which resulted in execution of army generals, military and police officers, SAVAK agents, cabinet members, *Majlis* deputies and officials of the Shah regime. Distrustful of the remnants of the Imperial Army which has been the very symbol of the Pahlavi monarchy, Khomeini ordered the establishment of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (*sepah-e pasdaran*) in May 1979. The Guards would become the ideological arms of the emerging order through their loyalty to Khomeini and the Islamic order and play a decisive role in suppression of ethnic and ideological contenders of the Islamic

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[469] See Hamid Mavani, "Ayatollah Khomeini's Concept of Governance (wilayat-al faqih) and the Classical Shi'i Doctrine of Imamate", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 5, September 2011, pp. 807-811; Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 126.

[470] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran,* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2002), p. 11.

Republic.[471] Ayatollah Khomeini defined a strong state with its capability of protecting the country and intimidating enemies at frontiers and elsewhere through the help of a strong army and propaganda mechanism.[472] The post-Pahlavi state has mastered propaganda and ideological control through extensive network of mosques and Friday Prayer Imams appointed by the regime to disseminate official messages alongside its control over state media. Ayatollah Khomeini had already gained constitutional prerogatives at the top of the power hierarchy of the new politico-religious system, yet he also appointed representatives to each state organization to monitor these institutions confirming his extra-constitutional methods given the fact that these representatives were not constitutionally designated.[473] The Council of Guardians (*Shora-ya Negahban-e Qanuni-ye Esasi*) emerged as the legislative arm of the new state and undertook the task of overseeing *Majles* legislation and ensure its compatibility with Islam and the Constitution. Its role would expand in the following epochs particularly because of the intense vetting power it would enforce against presidential and parliamentary candidates. Under the regime of Shiite jurisprudents, the legal system was Islamized through codification of the *Sharia* into law where possible.[474]

These parallel institutions constituted by the religious revolutionaries built up a higher system of rule to subjugate the modern state institutions, mostly remnants of the Pahlavi era. As the religious wing of post-revolutionary dual authority was institutionalizing its power, the PRG as the official government in charge of "legal" apparatus of the state was unable to exert control over the "extra-legal structures" of power formed through popular revolutionary institutions.[475] These institutions would remain under the control

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[471] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*.

[472] Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, pp. 110-111.

[473] Ibid., pp. 73-74.

[474] Ibid. pp. 161-174.

[475] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 133.

of the Revolutionary Council and once the Islamists consolidated their power by 1982, they were integrated into the bureaucratic apparatus of the state in the mid-1980s.

In the aftermath of the revolution doubtlessly command over economy and resources was a major issue for political contestants. As mentioned above, economy succumbed into crisis with revolutionary turmoil and disruptions in oil exports and industrial production. There was a flight of capital, as Iran's major capitalists that were organically linked to the Pahlavi court left the country. In their absence, it was the Islamist elites that filled the void in post-revolutionary economy and seized the assets of the departed royal enemy and the Pahlavi era bourgeoisie. Khomeini and his disciples created an immense network of *bonyads* (foundations) that worked as agents of "social justice" for economic development and income distribution schemes.[476] Maloney argues that the *bonyad*s were one of the core ideological innovations of Khomeini operating in the name of the deprived masses, but in time developed into formidable conglomerates oriented towards capital accumulation particularly in the 1990s.[477] After the revolution, the Pahlavi Foundation which served as the patronage network of the Shah was seized by the clergy and renamed as *Bonyad-e Mostaz'afin va Janbazan* (The Foundation of the Oppressed and Self-Sacrificers). Other important *bonyad*s included *Bonyad-e Shahid* (The Foundation of the Martyrs), *Bonyad-e Panezdah Khordad* (The Foundation of the 15th Khordad) among others. These revolutionary organizations were exempt from public scrutiny and taxation and they were only accountable to the Supreme Leader. *Bonyad*s with these privileges also intervened in domestic and international arena on behalf of their distinct and independent agenda which complicated domestic and international affairs of the state.[478]

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[476] See Suzanne Maloney, "Agents or Obstacles? Parastatal Foundations and Challenges for Iranian Development", in Parvin Alizadeh (ed.) *The Economy of Iran: The Dilemmas of an Islamic State*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), p. 148.

[477] Ibid., p. 150.

[478] Ibid., p. 152.

The post-revolutionary politics culminated in a hybrid political system that aspired to be both a republic and Islamic system. The Islamic tenet of the system crystallized with the institutionalization of *vali-ye faqih* in the persona of Ayatollah Khomeini. After the demise of the monarchy by a popular revolution with strong motives for freedom, the post-Pahlavi Iran declared itself as a republic which has brought people's will into the fabric of politics. The complex institutional ensemble of the state included republican institutions of presidency and the parliament and principles such as separation of powers and regular elections. The republican political system of post-revolutionary Iran was modeled on the French Fifth Republic, but the highest authority in Iran's Republic was to be the faqih assuming temporal and spiritual authority through an institution modeled on vision, aspirations and qualifications of Ayatollah Khomeini.[479] From the outset, the Islamic Republic of Iran was an amalgam of revolutionary, republican and populist institutions reflecting the diverse social coalition and social struggles which determined the historical direction of state transformation with the revolution.[480] The complexity however would lead to incessant struggles among different state institutions and powerful personalities dominating these institutions.

The trajectory of state formation has shown that in the fight between legal and extra-legal institutions or republican and revolutionary (religious) institutions, populist institutions that were in control of mass mobilization were of enormous importance in political balance of power.[481] This has made populism one of the most salient features of post-revolutionary order, particularly an essential aspect of state-society relations in post-revolutionary Iran. Abrahamian in his prolific piece *Khomeinism* argues that "populism" was a more convenient term to describe Khomeini's political method than "fundamentalism", given his ideological flexibility instead of a fixed and unchanging

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[479] See Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 226.

[480] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, pp. 31-36.

[481] See Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*; Val Moghadam, "Islamic Populism, Class and Gender in Postrevolutionary Iran".

understanding of theological texts as well as ability to appeal to socio-economic and political grievances of people.[482] He defines populism as "a movement of the propertied middle class that mobilize the lower classes, especially the urban poor with radical rhetoric directed against imperialism, foreign capitalism and the political establishment."[483] In this regard Abrahamian observes that "revolution against the royalist elite" and "expulsion of Western imperialists" became the main themes that kept revolutionary fervor and mass mobilization alive and worked to institute the socio-economic order of the petty bourgeoisie through reconstruction of cultural, political and national "superstructure."[484] Khomeini's powerful discourse on the empowerment of the *mostazafin* brought him political advantage against liberal and leftist rivals. Indeed, it would be meaningful to argue for two major aspects of Khomeini's populism which entail economic populism and political populism. Accordingly as many scholars have shown Khomeini and his disciples were adamant to co-opt the "downtrodden" and sustain the revolutionary movement with economic populism through subsidization of basic needs items to protect the poor, reorientation of government expenditure toward lower income and rural sectors, increase in minimum wages and growing role of parastatal foundations (*bonyads*) in helping out the poor.[485]

The political populism of Iran's new rulers on the other hand resided on the political tradition of the 1970s based on the theme of anti-imperialism and strong political aspiration for Iran's independence. It is particularly in the context of political mobilization through anti-imperialist sentiments that political consolidation against contenders was achieved. As will be analyzed in the following section, international crisis with the United States would turn into a major political asset for Khomeinists to control the strong leftist and nationalist sentiment against imperialism and the United

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[482] See Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*, pp. 13-38.

[483] Ibid., p. 17.

[484] Ibid.

[485] See Val Moghadam, "Islamic Populism, Class and Gender in Postrevolutionary Iran", pp. 211-213.

States which had been blamed for all the mischief and social ills of Iranian society with the deposed Shah. The domestic consolidation of the clerical regime took place mainly during 1979-1982, which was a period of intense social strife through class struggle and ethnic unrest, coupled with political struggles to rule over the institutions of the state and control a mobilized society to build a new social order.[486]

The dramatic change in Iran-US relations in post-revolutionary times started in the same period. The next part of the chapter will offer an analysis of the revolutionary rupture in Iran's foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States and focus on the changing dynamics in Iran-US affairs with transformation of strategic, military and economic relations. The chapter will also analyze the role of the United States in political transformation of the country.

4.3. The "International" and State Transformation: Revolutionary Change, Crisis and Consolidation

As state and society were in throes of revolutionary change, so were Iran's international affairs and among these changes, the most striking of all was taking place in Iran's deteriorating relations with the United States. The revolution posed a radical rupture to the immense military, commercial and political ties established during the Shah era and the aftermath of the revolution became an era in which Iran and the United States transformed into adversaries.

The end of the Pahlavi monarchy was a grave and unexpected challenge to American interests in the Middle East. As Abrahamian aptly summarizes, the revolution ended the Nixon Doctrine in the Gulf; wiped out "the island of stability", the major customer of US high-tech military hardware, the main recycler of petrodollars, the second largest

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[486] Mansoor Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran", pp. 317-343; Val Moghadam, "Islamic Populism, Class and Gender in Post-revolutionary Iran", in John Foran (ed.), *A Century of Revolution: Social Movements in Iran*, pp. 189-222.

provider of reliable and relatively inexpensive oil to the US, beside it brought Israel loss of a valuable ally in the region.[487] According to Keddie, even though President Carter's emphasis on human rights may have influenced the Shah's liberalization policies and opened up the channels of dissent and opposition, eventually bringing the regime to an end, the US administration would have preferred a ruthless strategic ally to a lenient king and therefore did not pressure Iran much on human rights.[488] This was mainly because neither the US government, nor the US bourgeoisie wished to see a fundamental change in Iran's foreign policy orientation that might take it into a path of non-alignment or a search for a more independent and self-sufficient economy or reduction in arms or other profitable deals to the US economy.[489] Ironically, this was what would follow, once a popular revolution toppled the Shah from his Peacock Throne and started to refashion Iran's domestic order and international orientation through revolutionary credentials.

For Iran's revolutionaries, their revolution was a victory (*piroozi*) against the Shah and its imperial patron, the United States.[490] For a long time, the political consciousness of Iranian society viewed Iran's relations with US as a relation of subjugation to American designs and the revolution, they argued, restored Iran's political independence and posed

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[487] Ervand Abrahamian, "Empire Strikes Back: Iran in U.S Sights" in Bruce Cummings, Ervand Abrahamian and Moshe Ma'oz, *Inventing the Axis of Evil: The Truth about North Korea, Iran and Syria*, (New York: The New Press, 2004), p. 98. On the United States and the Islamic Revolution see Said Amir Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, pp. 128-133; Babak Ganji, *Politics of Confrontation: The Foreign Policy of the USA and Revolutionary Iran*, (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2006), pp. 62-117; see also Garry Sick, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter With Iran*, (Penguin Books, 1986).

[488] See Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution,* p. 165. But the policy and Shah's quite limited and cosmetic relaxation nevertheless encouraged liberal and secular groups to be more assertive in their political demands before political dissent evolved into a revolutionary movement. Ayatollah Khomeini advised the religious movement to take the same path and use every opportunity to make Shah's ruthless policies and repression known internationally. See Amir Ahmad Fekri, *Tarihsel Gelişim Sürecinde İran Devrimi*, (İstanbul, Mızrak, 2011), p. 168. Fekri quotes Mehdi Bazargan's *Enghelab-e Iran Dar Do Harekat*, Tehran 19884, p. 26.

[489] Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution,* p. 165.

[490] See Jamileh Kadivar, *Rooyarooyi: Enghelab-e Eslami-ye Iran va Amrika*, (*Encounter: Iran's Islamic Revolution and America*), (Tehran: Entesharat-e Ettela'at, 1374).

a blow to imperialism inflicting the Third World nations.[491] Therefore, from the very start, the direction of mutual relations in post-revolutionary epoch was fraught with uncertainty. Iran's revolutionary domestic politics would dictate the direction and bring a radical break to Iran's foreign policy toward the United States.

As a matter of fact, Iran-US relations did not collapse immediately after the revolution. Iran's strategic value in the volatile region did not change overnight, despite change in its political regime, and the US retained its interest in seeking collaboration with the new regime. President Carter on February 12, 1979 announced that the United States would "honor the will of the Iranian people." The PRG who took charge of the government held a moderate view of post-revolutionary foreign policy compared to more radical perspectives of Ayatollah Khomeini and the Leftist forces inside Iran.[492]

But, Iran through words and deeds made it clear that relations of the Shah era were over, as it canceled the 1959 Iran-US Defense Agreement and terminated the 1964 Iran-US Status of Forces Agreement which granted diplomatic immunity to US military personnel in Iran. It annulled 9 billion-worth arms contract with the US, except for the spare parts.[493] The Islamic Republic of Iran was no longer an ally of the United States; it declared its non-alignment and broke away from CENTO. The defining dictum of Iran's international orientation and vision of domestic development was thence "neither East, nor West, but the Islamic Republic" (*na shargi, na gharbi, jumhuri-ye islami*). It rejected alignment with both superpowers as well as their capitalist and socialist path to development.

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[491] Houman A. Sadri, *Revolutionary States, Leaders, and Foreign Relations: A Comparative Study of China, Cuba and Iran*, (London: Praeger, 1997), p. 88.

[492] See David Menashri, Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution, p. 97; Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, p. 138.

[493] Ibid.

Even though the PRG and the Revolutionary Council agreed on the principle of non-alignment; they diverged especially on its implications for Iran-US relations. For the moderate politicians of the PRG, non-alignment meant retaining relations with both superpowers, so long as it benefited Iran and posed no harm to its interests.[494] Karim Sanjabi, the first foreign minister of the Islamic Republic stated that Iran was prepared for "friendly relations" with the United States and other Western countries.[495] Actually, the Bazargan government did not see imperialism as the main threat and even considered it potentially helpful in dismantling of the Pahlavi regime.[496] Prime Minister Bazargan reportedly held meetings with the US ambassador in February 1979. Until its demise, the government attempted to improve relations with the US not to jeopardize Iran's relations with the capitalist world and it was through these efforts that Iran-America Commerce Bureau resumed its activities and the PRG paid the debts of the private banks to the American banks in order to attract foreign direct investment.[497] The Bazargan government aimed to restore pre-revolutionary commercial ties and capitalist relations as well, *albeit* in a limited manner not to raise the ire of the mobilized population.[498]

On the other hand, the Revolutionary Council's understanding of non-alignment was more radical. It defined non-alignment in terms of Iran's strictly defined independence and anti-imperialism, no matter how much isolation it brings.[499] Ayatollah Khomeini thus opposed Bazargan and his cabinet's moderate views on the US, arguing that once deposed its "American Shah", Iran at any cost should refuse and resist a possible return of US presence to Iran.[500] Soon, the initiative to set the policy vis-à-vis US and the

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[494] David Menashri, Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution, p. 97.

[495] Ibid.

[496] Mehdi Bazargan is quoted in Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982,* p. 127.

[497] Ibid., p. 138.

[498] Ibid.

[499] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 167.

[500] Shireen Hunter, *Iran and the World*, p. 60.

control of domestic politics would totally pass to the hands of the Revolutionary Council.

4.3.1. The "Second" Islamic Revolution: The Hostage Crisis

On November 4, 1979 a group of radical students identified with Imam's Line (*Khatt-e Imam*) seized the US Embassy in Tehran. The embassy held a strong symbolic presence in the political consciousness of Iranians as a place of "malicious imperial designs" that toppled the democratic Mosaddeq government through a CIA-orchestrated coup in 1953.[501] The students were galvanized by the admission of the deposed Shah to the United States for his cancer treatment. The news were received with fear and resentment as the Shah's presence in the US revived the historically vivid memory of Operation Ajax and the revolutionaries conspired that the incident was nothing, but a US plot to undo the revolution and topple the revolutionary government.[502] According to Milani, the opportune moment for seizure came, when Prime Minister Bazargan and Foreign Minister Yazdi met with Zbigniew Brzezinski in Algeria in late October 1979, which triggered unrest among the radical clergy and hard-line media out of the fear that this could be "the return of American influence."[503] Ayatollah Khomeini approved and supported the seizure hailing it as the "second" Islamic Revolution which completed the victory of the revolution by "settling the old scores" with the United States and seizing the "den of spies."[504]

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[501] See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 89.

[502] Babak Ganji, *Politics of Confrontation: The Foreign Policy of the USA and Revolutionary Iran*, pp. 148-149.

[503] Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, p. 166; Baqer Moin, *Khomeini*, p. 221. Foreign Minister Yazdi shortly before the meeting told that US would have to change its attitude toward the Iranian revolution, arguing that "any change depends on the United States, because the Iranian people succeeded in their revolution … and eliminated the domination of American power in Iran." in "Brzezinski and Bazargan hold first talks since February Revolution in Iran", *Reuters*, November 1, 1979, quoted in *Toledo Blade*, November 2, 1979.

[504] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 95.

Beyond its symbolic meaning for Iran's political history, the real importance of the embassy takeover soon became evident with its repercussions for the domestic configuration of power at a time of revolutionary change. By the time crisis broke out, the government and revolutionary clergy were in serious struggle over the institutionalization of clerical rule in the Constitution. Khomeini's support for Iran's radical "young men"[505] and his fierce anti-American rhetoric before and during the crisis brought him support from Iran's leftists- *albeit* not from all of them- who regarded Khomeini as a "progressive" clergy for his discourse favoring the dispossessed and his anti-imperialist stance compared to the "liberal, pro-American and pro-bourgeoisie position" of the PRG.[506] In his struggle against liberal-constitutionalists demanding a secular order and moderate foreign policy, support of the left was significant for consolidation of clerical regime and Khomeini used the crisis to ensure the approval of the constitution through anti-US mobilization of the masses. Moreover, the students confiscated documents that are not destroyed by the Embassy personnel and used these documents to de-legitimize Iranian politicians who were mentioned in the documents as anti-revolutionary.[507] Bazargan condemned the takeover as violation of international law and diplomacy and demanded the immediate and unconditional release of the US diplomats; yet unable to end the crisis, he had to resign.[508] His resignation tilted the

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[505] The common view on Khomeini's role in the incident argues that it was not him who ordered for the seizure of the embassy but once the incident broke out; he gave his support and sanctioned the students. The hostage-taking occurred in the heated revolutionary atmosphere marked by high level of mobilization and activism within the society. See Babak Ganji, *Politics of Confrontation: The Foreign Policy of the USA and Revolutionary Iran*, pp. 150-156 and Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, pp. 162-167.

[506] Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*, pp. 130-131. Khomeini was mainly supported by the Tudeh Party, which bolstered the anti-imperialist and anti-American position of the Khomeinists' for its "progressive" stance. The leader of the Tudeh Party, Kianuri in 1979 argued that the forces of the Shah era have not given up struggle and therefore "[t]o counter this danger and others which threaten the revolution, the communists propose that 'a united people's front for the destruction of foreign military bases and the elimination of imperialist political and economic influence all vestiges of reaction' be constituted among the revolutionary and democratic forces." See "Tudeh Leader United Front Embracing Khomeini's Lefwing" LD 101315, *Paris L'Humanite*, in French, 4 April 1979, p. 10. From the start, the radical leftists parties *Paykar* and *Fedai* declared their opposition and went underground.

[507] See Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*.

[508] Ibid., p. 166.

balance of power in favor of radical factions by "cleansing" the government from moderate elements. In fact, Bazargan government from its inception was never able to rule independently, which led him dub the provisional government as "a knife without a blade", paralyzed by pressure and intervention of revolutionary institutions. [509]

It was during the Hostage Crisis that Khomeini started to call the US the "Great Satan" which was, according to Beeman, a strong rhetorical devise and symbolic construct with an enduring appeal for the political culture and discourse of the Islamic Republic.[510] The crisis provided the regime with an enemy to unite against and helped it purge its liberal competitors in charge of the government at a time revolutionary coalition was fighting over Islamization of political and social order.[511] The US especially then onwards found its central place in the Manichean worldview and discourse of Iran's rulers representing the "greatest evil against the purity and righteousness of Iran" in post-revolutionary era.[512] During the crisis, anti-US rhetoric became a major tool for mass mobilization, as Ayatollah Khomeini constantly warned against the "underground treason" being devised in these embassies by the "great Satan, Carter" and called the hostages "the worst anti-God and anti-people criminals."[513] Khomeini's sermons and speeches were constantly calling for the necessity of unity against possible US encroachment to undo Iran's revolutionary victory. In one of those speeches he was declaring:

> Today while the issue of confrontation with America lies at the top of our Islamic agenda, if our forces disunite, this will benefit America and now our enemy is America and all our resources must be directed against this

[509] Ibid., pp. 143-154.

[510] William O. Beeman, *The "Great Satan" vs. The "Mad Mullahs": How the United States and Iran Demonize Each Other*, p. 119.

[511] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p.90.

[512] Ibid.

[513] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 147.

enemy….Today whatever disturbance which is directed in any other direction will be to their advantage.[514]

Notwithstanding the political assets of the crisis for domestic power dynamics inside Iran, the prolongation of crisis and growing humiliation of the US ended America's search for a *modus vivendi* with the Iranian regime. The Carter Administration responded with a ban on Iranian oil imports and later froze the official holdings of the Iranian government in US banking system, which amounted to $ 12 billion before Iran could withdraw them.[515] The US also froze the arms purchasing program started under the Shah, canceling or selling many of the weapons system including warships to other parties to pay for the costs of its terminating contracts.[516] In April 1980, the administration imposed an embargo on all trade with Iran and travel to Iran. With this protracted crisis, the fundamental military and economic connections between Iran and the United States started to break one by one.

Without doubt, the crisis had to terminate at some point. To release hostages, Iran demanded the extradition of the Shah from the US, the repatriation of his "plundered wealth" and an apology for US intervention in Iranian affairs.[517] Sanctions and embargo did not change Iran's behavior. Moreover, lack of an immediate US military response to the seizure was perceived as a sign of US weakness.[518] Revolutionary Iran in the words of Ayatollah Khomeini started to believe even more frankly that "America cannot do a damn thing!" The crisis concluded after 444 days with the Algiers Accord on January

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[514] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 34.

[515] Gary Sick, "The Carter Administration" in United States Peace Institute, *Iran Primer*, pp. 2-3. Online available at http://iranprimer.usip.org/sites/iranprimer.usip.org/files/The%20Carter%20Administration.pdf (accessed on June 30, 2012).

[516] Ibid.

[517] Ibid.

[518] Ibid., p. 152.

20, 1981 through the release of hostages and lifting of the US embargo on trade; however, it left the issue of frozen assets unresolved, as US retained its control over royal assets.[519]   The Accord also set up an Iran-US Claim Tribunal in Hague for addressing reciprocal claims.

The Hostage Crisis was a turning point in the self-definition of the revolutionary regime by entangling domestic political struggles with an international struggle defined particularly against the United States. The crisis strengthened revolutionary leadership's zeal to make defiance of the US the hallmark of its revolutionary and international identity. Being anti-American and anti-imperialist became the definitive aspect of being a revolutionary and Islamic in the Iranian context. In the immensely symbolic and allegoric political language of politics, equating embassy takeover to another revolution revealed the sense of victory against the US and its further integration into revolutionary pillar of the new state. The crisis left its imprint on US politics and with hindsight we can argue that it constituted the normative backdrop of American policy vis-à-vis the Islamic Republic in the coming epochs. It was after the Hostage Crisis that a staunch anti-Iran diplomatic and political front emerged in the US, composed of future architects and practitioners of antagonistic policies against Iran.[520] Iran since then became a bi-partisan adversary, uniting both the Democrats and the Republicans of the United States against itself.[521] As Shireen Hunter argues the outsiders tended to view Iran's political behavior as a "fanatical pursuit of a millenarian dream or a quest to establish a so-called Islamic world order" rather than as a "behavior of a revolutionary state at different

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[519] See Patrick Clawson, "US Sanctions" in United States Peace Institute, *Iran Primer*, p. 2. Online available at http://iranprimer.usip.org/sites/iranprimer.usip.org/files/U.S.%20Sanctions.pdf (accessed on June 30, 2012).

[520] See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 90. Ali Ansari also adds that the Hostage Crisis was a "televised drama" watched by millions of Americans who came to see Iran as an enemy headed by "lunatic" mullahs. The prolonging of trauma and humiliation thus engendered a hostile feeling among the public opinion as much as among politicians.

[521] Ibid. The scars of the Hostage Crisis would re-surface during the Democrat Party's Presidency under Clinton in the 1990s. President Carter himself a president from the Democrat Party paid fort he crisis by losing a second term in office.

stages of its internal consolidation and adaptation to its external setting."[522] Houman Sadri in his comparative study of foreign policies of revolutionary Iran, Cuba and China likewise contends that seemingly "irrational or irregular" foreign behavior of these states were mostly based on their own interpretation of events and had a rationale related to the peculiarities brought by "massive, violent and rapid social change."[523] Seen in this vein, Iran was pulled apart by contending rationalities of revolutionary struggle at home and as a member of international community.

4.3.2. After the Hostage Crisis: Iran's De-linking from the West and Islamization of Society and Politics

The crisis served both to humiliate the American leadership and purge domestic rivals of the Islamist revolutionaries. The developments since the Hostage Crisis demonstrate the growing pace of Iran's de-linking from the West and Islamization of its society and politics. The revolutionary turmoil and the crisis it generated apparently have brought a new political context for contestations within the state and state-society affairs.

4.3.2.1. Transformation of Economic Relations between Iran and the US

With the sidelining of Bazargan's government, Iran-US relations started to deteriorate. Having purged liberal-constitutionalist elites, the government was truly in the hands of the clergy, which was an organic part of Iran's traditional petty bourgeoisie, diametrically opposed to Iran's integration into Western capitalism viewed with concern for Iranian markets and traditional values.[524] During and after the conclusion of the grave political crisis with the US, massive economic linkages established in the Shah era

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[522] Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran and the World: Continuity in a Revolutionary Decade*, p. 4.

[523] Houman A. Sadri, *Revolutionary States, Leaders, and Foreign Relations: A Comparative Study of China, Cuba and Iran*, p. 2 and 10.

[524] See Hossein Bashiriyeh, *The State and Revolution in Iran: 1962-1982*.

through oil companies, banking sector, consumer and capital goods exports started to vanish one by one. Military agreements were already canceled. Iran's new political elite had no appetite for sustaining relations with the US, which "plagued" Iran for so many years. With the approval of the Constitution, Iran's quest for "economic independence" was confirmed which prohibited foreign concessions and borrowing for self-sufficiency. Economic independence was seen as a *sine qua non* of political independence and the "Islamic model" that the revolutionary cadres aspired to build.[525]

In post-revolutionary era, the contracts with the Oil Consortium and other oil companies were canceled and the government started to sell its oil directly in the market without any intermediaries.[526] US oil embargo during the Hostage Crisis worsened the oil sector, which suffered from oil strikes and disruptions by rampant sabotage in post-revolutionary era.[527] The revolution ended previous employment opportunities for foreigners in Iran's oil industry, as they fled Iran and an expanded NIOC almost entirely dependent on Iranian personnel took full responsibility of the oil sector.[528] Moreover as Fatemi argues Iran's moderating role in OPEC was subject to change as it started to push for higher prices and strengthened the position of the hard-liners.[529]

The financial system was at the heart of the "Islamization" of economy and banking and insurance sectors were among the first institutions to be nationalized and reorganized

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[525] "Economy x. Under the Islamic Republic" in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, Vol. VIII, Fasc. 2, pp. 156-163, online available at: http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/economy-x-under-the-islamic-republic (accessed on July 30, 2012).

[526] Ibid., p. 160.

[527] Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", p. 309.

[528] Djavad Salehi-Isfahani, "The Oil Sector after the Revolution" in Saeed Rahnema and Sohrab Behdad (eds.), *Iran after the Revolution: Crisis of an Islamic State*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 1995), p. 158.

[529] Khosrow Fatemi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Impact on Economic Relations with the United States", p. 309.

alongside the "Islamic" precepts mostly understood as their interest-free operation.[530] Foreign banks which linked Iran's financial system to global finance capitalism had to leave Iran after the revolution. The US exports to Iran also plummeted to negligible levels from its former domination of Iran's capital and consumer goods exports.[531] Iran seemingly constructed its new political and economic order through de-linking from Western capitalist and political relations as much as possible. The most formidable impediment was, however its "dependent capitalism" built on the oil sector which will be elaborated more in detail in the concluding remarks.[532] Nevertheless, in this process of rectifying Western presence, the next step would be the Islamization of the society.

4.3.2.2. Towards the Consolidation of the Islamic state: Islamization of Society

The Hostage Crisis by precipitating the fall of the Bazargan government resulted in a significant reconfiguration of domestic order. By the end of 1979, however, the political struggle of the clergy was far from complete, as it still faced a strong leftist presence in Iran active in labor councils and universities. Since Islamization of the state has turned a critical corner with the constitution, the ruling elite deemed it right to embark on Islamization of society through "Cultural Revolution" in April 1980. As Moghadam argues this move has been a significant component of the struggle for hegemony which would not be complete simply through control over politics and economic policy and required an "Islamic" refashioning of culture, identity and authenticity.[533]

To consolidate its power over left-dominated student councils and to "rectify the *gharbzadegi*" rampant in the universities due to Western-minded, "liberal" professors,

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[530] "Economy x. Under the Islamic Republic" in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, p. 161.

[531] Ibid., p. 163.

[532] See M. H. Pesaran, "The System of Dependent Capitalism in Pre- and Post-Revolutionary Iran", pp. 501-522.

[533] Val Moghadam, "Islamic Populism, Class and Gender in Postrevolutionary Iran", p. 196.

the regime's next target was universities and their curricula.[534] Women and gender relations were also objects of regime's robust war against "Western cultural imperialism." In summer 1980, veiling was imposed on women to rectify their "vulnerability" to *gharbzadegi* through intense political campaign of the regime purporting that women by veiling were protecting both themselves and the whole society from Western imperialism.[535] Women with *hejab* hence became the symbols of Islamization of the public sphere; together with Iran's fierce anti-US rhetoric, compulsory veiling became the hallmark of the emerging Islamic order. As in modernization, in revolution and its anti-imperialism, woman body was at the forefront of political symbolism and rhetoric.

The struggle between Islamization of state and centralization of power under state authority continued even after Bazargan was sidelined. Prior to the outbreak of Iran-Iraq War in September 1980, President Bani Sadr, receiving the majority of votes in the first presidential election in the Islamic Republic was in a political fight with the IRP over control of the powers of *Pasdaran*, revolutionary courts and committees, whose unbridled acts hampered centralization of power and normalization of politics.[536] As noted above they were almost a state within a state that struggled to control the polity. The revolutionary courts turned into execution machines of "royalists", executing 900 people between May and September 1980. Meanwhile purges from Pahlavi bureaucracy

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[534] Ibid., p. 205. Another political struggle was to unfold between the sent troops of Revolutionary Guards and the Leftist groups of *Paykar*, *Fada'i* and *Mojaheden-e Khalq* which resisted abiding by the rulings of the Islamists. The IRP closed universities for two years to purge anti-revolutionary elements "at the service of the West" and to Islamize their administrations and education.

[535] Ibid. Obviously imposed veiling was not the only problem of women in post-revolutionary era. They were deprived of their legal rights under the Family Protection Law and the Family Courts with the suspension of the law by the Islamic regime. They were subjugated to gender subjugation in the workplace, encouraged to quit the civil service and barred from becoming judges and lawyers as well as from other "unsuitable" fields of study such as agriculture, veterinary science and some branches of engineering. See Haleh Esfandiari, "The Politics of the 'Women's Question' in the Islamic Republic, 1979-1999", in John L. Esposito and R. K. Ramazani, (eds.), *Iran at the Crossroads*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 79-82.

[536] See Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, p. 185.

and military reached to 4000 civil servants and more than 10,000 military officers by then.[537] By April 1980, the Kurdish uprising resumed, which received support from leftist opposition to the regime. Meanwhile, Bani Sadr's attempt to seize control through his commander-in-chief position in the newly started Iran-Iraq war was fruitless in the face of rising national mobilization behind the Islamists and their enhanced administrative and control over state and society by the war. His opposition to IRP gradually turned Khomeini against him and he was impeached with claims discrediting him as a "CIA agent."[538] The latest domestic challenge to the regime's consolidation was its ruthless fight with its Islamist-Marxist rival *Mojaheden-e Khalq* throughout June 1981 until 1982. The fight was intensified by blasts allegedly purported by the Mojaheden killing important members of the political elite including the secretary of the IRP Ayatollah Beheshti and President Raja'i and Prime Minister Ayatollah Bahonar in June and August 1981.[539] In the end, the Islamists came out victorious with better political organization, coercive power and popular mobilization which were strengthened by Saddam Hussein's aggression on Iran.[540]

4.4. The State, Society and the International during 1982-1989

By 1982 Khomeini and his disciples consolidated their power over state institutions and society by reigning over liberal, leftist and ethnic challengers. They have sidelined Mehdi Bazargan, impeached Bani Sadr and demolished leftist opposition from *Mojaheden* and *Fedai*, while leaving Tudeh untouched until 1983 for its tactical support. The constitution was approved and the republican institutions were then under clerical

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[537] Shaul Bakhash, *The Reign of Ayatollahs*, pp. 112-113 quoted in Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, p. 179.

[538] See Bahman Baktiari, *Parliamentary Politics in revolutionary Iran: The Institutionalization of Factional Politics*, (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1996), p. 74.

[539] Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, p. 188.

[540] Ibid.

control. In 1981 Khomeini issued his Eight-Point Declaration which ordered revolutionary authorities to fully respect the sanctity of private property and toned down his fierce populist rhetoric on the fight of the oppressed against the oppressor which infuriated the poor not only against the royalist elite and the multinational corporations but also against the propertied middle class.[541] Abrahamian aptly observes that the *mostazafin* no longer denoted the deprived masses, but those who supported the new regime including the wealthy *bazaar* merchants.[542]

The political elite did not speak with one voice over economy and foreign policy of Iran. Despite his charismatic leadership, factionalism was rampant even during Khomeini era among the IRP members, who were roughly divided as Islamic leftists and traditional conservatives.[543] Khomeini pledged to build an "Islamic" system of government and economy, but as Nomani and Behdad argue, the post-revolutionary leadership did not have any clear idea about the parameters of the new ideal economic order and all that they could declare was that it would be Islamic.[544] For Khomeini, the ideal of an Islamic order was much more exalted than material considerations, as he declared "Iran's Islamic Revolution was not about the price of melons." However, running a state and modern economy, coupled with severe social struggles for redistribution and equality, economy was as much important as the political victory of the clergy and the diverse coalition it led in toppling the Shah.

The Islamist leftists advocated a greater involvement of the state in economy, while the traditional right supported the "rolling back of the state" and greater role for the

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[541] Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*, p. 51.

[542] Ibid., p. 52.

[543] For an in-depth analysis of factionalism during Khomeini era, see Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, pp. 47-81.

[544] See Farhad Nomani and Sohrab Behdad, *Class and Labor in Iran: Did the Revolution Matter?*, p. 39.

bourgeoisie.[545] The former emphasized social justice and redistribution of wealth, whereas the latter argued that growth must be the key stone of an Islamic economy.[546] In this era, the fundamental divisions over redistribution, land reform, labor law and nationalization of foreign trade continued basically between an Islamist-leftist dominated *Majles* and the traditional-right dominated Council of Guardians.[547] Abrahamian notes that from 1981 to 1987, the Council of Guardians vetoed some one hundred bills including those on land reform, labor law, nationalization of foreign trade.[548] By 1983 with the rejection of the bills by the Council, which became a stronghold of mercantile and landed interest, the social revolutionary movements were effectively suppressed and contained within the existing economic structures and their concerns were removed from the government's agenda despite continuous rhetoric on the struggle for the rights of the oppressed.[549] By 1982, the properties of over 230 of the richest capitalists of the Shah era were nationalized which together with other nationalizations amounted to over 80 percent of state control on private industry.[550]

Aside from economy, foreign policy of the Islamic Republic was also a highly contested realm. During his lifetime, the charismatic and constitutional authority of Ayatollah Khomeini over all branches of government and power elite helped him establish full

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[545] See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, pp. 64-65.

[546] "Economy x. Under the Islamic Republic" in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, pp. 156-163.

[547] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 87; Mansoor Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 319.

[548] Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*, p. 55.

[549] Mansoor Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 328.

[550] The Revolutionary Council passed the Law for the Protection and Expansion of Iranian Industry which nationalized Iran's industries in three broad categories: (1) heavy industry, including metals, automobile assembly, chemicals, ship building, aircraft manufacturing and mining, (2) industries owned by fifty specific businessmen and one family who allegedly acquired wealth through influence over the Pahlavi regime and (3) industries in economic difficulties with liabilities exceeding net assets. See Mansoor Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 324.

control over both domestic and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic.[551] Yet, even after the consolidation of the Islamic regime, factionalism among his disciples over foreign policy issues went unabated and his balancing attitude to prevent domination of one faction over the other resulted in foreign policy zigzags.[552] According to Ramazani, factionalism in foreign policy stemmed from "a lack of normative consensus" over the fundamental questions that Iranians have faced throughout their history about "their organized existence as what they are as a society, as a nation and as a state and what their place is in the world."[553] It would remain as a persistent pattern in Iranian politics and foreign policy, so long as political elite and the social formations they represent lacked normative consensus over identity and objectives of the polity. Afrasiabi argues that tensions over foreign policy reflected inherent duality of post-revolutionary state, which he dubs as the "quasi-state", structured both as a social movement and the state.[554] The tensions arising from the hybrid structure would make its impact felt in different epochs of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation with varying degrees.

4.5. Post-revolutionary State and Foreign Policy

The constitution of the Islamic Republic crystallized the revolutionary mantra in foreign policy of the state. Article 154 of the constitution stipulated that "while scrupulously refraining from all forms of interference in the internal affairs of other nations, it supports the just struggles of the *mustazafin* against the *mustakbarin* in every corner of the globe.[555] As far as the epoch of revolution and war is concerned, the above-

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[551] Asghar Schirazi, *The Constitution of Iran: Politics and the State in the Islamic Republic*, pp. 68-73.

[552] See Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, (Boulder: West View Press, 1994), pp. 9-55.

[553] Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 255.

[554] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy,* p. 19.

[555] See an online version of the Iranian Constitution, available at: http://www.iranchamber.com/government/laws/constitution_ch10.php#sthash.LwNN9kee.dpuf

mentioned hybridity prompted Iran to seek transnational and national objectives simultaneously. The cleavages at the center of Iran's foreign policy during this epoch were basically related to its war and export of revolution policy. The *Hojjatiyeh* society demanded continuation of war and Iran's export of revolution through use of force.[556] They adopted an anti-diplomacy "people-to-people" foreign policy and rejected foreign ministry's institutional control over foreign policy and instead supported Revolutionary Guards' special unit formed to support Islamic liberation movements abroad.[557] The militants inside the state wanted to push the mantle of export as far as smuggling arms and financing solidarity movements, using the Hajj occasion for spreading the message of revolution among the pilgrims.[558] Curiously this line of thought was even farther right than Khomeini's initial position, which gradually softened on the theme of export to break Iran's isolation. On the other side of the debate, the *Maktabis* comprising Khomeini's former students adopted a more internationalist outlook, more inclined to accept international system pragmatically and emphasize the importance of the nation state, the "Islamic Republic", over the *umma.*[559] According to Afrasiabi, the revolutionary elite remained unaware of their nationalist impulse accompanying their "pan-Islamist ethos", for they defined nationalism either as a "Western-imported ideology" as Muttahari and Davari did or as a "pre-Islamic legacy" as Khomeini did.[560] The ideologues however separated "love of the country" from nationalism and regarded

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[556] The Hojjatiyeh society was an ultra right wing religious organization established in the 1930s with advocacy of purification of the Muslim society from Bahais and Communists. The organization owned companies, schools, hospitals and financial institutions and it had sympathizers within the ulama, parliament, the government and the Council of Guardians. It was opposed to Khomeini's notion of velayat-e faqih as much as radical economic change. In the post-revolutionary era notes Moaddel, the merchants and landowners were directly aided by the society. See Mansour Moaddel, "Class Struggle in Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 334.

[557] Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 257; Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 25.

[558] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 25.

[559] Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 257.

[560] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 16.

it as perfectly natural and legitimate.[561] But such recognition did not yield a settling of the tension between the nature of interests emanating from love of the country and pan-Islamist transnational objectives.[562] The historical trajectory of post-revolutionary state in fact endowed Ayatollah Khomeini with two roles. As argued by scholars like Rizvi, Khomeini acted not only as the head of the state, but also as an aspiring leader of the Muslim world.[563]

Moreover, the diverging attitude toward export of revolution and Iran's international orientation reflected the proliferation of actors within the state that attempted to interfere in foreign policy making. Accordingly a number of other centrifugal forces within the Revolutionary Guards as well as private and semi-private foundations such as the bonyad named the Fifteenth of Khordad pursued their "self-style revolutionary agendas" and resisted and obstructed attempts aiming at centralization of foreign policy decisions.[564] In the epoch of revolution and war, the formal authority of the state was not yet established over informal centers of power.[565] Nevertheless, Khomeini's presence and dominance in the political system gave direction to Iran's foreign policy against all discord and diversion, as it was his preferences and worldview that shaped the foreign orientation of the new state to the greatest extent.[566]

But it was equally important to note that Iran's experimentation with war and international affairs shaped and limited this in-built duality of the state, its foreign policy decisions. Likewise, the power of political factions kept changing with domestic and international conjuncture. The meaning and extent of export of revolution policy also

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[561] Ibid.

[562] Ibid., p. 17.

[563] See M. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, "Velayat-e Faqih (Supreme Leader) and Iranian Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 36, No.1, 2012, p. 115.

[564] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, pp. 27-28.

[565] Ibid.

[566] Ibid.

took shape in the light of political and military developments during the war. The following section attends to the evolution of Iran's export of revolution policy while mainly reflecting on the formative influence of war on state and state-society affairs and the state of Iran-US relations throughout the war.

4.5.1. The Revolutionary State and the Iran-Iraq War

Doubtlessly, it was the protracted war with Iraq that has fundamentally shaped the institutions, ideology and economy of the state, state-society affairs and international affairs of Iran. Together with the revolutionary struggles, war efforts have been constitutive of state and its foreign policy in post-revolutionary Iran.

By September 1980, Iran's revolutionary transformation was further compounded by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Iran. Saddam Hussein perceived Iran's revolutionary re-structuring and ongoing entanglement in an international crisis with the US as an "opportunity" to exploit Iran's alleged weakness in order to claim its Arab-populated, oil-rich province Khuzestan, resolve Shatt-al Arab dispute in Iraq's favor and if possible to overthrow the revolutionary regime.[567] The war and aggression on Iran's territorial integrity kept national concerns alive in addition to growing transnational imagination of the revolutionary leaders.

Indeed, tensions were already on the rise right after the revolution. Iran resented the mistreatment of Iraq's Shiite population by the ruthless, secular, Sunni Saddam regime as well as Iraq's meddling in Khuzestan.[568] For Iraq, as for other Persian Gulf states with

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[567] See Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1988), and Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 97.

[568] Menashri notes that by the end of 1979 the propaganda war between Iran and Iraq based on Khomeini's pan-Islamism versus Saddam's pan-Arabism had intensified. While Iran clung to ideological assaults, it was Iraq which engaged in border clashes and armed confrontation which would soon turn into an open war with Iran. Iran's propaganda was based on de-legitimizing the Ba'athist regime as "an enemy of Qoran and Islam", its tyrannical nature against the oppressed, "a puppet of world-devouring imperialism", its leader Saddam as a "mentally ill", "puppet Satan" while trying to distinguish the fraternal Iraqi people

large, poor and deprived Shiite populations, Iran's revolutionary message calling up to the Muslims of the region and the world to emulate its model and topple their illegitimate rulers was also threatening.[569] In a warning particularly issued for Saddam Hussein before the start of the war, Khomeini admonished that any repressor shall taste the fate of the Shah.[570] In September 1980 Saddam attacked revolutionary Iran with great expectations, only to see that a quick victory against the Islamic Republic was unrealistic and he was wrong in his calculations over Iran's revolutionary weakness and demoralization of its armed forces.[571]

By the summer of 1982, Iran achieved to repulse Iraqi forces from its territory with the *Khorramshahr* victory. The war could have ended in 1982, but Iranian leaders *chose* to prolong it and decided to pursue Iraqi troops on their own soil. This move, together with American and regional reactions to "contain" the revolution and prevent a likely Iraqi defeat sustained one of the longest and bloodiest wars of the 20th century until 1988.

If revolution as a radical disruption of social order sent shock waves and constituted Iran's regional and international affairs anew; as Fred Halliday aptly argues, war was the reaction of the regional/international against massive social and political change brought by the revolution.[572] Revolution and war in this sense demonstrated the co-constitutive relationship between the domestic and the international. Iran's revolutionary change re-structured its domestic setting as well as its regional environment through radical shifts

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from its illegitimate ruler and regime. See David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, pp. 101-102 and 157-158.

[569] See David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 96; Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 24.

[570] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 96.

[571] On the Iran-Iraq War, see Efraim Karsh, *Essential Histories: The Iran-Iraq War 1980-1988*, (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2002); Lawrence G. Potter and Gary G. Sick (eds.), *Iran, Iraq and the Legacies of War*, (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2004).

[572] See Fred Halliday, *Rethinking International Relations*, pp. 124-146.

in its political agency. By the same token war did not remain in the battlefields. It restructured the state, state-society relations and state's regional and international agency through its response and strategy to the exigencies of war. War can be seen as an intervention by the external to curtail disruptive change in society and weaken the state by exhausting it in two fronts. While analyzing the transformation of state after the revolution, it is equally important to understand the formative impact of war on institutions, ideology, political economy and foreign policy of the state as well as the damage and challenges it brings for the society which entails a long-run recovery. The next part of the chapter will examine the politics, strategy and ideology of war in the context of Iran's revolutionary transformation and the impact of war on state-society relations in terms of increasing centralization and control of state over society. The chapter will later locate Iran-US relations and Iran's policy toward the US in the historical context of war and shed light on Iran's simultaneous efforts for post-revolutionary consolidation.

4.5.1.1. Iran's War policy: Ideology and Strategy

Iran's decision to continue fighting was to some extent motivated by Iran's changing perception of the international and its place in it. The revolutionary leadership viewed the 1982 victory as a sign of their righteous path in a war they deemed a holy struggle between Islam and the infidels.[573] The political elite adhered to the slogan of "war, war until victory!" hoping to topple the Saddam regime in the end and establish an "Islamic Republic in Iraq."[574] With the war, "export of revolution" (*sudur-e inqelab*) became the major theme of Iran's foreign policy in the epoch of revolution and war.

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[573] See Fred Halliday, *Nation and Religion in the Middle East*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), pp. 109-128. Halliday in his pertinent review of historical evolution of "the conflict of Arabs and Persians" exemplifies how history is evoked by both warring parties in their discourse. Iraq portrayed Khomeini as "magus" a Zoroastrian priest to cite the ancient conflict between Mesopotamia and Medes besides invoking the war of Qadissiya which marked Iran's conquest by Arab armies in the 7th century, while Iran portrayed Saddam Hussein as Yazid, the Umayyad caliph who killed Hussein in Karbala in 680 AD. For the analysis on Iran-Iraq war, see especially pp. 110-113 and 120-125.

[574] See David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 250.

Ehteshami argues that after the revolution, the principles of Iran's foreign policy were mainly derived from revolutionary slogans of "neither east, nor west" and "export of revolution."[575] Exporting the revolution aimed at spreading Iran's revolutionary message and "Islamic model" not only within the Muslim world, but even beyond it. Carved with strong Third Worldist anti-imperialist rhetoric, the Khomeinists championed fighting "world arrogance" and the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor.[576] The idea was rooted in Khomeini's and his followers' conception of the international as an inherently unjust and imposed order on weaker nations, and they believed that the oppressed only by means of revolutionary struggle could break away from injustice.[577]

Iran's revolutionary slogans found their way into institutions and policy-making only after domestic balance of power shifted to the radicals. In this regard, growing radicalization was directly related with the elimination of moderate political figures such as Bazargan and Bani Sadr. In this context, the export of revolution could institutionalize after the impeachment of President Bani Sadr, who was opposed to the idea for its detrimental impact on Iran's relations with Muslim countries and tried to assure regional states of Iran's good intentions during his tenure.[578] The integration of spreading Iran's words and Islamic model into state policy and institutions materialized with the

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[575] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*.

[576] In this regard, while the Article 11 of the Constitution bound foreign policy to the principle that "all Muslims belong to a single community" which entrusted the government with the task of striving for the unification of Islamic people, an even broader scope for support was discernable in Articles 152 and 154 of the Constitution which endorsed that "while completely refraining from any interference in the internal matters of other nations, the Islamic Republic of Iran supports the rightful struggle of the oppressed people against their oppressors anywhere in the world." See Chapter X of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Foreign Policy which comprises Art. 152-155, online available at: http://www.iranchamber.com/government/laws/constitution_ch10.php (accessed on May 26, 2012) and Asghar Schirazi, *The Constitution of Iran: Politics and the State in the Islamic Republic*, p. 11.

[577] See Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 21 and also Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 6.

[578] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 97.

establishment of an umbrella organization, named Islamic Revolutionary Council which comprised the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the Islamic Revolution Movement of the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain.[579] Prime Minister Mousavi also set up a committee to "determine the basis of the foreign policy from an ideological perspective" and worked on a "plan for an Islamic front" worldwide.[580]

The regional context shaped the scope of Iran's newfound revolutionary agency. In addition to Iraq and the Gulf monarchies, Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 made Lebanon another spot for Iran's revolutionary activism. The invasion took place at a time Iran had chosen to prolong its war on Iraq. The plight of Shiite Muslims and Iran's ideological enmity against Israel qualified Lebanon as a target for Iran's outreach. As Ramazani observes after the revolution, Iran-Israeli relations suffered from even a more abrupt and quicker end compared to Iran-US relations. For Khomeini and his disciples Israel was the "foster-child of imperialism", a foreign "plot" placed at the very heart of Islamic world by foreign powers.[581] Iran's revolutionaries detested Israel as much for the plight of Palestinians and the occupation of holy city Jerusalem (*Quds*) as for Israel's complicity in supporting the Shah's corrupt regime and his brutal secret service apparatus.[582] Bringing a solution to the Palestinian problem and "liberation of Jerusalem" became fundamental themes in Iran's foreign policy discourse. Iranian revolutionaries believed in the necessity of eradication of the Zionist regime and establishment of a Palestinian state by armed struggle.[583]

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[579] Said Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini: Iran Under His Successors*, (Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 134.

[580] Ibid., p. 135.

[581] David Menashri, *Post-Revolutionary Politics in Iran: Religion, Society and Power*, (London: Frank Cass, 2001), p. 263.

[582] See Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 160.

[583] Ibid.

After the invasion Iran dispatched Revolutionary Guards troops to train Shiite militias, which were stationed in Lebanon with the logistical support of Syria and helped the formation of Hezbollah to perform "Islamic resistance" against Israel.[584] Apart from this critical military support, Iran was reportedly providing financial aid and engaging with the Shiite clergy for a "cultural" export of its revolution.[585] Beeman argues that it was mainly through the *bonyads* under the control of Shiite clerics that Hezbollah received financial aid from Iran and once it had developed, it had taken a life of its own despite cultural and ideological affinities with Iran's Islamic Republic.[586] However, the role of the IRGC in the formation of Hezbollah resulted in association of every act of the organization with the Islamic regime and the Islamic regime was in turn identified with terrorism despite lack of factual evidence for its complicity in allegedly Hezbollah-related incidents in the 1980s particularly targeting US troops stationed in Lebanon.[587] The regime on the other hand defined its relations with Hezbollah in the context of its support for liberation/resistance movements against oppression, which has become of the defining principles of its post-revolutionary foreign policy.[588]

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[584] Iran's ambassador to Syria in the early 1980s, Ali Akbar Mohtashami has been a key actor in providing financial, military and political support for the creation of the "Party of God." Norton argues that Hezbollah throughout the 1980s stood close to Iran's line. The programmatic document of the Party resonated with Iran's emphasis on "downtrodden". It declared that "the Muslim's experience in Islamic Iran left no one any excuse since it proved beyond all doubt that bare chests motivated by faith are capable, with God's help, of breaking the iron and oppression of tyrannical regimes" and embraced Iran's dictum of "neither east, nor west" as well as Ayatollah Khomeini's views of United States as "the reason for all our catastrophe and the source of all malice." See Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 35-37; Gary Sick, "Iran: Confronting Terrorism", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 4, 2003, p. 85.

[585] Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, pp. 184-186.

[586] William O. Beeman, *The "Great Satan" vs. The "Mad Mullahs": How the United States and Iran Demonize Each Other*, pp. 141-142, see also Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 101.

[587] Hezbollah is widely believed to get involved in the bombings of the US Marines barrack and the US embassy in Lebanon in 1983 as well as the killing and hostage-taking Americans and others throughout the 1980s. The last Western hostage held captive by Hezbollah was not released until 1991. See Gary Sick, Confronting Terrorism, p. 85; Augustus R. Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History*, pp. 41-42.

[588] In the mid-80s as initial signs of moderation in Iran's foreign policy show, the regime started to use its- somehow exaggerated- control over Hezbollah as a bargaining chip in its dealings with the US, i.e. pledging return of US hostages in Lebanon for arms supply. See Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*.

Without doubt, Iran's policy of exporting its revolution reflected the revolutionary fervor and entailed a strong ideological motive. Scholars like Ramazani, however stress the geopolitical rationale behind the policy of "export of revolution".[589] The meaning, scope and means of export of revolution policy in time started to change alongside international costs and domestic configuration of power. In 1982 Iran made some clarifications about its policy, arguing that what it sought by export was rather a cultural and ideological export, "not export of cannons, tanks and soldiers."[590] President Khamenei asserted that Iran's support for liberation was "first of all spiritual" and it had "no intention of forcing revolution over others."[591] These moves together with Iran's "regular" diplomacy with increased participation in international assemblies and development of bilateral relations with the Third World countries and liberation movements signaled its attempts to rectify its warlike image and reach out to nonaligned countries to receive international support for its war with Iraq.[592]

4.5.2. War and Change in State and State-Society Relations

The war with Iraq proved decisive for state-society relations in the foundational epoch. The domestic social strife and unrest was then coupled with aggression of an external enemy which enhanced the autonomy of the state. The war proved a "blessing" (*barakat)* for consolidation of the state in many respects.[593] It strengthened state's coercive arms-both the army (*artesh*) and the Revolutionary Guards and particularly played a central role in the evolution of *pasdaran* into a "military-Islamic" force, whose

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[589] Ibid.

[590] The quote belongs to Ali Akbar Velayati, then-Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic, see David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 247.

[591] Ibid.

[592] Ibid.

[593] Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic,* pp. 180-181; David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 230.

help had been of enormous importance both for the war effort and domestic consolidation.[594] Milani argues that the war also solidified the organic link between the clergy and lower classes, as the clergy administered the *Basiji*s and the bulk of *Basij* militia, the popular army of volunteers, came from lower classes.[595] Together with the *pasdaran*, *basijis* constituted the backbone of Iran's "human waves" infantry tactics aimed at compensating lack of weapons with zealous youth seeking martyrdom in the battlefields. During the war, state-building was achieved through incorporation of autonomous revolutionary institutions into state bureaucracy in addition to growing institutionalization of the state through creation of war-related agencies.[596]

The war fortified national mobilization behind Ayatollah Khomeini, while strengthening paramilitary, media, propaganda and intelligence services of the state and resulting in greater control and surveillance of the society.[597] There was a rise of patriotic feeling among the population, which united against the enemy in an act of national self-defense.[598] For the leaders of the Islamic Republic, the war was an "imposed war" (*jang-e tahmili*) perpetrated by forces of imperialism and Iran understood and portrayed its fight against the enemy in terms of the fight of the oppressed against the oppressor.[599] Thus the domestic revolutionary theme of oppression resonated at the international/regional level and war turned into a continuation of Iran's idealistic struggle at a different level. In this "holy" struggle in the name of the revolution and all the oppressed nations of the world, the state was able to mobilize society, at least for a

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[594] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 230.

[595] Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, p. 180.

[596] Val Moghadam, "Islamic Populism, Class and Gender in Postrevolutionary Iran", p. 209.

[597] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 110.

[598] Ibid., p. 97.

[599] Ibid., p. 100.

while, against material hardships caused by the war, declaring these difficulties as bearable costs of independence.[600] Therefore, the war became a blessing for diverting attention of Iranian society away from deterioration of economy, suppression of political and social liberties and domestic rifts as Khamene'i, then President of the Islamic Republic himself expressed.[601]

Meanwhile in post-revolutionary Iran, the society hoped to find greater freedom, independence and welfare once the Pahlavi regime was toppled. However, soon after the revolution, social struggles for radical restructuring of economy and demands for democracy and participation were suppressed. Workers, peasants and women were subject to domination by mercantile, landed and patriarchal interests. War also played its part in state's increasing control of the society. Panah argues that social populism of the revolution, which stressed regime's existence for the oppressed and barefooted gave way to "war populism", which placed survival and victory above all political and socio-economic concerns of the society.[602] During the political, economic and ideological austerity of war years, debates over democracy and aspirations for improvement of socio-economic conditions had to await the war to end.[603]

The Islamic regime in this era embarked on refashioning its society through Islamization and sought to create what Moghadam calls an undifferentiated "Muslim people" by disregarding the complexities of class, ethnicity and cultural aspirations and placing them against the West and its domestic associates.[604] While social dissent and criticism

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[600] Ibid. p. 112.

[601] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 230. For a comprehensive review of economic challenges in the first decade of the Islamic Republic, see Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, pp. 77-99.

[602] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 111.

[603] The origins of reform movement shall be sought in society's quest for materialization of revolution's republican virtues which will be covered in detail during analysis of the Khatami era.

[604] Val Moghadam, "Islamic Populism, Class and Gender in Postrevolutionary Iran", pp. 206-207.

emanating from lower classes were suppressed by the state, the war seemingly enhanced state's relations with the *bazaar* community, as a remarkable portion of funds to finance the war effort were provided by the *bazaari* assistance.[605] The bazaaris also came to play a greater role in parliamentary politics with increasing number of representatives in the *Majlis* with the second parliamentary elections held in 1984.[606] During the war, the power of the clergy was enhanced by its central role in the distribution network of essential goods through rationing due to war shortages. As the rich could obtain these goods from black market, lower and middle classes were dependent on the local mosques and the *Komiteh*s for the supplies, which effectively turned them into an influential economic force at the community level.[607] During the war years, the ruling bloc of the Islamic Republic took further shape with the strengthening of clerical power and bazaar's economic and political fortunes. However, the domestic function of war for mobilization and control over society reached its limits with crisis in economy and war-fatigue society. Apparently, geopolitical pressure and exigencies of the war posed the outer limit straining state's autonomy to go along with the war decision.

As the war restructured state and state-society relations, it also shaped Iran-US relations and Iran's post-revolutionary foreign policy toward the United States. The following section will analyze the strategic and political context of relations throughout the war, the major events that shaped Iran's decisions as well as American strategy vis-à-vis the war between two powerful Persian Gulf states.

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[605] Mansoor Moaddel, "Class in Post-Revolutionary Iran", p. 335. Moaddel quotes Rafsanjani's remarks on the ability of the *bazaar* of the Qom (with relatively limited financial power) to raise 130 million rials for the financing of the war on a single day.

[606] Ibid.

[607] Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, p. 181.

4.5.3. Iran-US Relations and Iran's US Policy within the Context of Iran-Iraq War

With the Hostage Crisis over on January 20, 1981, Iran's revolutionaries were quick to reiterate their anti-US position declaring US the arch enemy of the Islamic Republic.[608] Saddam's invasion of Iran nevertheless precipitated the end of the crisis through a diplomatic resolution.[609] Yet even though the crisis may have served its domestic purpose by consolidating the clerical rule, it left Iran's international image tarnished and engrained a perception of a country ruled by "mad mullahs."[610] Iran-US relations were severely wounded and the immediate negative impact of this normative and strategic context was discernable in Iran's war with Iraq.

As the war erupted, Iran grew deeply suspicious of the US role in Saddam's aggression and blamed US imperialism for the eruption of the war as well as prolonging the fall of the Saddam regime afterwards. By 1982, at the critical juncture of the war, Iranian leaders expressed that Iran's sacred struggle would doom US imperialism, which they believed, wanted Iranians "to sink into despair and helplessness."[611] Khomeini at the time of the decision to prolong the war stifled voices of dissent by arguing that those who wanted peace were supporting an "American peace."[612] Throughout the war, state-controlled media and newspapers were fraught with accusation and insults of the US for supplying aid to Iraq, while they constantly reported fierce rejection of any reconciliation, including arms purchases from the US.[613]

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[608] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, pp. 204-205.

[609] See Sepehr Zabih, *Iran Since the Revolution*.

[610] See William O. Beeman, *The "Great Satan" vs. The "Mad Mullahs": How the United States and Iran Demonize Each Other*.

[611] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution,* p. 230.

[612] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 105.

[613] David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 247.

The context for Iran's political agency at war was partly drawn by US reaction and strategy vis-à-vis the Iran-Iraq war. United States, on the one hand, feared the subversive and destabilizing impact of Iran's revolutionary appeal over Gulf littoral states in its south, especially after Iran's decision to continue with the war; on the other hand, it was also wary of a possible Soviet encroachment on Iran, if the regime got seriously crippled by war.[614] To tackle the "southern" threat, US decided to "contain" Iran's revolutionary outreach to socio-economically fragile, politically weak and insecure Gulf States. It wished neither defeat, not victory for Tehran and was content to see the Gulf's two power contenders devastating one another, so long as it did not create a power vacuum in favor of the Soviet Union.

President Reagan adhered to the "Carter Doctrine" which declared US readiness to deploy military force to secure its vital interest in secure flow of oil through the region. In accordance with the doctrine, a new permanent military command (CENTCOM) was stationed in the Indian Ocean to contain the Islamic Republic's outreach in the Gulf, a move that was vehemently criticized by Iran, for it viewed increasing presence of the US in the Persian Gulf as interference in regional affairs and a threat to its security.[615] After the Iranian revolution, the Nixon Doctrine was over and the Islamic Republic of Iran sought to be the dominant power of the Persian Gulf to pursue its *own* interests without subservience or commitment to any other power.

Indeed, given the sheer fact that Iran's economy depended on oil exports, the secure and continuous flow of oil was a common interest for US and Iran. Moreover, breaking diplomatic relations with the US did not free Iran of its structural dependence on US supplies of arms and spare parts. Iran's official discourse never gave up calling US the

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[614] See Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 89.

[615] See David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*; Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*.

"Great Satan", but its foreign policy decision to prolong the war compelled Iran to seek a deal with its greatest enemy for obtaining arms in order to survive in the war.[616]

By mid-1983, notwithstanding regime's outright hostile discourse against the United States, there were also references to the possibility of renewal of relations with the US. Then *Majle*s Speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani in May 1983 directly addressed the "Americans" declaring that "in principle Iran could have relations with all such countries as wished to have proper relations with us", except for Israel and South Africa and provided that "they honor our revolution".[617] Rafsanjani's statement was an exception, given the predominance of negative statements toward the US, particularly Khomeini's strict dictum of no relations with the US. As Menashri's detailed account of Iranian politics shows, revolutionary Iran spoke through multiple languages simultaneously. President Khamenei was declaring "hostility toward both superpowers as the philosophy of the Islamic Revolution" and the regime was encouraging the Third World states to follow Iran's anti-imperialist struggle, meanwhile Rafsanjani in 1984 was talking about the possibility of buying US-made weapons "preferably through a third party, but if necessary directly."[618] The complex institutionalization of politics and factionalism yielded diverse discourses and statements whereas war-time realities and

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[616] Since 1984, the US with "Operation Staunch" shut international markets for Iranian purchases of US weapons by preventing its allies from reselling US weapons to Iran. Trita Parsi argues that Iran first sought weapons from regional US allies Egypt and Saudi Arabia which brought no success and even tried to reach out to the US directly by playing a constructive role in the release of 39 American hostages from TWA Flight 847 plane hijacked by Hezbollah in June 1985. Having exhausted all other channels, Iran's arms dealers went to Israel convinced that the only way to reach out the US weapons was Israel. Israel welcomed Tehran's overture mistakenly assuming that such a move showed Tehran's interest in improvement of its relations with Tel Aviv and posed an opportunity to restore the Islamic Republic in the US-Israeli axis against Iraq's rising might and ambitions against Israel. In fact Iran's move had nothing to do with Israel and sought to improve relations with the US not only for attaining US arms but also ensuring US protection against a possible Soviet encroachment besides seeking possibilities of cooperation in Afghanistan. See Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran and the US*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 113-115.

[617] Rafsanjani is quoted in David Menashri, *Iran: A Decade of War and Revolution*, p. 289.

[618] Ibid., pp. 329-330.

previously established structural dependencies compelled Iran for self-restraint even in its discourse.

As of 1984, Iran was adopting "open-door foreign policy" as a means of serving both the needs (*niyazha*) and "Islamic message" (*payam*) of the Islamic Republic.[619] The policy was a marked shift towards moderation, as Ayatollah Khomeini himself had warned of the prospect of defeat and annihilation, unless Iran achieved to establish relations with other governments.[620] Ramazani argues that then Khomeini left the door slightly open to the US as well, if only it behaves itself ("*agar adam bashavad*").[621] To perpetuate the survival of its revolution, Iran was ready to show pragmatism, which did not necessarily mean a fundamental retreat from its ideology. The ongoing war depleting Iran's military weapons and its military dependence on US arms would bring the two antagonists to hidden contact soon.

4.5.4. The Iran-Contra Affair: A New Episode for Iran-US Confrontation

On November 6, 1986 Lebanese newspaper *al-Shiraa* leaked the secret deal between Iran and Reagan administration, achieved after several secret meetings between US, Israeli and Iranian representatives- arms dealer Mr. Ghorbanifar and a person named "relative" allegedly linked to then Majles Speaker Rafsanjani- and approved by President Reagan, which authorized selling of US arms to Iran.[622] President Reagan reportedly accepted supplying Iran with weapons because of his fears of a possible Soviet encroachment on Iran. The US would provide weapons to the extent that "it would not decisively affect the war with Iraq and meanwhile show Tehran that it had

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[619] Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 256.

[620] Ibid., p. 237.

[621] Ibid.

[622] For the process and negotiations in Hamburg, Geneva and Tehran, see Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran and the US*, pp. 117-123.

alternatives to reconciliation with and dependence on Moscow."[623] According to the scheme, also known as "arms for hostages", Iran would assure the release of American hostages held captive in the hands of Hezbollah since 1983 Marine attacks in Lebanon in return for arms, and then in the next phase US would divert some of the proceeds from arms sales to the Contra rebels fighting against the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.

Legally speaking this was a breach of the US arms embargo on Iran and Iraq due to its officially declared neutrality in the war. But, it was not the first time that US breached the embargo. After 1982, fearful of Iran's menace, the US had already supplied Iraq with weapons and intelligence, which marked a definite tilt towards Iraq.[624] By February 1982, US removed Iraq from the State Department's terrorism list -even though the Congress refused to do so- and placed Iran on the list as an exporter of terrorism, because of the bitter political legacy of the Hostage Crisis and its revolutionary activism in Iraq and in Lebanon.[625] Thus, Reagan's decision to provide arms to Iran which hurt and humiliated the US was a very controversial decision to take given above-mentioned context.[626]

This secret deal was believed to be leaked by an associate of Ayatollah Montazeri, heir apparent to Khomeini, who did not approve Rafsanjani's pragmatic openings to the

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[623] Congressional Research Service, "Soviet Policy towards Iran and the strategic balance in South West Asia, 19 June 1987, quoted in Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 89.

[624] Donette Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran: American-Iranian relations since the Islamic Revolution*, pp. 44-45.

[625] Ibid., p. 46.

[626] The main reason for taking such a risk was a rising trend especially in the National Security Council which purported that given Iran's dire straits and geopolitical significance, the conjuncture and a US opening might help establishment of a more moderate government in Iran by sidelining radicals. This line was in clash with the State Department's strategy of supporting Iraq to bring the war to an end and curtail Iran's foreign policy activism. See Donette Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran: American-Iranian relations since the Islamic Revolution*, p. 47.

West.[627] Once the deal was made public, US credibility was once again seriously shaken, deepening the traumatic conception of Iran right after the revolution and hostage crisis and dealing with Iran a real political challenge. Iran's position was also curious, for the news of secret dealing with its erstwhile enemy contradicted its ideological dictum and self-sufficiency. The reaction was outright denial of any negotiations with Israel and portrayal of the incident as willingness to help release of hostages, if Washington delivered "the weapons bought by the Shah", in no way implying a deal for new arms.[628] Ayatollah Khomeini had to step in to terminate the crisis to prevent further delegitimization of the regime for its involvement with the US and Israel and to stifle fierce debates between pragmatist and idealist factions over foreign policy. Interestingly, Hashemi Rafsanjani who was blamed for Iran's overture to the "Great Satan" survived the scandal, while a radical revolutionary figure, Mehdi Hashemi was eventually executed in the course of post-scandal developments.[629]

The exposure of secret dealings with Iran resulted in a hardening of US policy vis-à-vis Iran. The US started to involve in the Iran-Iraq war, so much so that it became almost an "undeclared belligerent."[630] In March 1987, the US agreed to protect Kuwaiti shipping by reflagging them and several months later started to escort reflagged ships in the Gulf. Iran and US were even closer to an armed confrontation in case of an escalation of the conflict. Iran since 1984 was caught in "tanker war" due to Iraqi retaliation on its ships and oil installations; it retaliated back against the Iraqis preserving its position on "war until victory". This position, as Ehteshami argues has left Tehran little room for maneuver and compromise, despite rising criticism among the elite and growing social

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[627] Ramazani argues that the leak of Iran-Contra negotiations was a retaliation of transnationalist faction who detested Iran's pragmatic overtures and wanted to spoil their secret dealings with the United States. See Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 264.

[628] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran and the US*, p. 115.

[629] See Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 264.

[630] US National Security Council Staffer Howard Teicher is quoted in Donette Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran: American-Iranian relations since the Islamic Revolution*, p. 58.

discontent of population against the continuation of the war.[631] Especially, Iran-US military confrontation in April 1988, ending with sinking of three Iranian warships by US Navy vessels' fire boosted US confidence and perception of Iran's military weakness.[632]

Indeed, since 1987, Iran's military machine was losing its effectiveness failing to deliver victories after long awaited *Karbala* 5 and *Karbala* 10 offensives in southern and northern Iraq.[633] Moreover, Iran's international position was further strained, as it also lacked Soviet support because of differences over Afghanistan, Iraq and Arab-Israeli conflict.[634] In the final days of war, notwithstanding its harsh rhetoric, Iran's response to US retaliation became only diplomatic complaints and protests at the United Nations.[635] It seemed that Iran's discourse and vision of its capabilities exceeded its social and military capacity to go on with the war. In 1988, the "accidental" shut down of an Iran Air jet by the *USS Vincennes* killing 290 civilians en route from Shiraz to Dubai ended the war by forcing Ayatollah Khomeini to drink "poison chalice", as Iran abided by UN Security Council Resolution 598 without any pre-conditions and accepted cease-fire to prevent a possible full-scale US assault.[636] Ansari argues that, it was basically the

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[631] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 135.

[632] Houman A. Sadri, *Revolutionary States, Leaders, and Foreign Relations: A Comparative Study of China, Cuba and Iran,* p. 106.

[633] Ibid.

[634] Ibid., p. 107.

[635] Ibid.

[636] Iran's unconditional acceptance of the Security Council Resolution 598, for many observers of Iranian politics was a sign of moderation. In the end there were no victors, but great devastation. Iran's ambition for "victory" over Saddam regime did not materialize. After eight years of war, society and economy were ruined. Facing military defeats caused by the shortage of arms, rising international isolation, deteriorating economic conditions, the war expenditure, heavy casualties and US presence in the Persian Gulf compelled Iran to end the war. Yet against all odds, Khomeini had to be persuaded to sanction the cease-fire as it was a serious drawback for Iran's years-long effort and ideological stance. See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic* and also "Iraq: vii- Iran-Iraq War" in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, Vol. XIII, Fasc. 6, pp. 572-581, online available at http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/iraq-vii-iran-iraq-war (accessed on July 31, 2012).

dissolution of war mobilization in Iranian society, torn by the trauma and material devastation of the war and rising voices of dissent against the war that compelled political elites to stop fighting.[637]

4.6. Analytical Remarks and Conclusions

4.6.1. From the Pahlavi State to the Islamic State: Co-constitution of the domestic and the international

The Pahlavi order came to an abrupt end with "the last great revolution" of the 20th century as Robin Wright has dubbed it.[638] The state was in flux and in post-revolutionary era it was reconfigured. The new era in Iran's political history entailed significant ruptures as well as continuities. In terms of the state, the Islamic ideology crystallized and culminated in a new political system under the all-encompassing charismatic and constitutional authority of Ayatollah Khomeini as the faqih of the religio-political order. Iran's "Islamic" Revolution constituted a political system based on clergy's control over a wide array of revolutionary, republican and populist institutions that reflected the underlying struggles for the new order. According to Abrahamian, the new state ceased to be "an isolated autonomous entity hovering over society. Instead it became an arena in which various interest groups competed and jockeyed for influence; it became part and parcel of the larger society."[639]

Ali Ansari argues that the new state resembled the former state, for they were both instituted on co-existence of modern institutions with traditional ones.[640] The Islamic

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[637] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After*, p. 239.

[638] See Robin Wright, *The Last Great Revolution: Turmoil and Transformation in Iran*, (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2010).

[639] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 169.

[640] For Ansari's analysis of the traditional monarchical rule over modern state and modernizing society, see Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921:The Pahlavis and After,* p. 39.

Republic of Iran turned out to be an amalgam of modern, capitalist nation-state that has crystallized during the Pahlavi monarchy and the emerging theocracy. The revolution toppled the political elite of the former era and brought about the victory of traditional petty bourgeoisie at the expense of modern petty bourgeoisie which had joined the revolution and supported the clergy; yet ended up by being sidelined afterwards. As Ehteshami argued during the Shah era, Iran's bourgeoisie was an amalgam of state bureaucracy and comprador bourgeoisie which prospered because of Iran's growing dependence on Western capitalism.[641] The revolution, he argues, had dismantled this structure and terminated the predominance of the Pahlavi court. Yet, the revolution was not a "social revolution" at all, for it left the underlying socio-economic structure of the polity intact and did not introduce radical change in the lives of the "barefooted" or the "oppressed."[642] For this reason, Iranian Revolution was rather a "political" revolution, marked by a change in the composition of the bourgeoisie as the power bloc shifted to traditional petite bourgeoisie.[643]

The Islamic Republic of Iran managed to survive almost a decade of war and domestic turmoil much to the dismay of its domestic and regional competitors. Iran's post-revolutionary state was carved out by massive social change and political struggles within the country and war with Iraq, which turned out to be one of the bloodiest wars of the last century. As detailed in the chapter, it was both revolution and war that played a decisive role in structuring of the complex institutional ensemble, ideology, material capabilities and political agency of the state. International crisis also helped the regime to consolidate its grip on power.

As analyzed earlier, changes brought by revolution and war undermined the strict analytical categories of the domestic and international. Revolutionary change did not

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[641] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 5.

[642] Ibid., p. 218.

[643] Ibid.

stop by territorial borders and impacted on both the region and the state-society complex. It altered domestic configuration of power, institutions of the state, state-society affairs and ruling ideology of the state as much as it projected state's revolutionary objectives and strategies through foreign policy. War, on the other hand, was partly motivated as a response of the international to disruptive and destabilizing social and political change and it played its structuring role in reshaping of the state and state-society affairs. The chapter attended to the role of co-constitution through its assessment of the domestic revolutionary change over both state and its international environment and its analysis of war and other international crisis in the transformation of the state.

The chapter articulated the role of the United States in post-revolutionary transformation and politics of Iran to assess the changing nature of relations between Iran and the US. The historical trajectory of events has demonstrated that with the victory of revolutionaries, the strong anti-American credentials of the Iranian left and the Islamists became a major component of the state's ruling ideology. In the course of the events, particularly since the Hostage Crisis, US became "the greatest enemy of Islam and the Revolution" and the discourse soon moved to the center of domestic mobilization and served as a litmus test to distinguish revolutionary and "Islamic" elites from "agents" or "traitors." Anti-imperialism and populism became major ideological tools through which the Islamic Republic instituted order by helping Ayatollah Khomeini to unite diverse political factions and groups behind his regime and delegitimize domestic opponents for their alleged collaboration with the "enemy." Apparently opposing the United States was not sufficient to guarantee unity in the complexity of post-revolutionary politics, but ideologically it was uncontested.

In line with the mantle of political independence and anti-imperialism, Iran started to terminate its vast economic, strategic and military relations with the United States, which were accounted for in the previous chapter. The post-revolutionary era was marked by Iran's material de-coupling from hitherto established relations with the

capitalist world, even though Iran's structural dependence on American arms and embeddedness in global energy markets made its quest for total independence untenable. However, Iran's new political elite were resolute in rejecting American political influence and interference in the Islamic Republic. Therefore, United States in military, strategic and economic terms lost its policy tools and leverage over Iran. Yet, ironically, as the US materially receded, it became an intrinsic ideological component of the new regime as the foremost enemy against which the revolution must be protected. The constant concern with a possible American attempt for undoing of the revolution directly or indirectly through its "agents" within the state in addition to the strategic context of war and growing isolation of Iran paved the way for crystallization of an ideological-moral state power, as Mann would put it and turned anti-Americanism into a strong and definitive ideological pillar of the new state.

4.6.2. Agency of the Islamic Republic during the Epoch of Revolution and War

As Sadri argues, revolutionary Iran like other revolutionary states perceived change in foreign policy as an imperative break with the past.[644] Concomitant to its domestic transformation, the revolutionary leadership aimed at exporting its revolution and portrayed the Islamic Revolution as a model to be emulated by the downtrodden of the world. Iran's political rhetoric and policies in the Persian Gulf and Lebanon soon resulted in its association with subversive and disruptive policies and amplified regional concerns and efforts to contain Iran's revolutionary outreach. Iran adhered to the transnational imagination of its Islamic ideology and particularly in the first few years of revolutionary turmoil made no differentiation between domestic and external, which confirmed pan-Islamism's odds with the territorial logic. Yet, in time repercussions of its export policy taught Iran to show restraint and re-define its objectives without necessarily giving up the discourse of export of revolution.

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[644] Houman A. Sadri, *Revolutionary States, Leaders, and Foreign Relations: A Comparative Study of China, Cuba and Iran*, p.11.

Iran's political agency during the epoch of revolution and war reconfigured regional geopolitics. Fearful of an Iranian encroachment on the Gulf, more than Iraqi aggression, the Gulf kingdoms constituted the Gulf Cooperation Council. The security architecture of the Persian Gulf was evolving in response to Iran's revolutionary outreach as much as the ongoing war between Iran and Iraq which eventually entangled the safety of the oil trade in the Persian Gulf. Iran's decision to prolong the war to depose Saddam regime, once it recovered its territory from Iraqi aggression was a significant decision which alongside other factors paved the way for exhaustion of material and human resources and weakening of both Iran and Iraq. Iran's decisive role in the formation of Hezbollah sowed the seeds of its outreach to the politics of the Levant. Hezbollah would thence become an integral component of Iran's strategic relations with the US and Israel as well as a blunt example of the Islamic Republic's ideological and military support for "freedom fighters" and liberation movements. As Ramazani points out the Lebanon war, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem were all touched by the Islamic Revolution.[645]

Arguably, fraught with revolutionary fervor Iran's political elite sought multi-scalar constitution of state at local, national and regional contexts. It was not enough for ardent revolutionaries to Islamize the state and society; confronting regional US allies and United States equally mattered. Export of revolution strategy can be conceived as Iran's search for this multi-scale structuring of its environment. However, there were limits to the success of its agency. Iran could not succeed in instigating popular revolts that would topple Western-backed monarchs and the Iran-Iraq war ended without any victors as exhaustion and prospects of bitter defeat compelled Khomeini to drink "poison chalice." Regarding political and economic independence of the state, state's agency had to grapple with former structures of power and economy. Iran's dependence on American arms and military technology could not change overnight. As Irangate has shown Iran had to behave pragmatically to seek weapons from the US, even though this did not

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[645] Rouhullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 235.

denote an end of enmity. Revolution did not alter Iran's position within global capitalism. Despite revolutionary goal of self-sufficiency, Iran's dependent capitalist relations remained intact, as social relations of production, circulation and exchange could not get transformed by the revolutionary regime.[646] Pesaran succinctly argues that so long as the functioning of the Iranian economy depends on oil revenues; neither the overthrow of the Pahlavi monarchy, nor replacement of his industrial bourgeoisie would defeat and alter the system of dependent capitalism in Iran.[647] In this sense, oil provided a major structural continuity, as it sustained Iran's dependence on the world market and kept Iran strategically central to the Persian Gulf geopolitics and world economy. It also sustained political relations and clientelism of the rentier state with social classes.

Foreign policy of the new regime turned into a highly contested realm just like the state itself. Revolution brought new agents, new struggles and new strategies to Iran's foreign policy. Initial fault-line between preserving Iran's previously established ties to the international and ushering a new era with a radical break from these relations resulted in favor of the latter, as radicalization became the preferred dictum of post-revolutionary order in international affairs. Out of political and social struggles taking place in a context of international crisis and war, it was the clergy and its traditional petite bourgeoisie supporters that seized state power to exert agency and act on behalf of the Islamic state. In this contestation, as elaborated above, the ideological climate of Hostage Crisis and Iran-Iraq war were decisive in sidelining moderate politicians such as Mehdi Bazargan and Bani Sadr and crystallize a more conflictual foreign policy orientation alongside institution of an Islamic order. However, even after the consolidation of the new regime, factionalism in foreign policy persisted, as political elite diverged on the scope and means of foreign policy, particularly regarding Iran's policy of export and decisions with the war.

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[646] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 5.

[647] M. H. Pesaran, "The System of Dependent Capitalism in Pre- and Post- Revolutionary Iran", p. 511.

Relations with the US have been a source of factional strife among what Ramazani calls "transnationalist" and "internationalist" elements of Iran's ruling elites.[648] In the aftermath of the revolution, the diplomatic relations between Iran and the United States ended; however this has not terminated their encounter and signaled a shift to conflictual relations. For the revolutionary elite, US was the embodiment of injustice and "world arrogance." It is through this all-encompassing ideological enmity against US that Iran defined its international struggles. Iran linked the "imposed war" against Iraq and its involvement in Lebanon to help fomenting Shiite resistance against Israeli invasion, to its anti-American, anti-Israeli and anti-imperialist struggle. Therefore, Iran and United States confronted each other not only bilaterally, but in multiple fronts, which has transformed their growing antagonism into a multi-spatial confrontation.

Iran's mistrust and antagonism of the international and the US grew further with the war. Ansari argues that the war taught the political elite that the international was "inherently unjust, anarchic and determined by might rather than right", as they have seen that the West did not stop or condemn Iraq when it used chemical weapons, extended the war to Iranian cities to inflict pain and damage over civilian population and extended the war into the Persian Gulf by attacking Iranian tankers.[649] The failure of the Security Council to condemn Iraqi invasion and to identify Iraq as the aggressor showed Iran that international law was nothing but a "tool in the hands of the superpowers" to reinforce and legitimize their stronghold on world politics.[650] The lack of international response to Iraqi aggression and Iran's growing international isolation served to confirm Iran's doubts as to an "international conspiracy" against the Islamic Republic."[651]

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[648] See Rohullah K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East*, p. 264.

[649] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran Since 1921: The Pahlavis and After,* p. 239.

[650] Ibid.

[651] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 99. This persistent unease about malevolent intentions of the international actors against Iran would nurture neoconservative thinking which will be thoroughly examined in Ahmadinejad era.

4.6.3. Identity and Interest in the Shadow of Revolutionary Change and War

The revolutionary rupture and constitution of the Islamic Republic brought a reformulation of Iran's identity and interests. As Farhang Rajaee argues Iran's official ideology was a composite ideology entailing elements of Third Worldism, nationalism, besides its embrace of Islamic universalism and the Shiite particularism.[652] Suzanne Maloney similarly talked of three components of Iranian identity which are nationalism, Islamism and anti-imperialism which have co-existed throughout the history of Iran and often in competition with each other.[653] An overview of Iranian politics in the epoch of revolution and war shows that in line with the Islamization of the polity under religio-political leadership, Islamism became the dominant feature of Iran's political identity and official discourse. The transnational vision of *umma* brought a new element into Iran's post-revolutionary foreign policy through the theme of export of revolution The changing definition of the identity of the polity created a fresh impetus for Iran in supporting the struggles of the other oppressed people in the Muslim world. The post-revolutionary state's interest in exporting its value-system and model of government confirmed the constructivist arguments on the constitution of interests by identity. But as noted, export of revolution policy was also endorsed for the strategic purpose of creating an Islamic Iran-friendly environment particularly in Iran's neighborhood. Therefore, strategic interest also underpinned this policy.

Iran's anti-imperialist posture and historical resentment against American interference in politics and support for Shah's autocracy also crystallized in its foreign policy, as Iran and the United States turned into bitter adversaries in this epoch. Iran's aspiration for *azadi* (independence) prompted political elite to give primacy to political and economic independence of the country and break away from previous patterns of exploitative

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[652] Farhang Rajaee is quoted in Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 11.

[653] Suzanne Maloney, "Identity and Change in Iran's Foreign Policy", in Shibley Telhami and Michael Barnett (eds.), *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), pp. 88-116.

relations. Indeed, as the new order was being instituted through revolutionary ideology and struggles, the historical legacy of past events, political consciousness and symbolism played decisive role in determining the interests of the new polity. However, assuming a one-way constitution between interests and identity would be misleading; since identity does not exist detached from interests. In the course of Iran's post-revolutionary history, international and regional events also impacted on the way identity was framed and operationalized in foreign policy. The Iran-Iraq war and the policy of export of revolution with their repercussions compelled the political elite to modify foreign policy and reframe state's international identity which would be elaborated in the next chapter that examines the epoch of reconstruction and the epoch of reform. Moreover, Iran's aspirations to create its own path of development could not change state's rentier character and its very embeddedness into international capitalism through its oil commodity.

The way that Iran defined itself, its political identity proved to be an important dynamic in Iran's foreign policy in the epoch of revolution and war. Then, the state was in search of itself and a new political, ideological and socio-economic order was being instituted. As Checkel argued, in the constitution of the interests by identity, we need to acknowledge the significance of political and social agency, which Checkel thought was absent in constructivist analysis. In the definition of the interests, strategizing of the political elite and state institutions mattered, as they responded to different structural and social dynamics within the complex ensemble of the state. The lessons and effects of this epoch created pathways for successive eras of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and foreign policy.

4.7. Iran at the Dawn of Reconstruction and Renewal

As the decade was coming to an end, the era of pragmatism was in the dawn. With the war over, the necessity of change and reform was widely spelled out among the ruling

elite.[654] By the end of 1980s, economy suffered from 26 percent inflation and even higher levels of unemployment, while the sharp decline in oil prices in 1986 glut worsened the economic situation.[655] Regrets over past policies ranged from continuation of war after 1982 to much broader and deeper challenges to the political nature of the regime. Ayatollah Montazeri, the first designated successor of Ayatollah Khomeini, who would be forced to resign due to divergence of opinion with Khomeini, even declared that the fuqaha so far studied less on economy, politics and sociology and research and analysis of these issues belonged to scientists and scholars.[656]

In the aftermath of the war until the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in June 1989, the regime took important steps to rectify the deadlocks of the political system and to rationalize the government. To arbitrate and resolve the interlocking disputes of the Majlis and Council of Guardians, Khomeini ordered the establishment of a new institution, Expediency Council (*Majma-e Tashkis-e Maslahat-e Nezam*), the constitution of the Islamic Republic was also amended resulting in structural changes in the configuration of political power by abolishing the post of Prime Minister and strengthening the power of the President.

The epoch of revolution and war was giving way to the epoch of reconstruction with a major re-formulation of the governing philosophy of the Islamic state before the death of Ayatollah Khomeini. In January 1988, Khomeini declared:

> The government [state] that is part of the absolute vice-regency of the Prophet of God is one of the primary injunctions [*ahkam-e avvaliyeh*] of Islam and has priority over all other secondary injunctions, even prayers, fasting or hajj'. The

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[654] For the debates on the necessity of change, see Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, pp. 71-72.

[655] Ibid., p. 70.

[656] Ibid., p. 72.

ruler is authorized to demolish a mosque or a house that is in the path of a road and to compensate the owner for his house. The rule can close down a mosque that is a source of harm if its harm can not be remedied without demolition. The government is empowered to unilaterally revoke any shari'a agreement that it has conducted with people when those agreements are contrary to the interest [*maslahat*] of the country or of Islam.[657]

As Panah succinctly puts it Khomeini's dictum was a *de jure* confirmation of previous state policies de facto established by the state.[658] With this ruling the needs of the Islamic state were favored over the requisites of the Islamic law which would have significant repercussions for secularization of politics under the Islamic Republic as much as for the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic in subsequent epochs.

To conclude, Iran in the end of the 1980s was at the crossroads of reconstruction and renewal. As Keddie puts it, the state was strengthened, the authority was rationalized and a new power configuration was formed with constitutional amendments; but this strong state was to face major political, socio-economic and international problems in the coming era.[659] The closing decade has seen the emergence of the Islamic Republic as a new polity with radical changes and significant continuities. The coming decade was to present its own domestic and international challenges to Iran's post-revolutionary experience and continue to shape it together with legacies of the past.

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[657] The quote is directly taken from Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 74 which is a translation of Khomeini's verdict that appeared on *Ettela'at* on January 9, 1988.

[658] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*, p. 129.

[659] Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, p. 262.

CHAPTER 5

THE EPOCH OF RECONSTRUCTION AND REFORM

5.1. Introduction

The Islamic Republic has stepped into a new epoch with the end of Iran-Iraq war in 1988 and the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic Revolution, the architect of the Islamic state and the arbiter of Iran's faction-ridden politics in 1989. By the time the war ended, Iran was devastated and the immediate challenge facing the people and the political elite was "reconstructing" Iran. However, this was not the only challenge facing Iran. Massive structural shifts were taking place in international and regional politics with the end of the Cold War, leaving US, Iran's erstwhile enemy, as the sole superpower of the new era. The disintegration of the Soviet Union opened up the post-Soviet space for geopolitical, economic and cultural influence of Iran, extending the boundaries of its geography and leading to Iran's straddling between Central Asia and the Middle East. The Middle East states that have long played their Cold War through polarization under American and Soviet tutelage lost the Soviet Union card to play against the United States.[660] The 1990-1991 Gulf Crisis and the following American strategy of building a new regional order through Middle East Peace Process and exclusion of Iran from the emerging framework via dual containment policy would set up the very context for Iran's foreign policy toward the US as well as its broader international affairs. Therefore, the starting epoch of reconstruction corresponded to a period of post-war, post-Khomeini and post-Cold War structuring of state, state-society and state-international relations within which Iran aspired to rebuild its economy and

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[660] See "The Cold War: global conflict, regional upheavals" in Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations*, pp. 97-129 for an eloquent analysis of the agency of regional states in structural bipolarity.

military and find a proper balance between its revolutionary identity and rapidly shifting regional and international context.

This chapter is built on two parts, examining two consequent and integrated period of state transformation in post-revolutionary Iran. The first part deals with transformation of state, state-society relations and foreign policy during the epoch of reconstruction which mainly starts with Hashemi Rafsanjani's presidency (1989-1997) and continues thereafter during the epoch of reform as a state policy. The epoch of reform (1997-2005) brings political and social demands and aspirations of Iranian society, while the state seeks renewal and reconstruction mainly on economic terms. Both epochs are marked with Iran's attempts at re-integrating into international politics, globalizing economy and international community after a tumultuous decade of war and post-revolutionary transformation. The chapter will examine the objectives, means and outcomes of Iran's foreign policy in general and its political agency vis-à-vis the United States, by analyzing the co-constitutive interaction of changing international and regional context with Iran's domestic re-structuring. It will draw upon the impact of the international on the constellation of political forces, institutions, political economy and ideological structures of the state and analyze how this re-structuring of the state shapes Iran's political agency vis-à-vis the United States as well as it shapes Iran's domestic and regional/international environment. The chapter aims to place these complex and dynamic relationships within historical and international context through analysis of important events and processes that involve Iran and the US either bilaterally or through regional politics by highlighting the multiple contexts Iran pursues its agency.

5.2. The Epoch of Reconstruction: State transformation, Foreign policy and Iran-US relations

Scholars of Iran characterize the decade of 1990s as the "Thermidor" stage of the Iranian Revolution, which means the "closing phase of a revolution wherein hard-line revolutionaries are increasingly challenged by reformists and/or revisionists" and a new

epoch starts, as revolutionary extremism gradually vanishes.[661] According to Ehteshami, a "Second Republic" came into being in post-Khomeini Iran with major changes taking place in politics, economy and international affairs of the country.[662] To what extent the Thermidorian stage succeeded in bringing normalization and in what ways state, economy, ideology and domestic and international politics of Iran changed was a matter of convolution of domestic, regional and international dynamics which will be explored through the prism of Iran-US relations.

5.2.1 The Post-Revolutionary State in the Epoch of Reconstruction

5.2.1.1. Power in Transition: The Succession Issue and the Emergence of Iran's "Divided Leadership"

As articulated in the emergence of an "Islamic" state in post-revolutionary Iran, the institutional and ideological center of the new state was the institution of *velayat-e faqih*. Given its centrality for organization of power and politics, the future of the Islamic Republic was intrinsically linked to a smooth succession of power after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini. By the time he passed away, he lacked an heir. Once his heir apparent, Ayatollah Montazeri was forced to resign in March 1989, before the death of Khomeini, because of his criticism of mass executions of political prisoners and support for the Islamic left.[663] In post-Khomeini Iran, Ali Khamenei, known to be a close confidante of Khomeini and the former president of the Islamic Republic became Iran's new Supreme Leader with the election of Assembly of Experts (*Khobregan*). The choice was predicated upon a number of constitutional changes that were arranged shortly

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[661] The definition is cited by Matthew C. Wells, "Thermidor in the Islamic Republic of Iran: The Rise of Mohammad Khatami", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 26, No.1, 1999, pp. 27-39. For an eloquent analysis of Iran's Thermidorian trajectory, see Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic.*

[662] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic.*

[663] Daniel Brumberg, *Re-inventing Khomeini*, p. 172.

before Khomeini's death. Accordingly, the leader of the Islamic Revolution came to the conclusion that the constitution needed fundamental revision with regard to the definition of *velayat-e faqih,* which was tailored only for Khomeini's religio-political authority and charisma. Khomeini is argued to have favored "political and managerial skills" over *marjaiyyat*; that is the faqih's religious supremacy as a "source of emulation" in Shiite jurisprudence.[664] Khamenei's qualifications as a middle-ranking clergy, *Hojjat-ol Islam*, by the time he was elevated to the post of faqih, affirmed the growing primacy of political and managerial merit than religious expertise. His designation was hence justified by his alleged "political competence" to manage "contemporary problems facing the Muslim world"[665] and an absolutist (*motlaqiyeh*) definition of the *velayat-e faqih* was codified to cope with the possible political and religious challenges that might arise from the rulings of senior ayatollahs over the rulings of Khamenei.[666] The amended constitution through Article 110 declared the *faqih* as the highest authority in the Islamic Republic and entrusted it with enormous political power comprising authority to determine the general content and direction of Iran's domestic and foreign policy after consulting to the Expediency Council, supervise system's general policies, declare war and peace, hold the supreme command of the armed forces as well as to appoint, dismiss and accept the resignations of the head and highest authorities of both state and revolutionary institutions.[667]

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[664] This move resulted in a separation of *velayat-e faqih* from *marjaiyyat* which increased the political character and role of the faqih, making the post less religious and more secular. That is, even though Khamenei was designated as the highest political authority in the Islamic Republic, he was not the supreme religious authority in "jurisprudential" terms vis-à-vis the Grand Ayatollahs of the Shiite world. Cognizant of this authority deficit, Rafsanjani argued that the faqih always took precedence over the religious authority of the *marja*. Ibid., p. 157.

[665] Karim Sadjadpour, *Reading Khamenei: The World view of Iran's Most Powerful Leader*, (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2009), p. 6.

[666] See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, pp. 78-79; Asghar Schirazi, *The Constitution of Iran*, pp. 76-80.

[667] For the constitutional prerogatives of the Leadership in the Islamic Republic of Iran, see http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=leader_law See also Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 79.

The constitutional amendments also strengthened the executive powers of the Presidency by abolishing the post of prime minister and centralizing the executive branch of the government. In post-Khomeini Iran, Hashemi Rafsanjani became the president in 1989. Rafsanjani has been a rising political player since the mid-1980s and allegedly the "kingmaker" of Ayatollah Khamenei with his arduous arguments on the necessity of the faqih to be well-versed in politics.[668] With Khamenei's supreme leadership and Rafsanjani's executive presidency, power relations and institutional capabilities of the state went through a reconfiguration. Compared to all encompassing mandate of Ayatollah Khomeini, political system in post-Khomeini era was structured on a "divided leadership"[669], which made concord and discord between the *faqih* and the president central to the working and policies of the Islamic Republic. Nonetheless, the smooth succession of the Islamic leadership saved Iran from a perilous political crisis and it was the consensus between the Leader and the president over the policy of reconstruction that enabled the political agency for Iran's post-war transformation in the first term of President Rafsanjani.

5.2.1.2. Reconstruction and Structural Transformation

By the time the war has ended, society and economy of Iran were in major devastation. The war-related expenditures and considerable fluctuations in oil revenues -estimated to be $ 21 billion and $ 6 billion respectively- resulted in severe budget deficits and inflationary pressures; as the government rejected foreign borrowing and financed the war relying on the Central Bank.[670] The state could no longer reproduce itself, because of its inability to extract revenues from structurally weak industrial capital and tremendously affluent mercantile capital that has prospered with black market and war

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[668] See Daniel Brumberg, *Re-inventing Khomeini*, pp. 157-159; Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 80, Karim Sadjadpour, *Reading Khamenei*, p. 6.

[669] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, p. 118.

[670] See M. R. Ghasimi, "The Iranian Economy After the Revolution: An Economic Appraisal of the Five Year Plan", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4, (Nov., 1992), p. 599.

economy, and escaped taxation through its influence over conservative institutions of power.[671] The acute sense of crisis compelled Iran's political elite to revise their policies and embark on "reconstructing" the state and economy for the survival of the revolution, which could only materialize with the survival of the state.[672] Indeed, it was Ayatollah Khomeini who declared Iran's goal for post-war recovery; yet as Keddie notes, his mantra for total independence was a major impediment for reconstruction efforts and full-fledged liberalization had to wait for the post-Khomeini period.[673]

President Rafsanjani came up with an agenda for development (*Towse-'eh*), aimed at building a centralized polity and rationalization of rule and order by curbing the power of religious-revolutionary institutions and ensuring governance by formal institutions of the state.[674] He believed that Iran needed expertise and managerial elites, not revolutionary and ideological cadres for a resolution of its deep-seated economic problems; for the latter could threaten the success of the reconstruction project.[675] His cabinet reflected this vision. It was composed of twelve new nominees out of twenty-two, seven of them had doctorates, nine were engineers and only four ministers were clerics. In the cabinet six ministers had been educated abroad, strikingly four of them in the United States.[676] With this vision on mind, the Islamic state in the 1990s transformed into a "developmentalist state" (*dowlat-e towse-'ehgara*).

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[671] Iran survived the 1980s through "managed war economy." The state with extensive industrializations controlled 85 percent of the economy. Given war conditions, there was not much incentive for private investment in productive sectors and import turned into a tremendously lucrative business. The bazaaris gained great fortunes and effectively resisted government's attempts to exert taxes on their wealth through their linkages to clergy and the Council of Guardians. They obtained trade permits and benefited from rates of return of 2000 to 3000 percent. See Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, pp. 124-125.

[672] See Daniel Brumberg, *Re-inventing Khomeini*.

[673] Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, p. 262.

[674] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 142.

[675] Ibid., p. 140.

[676] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *Iran After Khomeini*, p. 102.

Reconstruction was a broad theme which comprised economic recovery, physical reconstruction projects for war-torn regions, strengthening of social welfare and justice as well as rebuilding of the army through rearmament.[677] However, among them it was the economic recovery that gained priority.[678] In 1989, Iran's new leadership came up with the first Five Year Development Plan (FFYDP) (1989/90-1993/94) envisaging expansion of the private sector through privatization of public sector assets, the repatriation of capital and promotion of foreign direct investment.[679] The plan targeted achieving an annual rate of 8 percent growth in GDP, a sharp fall in the fiscal deficit-calling for a restructuring of tax laws and procedures- and a decrease in the economy's dependence on oil exports.[680] As Panah argues the plan was in conformity with the strategies of structural adjustment (*ta'dil-e eqtesadi*) advocated by the IMF and World

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[677] Soon after the end of the war with Iraq, rearmament and the development of defense industries were high on Iran's agenda. Especially until Iraq's acceptance of the 1975 Algier Accords in August 1990, Iran sensed an urgency in keeping its military prepared and superior vis-à-vis Iraqi forces. Its defense equipment was seriously depleted in war and reconstruction also entailed rearmament dynamic. However since 1992 military expenditures did not feature as high as they have been in the immediate post-war years. Former Defense Minister Torkan told that "Iran had no intension to be dragged into [arms race] and will focus on the reconstruction of the country." Tehran kept its defense budget to no more than 3.8 percent of GNP and reconstruction of the economy paralleled "demilitarization of the economy". With low oil prices and high foreign debt, Tehran allocated smaller military budgets. Compared to the enhanced military build-up of the Gulf states, Tehran's arms imports lagged far behind as for 1988-1992 it was $ 3.6 billion for Iran and a total of $ 13.5 billion for the GCC. For a comprehensive analysis of the security and defense policy of the Rafsanjani era, see Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini, The Iranian Second Republic,* pp. 171 and 193-194.

[678] Hooshang Amirahmadi, "Iranian economic reconstruction plan and prospects for its success", in Hooshang Amirahmadi and Nader Entessar (eds.), *Reconstruction and Regional Diplomacy in the Persian Gulf*, (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 109.

[679] As Ghasimi asserts during the revolutionary decade, economic planning has been unsuccessful mainly because of a lack of consensus on some of the fundamental economic issues among the members of the Parliament's Special Plan and Budget Committee. Accordingly projections for major macroeconomic variables were unrealistic and factional strife over economy was worsened by the exigencies of war. It was after two and a half years of debate starting in January 1986 that an economic plan with quantitative targets culminated for the reconstruction of the economy. However Ghasimi argues that the plan was still too ambitious and unrealistic and did not render a blueprint for sustained economic growth. See M. R. Ghasimi, "The Iranian Economy after the Revolution: An Economic Appraisal of the Five Year Plan", pp. 599-614.

[680] Ibid., pp. 603-610.

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Bank for most of the semi-industrialized peripheral countries.[681] Implicitly, reconstruction efforts seemed to bring Iran in conformity with the neoliberal restructuring and Washington consensus.

5.2.1.3. The Politics and Discontents of Reconstruction

The capitalist development agenda of the new government was not without its discontents. The reconstruction agenda was a bone of contention between Iran's pragmatic leaders and Islamic leftist elite that had long adhered to the themes of Islamic populism and economic independence. Known as the *Maktabi*s[682], they were close disciples of Khomeini and proponents of the Islamic Left and they were advocates of state intervention in the economy on behalf of the *mostazafin*. During Khomeini's lifetime, they secured his support for much of the statist and populist policies of the Islamic Republic, even though economic policy eventually came to protect the *bazaaris* and landed class. Prime Minister Mousavi, an advocate of state-managed economy and policy of redistribution, himself acknowledged the necessity of structural reforms; however he and like-minded politicians were vehemently opposed to increasing emphasis on material well-being at the expense of the revolutionary goal of social justice.[683] In the post-war epoch, Iran's elites were praising "comfort and well-deserved lifestyle" and preaching the significance of wealth not only in cultural and spiritual

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[681] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, p. 133. The government was "rolling back" and embarking on a privatization programme comprising over 400 small and medium-sized state-owned companies.

[682] As Wells clarifies, the term *Maktabi* was subject to disagreement among scholars of Iran mainly because of the "fluid" nature of political formations in Iran. Initially it referred to a wider spectrum of political forces comprising both left, center and right wing politicians who followed the "Imam's line", however with intense factionalism inside the disciples of Khomeini over economic and foreign policy, the Maktabis gradually represented those staunchest supporters of Khomeini from the Islamic left who advocated populist economic policies through state intervention in the economy and a radical foreign policy. See Matthew C. Wells, "Thermidor in the Islamic Republic of Iran: The Rise of Mohammad Khatami", pp.28-29 and footnote 2.

[683] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 152.

terms but also in economic/material terms.[684] As the new era unfolded, gone were the days of sacrifice and austerity. Iran with emphasis over economic prosperity (*rafah-e iqtisadi*), aspiration to become an "Islamic Japan" and later admiration for the "Chinese model" seemed quite distanced from Khomeini's dictum over victorious political struggle rather than concern with the "price of melons".[685] As Abrahamian aptly puts it, Ayatollah Khomeini's heirs were "no longer talking of land reform, income redistribution and nationalization of foreign trade….They talked less about social justice and the rights of the shantytown poor and more about productivity, privatization, business incentives and free-market mechanisms."[686]

The government's new agenda was an obvious departure from the revolutionary principle of self-sufficiency, as Iran was in need of obtaining external loans and foreign direct investment for reconstruction of the economy. Rafsanjani used Friday sermons as an opportunity to declare the futility of the "fantasies of independent and self-sufficient society."[687] For the *Maktabis*, however, foreign borrowing was nothing but "to eat the forbidden wheat", which would derive them out of "the paradise of [Khomeini's] Islamic Revolution."[688] They were especially concerned with the consequences of economic dependence on political independence that post-revolutionary Iran took pride. The economic agenda also considered elimination of state subsidies which has been the backbone of Islamic justice policies. Another controversial policy was government's call

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[684] Maryam Panah quotes Ayatollah Khamenei and Ayatollah Emam-Keshani who served as the spokesman of the conservative Guardian Council as exemplars of changing discourse of mobilization. See Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, pp. 132-133.

[685] Ibid. Ayatollah Khomeini after the revolution famously declared that the revolution was not about the price of melons.

[686] Ervand Abrahamian, "Khomeini: Fundamentalist or Populist?", *New Left Review* I/186, (March-April 1991), p. 119.

[687] President Rafsanjani is quoted in one of his Friday sermons in September 1989, in Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *Iran after Khomeini*, p. 142.

[688] See Daniel Brumberg, *Re-inventing Khomeini: The Struggle for Reform in Iran*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 166.

for return of the exiled *comprador* bourgeoisie to reclaim their state-seized property and help reconstruction efforts through industrialization. Ehteshami argues that unable to transform itself into a new class during the 1980s, Iran's new elites planned to strengthen capitalist economy through revitalization of social classes, even if this entailed an invitation to the capitalists of the *ancien régime*.[689] Therefore, in the aftermath of the war and the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, the state was a site of contestation over economic policy which cut across regime's legitimacy and state's international orientation in pursuit of material resources for renewal.

The political struggle soon crystallized into rivalry between two major political factions that have emerged from the remnants of the dissolved Islamic Republican Party (IRP). The Society of Combatant Clergymen of Tehran (*Jameh-e Rouhaniyyat-e Moarez-e Tehran*, hereafter *Rouhaniyyat* or JRM) was supporting the ruling coalition, while the *Maktabi*s were organized within the Society of the Combatant Clergy of Tehran (*Majma-e Rouhaniyyun-e Mobarez-e Tehran*, hereafter *Rouhaniyyun* or MRM). Interestingly both factions claimed to be the "true heir of Ayatollah Khomeini" no matter they clang to diametrically opposed agendas. As Brumberg argues, political elite's reliance on Ayatollah Khomeini for justification of their policies made "re-inventing Khomeini" an integral pattern of politics.[690] The discourse battles however did not relieve the ruling coalition from political pressures. Iran's new leadership then decided that the smooth implementation of Iran's neo-liberal development scheme and constitution of a new political order could only be possible by sidelining the ideological cadres institutionally. President Rafsanjani was able to achieve it by collaborating with the conservative institutions of the regime which resulted in the sidelining of *Maktabis* from the *Majles*, the last fortress of the Islamic Left.[691]

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[689] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *Iran after Khomeini*, p. 220.

[690] See Daniel Brumberg, *Re-inventing Khomeini: The Struggle for Reform in Iran*.

[691] In the 1992 *Majles* elections, the Council of Guardians, strengthened with additional supervisory powers to ban candidates on the basis of their "Islamic" and "revolutionary" credentials, vetted the *Maktabis* and helped "cleanse" the Majles from radical elements. The left was also denied the right to

President Rafsanjani secured his goal by collaborating with the conservative institutions of the regime. *Rouhaniyyat* with this intervention secured 70 percent of the seats which for the time being achieved *yekdastegi* (purity), even though it did not guarantee *yekparchegi* (uniformity).[692] In fact, sidelining of political factions was a departure from Khomeini's balancing act, which kept all contending factions within the political game; but in throes of structural transformation and in the absence of Khomeini's charisma and politico-religious authority, the leadership deviated from past practice to secure political and economic change.[693]

It is important to recall that regime's ability to start the process of reconstruction was possible with alliance and agreement of the dual leadership. The urgency of economic development and post-war normalization united the Leader and President to take necessary moves to save the revolution and the state from crisis. Ansari contends that during Rafsanjani's presidency, politics was organized alongside a "political pact" based "mercantilism" and "Islam."[694] However, this "political pact", by no means ended the deep running political competition and network building. As Sariolghalam argues politics in Iran remained as a zero-sum game and this game of survival made long-standing consensus and agreement elusive.[695] In time, Rafsanjani's domestic and international policies started to draw a wedge between traditional right organized behind the Leader and modern right supporting Rafsanjani's liberal policies. The pact was in charge so long as leaders and their power networks were assured that their vested

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become members of the Assembly of Experts (*Khobregan*) which was entitled to choose and dismiss the faqih. See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 160.

[692] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *Iran after Khomeini*, p. 217.

[693] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 30.

[694] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 121. According to the pact the mercantile capital would benefit from liberalization and opening up to global economy, while the clergy would maintain social policies and ruling ideology of the state.

[695] Mahmood Sariolghalam, "Sources of Continuity in Iran's Foreign Policy", paper presented at *MEI: "Whither the Gulf? Accomplishments, Challenges and Dangers"*, 19-20 May 2011, p. 3.

interests were safe from disruptive change. But, the challenge of reintegration demanded Iran's adjustment to the international structures which started to change the balance between merchants and industrial capital and create new friction lines that are not solely related to economic policies, but broader control over cultural space.

5.3. The State and the International in the Epoch of Reconstruction

After the turbulent years of war with Iraq, Iranian elite grew even more suspicious of international and regional powers, for their revolutionary vision of the international as inherently "unjust" and fraught with double standards was fortified. However, in post-war years, Iran also needed the "international" to rebuild its economy as well as its military. As Ehteshami asserts, Iran as a semi-industrialized country would not survive without external inputs for its dependent industries, and without rejuvenation of these industries recovery would be elusive. Therefore, he adds, Islamic leaders never encouraged departure from international capitalist system and seemingly had little choice but to open up to the global system again.[696] The key to domestic success in fulfilling expectations of society from the Islamic Republic depended on Iran's ability to reintegrate and normalize which has granted the relations of the state with the international a distinct character. In the beginning of the 1990s, the international itself was going through a qualitative shift with the end of Cold War and disintegration of the Soviet Union testifying the emergentist perspective of the international. This transformation was to bring formative geopolitical, economic and ideological challenges and opportunities for Iran's own attempted transformation, re-positioning and political agency.

5.3.1. International Change: The End of the Cold War

The Cold War left the United States triumphant and unrivalled as the sole superpower in possession of enormous political, economy, military power. There were debates as to

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[696] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Second Iranian Republic*, p. 220.

whether the post-Cold War order would be a unipolar or multipolar one after the end of bipolarity. The post-Soviet space was increasingly integrating into the framework of capitalist relations. In the Middle East, post Cold War era compelled regional states particularly pro-Soviet states to contemplate change and make necessary adjustments in their foreign policies. Iran as a non-aligned state, rejecting both the "East" and the "West" had to operate in a new environment marked by the dominance of its erstwhile enemy. The Gulf War 1990-1991 and the ensuing Middle East Peace Process were among the foremost regional challenges that Iran had to cope with alongside other regional states. Besides, the emergence of new republics in Central Asia and Caucasus in the post-Soviet space opened up new venues for Iran's foreign policy. Without doubt, new opportunities for Iran's foreign policy became new sites of contestation for Iran-US relations, given the determination of the United States to deny expansion of Iran's ideological, political and economic influence.

In this new epoch, Iran's pursuit of development, normalization and security were all intrinsically related to the policies of the United States. As the following part will articulate, the US was central to Iran's post-war transformation both as a geopolitical and economic actor directly bearing on Iran's development and geopolitical security and as an integral discursive component of Iran's faction-ridden domestic politics. Hence the US policies and the way they were being perceived in Iran impacted both on the "Revolution" and the "state" as well as on the balance of social forces and networks organized within this duality. Iran's foreign policy was shaped within shifting domestic, regional and global contexts, and through its foreign policy, Iran tried to exert influence and change structures of power, wealth and norms. The following part aims to draw international and regional context for Iran-US relations and reflect on Iran's responses to the international through its foreign policy. It will then focus on how the international context and foreign policy of Iran have shaped state and state-society relations with an analysis of growing political discord and the intrinsic role of the US to domestic politics. The end of the Cold War had significant political, strategic and economic consequences for Iran and its relations with the United States. Strategically Russia's power was not

comparable to the Soviet Union and it was in a deep state of transition so that Iran's northern borders were relatively secure. The end of Soviet socialism had ramifications for development strategies and their justification inside Iran. The new conjuncture empowered President Rafsanjani's neoliberal agenda against advocates of state-controlled economy, by providing him with an international context marked by the "triumph" of global capitalism and market relations.[697] Nonetheless, opportunities came with costs. The new situation introduced heightened competition for credits and foreign direct investment with proliferation of post-Soviet states seeking capitalist restructuring.[698] At home, the limits of neoliberal structuring would come with widespread riots and opposition of the conservative elites, institutions and the bazaar which will be elaborated in the coming sections.

5.3.2. Regional Environment: The Gulf War (1990-1991) and the Traces of "New World Order" in the Middle East

Saddam Hussein was back in theater of war in August 1990 with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait to rectify its economic losses in Iran-Iraq war by seizing the oilfields of its "historical province." He was once again mistaken in his calculations of the repercussions of his aggression, as the crisis triggered a concerted international and regional response, which called for the expulsion of the Iraqi troops from Kuwait and restoration of Kuwaiti sovereignty.[699] In this very first crisis of the post-Cold War era, US was able to secure the support of international and regional actors to safeguard its strategic oil interests as well as maintenance of the international norm of sovereignty.

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[697] Some still argued that absent a socialist challenger, the anti-thesis of capitalist system of the West would be Iran's model which was portrayed as an Islamic economy with a theme of social justice through subsidies and an Islamic banking system. See Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 38.

[698] See M. R. Ghasimi, "The Iranian Economy after the Revolution: An Economic Appraisal of the Five Year Plan", p. 610.

[699] For a comprehensive analysis of the crisis and its aftermath, see F. Gregory Gause III, *The International Relations of the Persian Gulf,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 102-135.

At the time the crisis erupted, Iran was negotiating a peace treaty with Iraq to ensure the stability of its borders and security of the country in the wake of plans for economic development. The Gulf Crisis in 1990-1991 was a test case for Iran's international positioning and re-making of its foreign policy. Iran immediately condemned the attack on Kuwait and declared its neutrality in the war supporting neither Iraq, nor international coalition headed by the US. Saddam Hussein's occupation in another war front and Iran's declared neutrality paid off for Iran; as Iraq pledged to fulfill its objectives on reverting back to the 1975 Algiers Treaty and designation of the mid-point of Shatt-al Arab waterway as the common border, withdraw Iraqi troops from border, exchange political prisoners and send its aircraft and passenger planes for refuge in Iran which were never returned by Iran as a compensation for damages in the Iran-Iraq war However, as Parsi notes, Iran in practice acted with "positive neutrality" vis-à-vis the Western coalition in their campaign for restoration of the status quo.[700] During the war Iran permitted US Air Force to use its airspace, declined Iraqi demands for help and refused to return the Iraqi jets that had flown to Iran for safekeeping. Iran refrained from "revolutionizing" the conflict by provoking a Shiite uprising and by doing so played a vital role for keeping Iraq integrated in the face of military attack.[701] Iran's self-restraint was even acknowledged and praised by US Secretary of State James A. Baker, as he told that Iran could play a role in the future security arrangements in the Persian Gulf with its "very, very credible way throughout the crisis."[702]

According to Potter, during the crisis, Rafsanjani supported foreign intervention, if it would be performed under a UN mandate.[703] Compared to Rafsanjani, Supreme Leader Khamenei adopted a more intransigent discourse repeatedly calling for the autonomy

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[700] See Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 142; see also Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, pp. 65-77.

[701] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 142.

[702] Secretary Baker is quoted in F. Gregory Gause III, *The International Relations of the Persian Gulf,* p. 111.

[703] See Lawrence G. Potter, "Gulf War and Persia".

and independence of regional states from external powers. According to Afrasiabi, it was Khamenei's objection that had prevented Iran from formally participating in a multinational coalition against Iraq.[704] But given the bitter legacy of Iran-Iraq war, Iran's hope for an Iraqi defeat in the Gulf Crisis was not so controversial, even this amounted to tacit cooperation with the US-led coalition. Moreover, the Gulf Crisis also granted Iran the opportunity to show its interest in status quo rather than revisionism. Reminiscent of pre-revolutionary times, Iran wanted to portray itself as an "anchor of stability" and a "norm-abiding nation" and use the Gulf War as a beginning of its normalization as well as return to international politics and economy.[705] Iran also made use of the Iraqi aggression as an occasion to argue that it was Iraq, not Iran that was the real threat to peace and security in the region.[706] Iran's policy bore fruit as UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar in his report identified Iraq as the aggressor in Iran-Iraq war, a move that the international community hitherto had not taken and until then served to deepen the sense of injustice for Iran. However, these gains vis-à-vis Iraq could not relieve Iran's concerns over the rising Western, particularly American influence in the region.

The domestic backdrop of Iran's foreign policy was fraught with tensions. In general, decisions that would support and serve US policies were never easy. The radicals wished to use the war to re-radicalize politics inside and abroad and for that reason supported Iran's alliance with Iraq against the Western alliance.[707] They were fiercely against the Western campaign, which they viewed as nothing but a return of Western imperialism to the region and argued that rising military presence of the US the region was even more dangerous from the annexation of Kuwait by Iraq, as the situation was tantamount to

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[704] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 69.

[705] Ibid., p. 67.

[706] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 142.

[707] The prominent Maktabi figures Mohtashami and Khalkhali called upon the faqih to declare a jihad against the US and its allies. See Daniel Brumberg, *Re-inventing Khomeini*, p. 173.

annexation of Saudi Arabia by the United States.[708] Yet, Rafsanjani succeeded to quell domestic opposition by arguing that any alliance with Iraq would be detrimental for the security and prospects of prosperity of Iran.[709]

The rising pragmatism under Rafsanjani's presidency aimed to curb foreign policy excesses of the former era; which if pursued would prevent Iran from repairing its political relations with the world and reaching out to credits and financial support for its reconstruction attempts. Iran's self-restraint was related to the political pact, cited above, within the leadership, which allowed radical elements to concentrate on "revolution at home", only if they avoided revolutionary activism abroad.[710] Arjomand likened Iran's post-Khomeini orientation to the Soviet experience on "revolution in one country."[711] A significant aspect of this shift was Iran's changing discourse and policy of "export of revolution", that failed to bring populist revolutions to topple the Gulf monarchies. Saddam regime was weak but intact at the end of the eight-year war and Lebanon which indeed has been a quite different case from Iran with its complex religious make-up did not turn into a replica of Islamic Iran. Supreme Leader Khamenei revealed Iran's changing tone, when he told that:

> The export of the revolution did not mean that we would rise up and throw our weight and power around and begin wars, forcing people to revolt and carry out revolutions. That was not the intention of the Imam at all. This is not part of our policies and in fact it is against them…This is what exporting the revolution means: to enable all nations in the world to see that they are capable of standing

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[708] Remarks of Mohsen Rezaei, then a commander of the IRGC and the newspaper *Jomhuri-ye Islami* of August 23 1990 are quoted in Lawrence G. Potter, "Gulf War and Persia".

[709] Eva Patricia Rakel, *Power, Islam and Political Elite in Iran: A Study on the Iranian Political Elite from Khomeini to Ahmadinejad*, (Leiden: BRILL, 2009), p. 166.

[710] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 132.

[711] See Said Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini*, pp. 137-138.

on their own feet, resisting submission with all of their strength by relying on their own will and determination and by replacing their trust in God.[712]

Ehteshami argues that Iran ceased trying to change the regional map and decided to co-exist with the given regimes and state-forms.[713] The primary purpose of foreign policy in the new epoch was to provide Iran with much needed international capital and technology to renew itself, while Iran also struggled to manage multi-scalar change in its domestic, regional and international environment.

Institutionally a greater bureaucratization in foreign policy was palpable with the proliferation of committees and sub-committees in the foreign ministry. Greater emphasis on professionalism was accompanied by de-clericalization of diplomatic cadres since the mid-1980s.[714] Rafsanjani in his presidency sought to insulate foreign policy from domestic politics and ideological discord and entrusted foreign policy decision-making process to the Supreme National Security Council (*Shora-ye Aliye Amniyat-e Melli*).[715] The council worked on the principle of "consensus" in the midst of

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[712] Khamenei's remarks are cited in Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 150.

[713] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 145.

[714] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 26. See also "Sakhtar va Ahdaf-e Vezarat-e Omur-e Khariji" (The structure and goals of the Foreign Ministry) in Ali Reza Azghandi, *Siyasat-e Khariji-e Jomhuri-ye Islami Iran (The Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran)*, (Tehran: Ghoms, 2009), pp. 185-232.

[715] See Said Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini*, p. 136. The council was formed with the constitutional amendments. It was headed by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and composed of Heads of the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary, Chief of the Supreme Command Council of the Armed Forces (SCCAF), the official in charge of the Plan an Budget Organization (PBO), two representatives nominated by the Leader, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of the Interior, and Minister of Information (Intelligence), a minister concerned with the subject, and the highest authorities of the Army and the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC). According to Article 177 of the Constitution, the responsibilities of the SNSC comprise: (1) To determine the national defense/security policies within the framework of general policies laid down by the Leader, (2) to coordinate political, intelligence, social, cultural and economic activities in relation to general defense/security policies, (3) to exploit material and non-material resources of the country for facing internal and external threats. See A. Farahani, "Islamic Republic of Iran: The Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), Moesseseh-e Farhang va Andisheh, 1999, online available at: http://www.iranonline.com/iran/iran-info/government/Supreme-National-Security-Council.html (accessed on August 18, 2012).

institutional complexity related to different pillars of the state and its decisions were enforceable only after the ratification of the Supreme Leader. The principle of consensus has institutionalized inter-elite negotiation and made foreign policy decisions subject to discussion. However, it was the decision of Ayatollah Khamenei that would prevail in the last instance.

5.3.2.1. The New World Order: American Hegemony and the Islamic Republic

On March 6, 1991, US President George H. W. Bush declared the victory of the Allied coalition and the beginning of a "New World Order." The new regional order envisaged institution of shared security arrangements in the Gulf, control and prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional economic development and resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.[716] While US intended to structure new political, military and economic relations in the region, Iran was waiting for recognition of its legitimate interests in the Persian Gulf and inclusion in post-war security arrangements. Soon it found out that Baker's earlier signals for Iran's inclusion in the Persian Gulf security arrangements would not materialize. Its concern for a regional order free from American presence was highly elusive. Tehran was equally wary of the "Arab initiatives" such as "Damascus Declaration" (also known as "GCC+2" initiative made up by the Gulf Cooperation Council states plus Egypt and Syria), which envisaged military and economic cooperation between these states by bringing Egypt and Syria into the power equation of the Gulf, meanwhile excluding Iran.[717] Eventually, US opted

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[716] See Richard K. Herrmann, "The Middle East and the New World Order: Rethinking US Political Strategy After the Gulf War", *International Security*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall 1991, pp. 42-75.

[717] Iran was deeply alarmed by the prospect of permanent deployment of Egyptian and Syrian troops in the Persian Gulf, until it became clear that the GCC opted for the American option, a decision which was even more detested by the Iranian leadership. Nonetheless, the decision helped sustain the strategic alliance between Iran and Syria in post-Cold War era. Bilateral relations would come under increasing pressure from the Clinton Administration through its attempts to persuade Hafez al-Assad to distance Syria away from Iran and make peace with Israel in the peace process. Goodarzi notes that Clinton sent his secretary of state Warren Christopher to Damascus more than 20 times between 1993 and 1997 to this end. See Jubin M. Goodarzi, *Syria and Iran: Diplomatic Alliance and Power Politics in the Middle East*, (London: Tauris, 2006), pp. 289-290.

for a bilateral framework, once it seized the upper hand for designing the security architecture of the region. Accordingly, US supplied Iran's Gulf neighbors with sophisticated arms, deployed large troops on land, sea and in the air and it shifted from being an offshore balancer to an integral part of the regional balance of power.[718]

Iran's restraint through its neutrality, tacit cooperation with the Allied forces and avoidance of reciting unrest in the Gulf helped to set the stage for reconciliation in Iran-Saudi Arabian relations shortly after the end of the war.[719] Rafsanjani's emphasis on "development first, rearmament second", confirmed by Iran's decreasing military expenditure from $ 9.9 billion in 1990 to $ 5.3 billion in 1995 also played a decisive role in improvement of Iran's relations with its Gulf neighbors.[720] Improved relations with Saudi Arabia mattered for Iran's agency at OPEC, outreach to Arab markets and reintegration into Gulf politics.[721] Given the tension-ridden history of bilateral relations during the epoch of revolution and war because of Iran's resentment of Saudi support for Iraqi war efforts, close relations of the Saudi monarchy with the US and competition for the leadership of the Muslim world; defined by Khomeini as a competition between "American Islam" and "Islam of the Downtrodden", Iran's decision to rebuild relations with Saudi Arabia was a significant departure from the past and it became the kernel of Iran's regional détente policy starting with the Rafsanjani administration.

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[718] See Mohammed Ayoob, "American Policy Toward the Persian Gulf", in Mehran Kamrava (ed.), *International Politics of the Persian Gulf*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011), pp. 128-130. According to Katzman, US sale of arms and related defense services to its Arab allies in the Persian Gulf has been the key strategy since the Gulf War. He observes that the Congress has not blocked any sales, even though at times some Congress members expressed their concern for erosion of Israel's "qualitative edge" against its Arab neighbors. Kenneth Katzman, *The Persian Gulf States: Post-War Issues*, (New York: Novinka Books, 2004), pp. 32-33. According to a research conducted in 2009, over the period 1988-2005, the Persian Gulf experienced the highest rates of militarization in the world with the highest rates seen after 2002. For further details, see Hossein Askari, Amin Mohseni and Shahrzad Daneshvar, *The Militarization of the Persian Gulf: An Economic Analysis*, (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2009), pp. 33-43.

[719] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 145-147.

[720] Ibid., p. 147.

[721] See Hooshang Amirahmadi, "Iranian economic reconstruction plan and prospects for its success", p. 137.

The limits and success of Iran's re-integration into the Persian Gulf ultimately depended on American foreign policy in the Gulf. Rather than integrating Iran back into the political and security framework of the region as promised, the US decided to marginalize Iran in the new epoch.[722] Iran's exclusion from the Middle East Peace Process and the simultaneous American policy of "dual containment" against Iran and Iraq would be the contours of American strategy vis-à-vis Iran and the fundamental strategic context within which Iran would formulate its US and regional policy. The following parts of the chapter will explore the impact of emerging international and regional context on the domestic restructuring of the state and its subsequent impact on Iran's political agency to shape its regional and international environment.

5.3.2.2. The Middle East Peace Process: Iran's Reactions and the Impact of American policy over Domestic Politics

In the post-Cold War Middle East, US viewed resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict indispensible for creation of a stable and secure regional order. US decision-making elite also understood that so long as the conflict remained unresolved, regional actors could recite it to justify belligerent acts, as Saddam Hussein did through his "linkage politics", by declaring his withdrawal from Kuwait conditional upon the Israeli withdrawal from all of the Occupied Territories.[723] US placed utmost significance to the Madrid Peace Process and it was determined to start it, notwithstanding Israeli reluctance to join US efforts for fear of a loss of hitherto gained land and leverage over different Arab states.[724] Eventually, President Bush and Secretary of State Baker succeeded in bringing Prime Minister Shamir to the table. The Bush administration asserted that all peoples of

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[722] Iran despite its efforts was seen as a threat and any move that might strengthen its regional prominence was avoided by the US. It is argued that the main reason for the decision of Bush Administration in 1991 of not toppling the Ba'thist regime in Iraq was preventing the formation of a balance of power favorable to Iranian interests. See F. Gregory Gause III, *The International Relations of the Persian Gulf,* p. 118.

[723] Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict 1881-2001*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), pp. 612-613.

[724] Ibid., pp. 613-614.

the region should have a say in the constitution of this new order; except for Iran.[725] As the region was headed to a new political reconfiguration, Iran was left out of the conference and diplomatic framework. Soon the announcement of US "containment" policy would confirm and clarify the framework of Iran-US relations in the post-Cold War era.

According to Tehran, its exclusion from peace process was tantamount to the denial of its place as a major regional power in the decision-making on the future of the region.[726] Parsi argues that the exclusion resulted in a change of Tehran's Palestine policy. Accordingly, in the 1980s Iran's fierce diatribe against Israel on the Palestinian issue remained largely rhetorical. The Islamic Republic challenged Israel mainly through its financial, logistical and military support for Hezbollah militias, and its support then did not directly benefit the Palestinian groups.[727] As of late 1980s, both President Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister Velayati publicly stated that Iran was not opposed to a "mutually satisfactory" resolution of the conflict; Rafsanjani in this regard argued that "if the content of the peace plan is just, the substance is just; [Iran] shall all go along with it."[728] However, according to Iran the process was unjust and doomed to failure because of its inability to address the rights of Palestinian refugees from 1948, Israeli annexation of Jerusalem, ongoing expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, and the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon.[729] Iranian elite thought that Israel intrinsically

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[725] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 151.

[726] Ibid., pp. 152-153. According to Parsi several factors seemed to prevail over the US decision to exclude Iran. One of them was the bitter memory of the revolutionary decade and the sense of humiliation and frustration that the US suffered especially in the Hostage Crisis. Despite constructive remarks of Rafsanjani for supporting any plan agreeable by the Palestinians, the US politicians continued to view Iran negatively. Another significant reason was Iran's irrelevance to the conflict and lack of any leverage on any of the Arab states in the eyes of the United States. They suspected that if invited Iran would spoil the conference. As Trita Parsi argues they did not think much over how it would respond if uninvited.

[727] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*.

[728] See Eric Hooglund, "Iranian Views of the Arab-Israeli Conflict", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1, (Autumn 1995), p. 88.

[729] Ibid.

had no interest in any true peace because of its "tyrannical" nature and they viewed the whole process "as an attempt to get Arab acceptance of Israel without its conceding Palestinian rights and to impose Arab submission to Israel."[730] Apart from the Palestinian issue, Iran was mainly concerned with Syria's participation in peace talks to get back Golan Heights, which was under Israeli occupation since 1967. The prospect of Syrian-Israeli peace would leave Iran isolated and result in Iran's loss of its only ally in the region. As Ahouie argues Iran was caught between ideological opposition to a peace agreement with Israel and the need to preserve its alliance with Syria and avoid regional and international isolation.[731]

As a response to the Madrid Peace Conference, Iran hosted an "International Conference in Support of the Islamic Revolution of the Palestinians" in October 1991 and declared its support for the "struggle of the Palestinian people for total liberation of the occupied lands, elimination of Zionist existence and establishment of an independent Palestinian state."[732] The conference aimed to constitute a "rejectionist/Islamic substitute" for the Madrid Peace Conference.[733] When the conference failed to yield results, Iranian politicians interpreted it as an affirmation of Iran's indispensability to the process; however the announcement of "Declaration of Principles" from the Oslo backchannel between PLO and Israel in 1993 dashed Iranian hopes and increased its support for

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[730] See Mahdi Ahouie, "The Middle East Peace Process from the Perspective of Revolutionary Iran: Will Tehran ever take part?", *Iran Analysis Quarterly*, Volume 1, No.4, (September-November 2004), p. 4.

[731] Ibid. Accordingly so long as Syria continued with the peace effort, Iran's material support for the opposition groups could not stop the tide. Hence came Iran's largely verbal opposition, argues Ahouie.

[732] The conference was attended by 400 delegates from 60 countries including such Lebanese figures as Walid Junblatt, Sheikh Shabaan and Abbas al-Musawi, Afghan leader Burhaniddin Rabbani and Palestinian rejectionists Abu Musa and Ahmad Jebril. See Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch, *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*, p. 186; Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, p. 154.

[733] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch, *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*, p. 186. Ehteshami and Hinnebusch argue that apart from Hezbollah's commitment for derailing peace talks, Iran's pledge to provide some funding for Palestinian Islamists and talks over supporting intifada, the conference did not bring practically important results. Many of the radical leaders of Palestinian opposition, including George Habbash did not participate in the conference.

Palestinian groups of Islamic Jihad, Hamas and Ahmad Jebril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine with which it hitherto had poor relations.[734] Rafsanjani was careful to reiterate that Iran's support for these groups were mainly moral and humanitarian and Iran in no way supported terrorism.[735] Indeed, in line with the moderation of Iran in the early 1990s and until the rise of anti-Iran campaign of Israel and the United States through "dual containment" policy, Iran reportedly reduced its financial support to Hezbollah in the first years of Hashemi Rafsanjani.[736] Iran's president was aware of the costs of Iran's association with Hezbollah's actions and his vision of "revolution in one country" shelved the policy of export of revolution.[737] In a 1993 interview with *Time*, he argued that "[w]e have respect for Hezbollah as concerns the liberation of their land occupied by Israel. But if Hezbollah commits terrorist acts, we do not accept it and we condemn it."[738]

Nonetheless, in the emerging regional conjuncture, Iran perceived an ideological vacuum to fill in. Pan-Arabism was strictly wounded with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and Arab support for Western coalition against Iraq. As Ehteshami argues with the

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[734] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 174-175. For Iran, PLO by accepting UNSCR 242 and thereby recognizing Israeli existence in 1988 and later participating in Madrid peace talks "sold out" the Palestinian struggle and it was no longer the representative of Palestinian rights. See Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch, *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*, p. 186.

[735] Eric Hooglund, "Iranian Views of the Arab-Israeli Conflict", pp. 88-89. Hooglund in his article also draws upon growing disagreement inside Iran over its Palestinian policy with views ranging from total disengagement to a more active engagement and other perspectives in between.

[736] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 155.

[737] See Said Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini*, p. 137. Richard Norton notes that Iran's new leadership in the early 1990s started to re-orient Iran's policy toward the broader Shiite community and Lebanon as a whole, trying to distance themselves from the militias, at least for a few years. This was also to do with the bloodletting caused by fighting between Amal and Hezbollah. The fight claimed many civilian lives which disturbed Iran and led to condemnation of both sides. Therefore the dynamics of Lebanese politics also factored in Iran's change of policy in addition to President Rafsanjani's attempts to adjust Iran to changing politics of the region and the international with the end of the Cold War. See Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short Story*, pp. 44-45.

[738] See James R. Gaines and Karsten Prager, "Rafsanjani's advice to "Great Satan".

participation of Arab states to the peace process, Tehran understood that the Islamic agenda had little or no relevance for their policies; hence Iran was left to bear the mantle of Islamic values and act as the leader anti-Israeli and anti-US coalition of regional actors.[739] Iran's newfound political position risked cleavage with Syria and other Arab states; but it also provided Tehran with legitimacy and direct influence in the Arab world especially over the agenda of the Islamists and radical Arab forces.[740] According to Trita Parsi, the Arab states' search for peace with Israel allowed Iran to rely on a rhetoric charging Arab governments of treason and using the "Arab street" to undermine them; while refraining from confronting Israel either conventionally or through use of terror.[741]

Tehran's policy attested to its self-perception as "the epicenter of Muslim international relations" and "moral superpower", even though in a re-defined notion of *ummah* now acknowledging ethnic and national differences.[742] It was hence a confluence of strategic interest with revolutionary identity, even though the conjuncture could change the balance between ideology and pragmatism. Domestically, this strategic increase in Iran's revolutionary stance helped to empower the political position and ideological power of the conservatives, who viewed Iran as the vanguard of the Islamic world and brought them further influence in regional policy and domestic politics. Iran was adamant to frame the Palestinian conflict as a confrontation between "Islam" and "America." Ayatollah Khamenei declared that the aim of the US was to suppress Islam in Palestine, the heartland of the Muslim world.[743] Foreign Minister Velayati argued that the Palestinian struggle would be on the wrong track, unless it was based on Islam, and added that "The people are prepared to lay down their lives for Islam, but they are less

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[739] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 157.

[740] Ibid.

[741] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 156.

[742] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, pp. 201-203.

[743] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch, *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*, p. 185.

prepared to die for nationalism."[744] As the Palestinian struggle gained an Islamic character beside its secular-nationalist path, it created a regional context for Iran's pro-Islam, anti-American and anti-Israeli agency, which also fostered the ideological standing and strategic command of the conservatives. Iran was on a path of change in many regards, but keeping its rejectionist stance helped Iran to maintain its revolutionary image. Regional politics kept Iran's zeal to confront United States alive, both strategically and ideologically.

5.3.2.3. The "Dual Containment" Policy

In 1993, the Clinton Administration declared "dual containment" policy, built on a strategy of "containing" both Iran and Iraq. Previously American strategy was based on balancing Iran and Iraq against each other. In the new epoch US decided to confront these two antagonist states which it viewed inimical to its regional interests together.[745] Iraq was already placed under UN sanctions regime built on economic sanctions including a ban on its oil exports with UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 687 adopted in August 1990. The justification of Iran's containment was based on the assumption that unless contained and compelled to change its behavior, "five years from now Iran will be much more capable of posing a real threat to Israel, to the Arab world and to Western interests in the Middle East."[746] Martin Indyk, then the senior Middle East official of the US National Security Council argued that President Clinton was not opposed to the Islamic government, but its policies which sponsor terrorism and assassinations, support Hezbollah and Hamas, obstruct the peace process, subvert US-friendly governments, and seek to dominate the Gulf by attaining weapons of mass

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[744] Ibid.

[745] See Martin Indyk, "The Clinton Administration's Approach to the Middle East", Soref Symposium 1993, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, May 1993, online available at: http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/the-clinton-administrations-approach-to-the-middle-east (accessed on August 15, 2012).

[746] Ibid.

destruction. Accordingly Iran would either "modify" its behavior under political and economic pressure or it would be denied any chance of normalization.[747]

The dual containment policy was a marked departure from previous US policy toward post-revolutionary Iran which tried to reach out Tehran.[748] Indeed, there were slight chances of normalization between Iran and the United States immediately after the end of the Cold War and breakout of the Gulf Crisis. During the Bush Administration (1988-1992), US and Iran had resumed indirect diplomatic communications through third party mediators and reached an understanding on Iraq as well as the freeing of US and European citizens being kept as hostages in Lebanon.[749] Particularly freeing the American hostages in Lebanon was an issue President Rafsanjani invested considerable time and energy, lest this shows Iran's goodwill and commitment for a breakthrough in its relations with the US in the new epoch.[750] Apparently Iran was heartened by the promising remarks of President George W. H. Bush's inauguration speech, as he asserted "goodwill begets goodwill and good faith can be a spiral that endlessly moves on."[751] Iran in return for its goodwill expected to see recognition of its legitimate interests in the Persian Gulf, the lifting of the economic embargo and release of its

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[747] Indyk argued that "the opportunity to act now, on the other hand, derives from the fact that Iran is no longer a good commercial proposition. It is $5 billion in arrears on its short term international loans and this figure is growing in leaps and bounds. Iran suffers from 30 percent inflation and 30 percent unemployment. In short, Iran is a bad investment in both commercial and strategic terms, not just for the United States but for all responsible members of the international community."

[748] Donette Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran*, p. 97.

[749] Eric Hooglund, "Mythology versus Reality: Iran's political economy and the Clinton Administration", *Critique: Critical Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 6, No. 11, 1997, p. 38.

[750] See James R. Gaines and Karsten Prager, "Rafsanjani's advise to "Great Satan", *Time*, 31 May 1993, Vol. 141, Issue 22.

[751] President George H. W. Bush in his 1989 asserted that "To the world, too, we offer new engagement and a renewed vow: We will stay strong to protect the peace. The offered hand is a reluctant fist; once made -- strong, and can be used with great effect. There are today Americans who are held against their will in foreign lands and Americans who are unaccounted for. Assistance can be shown here and will be long remembered. Good will begets good will. Good faith can be a spiral that endlessly moves on." See Inaugural Address of President George H. W. Bush, January 20, 1989, online available at: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=16610 (accessed on August 18, 2012).

frozen assets in the US banks including military hardware purchased by the Shah.[752] Amirahmadi notes a covert rapprochement between the two states through a tacit American approval of a $ 250 million World Bank loan to Iran and Secretary Baker's above cited announcement of Iran's inclusion in the Persian Gulf security structure for its constructive efforts in the Gulf War.[753] Much to Iran's dismay, the US policy continued with sanctioning Iran. According to Gerges, American political and economic pressure and authorization of the CIA to pursue covert operations against Iran meant a blunt preference for confrontation over cooptation.[754]

Therefore, at a time Iran sought to rebuild its political and economic relations with the US, US strategy was to exert economic and political pressure upon Iran. In the early 1990s, through the "Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Appropriation Act" in 1991 US Secretary of Treasury instructed the US directors to prevent Iran's access to loans and funds from international financial institutions for its alleged support to international terrorism, while "The Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act" of 1992 enforced sanctions against persons or countries that transfer to Iran and Iraq goods or technology for acquiring certain weapons.[755] Since 1995, sanctions policy even turned into an "undeclared economic and political war" against Iran, which was portrayed "not only a threat to its neighbors, but to the entire region and the world."[756]

American policy toward Iran soon became intrinsically linked with the Israeli lobby campaigning mainly through the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)

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[752] Hooshang Amirahmadi, "Iranian economic reconstruction plan and prospects for its success", p. 144.

[753] Ibid.

[754] Fawaz Gerges, *America and Political Islam*, p. 115.

[755] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, p. 158.

[756] President Clinton announced his confrontational strategy at a dinner of the World Jewish Congress. See Fawaz Gerges, *America and Political Islam*, p. 115.

and associated think-tanks.[757] In the early 1990s, the Labor government in Israel through determined efforts of Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres embarked on a determined anti-Iran campaign by repeatedly talking of an "Iranian threat" that "fanned all the flames of the Middle East."[758] According to Trita Parsi, Israel's rising enmity against Iran stemmed from its perception of Iran as its main rival for regional hegemony, once Iraq was weakened after the Gulf War of 1990-1991. Besides, Israel allegedly feared of a possible Iran-US rapprochement in the post-Cold War era, at the expense of its special relationship with the United States.[759] The campaigns depicted Iran as a "fanatical", "terrorist" state and an "existential threat" not only to Israel but to the entire region and the world through its search for weapons of mass destruction. In the discourse of the 1990s, Iran seemed to have replaced the communist threat with its "Islamic threat."

It was through the persistent pressure from the Israeli government, Israeli lobby and US Congress that US sanctions and containment policy evolved and intensified. In May 1995, President Clinton signed an executive order that banned all US trade to and investment in Iran, including the purchase of Iranian oil by US companies abroad. It also prohibited US export of goods, technology and services, the re-export of those goods from third countries to Iran as well as new US investments and financing, trading and investment by US subsidiaries in Iran. The 1987 prohibition on the import of Iranian goods to the US was still in force.[760] If left solely under executive orders, US Presidents

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[757] For a comprehensive account on anti-Iran lobby activity in US politics, see Sasan Fayazmanesh, "The Politics of the US Economic Sanctions against Iran", *Review of Radical Political Economics*, Vol. 35, No. 3, (Summer 2003), pp. 221-240, and Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 181-189.

[758] Shimon Peres is quoted in Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliances*, p. 162.

[759] Ibid., p. 159. US-Israeli affairs were already strained during the Gulf War and due to former Prime Minister's Shamir's reluctance to participate US-sponsored peace process right after the war. There were debates on whether Israel turned into a liability rather than an asset for US Middle East policy with the end of Israel's strong bulwark status against Soviet communism with the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

[760] See Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, p. 158.

would retain some room for maneuver in sanctions policy; as the orders could be lifted, if deemed necessary and without congressional oversight.[761] However, sanctions policy became further institutionalized with the adoption of 1996 "Iran-Libya Sanctions Act" (ILSA) by Congress upon the proposal of the Republican Party New York Senator D'Amato.[762] The ILSA imposed sanctions on *foreign* companies, (both entities and persons) investing more than $20 million in one year in Iran's energy sector.[763] In August 1997, Clinton approved a new executive order, which extended the scope of previous sanctions and in a sense affirmed the administration's commitment to sanctioning Iran in the face of Republican competitors. As Fayazmanesh observes sanctioning Iran in the mid-1990s was a bipartisan affair and almost a race between the Republicans and the Democrats for ensuring support of the Israeli lobby.[764] US in the 1990s justified and carried forward its containment policy by depicting and denigrating Iran as a "rogue", "reactionary backlash" state.[765] Gerges argues that even though the Clinton Administration rejected Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" thesis, in

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[761] See Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*; Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*.

[762] Sasan Fayazmanesh in his analysis identifies Senator D'Amato's close affiliation with the Israeli lobby by referring to his slim election of 1992 with the help of one of the Israeli-affiliated groups in the US, the Council of Jewish Organizations of Borough Park, his subsequent diversion of federal and state grants to this organization and the illegal use of these funds. See Sasan Fayazmanesh, "The Politics of the US Economic Sanctions against Iran", pp. 229-230.

[763] The threshold for Libya was $ 40 million. In essence, Libya was added to sanctions act lately by Senator Edward Kennedy because of its refusal to yield the suspects of the bombing of Pan Am 103 flight in 1988. The sanctions act authorized the President to impose two out of a menu of six sanctions which comprised (1) denial of Export-Import Bank loans, credits, or credit guarantees for U.S. exports to the sanctioned entity; (2) denial of licenses for the U.S. export of military or militarily-useful technology to that entity; (3) denial of U.S. bank loans exceeding $10 million in one year to the entity; (4) if the entity is a financial institution, a prohibition on its service as a primary dealer in U.S. government bonds; and/or a prohibition on its service as a repository for U.S. government funds (each counts as one sanction); (5) prohibition on U.S. government procurement from the entity; and (6) a restriction on imports from the entity, in accordance with the International Emergency Economic Powers Act. See Kenneth Katzman, "The Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA)", *Congressional Research Report (CSR) for Congress*, RS20871, April 3, 2006. Online available at: http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/64937.pdf (accessed on August 15, 2012).

[764] Sasan Fayazmanesh, "The Politics of the US Economic Sanctions against Iran", p. 230.

[765] See Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 2, (March/April 1994).

their mindset "Islamic extremism" was synonymous with Iran and the administration's preferred method of confronting Iran remained controversial. [766]

The latest US sanctions created serious tensions for US-European relations, for targeting the third parties doing business with Iran. Europe's expanding energy needs and Iran's search for new economic partners created a favorable atmosphere for improvement of relations between Europe and Iran, and Europe then started to engage Iran via "critical dialogue."[767] The US meanwhile aimed to foment multilateral and concerted pressure vis-à-vis through "aggressive" diplomacy to persuade its allies in G-7 and other international meetings.[768] But, it was not able to bring a unified anti-Iran front in the 1990s, which has provided room for Iran to pursue its developmentalist agenda despite US sanctions, particularly toward the end of the decade under the reformist administration following the footsteps of the Rafsanjani administration.

5.4. Iran and the "New World Order": Agency, Capabilities and Limitations

Sariolghalam argues that in the face US dominance over Gulf politics, Iran's strategy was the "containment of the United States" by enhancing its outreach in the region and relations with regional states and non-state actors.[769] It promoted the strategy of *amniyat-e dast-e jam'ii* (collective security) with a renewed belief in Iran's role as the

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[766] Samuel Huntington argued that the major fault-lines of post Cold War politics would be along civilizational lines. Accordingly Islam was one of the major civilizations he enumerated. Islam versus the West turned to be a widespread, reductionist, perilous discourse and binary opposition in the historical trajectory of world politics especially after September 11 attacks. See Samuel p. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Re-making of World Order*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003). His theme of clash first appeared in his article "The Clash of Civilizations?", *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1973, Vol. 72, No. 3, pp. 22-49. See Fawaz Gerges, *America and Political Islam*, p. 118, for the traces of this line of thinking on the Clinton administration.

[767] See Ziba Moshaver, "Revolution, Theocratic Leaderhip and Iran's Foreign Policy: Implications for Iran-EU Relations", *The Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (Winter 2003), p. 294.

[768] See Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, p. 160. "Working aggressively" is a quote from Peter Tarnoff, the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs of the time.

[769] Mahmood Sariolghalam, "Sources of Continuity in Iran's Foreign Policy", p. 3.

guardian of regional stability. Rafsanjani argued that "the only power that can provide peace and stability of the Persian Gulf is Iran."[770]

Iran from the very start was suspicious of US talks over the "new world order." Hard-liners expected that it would be marked by US monism rather than a collective and multilateral framework for the region.[771] Ayatollah Khamenei was pessimistic about the likely consequences of the new US jargon and related policies on the interests of the Third World, while President Rafsanjani was more interested to exploit the likely benefits of diverse and horizontal relations of the post-Soviet era international politics as well as inherent contradictions of the US policy.[772] In the face of US pressures on Iran, Rafsanjani administration adhered to the vision of a multipolar international system within which Iran could balance the negativity of American policy with economic and political gains from relations with Europe which was viewed as a rather less malign part of the "West" as well as relations with Japan, China and Russia in the East. Rafsanjani was so impressed by his official visit to China that he started to propose Chinese model of economic growth as an exemplar for Iran's development.

However, Iran's pragmatist leadership was also aware of the fact that the country's full integration into international political and economic system would materialize only if it could achieve normalization with the US. This would also secure the survival of the revolution.[773] After the Gulf war, initial hopes for putting relations on the right track were dashed because of the US decision to leave out Tehran from re-configuration of the region and "contain" its sphere of influence through sanctions and rising US presence in the region. US intransigence only served to raise the political costs of Rafsanjani's search for reconciliation with the erstwhile enemy of the Islamic Republic, especially

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[770] Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 103-104.

[771] Ibid., p. 171.

[772] Ibid., pp. 172-174.

[773] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 142.

with the growing concerns and suspicions of Supreme Leader and the conservative establishment over American policy. But he remained determined to reach a *modus vivendi* with the US through an economic strategy, which he deemed would be less risky for domestic consumption, as it could be portrayed as an economic agreement, not a political compromise.[774] His efforts resulted in one billion dollar-worth oil contract with American company Conoco in March 1995. This was the most lucrative oil deal offered by Iran in its history.[775] As Gerges notes, Iran deliberately chose a US company over European companies to show its willingness to do business with the US.[776] However, Conoco had to drop the deal after President Clinton's executive orders prohibited US financing and management of Iran's petroleum sector. According to Rafsanjani, the Conoco deal was "a message to the US which was not correctly understood" and in the end, he told, US had lost a major opportunity.[777] In 1997, a two billion-worth deal would go to the French company Total, which was in open violation of multilateral sanctions strategy of the United States.[778] Iran by opening up its lucrative markets tried to resist and counter US moves aimed at its strategic and economic isolation, while obtaining the much needed capital for its oil industry. Sanctions policy was particularly detrimental to the developmentalist tenet of Iran's foreign policy. Iran was constantly prompted to find

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[774] Ibid.

[775] Ellen Laipson, "Reading Iran" in *The Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, online available at http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/reading-iran (accessed on June 29, 2012)

[776] Fawaz Gerges, *America and Political Islam*, p. 140.

[777] Rafsanjani's remarks in his interview with ABC's Peter Jennings are quoted in Ellen Laipson, "Reading Iran". Iran opened bidding for production agreements for two of its offshore oil fields to international companies in 1994. In March 1995, it announced that the deal would go to the American company Conoco. The Conoco deal was approved by Ayatollah Khamenei and the company from the outset informed the US government of its negotiations. The State Department in return assured Conoco that the White House would approve the deal. However with intensified Israeli lobbying against US-Iran breakthrough, the sanctions terminated the deal. See Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 186-187 and also "Burned by loss of Conoco Deal, Iran says US betrays free trade", *The New York Times*, March 20, 1995, http://www.nytimes.com/1995/03/20/business/burned-by-loss-of-conoco-deal-iran-says-us-betrays-free-trade.html (accessed on August 17, 2012).

[778] For further details and ensuing Western contractors of Iranian oil and gas, see "Business: The Economy Shell secures Iranian oil deal", BBC News, November 14, 1999, online available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/519688.stm (accessed on August 17, 2012).

ways of bypassing US sanctions through new partners that are willing to do business with it. With the sanctions on trade, investment and technology transfer and containment policy, Iran's foreign policy started to diversify Iran's relations especially building links with Russia and China mainly for strategic cooperation.[779]

US containment strategy was not solely confined to Iran's sphere of influence and activity in the Middle East; it also targeted Iran's outreach in Central Asia and Caucasus after the collapse of the USSR. In post-Soviet era, Iran started to promote itself as a "strategic link", a "bridge" between land-locked Transcaucasia-Caspian region and the outside world.[780] Politicians in Iran stressed the strategic location of the country, which offered the shortest and most direct link between the energy-rich regions of Caspian and the Persian Gulf.[781] Iran envisaged a central role to play in energy politics. Meanwhile, United States was determined to shape post-Soviet geopolitics in line with its strategic and economic interests which entailed control of new regional politics and fulfillment of the growing stakes of American companies with vested interest in hydrocarbon resources of the region.[782] As Ansari argues, to exclude Iran from emerging energy networks, Clinton Administration was ready to risk economic rationality, by preferring more perilous and longer routes to extract Caspian oil and transfer it to international oil markets.[783] The pipeline politics was hence another platform that Iran aspired to accrue political and economic leverage, but its tension-ridden affairs with US once again impeded Iran's grasp of opportunities in full sense.

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[779] See Daniel Byman et. al, *Iran's Security Policy in the Post-Revolutionary Era*, pp. 53-65.

[780] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Geopolitics Beckons: Hydrocarbons and the Politics of the Persian Gulf", in Ali Mohammadi and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (eds.), *Iran and Eurasia*, (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2000), p. 94.

[781] Ibid., p. 99. For instance, Iran already possessed the necessary infrastructure to transfer Azerbaijan's oil to the Persian Gulf.

[782] Ibid., p. 98.

[783] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 139.

The post-Soviet space posed grave security challenges for Iran, besides opportunities for economic progress and ideological influence. Iran's new neighbors were in a volatile transformation. In the Caucasus, Armenia and Azerbaijan were at war over Nagorno Karabakh, to the east, Tajikistan was marred by civil war and Iran's eastern flank was a hotbed of radicalism with the rise of Taleban through Saudi and Pakistani support.[784] The independence of Azerbaijan was a source of concern because of Iran's fear of ethnic unrest and separatism instigated by its own Azeri population. The Persian Gulf, which has been the life vessel of Iran's economy, already came under increased military domination of the United States.[785] In the 1990s, regional transformation was breeding future threats and challenges for the Islamic Republic.

In this new epoch, therefore Iran had to cope with multiple challenges of change taking place at different scales including its own polity. In this transformation, US remained a contentious challenge. In addition to its material repercussions, US policy of containment strengthened the anti-US feeling among the political elite in Iran endorsing their beliefs in its "arrogant" and "evil" nature.[786] As argued before, with the end of the Cold War, the triumphant image and preponderance of the United States once again boosted the prevalent idea in Iran that US was the embodiment of unjust international order. US policies based on marginalization of Iran posed a major challenge against Iran's foreign policy and development plans at a time its main goal was to re-integrate to the international political and economic system. US policies shaping the context of Iran's foreign affairs thus structured Iran's material reproduction choices as well as the ideological climate at home. Now, the chapter will attend to the emerging discord in the dual leadership of the Islamic Republic and the role of US in these conflicts. It will

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[784] See John Calabrese, *Revolutionary Horizons: Regional Foreign Policy in Post-Khomeini Iran*, (London: Sr. Martin's Press, 1994), pp. 10-12; Mohsen M. Milani, "Iran's Policy Towards Afghanistan", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 60, No. 2, (Spring 2006), p. 239.

[785] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Geopolitics Beckons: Hydrocarbons and the Politics of the Persian Gulf", p. 94.

[786] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 142.

analyze the economic, ideological and international sources of discord and how this has institutionalized in politics.

5.5. The Post-1993 Contestations within the Islamic Republic

By the time US announced dual containment policy, Rafsanjani was starting his second term in office in the midst of political challenges due to the shortcomings of his reconstruction agenda. Then, the fault-lines between traditional right (conservatives) organized under the *faqih* and modern right (pragmatists) supporting Rafsanjani started to crystallize.[787] The initial concord between Supreme Leader Khamenei and President Rafsanjani was dissolving, because Rafsanjani's economic agenda, milder attitude toward social and cultural issues and foreign policy toward the US were threatening the vested material interests and ideological values of Iran's powerful conservatives. Apparently the perils of change against the status quo set the limits for initial agreement.

5.5.1. The Economic Sources of Discord

At the beginning of the reconstruction efforts, the merchant capital supported privatization and liberalization of the economy; however over time both *bonyads* and the *bazaar* found their interests threatened by the structural steps proposed by development plans (FFYDP). The bazaar merchants have been the main benefactors of Iran's multiple exchange rate system and the black market economy it resulted in. Rising imports and the weak taxation system prospered the *bazaaris*. The decision of the government to adopt a unified exchange rate and reform the ailing taxation system was no good news for the *bazaari*s with direct implications on their rent-seeking policies and profits.[788]

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[787] The results of the 1993 Presidential election not only signaled the declining popular support for Rafsanjani but overall decline in the voter turn-outs which testified lack of strong interest in politics by the public with significant repercussions for the regime's legitimacy. Only 55 % of the voters cast votes compared to 70 % in the previous election. See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini* Iran, p. 203.

[788] Maryam Panah, *The Islamic Republic and the World*, p. 141.

Managers of the *bonyad*s were opposed to privatization and liberalization of economy, for it would lessen the state's role which served to protect them and ensure their power and profits. To make matters worse, a planned shift to export-led growth and encouragement of industrial capital resurfaced the crux of economic modernization in Iran; as the merchant capital rejected resurgence of industrial capital.[789] It is in this context that the traditional right obstructed the Second Five Year Development Plan, which in turn slowed down structural adjustment policies of the administration.[790] In post-1993 era, Rafsanjani and his technocratic cadres were seeking to supervise the *bazaar* and fight with rampant profiteering and hoarding, while the conservative-right members of his second-term cabinet struggled to free the bazaar from governmental control and diminish the role of the state in economy as much and fast as possible.[791] Interestingly conservative right even started to blame the government for pursuing the economically antagonistic policies of the Shah regime toward the *bazaaris*.[792] Inside the country, reforming economy by shifting traditional dominance of mercantile capital into industrial capitalism and breaking Iran's dependence on oil sector was a formidable task, fraught with major political risks and tensions. Indeed the politics of economic reform became tremendously difficult, as oil prices dropped from $20 per barrel in 1991 to $12 in 1994, unemployment reached to 30 percent, and the price of sugar, rise and butter rose threefold.[793] Neoliberal restructuring was socially explosive and led to widespread protests on the streets and workplaces against the liberalization policy of the government, which entailed reduction of state subsidies on essential goods such as food.

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[789] Ibid.

[790] See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini* Iran, p. 210. The single exchange rate system adopted in 1993 was dropped in 1994 mainly because of bazaari protest since change from multiple exchange rates system into a single on threatened their fortunes in the black market economy. See also Bijan Khajehpour, "Iran's Economy Twenty Years After the Revolution", in John L. Esposito and R. K. Ramazani (eds.), *Iran at the Crossroads*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 108.

[791] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini* Iran, pp. 208 and 210.

[792] Ibid., p. 195.

[793] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 185.

State-society relations were strained by these riots in 1992 and 1994 which started in key industrial centers and then spread into many towns and cities and left dozens of protesters killed and hundreds of them injured and arrested with the strict use of force by the regime.[794] Supreme Leader Khamenei together with the Council of Guardians, conservative deputies of the Majles and *bazaar* merchants opposed President Rafsanjani's full-fledged neoliberal agenda which was charmed by Chinese model of economic development after his official visit to Beijing.[795]

5.5.2. Discord over Culture and Social Space

Another fault line between traditional and modern right emerged over political control of cultural and social space, which was going through its own transformation in the post-war era with rising demands and aspirations for political and civil freedoms. Societies could no longer remain as territorially contained, especially at a time of globalization of ideas, norms and consumerism. In 1992, the High Council for Cultural Revolution[796] (HCCR) headed by President Rafsanjani introduced the "Cultural Principles of the Islamic Republic" (CPIR), bringing a more liberal and less dogmatic approach to socio-cultural issues. The principles underlined that the Islamic Republic should attend to the "realities of the time" and leave the solution of social problems to "experts", not to clergy.[797]

In the 1990s, cultural space and moral codes increasingly turned into another site of contestation, as modern right's perspective of society and freedoms clashed with

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[794] Eva Patricia Rakel, *Power, Islam and Political Elite in Iran*, pp. 96-97.

[795] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, pp. 184-185.

[796] The High Council for Cultural Revolution (HCCR) was established in 1980 by Ayatollah Khomeini's order to determine regime's principles and guidelines and act independently without the need for approval by any other institution. It was to be headed by the President of the Islamic Republic. See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 167.

[797] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 168. Moslem argues that even though there was not any mention of "clergy" as such, the wording of the principles was built on careful selections from Ayatollah Khomeini's criticism of dangerous inclinations of conservative right.

conservatives' claim for exclusive authority over social life through Islamization. The debate on Islamization also pertained to Iran's international identity. As argued in the analysis of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation, the ideological pillar of the new state was instituted on Islamization of the public sphere, which was proposed as an authentic panacea for the West-stricken society of the Pahlavi Iran. Preservation of the Islamic order both in state and society gained new urgency in the face of ideological and cultural threats Iran perceived from the New World Order. The conservative factions adopted a hard line policy to maintain the ideological coherence of the state and not let the society get "contaminated" by Western values. They did not want to lose the Islamic control over social space neither to more pragmatic elements within the regime, nor to the Western cultural onslaught. In this context United States turned into a "cultural threat" in an era of globalization

By 1993 the need to protect society from "cultural onslaught from the West" became a persistent theme in Khamenei's parlance. The conservatives argued that the main threat to Third World nations came from clothes, theater, films and broadcasting of the West, especially of the United States, which aimed nothing but "eradicating religious values, tradition, culture and the civilization of the South and destroy cultural diversity around the world.[798] To counter Western cultural onslaught, the conservatives focused on strengthening the Islamicity of the regime by making mosques new cultural headquarters of the Islamic Republic and started to use *Basijis* and *Hezbollahis* to control and disrupt liberalization and political organization of society, a policy that would intensify in the coming era of reformism.[799] This "securitization" of the social gave a new impetus for the strengthening of conservative institutions of the state and thus institutional and social control of the conservative establishment.

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[798] Ali Larijani's remarks in June 2003 are quoted in Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, pp. 216-217.

[799] See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 216.

As a built-in element of post-revolutionary ideological order, US featured in all important debates over the future orientations of the polity. Prior to Iran's growing sensitivity on cultural onslaught, United States was invoked in the discussions over reconstruction agenda. Against the Maktabis' accusations of "betrayal" of Imam's legacy, Khamenei associated revolution with the reform programme and argued that "if during reconstruction period, the government can…enable the Islamic system to provide answers for the material and spiritual needs of the nation …the greatest blow will be delivered to world arrogance."[800] Khamenei defined and justified Iran's changing economic and political order in the context of its permanent struggle against the United States. Brumberg argues that anti-US mobilization served to keep revolutionary fervor alive without endangering the stability of social order and reconstruction agenda.[801] In time the emphasis on cultural threat and imperialism grew in parallel with the politicization of post-war society and the rise of political, economic and cultural expectations from the state. As to the political configuration of the state, Supreme Leader Khamenei succeeded in carving out a position for himself as the vanguard of the "traditional" forces structures in a rather closed society and economy against the forces of internationalization/globalization and modernization after a period of initial weakness in the political system vis-à-vis President Hashemi Rafsanjani.[802]

Given the historical constitution and definition of post-revolutionary state in Iran, out of a social revolution that has overthrown a ruthless monarch viewed as the gendarme of the United States in the region, relations with the United States could never be a purely foreign policy issue for Iranian political elite. Indeed, as articulated in the conceptual

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[800] The speech of Ayatollah Khamenei to the Grand Assembly of the *Basij*, quoted in Daniel Brumberg, *Re-inventing Khomeini*, p. 161.

[801] Ibid., p. 160.

[802] However, Khamenei was a staunch supporter of technological progress and science, which he deemed would make Iran independent and self-sufficient against its enemies. See Karim Sadjadpour, *Reading Khamenei*, p. 22. This selectivity will become more evident, especially in the early 2000s, once Iran started to reap the benefits of its research and development projects in armament. The issue will be tackled in the chapter focusing on the epoch of confrontation.

framework of this study, foreign policy regardless of its context is deeply integrated to domestic structures of power, norms and wealth which inform state's agency together with external contexts. In Iran, reorienting foreign policy vis-à-vis United States cut across many political layers and brought up challenges of balancing Iran's resistance against "Great Satan", the world arrogance" which have become the hallmark of regime's legitimacy with the structural necessities of opening up to the international to sustain the material reproduction of the state. The growing wedge between political elite to a certain extent reflected these dilemmas and foreign policy has become a site of contestation, just like the state, between Iran's traditional and modern right.

Institutionally, the discord within the elite resulted in formation of a distinct faction composed of fifteen members of Rafsanjani's cabinet splitting from the *Rouhaniyyat*. Naming themselves "Executives of Reconstruction" (*Kargozaran-e Sazendegi*), the group expressed its commitment to political and economic development of Iran through industrialization of economy and strengthening of political institutions and adhered to the "God-given right of self-government for the people", as stated in Article 56 of the Constitution.[803] Modern right imagined a politically and economically modern state without disregarding religious principles.[804] The split of the right was to play a significant role in the coming victory of the reformists in 1997 with the significant political support of the modern right to Iran's leftists that have gone through their own processes of change and transformation. However, the key to the epoch of reformism was the latent and deep-running social transformation of Iranian society throughout the 1990s. The society was not simply a site of contestation; growing expectations and political activism has turned Iran's society into an actor that the political power has to reckon with.

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[803] For an analysis of the formation, composition and objectives of the *Kargozaran*, see Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, pp. 128-134; Ruşen Çakır and Sami Oğuz, *Hatemi'nin İran'ı*, p. 53.

[804] Ibid., p. 134.

5.6. From the Epoch of Reconstruction to the Epoch of Reform: Transformation of the Post-war Society and the Rise of Reformism

In the 1990s, Iranian society has been transforming alongside state and its international affairs. After tumultuous war years marked by austerity, sacrifice and strict state control over social debate, the expectations of society, particularly of urban middle class from the epoch of reconstruction were high.[805] In the post-war epoch, the state faced a younger, more literate and politically articulate society. The baby boom of war years almost doubled Iran's population and brought up the challenge of fulfilling material and cultural expectations of Iran's young society as well as keeping them within the confines of the Islamic system.[806] Thanks to the reconstruction crusade immediately after the revolution, the literacy rate increased remarkably both in urban and rural population. Accordingly, in 1996, 93 percent of the population aged between 6 and 24 years were literate compared to 50.5 percent of literacy in 1976.[807] The accomplishments in education and infrastructural reach of the state however could not be supported by economic growth and political development for reasons related to war and the regime's authoritarian tendencies.

In the 1990s, there was growing sense of resentment against the state of economy and politics. It was mainly the *bazaaris* that benefited from state's economic policies, while population at large faced adverse consequences of economic re-structuring through lifting of price controls, rationing system and some of the state subsidies, as well as rampant inflation reaching to 50 percent in the mid-1990s.[808] The purchasing power of

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[805] Mehran Kamrava, *Iran's Intellectual Revolution*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 20.

[806] By 1996, 74.4 percent of the population was below the age of thirty-five and 35 percent was composed of people between the ages of fifteen to thirty-four. Ibid., p. 21.

[807] Azadeh Kian-Thiebaut, "Political and Social Transformations in Post-Islamist Iran", *Middle East Report*, No. 212, (Autumn 1999), p. 13.

[808] Ibid.

the middle class, that survived the 1980s and early 1990s with their previous savings from the former regime, declined severely prompting them to work in several jobs simultaneously to sustain expenses of modern life.[809] As Kian aptly observes because of the inability of rentier state to redistribute national wealth, the poor and unemployed Iranians increasingly relied upon an expanding underground economy and multiple jobs, none of which are under state control.[810] The black market got further boost, when military and paramilitary forces including the Guards also engaged in informal economic activity.[811] Popular dissatisfaction with the economy was deepened with rampant corruption among the political elite, what has become "a virtue, a means of governing and a mechanism of control", as Ansari puts it.[812] The more the agenda of social justice was sacrificed for economic growth, people during the 1990s started to talk about "Ayatollah Dollar" as the only authoritative Ayatollah left in the country.[813] In this regard, the political and socio-economic direction of the state was a source of resentment especially for the war veterans, as they witnessed rising bureaucratic centralism and elitism alongside an abandonment of the objective of social justice.[814] The rentier economy of the state benefited power networks allied with the regime and it was successful in co-opting urban poor through distribution of wealth via bonyads.[815]

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[809] Ibid.

[810] Ibid., p. 14.

[811] See Frederic Wehrey et.al, *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps,* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009), pp. 64-66. Accordingly the Guards are claimed to yield 200 to 300 percent profit on illegal sales by 2009. Ali Ansari argues that it was because of Iran's black market activity that the economy continued to function despite statistics predicting the country's formal economy at the edge of collapse. See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 123.

[812] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy*, p. 121.

[813] Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East,* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), p. 75.

[814] Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921*, p. 248.

[815] See William Beeman, "The Economics of the Downtrodden: Revolutionary Ideology and Practical Politics in the Islamic Republic of Iran", paper presented at *USC College Conference "Iranian Economy at a Crossroads: Domestic and Global Challenges"*, September 18-19, 2009, University of Southern California, USA, pp. 2-16.

Abrahamian argued that the resilience of the Islamic Republic to a great extent depended on the idea of social justice and state's populist policies.[816] Yet, politics remained a closed game secured for *khodis* (insiders), those belonging to close circles of powerful personalities of the Islamic Republic. In the 1990s it was *bazaaris* and *bonyads* that prospered from political rent and through selective strategies of the state.[817] Factional strife was a persistent element and those that aimed to reform the state and its entrenched political and economic relations risked exclusion from the centers of power.

The state's control over social and cultural space went through a modest and precarious relaxation compared to the war years and each time provoked a conservative reaction to sustain the status quo.[818] In the absence of political parties, relative freedom of press served as a platform for politicization and debate.[819] As Roy and Khosrokhavar argue, it was mainly through art and intellectual debates that the middle class could express itself and its frustration with the political system.[820] In this regard, emergence of "religious-intellectuals" such as Abdolkarim Soroush, Mohammad Mujtahid Shabestari and Mohsen Kadivar was of utmost significance for political debate and activism in the 1990s. These scholars were engaged in re-interpretation of religious thought and searched for a critical appreciation and reconciliation of the dialectical relationship

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[816] See Ervand Abrahamian, "Why the Islamic Republic has survived?", *MERIP Report* 250-*The Islamic Revolution at 30*, Spring 2009, online available at: http://www.merip.org/mer/mer250 (accessed on August 12, 2012).

[817] David E. Thaler et al. *Mullahs, Guards and Bonyads: An Exploration of Iranian Leadership Dynamics*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), pp. 37-58.

[818] As examples of relative relaxation, Shaul Bakhash cites women appearing in public in brightly-colored scarves, showing a bit of hair, nail-polish and lipstick, young couple socializing in public sphere, government's toleration of underground trade in video-cassettes of Hollywood films and reopening of art galleries. See Shaul Bakhash, "The Six Presidents", *Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, online available at: http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/six-presidents (accessed on August 16, 2012).

[819] See Azadeh Kian-Thiebaut, "Political and Social Transformations in Post-Islamist Iran", p. 14.

[820] See Farhad Khosrokhavar and Olivier Roy, *İran: Bir Devrimin Tükenişi* (*Iran: Comment sortir d'une révolution religieusse*), (İsmail Yerguz, trans.), (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2000), p. 31.

between religion and modernity.[821] Scholars like Kamrava and Arjomand claim that emerging discourse of "religious modernism" was tantamount to Shiite reformation[822], even if it had to compete with other discourses in the political arena.[823] However, these social currents were not allowed to translate into reform and political liberalization during the presidency of Hashemi Rafsanjani, for they could jeopardize the stability of the regime and its reconstruction agenda.[824] The rising demands for a "republican" state placing people's will over clerical authority was a grave challenge to the institution of velayat-e faqih that has gained an absolutist mandate in the epoch of reconstruction. The religious intellectuals were essential in providing religious justification for republican arguments. Interestingly, US also featured in these debates, as the conservatives in an act of self-defense and delegitimation of their contenders claimed that supporting "Islam minus *velayat-e faqih*" was tantamount to defending an "American brand of Islam."[825]

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[821] The thought-breaking pieces of the above mentioned scholars are as follow: Abdolkarim Soroush, *Siratha-ye Mostaqim (Straight Paths)*, (Tehran: Sirat, 1998) and *Bast-i Tajrobeh-e Nabavi (Expansion of the Prophetic Experience)*, (Tehran: Sirat, 1999); M. Mojtahed Shabestari, Hermeneutic: Kitab va Sonnat (Hermeneutis: The Book and Tradition), (Tehran: Tarh-e Naw, 1996) and Naqdi bar Qiraat-i Rasmi-ye Din (A Critique of the Official Reading of Religion), (Tehran: Tarh-i Naw, 2000); Mohsen Kadivar, *Nazariha-ye Dowlat dar Fiqh-e Shi'a (Theses on the State in Shiite Jurisprudence)*, (Tehran: Nashr-e Nay, 1997) and *Hokumat-e Vila'i (Theocratic Government),* (Tehran: Nashr-i Nay, 1998). For a review of the reform movement and the reformist debate, see Said Amir Arjomand, "The Reform Movement and the Debate on Modernity and Tradition in Contemporary Iran", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 34, 2002, pp. 719-731 and Mehran Kamrava, *Iran's Intellectual Revolution*, pp. 120-172. For an English translation of Soroush's ideas, see Abdolkarim Soroush, *Reason, Freedom and Democracy in Islam*, (Mahmood Sadri and Ahmad Sadri, trans.), (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). See also Afshin Matin-asgari, "Abdolkarim Soroush and the Secularization of Islamic Thought in Iran", *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 30, No.1, pp. 95-115, Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi, "Contentious Public Religion: Two Conceptions of Islam in Revolutionary Iran: Ali Shari'ati and Abdolkarim Soroush", *International Sociology*, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 504-523.

[822] Arjomand asserts the Islamic Revolution resulted in the modernization of the Shiite tradition concomitant to the traditionalization of modernizing nation-state. The merging of traditional and modern elements within the structure of the Islamic state was articulated in Chapter 3. For Arjomand's remarks, see Said Amir Arjomand, "The Reform Movement and the Debate on Modernity and Tradition in Contemporary Iran", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 34, 2002, p. 721.

[823] Mehran Kamrava classifies three dominant discourses that have been prevalent in post-revolutionary Iran that are conservatism, religious modernism and secular modernism. See Mehran Kamrava, *Iran's Intellectual Revolution*.

[824] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *After Khomeini: The Iranian Second Republic*, p. 101.

[825] See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 153.

It was Mohammad Khatami, Iran's next president, who played a significant role in the relative opening of cultural space before the political victory of the reformists in 1997 Presidential elections. Much to the dismay of the conservative establishment, Khatami served as Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance during 1982 to1992, and he adopted liberal policies on cinema, theater and art, sanctioned proliferation of books, literary and intellectual journals such as *Zanan* (on women issues), *Kiyan* and *Goftegu*, which enabled lively debate on civil society, religion and politics as well as social demands and aspirations within a closed political environment. By 1992, he was forced to resign due to growing resentment against his liberal attitude; yet in 1997 he would make a glorious come-back as the President of the Islamic Republic.

5.7. The Epoch of Reform: State Transformation, Foreign Policy and Iran-US Relations

On May 23 1997, (*Do-e Khordad 1376*) the reformist candidate Mohammad Khatami won a landslide victory against his powerful rival the *Majles* speaker Nateq Nouri, the candidate of the conservative establishment. Khatami was a "dark-horse winner", who came to power with overwhelming support from women, youth and students on an electoral campaign pledging civil society, rule of law and democracy.[826] Khatami also received strong support from rank-and-file members of the Revolutionary Guards and young clergy with growing ties to Iran's modern right.[827] The reformist victory through a strong popular mandate-amounting to 70 percent of the votes-, started a new era of struggle over the direction of the revolution, state and people's place in it with significant repercussions for Iran's self-definition and its regional and international politics.

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[826] See Ruşen Çakır and Sami Oğuz, *Hatemi'nin İran'ı*, pp. 75-85.

[827] Ibid., p. 79. Çakır and Oğuz observe that Khatami's family connections with the three important religious families of Iran-Tabatabai's, Mousavi's and Rowhani's made him a strong figure within the Shiite circles. His tenure as Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance also acquainted him with urban middle class and intellectuals.

5.7.1. The State during the Epoch of Reform (1997-2005)

During the epoch of reform, the state became a site of contestation between contending definitions of state, politics, individual and international. The new epoch was in many regards a continuation of the former with accent on renewal and reconstruction. But it was distinct because of the growing impact of society and social demands on politics, which introduced new dynamics to state-society relations.

Mohammad Khatami presided over a diverse coalition of political forces comprising "moderates", the representatives of modern right (*Kargozaran*) seeking economic growth and modernization; the "reformists" aspiring to achieve political reform and a functioning civil society; and the "radicals" supporting rule of law and democracy to reclaim their place in the political system after having been sidelined by the alliance of modern and traditional right in 1992 *Majles* elections and aiming to restore social-justice and redistribution-oriented policies of the Islamic Republic.[828] This diversity resulted in contradictory objectives and deadlock in economic policy, regarding the choice between economic growth and social justice.[829] Therefore, Khatami had to walk a tightrope not only against the conservatives but also against divisions within his social base as well. Nevertheless, the state continued to be development-oriented; as Khatami pledged to follow the footsteps of Rafsanjani's economic programme and supported privatization and liberalization policies. The significant continuity between the epoch of reconstruction and reform was maintained by the crucial backing of the reformist coalition by the Executives of the Construction group.[830] These managerial elites made

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[828] Here I relied on Eric Hooglund's categorization. For further details, see Eric Hooglund, "Khatami's Iran", *Current History*, (February 1999), pp. 62-63.

[829] See Sohrab Behdad, "Khatami and His 'Reformist' Economic (Non-) Agenda", *Middle East Research and Information Project*, May 21, 2001.

[830] In the victory of the reformists, modern right and its social networks were highly effective. Kargozaran was headed by Tehran's influential mayor Gholamhossein Kerbaschi who has been behind the success of reformist campaign through sparing a significant budget and providing wider circulation of reformist worldview through the journal of *Hamshahri* published by Tehran municipality.

inroads to the cabinet and important centers of decision-making, sustaining Iran's economic orientation.

Nevertheless, Khatami administration diverged from the previous epoch with its determined emphasis on the necessity of political reform as a prerequisite for economic reform. In this epoch, the prevailing consensus rested on priority and urgency of political reform to address structural economic problems. As Kaveh Ehsani argues, Iran's economic malaise was related to the insecurity of multiple centers of authority, which disrupted economic plans and decisions; and placed incompetent managers to consolidate the "domination of Mafia-like clans" over state institutions.[831] Khatami fought to institute "rule of law" into a political system that was struck by arbitrary power, mismanagement and corruption. He argued that all officials of the regime should be accountable to people regardless of their status, which directly bore on the status of the Supreme Leader and his protégés at the higher echelons of power.[832]

The reformist discourse on rights, liberties, rule of law and democracy introduced a new thinking on state and state-society relations. Against subordination of popular will to absolute authority of Supreme Leader, the reformists were seeking a modern state attentive to social demands and political rights of its society. As Ansari argues, supported by strong political activism from below, the reformists demanded renegotiation of the social contract that shall define people no more as subjects, but "citizens" of the Islamic Republic.[833] Asef Bayat notes that Iran's reformers, both elite and people, conceived their movement as Iran's "second revolution" aimed to complete the 1979 revolution and bring an inclusive, egalitarian and democratic framework for

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[831] Kaveh Ehsani, "Do-e Khordad and the Specter of Democracy", *Middle East Report*, No. 212, (Autumn 1999), pp. 10-11.

[832] Mehdi Moslem, *Politics of Factionalism in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 255.

[833] See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy: The Politics of Managing Change*, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2006), p. 50.

politics.[834] As their name suggests, the reformist elites were not revolutionaries seeking to dismantle the Islamic Republic. They were not opposed to the Islamic Republic *per se*, but to the authoritarian and patrimonial way it had been ruled so far.[835] Khatami and his disciples regarded their victory as a return to the true essence of the Revolution; namely to its republican features based on people's right to self-government.[836] For this reason, they were careful not to imply a secular and Western notion of civil society and worked to come up with a non-Western and an Islamic-Shiite reading of civil society and democracy.[837] In line with the articulations of the religious intellectuals, Khatami was talking about reconciliation of Islam and democracy in an authentic way and he formulated the notion of Islamic democracy (*mardomsalari*) which comprised notions of civil society, rule of law and democratic participation in an Islamic framework. Scholars like Asef Bayat, termed Iran's reformist experimentation as "post-Islamism" which corresponded to re-secularization of religion and a fusion between Islam as an individual belief and individual freedom and choice.[838] According to Bayat, post-Islamism was associated with values of democracy and features of modernity.[839] The reformists were attacking conservatives for impeding Iran's progress to become a full-fledged "Islamic" democracy.[840] The reformist elite and intellectuals supported grassroots democracy and enacted the unimplemented article of the constitution on local councils, which enhanced

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[834] Asef Bayat, "Iran: a green wave for life and liberty," *Open Democracy*, 7 July 2009, online available at http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/iran-a-green-wave-for-life-and-liberty , (accessed on March 2, 2010) If recalled, for radical revolutionaries, it was the seizure of the American Embassy that constituted Iran's Second Revolution, which for them completed the independence of the country once the Shah was toppled, by "humiliating United States" and seizing the "den of spies."

[835] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy: The Politics of Managing Change*, p. 113.

[836] Ibid.

[837] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 255.

[838] Asef Bayat, "The Coming of post-Islamist Society", *Critique*, (Fall 1996), p. 45.

[839] Ibid.

[840] Ghoncheh Tazmini, *Khatami's Iran: The Islamic Republic and the Turbulent Path to Reform*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), p. 57.

their capacity to reach out and control "local" politics[841], hitherto controlled by religious networks. A significant part of their policy was to boost reformist press through granting permits which resulted in proliferation of newspapers and journals and added up to social dynamism and expectations of real change in politics of the Islamic Republic.[842]

Regardless of its Islamic reference, Khatami's vision and demands for reform still sounded like an "alternative" to the current system of rule and therefore "perilous" for the vested interests of traditional elite. Soon the landscape would be polarized between what Mohsen Kadivar aptly termed as the supporters of "civil society" (*jame'eh-ye madani*) and the advocates of "guardianship society" (*jame'eh-ye velayi*).[843]

The epoch of reform was an epoch of struggle both among the political elites of the Islamic Republic and between state and society. It proved to be a period of intense crisis over the character and future direction of the state and involved institutional, ideological as well as real fight, discernible in outburst of demonstrations against regime policies or political violence perpetrated by thugs linked with deeper layers of political power, which even led some analysts to call Iran "thugocracy" pointing out to societal violence out of polarization and securitization of the reform agenda. Iran's tumultuous domestic struggle for reform took place in an international and regional context, which significantly bore upon the transformation of the state and the struggle of the reformist movement. Both "domestic" and "international" forces were at work to re-configure the

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[841] See Saed Hajjarian and Kaveh Ehsani, "'Existing Political Vessels Cannot Contain the Reform Movement': A Conversation with Saed Hajjarian", *Middle East Report* No. 212, (Autumn 1999), pp. 40-42.

[842] Ataollah Mohajerani, Khatami's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance adopted a liberal perspective like Khatami and told that during his tenure the ministry will serve as a ministry of culture, not guidance. The Ministry granted licenses and enabled proliferation of reformist newspapers which included *Jame'eh-e*, *Tus*, *Neshat*, *Khordad* and *Sobh-e Emrooz* and weeklies *Rah-e No*, *Aban*, *Salaam*, *Iran-e Farda*, *Asr-e Ma* and *Kiyan* which engaged in debating controversial religio-political issues. See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 257.

[843] Kadivar's terminology is quoted in Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 252. Kadivar's writings over politics and religion in Iran are also available in his website kadivar.com

state and shape its relations with the international and its society. The following part aims to shed light on the relationship between the state and the international by analyzing the significance of the United States in Iran's attempts to re-build itself and its relations with the international during a time of reform and struggle in Iran.

5.7.2. The State and the International during the Epoch of Reform: Re-defining State, Re-defining Foreign Policy

By the time Khatami assumed presidency, economic situation was deteriorating. As Abrahamian notes the early 1990s deepened economic crisis. Oil prices fell from $20 per barrel in 1991 to $12 in 1994, unemployment reached to 30 percent, the price of sugar, rise and butter rose threefold.[844] Improving economic situation remained the most daunting challenge for the government. In order to sustain development and generate jobs and welfare for Iran's young and dynamic society Iran was in need of FDI and new regional and international markets for its exports.

The Khatami administration continued with the strategy of Iran's re-integration into international politics and world economy despite US sanctions. As noted above, Rafsanjani's neo-functionalist logic was based on the assumption that Iran's increasing economic relations with the US through attraction of American investment into Iran's most strategic sector, the oil industry, would spill-over and improve political relations. Iran would then benefit political normalization as well as rebuilding of its oil industry in severe need of investment and technology to reach at production levels before the revolution. Iran's diplomacy in this epoch too followed the developmentalist path initiated by former president Rafsanjani. Yet, Khatami's approach attempted at a deeper transformation of Iran's international relations. He sought to foment greater recognition and political prestige for Iran in international community, for Iran's radical image in the epoch of revolution and persistent attempts to portray it as a rogue state in spite of a great deal of efforts for moderation and normalization impeded its development. The

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[844] Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 185.

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epoch of reform was hence not only about reforming state and state-society affairs; it was also a quest to reform Iran's tension-ridden affairs with the world. The on-going domestic transformation of the polity had impacts on regional and international affairs of Iran through reform. In this search, Khatami's ideas rooted in his philosophical and intellectual background and Iran's changing society since the beginning of the 1990s would become a major tool.

5.7.2.1 Khatami's Vision of International Affairs

Khatami's approach to international relations of Iran reflected his insights on the definitions of the "self" and the "other", grounded in his education in Western philosophy. Iran's intellectual tradition in the 1960s and 1970s defined Iran against the West, which constituted Iran's "occidental other."[845] In the 1990s, this binary opposition was seriously debated. One of the most significant developments regarding the conceptual milieu of thinking about Iran and the West was growing moderation in anti-Americanism of the Islamist leftists in the mid-1990s.[846] The left then started to argue that "Iran cannot live in an international vacuum oblivious to the realities of the world" and anti-US slogans shall be dropped. This was a definitive shift from a position, which defined Khomeini's real Islam in terms of "anti-US feelings and class wars."[847]

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[845] Iran's definition of the West as "Occidental Other" was elaborated by Mehrzad Boroujerdi, whose insights were referred in the previous chapter on Epoch of Revolution and War. Mehran Kamrava draws upon Iranian intellectuals' changing ways of theorizing about the world and cites Ramin Jahanbegloo's analysis of "four generation of Iranian intellectuals." Accordingly the last generation belongs to a post-revolutionary and post-war society and tries to move beyond entrapment by the Westoxification thesis and a rather superficial antagonism against the West. They aim to distance themselves from ideological rather than intellectual position of the influential philosophers of the pre-revolutionary era such as Al-a Ahmad and Shariati. They defend a "deep and substantive study of the essence and meaning of modernity and its relationship with [Iran]." See Mehran Kamrava, *Iran's Intellectual Revolution*, pp. 44-78. The quote belongs to Daryush Ashouri on page 56.

[846] Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*.

[847] Ibid., p.153 and 228.

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Khatami came up with the idea of "dialogue among civilizations" as a new framework for Iran's relations with the West, particularly with the United States. Hooglund argues that the theme of "civilizational dialogue" in foreign policy paralleled domestic debates over civil society and democracy.[848] Iran was no exception for the outreach of global discourse on democracy, civil society, social and cultural rights, which matched with society's aspirations.[849] Khatami saw in Iran a politically and socially mature country and believed that Iran shall reintegrate into global society through dialogue based on "mutual respect and equal footing."[850] Interestingly, rather than denigrating the international as an unjust order, he held a more qualified view attentive to the processes and structures of the international order. In his rather bold statement, Khatami acknowledged the hegemony of the "Western civilization" and argued that "Today's world is Western in its orientation, techniques and thoughts…one must incorporate the West into one's values and life." He added that "aspects of our culture belong to a civilization whose time has passed."[851] According to Khatami, the Islamic Iran must create its own intellectual force rather than being consumed by a hostile confrontation with the West, because "it is the religious intellectual that can provide powerful logical and [cultural] alternatives to that of the West.[852] Khatami's advocacy of Islamic democracy (*mardomsalari*) reflected this quest for authenticity. He was confident that Iran under his presidency possessed a "home-grown, indigenous and popular adaptation to modernity", and his accent on indigenization and the historical, cultural and religious fabric of the society made his arguments appealing to middle class Iranians, even to many conservatives.[853] Islamic *mardomsalari* would neither emulate, nor isolate itself

[848] Eric Hooglund, "Khatami's Iran", *Current History*, (February 1999), p. 63.

[849] See Farhand Rajaee, "A Thermidor of "Islamic Yuppies"? Conflict and Compromise in Iran's Politics", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Spring, 1999), pp. 217-231.

[850] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy: The Politics of Managing Change*, p. 116.

[851] See Shabnam Holliday, "Khatami's Islamist-Iranian Discourse of National Identity: A Discourse of Resistance", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2010, p. 3.

[852] Khatami's remarks are quoted in Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 171.

[853] Ghoncheh Tazmini, *Khatami's Iran*, pp. 57-59.

from the institutions and values of the West. It was a reconciliation of Islam and modernity, both of which were regarded by Abdolkarim Soroush amongst the sources that constitute Iran's multiple identities.[854] By framing a reconciliatory perspective of Iran's identity, reform-minded elite and intellectuals intended to emancipate foreign policy, which has been at the forefront of the regime's claim to legitimacy, from normative constraints, while remaining true to its revolutionary essence.

Khatami in his inaugural address in 1997 declared that Iran was willing to have "relations with any state which respects our independence," and called for a "dialogue of civilizations" with all nations.[855] It seemed that Iran under Khatami possessed a paradigmatic programme and normative framework through which it would seek normalization. Khatami's first move in foreign policy decision-making was to change the foreign minister by removing conservative Ali Akbar Velayati, who had served as the Islamic Republic's Foreign Minister since 1981 and appointing Kamal Kharrazi, a veteran diplomat known for his moderate perspective on Iran-US relations.[856] One of his remarkable moves would follow with his CNN interview in 1998.

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[854] See Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri, *Reason, Freedom and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings* of *Abdolkarim Soroush*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[855] Khatami in his election campaign already made his approach to the US known, when he asserted that Iran is "in favor of relations with all countries which respect our independence, dignity and [national] interests….If we do not have relations with an aggressive and bullying country such as America, it is due the fact that America does not respect those principles." Khatami's remarks are quoted in Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 310 and Semira N. Nikou, "Timeline of Iran's Foreign Relations," *Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, online available at: http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/timeline-irans-foreign-relations (accessed on August 20, 2012).

[856] The decision was vehemently opposed by the conservative press and Velayati himself. Ayatollah Khamenei soon after the decision appointed Velayati as his senior advisor on international affairs. Kamal Kharrazi was the architect of Iran's efforts in the release of American hostages in Lebanon in the early 1990s and served as Iran's Permanent Ambassador to the UN for eight years. See Gouncheh Tazmini, *Khatami's Iran*, p. 62. Velayati then became the senior advisor of Ayatollah Khamenei on international affairs and retained his influence through Khamenei's final decisions on Iran's foreign policy.

5.7.2.2. Khatami's US Overture: the CNN Interview

Khatami's appearance on CNN for an interview in January 1998 was a remarkable starter for his diplomacy with the US.[857] In his interview, the President declared Iran's willingness to "benefit from the achievements of all civilizations, Western and non-Western and to hold a dialogue with them." He expressed Iran's "intellectual affinity with the essence of the American civilization" and its respect and admiration for the "great American nation."[858] He diagnosed that the problem in US-Iranian relations stemmed from "a mode of relations" marked by the "flaws in US foreign policy" which continued to live with "cold war mentality and try to create a perceived enemy" by targeting "progressive Islam" rather than certain "regressive interpretations of Islam."

Khatami told that he regretted the hostage crisis; however he argued that each event shall be analyzed in its proper context and the fact that the US policies had seriously hurt the feelings of Iranian people shall be recognized. Khatami's offer of dialogue based on mutual respect and peaceful coexistence would have to face the bulky "walls of mistrust" separating Iran and America. He clarified that his theme of dialogue did not mean political relations; however he argued that the latter could only materialize once the dialogue has started.[859] In his interview he was careful not to overstep Iran's political line vis-à-vis the US, as he added that "we feel no need for ties with the US, since Iran could reach its objectives without the US assistance." But accordingly, he was hopeful that societal contact and dialogue could change political relations for better; in the end

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[857] See "Transcript of interview with Iranian President Mohammad Khatami", *CNN*, January 7 1998, online available at http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/9801/07/iran/interview.html , (accessed on August 13, 2012). The following quotations in the text are taken from Khatami's interview transcript.

[858] The source of intellectual affinity laid in the congruence of religion and liberty which Khatami believed was a significant commonality between Iranian and American civilizations.

[859] He proposed establishment of cultural and intellectual channels through exchange of professors, writers, scholars, artists, journalists and tourists of both countries to enhance society to society dialogue.

he argued Iran sought nothing but the "right of every nation to stand on its own principles and values and have the expectation of respect and dignity from others."[860]

Back at home, Khatami infuriated the conservative establishment who remained staunchly opposed to a breakthrough with the US. Supreme Leader Khamenei stated that "dialogue with America was even more harmful than establishing ties with that country", while the conservatives at large found Khatami "too lenient" towards the US.[861] Apparently Khatami's way of relating to the US was in clash with the fierce rhetoric of the establishment perceiving the US as an existential threat and ruling out any relations.[862] Khatami and the reformists were seeking to establish a mutually beneficial relationship based on foreign investment and exchange of ideas[863] rather than perpetuating a conflictual relationship, which disrupted Iran's smooth relations with the international and harmed Iran's national interests. Yet, Khatami's constructive offer was not a retreat from Iran's commitment to anti-imperialism and independence. It was built on the notion that if Iran would re-integrate to the international system, it could only happen without subjugation to Western hegemony and only on equal terms.[864] Khatami administration with its mantra of dialogue also aimed to rectify the belligerent

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[860] On terrorism, Khatami declared Iran's categorical rejection while noting that Iran does not see supporting people fighting for their liberation as terrorism. On the peace process, he argued that because "the process is not just and does not address the rights of all parties in an equitable manner", noting the common impression in the Middle East that US regional policy is rather made in Tel Aviv than Washington, Iran does not believe that the process would bring peace. However he also told that Iran does not intend to impose its views on others or stand in their way. On Iran's nuclear programme, he underlined Iran's being part of the NPT and inspections of the IAEA and criticized Israel's unwillingness to sign the NPT or accept the IAEA. He told that Iran is not a nuclear power and does not intend to be one and its programme is for peaceful purposes.

[861] Shah Alam, "The Changing Paradigm of Iranian Foreign Policy under Khatami", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 24, No. 9, (December 2000), p.3.

[862] Former Foreign Minister Velayati declared that "The issue of talks with America is a prelude to reopening its 'den of spies' in Iran and carrying out its plans to overthrow the Islamic Republic." See Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran*, p. 113.

[863] See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy: The Politics of Managing Change*, p. 116.

[864] Ibid., p. 133; Shabnam Holliday, "Khatami's Islamist-Iranian Discourse of National Identity: A Discourse of Resistance", pp. 7-8.

international discourse depicting Iran as an "outlaw" and "rogue" state.[865] Practically, as Hooglund asserts, the end of tensions with the US was even more significant than resumption of normal relations, because problems with the US hindered Iran's developing ties with other countries, especially American allies.[866]

5.7.2.3. Clinton and Khatami: Breakthrough in Sights?

Meanwhile in the United States, there was reportedly growing acknowledgement of the shortcomings of Iran policy in policy circles. US corporate interest, particularly oil and agricultural corporations that were held back from doing business with Iran, were putting pressure on the Clinton administration to review its "irrational" and "unenforceable" policy.[867] According to Trita Parsi, by 1996 US had greater room for maneuver vis-à-vis Iran due to Israel's changing security policy under the Likud government with its threat perception shifting back to the Palestinians.[868] There was also pressure from US-based Iranian scholars[869], who warned the administration against the dangers of a weakened Iran in the region in addition to pressure from policy circles calling for an end of the sanctions regime, which so far failed to change Iran's behavior and instead damaged the national-geostrategic, economic and energy-related-interests of

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[865] Khatami's theme gained support and recognition from the UN. The UN declared 2001 the "Year of Dialogue among Civilizations" which for Khatami signified the unease of the Third World and the Muslim World with the belligerent rhetoric and repercussions of the "Clash of Civilizations" thesis. See "Khatami speaks of Dialogue among Civilizations", *Iranian Diplomacy*, October 2, 2010, available at http://www.irdiplomacy.ir/en/page/8798/Khatami+Speaks+of+Dialogue+among+Civilizations.html (accessed on January 12, 2012). See also Address by H.E. Mohammad Khatami (provisional verbatim translation) of Round Table: Dialogue among Civilizations, UN, New York, September 5, 2000, online available at http://www.unesco.org/dialogue/en/khatami.htm (accessed on August 13, 2012.)

[866] Eric Hooglund, "Khatami's Iran", *Current History*, (February 1999), p. 63.

[867] Sasan Fayazmanesh, "The Politics of the US Economic Sanctions against Iran", p. 235.

[868] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 197-201.

[869] Donette Murray quotes Hooshang Amirahmadi in *US Foreign Policy and Iran*, pp. 96-97.

the US by enabling Russia and China to reap the benefits of cooperation with Iran.[870] Iran's own contribution to this seemingly changing political atmosphere has been dispatch of what Kenneth Pollack terms "unofficial diplomats" by Khatami in a framework of cultural exchange and with a clear message to the US that a real change was taking place in Tehran and for achieving reconciliation Khatami needed signs of goodwill from America that would make him stronger in the face of hardliners.[871]

The Clinton administration's response to this overture was reaching out to Tehran for direct dialogue through intermediaries, first by the Swiss Embassy and then through Saudi Arabia in order not to replicate the scandalous Irangate of the 1980s. In both cases the US aimed to reach only Khatami by sidelining Khamenei, who held the ultimate authority to determine foreign policy and authorize the policies of the government.[872] But these attempts did not receive any response, since direct dialogue would never be sanctioned by Supreme Leader at the height of his anxiety over the reformists' US policy.[873] Furthermore, Khatami favored a gradualist approach vis-à-vis the United States not to provoke a conservative backlash and meanwhile prepare the cultural and social ground for reconciliation.[874]

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[870] See James A. Bill, "The Politics of Hegemony: The United States and Iran", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (September 2001), p. 89. Bill cites the report of Atlantic Council's three-year working group on Iran.

[871] Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 317. Those "unofficial diplomats" who also contacted with Pollack told the US officials and academics that Khatami struggled to terrorism operations and take control of the Ministry of Intelligence, a hotbed for illegal activities as well as they talked of Khatami's understanding of the Western concerns of WMD and his willingness to accommodate them. A tangible sign of Khatami's commitment was to come with Iran's shutting down of Iraqi oil smuggling which so far leaked the oil embargo and sanctions against Iraq. Pollack notes that Khatami eventually prevailed over Khamenei who opposed ending smuggling. For details, see Ibid., pp. 317-319.

[872] Ibid., p. 320.

[873] Sadjadpour argues that for a successful engagement, the US had/has to establish a direct channel of communication with the office of the Supreme Leader, preferably with Khamenei himself. He contends that being wary of his domestic rivals; Khamenei would never let any foreign policy decision that could hurt his own political interests. See Karim Sadjadpour, *Reading Khamenei*, p. 31.

[874] See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy*.

Clinton's next moves indeed responded to the issues Khatami addressed in CNN interview. US relaxed visa restrictions, increased people-to-people contact by sending its wrestlers team to Tehran, put *Mojaheeden-e Khalq* to the State Department's terrorist list and waived ILSA sanctions for Europeans in return for greater cooperation against proliferation and terrorism. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in June 1998 asked Iran to join the US in drawing "a road map leading to normal relations", whereas President Clinton in his almost-apology statement in April 1999 told that

> Iran because of its enormous geopolitical importance over time has been the subject of quite a lot of abuse from various Western nations. And I think sometimes it is quite important to tell people, look, you have a right to be angry at something that my country or my culture or others that are generally allied with us today did to you 50 or 60 or 100 or 150 years ago.[875]

The Clinton Administration was hopeful of an improvement in relations with Iran, once the reformists gained a major victory in February 2000 Majles elections. Assuming that this would bring Khatami more agential power, Clinton administration failed to understand the structural power of the Supreme Leader over the political system. As Ansari argues "timing" was a very pertinent factor in Iran-US relations and when Clinton was ready for a breakthrough, Khatami was in the midst of domestic turmoil.[876] Albright's official apology for US involvement in the 1953 coup and for its "short-sighted" support to Iraq during Iran-Iraq war, which was perhaps "the most constructive statement from an American official" since the revolution[877] and minor modifications in sanctions policy-with a lift of the ban on US imports of Iranian carpets, pistachios and the sale of food, medicine and other humanitarian goods to Iran-did not help to empower Khatami's position at home. These attempts were far from delivering Iran's demands for

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[875] President Clinton's remarks are quoted in Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 323.

[876] See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 177.

[877] Ibid.

substantial relief in sanctions, start of US investments in energy sector and discussions over the return of Iran's frozen assets in the US. As Takeyh argues, such measures could have tilted the domestic balance of power in favor of the reformists in a game of legitimacy and enhance their credibility in Iran's policy toward the US.[878]

While Iran-US relations were stalled, Iran's international affairs under Khatami throve particularly in Europe and the Persian Gulf. Khatami from the outset made détente a priority of his foreign policy not simply because of Iran's needs.[879] With the pursuit of détente, he aimed to build trust which would yield to long-lasting regional cooperation.[880] Through his diplomatic charm offensive, Khatami significantly improved relations with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states following Rafsanjani era's earlier commitment and the groundwork.[881] Khatami's visits to Italy, Vatican and France in 1999 and Germany in 2000 proved significant for Iran to mend its relations with European states, enhance its international standing and economic opportunities. During the epoch of reform, Britain established full diplomatic relations with Iran broken since 1979, after Khatami's assurance that his government would not seek enforcement of Ayatollah Khomeini's decree for the death of the author Salman Rushdie. Khatami's diplomacy started to pay off as the World Bank without US approval approved a $232 million credit for medical services and sewage lines, whereas despite US opposition,

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[878] Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic*, (New York: Times Book, 2006), p. 116. In the interviews conducted for field research in 2010, on the issue of "missed opportunities" particularly the academics mentioned the "handshake incident" which was mainly about President Khatami's absence from the Millennium Summit in 2000, after his UN General Assembly speech listened by President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright which could end up with handshake between Iranian and American leaders. Some of the interviewees argued that this was precluded by Supreme Leader, whereas as some though that it was Khatami's self-restraint. The example in fact showed how symbolism mattered in Iran-American affairs.

[879] Shah Alam, "The Changing Paradigm of Iranian Foreign Policy Under Khatami", p. 3.

[880] Ibid.

[881] Relations with the Gulf countries, especially with Saudi Arabia mattered for regional peace and stability, a common cooperation in OPEC, for attracting Gulf investment in Iran, keeping Iraq under control and improvement of relations with the West. See Cristen Marschall, *Iran's Persian Gulf Policy-From Khomeini to Khatami*, (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

European, Russian and Japanese firms agreed to invest $12 billion in the oil, gas and automobile industries.[882]

As commonly asserted, the domestic consensus over improvement of ties with Gulf and Europe, which mainly implies Supreme Leader Khamenei's consent on the issue, gave President Khatami a free hand for unhindered diplomacy from domestic politics. However, he lacked such freedom in his pursuit of conciliatory agenda with the United States. Iran's favorable relations with Europe confirmed that reconciliation with ideologically less controversial states amounted to a "state policy" and did not raise much contradiction or political cost within the political elite. But normalization with the United States was different. It was politically contentious, even though strategically necessary. If achieved, managing Iran's crisis with the US would make the reformist victorious and change domestic power balance to the detriment of conservative forces leaning on anti-Americanism. Scholars like Ganji, Ehsani, Parsi and Ansari argued that Ayatollah Khamenei's opposition to normalization with the US under the reformist government was mainly because he did not wish the reformists getting the credit for reestablishing ties with the US, even though reformist and pragmatist forces as well as society at large held a positive attitude toward relations with the US.[883] With the coming of the Bush administration to power and shift of American policy from containment to regime change, the initiative to defend the regime would shift to the hard-liners in Iran.

5.7.3. The Islamic Republic versus the American Republicans: Iran-US Relations during the Bush Administration

President Clinton's second-term ended without yielding a significant breakthrough in Iran-US relations, depriving President Khatami from an international victory he could channel back at home. Khatami's second term in office between 2001 and 2005 would

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[882] See Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, pp. 189-190.

[883] Akbar Ganji, "The Latter-Day Sultan", p.7; Kaveh Ehsani, "The Neoconservatives and the bomb", X; Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 224; Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*.

correspond to George W. Bush's presidency and the challenges of a radically changing international and regional conjuncture with September 11 attacks and US occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq afterwards. The pragmatists in Tehran favored a Republican victory, which they believed would bring geopolitics and oil business interests back to Washington's agenda and facilitate a breakthrough in relations.[884] However, the new administration's political composition implied otherwise, as it was composed of Republican figures such as Elliot Abrams, Douglas Feith and John Bolton with political careers deeply wounded by the Iran-Contra scandal, and they constituted the elements of what Ansari calls "structural consensus" vis-à-vis Iran.[885]

5.7.3.1. The 9/11 Attacks: The Changing Landscape of World Politics and Iran's Responses

The terrorist attacks on World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001 started a new era in US foreign policy and regional politics of the Middle East, which would directly bear on Iran's political agency. The Bush administration at the start of its term signaled that it would pursue an inward-looking foreign policy, but unprecedented attacks at the heart of homeland posed a severe challenge for US hegemony and security and the events restructured foreign policy vision of the Bush administration.[886] US

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[884] See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 178. However he adds that Iran was oblivious to the fact that it was the Republican Congress which drafted and adopted the ILSA sanctions against Iran during the Clinton Administration. Indeed, as expected, there was a quite strong presence of oil interest in the Bush administration with the president, vice-president, commerce secretary and national security adviser all having intrinsic ties to the oil industry. Vice-President Dick Cheney was chief executive of Haliburton oil company, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice was a director of Chevron, Commerce Secretary Donald Evans held stock in Tom Brown Inc, the oil and gas exploration company he headed. See Katty Kay, "Analysis: Oil and the Bush Cabinet", *BBC News*, January 29, 2001, online available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1138009.stm (accessed on August 21, 2012).

[885] Ibid., p. 180.

[886] In the aftermath of 9/11 attacks, a growing literature over American foreign policy debated whether the US sought to construct an "empire". See Michael Cox, "The Empire's Back in Town: Or America's Imperial Temptation-Again", *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, Vol.32, No.1, 2003, pp. 1-27 and "Empire, imperialism and the Bush doctrine", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 30, 2004, pp. 585-608.

responded by declaring a "global war on terror" and started hunting down the leader of the al Qaeda network, Osama bin Laden for planning and perpetrating the attacks.[887] The total war against terrorism left US allies and foes with no choice other than being "either with the US or against it". US "war on terror" would have clear and long-lasting impact on Iran's foreign policy context, as American campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq turned Iran's neighborhood into theater of war and introduced geopolitically imposed change in these states.

The catastrophes of 9/11 posed an opportunity for Iranians to express their solidarity with the US and demonstrate that Iran was not complicit in those horrific acts of terrorism, despite its persistent accusation as a state sponsor of terrorism.[888] President Khatami was the first Iranian official to offer condolences for this "anti-Islamic" and "barbaric" event, Supreme Leader Khamenei also condemned the "catastrophic acts," "wherever they may happen and whoever the perpetrators and the victims may be."[889] Iranian society showed its solidarity with America and the Iranian Diaspora residing in the US through street demonstrations against terrorism. Even the chants of "Death to America" (*marg ber Amrika*) were suspended for several weeks in Friday Prayers for a show of respect, though some argued that this was because of fear in the first place.[890]

Aside from humanitarian sympathies, scholars such as Heradsveit and Bonham argue that in the aftermath of the attacks, an optimistic mood was observable in Iranian policy

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[887] See Donette Murray, *US Foreign Policy and Iran*, p. 120; Ömer Kurtbağ, *Amerikan Yeni Sağı ve Dış Politikası*, pp. 303-310

[888] See Daniel Heradstveit and G. Matthew Bonham, "What the Axis of Evil Metaphor Did to Iran", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 61, No. 3, (Summer 2007), p. 430. In the immediate aftermath of the events, there were rumors of Hezbollah's and by extension of Iran's complicity in terrorist acts. Anxious of blames against Iran, Ansari notes that Khatami summoned the leaders of Hezbollah to Tehran to make sure that they were not involved in the incidents. See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 182.

[889] See Jim Muir, "Iran condemns attacks on US", *BBC News*, September 17, 2001, online available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1549573.stm (accessed on August 12, 2012).

[890] See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 181.

circles due to the belief that shifting geopolitical context would finally bring Iran recognition of its importance in the region and alleviate its subversive, terrorist image.[891] Iranian scholars interviewed by these authors expressed that Iran's solidarity with the US was a sign of its reintegration into the "mainstream of world politics" from the margins of the "international."[892] This meant a more positive understanding of international as a realm whereby Iran's agency and prudent policy could deliver geopolitical and economic benefits to the country.

Afrasiabi and Maleki enlist a number of foreign policy adjustments by Iran in the post-9/11 era, which entailed adopting a new flexible approach to the US, fostering closer ties with Russia, deepening détente with the EU, improving its profile in international organizations, continuing to improve relations with the Persian Gulf, enhancing regional cooperation, stabilizing relations with Turkey, Pakistan, Iraq and simultaneously upgrading its military preparedness.[893] Iran's foreign policy elite defined Iran's approach as "preventive" and "active" diplomacy to cope with geopolitical challenges and maintain the status quo.[894] According to one view, the new international context enhanced search for consensus and greater unity in foreign policy, as Iran had to walk a tightrope between perils and opportunities of the new epoch.[895] Meanwhile, Iran's foreign policy, particularly its policy toward US mattered for the fate of the reform movement as well. In the face of conservative challenge against civil society activism and legal reforms proposed by the government, Ansari argues, Khatami believed that only a victory abroad could tilt the balance in favor of the reformists and strengthen his

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[891] See Daniel Heradstveit and G. Matthew Bonham, "What the Axis of Evil Metaphor Did to Iran", p. 432.

[892] Ibid., p. 430.

[893] Kaveh Afrasiabi and Abbas Maleki, "Iran's Foreign Policy After 11 September", *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Volume 9, No.2, (Winter/Spring 2003), p. 256.

[894] Ibid.

[895] See Daniel Heradstveit and G. Matthew Bonham, "What the Axis of Evil Metaphor Did to Iran", pp. 429-430.

hand in domestic politics.[896] After all, Khatami had been the most successful Iranian politician abroad since the Shah and his followers believed that if anyone was to achieve a breakthrough, it would be Khatami.[897]

5.7.3.2. Iran-US Relations in the Aftermath of 9/11 Attacks

In the aftermath of 9/11, US found a sincere and willing collaborator in Iran for the destruction of the Taleban regime. Taleban regime was one of the most abhorred enemies of the Islamic Republic, inflicting insecurity along Iran's eastern borders, assaulting the Hazara Shiites with its radical Sunni ideology and undermining Iran's efforts to exert economic and ideological influence in Afghanistan, particularly in Herat.[898] Iran was concerned with the Saudi and Pakistani support in fomenting a radical Islamic regime in its neighborhood especially after the Soviet invasion ended. In 1998, Iran and Taleban were even at the brink of a military confrontation because of Taleban's murder of Iranian diplomats, which could only be averted by Iran's self-restraint that would consume its resources with another war in the region.[899]

Reportedly shortly after the attacks, Iran and the US started their back-channel diplomatic exchange in Geneva over Afghanistan, which were the highest-level of contacts between the officials since the Iran-Contra Scandal.[900] Back at home, Khatami was trying to persuade the skeptical conservatives in the establishment that it was in Iran's interest to assist the war coalition in Afghanistan, as the war would remove Taleban, weaken the hand of Pakistan, enhance Iran's regional reach and facilitate the

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[896] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy*, p. 231.

[897] Ibid.

[898] See Mohsen M. Milani, "Iran's Policy Towards Afghanistan", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 60, No.2, (Spring 2006); Gülden Ayman, "Afghanistan as a bridge", in Rouzbeh Parsi and John Rydqvist, "Iran and the West, Regional Interests and Global Controversies", *FOI Special Report*, (March 2011), pp. 44-46.

[899] Ibid.

[900] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 228.

hard task of building bridges with the US.[901] Supreme Leader's sensitivity of a US invasion of Afghanistan was a well-known fact, as he made it clear in his condemnation of 9/11 attacks, telling that the attacks should not lead to US invasion of Afghanistan. Ansari contends that Khatami's key element of persuasion was America's need for Iran's cooperation, which would bring an "egalitarian moment" and balance relations at least at the regional level.[902] Iran was regarded central to the looming operation against Taleban. Back in the days, Tehran even hosted British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, which affirmed Tehran's importance in Western plans in Afghanistan.

Iran during the "Operation Enduring Freedom" announced that it would provide sanctuary to distressed American military personnel inside Iranian territory and allowed transfer of food and humanitarian goods to Afghanistan via its territory.[903] Iran's support was crucial for providing both a physical and political roadmap for the uncharted presence of Western troops in Afghan geography and politics.[904] Even more important has been Iran's constructive role in the making of Afghanistan's future government by ensuring the support of warlords for Hamid Karzai's leadership, in addition to its political and economic contribution to reconstruction of Afghanistan by delivering most of its promised assistance unlike many other donors.[905] Iran and the US found themselves on the same side, as both supported the Northern Alliance against Taleban. However, the defeat of Taleban and institution of a favorable government which would most probably oscillate between Iranian and American demands did not relieve Tehran's

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[901] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 182.

[902] Ibid. This "egalitarian" accent was historically quite important for Iran-US relations, especially for Iran's view of the relationship" between a wolf and sheep", famously put by Ayatollah Khomeini.

[903] Mohsen M. Milani, "Iran's Policy Towards Afghanistan", p. 247.

[904] Ibid.

[905] At a donors' conference in Tokyo in January 2002, Tehran pledged $ 560 million for Afghanistan's reconstruction, approximately 12 percent of the total $ 4.5 billion in international reconstruction assistance. In 2006, it pledged an additional $ 100 million. For an analysis of Iran's role in post-Taliban Afghanistan, see Mohsen M. Milani, "Tehran's Take: Understanding Iran's US Policy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 88, No. 4, 2009, p. 58 and Milani's "Iran's Policy Towards Afghanistan", p. 247.

long term concerns. The permanent US bases and stationing of American and NATO soldiers in its neighborhood posed a security threat, for it intensified the feeling of encirclement following US domination of the Persian Gulf. Soon, Tehran would find itself in the midst of another fight through its placement in so-called "axis of evil" and the fall of the Iraqi "evil" with a large scale military campaign on its Western borders.

5.7.3.3. From "Rogue" to "Evil": "The Axis of Evil" Speech and Iran's New Representation in the American Jargon

President Bush in his State of the Union address in January 2002 depicted Iran, Iraq and North Korea and declared that

> [s]tates like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an *axis of evil*, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies   or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.[906]

According to Bush, Iran was "evil" because of its "aggressive" pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, export of terrorism and government of "an unelected few [repressing] Iranian people's hope for freedom." The speech was a huge disappointment for the reformist elite and Iranians at large in many respects. Geopolitically, it came at a time when it was Iran's assistance in Afghanistan that made the "success story" Bush mentioned at the beginning of his speech possible. The accent on the "unelected few" was an offense for the reformists and the populace voting for Khatami; as ironically at the time Iran was going through the most democratic moment of its post-revolutionary

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[906] President Bush, State of the Union Address, January 29, 2002, online available at: http://edition.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/01/29/bush.speech.txt/ (accessed on August 21, 2012).

history despite conservative backlash.[907] It was also frustrating for Iranians to be classified in the same category with their arch enemy Saddam Hussein or the totalitarian regime in North Korea.[908] Bush's words were highly disappointing for the reformists who have risked their domestic legitimacy and political power to persuade the leadership to assist US policies in Afghanistan with an expectation that Iran's goodwill might beget goodwill, perhaps this time.[909] While disappointing the reformists, President's remarks pleased the conservatives led by Supreme Leader, for the remarks confirmed the conservative thinking on the "untrustworthiness" of the United States. Khamenei commented that "[t]he Islamic Republic is proud to be the target of hate and anger of the world's greatest evil; we never seek to be praised by American officials."[910] Khatami accused President Bush for "war-mongering" with his "bellicose and insulting" speech.[911] In the face of such a treatment, it was much more difficult for Khatami to justify an engagement policy or persuade his conservative rivals of an imminent breakthrough with the US. In the following weeks, corresponding to the 23rd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, Khatami urged mass anti-protests and told "all levels of the population will join hands, without partisan considerations, and will come to show their fidelity to the revolution."[912] The politicians demanded participation "even if they are political or ideological opponents of the regime."[913] The speech fortified the

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[907] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 186.

[908] Ibid. This point is also raised by Dr Kayhan Barzegar in an interview conducted by the author in Tehran, October 2010. According to Barzegar, Bush's insulting remarks made him the least popular American president in the eyes of the Iranian society.

[909] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 186.

[910] Nazila Fathi, "A Nation Challenged: The Rogue List; Bush's 'Evil' Label Rejected By Angry Iranian Leaders", *The New York Times*, February 1, 2002, online available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2002/02/01/world/nation-challenged-rogue-list-bush-s-evil-label-rejected-angry-iranian-leaders.html (accessed on February 24, 2012).

[911]"Iran accuses Bush of war-mongering", *BBC News*, January 30 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1792767.stm (accessed August 11, 2012).

[912] "Khatami urges mass anti-US protests", *BBC News*, February 10, 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1812199.stm (accessed on August 11, 2002).

[913] Ibid.

"new insecurity" argument inside Iranian policy circles debating whether the new regional environment of the post-9/11 era shall be conceived as a national security plus or minus.[914] As the US tilted to be a menace, contending vision of a breakthrough started to dissipate.

Indeed, the story of the axis of speech revealed an *ad hoc* formulation of the metaphor, which was initially built only on Iraq and its link to terrorism and it was initially termed as "axis of hatred." However, according to David Frum, the speech-writer of President Bush, it was the President who changed the title into "Axis of Evil" to sound "more sinister, even wicked" so as to make a stronger impression. The axis was to be completed with North Korea and Iran, who were suggested by then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice and Deputy National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley.[915] Nonetheless, Bush was adamant in his position arguing that through his speech, he put the axis countries "on notice", while there were some modifications and assurances from the US and the UK. Joe Biden, then the Chairman of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, told that the speech did not mean the end of dialogue[916], whereas Jack Straw, Foreign Secretary of Britain asserted that "Britain will continue its dialogue with the reformists in Iran, while sending 'strong messages' to hard-line elements within the government."[917]

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[914] Kaveh Afrasiabi and Abbas Maleki, "Iran's Foreign Policy After 11 September", pp. 255-256.

[915] See Daniel Heradstveit and G. Matthew Bonham, "What the Axis of Evil Metaphor Did to Iran", p. 423. Though Hadley changed his suggestion recalling Iran had a democratically elected President, Bush insisted to keep Iran in. Condoleezza Rice told in an interview with USA Today journalist Barbara Slavin that "what is funny about it is that [the phrase] did not catch my eye." See Barbara Slavin, *Bitter Friends, Bosom Enemies: Iran, The US and the Twisted Path to Confrontation*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007), p. 12.

[916] "Interview with Joseph Biden, 'Analysis The Long Reach of a Speech'", online available at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/tehran/axis/axis.html (accessed on February 23, 2012).

[917] "Bush's 'evil axis' stirs critics", *BBC News*, February 2, 2002, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1796034.stm (accessed on February 23, 2012).

But Iran's sense of US threat did not stop by the metaphor. The shifts in post-9/11 foreign and security policy vision of the United States became further crystallized with the declaration of the US National Security Strategy in September 2002. The document spelled "rogue states" and terrorists enemies of America and declared that "to forestall or prevent hostile acts by the adversaries, the United States, if necessary, will act preemptively."[918] As the US invasion of Iraq approached, Tehran was further alarmed by the recognition of the fact that the US no longer sought containment or pressure for disarmament, but pursued a more aggressive policy based on pre-emptive strike and regime change against its adversaries.[919] Even though the terminology of rogue state was waning toward the end of the Clinton era, what restored Iran back into "roguery" was Israel's discovery of a ship, *Karine A*, which was full of weapons addressed to Palestinian Authority with allegedly Persian marking on the shipment. As many scholars and politicians even in the West doubted, the timing of the incident and the way Iran was "caught" of shipping weapons was dubious, since the usual route has always been via Syria or Lebanon and the usual method has been shipment via air not by water, especially by a boat sailing around Arabian Peninsula.[920] Therefore, the incident looked more like a sabotage of Khatami's efforts at cooperation with the West.[921] But it provided US with a sufficient pretext to flex the muscles against Iran.

5.7.3.4. *Amrika* at the Doorstep: The Invasion of Iraq and Troubled Neighborhood of Iran and the United States

US invasion of Iraq and overthrow of the Ba'thist regime brought formidable change and challenge to regional politics. With the demise of the Saddam regime, seemingly,

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[918] The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, September 2002, Chapter V, p. 20, online available at: http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/USnss2002.pdf (accessed on August 22, 2012).

[919] Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic*, p. 118.

[920] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 186.

[921] Ibid.

Iran was saved from a regional foe by its erstwhile enemy America. However, the outcome was mixed for Iran. Tehran welcomed the end of the Saddam regime and "electoral" democracy that would empower Iraq's Shiite majority in the south[922], but it feared with growing US encirclement, Iran and Syria could become the next targets of American campaigns.[923] In the run-up to the war, Iran declared its opposition to invasion and opted for a diplomatic solution, yet it eventually engaged in tacit cooperation with the US, even though it was not as helpful as it had been in Afghanistan.[924] Iran's role grew further in the immediate aftermath of invasion through its efforts to stabilize and maintain the territorial integrity of Iraq and ensure its transition into a Shiite-dominated, Iran-friendly regime, but not into an Islamic Republic in Iraq.[925] As Barzegar argues Tehran viewed post-Saddam Iraq within its sphere of political, economic and cultural influence and conducted its foreign policy on the basis of preservation of Iraqi integrity and prevention of a puppet regime that would serve US encirclement of Iran.[926] Soon, Iraq would turn into a frontline in the regional political struggle between US and Iran.[927]

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[922] Ansari notes that Iran was one of the few countries in the world that did not have major anti-war protest. See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy: The Politics of Managing Change*, p. 256.

[923] See Kamran Taremi, "Iranian Foreign Policy Toward Occupied Iraq 2003-2005", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 12, No. 4, (Winter 2005), p. 32.

[924] Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 354. One of the reasons for Iran reluctance for cooperation could be the feeling that little good has come out of its constructive efforts in Afghanistan. However Iran's tacit assistance was discernible as it downturned Saddam's overtures and did not impede Iran-based Iraqi opposition groups to meet with US officials for war and post-war construction plans. See "Iran in Iraq: How much influence?" *Middle East Report* No. 38, International Crisis Group, 21 March 2005, p.9.

[925] In post-Saddam era, Iran sought to cultivate as many links as possible to make itself an indispensable player within new Iraqi politics. Historically the Islamic Republic already had relations with prominent Shiite actors such as al-Dawa Party and the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIR). In post-Saddam era, Iran also reached out to radical Shiite cleric Moqtada al Sadr and his Mahdi army which Takeyh argues was a political move given his otherwise Arab nationalist rhetoric. Iran is linked with Grand Ayatollah Sistani who is an influential authority for the Iraqi Shiites yet who does not endorse Khomeini's political dictum of rule by clergy. Besides Iran's relations with the Shiite Arab community, it also cultivated relations with the Kurdish groups especially with Talibani. See Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran*, pp. 179-187.

[926] See Kayhan Barzegar, "Understanding the Roots of Iranian Foreign Policy in the New Iraq", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 12, No. 2, (Summer 2005), pp. 49-57.

[927] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Iran-Iraq Relations After Saddam", *The Washington Quarterly*, (Autumn 2003), p. 124.

This has become so, not only for the sake of controlling and managing change in Iraq; it was also because Iran has become the next target of US neoconservative's advocacy for regime change. An undeniable element of ideological enmity was back in power with the neo-conservative ideology and its assertive ideologues, starting to dominate the foreign policy of the Bush Administration. Gaining strength and control within the Republican Party, the neoconservatives advocated spread of democracy-as they understand it- through an aggressive and "masculine" foreign policy, built on technological and military superiority of the US to enforce American hegemony on a global scale.[928] According to the neoconservatives, Iran was ripe for revolution and even a limited US pressure could help topple the regime.[929] In this regard, they were in full agreement with Ariel Sharon, who asserted that the day after Baghdad is liberated, Tehran shall follow.[930]

In the emerging security atmosphere and US animosity, it was not possible to talk of dialogue on mutual respect and equal footing. Iran's aim of reintegration and normalization with the international system as a respected and norm-abiding member of international community was overshadowed by geopolitical tensions which put survival of the regime and maintenance of its specific ideological and material order at stake. It seemed that Iran's cooperation with the US did not resolve the tensions. This was because of the fact that the problems inflicting Iran-US relations were not solely geopolitical in nature; ideology and institutionalized antagonisms dominated even the geopolitical context that was conducive to cooperation and shifted the context toward conflict with Bush administration's choice to confront Iran. Once the Bush

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[928] See Ömer Kurtbağ, *Amerikan Yeni Sağı ve Dış Politikası: Hegemonya Ekseninde Bir Analiz*, (Ankara: USAK, 2010), pp. 235-242.

[929] See Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran*, p. 127. Among them Richard Perle stated that "the US should do everything to encourage the centrifugal forces in Iran that, with any luck will drive that miserable government from office", while Douglas Feith, the undersecretary of defense talked of the administration's "plans to remake the Middle East" and an integral part of this plan was the removal of the "corrupt and unpopular regime in Iran." For an extensive analysis of the neo-cons and their vision of Iran, see Ervand Abrahamian, "Empire Strikes Back: Iran in US Sights", p. 102.

[930] See Ervand Abrahamian, "Empire Strikes Back: Iran in US Sights", p. 101.

administration signaled its intension to perpetuate enmity, Iran's approach was to rely on a limited geopolitical cooperation to guarantee the well-being of the regime and to take the necessary steps that would pay off in its future relations with Iraq and Afghanistan. An ideological reconciliation, which could have been built, if Khatami's framework resonated earlier with American administrations, seemed distant. Moreover, over time, Khatami's room for maneuver both in domestic and international politics started to decline. By the time geopolitical pressures mounted on Iran, the rift among the political elite and state and society was growing. The "international" was an integral component of the severe setbacks that reformists suffered in their attempts at transforming state and politics in Iran.

In this context, foreign policy proved to be a major ground for Khatami's struggle, as his victories or failures all translated back to domestic politics. Foreign policy was at the forefront of political game, despite attempts to insulate it from domestic power struggles. The radicalization of the international and regional context did not bode well with Khatami's vision of normalization and dialogue. As the international conjuncture became shaped by major shifts in US policy toward invasion, democratization and pre-emptive strike; domestic power and foreign policy initiative in Iran shifted to the conservative establishment and far right elements which will be dealt in-depth in the next chapter examining Mahmood Ahmadinejad's presidency and the rise of Iran's neo-conservatives.

The deterioration of Iran-US relations provided conservatives with an opportunity to capitalize on and sideline the reformists in domestic politics and foreign policy. From 2003 onwards, it was the hard-liners arguing for a tougher stance against the US that started to take control of foreign policy and determined Iran's line. The invasion of Iraq, President Bush's agenda on "democratization" of the Middle East and US strategy to use pre-emptive strike against adversaries served to strengthen the position of the hard-liners on the futility of negotiations with the West and resulted in moderates' "reluctant"

acceptance of the necessity of a more confrontational approach vis-à-vis the West.[931] In this regard there was a change in the balance of political forces with a shift to the conservative establishment and far right elements in the IRGC and Minister of Intelligence.[932] International crisis and threats against regime's integrity bore upon the configuration of domestic balance of power as regards to the factionalism in foreign policy. The tension-ridden context and gloomy prospects empowered the security elite and culminated in a much hard-liner foreign policy. The following chapter will shed light on the epoch of confrontation in Iran-US relations, which is brought by state's transformation into a national security state by international dynamics and the outcome of this transformation on political agency of Iran vis-à-vis the United States. Before then, it is necessary to examine how the US policy of democracy promotion and regime change resulted in securitization of Iran's democracy and reform agenda and curtailed Iran's growing civil society and democratic aspirations of the reform movement.

5.7.4. The State, Society and the International during the Epoch of Reform

Khatami's search for reform was a dual-front struggle aimed at transforming both the domestic realm and regional/international environment of the state. The social transformation of Iran in the 1990s created an indigenous impetus for change both economically and politically and it was to a certain extent successful in re-integrating Iran into regional and international affairs. The dominant thinking in intellectual and policy circles, reflective of the pragmatism and renewal of the 1990s, advocated that Iran with its strategic location, vast energy resources and soft power could not remain on the sidelines and as an "international country" it has to build relations with the Western world.[933] However, reforming politics, institutions and social relations of the state was as

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[931] See Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, p. 188.

[932] Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*.

[933] Mahmood Sariolghalam, "The Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran: A Theoretical Renewal and a Paradigm for Coalition (Part I)", *Discourse: An Iranian Quarterly*, Vol.3, No.3, (Winter 2002), pp. 67-83.

fierce as the task of normalizing Iran's international affairs. Indeed, of the dual-front struggles, the domestic struggle was far fiercer during the first term of Khatami during the period from 1997 to 2001 only to be coupled with an international and regional context constraining Iran and the reformists in his second term particularly after 9/11. It would be convenient to argue that Iran's attempts for reconstruction and reform, development and democracy were pursued against and intrinsically shaped by confluence of domestic and international crisis.

Khatami named his tenure as "crisis in every nine days" due to persistent campaign of the conservative elements of the regime against reformist politicians, publications and intellectuals.[934] State institutions were a site of power struggle, as Khatami administration took bold steps to cleanse state institutions, especially the Ministry of Intelligence and Judiciary and associated security and intelligence networks from radical elements indulging in illegal activities and creating a state within a state. From the outset, reformists operated in a structurally weaker context notwithstanding their enormous popular base. They did not have control over the Judiciary, Council of Guardians, State Television and Radio, Law Enforcement Forces (*Basijis*) and radical thugs (*Ansar-e Hezbollah*) which constituted the main components of the state, instituted so far. Even the reformist control over the *Majles* with February 2000 elections and the Presidential office was not enough to execute policies, since the republican institutions were subordinated to higher conservative institutions. The "popular" will had to confront the "Islamic" rulings of the Council of Guardians.[935]

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[934] See Appendix I "A Crisis Every Nine Days: Khatami's First Term" (adapted from Masud Nikfar, *Nowruz* Persian Daily, June 6 (Khordad 16), 2001, pp. 5-6 in Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy: The Politics of Managing Change*, pp. 285-296.

[935] The Expediency Council, instituted to resolve the disputes between the two legislative bodies and headed by former President Rafsanjani, a significant factor behind Khatami's ruling coalition was reportedly not helpful in backing reformist initiatives after his alienation from the parliamentary elections in 2000 and rising fear of disruptive social change. See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy: The Politics of Managing Change*.

The conservatives were able to wage a total war by blocking reformist bills[936], harassing, disturbing, arresting and trying reformist politicians and religious intellectuals[937], closing reformist newspapers[938], impeaching ministers[939] and even executing intellectuals and opposition figures.[940] The conservative backlash triggered social unrest, especially

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[936] The Council of Guardians was the stronghold of conservative establishment in legislative front. As the reformists pursued a legal struggle, the Council was at the forefront to obstruct their attempts to reform the legal system. The Press Law adopted by the Conservative Majles could not be changed by the reformist parliament due to conservative opposition. The Council vetoed over fifty bills passed in the Majles since February 2000 (since the reformist control of the Majles) and rejected Khatami's bills to strengthen president's power and curb that of the council could not pass the ratification process of the Council. Khatami's loss of Rafsanjani's support also impeded Expediency Council's pro-reformist move to resolve the Majles-Council of Guardians dispute. See Ahmad Siddiqi, "Khatami and the Search for Reform in Iran", *Stanford Journal of International Affairs*, p. 6.

[937] The establishment started arresting prominent reformist figures from the onset of the reformist epoch. Among them the arrests of reformist journalist Akbar Ganji in 1376, Tehran's Mayor Gholamhussein Karbaschi in 1377, religious intellectual Mohsen Kadivar in 1377 were highly controversial. The thugs were active in raiding reformist gatherings. Abdolkarim Soroush's speeches were constantly targeted by *Ansar-e Hezbollah* forces.

[938] During the reformist epoch, besides regular raids and attacks to the printing centers of reformist newspapers and journals, the Judiciary ordered the closure of almost all reformist pieces one after another. *Jame-eh, Tous, Jame-eh-ye Salem, Adineh, Salam, Neshat and Khordad* were closed in 1997-2000. In 2000-2001, the Judiciary following a speech of Ayatollah Khamenei order the closure of twelve newspapers, weeklies and monthlies at once which were *Arya, Aftab-e Emrooz, Akhbar-e Eqtesad, Azad, Fath, Asr-e Azadegan, Bamdad-e No, Payam-e Azadi, Gozaresh-Rooz, Iran-e Farda, Payam-e Hajar and Aban.* The closures were followed by new ones when *Sobh-e Emrooz* and *Mosharekat* were also banned. See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy,* pp. 285-296.

[939] Minister of State Abdollah Nouri and Minister of Ataollah Mohajerani were the targets of the conservatives with their "liberal" views on Iran-US relations and cultural freedom and an environment for free debate respectively. In 1377 they were attacked by the forces of *Ansar-e Hizbollah*, while leaving Friday prayers in Tehran. Abdollah Nouri was impeached and arrested in 1999 before the 6th Majles elections for fear of his re-election and assuming the influential post of Majles speaker. His defense turned into an embarrassment for the conservatives and intensified public support for the reformists in the parliamentary elections. Ataollah Mohajerani could withstand pressures until 2000, surviving an impeachment attempt in July 1999. Much to the disappointment of President Khatami, he resigned in 2000 which was a victory for the conservatives who worked hard to eradicate his liberal cultural policies. See Ali Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy*, pp. 198-201 for Abdollah Nouri and p. 226 for Mohajerani.

[940] In 1998 and 1999 there were "chain murders" of prominent intellectuals and activists. Majid Sharif, Dariush Foruhar and his wife Parvaneh Iskendari, Mohammad Mokhtari and Jafar Pavindeh were murdered by regime elements in the Minister of Intelligence. Khatami in a resolute manner forced the exposure of the gang operating within the Ministry and involved in the executions of intellectuals and activists. See Kaveh Ehsani, "Do-e Khordad and the Specter of Democracy", p. 11. See also Shirin Ebadi and Azadi Moavini, *İran Uyanıyor: Devrim ve Umut Üzerine Bir Biyografi (Iran Awakening: A Memoir of Revolution and Hope)*, (Zeynep Sönmez, trans.), (İstanbul: Timsah Kitap, 2008). The main strategist of the Reform Movement Saeed Hajjarian survived an assassination attempt in 2002, but he was seriously crippled because of his wounds. Ansari argues that this has been traumatic for Khatami revealing the

amongst Iran's organized and politically articulate university students. The student riots of 1999 broke out in major cities in protest of the closure of reformist newspaper *Salaam* and it was a sign of social frustration and resentment with unprecedented scale of clashes since the inception of the Islamic Revolution.[941] American policy of democracy promotion in the Middle East would bring further tension to state-society relations in Iran.

5.7.4.1. Democracy by American Neo-conservatives versus "Islamic *Mardomsalari*": The Securitization of Iran's Democracy Agenda

One of the most definitive impacts of American policy over state-society relations in Iran during the epoch of reform was securitization of Iran's democracy agenda. As stated earlier, the idea of reform was viewed as perilous for the establishment. Supreme Leader's speeches were marked by constant reference to the "enemy", "striking Iran from home."[942] The reformists were portrayed as collaborators of the enemy undermining the power and unity of the Islamic regime. Even during his electoral campaign, Khatami was blamed for "trying to sell out Iran to America" by the thugs of *Ansar-e Hezbollah.*[943] As the reformist elite and civil society dynamism pushed for greater space in politics and social life, these demands pulled security forces that are equally concerned with domestic conspiracy against the regime into the center of

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extent of rage and radicalism of the establishment. After Hajjarian, the movement's loss of initiative and stratagem hastened. See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy*, pp. 208-209.

[941] On July 8 1999, plainclothes police forces and paramilitary forces of Ansar-e Hizbullah attacked a Tehran University dormitory late at night, after five days of student protests in Tehran, Tabriz and fourteen other cities of Iran against closure of *Salaam* and the passing of conservatives' anti-press freedom bill. Reportedly at least one person, a visitor of the dormitory was killed with many others injured. After the raid, the protests moved beyond campuses and gained support from ordinary citizens of Tehran. The state forces showed no restraint and crushed the uprising. See Mehrdad Mashayekhi, "The Revival of the Student Movement in Post-Revolutionary Iran", *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, Vol. 15, No. 2, (Winter 2001), pp. 283-285.

[942] Supreme Leader Khamenei is quoted in Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 262.

[943] Ruşen Çakır and Sami Oğuz, *Hatemi'nin İran'ı*, p. 73.

politics. The commanders of the *pasdaran* shared Ayatollah Khamenei's concerns and mistrust of the reformist struggle, as they conceived revolution and its achievements in danger. Soon they became natural and indispensible allies of Khamenei, at a time he felt the regime he presided over threatened by the rising tide of reform.[944] During Khatami's presidency these commanders started to interfere in politics much frequently with their stern warnings against the President and his supporters.[945] In November 1997, the deputy of IRGC, Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr asserted the right of the IRGC to engage in non-military matters in the country[946], while the tone and frequency of the statements by the military intensified parallel to social and political struggles between the regime and the reform-seeking segments of the society as well as among the political elite. The commander of the IRGC, General Rahim Safavi in April 1998 adopted a harsh tone against the reformists, labeling them as "hypocrites" and threatening that their "pens will be broken and throats cut."[947] After the breakout of student riots in 1999, a letter by twenty four commanders of the IRGC informed that their "patience were coming to an end" and threatened Khatami with action, if he did not maintain stability and peace in the country.[948] As a response to this alarming trend of militarization and

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[944] See Frederic Wehrey et.al, *The Rise of the Pasdaran: Assessing the Domestic Roles of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps,* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2009), p. 80.

[945] Khatami's broad popular mandate also entailed massive support from the rank and file of the IRGC. Reportedly 73 percent of the Pasdaran and 70 percent of the Basij voted for Khatami in 1997 election. See William Buchta, *Who rules Iran? The Structure of Power in the Islamic Republic*, (Washington DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2000), p. 125. As Wehrey et.al argues 1997 elections revealed significant schisms between the rank and file and the IRGC senior leadership who supported authoritarian and pro-establishment figures. See Frederic Wehrey et.al, *The Rise of the Pasdaran*), p.83.

[946] See Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, p. 263.

[947] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of its NeoConservatives: The Politics of Tehran's Silent Revolution*, (London: I.B.Tauris, 2007), p. 21.

[948] A translated version of the letter is available at: http://iranian.com/News/1999/July/irgc.html (accessed on August 12, 2012). In the letter, the commanders asked: "Was this the only tragedy? Is this matter alone worthy of being pursued and deemed so objectionable that several ministers resign over it, the National Security Council convenes, and an investigatory panel is formed? Are not the irreverences and affronts to the foundations of this system [of government] also cause for anguish and [hence] to be pursued? Is the sanctity of the authority of the jurisprudent less than that of the university housing area? Is the sanctity of the Imam [Ayatollah Khomeini] -- that rarely equaled personage -- less serious than disrespect toward a

authoritarianism, the reformists kept reminding the *pasdaran* of Khomeini's ruling against politicization of the IRGC, but the rising economic might of the Guards in the 1990s already has started to translate into a much prominent political role with a conjuncture of unrest and insecurity calling them to action.[949] Khatami believed that his rivals wanted to sideline the reformists by blaming the government unable to execute policy and establish order in the society.[950] But, these warnings and prospects of a military coup already started to draw the red lines of Khatami's reform agenda and prevented him from pushing for reforms more assertively.

In this domestic atmosphere, the sense of insecurity was compounded by President Bush's democracy promotion agenda with the declaration of Greater Middle East Initiative, later re-named as Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative, and Iraq's "democratization" by occupation. In his "axis of evil" speech Bush accused Iran not only of seeking WMD, but for abusing rights and freedoms of its people. Thus US added human rights and democracy deficits of Iran into the "problem list". Abrahamian notes that discourse and policy of regime change and "bringing democracy to Iran" had staunch advocacy from neoconservative politicians closely linked with the Israeli lobby and the monarchists residing in the US.[951] If recalled, Israeli lobby has been one of the architects of sanctions policy in the 1990s. This time the Congress allocated $ 20 million, reportedly to be channeled to the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe and émigré networks to stir change in Iran both through covert actions and open propaganda.[952] Shortly after his provocative speech on the "evil" adversaries, Bush

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university student? Are not the disruption of national security for several days, attacks against anyone who is religious, and arson an outrage?"

[949] See Frederic Wehrey et.al, *The Rise of the Pasdaran*, pp. 78-80; Elliot Hen-Tov and Nathan Gonzalez, "The Militarization of Post-Khomeini Iran: Praetorianism 2.0", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol.34, No.1, pp. 49-50.

[950] See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy.*

[951] Ervand Abrahamian, "Empire Strikes Back: Iran in US Sights", pp. 98-108.

[952] Ibid., pp. 104-105.

declared his support for democratic forces in Iran without any mention for Khatami's objective for instituting democracy and civil society in Iran.[953] Oblivious to Iran's sensitivities on anti-imperialism and the past US record of intervention to Iranian politics to the detriment of democratic government, Bush's repeated calls for democratic activism and his support for Iranian dissidents ended up providing the conservative establishment with further justification to uproot the reformists which they discredited as an "American project."[954]

In fact, a striking shift in public perception of the United States was happening in the 1990s. As noted above, within the political elite, the Islamist leftists have dropped their vehement anti-Americanism in the course of their political evolution and started to look for moderation on the basis of mutual respect. In stark contrast to ideological rigidity of the regime against the US, a number of polls conducted in 2002 demonstrated the growing popular support for improvement of relations with the US, even though they did not trust Washington.[955] One of the academics interviewed in Tehran argued that growing public support for Iran-American relations indeed decreased the legitimacy costs for the regime, if it would seek to establish political relations with the US. However, at the time the findings of the polls were announced, the hardliners vehemently criticized the polls, arguing that polls misrepresented the opinions of the

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[953] For an analysis of the Human Rights Policy of the US vis-à-vis Iran in post-9/11 period and Iranian reactions, see Anisseh Van Engeland-Nourai, "Iranian Reactions to US Foreign Human Rights Policy since 9-11", *Nathan Hale Foreign Policy Society Working Paper Series*, online available at: http://www.foreignpolicysociety.org/workingpapers/WP2--Annisseh.pdf , (accessed on February 12, 2012), p. 9.

[954] Ibid. p. 19. Nourai cites State Department's Human Rights Reports of Iran which did not take improvements in human rights and democracy since 1997 into account. Moreover, Nourai writes about the worsening situation after the "axis of evil" speech. Another US pamphlet entitled "Iran: Voices Struggling to be Heard" ironically praised the Bush Administration for the positive "developments" taking place in Iranian civil society.

[955] See Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, p. 192; Abdullah Abdi was incarcerated for publishing the public opinion polls in favor of Iran's relations with the US.

public, underlining that sympathy towards the United States was tantamount to treason.[956]

Iran's troubled past with imperialism and foreign invasions and lingering fear and doubts over the US, which got worsened during President Bush's discourse and policy seemed to captivate its search for democracy and political freedoms. This attested to the tension between freedom and independence as Bayat puts it. From the outset it was independence that became a priority, whereas freedom was sacrificed when independence was in danger.[957] Moreover, the US menace persisted both as a result of geopolitical context as well as reproduction of historical and institutional enmity by ruling regimes in both countries.

Eventually the Khatami administration's hopes for transforming domestic politics and Iran's affairs with the US were dashed before his second term was over. At home, in 2003, the conservatives won the local council elections and in 2004 they made a "triumphant" return to the *Majles*, not because of massive popular support but mainly by the Council of Guardians' banning over 3,000 reformist candidates including some of the reformist deputies from running in the elections.[958] For the reformists, this was nothing but an "electoral coup" but according to Ansari, for fear of sparking uncontrollable mass unrest and jeopardize the regime, Khatami and his followers showed restraint, which left them at the mercy of the conservative leadership who felt no regrets for pushing the reformists out of parliamentary politics.[959] The failure to bring change resulted in growing disenchantment of Iranians by the way politics worked in Iran. The growing apathy shifted struggle over public sphere into refuge and isolation in

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[956] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy*, p. 254.

[957] See Asef Bayat, "Iran: a green wave for life and liberty".

[958] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy*, p. 263.

[959] Ibid., p. 264.

the private sphere.[960] People started to blame the reformists for their apologetic and conformist attitude vis-à-vis the establishment and even discredited Khatami for being a "man of the regime" after all.[961] Ironically, for the regime President Khatami and the whole idea of reforms were conceived as plots. The "Tehran Spring" brought by the reformist victory in 1997 and *Do-e Khordad* movement with its broad constituency and intellectual and political potential could not achieve reforming the system, but still it corresponded to a significant epoch in terms of showing the dynamism and vibrancy of society in Iran and indigenous potential for democracy, rule of law and civil rights and freedoms.

5.7.4.2. The Outbreak of Nuclear Crisis and the Sidelining of Khatami

From mid-2002 on, the Islamic Republic was caught in the midst of another crisis with the leakage of information about Iran's hidden nuclear facility in Natanz and heavy water reactor in Arak.[962] The domestic, regional and international context of the nuclear crisis will be elaborated in the last chapter focusing on growing confrontation between Iran and the United States. This section, before concluding remarks, will briefly analyze the breakout and evolution of the crisis under Khatami's presidency and the consequences of international crisis in ascendancy of hard-line political elite.

Throughout the 1990s, American policy of dual containment targeted Iran's rearmament, particularly Iran's access to technology, material and know-how in its alleged search for building WMDs including biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. In 2002, leakage

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[960] See Christopher De Bellaigue, *The Struggle for Iran*, (New York: New York Review of Books, 2007).

[961] See Mehran Kamrava, *Iran's Intellectual Revolution*, p. 33.

[962] Iran started searching for nuclear technology during the Shah era; however nuclear research and investment ceased after the revolution. The Islamic Republic gained renewed interest for nuclear power during the Iran-Iraq war and sought to rebuild its incomplete nuclear power plant in Bushehr with the Soviet help. In the 1990s it was basically Russia and then China that helped Iran in its nuclear programme besides Iran's alleged contacts with Pakistani al-Khan network to acquire nuclear technology and materials during the 1980s. See Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*, (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), p. 7.

of Iran's hidden nuclear facilities emboldened neoconservatives' march on Iran. As a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Iran's hitherto undeclared nuclear sites were a breach of its responsibilities regarding the transparency clause of the NPT. But, Iran had a different interpretation arguing that it was only entitled to notify the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) before these facilities became operational and since they were not operational at the time, it was not a breach of its obligations. Against allegations of the military nature of its nuclear programme, Iran constantly emphasized its peaceful nature and underlined the country's right to produce nuclear energy in cooperation with the IAEA under the NPT.

In the heated conjuncture of Iraq war, Iran agreed to holding negotiations with the EU-3 countries, composed of France, Germany and Britain and adopted a cooperative attitude in order to defuse tensions and prevent the IAEA's transfer of Iran's nuclear dossier to the Security Council.[963] From the outset, the red line of Iran's diplomacy has been its "inalienable right" to nuclear technology under the NPT framework and negotiations hoped to assure international community of peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.[964] In the course of crisis, it became clear that the reformists were more prone to compromise and temporary suspension of the nuclear programme, lest it damages Iran's hitherto gained foreign policy successes in other realms.[965] However, it was the conservatives under the leadership of Ali Khamenei and powerful pragmatists like Rafsanjani that dominated Iran's nuclear decision-making. The nuclear dispute in this regard provided the conservatives another opportunity to sideline Khatami. Even though Supreme Leader authorized the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) to chart the

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[963] Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 356; Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*.

[964] See Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*, p. 18. Iran from the very beginning argued that its nuclear programme was peaceful in nature and it was destined for self-sufficiency in producing nuclear fuel for electricity and medical reactors used in cancer treatment.

[965] Ray Takeyh, *The Hidden Iran*, p. 152 and Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions,* p. 29.

nuclear policy, he designated his representative in the council, Hasan Rowhani[966], to guide the nuclear process rather than President Khatami who headed the council as the highest executive authority in the Islamic Republic.[967] At the end of the intensive negotiations, Rowhani was able to broker Tehran Agreement in December 2003 persuading the regime and his diplomatic counterparts on a "voluntary and temporary" suspension of nuclear enrichment and Iran also signed the Additional Protocol allowing more frequent inspections of the IAEA without prior notice, which has to be ratified by the parliament afterwards to take effect.[968] In 2004, a new Majles, dominated by conservatives and neo-conservatives would decline to ratify the Additional Protocol and in 2005 Iran would choose to defy international community by ending its temporary suspension of enrichment. Iran's new president, Mahmood Ahmadinejad would carry Iran's nuclear crisis to new heights, which will be one of the main analyses of the next chapter.

5.8. Analytical Remarks and Conclusions

5.8.1. Co-constitution of the Domestic and the International during the Epoch of Reconstruction and Reform

The epoch of reconstruction coincided with the growing US hegemony in the Middle East in the aftermath of the Cold War and the 1990-1991 Gulf War. This particular historical coincidence made US policy an integral part of Iran's post-war transformation and foreign policy. The denial of Iran's integration back into political, economic and

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[966] See "Profile: Hassan Rowhani", *BBC News*, November 30, 2003, online available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3240618.stm (accessed on August 24, 2012). The analysis argues that Ayatollah Khamenei's choice for Hasan Rowhani, rather than a government minister or the reformist president for the nuclear negotiations was related to his closeness to the hard-line clergy, which would make him more acceptable to the military.

[967] "Iran's Nuclear Diplomacy: The Political Fallout", *The Economist*, October 30, 2003, online available at: http://www.economist.com/node/2180338 (accessed on August 24, 2012).

[968] The Protocol had to be ratified by the Parliament before it could enter into force.

security relations of the Persian Gulf in particular, the Middle East and even Central Asia at large had formative impact not only over Iran's strategic affairs, but also over its development and reconstruction efforts, domestic configuration of power and retrenchment of anti-American ideology of the state.

The issue of development attained the highest significance for survival of the regime and the revolutionary order and maintenance of state's reproduction depended on Iran's ability to rebuild its economy. However, as elaborated throughout the chapters, Iran was not capable of renewing itself through its own resources and needed international capital, credits, investment and expertise. Iran's reconstruction efforts hence signaled an opening up of the country through pragmatist presidency of Rafsanjani and Iran aspired to achieve this goal in the face of American sanctions built on divestment and domestic opposition from traditional petit bourgeoisie against perils of industrial capitalism and foreign investment in a closed economy. The reconstruction policies of the pragmatist administration opened up the state for new struggles, for neo-liberalization and industrialization of economy threatened patrimonial relations with attempts to modernize the state through rationalization of bureaucracy, extension of control over quasi-autonomous post-revolutionary foundations and institution of modern macro-economic policies and management. In post-war environment, reconfiguring the state meant reconfiguring a giant ensemble, which has grown enormously through nationalizations and war time centralization and expansion. Neoliberal agenda also threatened the populist foundations of the state. Similar to other Middle Eastern experiences of economic opening, economic liberalization was considered separate from thorny issues of political liberalization. But the latter would assert itself with the reform movement and through the electoral victory of Mohammad Khatami.

After a tumultuous decade that has witnessed the breakup of diplomatic relations and almost entanglement in a naval confrontation in the Tanker Wars, Iran-US relations in post-war epoch was marked by Iran's rising moderation, restraint and even cooperation with the US, when its geopolitically-defined interests allowed. From the perspective of

the theme of co-constitution, this chapter has analyzed the formative impact of American policies over structures of power, wealth and norms in the Islamic Republic.

The framework of Iran-US relations in the new epoch was built on containment policy of the United States. Through sanctions, diplomatic and economic isolation, United States intended to compel Iran to change its behavior and cease "sponsoring terrorism", building weapons of mass destruction and "sabotaging" the peace process. Toward the end of the epoch of reform, US policy would shift to "regime change" with the early American euphoria in US-led operations to Afghanistan and Iraq.

The policy of isolation of Iran, militarization of the Persian Gulf and belligerent tone of US against Iran with the Bush administration has drawn policy pathways for the Islamic Republic. But this study aimed to look beyond policies and relate them with structural transformation of the state. Therefore the analysis focused on in what ways these pathways institutionalized new power relations and agendas within the state. Even though reconstruction of economy presided over rearmament, exposure to growing American military presence in the Persian Gulf as well as intensive military build-ups of American allies through US arms sales, continuing Iraqi threat in the 1990s apart, compelled Iran to attend to military renewal not to lag behind and let the military balance of power turn against it. However, militarization of the region outpaced Iran's relatively modest military expenditures particularly at the beginning of the 1990s.[969] Because of sanctions, Iran faced difficulties in access to weapons and military technology, but it soon handled this obstacle through its improving relations with China, Russia and North Korea.[970] Sanctions also forced Iran to seek self-sufficiency in

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[969] During 1988 and 2005, Saudi Arabia accounted for 60 percent the Persian Gulf's military expenditure; over the same period, Kuwait ranked second with 16 percent and Iran followed Kuwait with 13 percent. See Hossein Askari, Amin Mohseni and Shahrzad Daneshvar, *The Militarization of the Persian Gulf*, p. 35.

[970] Mattair provides a list defensive and offensive capabilities that the Iranian army was able to make by acquiring Russian-made Sukhoi and MiG fighter aircraft and Tupolev bombers, Russian-made surface-to-air defensive missiles and Chinese and Russian-made surface-to-surface anti-ship cruise missiles. Reportedly, Tehran started developing its nuclear programme in the 1990s through contact with China,

military, even if it could not do so in the economy. In the 1990s Iran's military industry grew. Iran registered success in producing a wide array of arms and made progress in its missiles programme.[971] Sense of alarm and insecurity kept "national security" high on the agenda, it also strengthened the role of security elites in politics. Especially during the Khatami era, the signals of militarization of politics were discernible, as politics was immensely securitized both because of the conservative establishment's concerns over the vibrancy of the society and US deliberations on regime change as well as military campaigns in the name of freedom and democracy. The letter addressed to Khatami from IRGC commanders immediately after the student riots in 1999 was a blunt exemplar of militarization, warning Khatami and his government not to jeopardize Islamic order and compel intervention of military into politics.

This chapter has asserted that US policy and discourse led to further fault-lines in state-society relations, especially after President Bush championed democracy movement in Iran and by doing so delegitimized Iran's indigenous movement for political rights and liberties. From the outset, the political jargon of the Islamic Republic associated reformism with an American project. Once revolutionary, the regime after consolidation has grown change-averse and highly conservative in domestic politics strictly preserving the arena open to the key political elite and their patronage circles from popular and secular demands. Even though Khatami has taken a cautious and gradualist approach and respected the red-lines of the regime not to disrupt the Islamic Republic, change was a formidable challenge, for it might have subordinated clerical rule to republican demands. The conservative establishment did not want the change to come in, lest it becomes uncontrollable with the dynamism of the society and alleged machinations of

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Pakistan and Russia. See Thomas R. Mattair, *Global Security Watch: A Reference Handbook Iran*, (London: Praeger Security International, 2008), pp. 45-46.

[971] Iran's conventional capabilities were also a source of concern for the United States. Iran throughout the 1990s embarked on R&D and production cycles in small arms, heavy land equipment, air defense industries and since the mid-1990s, it worked on aircraft repair and production and missile technologies. By the end of the decade Iran succeeded producing internationally recognized missile capabilities. See Hossein Askari, Amin Mohseni and Shahrzad Daneshvar, *The Militarization of the Persian Gulf*, p. 93.

imperialism. Prior to the epoch of reform, at the beginning of the 1990s, United States was constantly referred as ideological threat, a source of "cultural onslaught" against which the society must be protected. It was highly embedded into the factional struggles over cultural and moral space. As will be recalled, the post-revolutionary discourse and policies of Islamization of state, society and education were all defined in terms of Iran's purification from the corrupt influence of the West, particularly the United States. This discourse became even more evident in the epoch of reform and its aftermath.

Historical trajectory of events and responses and political agency of international and regional actors echoed back at home and partly determined the political configuration of domestic forces. Dual containment strategy and sanctions served to entrench enmity and mistrust against the United States. The old guards were re-assured of American hostility to the Islamic regime and of attempts to undo the revolution. This kept anti-Americanism, the very ideological pillar of the Islamic state strong among the key elite and made the struggles of the pragmatist and reformist elites much harder. As Afrasiabi argues the massive deployment of US forces in the region since the Gulf War was a source of discontent for Iranian politicians and on the domestic scene it strengthened Khamenei's anti-American position.[972] Similarly, the peace process and the prospect of a regional order that would integrate Israel, yet leave Iran out also strengthened the domestic position of the conservatives and helped them retain their influence in foreign policy discourse and Iran's relations with social movements. Regional context helped foster Tehran's self-portrayal as a moral power and laid the stepping stones for its further involvement in politics of Levant. In the epoch of reform, American denunciation of Iran as an axis of evil country to the dismay of reformists' expectations of further normalization due to constructive cooperation in Afghanistan also empowered the conservatives.

The historical account articulated in this united chapters demonstrated that Iran's struggle for reintegration took place at the backdrop of fierce factionalism and United

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[972] See Kaveh L. Afrasiabi, *After Khomeini: New Directions in Iran's Foreign Policy*, p. 76.

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States remained a contested issue for factional politics. This affirmed one of the major arguments of this study which asserts that United States is not solely a foreign policy issue, but a very fundamental issue for domestic politics. The autonomy of foreign policy from domestic politics was particularly limited, when the issue pertained to the strategy against the US given the significance of US as the erstwhile strategic and ideological enemy of the regime. American preference over confrontation than normalization stroke a heavy blow the reformists' objective for a breakthrough, made it redundant and shifted initiative to the conservatives with the securitization of the domestic and the international. The historical-sociological analysis above showed that US remained an integral factor in the evolution of the revolutionary state by implicating on the balance of political power through issues of legitimacy and served as a litmus test to distinguish devotees from "traitors."

Before prospect of a military confrontation became more pronounced in the post 9/11 era, the major tool of American policy to curb Iran's reintegration was sanctions, which would soon turn into an economic warfare and consistent component of American strategy. The sanctions policy posed additional hurdles for the implementation of Iran's development plans. It has curtailed investment, even though it could not completely prevent other states from investing in Iran which has shown that Iran was difficult to isolate with its vast natural resources essential for the smooth functioning of global economy. Nevertheless, US strategy also restricted Iran's room for maneuver and expectations to play greater role in energy politics of the post-Soviet space. In terms of commerce, US sanctions effectively denied Iranian exports to American markets, but Iran's improving international relations with Europe, Russia and China helped its exports soar.[973]

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[973] Folkeson depending on the data retrieved from the Global Trade Atlas notes that trade dipped in 1998 following the imposition of the new sanctions by the Clinton Administration in 1996. There was a slight increase in trade relations after Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's announcement of the lift of sanctions on carpets, pistachios and caviar. Sanctions remain as a persistent component of relations which curtail trade relations to a great extent. See Annika Folkeson, "US-Iran Trade Still Thrives", *The Iran Primer*, April 10, 2012.

5.8.2. Agency and Structuring during the Epochs of Reconstruction and Reform

During the epochs of reconstruction and reform, international and regional contexts offered both opportunities and challenges for Iran's agenda of development and reintegration. Iran faced the most significant hurdle through American sanctions and containment policy. In the epoch of reconstruction and reform, Iran's tension-ridden relations with the US had direct and indirect negative repercussions for economic and political development in the country through American blockage of investment in Iran and adverse impact of US democratization agenda and quest for empowering Iranian NGOs on the reform movement and civil society activism, as has been articulated in the section above.

However, the other part of co-constitution relates to agency of the state through its foreign policy in coping with the challenges of the international. Despite US attempts to constrain Iran's political agency, Iran's foreign policy registered success in establishing détente with its neighbors in the Persian Gulf and improving economic ties with the European states. Iran aimed to diversify its international partners and resist the new world order based on US preponderance. Tehran conceived itself as an indispensible part of the Middle East and aimed to get the recognition of regional and international actors and establish smooth relations with the world. Iran's political agency was intrinsic to its domestic transformation toward moderation. The power shifted away from transnationalist elements known for their advocacy of export of revolution and Iran's international vision and self-conception approximated to territorial international relations; even though Iran retained the discourse of Muslim leadership especially filling in the void of pan-Arabism and Arab leadership over the Palestinian issue.

Iran's growing relations with Europe during the epoch of reform brought increasing trade and Iran's growing recognition by American allies. Iran's moderation and retreat from export of revolution policy contributed to greater opportunities for cooperation with the GCC, even though the Persian Gulf remained under military domination of the

United States. To bypass American sanctions Iran looked to Russia, China, Pakistan and North Korea and obtained weapons and technology to keep the country ready for military conflict as bitter years of war have taught. Sanctions also served remarkable growth of indigenous military industry in the 1990s.

In the face of US hegemony, Iran was nonetheless able to exert considerable agency against being sidelined. In this struggle Iran benefited from its natural endowments and "soft power" through Islamic ideology resonating in regional politics. Iran's entitlement to oil and gas resources and search for capitalist re-structuring made it quite difficult for the United States to convince its allies to isolate Iran. Iran's mantle of anti-imperialism and anti-Israeli attitude was appealing in a region with considerable resentment against foreign encroachment; although such message was not welcome by Tehran's regional rivals. The exclusionary policies of the United States provided Iran to capitalize on the ideological and moral vacuum in the region, left by the weakening of pan-Arabism after the first Gulf War and the peace talks between Arab states and Israel. So long as its expectations of reintegration remained unfulfilled, Iran qualified as a natural leader of regional discontents vis-à-vis the emerging order. Iran's growing influence in the politics of Levant through Hezbollah, Hamas and enduring alliance with Syria brought it into the heart of regional politics and extended the scope of Iranian influence from the Persian Gulf into the Levant. Iran's involvement and capabilities beyond the Gulf were in the making and with the benefit of hindsight, we can argue that its real influence would unleash by critical regional events in the coming epoch of confrontation.

In the second half of the 1990s, it was the reformists' agency, supported by modern right that pursued Iran's quest for normalization against obstacles both inside and outside Iran. The epoch of reform brought a fresh impetus for Iran's search for moderation and it was also evident in Iran-US relations. Once a taboo, the prospect of rebuilding relations with the United States was clearly spelled out, even though it remained a major dilemma and source of discontent among the political elite and power networks with regard to post-revolutionary orientation of Iran. The Khatami administration searched for building

a reasonable and trustworthy dialogue with the US. It was based on the recognition that political and economic development of Iran was intrinsically related to American eagerness to let Iran in. As already covered, Khatami's agenda for dialogue was not wholeheartedly endorsed by the conservative power centers and at the end of the two consequent terms in office, domestic and international initiative of the country was seized by the conservative establishment. Therefore, it was not merely American policies that constrained the capabilities of the reformist administration; more importantly, Khatami's agency had to confront the opposition of the conservatives at home. Therefore, the executive branch's control over foreign policy and ability to respond to international developments depended more on the delicate domestic power balance, as the administration always had to rely on the approval of the Supreme Leader to pursue its policies.

As Margaret Archer has pointed out, it was the structures of yesterday that constrained and enabled today's agents. Iran's agency was constrained by the historical legacy of the revolutionary epoch which also institutionalized American antagonism toward Iran within US bureaucracy and party politics. The Hostage Crisis, Iran-Contra scandal, Iran's fierce revolutionary rhetoric made normalization a difficult choice, and arduous campaigns of the Israeli lobby and pressure from Congress resulted in American decision to punish and contain Iran. At the end of the decade Khatami must have seen that the mighty walls of mistrust have risen further and radicalization of domestic politics both in Iran and the United States meant failure of hopes to give relations a new start based on mutual trust, respect and dialogue. These rather Kantian aspirations seemed to be in clash with Hobbesian prospects of an armed confrontation. At the end of epochs of reconstruction and reform, Iran partly achieved to renew itself and resist American sanctions. But as the 1990s came to an end, normalization of relations with the US remained elusive which meant that structural impediments were firmly in place through growing American presence and control over the Persian Gulf and US sanctions against Iran.

5.8.3. Identity versus Interests: Reconstructing and Reforming Identities and Interests

The revolution and its aftermath radically changed the way Iran defined itself. Having argued on the Janus-face of the state, such change had implications for state's relations both with the international and its society. The consolidation of clerical rule over state institutions and Islamization of society paved the way for the constitution of the Islamic Republic, and its foreign policy carried the mantle of anti-imperialism, anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism as well as solidarity with the Muslim societies reflecting the main tenets of its ideological order. The historical context of domestic and external struggles, articulated in the chapter, resulted in association of being a revolutionary with being anti-American in the Iranian context. In this regard, post-revolutionary Iran's interests were defined in line with its identity which confirms constructivist arguments. It was also true that this normative context informed Iran's political agency by constraining its choices vis-à-vis United States.

However, in the epoch of reconstruction and reform, we observed changes in the way Iran's Islamic identity was being defined. The shifting strategic context and Iran's need for reconstructing its polity led the pragmatist and reformist leadership of Presidents Rafsanjani and Khatami to redefine Iran's political identity by leaving behind its revisionist mantle and portraying Iran amenable to norm-abiding behavior and dialogue. This was in stark contrast to earlier conception of the international as an unjust realm that the Islamic Republic shall confront and change. Now, the theme of reintegration was equally relevant with the themes of confrontation and resistance which were rather taken up by ideological elites of the regime than the presidents who assumed diplomatic mantles of building bridges. The epoch of reconstruction and reform has shown that at this particular stage of state's development, Iran was trying to balance its strategic interests and post-revolutionary identity.

The case of post-revolutionary Iran has shown that identity shall not be taken as a generic, monolithic and static concept. Acknowledgement of state's interests, domestic transformation of state-society complex and lessons learned from historical experience culminated in a rethinking over identity. The need to reconstruct Iran demanded moderation, growing reformism urged for greater integration with the world as well as amelioration of Iran's tarnished image, and the historical experience of war and failure of export of revolution policy curtailed Iran's commitment to transnational objectives. A review of academic discussions in the second half the 1990s and early 2000s before Khatami's presidency was over, showed that the notion of "national interest" was used extensively.[974] This to a certain extent confirmed Iran's self-restraint since the beginning of the 1990s in terms of pragmatists' inclination for "revolution in one country." However, this process did not mean a total agreement over Iran's post-revolutionary identity and convenient path of action. Support for "liberation movements" continued despite Rafsanjani's attempts to give primacy to state-to-state affairs and indeed beyond ideological affinity, this has become strategically convenient because of geopolitics of Iran's containment.

The material context of interests shall not be forgotten. Iran's pragmatism was predicated on the requisites of material reproduction of the state, particularly the necessity of building its post-war economy. Thus, rather than interest versus identity dichotomy, historical analysis and examination of sociology of state provides that interests and identities shaped each other and because the state is a complex institutional ensemble made up of myriad structured relations and co-existence of different agents, Iran's interests and identities are complex and multi-faceted. It was domestic politics and

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[974] In of the interviews conducted for the field research of the dissertation in Tehran, a university professor, who asked his name not to be cited, told that even in the early years of Khatami's presidency it was not much welcomed to use the notion of "national interest." He referred to one of his faculty colleagues' difficulty as his article was not published in the journal of *Siyasat-e Khareji* (Foreign Policy) which belongs to Foreign Ministry, because his piece talked about national interest. The professor argued that it was because of the perception that national interest is against Islamic interest and ummah and as of late 2010, he asserted that there is no formal definition of national interest which belongs to the state or the Islamic Republic.

state's relations with regional and international context that determined the balance between contending interests and identities. As examined in the chapters, Iran found a regional environment conducive to act as a power of resistance and defy American policies, which conflated its ideological posture with geopolitical interests. To argue that Iran acts solely on ideology or solely on material interest does not capture the complexity of its politics and the complexity of the contexts it operates.

5.9. Iran at the Dawn of Epoch of Confrontation

By the time Khatami's presidency was coming to an end, the conservative establishment was back in control of domestic and international politics of Iran. The patrimonial structures of power were intact. Rather than evolving into a democracy, Iran was succumbing into growing authoritarianism under the alliance of the conservatives and the military establishment. In the confluence of domestic struggles and geopolitical crisis, neither democracy, nor economic development and normalization could develop in full sense.

After eight years of reformist administration in power, despite attempts to manage economy through technocrats and rule of law, structural deficiencies were still in place. Iran's oil-dependence continued and formidable growth of Iran's informal economy, under the control of the military establishment became another serious problem for modernization of the economy. As stated earlier, the administration itself diverged on the primacy of economic growth or social justice. Khatami was not able to challenge the ever-growing power of the *bonyads* that owed accountability only to the Supreme Leader. The pervasive corruption of the ruling elite continued even within the reformist clique. In a complex and highly personalized structure of politics instituting rule of law and accountability for political and economic institutions proved highly elusive. Ansari argues that the crises that Khatami struggled to resolve by instituting a strong, accountable and democratic state were an integral and necessary component of profit-

making for the mercantile capital which throve on instability.[975] Accordingly, political crisis in the Islamic Republic was a rule, not an exception.[976]

The reformist epoch fundamentally shook the social contract of the Islamic Republic by trying to re-orient it to a true republic within the confines of the Islamic system. It opened up debate over individual, society, state and politics and paralleled Iran's search for greater recognition in the international community with a strong state and articulate society. Iran in the late 1990s was a place of unprecedented debate and activism compared to the previous epochs and many societies in the Middle East. However, the strong impetus for reform could not bring change because of the formidable structural restraints posed by the conservative system as well as the reformist leadership's loss of initiative, for they also feared the political consequences and outreaching potential of ideas and people's power.[977]

As for the international face of the state, Iran in epoch of reform as well as reconstruction aimed to re-construct its image and presence as a norm-abiding, strong state rooted in an historical civilization without sacrificing its Islamic character, but adjusting it to the reality of Western hegemony. The geopolitically favorable atmosphere for Iran and the United States in their converging interests against Taleban and Saddam regimes did not bring a remarkable improvement. A breakthrough would happen only with the agency of both Iranian and American decision-makers against the materially and normatively institutionalized dynamics of enmity. In Iran, there was a fierce struggle to seize political initiative and decide over one of the most challenging matters of foreign policy and domestic politics: relations with the US. As American policy shifted from containment to regime change, the ideological and strategic initiative was seized by hard-liners.

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[975] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran, Islam and Democracy*, p. 123.

[976] Ibid.

[977] Ibid., p. 272.

At the beginning of the 2000s, Iran was alarmed by the possibility of an imminent military attack from the United States. It came under mounting international pressure because of its nuclear programme which would set the terms of Iran's regional and international affairs in the following years. By 2003 pressure was partially offset by nuclear diplomacy of the pragmatist and reformist elites in charge through a deal to suspend nuclear enrichment temporarily. At home the hopeful atmosphere of the late 1990s for political reform was long gone. The coming epoch would see the escalation of tensions in Iran-US relations which would bear upon the unresolved dilemmas of the Islamic Republic. As a decade of hope and quest for change was closing down, confrontation and crisis were awaiting Iran.

CHAPTER 6

THE EPOCH OF CONFRONTATION

6.1. Introduction

Politics, international affairs and state-society relations of Iran entered into a new epoch with the victory of Mahmood Ahmadinejad in 2005 Presidential elections. In Mahmood Ahmadinejad's persona, a new generation of political elite, the neo-conservatives[978] seized the highest elected office of the Islamic Republic. The epoch of reform was officially over with the end of Khatami's presidency; but conservative backlash both at the elite level and within society was already in place before 2005, as conservative forces, mainly Iran's rising new right seized the control of local councils in 2003 and the parliament in 2004. The reformist momentum was fading with the suffocation of social demands within the red-lines of the regime and resilience of the status quo. The neoconservative victory in presidential elections opened political space for further

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[978] In the literature, Iran's new elites are referred as neoconservatives, principle-ists of the new right. The term neoconservative has been first coined by the reformist newspaper *Shargh*. Ehteshami and Zweiri (2008) also use the term for its strong resemblance with the American conservatives, for "they both married religious and traditional values with a muscular and assertive foreign policy." (p. 137) Hossein Bastani, co-founder of reformist website *Rooz*, argues that "The term, of course, is borrowed from American political culture. In both countries, neoconservatives represent new movements in conservative thought. Both have a literature of war-mongering ideology and both use religious concepts to justify their domestic and foreign policies. Just as George Bush sees himself having a religious call or destiny, Iranian neo-cons too believe that their confrontation with the West over the nuclear issue are the first steps in the reappearance of the twelfth Imam. Ahmadinejad has even identified a date when he believes that the Imam will reappear within the next two years." His remarks are online available at:http://blog.washingtonpost.com/worldopinionroundup/2006/03/iran.html Ali Ansari depicts Iran's rising new right as "principle-ists" (*Osulgarayan*) with emphasis on their adherence to revolutionary principles and fundamentals of the Islamic Revolution which will be elaborated throughout the chapter. See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*. Arjomand (2009) dubs them as the new right, which stands distinct from the conservative right and the modern right.

conservative consolidation. Iran was transforming into an authoritarian polity within a volatile geopolitical context and rising oil revenues in the early 2000s. At home, new power struggles alongside the old ones continued over domestic and foreign policy, resources and ideology of the state; as Iran's new elites sought to carve a space for themselves and transform the state.

The reason why this epoch is named confrontation pertains to both state's confrontational and defiant relations with the West, particularly the United States and subsequently Europe following the suit and the growing tensions between state and society as well as within the political elite especially after 2009. The title confrontation however does not suggest armed confrontation or lack of diplomacy and search for negotiated solutions, even though threats of war and military attack against Iran and punitive economic measures frequently rise and linger. The epoch, which is in fact still going on and is likely to do so in the absence of an understanding between Iran and the US over a variety of bilateral and regional issues, is arguably the toughest and most complicated epoch for Iran-US relations after an interval during the epoch of reconstruction and reform. The analytical focus of the chapter will be both on the role of the international over state transformation; that is transformation of Iran into a "national security state" and how this transformation reflects in foreign policy of Iran, particularly its political agency vis-à-vis the United States over what this study identifies as the fault-lines and arenas of confrontation between Iran and the United States. As in previous chapters, state-society relations will be analyzed intrinsic to state's relations with the international and the co-constitutive linkages between the international and domestic will be addressed. The chapter will draw on sociology of state, changing constellation of power, rise and fall of different agencies acting on behalf of the state and how foreign policy stands integral to both strategic responses to evolving contexts and reproduction of a historically constituted normative and material order in Iran. The chapter will analyze the epoch in two main parts, which corresponds to President Ahmadinejad's first (2005-2009), and second term in office, covering up the period from the start of his

tenure in 2009 under social unrest due to disputed elections, until mid-2012, which leaves us at stalled nuclear talks and toughening sanctions for Iran.

6.2. The State in the Epoch of Confrontation: Agency, Structuring and Contestation during 2005-2009

Mahmood Ahmadinejad's victory in 2005 was a culmination of deep-running change within the state and society since the 1990s. The rise of neoconservatives represented a new power constellation in Iran, as the military-theocracy bloc then seized further political control and sidelined pragmatist and reformist challenges. Some scholars claimed that US policy of regime change was "successful" in terms of transforming Iran's regime. But they argued that the policy did not bring about a Western-style capitalist democracy as America wished to install; instead it altered an authoritarian regime with a genuine pro-democracy movement into a "military dictatorship."[979] The emerging order, however, as Ali Ansari argues, was rather a union of theocratic and military class, devoid of cohesion to act as a monolith; not a military junta despite the growing role of both former and active members of the Guards in political, ideological, economic and military affairs of the state.[980] Having said that, this order created a structure open to contestation between old guards and new guards of the regime which will be elaborated in terms of its impact on foreign policy as well as re-definition and restructuring of the state throughout the chapter. Nevertheless, this ruling block, notwithstanding its internal tensions, testified increasing authoritarianism of politics at the expense of republican features of Iran's political system and risked transforming the

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[979] See Ali Alfoneh, "All the Guard's Men: Iran's Silent Revolution," *World Affairs*, (September-October 2010), pp. 73-79, Elliot Hen-Tov and Nathan Gonzalez, "The Militarization of Post-Khomeini Iran: Praetorianism 2.0", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol.34, No.1, 2011, pp. 44 and 54. Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, p. 190.

[980] Ali M. Ansari's remarks are quoted in Julian Borger and Robert Tait, "The financial power of the Revolutionary Guards", *The Guardian*, February 15, 2010.

Islamic Republic into an "Islamic monarchy."[981] In this epoch, the state increasingly turned into an authoritarian shield fighting against both "internal" and "external" enemies; indeed due to concerns over domestic dynamism and external threats that might instigate much-feared domestic unrest, the boundary between internal and external enemies has already disappeared for the regime.

6.2.1. Ahmadinejad's Iran and Sociology of Political Change

Mahmood Ahmadinejad's victory in 2005 presidential elections was rather unexpected in the face of his powerful and well-known competitors including Hashemi Rafsanjani and prominent members of neoconservative faction such as Ali Larijani, Mohammad Qalibaf and Mohsen Rezaei. Mahmood Ahmadinejad was a lay politician who was serving as the mayor of Tehran at the time and did not belong to a prominent clerical or wealthy *bazaari* family.[982] But he defeated Hashemi Rafsanjani in the second round of the elections by his populist appeal to lower and poorer class votes as much as with support from the Supreme Leader, the IRGC and the basijis. General Mohammad Baqer Zolqadr later testified that "fundamentalist forces, thank God, won the election thanks to their smart and multi-fold plan and through the massive participation of the Basij."[983] Indeed, given the nature of Iranian politics as a well-guarded niche open only to *khodi*s (insiders, loyalists of the Islamic regime), Ahmadinejad could not have risen, if he were not in some affiliated with Iran's rising military elite.[984]

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[981] See Ali M. Ansari, "Iran under Ahmadinejad: populism and its malcontents", *International Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 4, 2008, p. 699.

[982] For an eloquent biography of Mahmood Ahmadinejad, see Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad: The Secret History of Iran's Radical Leader*, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008).

[983] Zolqadr is quoted in Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives*, pp. 84-85. This statement further inflamed allegations of fraud in the elections and increasing control of the "garrison party" over Iranian politics -a terminology mainly employed by prominent reformists like Khatami's brother Mohammed Reza Khatami, the head of Islamic Iran Participation Front.

[984] Ahmadinejad's life and political career was also shaped by Iran's profound transformation through revolution and Iran-Iraq war. He was linked with the IRGC and the Basijis since 1986, when he joined the Ramazan Headquarters of the Revolutionary Guards for his military service. Even though lack of proof in

In 2005, Iran's second-generation revolutionaries seized the highest elected executive power. These elites were not clerics or technocrats; they predominantly belonged to the war generation[985] with lower class background and resentment against marginalization by the materialist turn of the Islamic Republic in the 1990s.[986] Much like the reformists, they were products of the deep-running political and socio-economic change in post-war society throughout the 1990s.[987] As commonly argued, almost a decade of tumultuous war with Iraq perhaps had much deeper impact on state and society than the revolution itself. Iran today profoundly reflects the exigencies of post-war development and politics, and war veterans are now powerful agents with a massive bearing on foreign policy of the Islamic Republic, besides their centrality in the reproduction of an authoritarian political and cultural system. Therefore, any analysis of the epoch of confrontation has to attend to their political views, economic demands and ideological orientation over Iran's domestic order and international standing, which started to structure politics and international affairs of the country.

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combat experience leaves Ahmadinejad's much emphasized war-veteran identity dubious, still his service in the IRGC seem to have earned him strategic milieu for future political career by placing him in relations of patronage. Ahmadinejad served as the Governor of Ardabil, later become the mayor of Tehran in 2003 and eventually the President of the Islamic Republic. See Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, p. 34.

[985] As Farideh Farhi clarifies "war generation" comprises both those fought the war on the battlefield and hence "served the revolution" and the generation born during the war years who now make up the vibrant youth population of the Islamic Republic. In contemporary Iran, it is the first group that has started to pull the strings of the polity and seek to find out the material returns of their "sacrifices." For the discussion of war generations, see Farideh Farhi, "The Antinomies of Iran's War Generation", in Lawrence G. Potter and Gary G. Sick (eds.), *Iran, Iraq and the Legacies of War*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 101-120.

[986] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neo-conservatives*.

[987] Interestingly, IRGC also benefited from civil society and press activism of the reformist epoch. They set up their own newspapers and associations, and developed links with the militant clergy who shared their disdain for liberalization of economic and social space boosting their political consciousness and agenda. The young war veterans also entered universities and earned advanced degrees, that is why most of the former IRGC members of the Majlis and cabinet carry the titles of Dr., including the President himself. Mahmood Ahmadinejad completed his Ph.D. on traffic and transport engineering. See Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of Ayatollahs*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 223.

6.2.2. The Rise of the Revolutionary Guards

The rise of Ahmadinejad to power is not understandable without analyzing the broader political and socio-economic transformation of Iran in the 1990s which witnessed to the steady rise of the Revolutionary Guards. Rehabilitation and peaceful integration of war veterans into post-war society and politics was a formidable task for the ruling elite of the post-Khomeini era, fearful of a military coup d'état.[988] Hashemi Rafsanjani, as the first president of post-war years sought to keep the military away from politics and curb the power of *Basijis* and other paramilitary thugs, as a part of his efforts to rationalize the state.[989] Ayatollah Khomeini before his death also asked the military to keep away from politics in his *Last Will and Testament*.[990] Within this political calculus, Rafsanjani's solution for de-militarization of society was to channel war veterans to economic reconstruction of the country and turn them into economic actors with powerful stake in the sustenance of the new order.[991] In the 1990s, the Guards have become leading contractors in Iranian economy through their firm named *Gharargah-e Sazendegi Khatam al- Anbia* (abbreviated as Ghorb) in major industries of construction, engineering, manufacturing, hydrocarbons and telecommunications.[992]

Nevertheless, the Supreme Leader's strategy was to keep Iran's military elite politically active as well. According to Hossein Bashiriyeh, it was Ayatollah Khamenei who has

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[988] "Iran: Ahmadinejad's Tumultuous Presidency", International Crisis Group *Middle East Briefing*, No. 21, February 6, 2007.

[989] Ibid.

[990] See Ervand Abrahamian, *Khomeinism*; Paul Wehrey, et *al.*, *The Rise of Pasdaran*.

[991] See Elliot Hen-Tov and Nathan Gonzalez, "The Militarization of Post-Khomeini Iran: Praetorianism 2.0", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol.34, No.1. Paul Wehrey, by quoting Mohsen Sazegara argues that his channeling of the IRGC to economic activity was thought as a way to generate independent income. See Paul Wehrey, et al., *The Rise of Pasdaran*, pp. 56 and 59.

[992] See Mehdi Khalaji, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps, Inc." *Washington Institute for Near Eastern Policy,* Policy Watch, 2007; Elliot Hen-Tov and Nathan Gonzalez, "The Militarization of Post-Khomeini Iran: Praetorianism 2.0", p. 49 and Paul Wehrey et al., *The Rise of Pasdaran*, pp.59-64.

been the architect of the post-2005 order by empowering security elite and their vigilantes within the society to guarantee the survival of the *velayat-e faqih* system.[993] Scholars note the history of a cordial relationship between Khamenei and the IRGC from the tumultuous days of Iran-Iraq War onwards.[994] According to Akbar Ganji, a former member of the IRGC and a well-known regime dissident who was jailed between 2000 and 2006, Khamenei was adamant in penetrating into the IRGC and appointing even the brigade commanders himself to ensure full authority and strengthen his power base within the ideological army of Iran.[995] This has culminated in a strong and mutually beneficial political relationship between his office and the *pasdaran* and constituted the essence of ruling class during the epoch of confrontation. The IRGC's rising political profile was apparent during the reformist epoch, as the conservative establishment feared losing regime's grab over reform-seeking elite and Iran's increasingly post-Islamist society. The *pasdaran* and *basiji*s were then called back to duty as vanguards of the Revolution against both external and "internal" threats.[996] As previously noted, the IRGC commanders then became essential spokespersons in the name of the Islamic order through their stern warnings against the reformist administration with their threats to seize power, unless social dissent-the student uprisings in 1999- is put under control, while affiliated law enforcement forces and street thugs have performed parallel activities for intimidating and suppressing the reformist momentum at the societal level. Furthermore, Khamenei's appointment of many former Revolutionary Guards commanders to top political positions such as secretaries of the Supreme National Security Council and the Expediency Council, the head of state television and radio

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[993] See Danny Postel, "Counter-Revolution and Revolt in Iran: An Interview with Iranian Political Scientist Hossein Bashiriyeh," *Constellations*, Vol.17, No.1, 2010.

[994] Ali Khamenei has been Ayatollah Khomeini's representative in the Defense Ministry during the interim government in 1979 and he later served as the deputy defense minister. As a Supreme Leader, he became the commander-in-chief and appointed the commanders of the armed forces. See Akbar Ganji, "The Latter-Day Sultan: Power and Politics in Iran", *Foreign Affairs*, (November/December 2008).

[995] Ibid., p. 5.

[996] See Elliot Hen-Tov and Nathan Gonzalez, "The Militarization of Post-Khomeini Iran: Praetorianism 2.0", pp.

services as well as the head of Iran's largest *bonyad*, *Bonyad-e Mostazafan* served to blur the line between civil and military authority.[997]

In post-2005 Iran, many former Guards members have become Iran's new executives. Almost half of the twenty-two ministers of President Ahmadinejad's first-term cabinet had either served for or were affiliated with the IRGC, while several others were war veterans.[998] Besides military affiliation, Ahmadinejad's cabinet like the President himself also reflected the rising influence of the *Haqqani* School known for raising ideologically-minded bureaucrats especially for the Special Court of Clergy, the Islamic Propagation Center and various branches of the intelligence community.[999] The School was under the control of radical Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi Mesbah Yazdi who is also known as the "ideological mentor" of President Ahmadinejad and a crucial influence over his millenarian views on the Hidden Imam.[1000] Iran's neoconservative government is hence carved up both by a military mentality and a specific understanding of religion.

According to Ahmadinejad, his tenure marked a higher and more advanced phase in the religious development of the Islamic Republic, a "wave of spirituality" (*mowj ma'naviyat*).[1001] Ahmadinejad's followers constantly projected his presidency as a new

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[997] See Mehdi Khalaji, "The IRGC Inc."

[998] Through nominations of Manouchehr Mottaki, Mostafa Mohammad-Najjar, Mohammad Hossein Saffar Harandi , Gholamhossein Mohseni-Ejehei, Mostafa Pour Mohammadi, Masoud Mirkazemi, Mohammad Reza Eskandari, Mohammad Rahmati, Alireza Tahmasbi and Parviz Fattah respectively for the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Logistics, Culture and Islamic Guidance, Intelligence, Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, Roads and Transformation, Industries and Mines and Energy, governmental control of strategic posts was entrusted to the new elite with military background. See Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of its NeoConservatives*, p. 69.

[999] See Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution*, pp. 226-227. Ministers of Intelligence and Interior, Gholam Hossein Mohsen Eje'i and Mostafa Pour Mohammadi were also graduates of this school.

[1000] See Ali Rahnema, *Superstition as Ideology in Iranian Politics: From Majlesi to Ahmadinejad*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) for an analysis of President Ahmadinejad's millenarian views which the author named as "superstition as ideology." Accordingly, Ahmadinejad's views were to a certain extent re-invention of faith, with unprecedented focus on the Hidden Imam and his imminent return, a reference Khomeini never raised during his lifetime.

[1001] Ibid., p. 46.

phase of moral and religious regeneration, a "divine gift" (*tohfeh elahi*), "divine plan/design" (*tadbir elahi*) full of miracles (*mashhun be karamat va mo'jazet*).[1002] Ahmadinejad's religious view embraced millenarianism with constant references to his connection and guidance by the Hidden Imam. Accordingly, he defined his mission as creation of a domestic and international environment which would hasten Imam Mehdi's return; he even set a date for the return of the Hidden Imam and made constant references to his contact with him.[1003] This millenarianism had important implications for both state-society relations and Iran's international politics by informing its reading of international affairs and Iran's foreign policy discourse which will be elaborated in greater detail in the following parts.

6.2.3. The Political and Economic Transformation of Iran under Neo-conservatives

Politics and discourse under Mahmood Ahmadinejad sought to rejuvenate Iran's revolutionary values and the legitimacy of the system. Ahmadinejad posed himself as a revolutionary leader, attentive to the predicament of Iran's poor and marginalized population and defiant against enemies of Iran and Islam. He sought to re-revolutionize politics, which he believed had gone astray from the righteous path and principles of the Revolution.[1004] To rectify the mistakes of the past, he argued, Iran should return to the principles of revolution which would be the panacea for all of its chronic problems.[1005] He blamed previous administrations and their managerial elite for deviating from the righteous path of the revolution and claimed that the revolution was flawless, whereas it was the elite that were complicit in its failures.[1006]

[1002] Ibid., p. 45.

[1003] See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*.

[1004] Ibid.

[1005] See Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, p. 211.

[1006] See Said Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini*.

In line with the commitment of neoconservatives to uproot reformist legacy in bureaucracy, Iran's ruling cadres and bureaucrats were subjected to massive purges. The new recruits were mostly ideological devotees who made up president's own network in his search to carve political space for himself and his protégés.[1007] The government removed governors appointed by the Khatami administration, bank officials and placed their own man especially in the Ministries of Intelligence, Interior and Culture and Islamic Guidance to take full control of the state and penetrate in the society.[1008] The purges also reached to Tehran's senior diplomats in the UK, France, Germany and the UN Headquarters in Geneva at a very critical time for Iran's nuclear diplomacy, an act which reminded of post-revolutionary purges in foreign ministry replacing diplomats of the Shah era with devotees with no proper training in diplomacy and IR. [1009]

As to their vision of state and economy, Iran's new right organized under the name *Itelaf-e Abadgaran-e Iran-e Islami* (Coalition of Developers of Islamic Iran) envisaged a strong state with strong economy.[1010] During the reformist epoch, they repeatedly accused the reformists of neglecting the daily needs and economic expectations of the population by seeking political reform and democracy. For the neoconservatives, the function of the government was not reconciling reason and religion, but attending to the economic problems of the society.[1011] Iran's chronic economic problems hence provided a propitious ground for both old and new conservatives to attack the reformists and delegitimize their "perilous" political agenda for freedom and democracy. In issues of

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[1007] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *The Rise of Neo-conservatives*, p. 75.

[1008] See Farideh Farhi, "Iran's Security Outlook", *MERIP*, July 9, 2007, online available at: http://www.merip.org/mero/mero070907 (accessed on May 24, 2012), p.2.

[1009]See "Iran recalls ambassadors", *BBC News*, November 2, 2005, online available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4398442.stm, (accessed on August 31, 2012). Even more problematic was the fact that embassies in important capitals of London and Paris were kept without ambassadors for nearly the entire first year of Ahmadinejad's government.

[1010] See Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution*, p. 224.

[1011] Ibid.

social justice and development, Ahmadinejad from the outset has shown an ardent populism and appealed to the poorer segments of the Iranian society who have been at the forefront of the revolutionary rhetoric of *mostazafin*. He promised to bring "oil wealth to the dinner tables of Iranians" and fight with corruption which inflicted political system and society in Iran.[1012] Ahmadinejad's modest image and messages have gained him support from the lower strata, while Iran's disenchanted middle class seemingly lost hope for reform and interest in politics, both because of the structural obstacles and the inability of the reformists to bring real change.[1013]

But it has been mostly the IRGC and the basijis that benefited from the economic policies of Ahmadinejad's government. Reformist newspaper *E'temad-e Melli* declared the IRGC and its major contractor firm Ghorb the "real winner of the 2005 Presidential elections."[1014] The government awarded Revolutionary Guards by grants of billion dollars worth no-bid contracts which were in violation of the Iranian law on open bidding processes. As early as 2007, the IRGC made a $2.4 billion contract with the Tehran Metro Company and a $ 2.5 billion contract for the fifteenth and sixteenth phases of expansion of the South Pars gas field.[1015] The *pasdaran* were already in control of unauthorized docks, smuggling networks and Iran's expanding underground economy

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[1012] By raising the issue of social justice as the major theme of his electoral campaign, Ahmadinejad highlighted a very plain and fundamental problem of Iranian society, and his presidency followed his populist course. He called his administration the "justice-driven government" under the banner of *mehrvarzi* (compassion) and used state resources at his disposal generously for delivering social justice, reminiscent of what Amuzegar calls compassionate socialism of the Islamic leftists during Prime Minister Mousavi. During his first term, the Ahmadinejad administration delivered "Love Funds" to encourage young couples to marry, provided low-interest loans to poor classes and pledged to fund development projects in his provincial trips. To ensure social justice his government embarked on distributing what he termed "justice shares" (*saham-e adalat*) which envisaged granting stock rights to the lowest income families from designated state enterprises. The plan the government submitted in October 2005 foresaw transfer of 80 percent of the shares of chosen state enterprises to the public, which has been portrayed as his way of privatization but brought its own problems with it. See Jahangir Amuzegar, "Islamic Social Justice, Iranian Style", *Middle East Policy*, Vol.14, No. 3, 2007, p. 68-71.

[1013] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neo-conservatives*, p. 151.

[1014] Quoted in Mehdi Khalaji, "How Intertwined are the IRGC in Iran's Economy", p. 4.

[1015] Mehdi Khalaji, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards Inc.", p. 2.

which granted them increasing control over Iran's external trade.[1016] Privatization also benefited the IRGC, since it turned out to be a transfer of ownership of companies to the Revolutionary Guards at below-market prices through no-bid contracts. [1017] Amuzegar calls it, the paradox of privatization in Iran which has resulted in the expansion of the public sector despite privatization efforts.[1018]

The economic power of the IRGC got boosted since 2005 so much so that no big businessman in the country could act independently of the IRGC or the government.[1019] The economy is now more than ever dominated by the state, semi-state foundations as well as overt and covert economic activities of various military, paramilitary and intelligence services[1020] and the absence of strong legal framework and regulatory institutions makes proper connections with the political elite, rather than entrepreneurship the main criterion for the profitability of the private sector.[1021] This structural condition perpetuated politics based on patronage and clientelism and culminated in what Ehsani names as Soviet-style oligarchies in Iran.[1022] The control of

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[1016] The illegal economic activities of the IRGC were raised by the then-Majlis speaker Mehdi Karroubi in 1999. The IRGC's closing down of Tehran's new Imam Khomeini International Airport in May 2004 which has been contracted to Turkish –Austrian consortium was an exemplar of its desire to maintain control over transportation, especially over airports that are essential for its vested smuggling activities. Then the Guards demanded the right to run the facility, posing consortium's control as a security threat and insult of "national pride." Yet the issue entailed an intrinsic economic dimension as Khalaji suggests. See Mehdi Khalaji, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps, Inc.", *Policy Watch* No. 1273, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy , August 17, 2007, p. 3 and Mehdi Khalaji, "How Intertwined are the IRGC in Iran's Economy", p. 5.

[1017] Mehdi Khalaji, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps, Inc.", p. 2.

[1018] See Jahangir Amuzegar, "Islamic Social Justice, Iranian Style", p. 72.

[1019] See Julian Borger and Robert Tait, "The financial power of the Revolutionary Guards", and Arang Keshavarzian, "Regime Loyalty and Bazaari representation under the Islamic Republic of Iran: Dilemmas of the Society of Islamic Coalition", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 41, No.2, (May 2009), pp. 225-246.

[1020] Bahman Nomani and Sohrab Behdad, *Class and Labor in Iran*, p. 211.

[1021] Kaveh Ehsani, "Iran: The Populist Threat to Democracy", *Middle East Report*, No. 241, 2006, p. 3.

[1022] Ibid.

Iran's largest *bonyads* by former IRGC commanders upon the appointment of the Supreme Leader constituted the basis of IRGC's structural and infrastructural power and made them major beneficiaries of state power and masters of, what Behdad and Nomani dub as, "Mafiaesque underworld of oligopolistic market" constituting a formidable obstacle to capitalist development in Iran.[1023]

The Ahmadinejad government has not forgotten to improve the economic standing of the *Basijis.* In early 2008, the Majles approved a bill for the establishment of the Basij Construction Organization which envisaged handing over economic projects from the private sector to the Basij, which indeed meant enlargement of state bureaucracy.[1024] The administration by doing so attempted to reward the *basijis* alongside the IRGC. Having defined himself as a basiji and praising the culture of basiji, Ahmadinejad had a strong incentive to put material benefits on the table of the basijis as well.[1025] These policies found favor within the basijis; as Brigadier General Mohammad Hejazi in 2007 told "Fortunately, the ninth government's position toward the Basij is most favorable and many members of government are active Basij members. We hope that these favorable points of view will help enhance the Basij and its standing in society."[1026]

Alongside its economic profile, the role and power of the IRGC as a politico-military organization also expanded with the regime's heightened concerns over its external and internal security. As Ehteshami and Zweiri concur, US military threats against Iran, nuclear confrontation with the West and invasion of Iraq were decisive in the rise of the

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[1023] Bahman Nomani and Sohrab Behdad, *Class and Labor in Iran*, p. 211. Mohsen Sazegara, one of the founders of the IRGC and now a dissident of the regime claimed that what was once a revolutionary organization has turned into a mafia" which was a testament to growing disillusionment of the veterans with what they perceived as materialism of the Guards. The quotations are retrieved from Mehdi Khalaji, "IRGC. Inc", p. 3.

[1024] Akbar Ganji, "The Latter-Day Sultan", p. 6.

[1025] See "Iran: Ahmadinejad's Tumultuous Presidency", p. 13.

[1026] Hejazi is quoted in Paul Wehrey et al, *The Rise of the Pasdaran*, p. 68.

IRGC's political profile.[1027] In the 1990s, Iran's war with Iraq was over and Iraq's power was checked by the Gulf War of 1990-1991. Then, the conservative establishment viewed the "international" more as a source of cultural threat than a source of military peril in the face of growing pace of globalization of ideas, neoliberal re-structuring and rising political demand and dynamism of the Iranian society. In the aftermath of September 11 attacks, the Iraqi and Afghanistan invasions made US a regional power following an agenda of changing the political topography of the region with the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative. By then, Iran and US have not been able to settle their disputes which, if achieved, could assure Iran of its security and the conflict was taking an essentialist appearance, approximating to what hard-liners on both sides preferred to see.

Under constant threat of military strike and regime change, Iran's efforts to improve its defensive and offensive capabilities sped up. In the 1990s, it was Washington's dual containment strategy and formidable presence in the Persian Gulf which kept the IRGC alert to US "military threat", as then deputy IRGC commander Brigadier Zolqadr said: "Today, the United States is the only enemy we take as a main threat in our strategy."[1028] Ehteshami asserts that the main responsibility for Iran's ballistic missiles and nuclear programme lay with the *pasdaran* which has arguably created economic, political and professional stakes in the pursuit of nuclear programme.[1029] Growing threats against the regime boosted Tehran's resolve to continue with its nuclear programme and made it take a more defiant posture and prepare for the worst-case scenarios through asymmetric warfare plans against the US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain.[1030] Iran has been more than glad to

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[1027] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives*, p. 82.

[1028] Daniel Byman et al., *Iran's Security Policy in the Post-Revolutionary Era*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), p. 91.

[1029] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "The Rise and Impact of Iran's Neocons", *Policy Analysis Brief*, The Stanley Foundation, April 2008.

[1030] See Mohammad Sahimi for a detailed account on the commanders and their strategic input in the IRGC's strategies and structure, online available at:

see the success of this strategy in Iraq, Afghanistan and Hezbollah's resistance against Israeli forces in the summer of 2006.[1031]

6.2.4. The Emergence of the "National-Security State"

According to Charles Tripp, unresolved conflicts both inside and among the Middle Eastern states have given rise to the notion of "national security states" within which armed security forces are key political actors either through direct military interventions or through military personnel's ascendance to positions of political command or through the role that military force plays in the strategies of the government.[1032] This particular constellation of state gains preeminence in a conjuncture that calls for either physical elimination or deterrence of threats, the ruling regime faces.[1033]

The Islamic Republic of Iran in fact can be argued to have become a national security state out of a political process shaped by international challenges and social transformation as outlined above. Scholars like Kaveh Ehsani and Ali Ansari among many others frequently mentioned Iran's transformation into a "security state" based on the regime's growing intolerance of social demands and grave suspicions of "internal threats." The issue assumed urgency for the regime particularly in the epoch of reform. This study, through reflection on Iran-US relations aims to posit security state in its

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http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2012/08/the-irgc-strategic-brain-trust-part-2-ahmadian-hejazi-and-jafari.html#ixzz23TJkOaWu (accessed on September 2, 2012).

[1031] Ibid.

[1032] See Charles Tripp, States, Elites and the "Management of Change", in Hassan Hakimian and Ziba Moshaver (eds.), *The State and Global Change: The Political Economy of Transition in the Middle East and North Africa*, (Richmond: Curzon, 2001), p. 225. He draws upon articulations of "national security state" by Korany, Brynen and Noble (1993), Sayigh (1993) and Ayubi (1995), as he analyzes the state in the Middle East with its varying meanings and structures that are state as "community, hierarchy and coercive apparatus."

[1033] Ibid.

international context as well.[1034] In our case, the rise of military did not come out through a military intervention, but it confirmed Tripp's criteria of the growing power of military in political command and its influence over strategies of the government. In the 1990s, it was mainly the domestic push for reforms that securitized politics and state-society relations. Increasing military presence of the US in the Persian Gulf since the early 1990s was unrelenting, but still the level of threat was not as harsh as it turned out to be with the intensification of "regime change" debates and American-led military interventions in the region. The epoch of confrontation was marked by a conflation of external and internal threats. The presence of Iran's greatest enemy in its neighborhood and its agenda for change in the region was decisive in transforming Iran into a national security state, preparing for the worst case scenarios either by an American and/or Israeli attack in the absence of diplomatic relations, security assurances and a common understanding. As American policy shifted to overt confrontation with Iran, which was discursively confirmed in late 2002 by Iran's depiction as a member of "axis of evil" country and followed by US National Security Strategy built on pre-emptive strike, and the invasion of Iraq, hopes for a breakthrough were dashed. By then, Iran started to view a conflict with the United States "unavoidable" which significantly bore upon structuring of state institutions to ensure internal and external security of the regime, which empowered security elite further and helped them carve up a material and normative order in line with their interests. State was transforming in the midst of confrontational relations with the international and tensions with its society. As its institutions, political economy and ideology changed, this would be reflected in its political agency vis-à-vis international events, actors and processes. The clearest implication of this change upon Iran's US policy was growing confrontation between the

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[1034] Scholars like Kaveh Ehsani and Ali Ansari frequently mentioned Iran's transformation into a "security state" which was based more on the regime's growing intolerance of social dissent and suspicion of "internal threats." named Iran as a security state by mainly focusing on state's response to what it conceived as the "internal threats" within the context they were writing. In this study, in the context of Iran-US relations, it will also posit security state in its international context. See Kaveh Ehsani, "Iran: The Populist Threat to Democracy", *Middle East Report* 241, p.2; Ali M. Ansari, "The Revolution will be mercantilized", *The National Interest*, February 11, 2010.

two states not only in bilateral issues, but a broad array of issues that concerned regional actors and geopolitics.

6.3. The State and the International in the Epoch of Confrontation: Iran-US Relations and Iran's US Policy during 2005-2009

6.3.1. Setting the context of confrontation: Geopolitics, Economy and "Look to the East" Strategy

Analysis of Iran's foreign policy in this epoch has to take changing constellation of power in this particular epoch which was to a certain extent aided by international and regional developments. Iran's decision to confront the West took place in a context formed by regional geopolitics, Iran's growing oil wealth and trust in its strategy to balance growing distance to the West with enhanced relations with the East. The following part of the chapter sets the context

6.3.1.1. Regional geopolitics after the Gulf War (2003)

Stunned by the quick and decisive victory of American forces in Baghdad, Tehran took a significant strategic step and offered a comprehensive proposal which sought to start a "grand bargain" with the US over all the contentious issues that strained bilateral relations for decades.[1035] Iran in a dialogue of "mutual respect" proposed to end its support to Hamas and Islamic Jihad and pressure them to cease their attacks on Israel; support Hezbollah's disarmament and its transformation into a purely political party; open up its nuclear programme completely to intrusive international inspections in order to alleviate fears of weaponization and offered extensive US involvement in the

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[1035] The proposal was drafted by Iran's Ambassador to France, Sadegh Kharrazi and back at home developed only by a close-circle of decision-markers which comprised Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi, President Mohammad Khatami, UN Ambassador Javad Zarif and Ayatollah Khamenei. Reportedly Iran also consulted to the Swiss Ambassasor to Tehran, Tim Guldimann who would eventually deliver it to Washington. See Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, pp. 243-244.

programme as a further guarantee and sign of goodwill; full cooperation against terrorist organizations above all al Qaeda; active cooperation with the US for stabilization and future democracy of Iraq, and its support for Beirut Declaration of the Arab League[1036] through which Iran would have officially recognized the two-state solution and regard itself at peace with Israel.[1037] In return, Iran asked members of *Mojahedeen-e Khalq* to be handed over in return for the al Qaeda operatives captured in Iran and at a more strategic level, it wanted to reach a long-term understanding with the US by demanding America to lift all US sanctions, respect Iran's legitimate interests in Iraq, support Iranian demands for war reparations, respect Iran's right to full access to nuclear, biological, and chemical technology and finally recognize Iran's legitimate security interests in the region. The proposal also offered a step-by-step negotiations scheme toward a mutually acceptable agreement.[1038]

The significance of the offer laid in its approval by Supreme Leader Khamenei who previously opposed and obstructed the Khatami administration's efforts for normalization, but apparently sanctioned the move not for normalization but for immediate relief from a possible US attack on Iran. However, the offer was rebuffed by the Bush Administration with particular rejection of the hawks who argued that United States shall exploit this moment of Iranian weakness by removing the regime soon after the Iraqi mission was accomplished.[1039] For the reformists in Tehran, the US attitude echoed Iran's ideological posture in the 1980s, as one of them argued:

[1036]The declaration, known as the Saudi peace plan was based on the offer of Arab states to make peace with Israel collectively and proposed recognition and normalization in return for Israeli agreement to withdraw from all occupied territories and accept a fully independent Palestinian state entitled to equal division of Jerusalem as well as an equitable resolution for the Palestinian refugee problem. See "Text: Beirut Declaration", *BBC News*, March 28, 2002, online available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/monitoring/media_reports/1899395.stm (accessed on January 9, 2013).

[1037] Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 244.

[1038] For details, see Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 3.

[1039] In the Bush administration, the Vice President Dick Cheney and the Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld prevailed over the Secretary of State Colin Powell and the National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice who were eager to discuss it. Cheney and Rumsfeld's blatant response was "we don't speak to evil." At the time Iran offered talks, reportedly the Pentagon under Rumsfeld's auspices was

these people in Washington don't see the world for what it is; they only see what they want to see. We suffered from the same mindset after the Revolution, but we learned very quickly the dangers of an ideological foreign policy. We paid a very high price for our initial mistakes. [1040]

According to Ali Ansari, at a time Iran turned more pragmatic toward US, the Bush Administration assumed a revolutionary mantra of changing the Middle East regimes and bringing them "democracy."[1041] This rebuff has been a significant harbinger of US motives for confronting Iran, but equally unprecedented for the US was Iran's zeal and success in confronting the United States with the help of regional and international conjuncture of political and economic developments and political establishment's embrace of confrontation not only as a geostrategic choice, but also as ideological mantra.

Much to the dismay of American neoconservatives what has unfolded in post-Saddam Iraq and Palestinian politics and Lebanon changed the strategic landscape to the detriment of American and Israeli interests. By mid-2005, US was already caught in a quagmire of rising insurgency and ethnic-sectarian strife in Iraq, whereas Tehran's allies in post-Saddam Iraq, the Shiite majority and Kurdish groups started to consolidate their control over state institutions with January 2005 elections.[1042] In 2006, there has been crucial developments in Palestinian and Lebanese politics with electoral victory of Hamas and Hezbollah's successful resistance in 34-Day War of summer 2006 against Israel, which meant empowerment of Iran's allies and ideology of resisting US

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calling for "using all available points of pressure on the Iranian regime, including backing armed Iranian dissidents and employing the services of the Mujahedeen-e Khalq." See Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 246. He quotes ABC news report of May 24, 2003.

[1040] See Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, p. 255.

[1041] Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*.

[1042] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of its NeoConservatives*, p. 101.

hegemony in the region. With favorable regional developments that were both related and unrelated to Iran's agency to shape them, in the post-2005 era, Iran has become a pre-eminent actor not only in its traditional sphere of influence in the Persian Gulf, but also in the politics of Levant.

As Ehteshami argues, in the 1990s Iran was discussed as a regional *actor*, whereas in the post 9/11 world, it has been analyzed as a regional *power*; a "pivotal state" as Maloney depicts, whose structural power in the region and enhanced agency is a force that US and regional states have to consider seriously.[1043] Feeling stronger and wind at its back, Tehran sought unconditional negotiations with the West, not just over its nuclear program, but over a wide-ranging security and economic issues.[1044] Tehran's strategy was to use its regional leverage in Iraq for a favorable resolution of the nuclear dispute and lifting off sanctions.[1045] A cornerstone of Iran's strategy was to negotiate from a position of strength, since weakness would mean greater submission to Western demands and yielding to pressure.[1046] Tehran strongly believed that US wanted to change the regime, not its behavior. Therefore, Iran's foreign policy in the nuclear issue and in regional politics alike aimed at keeping the regime safe from threats of regime change and conflated national interest with the regime interest.[1047] The politics of confrontation was built on both Iran's sense of grandeur and deep-running concerns over internal and external security pertaining to reigning over a dynamic society and being surrounded by American troops in the region.

[1043] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy in Contemporary Iran" in Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Reza Molavi (eds.), *Iran and the International System*, (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 121; Suzanne Maloney, *Iran's Long Reach: Iran as a Pivotal State*.

[1044] Kaveh Ehsani, "Iran: The Populist Threat to Democracy", *Middle East Report,* No. 241, 2006, p. 1.

[1045] Interview with Prof. Dr. Hamid Ahmadi, October 2010, Tehran.

[1046] Kaveh Ehsani, "Iran: The Populist Threat to Democracy", p.2.

[1047] This remark has been emphasized as an answer to the objectives of Iran's foreign policy throughout the interviews with Prof. Saideh Lotfian, Prof. Dr. Hamid Ahmadi and Dr. Kayhan Barzegar in Tehran, October 2010.

6.3.1.2. Oil as Soft Power and Hard Shield against Sanctions

Without doubt, Iran's resolve for confronting the West could not have materialized to this extent, unless it enjoyed remarkable oil windfalls since 2003 until the 2008 global financial crisis.[1048] According to data provided by Iran Central Bank, Iran's oil export revenues have increased from $36 billion in the 2004–5 fiscal year to $81 billion in the 2007–8 fiscal year, providing Iran a total of $197 billion from oil sales from April 2005 to March 2008.[1049] In 2006, Tehran was aware of its strong position with high demand for oil in the tight market due to rising consumption in Asia, decline of Iraqi production because of insurgency, unrest in Nigeria and labor strife in Venezuela disrupting the supplies.[1050] Europe then feared a further increase in oil prices which would see almost $ 150 per barrel in 2008, whereas Russia and China did not wish to jeopardize billions dollar investment in gas, oil and nuclear sectors which gave Ahmadinejad administration a free hand in confrontational policies with little concern for its consequences.[1051] Iran's oil wealth was a source of relief against sanctions as well as a source for projection of its soft power in its neighborhood and even beyond as will be articulated in the forthcoming parts of the chapter.

[1048] See Roger Howard, *Iran Oil: The New Middle East Challenge to America*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007). Howard draws on the growing political power of states endowed with strategic energy resources because of increasing world dependence on oil, brought by China's and to a lesser extent India's global rise. Iran has been among those states that have benefited from rising political power and openly defy the West like Venezuela under late Hugo Chavez did.

[1049] The figures are quoted from Abbas Maleki, "Oil Economies and Social Welfare: Iran", Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale, March 2009, p. 24, online available at: http://www.caspianstudies.com/article/maleki/Iran%20Oil%20Economies%20and%20Social%20Welfare %20CeSPI.pdf (accessed on October 12, 2012).

[1050] Christopher Dickey, "The Oil Shield", *Foreign Policy*, April 25, 2006.

[1051] Ibid.

6.3.1.3. Looking Eastward, Confronting the West

Moreover, shifts in global economy and henceforth global politics with the rise of China also created a favorable context for Iran's international affairs and economic development, at a time it was caught in a growing confrontation with the West. China's skyrocketing demand for oil imports to sustain economic growth prompted Chinese capital to seek access to Iran's rich oil and gas resources which have been isolated from Western investment because of US sanctions.[1052] The importance of the "East" as a substitute for Iran's trade and energy relations with the West started to rise in the face of sanctions during the epoch of confrontation.[1053] Iran's growing relations with the "big powers of the Eastern Hemisphere" through its "Look to the East" policy (*siyasat-e negah be shargh*) became one of the hallmarks of Iran's foreign policy during Ahmadinejad administration. The policy rested on Iran's economic, strategic and military expectations from Russia and China. While relations with Russia had a more strategic and military dimension, with Russia being Iran's major supplier of weapons and nuclear technology, Iran's blooming relations with China had a stronger economic basis mainly because of China's growing dependence on oil.[1054] Strategically, Tehran expected both Russia and China's diplomatic support against sanctions; particularly the hard-liners strongly believed that Russia and China would stand by Iran and prevent sanctions. Beneath the surface, Iran's relations with these powers also fitted its long-standing quest to confront American hegemony and celebrate the emergence of new powers.[1055] But as far as the sanctions are concerned, Tehran arguably could not find

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[1052] John M. Garver, "Is China Playing a Dual Game in Iran?", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol 34, No.1, (Winter 2011), p. 77.

[1053] See Nasser Saghafi-Ameri and Afsaneh Ahadi, *Iran va Siyasat-e Negah be Shargh (Iran and Look to the East Policy)*, (Tehran: Pejuhashkade-ye Tahghihat-e Estratejiki, 2008); Sanam Vakil, "Iran: Balancing East against West", *The Washington Quarterly*, Volume 29, Number 4, (Autumn 2006), pp. 51-65.

[1054] See Manochehr Dorraj and Carrie L. Currier, "Lubricated With Oil: Iran-China Relations in a Changing World", *Middle East Policy Council*, Vol. 15, No. 2, (Summer 2008), pp. 66-80.

[1055] Flynt Leverett and Pierre Noel, "The New Axis of Oil," *The National Interest*, No. 84 (Summer 2006), pp. 63-71.

what it has expected from Russia and China, as both states approved sanctions, albeit after much politicking with the West to water down their adverse impacts, and remained on board in each sanctions act without using veto power.

In case of China, Garver argues that China was vigilant to ensure that the sanctions were narrow and did not obstruct its investment in oil and gas sectors of Iran.[1056] Obviously, China's growing appetite for energy has been the most essential element of Iran-China relations and the fact that Iran's extraction rate was low but could thrive with proper amount of investment and technology has been the major motive of China's growing investment in Iran.[1057] As US blocked any American or Western investment on Iran's oil infrastructure, it was Chinese firms which reaped the benefits of Iran's oil market. Beside China has also built Tehran's subway system, dams, and fisheries, cement factories and recently became a major provider of consumer goods to Iran.[1058]

The following parts of the chapter will examine Iran-US relations and Iran's US policy by placing it in historical context of domestic, regional and international change. After identifying the actors and their disposition to international system and the United States, it will examine the major turning points and axes of confrontation through analyses of the nuclear crisis, Iran's growing outreach in the Levant and confrontation with Israel, its increasing might in the Persian Gulf to see in what ways Iran's agency has shaped its environment and in what ways international context (actors and processes) have shaped state and state-society affairs through their dynamic and co-constitutive interaction.

[1056] John M. Garver, "Is China Playing a Dual Game in Iran?", p. 82.

[1057] See Manochehr Dorraj and Carrie L. Currier, "Lubricated With Oil: Iran-China Relations in a Changing World", p. 71.

[1058]Ibid., p. 70.

6.3.2. The Agents of Iran's Foreign Policy in the Epoch of Confrontation

As argued throughout this study, it is always the agents of the state that act on behalf of the state and constitute its political agency, namely its foreign policy. The structural changes that were taking place throughout the 1990s resulted in new constellation of power, institutions and personalities, a specific order now preserved under the ruling coalition of clergy and the revolutionary guards. The consolidation of their power against reformist and pragmatist contenders from the modern right and reformists meant increased agency for the emerging power bloc in politics of Iran's foreign policy. As stated earlier, Iran's foreign policy has always been a site of factional struggles and most of the time it operated on the basis of consensus; no matter how difficult it proved to reach it, given the competition of different power centers pulling foreign policy on different directions. Foreign policy had to balance the objective of keeping the system intact, while making necessary adjustments to a changing world and region. Constitutionally, the ultimate decision belonged to the Supreme Leader, but the process and politicking up until the stage of decision equally mattered. The composition of the elite determined who would make its voice heard and involve in convincing the leader to sanction a particular policy. However, in this regard, the epoch also witnessed to remarkable agency of President Ahmadinejad which would also put him in an intense power struggle with the Supreme Leader and conservative establishment in enforcing his own control over policy. The following parts of the chapter will first introduce briefly the agency of the Supreme Leader and conservative establishment, then agency of Ahmadinejad in Iran's foreign policy toward the US. A broader analysis of these agencies will be provided in the section dealing with the major fault-lines and arenas of confrontation in Iran-US relations.

6.3.2.1. Agency of the Supreme Leader and the Conservative Establishment in the New Epoch

With the sidelining of reformist and pragmatist forces from parliamentary and presidential centers of power, Supreme Leader Khamenei was able to consolidate his position in the political system. His enormous stronghold led critics like Akbar Ganji to denounce him as a "latter-day sultan." Granted his enhanced centrality and authority in Iranian politics, it was Ayatollah Khamenei who determined Iran's policy toward US in the last instance. In the epoch of confrontation his power was much stronger than before with the effective sidelining of power centers challenging his position by defending moderation, breakthrough and détente with the US. If recalled, Khamenei and conservative establishment's opposition was the most decisive impediment to a breakthrough with the US under Khatami's presidency, which was at the time bolstered by reformist and pragmatic political forces as well as society at large. Many scholars argued that Ayatollah Khamenei's opposition to normalization with the US under the reformist government was mainly because he did not wish the reformists getting the credit for reestablishing ties with the US, as emphasized during analysis of the epoch of reform in the previous chapter. This indeed proves how the decision to have or not to have relations with the United States, has been integral to domestic power struggles and factional infighting. US and Iran could not achieve to bridge ideological opposition and historical scars, even when the geopolitical context was more amenable for a breakthrough; because on both sides the actors that are to decide remained opposed to such a change. Another major reason was Iran's pervasive mistrust of American intensions that has imbued the political culture of the ruling conservative elite.

According to Sadjadpour, Khamenei's confidantes provide different opinions as to his position regarding rapprochement with Washington.[1059] Some argue that he is ideologically opposed to any relationship between Iran and the United States, which he,

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[1059] Karim Sadjadpour, *Reading Khamenei*, p.17.

like Ayatollah Khomeini, depicts as a relationship between "wolf and a sheep." Others argue that Khamenei seeks recognition and normalization with America, but it is Washington which is ideologically opposed to Iran and seeks to go back to patron-client relationship of the Shah epoch. This vision has been particularly strong during George W. Bush's presidency, as then Khamenei declared "Cutting ties with America is among our basic policies. However, we have never said that relations will remain severed forever….Undoubtedly, the day relations with America proves beneficial for the Iranian nation, I will be the first one to approve of that."[1060] Apparently Khamenei's decision was related to American discourse and policies. Accordingly, relations with America under President Bush were impossible, as US strategy was built on regime change and Iran figured out that such a mindset only relied on tactical cooperation, not a genuine, transformative relationship, which helped to justify his deep mistrust of the United States and consolidate a defiant posture against the West.[1061]

6.3.2.2. The Agency of President Ahmadinejad: A Different Leader-President Relationship?

Regarding Iran's US policy, previously Khamenei was in discord with Khatami's vision for a breakthrough. In Mahmood Ahmadinejad, Khamenei saw a president with wholehearted commitment to rejuvenation of the Islamic Republic and opposition to the United States and Israel. Ahmadinejad believed in the possibility of a "world without America and Zionism."[1062] He reiterated the mindset and words of the revolutionary

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[1060] Ibid.

[1061] Having seen the failure of cooperation over Afghanistan to bring about strategic change, the political elite doubted whether US might only be following the "Hadley rules" named after the US Deputy National Security Advisor and which allowed for only a tactical cooperation with "rogue" states like Iran and did not foresee a real change in the strategic nature of relations, See Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 41.

[1062] Transcript of speech by Iranian President Mahmood Ahmadinejad at "World without Zionism" conference, Tehran, October 27, 2005, online available at: http://www.iranfocus.com/en/?option=com_content&task=view&id=4164 (accessed on December 21, 2012).

epoch, when he talked of "a historic battle going on between the Oppressor World and the Islamic world" with its roots going back hundreds of years. Ahmadinejad's strong religious belief in imminence of Mehdi's return and embrace of "Mahdism" informed his political vision, as he in many occasions told that the West was going through a fundamental crisis and the only way out was through Islamic teachings and Mahdism.[1063] For zealous supporters of the "Doctrine of Mahdism", it offered a strategic guideline for the "establishment of a global government", a "Mahdist government" represented by Islamic Iran which would replace the Western civilization on the threshold of decline.[1064]

Khatami and Ahmadinejad apparently became presidents in quite different geopolitical settings, which have made quest for dialogue or confrontation meaningful depending on the historical conjuncture. However, Iran's new president has been quite the opposite of former president Khatami in his mindset and perception of the West and Iran's place and role in the international system. While Khatami was a "child of enlightenment", well-versed in Western philosophy, and cognizant of Western civilization and the power of Western states, Ahmadinejad and his generation attacked the idea of the West and its civilization with a strong belief in the "eternal decline" of American hegemony in the Middle East.[1065] The discourse on dialogue among civilizations was laid to rest, as Tehran's new language tilted to clash between the oppressed and oppressor. While the West doubted Iran's belligerent intensions, a deep sense of mistrust underpinned the international vision of Iran's new generation leaders, a vision that was crystallized by the atrocities of the Iran-Iraq war, for which they mainly blamed the West. Their sense of grievance and injustice was now coupled by an equally strong search for regional

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[1063] Mehdi Khalaji, "Apocalyptic Politics: On the Rationality of Iranian Policy", *Policy Focus* 79, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2008, p. 23.

[1064] Khalaji mentions an international conference convened to discuss the "Doctrine of Mehdism" by the Bright Future Institute which was established in Qom in 2004 with the ideological and financial help from the Academy of Islamic Sciences and the government. Ibid. pp. 22-23.

[1065] Interview with Prof. Ali M. Ansari, St. Andrews University, UK, December 8, 2011.

preeminence with the help of favorable developments for Tehran's regional outreach.[1066] They did not approve reformist and pragmatist orientation aiming at Iran's integration and normalization with the international system, for they viewed these attempts as betrayal of revolutionary roots and contamination of revolutionary values.[1067] Instead, they praised defiance and readiness to confront the West. Opposition and resistance against the United States and Israel have long been the ideological pillars of the revolution and crystallized into state's foreign policy and under their government Iran's foreign policy would return to the right track and challenge the "enemy" once again.

Even though Ahmadinejad's political powers were limited in the face of Khamenei's supreme authority, his agency was undeniable in Iran's foreign policy especially in the nuclear agenda. Confrontation and defiance soon came to be associated with him, as his radical rhetoric hit the headlines and sent shockwaves to the West. Apparently his words did not sound like Khatami's diplomatic language and emphasis on dialogue. Iran's discourse under Ahmadinejad's presidency remarkably radicalized and earned him an image of a politician who "thrives in crisis" and complicates Iran's international standing.[1068] In this respect, many scholars of Iran, likewise his domestic and international critics argued that Ahmadinejad's basic input to foreign policy was creating crises or intensifying them. This has been especially true for his fierce rhetoric on Israel which risked sparking a military confrontation by flaming concerns over Iran's nuclear programme. On the other hand, Ahmadinejad's populism transcended Iran's borders as his bravado and resistance against imperialist powers made him a quite popular figure within the region and even across the oceans, when Iran reached out to Latin America to cultivate anti-imperialist brotherhood with the leftist governments of Cuba, Venezuela

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[1066] See Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution*, Ali Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*, Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives*.

[1067] See Ali M. Ansari, "Iran under Ahmadinejad: populism and its malcontents", *International Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 4, 2008, pp. 683-700.

[1068] See Christopher De Bellaigue, *The Struggle for Iran*, p. 227; Jahangir Amuzegar, "The Ahmadinejad Era: Preparing for the Apocalypse",

and Bolivia. As will be explored below in detail, Ahmadinejad's agency in Iran's foreign policy evolved around crisis, populism that replicates his domestic discourse and zeal to become a spokesperson of the "Global South."[1069]

Practically, the epoch has witnessed further intermingling of foreign and security policy which have never been detached since the inception of the Islamic Republic.[1070] In this epoch, securing the regime has become the utmost goal of Iran's agency which even overshadowed previous goals of development and re-integration. It is not that Iran left behind its goal of development; but geopolitical context, growing militarization and securitization of domestic politics empowered the security rationale. Defense Minister Vahedi talked of "defense diplomacy" which he named as a new approach entailing "defense initiatives in the field of diplomacy." His remarks revealed the military rationale of Iran's international thinking and growing influence of the IRGC and Defense Ministry in diplomacy, when he argued "success at national, regional and international levels depends on military power. The ministry is now present in disarmament conventions; [it] developed relations with Latin American and East Asian states and played an important role in export market of Iran."[1071] Increasing securitization of foreign policy in concord with state's transformation has intensified the role of the IRGC in Iran's diplomacy in the "field" together with their search for enhanced ideological and economic ties, which will be explored through different cases which constitute the contours of Iran-US interaction during the epoch of confrontation. The chapter will now turn to the fault-lines of Iran-US confrontation which entail the region and in a sense makes relations multiscalar and multilateral rather than a bilateral issue.

[1069] See Pepe Escobar, "The myth of 'isolated' Iran," *Al Jazeera*, January 23, 2012.

[1070] Daniel Byman et al., *Security Policy of Iran in Post-Revolution Era*.

[1071] "Interview: Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi on Iran's Defense Diplomacy", *Discourse: An Iranian Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 3-4, Fall 2010-Winter 2011, p. 5.

6.3.3. The Fault-lines and Arenas of Iran-US Confrontation

6.3.3.1. Nuclear Crisis: Defiance and Diplomacy

During the epoch of confrontation, the major fault line of Iran-US relations has been Iran's nuclear programme. The nuclear stand-off became the Gordian Knot of Iran-US relations, fortifying the "walls of mistrust" and preventing sound and sustainable cooperation in issues of mutual concern in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many analysts and politicians both within and out of Iran agree that it is mutual distrust and doubts over intensions which lie at the heart of the crisis.[1072] United States accuses Iran of seeking nuclear weapons, a charge that Iran vehemently denies. Iran's indigenous efforts to enrich uranium has been a bitter concern for the West, Israel and other regional powers fearful of Iran's rising military power and ideological outreach especially until the post-election turmoil and the "Arab Spring". United States is concerned with the possibility of regional proliferation triggered by Iran's attempts as much as scenarios that nuclear technology and/or weapons could easily reach to the hands of terrorist networks.[1073] A nuclear-armed Iran in one of the most strategic and volatile parts of the world, with a regime vehemently opposed to US and Israel, risks changing the political calculus radically. Besides, analysts also underline that Iran's weaponization would be a major diplomatic defeat for the US raising doubts over its power and capability to shape events in the Middle East.[1074] It is equally important to understand the symbolic and strategic meaning of the nuclear programme for Iran through its international and domestic dimensions.

[1072] Interview with Dr. Mahmood Vaezi, Deputy of Foreign Policy and International Relations, Center for Strategic Research, Tehran, October 26, 2010. See also Ali M. Ansari, *Confronting Iran*, Christopher De Bellaigue, *The Struggle for Iran*, p. 187.

[1073] See James M. Lindsay and Ray Takeyh, "After Iran gets the bomb: Containment and its complications", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.89, No.2, (March/April 2010), p. 34.

[1074] Ibid.

6.3.3.1.1. The Meaning of the Nuclear Programme for Iran

The motivation and possible outcomes of Iran's nuclear programme has been widely debated. Iran's latest crisis with the West relates both to its sense of insecurity brought by increasing encroachment and regime change policy of the US in the early 2000s, as much as it pertains to Iran's quest for power and prestige in the region.[1075] Moreover, Iran feels threatened by the growing nuclear proliferation in its neighborhood notably Pakistan and India.[1076] The Islamic Republic has allegedly started rebuilding its nuclear programme in the late 1980s which gained pace and advanced in the 1990s.[1077] However, after its discovery in 2002, the symbolic and strategic meaning of Tehran's nuclear programme grew up, as the regional context was rapidly shifting with the US interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Iran's nuclear discourse and policy was fraught with elements of symbolism. Ayatollah Khamenei argued that the nuclear programme symbolized the core themes of the revolution that are struggle for independence and the injustice of foreign powers; the necessity of self-sufficiency and Islam's highest esteem for sciences.[1078] International pressure and sanctions served to intensify Tehran's sense of victimization, desire for self-sufficiency against all odds trying to "leave Iran backward." Particularly the issue of enrichment has become highly central to confrontation. Against strong pressure to stop uranium enrichment, Iran declared enrichment as its "inalienable" right under Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and

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[1075] See Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*; Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*; Volker Perthes, "Ambition and Fear: Iran's Foreign Policy and Nuclear Programme", *Survival*, Vol. 52, No. 3, (June-July 2010), pp. 95-114.

[1076] See Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*.

[1077] Iran's nuclear programme dated back to the Pahlavi monarchy. Iran and the US negotiated Tehran's nuclear programme in the late 1950s in the context of President Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace programme and in the 1970s, US and the Shah agreed on the completion of twenty-three nuclear power plants for the next two decades. Iran's first nuclear facility, the Tehran Research Reactor was built by the US in 1963. After the revolution, the new regime halted Iran's nuclear research alongside other military projects of the Shah. For the history of Iran's nuclear programme, see David Albright and Andrea Stricker, "Iran's Nuclear Programme", *The Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, online available at: http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/irans-nuclear-program (accessed on August 12, 2012).

[1078] Karim Sadjadpour, *Reading Khamenei*, p. 17.

claimed that Western pressure and doubts, in the face of its cooperation with the IAEA was a testimony of the "double standards" of the West. Tehran viewed US opposition to enrichment as "the most radical form of modern hegemony, aimed at preventing Tehran from transforming into both a major power and regional power."[1079] It put the blame on the West, as Ali Akbar Salehi, then the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and currently Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic told:

> if we have not encountered with threats and political pressures of our enemies at the international arena, we would not persist on the production of fuel of our potential nuclear power plants….We feel that we cannot count on internationally guaranteed provision of nuclear fuel.[1080]

Iran's nuclear programme was also of immense prestige and symbolic importance, as officials occasionally expressed their pride of "being the only Islamic country which simultaneously possesses uranium conversion technology, uranium exploration and extraction knowledge."[1081]

Iran's nuclear quest, however, had significant strategic underpinnings. Although the motivation of the programme in official discourse usually stressed "existence of vast uranium deposits, scientific capability, indigenous skilled manpower and need for alternative energy resources"[1082], Chubin argues that regional and international experience of Iraq (invaded with the pretext of possessing WMD, but having dismantled them in reality) and North Korea (the US chose to pursue talks in the face of its efforts for weaponization) informed Iran of the strategic deterrence that nuclear weapons would

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[1079] "Iran's Nuclear Program: Challenges and Solutions" Roundtable with Dr Ali Larijani", *Discourse: An Iranian Quarterly*, Vol. 7. No. 2-3, pp. 3-4.

[1080] "Interview with Dr. Ali Akbar Salehi", *Discourse: An Iranian Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 1-2, Fall 2009-Winter 2010, p.13.

[1081] Ibid., p. 23.

[1082] "Iran's Nuclear Program: Challenges and Solutions"-Roundtable with Dr Ali Larijani", p. 9.

provide.[1083] Against strong allegations of the military nature of Iran's nuclear program, veteran scholars of Iranian politics argue that what Iran has been looking for in its costly commitment to nuclear technology is the "Japanese option", which offers a model of full civilian capability easily convertible to weapons, namely the "breakout" capability rather than the nuclear bomb.[1084] The fact that completing nuclear fuel cycle is essential for both holding the "option" and possessing the weapon complicated nuclear diplomacy further.[1085] That said, it remains a political decision for Tehran to switch from holding the capability of making a bomb into assembling the bomb and it is feared that regime's perception of insecurity or a possible military attack on Iran's nuclear facilities may lead Tehran to do so.

International crisis historically constituted an integral part of the post-revolutionary state's attempts to mobilize society, when everything else in the state of economy, freedom and liberties were hardly promising for the people. Seemingly, Iran's latest and protracted crisis over its nuclear programme served as a means to boost the legitimacy of the regime and restore credence in "revolution" and the political system defending it.[1086] The epoch of confrontation witnessed re-enactment of Iran's past revolutionary personalities and struggles as the political elite was revisiting Mohammad Mosaddeq's struggle for oil nationalization to portray the current nuclear standoff in the same mold by relying on what Ansari dubs the strong nationalist mythology of "resisting the foreign oppressor."[1087] By doing so, the neoconservatives have sought to defend Iran's national

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[1083] Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*, p. 20.

[1084] Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*, p. 59; Ervand Abrahamian, "The Mullahs Face Off: Washington versus Tehran" in David Barsamian et al. *Targeting Iran*, (New York: City Light Books, 2007), pp. 69-124.

[1085] Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*, p. 59.

[1086] See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*. Ansari aptly elaborates on Ahmadinejad's use of the nuclear crisis as a domestic hegemony building project to engrain himself within the political system.

[1087] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*, p. 45; Barbara Slavin, *Bitter Friends, Bossom Enemies*, p. 215.

interests, pride and dignity vis-à-vis the "malicious outside powers" and link different social classes to the state ideology. Amuzegar argues that Ahmadinejad with his strong emphasis on defending Iran's "inalienable" right was "appealing to rank and file's injured sense of nationalism and historic pride"[1088], as much as using it as a propitious ground to rally the support of modern middle class, who otherwise had no appetite for Ahmadinejad's worldview or policies.[1089] Zibakalam notes that many Iranians supported the regime in its defense of Iran's nuclear rights and believed that US rejection of nuclear enrichment was a Western conspiracy aimed at "keeping Iran backward and dependent on the West."[1090]

6.3.3.1.2. The Nuclear Stand-off: Crisis and Domestic Politics after 2005

Iran's nuclear programme and the fate of negotiations with EU-3 were at the crossroads in mid-2005; as Iran then decided to resume uranium conversion in defiance of the Paris Agreement of 2004.[1091] Iran's diplomatic negotiations with Europe from 2003 until 2005 failed to fulfill Iran's expectations in return for its "temporary and voluntary" suspension of enrichment activities.[1092] Eventually Tehran decided that E3 would not be able to offer strong incentives, so long as US remained suspicious of diplomacy.[1093] Observers

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[1088] Jahangir Amuzegar, "The Ahmadinejad Era: Preparing for the Apocalypse", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 2, Spring/Summer 2007, p. 47.

[1089] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*, p. 45, Sadegh Zibakalam, "Iranian Nationalism and the Nuclear Issue", *Bitterlemons-International*, January 5, 2006, online available at: http://www.bitterlemons-international.org/inside.php?id=465 (accessed on January 5, 2012).

[1090] Sadegh Zibakalam, "Iranian Nationalism and the Nuclear Issue".

[1091] In 2005, Iran rejected the European offer which called for a ten-year suspension of investment efforts in return for promises of an external source of fuel and improved economic and diplomatic ties with European states, for it deemed these offers vague and not persuasive enough for a critical trade-off. See Barbara Slavin, *Bitter Friends, Bosom Enemies*, p. 215.

[1092] See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*, p. 55 and also Shahriar Sabet-Saeidi, "Iranian-European Relations: A Strategic Partnership?" in Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri (eds.), *Iran's Foreign Policy From Khatami to Ahmadinejad*, (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2008), p. 68.

[1093] Inside Iran, the hard-line newspapers like *Jumhuri-ye Islami*, known for their proximity to Khamenei started to claim that it was time for Iran to withdraw from talks with the EU. An editorial on May 10, 2005

of American foreign policy under President Bush underline that the belated participation of US for diplomatic efforts was rather to mend the fences with Europe and give the impression that US this time was trying diplomacy. Iran in 2005 and 2006 rebuffed US offer for nuclear talks for United States set suspension of uranium enrichment as a precondition for not so charming carrots for Iran such as the lifting of American opposition to Iran's application to the WTO membership and allowing Tehran to buy spare parts for its aging fleet.[1094] Ayatollah Khamenei, then declared that "negotiating with America does not have any benefit for us and we do not need such negotiations."[1095]

In January 2006, centrifuges in Natanz started to work, ending more than two years of suspension and this decision was a defiant move that prompted European states to join American efforts to persuade the IAEA board for sending Iran's dossier to the Security Council. The following month, upon the resolution of the IAEA board declaring "Iran's many failures and breaches of its obligations" and the "absence of confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme", Iran announced that it would resume uranium enrichment, halt the application of the Additional Protocol and hence disallow the IAEA

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even called for abrogation of Iran's agreements with the EU arguing that US position vis-à-vis Iran was not different from its decision regarding Iraq and Afghanistan. It added that resuming enrichment and full nuclear cycle does not contradict NPT and shall be started immediately at this "critical juncture of Iran's history." See Babak Ganji, "Civil-Military Relations, State Strategies and Presidential Elections in Iran", Conflict Studies Research Centre, 05/26, June 2005, p. 18. Meanwhile both the IAEA and EU officials constantly argued for the necessity of US involvement and engagement in negotiations, if the talks were to succeed in defusing tension and resolving the conflict. See Elaine Sciolino, "United States and Europe Differ Over Strategy on Iran", *The New York Times*, January 29, 2005; Barbara Slavin, *Bitter Friends, Bossom Enemies*, pp. 212-213.

[1094] The then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice asserted that US offer in 2005 was a move to mend fences with European allies after Iraq, not a move to reward or reach out Iran. She argued that even a complete halt to Iran's nuclear and missile programs would not translate into American support for a policy of engagement and incentives by pointing out the presence of other controversial issues in Iran-US relations such as Iran's support for Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad. See Barbara Slavin, *Bitter Friends, Bossom Enemies*, p. 214.

[1095] Khamenei is quoted in Robert Lowe and Claire Spencer (ed.), "Iran, Its Neighbors, and The Regional Crises", Chatham House, A Middle East Programme Report, 2006, p. 16.

inspections without notice in-advance.[1096] A few months later, Ahmadinejad declared that Iran, having successfully enriched uranium, "joined the world's nuclear club" and thence it would "talk to world in a different language", a statement which confused the world about the extent of Iran's nuclear progress and fueled tensions.[1097]

With the referral of its nuclear file to UN Security Council, Iran has come under several rounds of sanctions since 2006. The first round of UN sanctions, UNSCR 1737 was accepted in December 2006 and imposed a ban import and export of sensitive nuclear material and equipment, and a freeze on financial assets of persons and entities supporting sensitive nuclear activities or the development of nuclear weapon delivery systems, which unsurprisingly targeted the IRGC officials in charge of Iran's nuclear programme.[1098]

But Iran's hard-liners proved to be staunch advocates of nuclear fuel cycle at all costs and with brinksmanship they departed from Iran's previous diplomacy of negotiations with Europe in order to build confidence and evade Iran's referral to the Security Council and possible sanctions that would follow.[1099] Iran's nuclear strategy paralleled change in domestic constellation of political forces. The take-over of parliament by the neo-conservatives in February 2004 elections produced the first tilt, as the Majles declined to approve the Additional Protocol, which would give the IAEA the right to broader and intrusive inspections with short-term notice. On 15 May 2005, the Majles passed a bill obliging the government to continue the enrichment programme with a majority of the deputie, which was deemed to exert pressure on the E3 by demonstrating the political climate as well as enabling Tehran to use enrichment-related activities as a

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[1096] International Crisis Group, "Is There a Way out of the Nuclear Impasse?", February 23, 2006, p. 6.

[1097] See "Ahmadinejad: Iran will now talk to world in different language", *IRNA*, April 12, 2006.

[1098] UN Security Council Resolution 1737 is online available at: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sc8928.doc.htm

[1099] Shahram Chubin, *Iran's Nuclear Ambitions*, p. 34; International Crisis Group, "Is There a Way out of the Nuclear Impasse?", p. 6.

bargaining chip in negotiations.[1100] Another significant change in Iran's nuclear diplomacy came with the removal of Iran's nuclear team by Mahmood Ahmadinejad complementing widespread purges in bureaucracy. This move replaced Iran's nuclear chief Hasan Rowhani, a veteran pragmatist and his clique who aimed both to advance Iran's nuclear programme and avoid referral to the Security Council. As the reformist-pragmatist forces lost their earlier influence in the political system with rising power of the principle-ists, their input and influence in foreign policy significantly waned. Iran's nuclear diplomacy got entangled with domestic politics, when Ahmadinejad blamed Iran's nuclear negotiators for being "weak, defeatist and insufficiently revolutionary" in the face of Western demands.[1101] Much to the dismay of warnings by veteran figures like Rafsanjani to save foreign policy from factional struggles, foreign policy under Ahmadinejad was a blatant extension of domestic politics. Iran's international agenda and foreign policy served as a tool to discredit pragmatic and reformist forces in the domestic battlefield for gaining control of the polity. Previous diplomatic efforts were portrayed as acting "soft on Satan" and the new approach reversed former presidents' attempts to transform enmity and save the future of relations from hardline rhetoric and ideologization.[1102] As the nuclear diplomacy turned into a litmus test for allegiance to revolution, Ahmadinejad was adamant to seize the nuclear dispute with the West as a venue to portray himself as a true revolutionary, and his method against unjust demands of the West was resistance and confrontation through the language of might and militarism which he believed would eventually bring Iran victory.[1103]

[1100] See Babak Ganji, "Civil-Military Relations, State Strategies and Presidential Elections in Iran", pp. 19-21.

[1101] David E. Thaler et al., *Mullahs, Guards and Bonyads*, p. 77. Iran's rising hard-liners accused top officials of the former administration with treason. Kasra Naji reports that especially the take-over of the office of SNSC was rather wild with safes broken, computer hard-drivers confiscated and telephones taped. The speaker of the Council, a veteran diplomat close to Rafsanjani, Hossein Mossavian was arrested and accused of spying. See Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, p. 227.

[1102] As Kurzman wrote in the late 1990s, accusation of acting "soft on Satan" proved a setback for Iranian politicians aimed to reach at an understanding with the US. This has been a recurrent theme and integral part of neoconservative offenses against the reformists. See Charles Kurzman, "Soft on Satan: Challenges for Iran-US Relations", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 11, No.1, (June 1998), pp. 63-72.

[1103] Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*, p. 46.

Indeed, Iran's right to nuclear research was out of question, yet the political elite were divided over how to handle nuclear diplomacy and at what cost.[1104] The neoconservatives considered nuclear programme as an indispensible part of Iran's regional power that must be pursued against all odds, whereas the reformist and pragmatic political elite viewed nuclear programme as a deterrent that shall not jeopardize Iran's relations with the world.[1105] That said, neoconservatives did not have a monolithic position either. A pragmatic versus hard-line division was perceptible among the new right, between those who tended to see the issue more in strategic terms and those who adhered to strict ideology and opposition as a proof their revolutionary credentials at a time they perceived a terminal decline of the West. Accordingly, more pragmatic members of the new right deemed it essential for Iran to build a more rational relationship with the US.[1106] Among them, Ali Larijani, the nuclear chief who replaced Hassan Rowhani in 2005 and resigned in 2007 because of a political fight with Ahmadinejad argued that "working with enemies is a part of the world politics….normalizing relations is itself beneficial."[1107] In this regard, it would be convenient to make a distinction between Iranian political elite that viewed confrontation as a means and those advocating confrontation as an end itself. Larijani and like-minded neo-conservatives were more prone to view Iran-US relations in "strategic" terms than a purely ideological perspective. The difficulty of making clear-

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[1104] Ibid., p. 49. In the face of Western demands asking Iran to give up uranium enrichment, even the diaspora and politicians of the Shah regime supported Iran's decision to adhere to the principle of peaceful research under NPT. Ardeshir Zahedi, the Shah's Foreign Minister was one of those who argued that nuclear energy is Iran's right.

[1105] Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of Ayatollahs*, p. 247. At the height of tensions in 2006, the reformist called for a suspension of enrichment and pursuit of negotiations with Europe. See Golnaz Esfandiari, "Iran: Reformist Party Calls For Talks With Washington, Freeze On Nuclear Activity", RFE/RL, March 21, 2006, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/06/mar/1184.html (accessed on September 4, 2012).

[1106] Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad,* p. 241.

[1107] See Walter Posch, "Only personal? The Larijani Crisis Revisited", Durham University, Center for Iranian Studies Policy Brief, No. 3, November 2007.

cut categorizations and the "fluidity" of factional politics, as Mehdi Moslem observed, indeed brings a highly complex picture for analysis.

Nevertheless, the final word belonged to Ayatollah Khamenei. Both the decision to halt the suspension and re-start enrichment and continue cooperation and diplomacy with the IAEA was his. Even though Ahmadinejad has been vocal and assertive in the nuclear dispute, Ambassador Hossein Mousavian, who served as spokesman of Iran's nuclear team from 2003 to 2005 reminds that Iran's decision to adopt a hard-line approach and halt the suspension of enrichment belonged to Ayatollah Khamenei and such a decision was already in place before Mahmood Ahmadinejad took office in August 2005.[1108] Khamenei himself previously made it clear that whoever becomes the president would not be allowed to reformulate Iranian nuclear strategy.[1109] Speaking in Kerman Province, he declared:

> The spokesmen of arrogance declare: We're waiting for the Iranian elections, then, we'll decide about the question of peaceful nuclear energy in Iran. What do Iranian elections have to do with you? The elections belong to the Iranian nation. Anyone who comes to power through these elections and becomes the people's president will neither want to nor be allowed by this nation to take a single step against the people's interests.[1110]

Though Khamenei was ideologically opposed to relations with the US and never trusted America, he was not as confrontational as Ahmadinejad and nor did he want any

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[1108] See Aslı Ü. Bali, "Iran will require assurances: An Interview with Hossein Mousavian", *Middle East Information Project*, May 16, 2012, online available at: http://www.merip.org/mero/mero051612, (accessed on May 25, 2012).

[1109] Khamenei's clarification most likely targeted Rafsanjani who conducted his campaign on the premise that once elected, he would save Iran from the current impasse and reach a deal with the West.

[1110] Khamenei is quoted in Babak Ganji, "Civil-Military Relations, State Strategies and Presidential Elections in Iran", p. 16.

military confrontation with the US or Israel.[1111] His decision to continue diplomatic talks and cooperation with the IAEA aimed to offset concerns over Iran's intensions and prevent military action by showing Tehran's cooperation with the IAEA, while Iran also continued to defy the West with its enrichment activities.[1112] To alleviate fears and lessen pressure, Ayatollah Khamenei in 2005 and later in 2010 and 2011 issued a *fatwa* declaring that "the production, stockpiling, and use of nuclear weapons are all *haram* (forbidden) under Islam and Iran shall never acquire these weapons."[1113] This has been supported by officials' remarks on the military doctrine of Iran built on conventional weapons and asymmetric warfare underlining the authority of the Supreme Leader over ultimate decision on the issue. But hard-line rhetoric, continuous enrichment and Iran's parallel advances in ballistic missile industry which made it capable of delivering long-rage missiles with nuclear warhead, may Iran decide so, fanned the flames of Iran's unresolved nuclear crisis.

Khamenei's vision and stand reflected both the ideological nature of the conflict giving him ground to strengthen his position within the regime, and the inevitable strategic dimension where he had to act as a statesman and manage nuclear politics without any harm to the regime. Once the perils of Ahmadinejad's rhetoric became clear for Iran-Western relations and Ahmadinejad's moves to entrench his clique to state institutions, Khamenei was adamant to make necessary adjustments and balance President's policies to prevent unpleasant repercussions that might lead Iran into isolation and further confrontation. In this context, he delegated some of his responsibilities for supervising policy implementation to the Expediency Council headed by Rafsanjani after the 2005 elections. By 2006, amid tensions of Iran's referral to the UN Security Council and mounting threats from America, Khamenei ordered the establishment of a new council

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[1111] Karim Sadjadpour, "Reading Khamenei", p. 17.

[1112] Mehdi Khalaji, "Apocalptic Politics", p. viii.

[1113] Khamenei's fatwa which appeared on IRNA, on August 10, 2005 is quoted by Juan Cole at http://www.juancole.com/2012/04/yes-memri-there-is-a-fatwa-from-khamenei-forbidding-nukes.html (accessed on November 5, 2012).

entitled "Strategic Council for Foreign Relations" (*Shora-ye Rahbordi-ye Ravabet-e Khareji*) made up of previous foreign ministers Ali Akbar Velayati and Kamal Kharrazi, and defense minister Ali Shamkani to advise the office of Supreme Leader on foreign policy decisions. The decision to establish this advisory body was taken after former President Khatami's meeting with Ayatollah Khamenei and applauded by reformist circles as the "continuation of the détente" and a venue to project the reformist and pragmatic vision and experience of former elites within the system.[1114] It was significant for keeping veteran figures within the consensus building circle of Khamenei's foreign policy decisions.

6.3.3.2. The Israeli Factor in Iran-US Relations in the Epoch of Confrontation

Ahmadinejad's first few months in office led to enormous uproar because of his provocative statements on Israel. Contrary to balanced and diplomatic tone of Khatami administration, President Ahmadinejad's anti-Israeli diatribe became a hallmark of his presidency and complicated Iran's already tense relations with international community over its nuclear programme. In a speech on October 2005, Ahmadinejad declared "*Israel az safha-ye roozgar mahv beshavad"* which literally meant Israel must disappear from the pages of time, however was translated as "Israel must be wiped off the map."[1115] Even if Ahmadinejad meant so, he was not the first Iranian politician to express it, given the fact that opposing Israeli regime and wishing for its eradication has been one of the intrinsic and persistent elements of post-revolutionary Iran. Ahmadinejad's radical remarks did not stop there. He blamed Europe for the Palestinian predicament and alienated it at a time Iran needed its support to balance the US[1116], and he even stepped

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[1114] See Bill Samii, "Iran: New Foreign Policy Council Could Curtail Ahmadinejad's Power", June 29, 2006, RFE/RL, online available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1069559.html (accessed on June 2, 2012).

[1115] For a detailed analysis of the speech and its mistranslation, see Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, pp. 140-141.

[1116] He told a crowd in Zahedan "if Europeans committed this crime, why should the oppressed Palestinian nation pay the price?" and suggested European states give Israel a piece of land somewhere else, in that

beyond the conventional rhetoric on Israel, when he questioned the historical validity of the Holocaust.[1117] Ahmadinejad's remarks intimidated Iran's neighbors and world at large, and stirred a crisis of Tehran's own making.[1118] United States and Israel portrayed his provocative statements as a testimony to Tehran's "malicious" intensions. Israel's ambassador to the UN, Dan Gillerman told that Ahmadinejad's remarks unmasked the "extremism, fundamentalism, and madness of the world-threatening regime" in Tehran.[1119] According to US State Department, the remarks underscored Washington's concerns that Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons.[1120] Ahmadinejad's radical statements served to draw other members of the Security Council closer to American-Israeli position over Iran's intentions with its nuclear programme. In the words of a former Mossad chief Epfrahim Halevy, President Ahmadinejad has been the "greatest gift for Israel" by helping the constitution of an international coalition against Iran.[1121]The international outrage compelled Foreign Ministry of Iran to reiterate Iran's commitments under UN Charter and assure international community that it would not use force against any country, nor threaten to do so.[1122]

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case Iran would also support it. See "Holocaust a myth, says Iranian President", *The Guardian*, December 14, 2005.

[1117] In December 2006, Tehran convened a conference on Holocaust and hosted controversial participants including the former leader of the Ku Klux Klan, David Duke. Naji succinctly asserts that the denial of the Holocaust and efforts to deconstruct the "myth" of Holocaust made Iran strange bedfellows with European Neo-Nazis and anti-Semitic Holocaust deniers, white supremacists and outright racists. Ahmadinejad's remarks besides inflaming international fury also hurt Iran's Jewish community. The leader of the community attacked him for challenging historical reality and soothing the complexes of racists with no good to neither Iran, nor Jews and the international community. See Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, pp. 157-158.

[1118] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives*, p. 119.

[1119] For remarks of Israel's ambassador to the UN, Dan Gillerman on Ahmadinejad's remarks, see Nazila Fathi, "Iran does damage control", *The New York Times*, October 29, 2005.

[1120] "Iran Says It Has No Intention To Attack Israel", *Payvand*, October 29, 2005, online available at:http://www.payvand.com/news/05/oct/1240.html

[1121] See "Ex-Mossad Chief: Ahmadinejad is Israel's greatest gift", *Haaretz*, August 21, 2008.

[1122] See "Iran Says It Has No Intention To Attack Israel".

Back at home, political elite was surprised to see such a radical backlash. Khamenei indirectly bolstered Ahmadinejad, arguing that it was not his fierce remarks that caused US enmity. According to Supreme Leader, American threat was a fundamental enmity and did not "follow expression or terms."[1123] In the end, the President served to reiterate Iran's revolutionary mantra Khamenei has arduously preached. Moreover, as Naji argues, challenging Ahmadinejad on ideological grounds became quite difficult when he was repeating the regime's historical discourse and any criticism as such would mean challenging the principles of the revolution and it would give the president political ground to blame his contenders as weak and submissive against Iran's enemies.[1124] Nevertheless, reformist and pragmatist elites criticized Ahmadinejad and his administration for "inflicting enormous costs on the country and the people" with "careless comments and slogans" which only "played to the enemies' hand to hurt the country and the system."[1125]

Israel's perception and portrayal of Iran as an "existential threat" to its survival became more persuasive in the face of Iran's hard-line discourse. However, both civilian and military officials of the Islamic Republic insisted that Tehran will strike, only if Israel strikes first. In November 2005, Khamenei asserted that "Iran will not commit aggression against any nations" to alleviate mounting concerns over "nuclear genocide."[1126] Iran kept rejecting military nature of its programme, emphasized its peaceful intent and kept diplomatic channels open with the IAEA by allowing

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[1123] Akbar Ganji, "The Latter-Day Sultan", p.8.

[1124] Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, p. 132.

[1125] Khatami's and Rowhani's comments are cited in Michael Theodoulou, "Khatami criticizes Tehran's rhetoric", *The National*, September 14, 2008, online available at: http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/khatami-criticises-tehrans-rhetoric#ixzz2FxCNDnRR (accessed on December 24, 2012).

[1126] Christopher De Bellaigue, *The Struggle for Iran*, p. 169. In the US think tanks, radical rhetoric of the Iranian politicians was widely debated. These remarks, for many in the US, either seeking for an excuse to attack Iran or genuinely concerned about possible repercussions of a nuclear Iran confirmed Iran's malign intensions for a "nuclear genocide." For an exemplar, see Elihu D. Richter and Alex Barnea, "Tehran's Genocidal Incitement against Israel", *Middle East Quarterly*, (Summer 2009), pp. 45-51.

inspections to relieve tension and ensure transparency. But so long as Iran continued to enrich uranium and breach the "red-lines" drawn by the West and Israel, accusations and deadlock persisted. Tehran's previous record of clandestine nuclear research, coupled with its unfavorable international image constructed and sustained both by its deeds, and the enmity of anti-Iran politicians, bureaucracies, lobbies, think-tanks and media proved serious obstacles to confidence-building and sound diplomacy.[1127]

Tehran, on its part, accused Western states with "nuclear apartheid" by turning a blind eye on Israel's undeclared nuclear arsenal and obstructing Iran's basic right to nuclear technology.[1128] One of the most pre-eminent themes of Iranian political lexicon, *justice*, once again found strong place in international affairs of Iran, as the Islamic Republic declared its quest for an egalitarian treatment on the nuclear issue that would recognize its "inalienable", national right to peaceful nuclear technology as an NPT signatory.[1129] Ahmadinejad's first speech at the UN in September 2005 emphasized Iran's commitment to peaceful research and nuclear energy-which would be meaningless, unless Iran did not complete the nuclear fuel cycle-together with its aspiration for a nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East.[1130]

Iran's defiance on enrichment and anti-Israeli diatribe resulted in further entanglement of Iran-US relations within the rising rift and competition between Iran and Israel. As Parsi demonstrates, Israeli lobby and Congress have been determined players in US

[1127] Trita Parsi names it as an "institutionalized enmity." See Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 5.

[1128] See Address by President Dr. Mahmood Ahmadinejad to the Sixtieth Session of the UN General Assembly, September 17, 2005, online available at: http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/60/statements/iran050917eng.pdf and "Rafsanjani: Iran's nuclear dossier a hard accessible field", *Payvand*, September 30, 2005, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/05/sep/1259.html (accessed on September 21, 2012).

[1129] Dehghani Firooz-Abadi, "The Islamic Republic of Iran and the ideal international system" in Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Reza Molavi (eds.), *Iran and the International System*, (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 43-58.

[1130] Address by President Dr. Mahmood Ahmadinejad to the Sixtieth Session of the UN General Assembly, September 2005, New York, United States of America.

domestic politics to sustain the Bush administration's hard-line approach and kept pushing for punitive measures against Iran, preferably a military attack.[1131] In 2006 the National Security Strategy of the United States declared that "We may face no greater challenge from a single country than from Iran" defined as "an ally of terror…has chosen to be an enemy of freedom, justice and peace."[1132] US, besides its efforts in the UN, continued taking unilateral steps against Iran. In February 2005, the Bush administration established the Democracy Fund and asked the Congress to allocate $ 75 million to promote democracy in Iran.[1133] Furthermore, US officials have been implicated in "covert operations" approved and controlled by the US President, which entailed planning military attacks-even considering a nuclear option against Iran-, drawing up target lists and establishing contact with anti-government ethnic minority groups concomitant to its diplomatic profile on Iran's nuclear programme.[1134]

Ahmadinejad kept dismissing the possibility of a US or Israeli attack, arguing that the threats were merely "psychological" even at the zenith of tension.[1135] His depiction remained much the same as he continued to say "Our most important war with the US is

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[1131] Trita Parsi observes that this has been a persistent pattern since Clinton Administration and intensified during Bush era and continues to the day under Obama Administration. See Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice: Obama's Diplomacy with Iran*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

[1132] The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006, p. 12 and 20, online available at: http://www.comw.org/qdr/fulltext/nss2006.pdf (accessed on December 23, 2012).

[1133] The main recipients of the fund would be twenty-five Persian-language radio and TV stations that broadcasted to Iran from Los Angeles in addition to Iranian expatriates residing in America. The Shah's son, Reza Pahlavi who advocated a referendum that would let Iranians to set up a constitutional monarchy restoring him as the Shah or a secular republic was a potential recipient of funds. De Bellaigue points out to the gulf between the perceptions of Iranians residing in the US over the imminent fall of the regime and reality on the ground. The MKO then has also urged the State Department to remove its name from terrorism list so as to qualify for the money the US would be using for empowering Iranian opposition groups. See Christopher De Bellaigue, *The Struggle for Iran*, pp. 172-173.

[1134] See Seymour Hersh, "The Iran Plans", *The New Yorker*, April 17, 2006. Hersh assesses the major strategy of the administration based on isolation and regime change and also draws on the criticisms not only within the US, but also in Europe and IAEA.

[1135] See Ali M. Ansari, *Iran under Ahmadinejad*, p. 61; Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad,* p. 210.

war of nerves."[1136] Foreign Minister Mottaki however warned that US threats were serious and should not be underestimated. Notwithstanding Ahmadinejad's calm, the tension was already building up in the Persian Gulf waters and in Iraq. Iran since 2006 has increased its war games exercises in the Gulf in retaliation of previous US maneuvers.[1137] In the absence of direct communication line, it was feared that Iran's navy and the US fleet stationed in Bahrain may be caught in a military confrontation.

6.3.3.3. Iran's Outreach in the Levant in the Epoch of Confrontation

Another fault-line in Iran-US and Iran-Israeli relations was obviously Iran's support for Hezbollah, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, which became more essential for Tehran's strategy of deterrence built on its ability to inflict pain on Israel via Hamas and Hezbollah in case it has been attacked.[1138] Besides its deterrence utility, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah were Tehran's entry points to regional matters, its non-state allies and "natural friends" for the sake of Islamic solidarity with the roots of relations traceable back to the epoch of revolution and reconstruction. In July 2006 when Israel and Hezbollah were caught in a war[1139], this was seen as an indirect war between Israel and Iran or at best as a first step toward a confrontation with Iran once after Hezbollah is

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[1136] See "Ahmadinejad meets Friday prayers leaders", *Tehran Times*, September 30, 2010.

[1137] In November 2006, Iran tested its long-rage Shahab 3 missiles with a striking rage of 2,000 km. that makes it capable of hitting Israel and other US bases in the Middle East. See Robert Tait, "Iran begins 10 days of war games", *The Guardian*, November 2, 2006, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/nov/02/iran.roberttait?INTCMP=SRCH (accessed on July 4, 2012).

[1138] The exiled leader of Hamas Khalid Meshal during his visit to Tehran confirmed this strategy and asserted that "All Islamist militant groups will form a united front with Iran against Israel if it attacks Iran," arguing that "We are all parts of the same body … We all should fight against the mutual enemy. But how, the leaders will decide, based on our capacities." See "Hamas says will unite with Iran if Israel attacks", *Reuters*, December 24, 2009.

[1139] Israel's response to Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers in exchange for Hezbollahi prisoners in Israel was an unprecedented retaliation lasting for thirty four days.

dismantled.[1140] Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice declared the war as "birth pangs" of the "New Middle East." The US allegedly did not rush for a cease-fire lest Israel had enough time to defeat Hezbollah and diminish Iran's bargaining chips in the Levant.[1141] Yet, much to the dismay of Israel and the US and even far beyond the expectation of the Iranian elite, Hezbollah's robust resistance spared Israel from a victory which has started a new epoch for Iran's regional popularity, self-confidence and political influence in the Levant.

Iran was delighted to claim a part in the victory, even though it made it clear during the war that it would never militarily interfere in it.[1142] After the war, Secretary of the Expediency Council, Mohsen Rezaei declared that "Iran is the superior power of the Middle East" and it was time for the US to change its policies toward the Islamic Republic.[1143] The 34 Day War enhanced Iran and Hezbollah's popularity in the "Arab street" elevating Ahmadinejad together with Hasan Nasrallah to the status of "heroes of the Arab street" and confirmed Iran's stronghold in the politics of Levant.[1144] Iran's power in Lebanon was already on the rise after Israeli and Syrian withdrawal from the country in 2000 and 2005.[1145] Hezbollah's successful resistance bolstered Iran's

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[1140] See Seymour Hersh, U.S. Helped Plan Israeli Attack, Cheney "Convinced" Assault on Lebanon Could Serve as Prelude to Preemptive Attack on Iran", *Democracy Now*, August 15, 2006, online available at: http://www.democracynow.org/2006/8/14/seymour_hersh_u_s_helped_plan. See the remarks of the deputy General Secretary of Hezbollah, Sheykh Naim Kassem and Iranian communities abroad in "Wake up call for Iranian Communities around the World: War waged by Israel in Lebanon is prelude to war on Iran", July 28 2006, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/06/jul/1277.html (accessed on November 4, 2012).

[1141] Elaheh Rostami-Povey, *Iran's Regional Influence*, p.120. See also Ewan MacAskill, Simon Tisdall and Patrick Wintour, "United States to Israel: you have one more week to blast Hizbullah", *The Guardian*, July 19, 2006, online available at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/jul/19/syria.usa (accessed on January 2, 2013).

[1142] See "Iran will never enter Israel-Lebanon War: general", *Mehr News Agency*, July 23, 2006.

[1143] "Iran is the superior power of the Middle East: Official", August 29, 2006, online available at http://www.payvand.com/news/06/aug/1323.html

[1144] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and The Rise of Its Neo-conservatives*, p. 101. See also Robert Lowe and Claire Spencer (ed.), "Iran, Its Neighbors, and The Regional Crises".

[1145] David Menashri, "Iran's Regional Policy Between Ideology and Pragmatism" p.161.

ideological mantra of resistance and political challenge against Israel. Meanwhile Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt were seriously discredited for denouncing Hezbollah and "betraying" the Lebanese people.[1146]

The end of the war has also granted Iran the opportunity to become a major actor in post-war reconstruction of Lebanon, which was left with ruined infrastructure. Iran provided $ 50 million aid for rebuilding of mosques, schools, hospitals, roads and bridges as well as Shiite Hosseiniehs; a move that propelled the US to press its Arab allies for more commitment to Lebanon.[1147] Iran's oil windfalls served well to reconstruct Lebanon and strengthen Hezbollah's political and economic standing as a significant player in Lebanese politics; and they had significant regional outcomes by engraining Iran in socio-economic life of its neighbors, while providing revolutionary foundations a role to play in Iran's diplomacy. Iran's involvement in Lebanese politics and infrastructure of the state constituted a multi-scalar outreach of state power with Iran firmly extending its sphere of influence into Lebanese politics and society, particularly among the Shiite community. Nevertheless, Iran's financial support for Hezbollah aroused criticism back at home, especially after the July War, as reformist politicians attacked the government for channeling money to Hezbollah and other movements which shall rather be used for development and prosperity of Iran.[1148]

Since 2005, Iran's ties with Hamas also strengthened especially after January 2006 parliamentary elections which resulted with the victory of Hamas. Tehran provided financial support and political backing for the Hamas government, as Hamas rejected the

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[1146] Vali Nasr's remarks are quoted in Elaheh Rostami-Povey, *Iran's Influence*, p. 123.

[1147] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and The Rise of Neo-conservatives*, p. 101. Iin early 2008, the head of the Iranian Headquarters for Reconstruction of Lebanon told that Iran has completed over 400 construction projects throughout Lebanon. "Iran has completed 400 projects in Lebanon since end of War", *ISNA*, February 1, 2008, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/08/feb/1009.html (accessed on August 4, 2012).

[1148] See David E. Thaler, et al. *Mullahs, Guards and Bonyads*, p. 91.

conditions of the Quartet, which included recognition of Israel, in order to be able to receive financial support.[1149] Albeit not as cordial and organic as Iran's relations with Hezbollah, Iran's relations with Hamas brought Tehran into the heart of the Arab world.[1150] Much like Hezbollah, Hamas too was a pillar of defense and deterrence for Iran in case of a military attack from Israel. Even before the electoral victory, Hamas political chief Khaled Meshal residing in Damascus stated that his group would step up attacks against Israel, if the Jewish state took military action against Iran over its nuclear programme.[1151] Iran also supported Islamic Jihad in its "resistance" against Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands.

Iran's increasing strategic and economic relations with its only ally in the region, Syria also confirmed its stronghold in the politics of Levant. Syria has been Iran's main route to Levant and Washington's efforts to isolate Syria drew it closer to Tehran. Iran recently became an economic actor in Syria as well with agreements allowing it to take part in telecommunication projects, car manufacturing, and cement industry besides its leading role in joint-efforts to develop ballistic missiles and export of arms to Syria and ideological influence via higher education.[1152] According to Sami Moubayed, the political outcome of Syria's deepening relations with Iran has been Tehran's heartening of the Assad regime "to stand up and show defiance."[1153] They both supported Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad to counter Israel and as a whole constituted the

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[1149] See Suzanne Maloney, *Iran's Long Reach*, p. 35.

[1150] Elaheh Rostemi-Povey, *Iran's Influence*.

[1151] Quoted in Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives*, p. 105.

[1152] See Michael Slackman, "A stronger Iran deepens links to Syria", *The New York Times*, June 25, 2006; Jubin Goodarzi, "Iran and Syria", *The Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, online available at: http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/iran-and-syria (accessed on January 12, 2013).

[1153] Quoted in Michael Slackman, "A stronger Iran deepens links to Syria".

"Resistance Front" against Western and Israeli encroachment which underpinned Tehran's regional strategy to counter US threats.[1154]

Iran's regional outreach with significant links to Hamas and Hezbollah which became vital political actors after surviving elections and war respectively paved the way for a covert alignment of Israel and the Arab states against Iran.[1155] In the face of Iran's rising self-confidence and popularity on the Arab Street, Egypt and Saudi Arabia were assured that Iran posed a multifaceted threat that must be curtailed.[1156] One Saudi newspaper editor even argued that "Iran has become more dangerous than Israel itself", and portrayed Iran's rising power and activism tantamount to "clash of civilizations" between Persian and Arab civilizations.[1157] According to Maloney, since 2006 United States sought to draw Arab states closer for a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by capitalizing on their misgivings of Iran.[1158] President Bush's first trip to Middle East in 2008 was an exemplar of US efforts to keep Arab states on board for American policy of containing Iran.

Iran was adamant to seize the opportunity to act on behalf of the "oppressed" people of the region and carry the banner of anti-imperialism which accompanied its rhetoric at home. Tehran's regional policy with growing reliance on Hamas and Hezbollah infuriated United States and Israel and sped up their accusations of Iran for "methodically cultivat[ing] a network of sponsored terrorist surrogates targeting America and Israel."[1159] Apart from its well-known support for Hamas and Hezbollah

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[1154] Geneive Abdo, "How Iran keeps Assad in power in Syria", *Foreign Affairs*, August 25, 2011.

[1155] See Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 16.

[1156] Suzanne Maloney, *Iran's Long Reach*, p. 33.

[1157] Ibid.

[1158] Ibid., p.47.

[1159] US Department of Defense, Unclassified Annual Report on Military Power of Iran, Executive Summary, April 2012, http://www.fas.org/man/eprint/dod-iran.pdf (accessed on December 22, 2012). The US Department of Defense made the cited statement with high confidence.

that the regime views as resistance movements, Tehran has been implicated in various plots since the 1990s some of which were not verified but continued to cast a shadow on the regime.[1160] These radical moves which did not bode well with Tehran's efforts during the epoch of reconstruction and reform for many analysts confirmed the attempts of radical elements within the regime to sabotage Tehran's moderation and growing relations with the West.[1161] In the epoch of confrontation, under the strategy of deterrence and alongside state's quest for markets and ideological influence, Tehran's relations with non-state actors expanded which evoked criticism from the reformist politicians blaming the government for "confronting the dominant rules of the game" in diplomacy and seeking to establish relations with nations rather than governments" which reminded of Iran's efforts to export the revolution.[1162]

6.3.3.4. Iran and the Gulf in the Epoch of Confrontation

The most significant aspect of Iran's regional influence pertained to the Persian Gulf, Tehran's foremost strategic environment as well as the pulse of world economy. With the removal of the hostile Saddam regime that has served as a geopolitical balancer against the Islamic Republic and the rising influence of the Shiites thereafter, Tehran felt its power and capabilities enhanced, which led to enormous concern among the Sunni monarchies as to an emergence of a "Shiite Crescent" with the formation of a Shiite-dominated Iraq. This part will shed light on the implication of regional developments in the Persian Gulf over Iran-US relations and how these relations, policy choices have shaped geopolitics and societies.

[1160] Among the incidents Iran was implicated, Khobar Tower (Saudi Arabia) bombings, explosions at the Jewish center in Buenos Aires in 1994 can be cited. Iran was charged by the German Court for planning Mykonos Restaurant assassinations in 1992 which killed the regime's prominent Kurdish dissidents residing in Europe.

[1161] See Said Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini*, p. 194.

[1162] Seyed Hasan al-Hoseyni's remarks in reformist newspaper Etemad-e Melli are quoted in David E. Thaler, et al. *Mullahs, Guards and Bonyads*, p. 87.

6.3.3.4.1. Iran-Iraq and the United States in the Epoch of Confrontation

The swift military victory of the Occupation forces did not bring about swift stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq and soon Iraq had turned into a quagmire with rising ethnic and sectarian clashes as well as Sunni and Shiite resistance against occupation.[1163] Even though it was mainly the Sunni insurgency and al Qaeda militancy[1164] which posed the greatest challenge for occupation forces, America kept blaming Iran for chaos and instability in Iraq.[1165] Iran favored a stable and preferably weak Iraq to avoid future challenges from its neighbor, but it was not discontent at all to see America bogged down which would preclude possible attack on Iran in the short term. Iran's rising fortunes in Iraq was central to Iran's diplomacy vis-à-vis America in two interrelated aspects. First of all, Iran was emboldened by its newfound influence in Iraq and US being troubled there which prompted Tehran to take a more defiant posture in nuclear stand-off. Secondly, even though Iran kept rejecting nuclear talks with the US, in 2006 upon the request of Iraq's President Jalal Talabani, who was anxious to see his country turning into a battlefield between Iranian and American interests, Tehran expressed its readiness to talk with the US over Iraq.[1166] The decision was a landmark

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[1163] Barbara Slavin notes that the Bush Administration did not have a plan for post-Saddam era as it did not ask the US intelligence community for an assessment of the likely impact of the Iraqi invasion. Accordingly such an assessment would have probably warned the administration of Iran's rise and predict the hastening of Iran and North Korea's attempts to become nuclear powers having seen the fate of Iraq which was occupied because of the lack of nuclear weapons. See Barbara Slavin, *Bitter Friends, Bosom Enemies*, pp. 210-212.

[1164] See Gordon Lubold, "New look at foreign fighters in Iraq", *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 7, 2008, online available at: http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Military/2008/0107/p02s01-usmi.html (accessed on October 12, 2012).

[1165] US officials held Iran responsible for the insurgency which claimed the lives of American soldiers and local population. The cable leaks of US diplomats identified "lethal aid to selected militant Shiite proxies, sanctuary to Iraqi figures fearful of US government" in addition to "financial support to and pressure on a cross-spectrum of Iraqi parties and officials and economic development assistance, notably to religious organizations among Iran's tools of influence in Iraq. See http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/05/wikileaks-cables-saudi-meddling-iraq?INTCMP=SRCH (accessed on December 28, 2012).

[1166] See "Iraqi President urges speedy Iran-US talks on Iraq", *IRNA*, March 30, 2006, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/06/mar/1258.html

development for Iran-US relations, for it would be the first direct talks between US and Iran in the post-revolutionary era and continued for several times to reach an understanding over Iraq. It was interesting to see, as Naji asserts that such a shift to direct talks happened under Iran's neoconservatives, while Ahmadinejad's main mantra has been opposing the West.[1167] When talks were decided, Ahmadinejad argued that "Iran was now strong enough to talk to the US as an equal partner and negotiate from a position of strength and added that "we will speak to anyone except Israel."[1168] But until the decision is taken, the idea of talks with the US over Iraq unleashed the factional strife among the neoconservatives through respective statements from different power centers simultaneously confirming and rejecting the talks.[1169] Ahmadinejad had to assure his hard-line followers that Iran would never compromise or "sell-out" in the face of opposition coming from his constituency, the basijis.[1170] Kasra Naji aptly observes the "ambivalent feelings" of Ahmadinejad vis-à-vis the United States, ambivalent in the sense that while he believed in the end of Pax Americana and rising hegemony of Iran to uproot it, he also wanted to be the man to end hostilities.[1171] With time, presumably, he

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[1167] Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, p. 205.

[1168] Ibid.

[1169] Indeed prospects of talks with US over Iraq were publicized by Iranian officials as early as 2006 when Ali Larijani, declared that Iran was "willing to negotiate with the US to resolve the conflict in Iraq and contribute to any efforts being in the interest of Iraq and its security." See "Iran ready for talks with US over Iraq", VOA, March 16, 2006, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/06/mar/1149.html and "Iran to help restore security in Iraq, says Larijani", *IRNA*, March 17, 2006. However in a perplexing twist, Ahmadinejad, one month after Larijani's statements rejected Iraq talks with US arguing that there is no longer need for talks since there is now a stable government in Baghdad. See "Iran rules out talks with US", *BBC*, April 25, 2006, online available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/4939426.stm Interestingly in 2007, Khamenei's advisor on foreign affairs, Ali Akbar Velayati, who has been known as the mouthpiece of the Supreme Leader rejected the possibility of Iran cooperating with US in Iraq and warned that Iran would actively oppose American efforts. See Velayati's remarks in Will Fulton, "A Window into the Foreign Policy of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei", p. 10.

[1170] See Farhad Davari, "Children of Khomeini Oppose Talks with US!", *Rooz*, May 17, 2007, online available at: http://www.roozonline.com/english/news3/newsitem/article/children-of-khomeini-oppose-talks-with-us.html (accessed on November 13, 2012); Kasra Naji, Ahmadinejad, p. 205.

[1171] Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, p. 192 and 205. Naji cites the remarks of Iranian officials in his private interviews.

came to understand the vitality of the issue, if he wanted to control domestic politics and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic.

Eventually on March 2007, envoys from Iran and Syria joined Baghdad talks with five permanent members of the Security Council seeking to persuade Iraq's neighbors to lend at least tacit support to the Iraqi government for stabilization of the country. Talks started shortly after US and Iran were on a collision course with the surge strategy of the United States. US was particularly after Qasem Soleimani, the head of the elite Qods Force of the IRGC, as US soldiers arrested several Iranians in Erbil.[1172] Qasem Soleimani and his network mattered, as they managed and conducted Iran's policies in Iraq in the name of the Supreme Leader, which has been put bluntly by Soleimani himself, when he informed General Petraeus that "I…control the policy for Iran with respect to Iraq, Lebanon, Gaza and Afghanistan."[1173] Farideh Farhi warns against depicting a powerful person in total charge of Iran's Iraq policy and maps out different branches responsible for policy formulation.[1174] Nevertheless, the IRGC's rising clout in foreign policy implementation is palpable as result of the geopolitical context, besides their domestic strength through control over military-commercial complex, since the first has provided the Guards with "something concrete to do" in foreign policy and extend their influence abroad.[1175] Moreover, Soleimani's mandate confirmed Khamenei's method of conducting foreign policy through personal envoys and networks outside the confines of foreign ministry and beyond the oversight of the executive to

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[1172] Tehran denied that those captured by the US were members of the IRGC, arguing that they were Iranian diplomats. See Suzanne Maloney, *Iran's Long Reach*, p. 45.

[1173] Soleimani's remarks are quoted in Will Fulton, "A Window into the Foreign Policy of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei", p. 3, online available at: http://www.aei.org/article/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/middle-east-and-north-africa/a-window-into-the-foreign-policy-of-irans-supreme-leader-ali-khamenei/

[1174] Farideh Farhi, "Who is making Tehran's Iraq Policy?", National Iranian-American Council, June 13, 2008, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/08/jun/1108.html (accessed on January 11, 2013).

[1175] See Ali Ansari, "Revolution will be mercantilized", *The National Interest*, (January-February 2010), pp. 6-7.

ensure that his word is taken and he is in full charge of foreign policy.[1176] Iran's quest to gain influence in Iraq paralleled the Guards' quest for strategic and economic returns in Iraq.[1177]

Iran's strategy in talking over Iraq aimed at moving beyond Iraq, since they hoped that this framework could be the start of harmonization of Iran-US relations and extend cooperation to other thorny issues between Iran and the United States.[1178] This linkage politics was vehemently rejected by the US not to weaken its hand in nuclear talks by Tehran's strategic advantage in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even though Iran has been implicated in the instability of Iraq via its alleged logistics and military support for the Shiite militia, politicians in Tehran posed Iran as a "stabilizing force" and demanded recognition of their power and presence in Iraq.[1179] Tehran aspired to stabilize Iraq through its influence to convince Moqtada al-Sadr for a political settlement and put an end to Shiite insurgency.[1180] Iran's contacts with diverse groups in post-Saddam Iraq helped it to accommodate Sunni elements, while subsidizing Shiite militias to stand the civil war against the Sunnis, if the political process failed to bring a Shiite-dominated regime in Iran.[1181] Iran's accent on stability also rested on the calculation that America

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[1176] Will Fulton, "A Window into the Foreign Policy of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei".

[1177] Ali M. Ansari, "Revolution will be mercantilized."

[1178] Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution*, p. 255. See also "Rafsanjani: Successful Iran talks with US could pave way for talks on other issues", *IRNA*, April 13, 2006.

[1179] The Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Ali Larijani in 2005 reiterated that Iran has been a stabilizing force in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Gulf, "balancing and even bordering status quo." See "Iran's Nuclear Program: Challenges and Solutions", Roundtable with Dr Ali Larijani, *Discourse: An Iranian Quarterly*, Vol. 7 No. 2-3, p. 5.

[1180] A US commander based in Iraqi central province Diyala was quoted in a French weekly in early 2008 that he did not witness any hostile act from Iranian side in the last 10 months. See "US commander: No hostile act from Iran observed in Iraq", *IRNA*, February 5, 2008. Iran-US talks over Iraq reportedly bore fruits for stabilization of the country as of August 29, 2007, the Mehdi Army militia declared a six-month ceasefire and on February 22, 2008, Moqtada al Sadr ordered another six-month extension of the Mehdi Army's ceasefire. Efforts over Iraq also entailed Iran's diplomacy with Saudi Arabia and the GCC aiming to pacify Sunni (mostly Salafist) forces that have been the main actors of Sunni insurgency receiving support from these Sunni regimes. Ray Takeyh, Guardians of the Revolution, pp. 254-255.

[1181] See Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution*, p. 254.

presence would prolong, so long as violence and civil strife went unabated. Therefore it was one of the genuine supporters of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) which envisaged an end to US presence in Iraq and it objected to any deal that would allow even a limited presence of US soldiers in Iraq. Meanwhile, there was also a growing recognition in the US that substantive progress in Iraq would not be possible without Iran's green light and active participation.[1182] US was aided by the fact that Tehran did not seek to cultivate a replica of the Islamic Republic in Iraq which was hard to achieve because of Grand Ayatollah Sistani's rejection to velayat-e faqih system and Iran's calculation that electoral democracy would be the most effective way to bring a Shiite-dominated political system.[1183]

Iran was looking forward enhanced economic relations with its neighbor and indeed found an economic ground to cultivate and engrain itself structurally in addition to its search for political influence, which confirmed Iran's "soft power" strategy in Iraq, similar to its attempts in Lebanon and Afghanistan.[1184] It started to build wide-ranging economic relations which included billions of dollars in agreement for future investments in the power sector, two oil pipelines from Basra to Abadan and other infrastructure projects.[1185] In time, it became clear that the balance of technological and commercial interaction mostly favored Tehran, as it entrenched itself in religious

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[1182] Joost Hiltermann, "Iraq, Iran and the United States: Problems and Prospects", *Open Democracy*, July 30, 2008, online available at: http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq-iran-gulf/iraq/op-eds/hiltermann-iraq-iran-and-the-united-states-problems-and-prospects.aspx (accessed on December 29, 2012). Ahmadinejad's visit to Iraq in 2008, the first presidential visit to Iraq after the Islamic Revolution confirmed Iran's influence. See http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jan/24/iran.iraq

[1183] See Mehran Kamrava, "Iranian Foreign and Security Policies in the Persian Gulf", in Mehran Kamrava (ed.), *International Politics of the Persian Gulf*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011), p. 201.

[1184] Ibid., p. 205; Suzanne Maloney, *Iran's Long Reach*, pp. 42-43.

[1185] Suzanne Maloney, *Iran's Long Reach*, pp. 42-43.

centers, politics and economy of Iraq through its vast economic and political infrastructure.[1186]

6.3.3.4.2. The Role of the Persian Gulf Arab Monarchies in Iran-US relations

Iran's nuclear programme, hard-line rhetoric, military build-up and rising influence in Iraq were all sources of contention for its Arab neighbors and Arab world at large. As for Iran's strategic and economic fortunes in Iraq, concerns of the Arab world surfaced when Jordan's King Abdallah II declared the rise of a "Shiite Crescent." The rise of "Shiite geopolitics" mattered both for domestic and regional reasons. Most of the Gulf monarchies have been historically alert to post-revolutionary Iran's at times subversive influence over Shiite communities in Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. On the regional landscape, it soon became clear that under the banner of Sunni-Shiite clash, Saudi Arabia and Iran embarked on a geopolitical contest through empowerment of their Sunni and Shiite allies in Iraq, Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, Yemen and at the time of the writing in the Syrian turmoil.[1187] According to Ayoob, one reason for the Arab states' raising of the prospect of the Shiite Crescent was to secure US support against the dangers it may pose to American interests in the Gulf and use the "Iranian threat" to shadow the political dissatisfaction and socio-economic grievances of the Shiite population because of the discriminatory policies of the states they reside in as well as American support for these regimes.[1188] Indeed, as many scholars argue, the idea of Shiite crescent underestimated the complexity of both Iraqi and Iranian politics and assumed them as a monolithic bloc.[1189] Besides, it was not convenient at all to claim that Tehran was

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[1186] See Babak Rahimi, "Iran's declining influence in Iraq", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No.1, (Winter 2012), p. 28.

[1187] See Anthony Cordesman, "Iranian and Saudi Competition in the Gulf", *The Iran Primer*, US Institute of Peace, April 27, 2011.

[1188] Mohammed Ayoob, "American Policy toward the Persian Gulf", in Mehran Kamrava (ed.), *International Politics of the Persian Gulf*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011), pp. 140-141.

[1189] Babak Rahimi, "Iran's declining influence in Iraq", p. 26; Mohammed Ayoob, "American Policy toward the Persian Gulf", p. 140; Suzanne Maloney, *Iran's Long Reach*, p. 48.

following a purely sectarian regional policy, given its support for "Sunni" Hamas and secular and Ba'thist Syria.[1190]

Iran's nuclear programme has intensified concerns over its much feared search of regional hegemony. According to Ehteshami and Zweiri, Iran failed to communicate fully and effectively with its Arab neighbors about the essence of its nuclear ambitions.[1191] The growing tension between Iran and the United States jeopardized prospect of security and stability of the Persian Gulf; as Iran's neighbors were mostly worried about getting entangled in a military conflict between Iran and America within which Tehran would hold the means to attack US targets in the Persian Gulf and exert direct pressure and punish the GCC states for their acquiescence.[1192] Iran's threat of closing the Strait of Hormuz, if attacked, was also a bitter concern for regional states, for it would disrupt the oil traffic in the Gulf alongside its worrisome impact on global economy. Iran meanwhile tried to assure its neighbors to preserve the ties built through the détente of previous epochs. The then-head of the Revolutionary Guards, General Yahya Rahim Safavi told that through war game exercises in the Persian Gulf waters "We want to show our deterrent and defensive power to trans-regional enemies, and we hope they will understand the message of the maneuvers." He was careful to add that Iran's response was a powerful signal to its enemies and had no intension of threatening its neighbors.[1193] Foreign Ministry of Iran has been careful to underline the "defensive" nature of Tehran's military policy which shall not be seen as a threat but rather

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[1190] See Marina Ottaway, "Iran, the United States and the Gulf: The Elusive Regional Policy", *Carnegie Papers*, No. 105, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, (November 2009), p. 9.

[1191] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran and The Rise of Its Neo-conservatives*, p. 104.

[1192] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Iran and the United States: Back from the brink", *Open Democracy*, March 16, 2007, online available at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-irandemocracy/brink_ehteshami_4444.jsp (accessed on August 4, 2012)

[1193] See Robert Tait, "Iran begins 10 days of war games", *The Guardian*, November 2, 2006, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/nov/02/iran.roberttait?INTCMP=SRCH (accessed on July 4, 2012).

"positive... for the security of the region."[1194] Nevertheless, to what extent these moves, combined with Iran's persistence in nuclear pursuit, could relieve its neighbors was highly dubious.

Despite their unease with the rising power and influence of Iran, the Gulf kingdoms did not want to antagonize Iran either; they rather wanted the United States to take a firm stand.[1195] President Bush by taking notice of Arab concerns sought to secure their support against Iran in his 2008 Middle East tour.[1196] However, the GCC countries particularly refrained from publicly opposing Iran[1197]; even though, behind closed doors, Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah was secretly asking the Bush administration to "cut off the head of the snake" as Wikileaks have shown.[1198] While the Arab world was concerned with a possible military confrontation between Iran and the US, Israel or both; they were, just like Israel, afraid of a possible rapprochement between Iran and the US, lest they might lose their strategic value for Washington.[1199]

Tehran from the earlier days of the Islamic Republic on advocated a collective security framework for the Persian Gulf which envisioned a central role for itself as natural

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[1194] Remarks by Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki, April 4, 2006, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/06/apr/1027.html (accessed on November 22, 2011).

[1195] Marina Ottaway, "Iran, the United States and the Gulf: The Elusive Regional Policy", p. 2.

[1196] "Bush Says Iran Threat Must Be Faced, 'Before It's Too Late'", *RFE/RL*, January 13, 2008, online available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1079349.html (accessed on November 24, 2012).

[1197] For an example, see King Abdullah says US policy toward Iran is non-diplomatic", *IRNA,* June 11, 2008.

[1198] The cable belonged to the king's meeting with General David Petraeus in April 2008. See Arshad Mohammed and Rose Colvin, "Saudi king urged U.S. to attack Iran: WikiLeaks", *Reuters*, November 29, 2010, online available at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/11/29/us-wikileaks-usa-idUSTRE6AP06Z20101129 (accessed on December 23, 2012).

[1199] Mehran Kamrava, "Iranian Foreign and Security Policies in the Persian Gulf", p.206; Trita Parsi, *A Single Role of the Dice*, p. 16.

hegemon of the Gulf.[1200] Kamrava notes that despite consensus over Iran's inevitable role in the region, the role of United States in Persian Gulf was a matter of contention among hard-liners and more pragmatic elite; as the former kept rejecting any legitimate role for the US in the region, whereas pragmatists and reformists have called for some degree of accommodation and modus vivendi which takes regional interests and concerns of both US and Iran into account.[1201] However, notwithstanding Tehran's aspirations, tension over the nuclear programme and Iran's regional strength resulted in growing militarization of the GCC states which reinforced their security dependence upon the United States.[1202] Meanwhile Iran's previous policy of deepening economic ties with the GCC countries continued and even gained new dimensions with Iran's increasing ties with Dubai to bypass economic sanctions.[1203]

By 2008, Iran was quite sure of its regional might. Ayatollah Khamenei in his speech declared the "defeat of the 'enemy' against the nation's spirit of self-confidence" by

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[1200] Accordingly, the "microstates" of the region shall enter into a collective security arrangement within which Iran must also take part as the natural hegemon or indispensable power in the Gulf. See Mehran Kamrava, "Iranian Foreign and Security Policies in the Persian Gulf", p. 192.

[1201] Ibid. Kayhan Barzegar offers a new paradigm in line with the latter position, when he argues that instead of following "balance of power" mechanism which is based on zero-sum mentality and compels the actors to take offensive postures, "balance of security" shall be instituted in the Persian Gulf to create win-win situations both for regional and trans-regional actors. He argues that after regional developments in Iraq, Lebanon and Afghanistan, US shall pay greater attention to the roles of "regional and rival actors" such as Iran, particularly for the benefit Iran could bring to the Gulf by playing a pivotal role especially after the withdrawal of US forces from Iraq. See Kayhan Barzegar, "The Balance of Power in the Persian Gulf: An Iranian View", *Middle East Policy*, XVII, No. 3 (Fall 2010), pp. 74-87.

[1202] According to December 15 report by Congressional Research Service analyst Richard Grimmett, Saudi Arabia was the biggest buyer of U.S. arms from January 1, 2007 until the end of 2010, with signed agreements totaling $13.8 billion, followed by the United Arab Emirates, with $10.4 billion. In 2011, American arms sales abroad has tripled and the bulk of the sales, $ 33 million worth-weapons out of $ 66.5 million were purchased by Saudi Arabia, followed by the UAE purchasing an anti-missile system. For more information, see Jim Wolf, "U.S. in $3.5 billion arms sale to UAE amid Iran tensions", *Reuters*, December 31, 2011, online available at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/12/31/us-usa-uae-iran-idUSTRE7BU0BF20111231 (accessed on january 24, 2013); "Rocket-propelled sales figures: US arms sales abroad triple to record highs", RT, August 27, 2012, online available at: http://rt.com/news/us-weapons-record-sales-649/ (accessed on January 24, 2013).

[1203] See Karim Sadjadpour, "The Battle of Dubai: The United Arab Emirates and the US-Iran Cold War", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, July 2011.

pointing at what has unfolded in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Iran's nuclear programme.[1204] The December 2007 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) of the US asserted with "high confidence" that Iran halted its weaponization programme in 2003, a statement that has relieved Tehran from an imminent attack.[1205] Mahmood Ahmadinejad viewed the assessment a "declaration of victory" for him testifying that confrontation would pay off eventually. His international bravado seemed to be an asset for domestic politics, as Khamenei praised the President's efforts as well as "courage, steadfastness and constant presence of the Iranian nation" paving the way for "the glory of the system, the country's progress in various spheres and its great success in the nuclear field."[1206] In April 2008, in defiance of the Security Council Resolutions of 2006 and 2007 Iran announced that it would add 6000 more centrifuges for enrichment which would triple their numbers.[1207] Meanwhile Iran's diplomacy outstretched to Latin America for both "making inroads to the enemy's backyard" and ending its isolation through creating long-distance bonds.[1208] Escobar makes a similar point when he argues that Iran's developing ties to the Leftist governments of Latin America refuted "the myth of

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[1204] "Leader's Speech to a Group of University Students from Yazd Province", January 3, 2008, online available at: http://english.khamenei.ir//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=696&Itemid=4 (accessed on December 22, 2012).

[1205] The estimate declared that "We judge with high confidence that in fall 2003, Tehran halted its nuclear weapons program; we also assess with moderate-to-high confidence that Tehran at a minimum is keeping open the option to develop nuclear weapons. We judge with high confidence that the halt, and Tehran's announcement of its decision to suspend its declared uranium enrichment program and sign an Additional Protocol to its Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Safeguards Agreement, was directed primarily in response to increasing international scrutiny and pressure resulting from exposure of Iran's previously undeclared nuclear work." It also stated that "We assess with moderate confidence Tehran had not restarted its nuclear weapons program as of mid-2007, but we do not know whether it currently intends to develop nuclear weapons." Excerpts from the NIE 2007 are online available at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/reports/2007/nie_iran-nuclear_20071203.htm (accessed on September 8, 2012).

[1206] See "Iran's Supreme Leader praises Ahmadinejad for 'nuclear success'", *IRNA*, February 26, 2008.

[1207] By November 2008 the number of working centrifuges reached to 3800 and in February 2009 to 5600 which raised concerns over Iran's enrichment activities and due pressures via sanctions to halt its programme. See Saeed Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini*, pp. 201-202.

[1208] Saideh Lotfian, "The New Role of Latin America in Iran's Foreign Policy", *Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs*, Vol.1, No.3, (Fall 2010), pp. 33-62.

isolated Iran" and integrated it to the "Global South", which perfectly suited Iran's strong Third Worldist credentials since the 1970s seeking to challenge global hegemony.[1209] Iran was adamant to emphasize that the US decision to isolate Iran was a mistake and never materialized, as Tehran had "plenty of friends" comprising Russia, China, Central Asian countries, Caspian, Arab League and the OIC[1210] and has become a truly important regional actor "as a reward for years of efforts, devotion and struggle for causes of the Arab nations."[1211] Meanwhile back at home, the neoconservatives further sidelined the reformists by denying them chance to run for the forthcoming Majles elections in 2008.[1212] However, the management of economy and the state of state-society affairs did not match with the glamour of foreign policy, which did not go unnoticed in the eyes of Ahmadinejad's rivals. Assured of its geopolitical strength and regional position, Iran was to face the gravest challenge from unprecedented level of mass demonstrations in the aftermath of its disputed 2009 presidential elections.

6.4. The State-Society and the International in the Post-2009 era

6.4.1. The 2009 Presidential Elections and Its Aftermath

The regime was quite assured of its power and standing up until it was profoundly shaken by the events unfolding in the aftermath of the tenth presidential election in June

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[1209] Pepe Escobar, "The myth of 'isolated' Iran".

[1210] See Simon Tisdall, "Bush Wrongfooted as Iran Steps up International Charm Offensive", *The Guardian*, June 20, 2006.

[1211] Seyed Hossein Mousavi, "The New Actors in the Middle East", Institute for Middle East Strategic Studies, Tehran, online available at: http://en.merc.ir/default.aspx?tabid=98&ArticleId=259

[1212] The election results however also showed a decline in the support for conservative candidates which signaled a growing apathy within the supporters of the conservatives and a division within the conservative ranks. See Farideh Farhi, "Iran's 2008 Majlis Elections:The Game of Elite Competition", *Middle East Brief* No. 29, Brandeis University, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, May 2008, online available at: http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB29.pdf (accessed on January 4, 2013); Kaveh-Cyrus Sanandaji, "The Eighth Majles Elections in the Islamic Republic of Iran: A Division in Conservative Ranks and the Politics of Moderation", *Iranian Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4, 2009, pp. 621-648.

2009. On June 13, 2009, the results declared Ahmadinejad's victory for a second term in office with 63 percent of the votes.[1213] This has been quite a shock for the supporters of Mir Hossein Mousavi[1214], who throughout the run-up to the elections has become the main rival of President Ahmadinejad and achieved to energize Iranians to participate in pre-election festivities, street rallies and eventually in the elections.[1215] The unease about the irregularities and inconsistencies of the results fanned the flames of widespread, unprecedentedly massive and peaceful street protests in Tehran and other major cities of Iran that sought annulment of the elections.[1216] The regime's reaction was equally

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[1213] The results declared Mahmood Ahmadinejad as the winner with 63 percent of votes out of an estimated 85 percent voter turnout. Mousavi got 34 percent of the votes, followed by Rezai by 1.5 percent and Karroubi by 0.86 percent. See Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Interior, www.moi.ir

[1214] Having performed as Iran's Prime Minister throughout the tumultuous years of Iran-Iraq war and Revolution's first decade, Mousavi has been a key political figure in the Islamic establishment, a staunch supporter of the revolution's promise for the "oppressed". His revolutionary credentials, managerial skills, manners and style made him a successful candidate for the reformist coalition, whose return to politics was very much encouraged by Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami. See Ali Abootalebi, "Iran's Tenths Presidential Elections: Candidates, Issues, and Implications," *Middle East Review of International Affairs,* (September 2009), p. 4, online available at: http://www.gloria-center.org/files/2009083124637.pdf , (accessed on May 30, 2011).

[1215]For an elaborate analysis of Iran's 2009 Presidential elections and its turbulent aftermath, see Mehran Kamrava, "The 2009 Elections and Iran's Changing Political Landscape," *Orbis*, Vol.54, No.3, (Summer 2010); Ali M. Ansari, *Crisis of Authority: Iran's 2009 Presidential Election*, (London: Chatham House, 2010).

[1216] The results were not declared according to the regular election procedure which foresees that after the results are collated and given to the Ministry of Interior and the supervisory bodies, they have to be sent to the Council of Guardians in charge of verification. Only after the Council approves the way the counting and voting has been carried, then the results are revealed. Another procedural break was observed when the number of votes cast in each constituency and the number of spoilt ballots was not released before the announcement of the results. They were declared early in the morning, when many Iranians were asleep and only hours after the voting process has ended. Many people doubted why none of the reformist candidates could win a majority even in their own constituency, a perplexing example being Ahmadinejad's a margin of 63 percent vote even in the Azeri heartland of Mousavi. It was also bizarre to see the uniformity of 2/1 margin in every province of Iran marked by significant regional, ethnic and linguistic diversity. The results had arithmetic inconsistencies as well. The analysis of election data by Chatham House detected more than 100 percent voter turnouts in Mazandaran and Yazd which was according to the Ministry of Interior might be related to high volumes of migration across certain parts of the country might account for such a situation. See Farhang Jahanpour, "Iran's Stolen Election," *Open Democracy*, June 18, 2009, online available at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/iran-s-stolen-election-and-what-comes-next , (accessed on April 4, 2010); Nasrin Alavi, "Shall I tell?" in "Iran's election: people and power," *Open Democracy*, June 22, 2009, http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/iran-s-election-democracy-or-coup , (accessed on July 2, 2011); "Preliminary Analysis of the Voting Figures in Iran's 2009 Presidential Election", Chatham House and the Institute of Iranian Studies, University of St. Andrews, June 21, 2009,

unprecedented in its brutality which resulted in the beating, arrest, detention and even deaths of demonstrators.[1217] Many prominent reformist elites were arrested, whilst "restless youth" was hunted through university raids by the thugs.[1218] Street clashes were followed by news and allegations of murder, torture and rape in Evin and Kahrizak prisons, which were brought to fore by the political elite of the Islamic Republic itself, testifying both the deterioration of human rights conditions in Iran and the growing rift within the political elite.[1219]

The hopes were dashed and political rift got deepened, when Ayatollah Khamenei, the ultimate arbiter of the political system endorsed the election results which he viewed as "divine assessment" on June 19, 2009 and warned that protests would no longer be tolerated and if they do, the opposition leaders would be solely responsible for the bloodshed. According to Bashiriyeh, Khamenei's decision to back Ahmadinejad before the partial recount of votes, he himself allowed was over and his tacit approval of brutality, which could not have happened otherwise, twisted his "neutrality" and legitimacy, and placed him in direct confrontation with the people.[1220] Seemingly, the

http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/14234_iranelection0609.pdf, (accessed on September 15, 2010) and Ali M. Ansari, *The Crisis of Authority*.

[1217] Reported death-toll by government and opposition sources differed to a great extent; official statistics for the first week of the demonstration was 20 people, however, opposition websites talked of an estimated 250 deaths by June 23. Among the deaths, the death of Neda-Agha-Soltan, shot by the Basij militia in front of cameras on Kargar Avenue in Tehran would become the symbol of the Green Movement. For further details see "Iran Protests: 'They have covered up the deaths'", *The Guardian*, July 9, 2009, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jul/09/iran-protests-doctor-disputes-toll (accessed on June 4, 2011).

[1218] These figures included Behzad Nabavi (the founder of the Mojaheden-e Engelab-e Eslami), Saaed Hajjarian (advisor to former President Mohammad Khatami), Mohsen Mirdamadi (the leader of the Islamic Iran Participation Front), Mohammad Ali Abtahi (advisor to the defeated reformist candidate Mehdi Karroubi) and former President Khatami's brother, Mohammad Reza Khatami.

[1219] "What will happen to those arrested? I can tell you" online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/09/jun/1291.html ; see also Hamid Dabashi, *Iran, the Green Movement and the USA: The Fox and the Paradox,* (London, New York: Zed Books, 2010), p. 55; "Mass Arrests and Detentions Signal Increasing Repression", online available at: http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2009/06/increasingrepression/

[1220] Danny Postel, "Counter-Revolution and Revolt in Iran: An Interview with Iranian Political Scientist Hossein Bashiriyeh", p. 66.

regime's crackdown on protests turned the slogans of "where is my vote" into the chants of "death to the Dictator!" which directly targeted Ayatollah Khamenei beside President Ahmadinejad. As Ansari purports, it was the mismanagement of the crisis by the political authority which moved the dispute beyond an election protest and unveiled the deep-lying resentment and disillusionment of the people vis-à-vis the regime and the national security state.[1221] Iran in the summer of 2009 was going through the severest crisis in state-society relations in the history of the Islamic Republic as many scholars argue and it was by no means only a state-society crisis and entailed severe frictions amongst the political elite, between those seeking to preserve the status quo with all its political, economic and ideological privileges and those seeking to enact republicanism and put an end to militarization and securitization of the state. It was the latter position which lay at the heart of Iran's emerging opposition movement, the Green Movement (*Jonbash-e Sabz*), also known as the Green Wave (*Movj-e Sabz*) which marked the return of mass politics and activation of dormant social dynamism in the face of now greater political and social pressures of the regime.[1222]

6.4.2. The State and the International in the Post-2009 Epoch

The post-election turmoil had significant repercussions for Iran's foreign policy and its broader international relations. As Fred Halliday argues, the presidential elections coincided with a significant conjuncture which entailed both newly elected US President Obama's pending efforts for a diplomatic breakthrough, once the new administration started office in Iran and the declining oil prices, that up until then served as a shield against sanctions and hazards of mismanaged economy.[1223] Furthermore, Tehran was still surrounded by destabilizing wars in its neighborhood, and an imminent military

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[1221] Ali M. Ansari, *Crisis of Authority*.

[1222] See Hamid Dabashi, *Iran, the Green Movement and the USA: The Fox and the Paradox*, and Hamid Dabashi and Navid Nikzadfar, *Green Movement in Iran*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2011).

[1223] Fred Halliday, "Iran's evolution and Islamic Berlusconi", *Open Democracy*, June 9, 2009.

attack either by Israel, US or both was not off the table. Whilst Tehran was confident in its regional position and scientific and political advances since 2005, domestic unrest seemed to complicate Iran's faction-ridden domestic politics and therefore its decision making. The state's relations with its international environment, in our case predominantly with the West entailed contradictory features in terms of issues of legitimacy and threat. On the one hand, the regime perceived demonstrations as attempts of a "velvet revolution" that it was arming itself against for the last few years and accordingly it was the Western powers that instigated this malicious move by collaborating with the "fifth columns" and "seditionists" in the society. On the other hand, the international seemed to be a way out from domestic crisis. According to Parsi, Barack Obama's offer for nuclear talks posed an opportunity to reap, as the regime believed that the international engagement with Tehran would convince the domestic critics that foreign powers have already accepted the result of the election.[1224] Shahram Chubin also depicts the domestic crisis as the main reason for Tehran's at least *tactical* engagement with the West in Geneva in October 2009.[1225] The ground for Iran's diplomacy seemed to be shifting with both domestic and international changes. Iran's America policy and broader international affairs then started to encounter a new dynamic with Barack Obama's presidency and prospects of a breakthrough which will be articulated below.

6.4.2.1. Iran-US Relations under Barack Obama: The End of Confrontation?

Contrary to President Bush's belligerent approach, Barack Obama was willing to pursue diplomacy for peaceful resolution of Iran's nuclear programme. Parsi argues that this change of heart was also related to the changing political mood inside US with a greater

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[1224] Inside Iran, the contradictions and irony of Ahmadinejad's blames on foreign powers for meddling in Iran's internal affairs and his willingness to do business with them was noted. An opined piece published on newspaper *Etemad* on November 2009 asking how come relations with the US are no longer a problem. See Ali M. Ansari, *The Crisis of Authority*, pp. 71-72.

[1225] Shahram Chubin, "The Iranian Nuclear Riddle After June 2012", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 1, p. 163.

recognition of increasing costs of political estrangement between Iran and the US; even though hard-line thinking against Iran persisted in American politics and decision-makers.[1226] Obama made his intensions known to Iranian leaders through his constructive discourse with his *Nowrouz* message in March 2009 by celebrating the new year of Iranian people and declaring his willingness to "open US hand" with the hope that Iran would "unclench its fist."[1227] In his June 4, 2009 Cairo speech addressing the Muslim world, he reiterated Washington's willingness for diplomacy with Iran "without preconditions and on the basis of mutual respect" and "moving forward" than "remained trapped in the past."[1228] At home, under Obama's vision for diplomacy, US embarked on a review process for crafting a constructive guideline for diplomacy.

Iran's reaction to Obama's charm offensive was mostly skeptical. As Parsi aptly observes, it was hard for the Iranian leadership to dismiss or vilify Barack Obama, given his exposure to Muslim and Christian cultures, experience of having grown up in a Third World country and even middle name Hussein. Therefore he hardly fit in "the Iranian stereotype of American, imperialist leaders characterized as arrogant, ignorant and incapable of empathizing with the grievances of the Third World states against Western powers."[1229] But it did not mean Tehran wholeheartedly confided in Obama's words either. Ayatollah Khamenei made it clear that it would be deeds, not words which would make a change in Iran-US relations, as Iran will "judge based on their actions."[1230]

[1226] For a comprehensive account, see Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*.

[1227] See the transcript of Barack Obama's message, "Happy New Year to Iran", *The Guardian*, March 21, 2009, online available at: http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/mar/20/iran-middleeast (accessed on August 5, 2012).

[1228] See "Remarks by the President on A New Beginning", Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt, June 4, 2009, online available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-at-Cairo-University-6-04-09 (accessed on January 20, 2012).

[1229] Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 8.

[1230] Khamenei in his response told that "Really, if anything other than a small part of your language has changed, show it. Has your enmity with the Iranian people ended? Have you released Iran's assets? Have you lifted the sanctions? Have you abandoned propaganda and psychological warfare? Have you ended unconditional support for the Zionist regime?" See "Tehran's Reaction to Obama's Norouz Message:

As Tehran was embroiled in severe domestic crisis, managing domestic and international crisis did not prove easy, especially because many in the West, among them US diplomats, viewed domestic turmoil as an end to Tehran's expanding influence and its self-confidence.[1231] Farideh Farhi makes a similar point arguing that domestic turmoil risked a weakening of regime's position in negotiations not only because of internal infighting, but also due to the reason that the election campaign opened up Ahmadinejad's foreign policy into serious debate and nullified the regime's previous rhetoric over national consensus over the nuclear issue.[1232] During the election campaign, the reformist contenders of Ahmadinejad called for further negotiations with the EU and advocated a more flexible policy. It became clear that public opinion and the moderate elite did not see any contradiction between Iran's right to enrichment and the international community's right to be assured of the peaceful nature of the nuclear programme.[1233] Mir Hossein Mousavi made it clear that while Iran's rights under NPT were non-negotiable, the concerns over possible weaponization were negotiable both in technical and political terms.[1234] He asserted that once elected he would switch from a confrontational (*taghabol*) approach to constructive interaction (*taghamol)* and through "New Greetings to the World" his government would reduce tensions and seek friendly relations even with the US, only if US practically changed its Iran policy.[1235] For the opposition leaders, Tehran's declining credibility was a source of bittern concern, as

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Waiting for 'Actual Changes'", *Rooz Online*, March 28, 2009, online available at: http://www.roozonline.com/english/news3/newsitem/article/waiting-for-actual-changes.html (accessed on August 5, 2012).

[1231] The views of a number of US diplomats are quoted in Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 94.

[1232] See Farideh Farhi, "Ahmadinejad's Nuclear Folly", *Middle East Report*, no. 252, (Fall 2009), online available at: http://www.merip.org/mer/mer252/ahmadinejads-nuclear-folly (accessed on February 8, 2012).

[1233] Shahram Chubin, "The Iranian Nuclear Riddle After June 2012", p. 168.

[1234] Joe Klein and Nahid Siamdoust, "The Man Who Could Beat Ahmadinejad: Mousavi Talks to Time", *TIME*, June 12, 2009, online available at: http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1904343-2,00.html (accessed on January 18, 2013).

[1235] Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, pp. 82-83.

Mousavi attacked the neoconservatives arguing that "We have been reduced to the degree that our passports are treated with disrespect."[1236]

But after the elections, it became clear that the next round of diplomacy or confrontation would be played out under Obama's and Ahmadinejad's presidencies. The trajectory of relations since then has not changed much, as Iran and US could not agree on a solution that would satisfy the demands and expectations of both sides. The nuclear knot remains intact, while sanctions intensified since 2010. The first significant encounter between the new administrations happened in October and November 2009, in Geneva and Vienna as Iran and P5+1 states came together to discuss the American-Russian offer for nuclear fuel swap deal which envisaged that Tehran would ship out 1,200 kg of its enriched uranium to Russia and receive fuel rods from France in twelve months time to be used in Tehran Research Reactor. Tehran initially accepted the offer in principle during October 2009 talks in Geneva, but this did not translate into a political agreement which was basically related to both factional infighting and Iran's historical mistrust of the Western states in keeping their goodwill and honoring thy agreement. As Parsi articulates, Tehran had reservations about the deal but did not have much time to discuss these issues because of the tight deadline the Obama administration set for diplomacy in the midst of domestic pressure for sanctions.[1237] These reservations basically pertained to possible strategic vulnerability Iran might suffer once it allowed shipping out 70 percent of its LEU, concerns over why it could not keep its LEU on its own soil or the reason why it has to pay for the fuel rods with its own LEU, whilst they could be purchased from the international market.[1238] Parsi adds that the offer was also problematic; as Tehran felt it lacked any leverage over Russia and France. Mousavian argues that rejection of Iran's

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[1236] "*Movj-e Sabz* (The Green Wave)", Documentary, online available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3TImYh1fq8 (accessed on October 10, 2012).

[1237] Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 141.

[1238] Ibid., pp. 135-137.

offer for a "simultaneous" swap became the major stumbling block in 2009 nuclear talks, since Iran did not trust the IAEA and Western powers to honor their deal.[1239]

The mistrust against international actors was coupled by a faction-ridden domestic politics when the political elites were literally at war with one another. In the words of an Iranian diplomat, the "existential crisis" that crumbled the state prevented the regime from taking a worthwhile decision and eventually ended with Khamenei's withdrawal of his initial support for the deal.[1240] Domestic crisis has put foreign policy vis-à-vis United States and the nuclear issue further in a factional frame. In the aftermath of the 2009 elections, it was mainly President Ahmadinejad who aspired to secure a deal through which would bring him a political victory over his domestic competitors and boost his legitimacy in the face of rising social demands for normalization with the US.[1241] He then adopted a conciliatory tone claiming that Iran and the West entered a "period of cooperation."[1242] But the swap deal was fiercely opposed by his reformist and conservative rivals who accused the government of giving up national interests and assets and lending trust to France and Russia that could never be trusted.[1243]

Nevertheless, next year, in May 2010, whilst Obama's policy was drifting to sanctioning Iran through the struggle of US diplomats to get particularly China on board, Turkey and Brazil were able to broker a deal with Tehran on a similar scheme of fuel swap and encouraged by President Obama himself, as then Iran on a broad domestic consensus agreed to ship out the same amount of uranium to be stored in Turkey, while waiting for

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[1239] Asli Bali, "Iran will require assurances: An Interview with Hossein Mousavian".

[1240] The Iranian diplomat's remarks are quoted in Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 147 and 150.

[1241] Volker Perthes, "Ambition and Fear: Iran's Foreign Policy and Nuclear Programme", p. 100; Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 147.

[1242] See Edward Yeranian, "Ahmedinejad Uses Conciliatory Tone Over Nuclear Deal", *VOA*, November 13, 2009, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/09/nov/1134.html (accessed on January 12, 2013).

[1243] Volker Perthes, "Ambition and Fear: Iran's Foreign Policy and Nuclear Programme", p. 102.

the fuel rods to be supplied in return. The Tehran Declaration of Brazil, Turkey and Iran has been an unprecedented development, since as Parsi notes, in the US not a single word was uttered or strategy devised on "what if Tehran agrees."[1244] Indeed none of the parties to the declaration has seen it as a final agreement, but as the very first step to build confidence and proceed with detailed talks mentioning an end-game and hoped that Tehran's move would prevent further sanctions. But US rebuffed the move for technical and political reasons and ensured that the next round of UN sanctions that it has been working on since late 2009 pass smoothly. Obama in his Nowrooz speech in March 2010 argued that "faced with an extended hand, Iran's leaders have shown only a clenched fist."[1245] Khamenei in his response accused Obama of offering "a metal hand inside a velvet glove."[1246] In the face of US indifference to Tehran Declaration, Iran felt re-assured of the "dishonesty" of American intensions.

With no agreement in sight, Iran's nuclear programme and Iran-US relations took a new turn. Iran from the onset made it clear that it would upgrade uranium enrichment to 19.75 percent from 3.5 percent, if it was not able to supply the fuel rods from international market. This rise technically meant a further stage in its nuclear programme, before Iran could start enriching to weapon grade uranium. Meanwhile, the discovery of a clandestine nuclear facility named *Fordow* near the religious city Qom in 2009 sped up Western concerns, for they suspected Iran might be conducting advanced nuclear tests on its way to "break out" capability.[1247]

[1244] Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 194.

[1245] See "Remarks of President Obama Marking Nowruz", March 20, 2010, online available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-obama-marking-nowruz (accessed on January 12, 2013).

[1246] "Khamenei issues testy response to Obama's hand of friendship", *The Gulf News,* March 23, 2010, online available at: http://gulfnews.com/news/region/iran/khamenei-issues-testy-response-to-obama-s-hand-of-friendship-1.601527 (accessed on Januray 12, 2013).

[1247] See Reuters' and Al Jazeera's Timelines for Iran's Nuclear Crisis.

In June 2010, UN adopted a new round of sanctions through UNSCR 1929 which called for measures against new Iranian banks with possible connection to nuclear or missile programs as well as vigilance over transactions with any Iranian bank, including the Central Bank of Iran.[1248] Following UNSCR 1929, the US Congress passed Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 which has imposed a comprehensive ban on all imports and exports to and from Iran, including those items that were previously exempted during Clinton Administration, restricted activities related to Iran's energy sector and embedded financial sanctions calling on the president to sanction Iran's Central Bank and financial activities.[1249] The EU also followed the suit by imposing sanctions that prohibited the sale and supply or transfer of energy equipment and technology used by Iran for refining, liquefying natural gas, exploration, and production as well as forbidding insurance and reinsurances of Iranian state businesses including shipping industry which would make it more difficult for Iran to import gasoline and consumer products made of fuel.[1250]

Parsi aptly argues that with the latest sanctions American policy toward Iran turned into a "one-track" strategy built on punishing Iran through toughening sanctions, rather than the much-intended "dual track" strategy combining diplomacy with sanctions.[1251] At the backdrop of US sanction laid a coalition of Israeli lobby and the Congress which kept urging the administration to impose "crippling sanctions" that would target the oil and gas sectors of the economy, while the Obama administration was looking for "targeted

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[1248] The sanctions also expanded a U.N. arms embargo against Tehran and blacklisted three firms controlled by Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines and 15 firms belonging to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. It called for setting up a cargo inspection regime similar to one in place for North Korea. See "Factbox: US, EU and UN Sanctions against Iran", *Reuters*, June 11, 2011, online available at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/09/us-iran-sanctions-idUSTRE7585W720110609 (accessed on October 4, 2012).

[1249] See Press Releases by Iranian American Bar Association, "New U.S. Sanctions on Iran Following U.N. Security Council Resolution 1929", July 16, 2010, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/10/jul/1143.html (accessed on January 14, 2013).

[1250] See "Iran Condemns New EU Sanctions", *RFE/RL*, June 27, 2010.

[1251] Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 208.

sanctions" to make change in Iran's foreign policy behavior while keeping warmongers at bay.[1252] Tehran increasingly resented US and Europe for "resorting to Security Council as instrument for development and justification of their unilateral behavior and one-sided measures against the Islamic Republic."[1253] US moves served to perpetuate Iran's mistrust which has been a key motive of its foreign policy with the West.

From 2010 onwards the confrontation between Iran and United States started to grow up against expectations of a breakthrough. While Iran continued with nuclear enrichment, United States employed other instruments including cyber attacks to slow down Iran's nuclear programme in the absence of a diplomatic solution.[1254] As Ratner argues, a "shadow war" which relies more on technology and human intelligence such as cyber attacks, espionage, and high-tech sabotage emerged, alongside the "economic war" via sanctions.[1255] Throughout 2010, Iran had to fight with the Stuxnet virus that afflicted its nuclear efforts. Since then, a number of Iranian nuclear scientists were assassinated in similar bomb plots for which the regime blamed the United States and Israel for starting on undeclared war over its "irreversible" nuclear programme.[1256]

The nuclear talks were stalled throughout 2011 and the year was closed with heavier unilateral sanctions by US, EU and Canada following the IAEA report in December 2011. Tehran's cooperation with the IAEA also shattered in the face of its mistrust of the new head of the organization as it suspected Mr. Amano's close ties with the US and possible implications of this bond for leakage of sensitive and confidential data that the

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[1252] Ibid.

[1253] See Seyyed Hossein Mousavi, "Aspects and Consequences of New American and European Sanctions against Iran", Center for Research and Middle East Strategic Studies, Tehran, January 11, 2012.

[1254] See David E. Sanger, "Obama Order Sped Up Wave of Cyberattacks Against Iran", *The New York Times*, July 1, 2012.

[1255] See Ari Ratner, "The US-Iran Covert War", *The Iran Primer*, December 20, 2012.

[1256] See Frank Gardner, "Iran and the undeclared campaign", *BBC News*, January 11, 2012.

IAEA possesses over Iran's nuclear programme.[1257] Growing Israeli pressure for a military attack could only be checked by imposing further sanctions on Iran, as Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta warned off the unintended consequences of a military attack on Iran over US troops in the region and told that "It is important for us to make sure we apply the toughest sanctions – economic, diplomatic pressures – on Iran to change their behavior."[1258] Likewise, in the first half of 2012, three successive rounds of nuclear talks, in Istanbul, Baghdad and Moscow failed to bring remarkable progress other than keeping the parties at the negotiation table. Iran has not stepped back from enriching at 20 percent and installing new centrifuges at *Fordow*, believed to be the only installation that may survive an Israeli air attack, as the P5+1 countries did not offer any sanctions relief for a deal. In the nuclear dispute, notwithstanding mounting costs of the nuclear programme on people and economy, Iran maintained its determination and as always sought for a deal that would acknowledge its right to enrichment on its own soil and lift the sanctions.[1259] Meanwhile, US remained resolute in its sanctions policy as Congress passed new rounds of sanctions against Iran even prior to the Baghdad talks to put further pressure on Iran to comply.[1260]

[1257] For an insider's view on the IAEA, spying and murder of the nuclear scientists, see Asli Bali, "Iran will require assurances: An Interview with Hossein Mousavian".

[1258] "Leon Panetta warns against Iran strike", *The Guardian*, November 11, 2011.

[1259] See International Crisis Group, "The P5+1, Iran and the Perils of Nuclear Brinkmanship", June 15, 2012.

[1260] Eskandar Sadeghi-Boroujerdi, "Briefing-Sanctioning Iran: Implications and Consequences".

6.5. The Impact of the International on State and State-Society Relations during the Epoch of Confrontation

6.5.1. The "Velvet" Threat, Legitimacy and Integrity

Iran's troubled and confrontation-ridden affairs with the international have brought significant repercussions for state-society relations. As the state has been transformed into a national security state with increasing control of the Revolutionary Guards over politics, economy and ideology as a result of a number of domestic and international developments, an element of insecurity has underpinned state-society relations which pertained both to diametrically opposed conceptions of the conservative and neoconservative elites to the idea of reform, democracy and rule of law alongside their growing fear and anxiety over a "velvet revolution" that may get instigated by untrustworthy external powers and their collaborators at home.

The new elite believed that Islamic Republic shall soon be replaced by an Islamic "Government" which has no responsibility but that of preparing for the reappearance of the Twelfth Imam."[1261] This government could only be meaningful with a "guardianship society" rather than civil society.[1262] Accordingly, the state embarked upon re-Islamizing politics, public space and education in line with the conservative establishment's wishes to eradicate reformist "heresy" and institute its hegemony over society. The natural targets of this policy have been NGOs, universities and intellectuals. In stark contrast to previous epoch marked by daring criticism of the principle of velayat-e faqih by religious intellectuals, in the present epoch, criticism of Ayatollah Khamenei and quest for democracy were declared as apostasy by the radical Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi so much so that the protestors of disputed 2009 elections were accused of being "enemies

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[1261] Ali Rahnema, *Superstition as Ideology*, p. 79.

[1262] See Hossein Bashiriyeh's remarks in Danny Postel, "Counter-revolution and Revolt in Iran: An Interview with Iranian Political Scientist Hossein Bashiriyeh".

of God." There has been "sacralization" of political authority both through Ayatollah Khamenei and President Ahmadinejad who believed in his connection with the Hidden Imam, a bond which implied his "supernatural presence."[1263] The regime despised and attacked the idea of democracy in the light of failures of American policy in the Middle East under the motto of democratizing it. It kept highlighting the human rights abuses of America in Abu Ghraib Prison and Iraq at large and American support for Israeli policies against Palestinians[1264], which according to Sadegh Zibakalam aimed to check growing popularity of United States among Iranians.[1265]

As elaborated in previous parts of this chapter, Iran perceived American threat mainly as "ideological" or psychological", even though the latest epoch has also raised concerns over a military confrontation. Under tense geopolitical conjuncture, normalization of politics and democratization was further aloof. The "Iran Democracy Fund" of the US Congress to help promote democracy and challenge the regime made things even more difficult and unbearable for the Iranians. It has been unfortunate for many NGOs and civil society activists in the country, since it only served to de-legitimize social opposition as the "fifth column", as "internal enemies" and collaborators within the tense security atmosphere of the Islamic Republic. The Iranian NGOs were increasingly worried about the domestic climate and called the US not to send them any money, for it "stigmatizes" them.[1266] True that Iran was acting defiantly and confronting the West, yet back at home the state felt quite vulnerable against "velvet revolution."[1267] Fear of social

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[1263] See Ali M. Ansari, "Iran under Ahmadinejad: populism and its malcontents", Ali Rahnema, *Superstition as Ideology*.

[1264] See Ayatollah Khamenei's speech in 2008.

[1265] Sadegh Zibakalam, "Iran and the Gaza War", *Open Democracy*, January 26, 2009.

[1266] See Arash Hadjialiloo, "Iranian NGOs to U.S.: 'Don't Send us Money'", *NIAC*, June 6, 2008.

[1267] Ansari observes that the regime gave this message through interviews with the Intelligence Minister, public information films, arrests of prominent intellectuals like Ramin Jahanbegloo, Haleh Esfandiari and Kian Tajbaksh in 2006 and 2007 and accusation US politicians and businessman for instigating a soft war against the regime. See Ali M. Ansari, *The Crisis of Authority*, pp. 24-25.

upheaval has been high on the agenda of the IRGC and it led to institutional adjustments to counter such a threat, if occasion arises. The appointment of Ali Jafari to the post of commander-in-chief in 2007 was followed by a restructuring of the IRGC's main focus from external threats to internal security, as he declared "For the time being the main responsibility of the Revolutionary Guards is to counter internal threats, and [only] aid the Army in case of external military threat."[1268] The organizational make-up of the IRGC started to decentralize to cope with possible ethnic unrest in frontier communities, because of alleged American plans to play the "ethnic card" in Iran.[1269] The IRGC has also been training a Special Force for scenarios of suppressing political or social uprisings in urban settings, especially in Tehran in addition to its control of a vast intelligence agency, the "Unit of Reservation of Information" which parallels and exerts influence over the Ministry of Intelligence and operates both within Iran and abroad.[1270] The Intelligence and Interior Ministries have also clamped down on the population in line with what Farhi dubs the "security outlook" of the state. American discourse and policy provided neo-conservatives with a propitious ground for repeatedly drawing on the imminent danger of velvet coup against the regime by enabling it to implement its security approach and "sell" it quite normally for seeing itself under threat and pressure.[1271] According to Ansari, growing relations with Russia and China via its "Look to East policy" was another factor which reinforced Iran's fear of velvet revolution and the deep suspicion of Western capitalism.[1272]

[1268] Jafari's remarks are quoted by Ali Alfoneh, "What do structural changes in the IRGC mean?" *AEI Outlook Series*, No.7, (September 2008), p. 3. For more details on Jafari's political background, see also Mohammed Sahimi, "A Hardliner's Hardliner: General Mohammad Ali Jafari", *Tehran Bureau*, January 21, 2010, online available at: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2010/01/a-hardliners-hardliner.html (accessed on January 4, 2013).

[1269] Ali Alfoneh, "What do structural changes in the IRGC mean?"; Seymour Hersh, "Preparing the Battlefield", *The New Yorker*, July 7, 2008, online available at: http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/07/07/080707fa_fact_hersh (accessed August 13, 2012).

[1270] Mehdi Khalaji, "Revolutionary Guards Inc.", p.1.

[1271] Farideh Farhi, "Iran's Security Outlook", p. 7.

[1272] Ali M. Ansari, *The Crisis of Authority*, p. 100.

The state-society relations went through the gravest crisis in the aftermath of the 2009 elections as the regime cracked down peaceful demonstrations with unprecedented brutality. Tamed as seditionists seeking to subvert the Islamic order, the Green Movement and its reformist leaders Mir Hossein Mousavi, Mehdi Karroubi and Mohammad Khatami came under tremendous pressure from the regime. The leaders of Iran's emerging opposition movement, the Green Movement throughout their campaign and in the aftermath of the elections made it clear that they were seeking "a government that serves its people" within the framework of the constitution of Iran and they enshrined return to the principle of rule of law as a remedy for various crises in Iran.[1273] But street clashes, repression and intimidation went unabated throughout the rest of 2009, when the regime finally ruled over the protestors by early 2010. In all these violent confrontations, it was mainly the *basijis* and the IRGC that were responsible for the "security" of the streets, as to their mind this has been the internal threat they were entitled to counter.[1274] While the regime suspected US plot behind the people's resentment against election results, Parsi makes an important point when he mentions Washington's rather minimal influence over developments in Iran with no trade, no diplomatic relations and no embassy on the ground.[1275] Meanwhile many Iranians disappointed by lack of strong condemnation of human right abuses by the US believed that Obama would forego the democratic aspirations of people for securing a deal over nuclear crisis.[1276]

[1273] "The Charter of the Green Movement", online available at: http://en.irangreenvoice.com/content/2083 (accessed on June 15, 2011).

[1274] See the remarks by higher echelons of the IRGC in Bahram Rafiei, "The Revolutionary Guards Before and After 2009: Two Acts of a Coup", *Rooz Online*, June 18, 2012, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/12/jun/1162.html

[1275] Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 96.

[1276] Ibid., pp.101-102.

6.5.2. Nuclear Crisis: Revolution, Resistance and Legitimacy

As noted above, one of the significant functions of nuclear programme was to repair the bond between state and society, by portraying the state at the forefront of the protection of Iran's inalienable rights and dignity. Nuclear programme, thus, was not simply a strategic issue, but a vital political and ideological tool, a crisis to unite the political elite and people behind the regime. Iranian leadership from the outset persistently emphasized strong national support for its nuclear programme in making their case to the world. In fact, it is important to note that in the absence of reliable polls or open debate over nuclear programme, it is not easy to make a clear statement over the extent of public support. The discourse of unequivocal support has been contested by some analysts such as Karim Sadjadpour, who warned against the risk of reification of the "Iranian street" and distraction of socio-economic problems that Iranians have long suffered under the mantle of opposing the West.[1277] Christopher de Bellaigue, reporting from Iran observed an indifferent mood in the streets at the time of Ahmadinejad's announcement of Iran's entry to the nuclear club in 2006.[1278] But many people also told him that in case of an attack, which would be no less than an all-out war because of the dispersed and embedded construction of nuclear sites close to the population centers, they would unite to defend the nation and rally behind the regime, no matter how opposed they are against it.[1279] Chubin asserts that the possible weapons component of the programme has never been debated or acknowledged publicly.[1280] The public support to the nuclear programme largely derived from the way it was framed as an

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[1277] Karim Sadjadpour, "How relevant is the Iranian Street?", *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No.1 (2006), pp. 151-162.

[1278] De Bellaigue notes that when he asked about the crisis, people either talked of their impotence to decision-making or criticized the government for not evading referral to the Security Council as well as the West for its hypocrisy and discrimination. See Christopher de Bellaigue, *The Struggle for Iran*, p. 188.

[1279] Ibid., p. 192. Even the fiercest opponents of the regime were caught in an "uneasy dilemma" of rallying behind the regime to protect the nation or fighting against it. Interview with a regime dissident, Tehran, October 2010.

[1280] See Shahram Chubin, The Politics of Iran's Nuclear Program, *Iran Primer,* p. 6.

assault against Iran's nuclear rights and used in political discourse, particularly by Mahmood Ahmadinejad.[1281] To quote Chubin once again, with the politics of nuclear programme, the issue gradually slipped from the hands of elite, hitherto managing nuclear development silently, to the street through popular rallies, slogans, stamps, banknotes and medals which became "substitutes for informed discussion."[1282]

Beside the nuclear programme, Tehran's increasing material support for Hezbollah was problematic for Iranians. In security terms, people doubted the merits of confrontation and questioned whether the administration's agency served making more enemies for Iran.[1283] In economic terms, people questioned why Iran's oil money was spent abroad for Islamic movements, but not for the well-being of Iranians in the face of uncured economic grievances. They resented "Iran's income going to Palestine and Hezbollah" and the failure of the regime "to help its people first and then help the people in Lebanon."[1284] Meanwhile, Iran's anti-Israeli policy and rhetoric boosted radicalization of certain segments of the society and brought to fore political and religious groups like "The Coalition for Martyr-inspired Actions against the Enemy and Their Interests", whose members embraced the culture of martyrdom that was previously praised against Iraq during the war and now advocated it against the enemies of Iran; US and Israel.[1285]

[1281] Ibid.

[1282] Ibid., p. 4.

[1283] Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad*, p. 160.

[1284] See some views of the Iranians quoted in Michael Slackman, "Some Iranians angered aid does not stay home", *International Herald Tribune*, July 23, 2006, online available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/23/world/africa/23iht-iran.2269436.html?_r=0 (accessed on November 24, 2012).

[1285] Roxanne Varzi and Majid Saeedi, "Seeking Martyrdom: Dying for an Ideal" (Photo-essay) in Malu Halasa and Maziar Bahari (eds.), *Transit Tehran: Young Iran and Its Inspirations*, (Garnet Publishing, 2009), pp. 96-97.Varzi and Saeedi note that the group keeps meeting every six months for public recruitment, keeps the identity of its members secret and aligns itself with the struggle of people without a state or conventional army, while denouncing nation state. The group did not find much coverage in state-run media, nevertheless it was a harbinger of radicalization of hard-liner groups in society in concord with state discourse and policies.

Many analysts converge on the argument that Iran has immersed itself very much to the nationalistic narrative that it has created for domestic politics and international image and therefore it would be difficult to climb down and give concessions on the principle of nuclear enrichment without provoking a popular backlash.[1286] As the regime faces mounting material and human costs of the nuclear programme in terms of sanctions, sabotage and killing of its nuclear scientists, it may also feel at a point of no return after "sacrificing" so much. Such moves may further stimulate the nationalist myth of resistance, seen also in the emergence of the discourse of "nuclear martyrs" to commemorate the losses of nuclear scientists. In any case, many scholars underline the necessity of a face-saving solution both for Iran and the United States. Inside Iran, reformist figures like Abdollah Nouri also proposed to hold a national referendum to understand the popularity of nuclear programme and hear "people's will" in this regard.

6.5.3. The Impact of the International on Development and Social Classes

The role of the international is neither solely confined to ideological reproduction of the state by providing it the context to raise sensitivities for anti-imperialism, national rights and self-sufficiency, nor to the geopolitical challenges it faces. Iran's contentious affairs with the US directly bear on its economic development and configuration of social forces because of the persistent American sanctions posing economic and political challenges that Iran had to surmount since the inception of the Islamic Republic.

Even though the Islamic Republic struggled hard to retain its self-sufficiency, as a rentier state, unable to diversify its economic activity and strengthen non-oil sectors, its economic development remained inextricably linked to global oil market. To make matters worse, American sanctions worked to the detriment of renewal of Iran's oil infrastructure in need of foreign capital and expertise to increase its production capacity. Iranian officials have been cognizant of the fact that Iran's economic problems cannot be handled, so long as Tehran does not normalize with the US. The head of the

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[1286] Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution*, p. 259.

Management and Planning Organization Hamid Reza Baradaran Shoraka, an organization which was abolished under Ahmadinejad's presidency, asserted that among the major obstacles to the development of Iran were economic sanctions imposed by Washington.[1287] By the start of the neoconservative government, Iran needed $20 billion in investment every year for the next five years to provide sufficient jobs for its predominantly young society, while the oil ministry estimated that the country needed $70 billion over the next ten years to modernize infrastructure, and a third-quarter of this renewal was expected through investment of foreign oil companies.[1288]

Inside Iran, the pragmatists have been reportedly wary of economic repercussions of Iran's nuclear policy, contrary to neoconservatives' trust in rising oil revenues and declining global hegemony of the United States. Nevertheless, it was up to the latter to decide. Iranian officials despised sanctions and argued that even though sanctions might affect economy, they won't be able to change Iran's nuclear policy, as Iran would never yield to pressure.[1289] The then head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization and Foreign Minister of Iran at the time of the writing, Ali Akbar Salehi in 2010 declared:

> We can't claim that sanctions won't have any impact on us, but they will not leave harsh and severe attacks on our country. We don't welcome any sanctions. They will eventually hurt the Iranian people. Such sanctions contributed to Iran's quest for nuclear technology. Sanctions neither can force us to give up, nor compel us to capitulate. We can tolerate whatever effects they might have.[1290]

[1287] Kenneth Pollack and Ray Takeyh, "Taking on Tehran", *Foreign Affairs*, (March/April 2005), Vol. 84, No.2, p. 3.

[1288] Ibid.

[1289] Interview with Dr. Kayhan Barzegar, Tehran, October 20, 2010.

[1290] "Interview with Dr. Ali Akbar Salehi", p. 20.

It is important to note that it is not only the sanctions that afflict Iranian economy. Economy has long suffered from structural problems of inflation, unemployment, dependence on oil sector, lack of privatization and liberalization of market under the dominance of state and semi-state. These problems exacerbated during Ahmadinejad's presidency due to mismanagement of economy with populist policies, extravagant government spending, contempt for technocrats, and radical rhetoric which has degraded domestic and foreign investment in Iran.[1291] Even though the oil revenue for the first five years of Ahmadinejad's presidency amounted to the total income for the previous 25 years, Iran was not able to use the revenues for long-term and planned programs.[1292]

International sanctions, both unilateral and multilateral, exacerbated Iran's economic performance and curbed its development. Since 2006 with the referral of Tehran's nuclear dossier to UN, Iran came under several rounds of sanctions which basically targeted the IRGC in wording, yet had wider impact on society, because targeting IRGC meant targeting the major actor in control of Iran's economy and outlawed any detachment of harm to IRGC from harming economy and the people.[1293] These punitive measures conceptually showed one of the formative impacts of the international on the domestic, as they shaped the composition and capabilities of social classes besides state's management of economy and relations with its society. As to the state and economy, toughening sanctions started to hit Iran's external trade and foreign investment in oil and gas sectors which constitute the lifeline of its economy. One of the obvious examples of divestment has been the South Pars Gas field, with not a single phase being completed during Ahmadinejad's presidency, since the major contractor

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[1291] For comprehensive analysis of Iran's economy under Mahmood Ahmadinejad, see Abbas Bakhtiar, "Ahmadinejad's Achilles Heel: The Iranian Economy", *Payvand*, January 25, 2007, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/07/jan/1295.html (accessed on July 21, 2010); Jahangir Amuzegar, "Iran's Economy in Turmoil", *International Economic Bulletin*, March 2010, online available at: www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=40354 (accessed on September 9, 2012).

[1292] Shaul Bakhash, "The Six Presidents", *The Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, p. 7.

[1293] Thomas Mattair, "The United States and Iran: Diplomacy, Sanctions and War", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. XVII, No.2, (Summer 2010), p. 59.

companies Shell and Total had to pull out due to sanctions.[1294] Analysts argue that the necessary amount of foreign direct investment for the development of oil and gas industries may not arrive in the short and middle-term because of the sanctions as well as the IRGC's dislike of foreign competitors.[1295]

The burden of confrontation has largely fallen on Iran's shrinking middle class, by intensifying their economic struggles and decimating their welfare with increasing inflation, unemployment and massive shocks to economy through devaluations.[1296] As Behdad and Nomani argue, Iran's modern petty bourgeoisie with little attraction to the Islamic state have been the major supporters of republican values and liberalization of the market and society in contrast to traditional bourgeoisie's appetite for protection by the state through subsidies and price controls.[1297] In the present epoch, neither liberalization, nor republicanism materialized; to make matters worse, Iran's economy was in shatters with intensifying sanctions, declining oil revenues and mismanagement. According to reports from late 2012, the middle class in Iran can no longer afford small luxuries, travel abroad, or even pay for the education of their children abroad.[1298] The government's decision to lift the subsidies which mostly benefited middle and upper classes also worsened the economic situation of the middle classes, as they led to

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[1294] Eskandar Sadeghi-Boroujerdi, "Briefing-Sanctioning Iran: Implications and Consequences", *Tehran Bureau*, October 9, 2012, online available at: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tehranbureau/2012/10/briefing-sanctioning-iran-implications-and-consequences.html (accessed on October 19, 2012), p.8.

[1295] Ibid., p. 9.

[1296] Mohammad Sadeghi Esfahlani and Jamal Abdi, "Sanctions cripple Iran's middle class, not the regime", *Foreign Policy-The Middle East Channel*, August 2, 2012, online available at: http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/08/02/sanctions_cripple_irans_middle_class_not_the_regime (accessed on January 4, 2013).

[1297] See Bahman Nomani and Sohrab Behdad, *Class and Labor in Iran*, pp. 205 and 210.

[1298] Dina Esfandiary, "Actually, the Sanctions on Iran Aren't Working", *the Atlantic*, October 11, 2012, online available at: http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/10/actually-the-sanctions-on-iran-arent-working/263474/ (accessed on January 4, 2013).

skyrocketing of the prices of many goods.[1299] The political outcome of middle class deprivation has been paralysis of a constituency which otherwise could be the source of societal change given the fact that it constituted the social basis of political opposition. The leaders of the Green Movement vehemently rejected sanctions for they would only cripple Iran's independent entrepreneur middle class, strengthen the black market and raise the stakes under the control of the IRGC.[1300] Mir Hossein Mousavi in September 2009 told that "We are against sanctions any sanctions against our nation….will impose agonies on a nation who suffers enough from miserable statesmen."[1301]

As to traditional petty bourgeoisie, increasing domination of the market by *bonyads* and the IRGC-affiliated firms was already discomforting. Despite the fact that it was the bazaaris that reaped the fortunes of the revolution, post-revolutionary regime's strategy has been engaging with the bazaaris on "personal ties", rather than as a corporate entity and through uniform laws and opportunities.[1302] These ties determined the bazaaris that are "correct, religious and skilled" and therefore "eligible for government portfolios, protection from property seizures and ultimately political and economic power."[1303] In the epoch of confrontation, even the Society of Islamic Coalition (*Jamiyat-e Motalefeh-e Islami*, shortly *Motalefeh* and hereafter SIC) and its sister organization of the Society of Islamic Associations of Guilds and Bazaars of Tehran (*Jameeh-e Anjumanha-ye Islami-ye Asnaf va Bazaar-e Tehran* and hereafter SIAGBT), institutions that are considered to represent the interests of the trading class, were sidelined by the new conservative trends

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[1299] Djavid Salehi-Isfahani, "Subsidy Reform".

[1300] Trita Parsi, *A Single Roll of the Dice*, p. 112.

[1301] Ibid., p. 113.

[1302] Arang Keshavarzian, "Regime Loyalty and Bazaari Representation under the Islamic Republic of Iran: Dilemmas of the Society of Islamic Coalition", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, No. 41, 2009, p. 232.

[1303] Ibid.

and associations.[1304] International sanctions and attempts at Iran's isolation strengthened the economic profile of the IRGC by stimulating smuggling and black market activities, as the state relied on the IRGC network to bypass sanctions.[1305] According to Khalaji, increasing involvement of the IRGC in the black market frustrated businessmen except for some bazaaris who thrive on black market and instability.[1306] Moreover, foreign finance became impossible because of Washington's pressure on Western banks, a development which worsened already tense business climate due to appointment of radical figures to ministries and state business.[1307] Investments plummeted as the bazaaris evaded risking capital in business deals and instead channeled capital either to property in North Tehran or investing in Dubai which has become a hub for the state to bypass sanctions.[1308] Despite tripled oil revenues, the capital flight from Iran has reached to its highest point since the presidency of Ahmadinejad.[1309] Bazaaris also resented the flow of cheap Chinese goods in the market and weak purchasing power consumers under sanctions.[1310]

[1304] Ibid., p. 226. Indeed SIC and SIAGBT have previously formed an alliance with socially conservative groups within the IRGC and intelligence apparatus to counter the "reformist threat", but eventually they started to lose political power in the face of Ahmadinejad's victory and had to assume less public role and give more room to Iran's neoconservatives advocating the logic of redistribution than the logic of accumulation.

[1305] See Mehdi Khalaji, "How intertwined are the IRGC in Iran's economy?"

[1306] Ibid., p. 2; Bahman Nomani and Sohrab Behdad, *Class and Labor in Iran*, p. 204 and Angus McDowall, "Iran versus the West: the view from the Tehran bazaar", *The Independent*, February 16, 2007.

[1307] Iskandar Borujerdi, "Sanctioning Iran: Implications and Consequences".

[1308] Angus McDowall, "Iran versus the West: the view from the Tehran bazaar", for an analysis of Iran's relations with Dubai, see Karim Sadjadpour, "The Battle of Dubai: The United Arab Emirates and the US-Iran Cold War".

[1309] Mehrdad Vahabi, "Between Social Order and Disorder: The Destructive Mode of Coordination", Working Paper, Munich Personal Repec Archive, 2006, p.20, online available at: http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/ (accessed on October 4, 2012).

[1310] Nejat Bahrami, "Bazaari criticism of Ahmadinejad bursts into the open", *insideIRAN.org*, July 21, 2010, online available at: http://www.insideiran.org/news/bazaari-criticism-of-ahmadinejad-bursts-into-the-open/ (accessed on July 7, 2012).

Needless to say, sanctions and economic mismanagement hit the urban poor and workers as well. The state has shown greater care to protect the lower classes from sanctions by offering cash handouts and subsidizing certain imported goods, in order to keep these items relatively affordable for poorer segments of the population.[1311] This has been understandable mainly because it was the lower classes and urban poor which formed the social basis of the Ahmadinejad government. As to the situation of workers, since 2010, there were frequent strikes particularly in petrochemical industry as the companies ran into difficulties and failed to pay the wages.[1312] The decline of industrial production because of the difficulties brought by international sanctions in finding raw materials for production and making payment to foreign suppliers is most likely to result in growing unemployment and further impoverishment of the society.[1313]

Hence society is squeezed by adverse socio-economic impact of sanctions and the threat of an imminent war, unless a favorable deal is reached in the forthcoming nuclear talks. Iran today faces not only declining industries or a melting middle class, but very fundamental shortages as food and medicine deprivation is bitterly felt among the Iranians.[1314] Indeed, neither geopolitical gains, nor oil revenues have been able to cure the social ills that afflicted Iran's society. According to Iran's Department of Statistics in 2010, 10 million Iranians live under the "absolute poverty line", while 30 million

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[1311] Dina Esfandiary, "Actually, the Sanctions on Iran Aren't Working".

[1312] "Unpaid workers go on strike in Iran", *RFE/LR*, October 8, 2010, online available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/Unpaid_Workers_Go_On_Strike_In_Iran/2185158.html (accessed on January 28, 2013).

[1313] The automobile industry so far has suffered from a 36 percent decline in manufacturing by 2012. See Ehsan Mehrabi, "Report from Tehran: How sanctions hurt the lives of ordinary Iranians," *insideIran.org*, online available at: http://www.insideiran.org/featured/report-from-iran-how-sanctions-hurt-the-lives-of-the-ordinary-iranians/ (accessed on July 27, 2012).

[1314] See Gleen Greenwald, "Iran sanctions now causing food insecurity, mass suffering", *The Guardian*, October 7, 2012, http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/oct/07/iran-santions-suffering, (accessed on November 12, 2012). By late 2012, shortages of medicine has even resulted in children deaths. Officials as well as social associations keep warning about a new catastrophe that Iraq once experienced because of sanctions against Iran. See Ehsan Mehrabi, "Report from Tehran: How sanctions hurt the lives of ordinary Iranians".

Iranians are under the "relative poverty line" of a total population of 73 million people.[1315] The social ills seemingly hit the youth which constitute more than 60 percent of Iran's population and the central component of political opposition through its vibrancy and dynamism particularly in the universities.[1316] Drug addiction, prostitution and HIV/AIDS are rampant among the youth. Economic plight of the country and failure of the government to create jobs results in brain drain which is estimated to have risen during Ahmadinejad's presidency. This picture seems quite distant than the "utopia" envisaged by the revolutionaries and mere populism does not pledge any solution to these protracted and ever daunting social problems.

But many analyses draw attention to increasing role of the state in managing sanctions and how this has made society more dependent on the state materially, even if the bond of consent and legitimacy may be destroyed.[1317] The prominent economist Djavad Salehi-Isfahani argues that "As basic services deteriorate, and the shortages and long lines that were common sights during the Iran-Iraq war reappear, the government will once again become not the source but the remedy to their problems."[1318] Sanctions also give the political elite a target to blame for and reinforce the anti-Western rhetoric for imposing "economic" war, alongside a "psychological" one.[1319]

[1315] "Ten Million Iranians Under 'Absolute Poverty Line'", *Radio Zamaneh*, May 29, 2010, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/10/may/1316.html (accessed on January 12, 2013).

[1316] See Omid Memarian and Tara Nesvaderani, "The Youth", *The Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, online available at: http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/youth (accesed on June 4, 2012).

[1317] Mohammad Sadeghi Esfahlani and Jamal Abdi, "Sanctions cripple Iran's middle class, not the regime".

[1318] Isfahani is quoted in Mohammad Sadeghi Esfahlani and Jamal Abdi, "Sanctions cripple Iran's middle class, not the regime".

[1319] See "Iran fighting economic, psychological war waged by West: Ahmadinejad", *Press TV*, October 2, 2012, "The West's All-Out Economic War on Iran", *Iranian Diplomacy*, January 19, 2012, online available at: http://irdiplomacy.ir/en/page/1897247/The+West%E2%80%99s+All-Out+Economic+War+on+Iran.html (accessed on October 12, 2012).

6.6. The State as a Contested Arena

Since 2009 the state has been an arena for Iran's contending conservatisms, old and new, as the growing rift between the Supreme Leader and President Ahmadinejad reveals. Ahmadinejad started office under the shadow of disputed elections results and violent street clashes and he embarked on strengthening his position through appointing or attempting to appoint staunch loyalists to Foreign, Intelligence, Defense and Interior Ministries that are in charge of security and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic under the dictates of Ayatollah Khamenei.[1320] He succeeded dismissing Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki, known for his close relations with the Supreme Leader, while Mottaki was on a foreign mission, and Ahmadinejad attempted to sack Intelligence Minister Haydar Moslahi who was reinstated by the Supreme Leader. Ahmadinejad's quarrel with the system extended to the Majles where his political rival, the Speaker of the Majles, Ali Larijani and conservatives close to Supreme Leader started to challenge him over economic policies and allegations of corruption. Since 2010, Ahmadinejad was also subject to criticism from the IRGC officials as well. Indeed, as Shaul Bakhash argues, Ahmadinejad and Khamenei both throve on their basis in the security and military services and Ahmadinejad was able to build a base independent of the supreme leader.[1321] Control of foreign policy became a severe source of contention as Ahmadinejad through unilateral appointment of special presidential representatives sought to exert more and direct influence, while the conservatives including the Supreme Leader resented creation of parallel institutions which risked jeopardizing their stronghold over state institutions and crippling Iran's diplomatic apparatus and moves.[1322]

[1320] See Geneive Abdo, "Iran's Bubble Boys", *Foreign Policy*, January 29, 2010; Ali Alfoneh, "All Ahmadinejad's Men", *Middle East Quarterly*, (Spring 2011), pp. 79-84; Muhammad Sahimi, "Analysis: Ahmadinejad-Khamenei Rift Deepens into Abyss", *Tehran Bureau*, May 7, 2011.

[1321] Shaul Bakhash, "The Six Presidents".

[1322] Golnaz Esfandiari, "Ahmadinejad Encroaches On Supreme Leader's Foreign-Policy Turf", *RFE/RL*, September 9, 2010.

The rift between Khamenei and Ahmadinejad resulted from a profound ideological incongruence which was hidden in Ahmadinejad's millenarianism and its political meaning for the clerical order in Iran. His belief in the return of the Hidden Imam also meant the end of *velayat-e faqih*, since the expected return of Imam Mehdi would make clergy's role redundant.[1323] Rahnema argues that the political implication of this for Ahmadinejad has been a message to the believers that he was "blessed" and empowered by the direct help of Imam Mehdi.[1324] What complicated this latent yet burning ideological clash was the idea of "*maktab-e Iran*" (Iranian School of Islam) that Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei, Ahmadinejad's chief of staff and close aide has put forward, as he claimed that "The country should introduce the ideology of Iran, rather than Islam, to the world."[1325] His statements created an enormous backlash from conservatives for its advocacy of "nationalism and secularism.", while Ahmadinejad backed him expressing his full trust in Mashaei as much as the necessity for "an atmosphere of criticism."[1326] The "symbolic" remained highly political in Iran. Ahmadinejad's reference to Zoroastrian king Cyrus and promotion of Iranian civilization with emphasis on culture and nationalism beyond defining it merely in an Islamic frame added to the flames and prompted Khamenei's intervention warning hardliners who seeks "to separate Islam from the clerics."[1327] Ahmadinejad's "deviance" and his state of being "bewitched by the deviant current" also resulted in the breaking of ties with his mentor Mesbah Yazdi, as the latter moved more to the Supreme Leader. Supreme Leader was

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[1323] Said Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini*, pp. 156-157. Khalaji argues that the cult of Mehdi flourished mainly because of state's attempts to popularize Islam via media and Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Mehdi Khalaji, "Apocalyptic Politics", p. 17. According to Ansari, these efforts aimed "re-invention of charisma" through "sacralizing" the authority of the Supreme Leader to re-enchant people to the political system after the epoch of reformism. Ali M. Ansari, "Iran under Ahmadinejad: populism and its malcontents" p. 698.

[1324] Ali Rahnema, *Supersititon as Ideology*, p. 44.

[1325] "Ahmadinejad backs VP Mashaei over Islam remarks, says confides him", *Mehr*, August 12, 2010.

[1326] Ibid.

[1327] See M. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, "Velayat-e-Faqih (Supreme Leader) and Iranian Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis", p. 122.

partially reassured by the support of his "praetorian guards" as in the aftermath of the post-election turmoil, as it was the IRGC that took control of the security of the regime and their support for Ahmadinejad was because he was the candidate of the Supreme Leader in the face of reformist candidates.[1328] The 2012 Parliamentary elections in this regard mattered as it was widely interpreted as a contest between the supporters of the Supreme Leader and President Ahmadinejad and the first group reigned over the latter. Confronted by a president that he endorsed to the risk of erosion of his legitimacy, Khamenei even hinted the abolition of the post of Presidency to evade future crisis, which would mean a structural blow to the Republican institutions of the state.

The place of "people" in this contestation as "citizens" seems quite restrained especially after the brutal crash on protests and attempts to revive street demonstrations in 2010 and 2011. The state-society relations were then largely maintained by hegemony through sheer coercion.[1329] The society is also divided along political, socio-economic and ideological lines and so far the state did not seek reconciliation with society given continuous repression of dissent. As Ansari argues, the relationship between state and society since 2009 is rather an "uneasy truce, not a state of peace" with shattering of the existing social contract and indifference for mending its fissures.[1330] The fragility of the bonds became even more tenuous with the unprecedented uprisings in the Arab World seeking a new social contract, democracy and economic welfare. The so-called "Arab Spring" posed new strategic and social challenges for the regime to cope with in a geography it claimed to possess great power /regional power status. The social challenge of the Arab Spring for Iran has been how to keep its Green Movement detached from the

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[1328] See Bahram Rafiei, "The Revolutionary Guards Before and After 2009: Two Acts of a Coup", *Rooz Online*, June 18, 2012, online available at: http://www.payvand.com/news/12/jun/1162.html (accessed on October 10, 2012).

[1329] Gülriz Şen, "The Green Movement in Iran: The Politics of Protest and Hope", paper presented at BRISMES Conference, University of St. Exeter, UK, June 28, 2011.

[1330] Ali M. Ansari, "Iran: domestic discontent and regional ambition", *Conservative Middle East Council (CMEC) Blog*, November 3, 2011, online available at: http://cmec.org.uk/blog/iran-domestic-discontent-and-regional-ambition/ (accessed on November 24, 2011).

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social dynamism and demand for change sweeping the region, while in geopolitical terms, the challenge was to maintain the regime's hitherto gained strategic advantages and if possible derive new geopolitical and ideological gains.[1331] This is being tried out with Iran arguing that people's protests in Egypt and Tunisia resulting in the departure of longtime dictators supported by the West follow the example of the Islamic Revolution of Iran and therefore the Arab Spring is an "Islamic Awakening" par excellence.[1332] However the victorious mood of Iran has long changed after the Syrian turmoil which Tehran deeply believes is a conspiracy by foreign powers to weaken resistance front and Iran sees the destiny of Syrian regime as its own.[1333] In a volatile and shifting regional context, Iran once again finds itself in a zero-sum game with the United States and holds mixed fortunes, but Syrian turmoil, sanctions and deadlock in nuclear talks deepen the crisis that the state has to manage to preserve its regional standing.

On the social terrain, concerns over revival of protests resulted in expansion of the coercive apparatus of the state by relying mostly on the basiji volunteers and turning them foot soldiers of the regime that penetrates deep in the society. Especially in the aftermath of the 2009 election, there has been discernible growth in their numbers which perhaps further approximated Iranian society to a "basiji society" as Ahmadinejad and the new political elite all hoped to transform. The security atmosphere continues to prevail so much so that it is mostly the agency of military and intelligence units which shape both domestic and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic by putting issues of

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[1331] Gülriz Şen, "İran ve 'Arap Baharı': Bağlam, Söylem ve Siyaset", *OrtaDoğu Etütleri*, Vol.3, No.2, (January 2012), pp. 95-118.

[1332] See "Khamenei hails 'Islamic' uprisings", *Al Jazeera*, February 4, 2011, online available at: http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201124101233510493.html (accessed on November 22, 2011); "Khamenei Praises Arab Revolts As Iran Crushes Its Own Protests," *Payvand,* February 21, 2011, http://www.payvand.com/news/11/feb/1202.html (accessed on October 7, 2011).

[1333] Mohammad Reza Kiani and Maysam Behravesh, "The Syrian crisis: What is at stake for regional players?" *Open Democracy*, September 10, 2011, p.2, online available at http://www.opendemocracy.net/mohammad-reza-kiani-maysam-behravesh/syrian-crisis-what-is-at-stake-for-regional-players (accessed on October 14, 2011).

development at the backburner. In this atmosphere, societal agency is drastically curbed by the regime. The survival of the regime antedates all other concerns and the basic function of foreign policy entangled with security policy of Iran is to ensure the continuity of the regime, however survival with restrained development and antagonistic relations with society is equally daunting.

6.7. Analytical Remarks and Conclusions

6.7.1. Co-constitution of the Domestic and International during the Epoch of Confrontation

The epoch of confrontation corresponded to crystallization of national security state in Iran alongside the ongoing securitization of state-society relations since the epoch of reform. This study contends that Iran's entanglement in nuclear crisis and rising warmongering through projections of military attack and regime change played a significant role in the transformation of the state into an authoritarian shield. In fact, the Islamic Republic from its inception had deep-seated security concerns as to the survival of its revolution and the political order, as Iran grew defiant against the United States in a highly strategic geography of world politics. A strong state was always envisioned as a shield to protect the regime, territory and order against the enemy, as Ayatollah Khomeini himself acknowledged in his praise of a strong army and propaganda machine. The formative influence of tension-ridden international context was palpable in the empowerment of the security elite, apparatus and rationale of the Islamic Republic. Indeed, the new generation of political elites in Iran mainly belonged to lower class war veterans who were socialized to the atrocities of war and hardships of poverty.

With their ideological and strategic mandate expanded, the IRGC assumed an unassailable place within the political system as a formidable component of the power bloc through its control over Iran's formal and informal economy and domestic and

external security. The confrontational context served to deepen securitization and the power of hardliners and conservatives.

The confrontational relations with the West and Iran's defiance structured both state and state-society affairs in many regards. The international served as a context and catalyst in shaping of politics -both configuration of political powers and creation of new institutions-, economic development and the status of social classes and ideology of the state and the state in return responded to shape its environment through political/ideological and economic capabilities. Starting from the last years of epoch of reform, American policy of regime change and interventions weakened the hand of the reformists and pragmatists forces seeking breakthrough, while strengthening the hands of hard-liner elites advocating a more robust and defiant posture. The presence of military threat compounded by allegations of meddling to instigate ethnic unrest expanded the scope and organization of IRGC preparing to encounter threats to the regime. In this epoch, the international was by persistent crisis over Iran's nuclear programme which cuts across many layers of politics and denotes multiple meanings for the regime. It has provided the regime ground for legitimacy particularly with the pursuit of "national" agenda vis-à-vis untrustworthy outsiders and it was used as an occasion to re-mobilize Iranians behind the regime. Rather than a social contract based on citizenship and enhanced freedoms and rights for the society, the elite aimed at mobilizing masses through another episode of populism. The international crisis also structured state-society affairs through sanctions. It is in the epoch of confrontation that Iran faced the severest sanctions in return for its defiance over continuous uranium enrichment. As the analysis outlined, sanctions mainly crippled the middle class and wage laborers and ironically empowered state as a protective shield in the short term. However, given the complications of Iran's oil-dependent and largely mismanaged economy, which suffers under expanding sanctions covering Iran's oil exports, it would become more difficult for the state to sustain economy amidst crisis in the long run. Therefore, it can be argued that inability of the state to resolve the crisis and prevent further sanctions would further strain state-society affairs. One of the most salient

impacts of the international over state-society affairs was palpable on the fate of democracy movement in Iran. Iran's more than a century old quest for democracy, freedoms and rights was periodically hampered because of geopolitical crises, wars and external inference in domestic affairs alongside the hazards of rentier state, clientelism and the closed nature of the political system. The democratization agenda of the US and covert and overt efforts for regime change in Iran further securitized the domestic political climate and obstructed the reformist project which was discredited for being an "American project." The "axis of evil" rhetoric of President Bush and following American moves in the Middle East and against Iran changed the balance of political forces by helping the reformists get further discredited in domestic politics. The crisis-ridden international context precluded normalization of domestic politics and threatened the future of republicanism and demands of societal struggles.

6.7.2. Agency and Structuring during the Epoch of Confrontation

The analysis of Iran-US relations in the epoch of confrontation revealed the extending sphere of Iranian influence and political agency in the region. In the epoch of confrontation, we have seen that Iran felt empowered even though this feeling of grandeur and geopolitical leverage sat uneasily with the securitization of state-society relations and regime's fear of domestic plots in the form of a velvet revolution. In this epoch, it was mainly the themes of resistance, defiance and confrontation that defined the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic. Iran resisted American policy of containment through its rising regional profile and growing oil power as much as by exploiting the mistakes and regional predicament of the United States. Ironically, it was American interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan that have provided Iran with room to maneuver and involve in the re-construction of these polities. Iran's foreign policy in regional spots refrained from replicating the past policies of export and instead focused on istitutionalizing Tehran's sphere of influence. It did not purport to radicalization and looked for stability for normalization of its neighborhood and departure of American troops. Since the early 2000s, Iran has become a major actor in regional politics and

often took pride in its rising influence. Iran's regional agency partly pertained to its ongoing confrontation with the West, as the region strategically, politically, economically and culturally became a wider theater of confrontation and Iran assumed its stronghold in the region as a deterrent against the likely assaults and estrangement. In this regard Iran's strategic linkages with Hezbollah, Hamas and Syria aimed at crafting a resistance front that would act as a strategic deterrence The fault-lines and encounter of Iran-US relations continued to be multi-spatial by extending into the region and involving many other state and non-state actors.

In the midst of fears that Iran intends to impose its hegemony in the Persian Gulf and the prevalent discourse that Iran poses an "existential threat" through "nuclear apocalypse", indeed the objectives of Iran's leadership remained much the same; as it looked for recognition of its legitimate interests and place in the region and assurances that will keep it secure from interference in its domestic affairs and attempts at regime change. However, there were debates as to whether the role that Iran has been seeking would be hegemonic or not and Iran's defiant nuclear policy and rise of radical, religio-nationalist views within the ruling elite fueled concerns and the aspiration to see Iran's power and opportunities contained. Even though Iran defied international community by adhering to nuclear technology and continued to enrich uranium, it did not close the door to diplomacy, remained in the NPT framework and searched for tangible assurances such as sanctions relief to stop enriching uranium at higher grades. Yet, Iran's fierce ideological rhetoric most of the time overshadowed its genuine interest in strategic solutions and combined with the tension-ridden context resulted in Iran's portrayal as an existential threat to world stability and security. Approaching to his last days in office, Ahmadinejad's diatribe has been under attack for endangering Iran's diplomatic achievement with war of words. Nevertheless, it was not solely the President that is responsible for foreign policy and the political system and in-built tensions are also implicated.

Iran's regional agency since the revolution shifted from exporting the revolution into establishing relations with the regional states on the basis of international norms. In the epoch of confrontation, Iran started to get more involved in its neighborhood in socio-economic terms and took part in the reconstruction of Lebanon, Iraq and Afghanistan as a prelude to long-term relations and firm establishment of Iran's material and ideological presence against regional and international competitors. As noted in the chapter, the agents of this multi-scalar constitution of state power at the regional level were the Revolutionary Guards with their formidable military and intelligence capabilities, economic might and mandate from the Supreme Leader. In this epoch, foreign policy of the Islamic Republic came under firm control of the Supreme Leader, his personal envoys and IRGC units. Arguably the agents of foreign policy entailed diplomats of foreign ministry in state-to-state relations and official negotiations, whereas a parallel diplomatic corpse that was directly empowered by the Supreme Leader's office was active in Iran's regional relations.

In this epoch, we have also seen the attempts by President Ahmadinejad to play a greater role in foreign policy which at times did not bode well with the boundaries of presidential agency vis-à-vis the mandate and authority of the Supreme Leader. Interestingly, although Supreme Leader and the President belonged to the conservative camp which was now composed of old generation and new generation of conservatives, the domestic balance of power and survival game created deep cleavages which also impacted on Iran's diplomacy. Especially after the political and social turmoil in 2009, the elite wars have found its reflections over Iran's nuclear policy. Iran's initially affirmative response to fuel swap deal in October 2009 and its change of mind weeks later pertained to divisions inside the regime as elaborated in the text. In that particular conjuncture of highly tense state-society relations, the goal of deriving legitimacy and victory from the "international" placed foreign policy once again at the very heart of domestic power struggles. Iran's agency and the end-game of nuclear crisis were growingly entangled in domestic expectations, as populism of the government integrated people into the dispute. In the post-revolution continuum of Iran-US relations, lack of

normalization between the two countries precludes normalization in Iran's politics and makes foreign policy even more integrated into power clashes between actors.

Compared to the 1990s, when search for reintegration and capitalist development across the globe also resonated in Iran, in the 2000s especially after the 9/11 attacks, securitization of world politics at large also bore upon Iran with the growth of its security concerns due to changing foreign policy strategy of the United States. It could be argued that regime security overshadowed the objective of development which seemed to be the major motive of Iran's foreign policy in the last decade. In the face of mounting sanctions, the regime persisted in its defiance by continuous enrichment despite deprivation and economic hazards. In response to increasing international economic pressure, Tehran looks to the East to compensate declining economic relations with the West, besides balancing strategic relations with the East against aggrandizement with the West. But how far Iran could stand sanctions and could live up to the expectations of development, prosperity and security, unless it can attain an understanding with the West, especially the United States is dubious.

6.7.3. Identity versus Interests: Back to the Revolution?

During the epoch of confrontation, with the consolidation of the conservative power, the conservative establishment and rising neo-conservatives seized the power to redefine and reframe Iran's identity. Earlier, during the epoch of reform, the conservatives faced a formidable alternative to their way of definition of society, identity and Iran's international vision. Then, religious intellectuals and reformist politicians were advocating reconciliation of Islam and modernity and came up with an authentic solution of "Islamic democracy" for political aspirations of society. This re-definition of identity facilitated Khatami's search for a breakthrough with the US, which he defined as a civilization based on reconciliation of religion and democracy. Thus, Iran's international affairs with the US would not contradict the normative underpinnings of the regime.

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However, balance of power shifted back to the conservatives through domestic political battles and the antagonistic international context forcing Iran to a hard-line position. A radical and confrontational discourse and definition of Iran's political identity started to pervade political landscape which echoed Iran's self-definition in the 1980s, as the post-revolutionary order was taking shape. In the early 2000s, under Mahmood Ahmadinejad's presidency, the elements of Islamism, Third Worldism, anti-imperialism and anti-Zionism gained ascendance, marking a shift from the identity that the reformist administration aimed to blend out of the composite ideologies that made up Iran's multi-faceted identity in line with the theme of integration and dialogue. Iran's strategic interests in resisting American policies that might endanger its domestic order reframed the definition of its identity and the language of its politics. Domestically, there was a surge of Islamization of social and cultural life to uproot the legacy of reformism and cope with the challenges of post-Islamist society. Iran's identity as a normative mind map to guide Iran's international posture and domestic existence took shape in the midst of contestations within the elites as well as between state and society. Ahmadinejad's personal contribution to reframing of Iran's identity has been thorough his millenarianism and motto of anti-imperialism that has placed Iran among those countries which resist global domination of the North, whereas his accent on the downtrodden and Islamic social justice aspired to revive the revolutionary decade.

In the Iranian context, the analytical relationship between identity and interest very much pertains to the duality between ideology and pragmatism. It was true that Iranian politics and the official parlance in international affairs became more ideological during the epoch of confrontation after a tempered period in the 1990s that focused more on opportunities of integration through balancing pragmatist concerns with Iran's post-revolutionary identity. In the latest epoch, within the context of vigilant scrutiny of international community over Iran's intensions with the nuclear programme, radical discourse jeopardized Iran's hitherto established relations with international community and the "war of nerves" risked a real armed confrontation that the president declined to acknowledge. But despite the rise of a more confrontational and belligerent rhetoric

reminiscent of revolutionary epoch, this chapter argued that Iran's foreign policy was not based on revolutionary slogans as it had been during the epoch of revolution and war. Even though Iran's confrontational tone sounded like its revolutionary past, Iran did not seek revisionism and its discourse and policies were motivated by self-preservation. After years of experience in government and international affairs and in spite of widespread purges of veteran diplomats and recruitment of ideological devotees, Iran retained its strategic power calculus. Supreme Leader Khamenei and his office were cognizant of the adverse repercussions of Ahmadinejad's rhetoric and took extra measures to keep experienced pragmatist and reformist figures in his circle, while he supported Ahmadinejad's rhetoric at home for reenacting revolutionary discourse. Ahmadinejad's discourse also made sense at a time US policies evoked strong anti-imperialist credentials all over the region and threatened Iran as well.

Judging foreign policy merely by discourse may lead to overextension of Iran's goals and capabilities as much as it overshadows Iran's planned strategy and pragmatic leanings. True that, in the epoch of confrontation with the rise of neoconservatives the ideological disposition became a salient factor to be emphasized in Iran's foreign policy. But in many respects the framing of Iran's identity as a moral and anti-imperialist power suited and supported its interests by providing a normative shield against geopolitical challenges it faced. As Iran sensed the "decay of Western civilization" out of failures of American policy in the Middle East, ideology became a soft weapon to combat American influence once again. The rise of Iran's regional influence boosted its perception of moral superiority and in a zero-sum-game mentality hardliners in Iran viewed the declining hegemony of the US as a harbinger of growing hegemony and might for Iran. This ideological perspective pushed the limits of confrontation and defiance and it risked endangering Iran's interests.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Having explored Iran's post-revolutionary transformation in a multi-spatial and multi-causal setting throughout successive historical epochs of revolution and war; reconstruction and reform; and confrontation, the last chapter aims to draw conclusions from this historical continuum for state, state-society and state-international affairs and assess evolution of Iran's post-revolutionary foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States. However, before these conclusions, the first part of the chapter will provide a brief overview of its analytical framework which has structured the research and its methodology. The chapter will conclude with challenges and future prospects awaiting Iran's foreign policy and relations with the United States.

Historical Sociology as a Research Systematique for Foreign Policy Studies

This study aimed to construct a historical-sociological perspective of foreign policy analysis by addressing the theoretical and meta-theoretical shortcomings of previous foreign policy articulations both within FPA and IR theories which engaged with foreign policy and offered Historical Sociology as a research systematique and analytical framework that would bridge inside-outside, agency-structure and interest-identity dichotomies.

Since the 1980s, the growing interaction between IR and HS has produced a wide array of works challenging the a-sociological and ahistorical orientation of IR theory and historicized the fundamental concepts of the discipline such as the state and international system, which until then remained as generic abstractions and analytical tools without much regard to their concrete and evolving ontology. HS in a sense rebuilt the bridges of

IR into historical analysis and social theorizing. Analysis of foreign policy, on the other hand, as a sub-discipline of IR was restricted to unit-level analysis and excluded from system-level theorizing. The rich empirical findings and complexity of foreign policy analysis contradicted with the search for abstract, general and parsimonious theorization of the international. Nevertheless, foreign policy has lately come under increasing theoretical attention paralleling theoretical diversity within the IR theory. Different versions of realist paradigm, constructivism and post-modernist approaches attended to the study of foreign policy and brought insights of evolving IR theory into this sub-field. But this study has argued that these perspectives produced foreign policy articulations based on either agential or structural explanation; relied on inside-outside distinction and reproduced identity versus interest dichotomy. The insights derived from HSIR highlighted the mutually constitutive linkages between the domestic and the international and transcended the merely interactive conception of both realms which were hitherto imagined as strictly separated from one another. The emphasis on structuring shed light on both agency and structures as indispensible components of any analysis of social phenomenon including state and its foreign policy. It emphasized the agential powers of the state, while analyzing various structures posited both within and out of the boundaries of the state that limited or extended state's room for maneuver. State through its agency which was shaped by the context, material and normative capabilities and strategy is able to shape and transform the material and normative structures it is embedded in including its own structural composite; whereas structures with their constraining and enabling effects change the state. This study in line with Colin Wight and Bob Jessop's scientific realist articulations has focused on multiple agencies residing in the complex institutional ensemble of the state, whose capabilities shifted from epoch to epoch, rather than a monolithic and unitary agency of the state. Arguing that the state is an arena and a site of contestation, state's agency depended on the outcomes of these struggles which also redrew the boundaries of state autonomy. This study also challenged the monolithic and static conceptions of identity and interest, attended their co-constitutive relationship and the role of agency in selecting, defining and reframing of identities and interests.

The major focus of this study has been upon the co-constitutive interaction of the domestic and international and state transformation out of this formative interaction. This study contended that historical sociological perspective of foreign policy first and foremost calls for a historical sociological analysis of the state that structure foreign policy. It is for this reason that transformation of the state is analyzed in conjunction with foreign policy. This accent on state through its focus on the international and domestic constituents of state institutions, material capabilities and ideology indeed has brought both international and domestic into analysis without excluding the "systemic" or "unit-level", "macro" or "micro" from analytical elaboration. In a sense, the state served as a meso-level entity that was posited at what Hobson dubbed at the "vortex" of the domestic and international, which does shapes and itself being shaped by struggles and processes emanating from each domain; whose extent obviously pertained to the historical context. Adopting a holistic and integrated perspective through a historical sociological imagination prioritized state and its complex ensemble of material and normative relations in a given historical conjuncture in analysis of foreign policy. It is in this context that the interplay of institutions and political elites, the role of identity and interest, the impact of geopolitics were looked through. This perspective allowed us to make sense of nuances and give adequate attention to multi-causality. Historical perspective also helped us to see the evolution of the concepts of identity, interest and geopolitics and challenged their reification. Historical analysis of Iran's different epochs therefore provided the ground for comparison and assessment of patterns of change and continuity within the state and its foreign policy.

Even though it may at first seem rather common sense to talk about the role of history and sociology, as literature review has shown; the major paradigm of IR theory until the 1980s remained largely ahistorical and asociological in pursuit of grand and parsimonious theorization. Compared to IR theory, foreign policy analysis has been more adamant to focus on historical factors and social dynamics; yet in FPA, lack of a social theory of the state and the sole focus on decision-making eluded an integrated approach to foreign policy and the broader structural context it is formulated. As

Abrams argued Historical Sociology is not simply adding up historical detail or sociological perspective into analysis, in our case, it required an ontological rethinking over the state beyond its representation as a "national-territorial container" and the "international" beyond the notion of anarchy, and demanded historical reflection to ground this ontology. HSIR analysis developed in this study aimed to provide a framework to think over these terms historically, sociologically and internationally while conceptualizing a systematic study of foreign policy.

The offered HSIR perspective does not intend to build a grand theory of foreign policy, which is elusive and untenable for such an empirically and analytically diverse subject matter particularly in the face of historical variation, contingency and complexity of different national formations. Even for the same state at different time intervals, choices, agency and the domestic and international structures that the state is embedded keep changing. However, it is one the contentions of this study that the complexity and dynamism of foreign policy shall not preclude scholars from analytical engagement and theoretical reflection, given the importance of foreign policy as a way to understand political agency of the state, as argued throughout the study. Instead of timeless, general, single-unit or single-level based analysis; historical, multi-causal, multi-spatial and processual analysis is offered as the most convenient method to analyze foreign policy. HSIR through this method arrives at patterns rather than general laws and it is through these patterns that less ambitious theoretical conclusions can be derived.

The dissertation used the suggested historical, multi-spatial, multi-causal and processual analysis to reflect on Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and evolution of Iran's US policy and Iran-US relations since the inception of the Islamic Republic. It used a diachronic method to detect patterns of change and continuity within the state and its foreign policy toward the United States. By emphasizing the historicity of the state and its emergent qualities out of the co-constitutive interaction of the domestic and the international, this thesis has structured its analysis in successive historical epochs of Iran's post-revolutionary history naming them as the epoch of revolution and war, the

epoch of reconstruction, the epoch of reform and the epoch of confrontation. Prior to the analysis of post-revolutionary change in Iran, this study has also reflected on the origins of modern state that crystallized during the Pahlavi monarchy.

In each epoch, the chapters accounted for state's political configuration and institutional composition, political economy and ideology within the context of geopolitical and social change and then analyzed foreign policy of the state. To analyze the mutual constitution of the domestic and the international, each chapter is organized into a two-tier analysis, which examined relations between state and the international and state-society affairs. Through these analyses, it shed light on the formative role of the international over state and state-society relations as well as the constitutive role of state's policies and tensions in state-society relations over the international. Indeed, the notion of "mutual constitution" or "co-constitution" has been frequently mentioned in historical sociological works in IR. This research aimed to substantiate the co-constitutive linkages between the state and the international through a historical analysis of Iran-US relations in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution. The theme of co-constitution demanded analysis looking at reciprocal and formative interaction between the international (including the regional) with state-society complexes. The study argued that the process of co-constitutive interaction between the state and its multi-spatial environment culminated in changes that re-structured state's administrative and coercive institutions, power balance in domestic politics, material development and social class configurations in addition to state's ideology to legitimate its political choices. The extent and scope of interaction and change were determined by historical conjuncture, therefore shall be analyzed in its historical context, but these linkages provided the framework that the elements of co-constitution could be addressed. After providing analysis of state transformation and foreign policy within the particular historical conjuncture of the epoch, the chapters concluded with analytical remarks responding to the contribution of the historical sociological perspective to the three axes of foreign policy articulations depicted in the analytical framework.

This study adhered to a broader definition of the international with the acknowledgement of the constitutive significance of global capitalism and intersubjective structures beside geopolitics. It conceptualized the state as embedded in its society as well as within international structures of power, wealth and norms which corresponded to different dimensions of the international as a "context and catalyst" for domestic change. From a conceptual perspective, analysis of foreign policy is related to agency of the state. The state as agent has been a common disposition in IR theory which defined state as the main actor of international politics. However, such perspective took state either as a unitary unit or person. This study reflected on the state as an institutional ensemble, a complex structural composite of material and normative relations whose agency derives from its agents acting on behalf of the state. In this regard, the dissertation has relied on scientific-realist articulations on state ontology and analyzed state as a structuratum; a structure based other structured material and normative relations. It paid attention to the difference between agency of the state through various agents that are structurally located in state structure and acting on behalf of the state and state-as-agent thesis that equated state with human beings capable of reasoning and action. This study underlined the significance of the former perspective and argued that foreign policy shall relate to competing agencies within the body politic of the state through recognition of multiple agencies at work on behalf of it. The role and capabilities of various state agents however changed with the historical conjuncture and crystallization of state structures. Changes in structural composition of the state either in institutional, economic or ideological terms also changed the contexts and capabilities of the agents and their relative positioning vis-à-vis each other. This plurality once again confirmed that the state constitutes an arena, a site for contestation of different social and political struggles and foreign policy is likely to become a battlefield depending on its significance for the vitality of material and ideological reproduction of the political order.

Iran's Post-Revolutionary Transformation and Foreign Policy toward the United States

In line with the historical sociological research systematique this dissertation aimed to analyze Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and foreign policy toward the United States through successive epochs since the inception of the Islamic Republic. Rather than focusing on a single factor or era, this study aspired to provide a holistic perspective of multi-spatial and multi-causal setting of Iran's foreign policy toward the US. Indeed, no other state has been so central to the politics and international relations of modern Iran especially after the second half of the 20th century as much as the United States has been. On the basis of this historical observation, the study argued that Iran's policy toward the US is not simply a foreign policy matter *per se*; but at the same time a contentious domestic issue bearing upon political configuration, socio-economic development, the ruling ideology and self-definition of the state. United States stand both as a geopolitical and ideological adversary as well as a critical actor and so far a persistent hurdle in the way of Iran's reintegration into world politics and economy in the full sense. Therefore, Iran's relations with the United States extend beyond strategic relations and pertain to various aspects of the state including development and self-definition. Iran's relations with America also surpass bilateral affairs between Iran and the US and encompass regional states such as the GCC countries, Lebanon and Syria; non-state actors such as Hezbollah and Hamas; major powers of world politics including Russia and China as well as European countries and international organizations such as UN, IAEA because of the steady growth of Iran-US confrontation over Tehran's nuclear programme. Curiously, Iran-US do not have "relations" in diplomatic sense, but their relations still pose an evolving, tumultuous and critical affair, as both states increasingly face each other in Middle East geopolitics. Therefore, it's a multi-spatial relationship and Iran's foreign policy toward the US is intrinsically related with Iran's regional policy and international diplomacy. On the other hand, American policy vis-à-vis Iran both directly and indirectly shape state's affairs with its society as much as factional

struggles among the political groups over the fate of Iran's relations with the US which adds up the domestic space into the above-cited multi-spatiality of Iran's US policy.

As the study demonstrated, in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution in 1979 Iran-US relations went through a radical rupture, terminating the entrenched affairs established during the Pahlavi monarchy. United States has been an integral actor in the politics, development and international orientation of modern Iran since the 1950s. It was one of perpetrators of the coup together with Britain toppling the democratically elected Mossaddeq Government that nationalized Iran's oil industry and endangered imperial interests in Iran. The coup reinstated Shah's authority against the defiant prime minister and broadened political, military and economic relations between the Shah regime and successive US administrations followed thereafter. Iran's burgeoning literate urban society as well as traditional segments of the society alike would detest *Amrika* for what they viewed as the country's subjugation to imperial power strategies in return for military and economic aid to Shah's abhorred autocracy, beside American assistance in training and support of the formidable secret service SAVAK, which turned into a horrid apparatus of the Pahlavi monarchy to crash political opposition. It was an era that social roots of political resentment and enmity against the US took shape, which would very much determine the course of relations in the aftermath of the revolution. The analysis therefore started with a historical analysis of politics and international affairs of Iran in pre-revolutionary times and examined the role that US played in the shaping of modern Iran; its institutions, economy, military and international orientation as well as the political consciousness and opposition.

The Epoch of Revolution and War

The fourth chapter entitled the epoch of revolution and war constituted the first part of the analysis on Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and radical change in Iran-US relations. It covered the period starting from 1979 until 1989. The chapter focused on the massive socio-political change brought by revolution and the formative impact of the

tumultuous war with Iraq not only over the institutions of the state, but also over the restructuring of state-society relations by examining the role of populist mobilization, ideology and changes in social classes. A new polity was to unfold under the duress of war and revolutionary transformation. The analysis dubbed this epoch as foundational for institutions, political economy and the ideology of the state as much as for foreign policy and international orientation of the state. The Pahlavi monarchy gave way to the Islamic Republic which was built upon a unique yet uneasy coexistence of republicanism and theocracy. The new Iran turned into an amalgam of revolutionary, religious and republican institutions which brought patterns of conflict and complexity into post-revolutionary politics and set the challenges for the consolidation of the state. Among the diverse anti-Shah coalition of revolutionaries, it was the Islamists under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini that seized state power and one by one sidelined their political rivals. The epoch was known for brutal contestations and reign of terror for political dissidents as much as politics of sidelining with the help of international crisis. As argued throughout the text, it was in this epoch that the dualism of state came into existence. The post-revolutionary state was built upon both the revolutionary movement which came under the control of clerical powers and the state tradition as the new leadership preserved the institutions of the Pahlavi state, while purging them from the "servants" of the Shah. In this epoch, the movement started to consolidate its grip on the state and reconfigure the state and society alongside the ideals of the revolutionary leadership. Although revolution has shattered the autonomy of the Pahlavi state and transformed the state truly into an arena of social and political struggles as Abrahamian argued, with the consolidation of the regime, the political field was solely open to the "insiders" that are loyal to the revolution and Islam.

The field of foreign policy was highly contested, for a number of revolutionary bodies and foundations claimed a role to play in foreign policy at the expense of foreign ministry. In this era, Iran's mantra of exporting its revolution and the war with Iraq empowered Revolutionary Guards and semi-state bonyads as agents of the Islamic Republic in Iran's regional agency. As argued, foreign policy of Iran in this epoch was

not a proper foreign policy, but rather a pursuit of revolutionary principles and imagination. The epoch was dominated by the ideological zeal and multiplicity of agents aspiring to create replicas of the Islamic Iran in its neighborhood through a mix of subversion and propaganda. Even in this epoch, different thoughts over the meaning and limitations of the export of revolution policy and coping with Iran's growing international isolation started to appear. Beside ideology, preserving the security of the regime and the state gained primacy with the Iran-Iraq War, let alone the deep-seated fears of a possible American move to undo the revolution and reinstitute the Pahlavi monarchy.

The clearest example of the impact of transforming state over foreign policy was palpable in the radical transformation of Iran-US relations. This epoch was also foundational for Iran-US relations, as the two states transformed into bitter adversaries from key strategic allies in the Middle East. Iran started to define United States as the "Great Satan", the erstwhile enemy of the "Government of God" which would endure in official parlance for years to come. The first grave crisis of Iran-US relations after the revolution, the Hostage Crisis was named as the "Second Revolution" in official parlance, completing the first revolution ousting the Shah. The official discourse would define the revolution as a victory not merely against the Shah, but also against the United States which was seen as the imperial patron of the Shah's dictatorship. Notwithstanding earlier attempts to reach a *modus vivendi* between US and Iran through milder attitude of liberal Islamists in the provisional government, with the consolidation of theocratic rule under Ayatollah Khomeini and sidelining of moderate contenders, anti-Americanism became the ideological pillar of the new state, a feature of regime's legitimacy, a means for popular mobilization and keep revolutionary fervent alive, besides serving as a litmus test to distinguish the loyalists from the traitors and the basis of Islamization of society and education. In the eyes of the revolutionaries, United States became the embodiment of unjust international order, the "world arrogance" against which Iran's moral, Godly government should struggle. In search for political independence, there was a strong motive both among Islamist nationalists and Islamist

and secular leftists to break away from the imperial past and history of exploitation. In this epoch, the vast military and economic relations between Iran and the US started to vanish one by one. Iran worked assiduously to decouple itself from hitherto-built material relations with the US by terminating strong economic linkages through oil companies, banking sector and high volumes of consumer and capital goods exports. The diplomatic relations were over, as US was entangled in revolutionary Iran with the Hostage Crisis that Iran chose to prolong for domestic consolidation around Khomeini as well as to fulfill a vengeful humiliation of the US and President Carter.

However, ironically, the end of diplomatic ties and expulsion of "spies" from Iran's territory did not mean an end of American presence or of Iran-American relations in real terms. This is not to argue for a continuity of American ability to meddle in Iran's affairs. American officials were quite clear about the "loss" of a significant ally in the region. But the more US materially disappeared from the scene, the more it assumed the position of an ideological construct and an enemy cult, reminding Iran of its revolutionary victory against imperialism as much as keeping it vigil and concerned about likely American moves against revolution.

The course of geopolitical developments such as political opportunism of the Saddam regime to fight a war with the new Iran deepened the rift between Iran and the United States. Iran believed that there were imperial machinations behind the Iraqi aggression and therefore argued that the war with Iraq was an "imposed war". It blamed the US for helping Iraqi war efforts and postponing an Iranian victory. The war has been decisive for both state-society affairs and Iran's international affairs. For Iran-US relations, it can be argued the war in fact taught the Islamic Republic that the US is a formidable military power, which could threaten Iran not solely through meddling into Iran's domestic affairs and manipulating politics, but also through military confrontation. Iran and the US were almost at the brink of a naval war after the Irangate scandal and escalation of the Tanker War in the Middle East. Moreover, the war also revealed that despite radical rupture, it was not easy for Iran to break up all relations with the US in such a short span

of time, particularly due to its historical dependence on American weapons, which depleted rapidly in the prolonged war. As far as Iran's dependence on US weapons is concerned, unable to obtain arms from American allies, Iran through secrecy and gun dealers reached out its enemy to get weapons; a move that has shown Iran's pragmatism despite all the rhetoric. Apparently amidst ideologization of Iran's international orientation through a radical pursuit of revisionism, pragmatist political elite made inroads to Khomeini's decisions. On the issue of Iran's strategy of "war until victory"; that is until the overthrow of the Saddam regime and institution of an Islamic Republic in Iraq, even though Iran had expelled the Iraqi troops from its soil in 1982 and could end the war by then, in 1988 Ayatollah Khomeini was persuaded to drink the "poison chalice" and accept ceasefire without preconditions as Iran's worn-out military capabilities and morale of the society could not have withstood further violence. Geopolitical dynamics also limited Iran's ideological commitment for a victory. Iran eventually took a strategic decision to end the war, a move that it did not consider to take when revolutionary fervor was high with the 1982 victory, beside the victory's enhancing impact on state autonomy. In the face of domestic and international tension, the autonomy to pursue the war eroded significantly.

This foundational epoch has set some of the persistent patterns of Iran-US relations for the subsequent epochs. The revolutionary turmoil and Iran's domestic reasons to escalate the Hostage Crisis led to crystallization a perception of Iran as a country run by "mad mullahs" and "irrationality" tarnishing Iran's international image. It would be the normative structure that would challenge Iran's agency for rebuilding its relations with the world in the coming epochs. The intersubjective relationship between Iran and the US was underpinned by a Manichean worldview in both states and was a factor that needs to be considered. Iran's fierce rhetoric, revolutionary crowds and slogans, export of revolution policy and role in the establishment of Hezbollah and radical activities associated with Hezbollah led to institutionalization of mistrust vis-à-vis Iran. For Iran, revolution was redemption from past injustices and the start of a brand new era of independence. Another pattern in relations was US policy of sanctions vis-à-vis Iran.

Since the Hostage Crisis, American sanctions policy persisted and the issue of frozen assets remained unresolved so far. Interestingly, even then sanctions were not able to change Iran's behavior. Thirdly, the epoch has seen the first attempts of multiscalar constitution of the state by seeking embeddedness not only in its society, but also in the region through its policy of export of revolution. Iran wanted to replicate its domestic order as the epicenter of further Islamic revolutions in the region. This was both strategically and ideologically motivated. But it created further strategic challenges against Iran, as regional states were gravely alarmed by what they perceived as Iran's intensions to subvert, destabilize and if possible depose monarchies and establish new popular theocracies that would break away from the United States. The revisionist and transnational scope of Iran's foreign policy brought forth a strategy on the part of the United States and its regional allies that would seek to constrain and contain Iran as much as possible. Indeed, revolutionary change and its regional impact have shown that so called "domestic" events had the ability to threaten and change regional order. As Halliday argued revolutions were international events as much as domestic. It was against containing Iran's revolutionary influence that a new security architecture which would depend on extended US arms sales and containment strategy against Iran and Iraq emerged with the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council and growing military presence of the United States in the Persian Gulf. In ideological terms, the seizure of power by the Islamists in Iran strengthened Islamism as a transnational ideology which would become potent with the further weakening of pan-Arabism in the coming epoch.

Iran's agency in this epoch intended to be transformative, for it targeted spreading its model by exporting the revolution which would mar regional balance further, if succeeded. It has bullied the United States and by doing so wanted to end the "wolf and sheep" relationship. Iran's courage and calculus obviously had nothing to do with military parity; it rather stemmed from the sense of victory out of deposing the US-backed Shah. Iran also targeted the Iraqi regime until victory but eight years of war did not bring an Iranian victory other than preserving its territorial integrity and strengthening of state's infrastructural reach. Iran's revolutionary objectives were

contained by war, which exhausted its human and material resources and led to a reframing of its interests with a redefinition of the scope of revolution in the coming epoch.

At the end of the decade, Iran came to the conclusion that it had to contend with the dynamics of "dependent capitalism" due to its natural resource endowment and its oil-dependent economy which challenged the revolutionary dictum of economic independence as well as with military dependence on outsiders which was a legacy of the Shah era. Tehran's belief in its self-righteousness for a while led to a disregard for political, economic and strategic dynamics that international and regional relations were built upon. But war, the costs of growing isolation, economic crisis and social exhaustion reminded Iran of the workings of international and the need for striking a balance between its quest for self-definition and the contexts that such a quest was taking place. The epoch of revolution and war ended with growing recognition within the Iranian leadership and political elite of the necessity of change, although the extent and boundaries of change were far from clear and would be subject to further contestations. However, the undeniable urgency to reconstruct Iran in economic, social and military terms was widely acknowledged. As the epoch was coming to an end, it would be the process of Iran's reintegration into political and economic relations with the international system which would define its overall foreign policy as well as a significant portion of its policy vis-à-vis the United States.

The Epoch of Reconstruction and Reform

The fifth chapter analyzed the epoch of reconstruction and the epoch of reform in conjunction for the very reason that both epochs were marked by Iran's attempts at re-integrating into international politics, globalizing economy and international community after a tumultuous decade of war and post-revolutionary struggle. The epoch of reform extended the scope of change from quest for economic renewal into quest for a broader change in state-society affairs and a deeper reconciliation of state's relations with the

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international. The epoch of reconstruction was shaped by tremendously important structural and political changes with the end of the Iran-Iraq war and the Cold War; the 1990-1991Gulf War and the death of Ayatollah Khomeini. It is in this epoch, which corresponded to post-Cold War Middle East that the United States, the erstwhile enemy of the Islamic Republic embarked on reshaping the region through Middle East Peace Process, increased its military presence in the Persian Gulf and built its strategy on containment and sanctioning of Iran and Iraq.

At the beginning of the 1990s, state, state-society affairs and foreign policy were all subject to challenges of change. With the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, the father of the Revolution and the cement of factionalized politics in Iran, the fate of the revolution and the direction of post-Khomeini politics were widely questioned. The political system organized under the supreme authority of the *velayat-e faqih* survived through smooth transition of power to Ayatollah Khamenei as the new faqih. At the start of the decade, there was institutionalization of a new political configuration with strengthened mandates of the faqih and the creation of a strong executive presidency which has introduced the elements of dual leadership into Iranian politics. The epoch of reconstruction was coined as the Thermidorian stage of the Iranian Revolution within which revolutionary excesses would give way to more balanced and reformist forces. Scholars like Ehteshami even dubbed this era as Iran's "Second Republic." The leaders of Iran had to contend with the grave economic and social challenges of post-war days, which culminated in growing moderation and opening in Iran's foreign behavior with registered success in the Persian Gulf and Europe and striking moves even in Iran's approach toward the US. The themes of development and reconstruction gained enormous significance in Iran's international orientation. This study demonstrated that Iran with lessons derived from the previous epoch shifted to reconciling with the international and gave up revisionism in *stricto sensu*, but apparently the boundaries of reconciliation had to strike a chord with Iran's post-revolutionary self-definition. The political elite at large did not necessarily start to think favorably about the international domain particularly because of its "unjust" and "domineering" characteristics. But in the

1990s, the rising pragmatism through modern right also perceived the international as a realm of opportunity to rebuild the country. The revolutionary movement in the 1980s was gradually crystallizing into the state, and seeing and acting through the state demanded Iran to achieve some kind of reconciliation with international actors so as to ensure the material reproduction of the state. The political economy of the regime after the revolution and war played a decisive role in post-war foreign policy of the Islamic Republic and introduced the element of moderation.

The starting epoch was marked by a process of Iran's search for reintegration and development, following Iran's search for self-definition and repositioning as a post-revolutionary state in the epoch of revolution and war. The theme of development gained currency, as the warring state transformed into a developmental state seeking termination of post-revolution and post-war economic crisis and obstacles to its material reproduction. However, the starting epoch and process of reintegration did not denote an end for the former process of Iran's soul searching after the revolution. The process of self-definition continued alongside the new objectives of reconstruction and development, as attempts for integration back into world politics and economy at times clashed with the ideological foundations of the post-revolutionary order. The tension between change and status quo brought further contestations within the state between different power centers and found its reflection over foreign policy. Iran's foreign policy in the 1990s carried several motives; it sought building ties with the world so as to bring Iran much needed international capital and investment for renewal, whereas it also responded to geopolitical developments taking place in the region as United States embarked on refashioning regional order and isolating Iran. The evolving context also led Tehran to carve up a policy that would support actors that were pushed to the margins of politics in the emerging order. Therefore, development and security of the state and preservation of the identity of the regime all factored in Iran's agency and the balance between these motives changed through historical conjunctures made up of different domestic, regional and international developments and shifting power configuration within the state.

The new context through the restructuring of state institutions and power relations empowered new agents within the state and Iran's foreign policy. There was more administrative space for professionals and technocrats in the handling of state affairs, even though the political command was strictly reserved for the clerical authority. Nevertheless, in the field of foreign policy professional and trained diplomats became the agents of a more pragmatist posture and the moderate definition of revolutionary principles. The pragmatic administration under Hashemi Rafsanjani wanted to isolate state and its foreign policy from radical revolutionary agency that could spoil Iran's much needed integration into regional and international system. In this sense there was an attempt to ensure the autonomy of foreign policy from factional politics. Rafsanjani attempted to channel the energies of revolutionary formations into reconstruction of Iran. In the 1990s, there has been a reconfiguration of political elite as well. The political right soon got divided with the rise of modern right eager to catch up with neoliberal economy and provide liberalization of society, whereas the traditional right adhered to strict conservatism of political, economic, cultural and moral space. A significant change also took place among the Islamic leftists, as they started to drop their radical vision and even embraced the possibility of relations with the US, so long as United States treated Iran on the basis of mutual respect. The mantle of anti-Americanism as an in-built ideological pattern of the regime was thence mainly owned by conservative centers of power and no longer constituted an unassailable principle, if Iran and the US could start a more egalitarian and trust-based relationship.

In the epoch of reconstruction as well as reform, it was mainly the American policies vis-à-vis the region and Iran that shaped the strategic challenges facing the Islamic Republic. Iran's goal of reintegration and reconstruction coincided with the US preponderance in the region. The growing US hegemony in the Persian Gulf after the 1990-1991 Gulf War kept Iran's military and strategic concerns alive. In political terms, at a time Iran aimed at reintegration, American policy stood in stark contrast, for it was built on containing Iran together with Iraq and Iran's exclusion from the new world order in the Middle East. During the Clinton Administration, together with the

containment policy, Iran became subjected to mounting unilateral sanctions from the US through Congress and Presidential Executive Orders which sought to limit not only trade and investment of American firms in Iran, but also extended its prohibitions against third parties eager to welcome Iran's reintegration into global capitalism. Iran's desire to play a greater role in energy politics with its geographical location, infrastructural leverage and vast natural endowments, beside its quest to reach out post-Soviet space that was once historically connected to Iran were effectively curtailed by American policy. In this regard, the containment policy exceeded the Middle East and incorporated all possible strategic moves Iran would take under changing geopolitical and social conjunctures.

Despite shortcomings, Iran in this era assumed the mantle of "norm-abiding state" and portrayed itself as a stable power that should be recognized as a legitimate player in its region which strategically echoed Shah's foreign policy discourse. Meanwhile, United States during the 1990s characterized Iran as a "rogue state", a backlash country which posed the foremost challenge to world stability and security. The perception of "Iranian threat" started to get constructed at a time Iran worked assiduously to normalize its international affairs. As noted elsewhere, the bitter memory of the Hostage Crisis and concerns over the prospect of a powerful Iran in the region which was perceived as a threat against Israeli security helped build up a normative context in the US, working against Iran no matter how favorable geopolitical conjunctures proved for accommodation between Iran and the United States. It proved hard for those politicians and intellectuals in the US arguing for a more balanced and objective approach vis-à-vis Iran to make their voices heard and taken into consideration. Equally, it would be harder for Iranian politicians seeking accommodation with the US to defend these objectives, so long as United States remained stringent on its Iran policy.

The rising pragmatism in Iran's policies rested on a recognition of the need for material reproduction of the state, if the revolution and the regime were to survive. Therefore, the quest entailed ensuring domestic survival of the regime and smooth functioning of the state mechanisms as much as it pertained to survival under US hegemony and global capitalism. The political elite converged on the necessity of economic renewal and

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reconstruction of Iran. Iran's leaning towards change coincided with change sweeping the post-Soviet space in Europe and Central Asia through neo-liberal restructuring and the Islamic Republic had to reintegrate into a world now defined by the Washington Consensus. The Rafsanjani administration came to the conclusion that Iran's successful reintegration into international political and economic relations depended much on American approval and Iran's ability to reach a *modus vivendi* with the US. The necessity of striking a chord with the United States however proved to be a highly contentious issue which would fan the flames of factionalism in domestic politics and Iran's foreign policy toward the United States. Even though Iran's need for integration and access to investment and international capital was crystal clear, the mistrust and enmity against outside powers, particularly toward the United States was pervasive, the scars of war and memories of history were quite vivid and they were an intrinsic part of the political order as an element of regime's legitimacy and self-definition. Any conciliatory move towards the US echoed as a betrayal of revolution and Khomeini's legacy which indeed constituted a normative constraint for the political elite in their quest for accommodation.

Reaching out to US was politically costly, but strategically necessary. To do so, the Rafsanjani Administration played the economic card to evade political risks. The Conoco deal in 1995 was a bold step which opened Iran's oil sector to American investment and albeit economically motivated, the agreement of the leadership to open up to American investment was also striking in political terms. Yet, the deal could not materialize because of US sanctions encouraging divestment in Iran. In the early 1990s, Iran also took strategic measures that would defuse tensions in its regional and international environment. As elaborated, these moves were made possible with related domestic transformation of politics. In this epoch the inherent duality between movement and state entered into a spatial division of labor through shelving of the export of revolution policy and adhering to the dictum of revolution in one country. Placing development high on the agenda, the executive leadership would lean on détente and moderation in foreign policy by attempting to temper revolutionary excesses of the

former era and improve Iran's tarnished image by mentioning its stabilizing force in the region. These objectives were manifest during the early 1990s in Iran's role in helping release of American Hostages held captive by Hezbollah and constructive role in the Gulf War.

President Khatami in the epoch of reform with his broad popular mandate embarked upon reforming Iran's domestic politics and international affairs, which proved equally daunting for the reformist government. In the epoch of reform, out of similar concerns to speed up development and integration, President Khatami's foreign policy followed former president Rafsanjani's footsteps and registered important success in building bridges with the international particularly in Iran's relations with the Persian Gulf countries and Europe. Parallel to intense domestic debate on reconciliation of tradition and modernity and attempts to carve up an authentic response that would provide the conceptual basis of Iran's reintegration, there was a rethinking over Iran's relations with the West. Khatami's quest for rapprochement with the West was not merely economic; his administration sought to lay the conceptual framework for establishing political relations through confidence-building measures. His theme of "dialogue between civilizations" was a significant discursive and political move addressing the deep-seated problem of mistrust and historical scars. As the clash of civilizations and the misplaced dichotomy of Islam versus the West started to dominate thoughts and agency in world politics, Khatami's accent on dialogue aimed to overcome ideological and historical barriers and achieve normalization.

President Khatami's second-term in office coincided with watershed developments in world politics with the September 11 attacks, which created a brand new geopolitical scheme that Iran had to adjust. Inside Iran, the policy circles and analysts expressed their hope for improvement of Iran's geopolitical standing and Iran-American relations. Iran's strategic decision to cooperate with the US in ousting of Taliban and making of a new Afghanistan under the auspices of the Northern Alliance that has been supported by the Islamic Republic throughout the 1990s was expected to bring a qualitative change to

strategic relations. However, since 2002, Iran became an open target of neoconservative march in the Middle East with overt mention of "regime change", a prospect that became graver with the occupation of Iraq by American-led Coalition Forces. The emerging picture was mixed with opportunities and challenges which imbued Iran's foreign policy with a sense of grandeur and constant fear. Iran rejoiced the elimination of its enemies in Afghanistan and Iraq, yet found growing American presence at its doorstep. Absent a marked victory for Iran in terms of recognition of its interests together with the discourse of axis of evil, the international conjuncture turned the tide against the reformist government. As argued, Khatami's foreign policy towards the US was not fully endorsed by the Supreme Leader and the conservative establishment at large. For the conservatives, the strategic necessity of *modus vivendi* with the US sat uneasily with possible victory accorded to the reformists, if there could be any. The breakout of nuclear crisis would make that goal even more elusive.

The role of the international in structuring of state-society relations in the context of Iran-US relations was palpable in growing securitization of domestic and international politics of Iran. President Bush's democratization agenda, disregard for Iran's indigenous reformist struggle and decision to empower Iranian NGOs only served to fuel the ferocity of the regime against social demands for democracy, rule of law and civil society as well as fed its fear of foreign plot through domestic collaborators. Iran's century-old civil rights tradition was jeopardized by lack of normalization in Iran's international affairs. With the breakout of nuclear crisis, the regime's defiance against outside powers would escalate. The deterioration of the security atmosphere would turn the state into a national security state and enhance the agency of military elite in international affairs and domestic politics of Iran.

The Epoch of Confrontation

The last chapter analyzed contemporary state of Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and its foreign policy toward the US since 2005 up until the first half of 2012. Named as

the epoch of confrontation, the chapter aimed at articulating growing militarization and securitization of the state-society complex and Iran's transformation into a security state. It shed light on the context for Iran's confrontational posture through a multi-causal perspective; the deepening fault-lines and contestations between Iran and the United States; and the impact of tension-ridden international context on growing authoritarianism of the state, shaping of social classes and overall development of the polity as well as fractures in state-society affairs.

Indeed, confrontation has been a pervasive theme in Iran's post-revolutionary history and agency. But the analysis has also shown that particularly in the 1990s there was a strong element of accommodation and moderation in Iran's foreign policy, even towards the United States during the presidencies of Rafsanjani and Khatami. These attempts had to operate on the fault-lines of factional politics, among which relations with the United States was highly contentious, and against the lack of timely and positive response from the United States which was highly essential, if a breakthrough or accommodation was to materialize. Iran's tilt towards confrontation was both domestically and internationally motivated. A new generation of hard-liners with strong ideological credentials against the injustice of the international and deep devotion to the glory of a defiant and revolutionary Iran seized power by sidelining reformist and pragmatist figures. By the time Iran's new right seized institutional control of the state in full sense, Iran was facing American threats of regime change, as US policy seemed to shift away from containment as well as it faced mounting international pressure over its nuclear programme. This study argued that securitization of Iran's international affairs besides domestic tensions over economic and political reforms resulted in the emergence of a national security state which conflated regime security with the security of the state as a protective shield against external and internal enemies. The policy of confrontation carried both ideological and strategic rationale, which belied a dichotomous perspective and arguments that Iran acted solely on ideological enmity or strategic calculus. The balance between the two kept changing, but Iran retained both rationales. The analysis has shown that confrontation was embraced as the most viable strategy against

American "arrogance" to protect the ideological and material order instituted through the Islamic Republic.

As noted above, the epoch of confrontation confirmed that post-war change in Iran has produced political elites that were inclined to reform and greater integration and opening to the world as much as those who wished to preserve and re-enact the revolutionary spirit of the polity which they thought had gone astray because of corruption and betrayal of the managerial elite. They enshrined anti-imperialism, resistance and populism once again, as their political power flourished. Iran was caught between two imaginations and the power balance tilted towards the latter in early 2000s. The political field became dominated by confluence of traditional and new right, while reformists and the modern right were pushed to the margins. Iran's rising neo-conservatives were largely war veterans with strong ideological credentials and commitment to the system of *velayat-e faqih* and bolstered a defiant posture for Iran in its international affairs. In this epoch the Revolutionary Guards transformed into formidable political, economic and security agents of the state, amassing tremendous power and control over the state within the power bloc run by the Supreme Leader. Iran's formal and informal economy, military strategies and programmes were all controlled by the *pasdaran*. The study also took notice of the fact that the *pasdaran* did not constitute a monolith and Iran was not a military dictatorship within which it was merely the dictates of the military which counted. However, in the aftermath of 2009 elections with the brutal crackdown of demonstrators by security forces, most analysts started to see the IRGC as the major power inside the regime able to protect the regime. Seemingly after September 11, international and domestic tensions made the state arena wide open for greater role of the military elite. The structural basis of this enhanced role was already in the making since the 1990s as the political economy of the regime came under growing domination of the guards and bonyads. The political control of the guards was therefore underpinned by their stronghold in economy, their ideological commitment to the system and their military power and strategizing at a time of rising international hostilities.

In the epoch of confrontation state increasingly turned into an authoritarian shield through militarization and securitization. This has further engrained the power of military, security and intelligence institutions, personnel and mindset within the state. By 2002 Iran was in the midst of nuclear crisis with the leakage of information about its hidden nuclear facilities, which granted the United States to make its case stronger for portraying Iran as a menace to world security. In 2003, Iraq was invaded and in the euphoria of political victory there were repeated calls in the US that the next destination should be Tehran. Geopolitically strained, Iran offered a grand bargain that opened up all contentious issues with the US to negotiation in return for a guarantee of its security and integrity only to find its offer rebuffed by the US. Still through efforts by reformist and pragmatist politicians in order to defuse mounting tensions, Iran pursued diplomacy and agreed to suspend its nuclear programme voluntarily and temporarily. In 2005 coinciding with the start of Ahmadinejad's presidency, Tehran declared the end of its temporary suspension even against the possibility of its referral to UN Security Council and multilateral sanctions. Since 2006 Iran faced several rounds of UN sanctions together with unilateral sanctions from the US.

By then, particularly the hardliners in Iran started to view conflict with the United States "unavoidable" which merged Iran's foreign policy with security policy further and overshadowed the rationale of development and integration in Iran's relations with the West. It was threats over imminence of military attack from the US vis-à-vis the state and the regime which mattered most. Iran-US relations turned into a geopolitical competition, as US became embroiled in the region through successive operations in Afghanistan and Iraq with grave difficulties to restore order. In this epoch, normalization proved quite elusive and in this regard the previous discourse on dialogue among civilizations changed dramatically. Iran perceived American hegemony in terminal decline and its own might and influence on rise, which emboldened the limits of defiance. The rentier state did not fear sanctions so long as oil prices climbed up, for immense oil wealth helped the regime to maintain the patronage network and populist policies at home and sustain Iran's reconstruction efforts in its neighborhood and stand

against sanctions. As Iran-US relations were entangled in nuclear crisis, Tehran found the regional tide turning against the US in Iraq due to incessant turmoil and against Israel in Lebanon and Palestinian Territories with enhanced military and electoral power of Hezbollah and Hamas. Tehran meanwhile also hoped to substitute the West with the East, as lack of proper reintegration into political and economic affairs dominated by the US and shifts in global economy pledged Iran much easier relations with the East.

The limits of defiance and the discourse of President Ahmadinejad were subject to controversy, as reformist and pragmatist forces which were the main actors behind Iran's previous foreign policy successes and reintegration feared that confrontation would jeopardize future gains and in any case Tehran would have to reach to an understanding, if not normalization with the United States. The sense of grandeur had to be balanced by a sound assessment of Tehran's capabilities. Despite confrontation, the Islamic Republic embraced diplomacy and kept diplomatic channels open to defuse tensions over its nuclear programme and balance US through diplomacy with other parties. However, radical discourse which seemed to boost Iran's standing in the region detracted from its strategic credibility and served as a pretext to forge an imagery of Iranian "menace." In the epoch of confrontation, the relationship between Iran and the US became multi-spatial involving regional politics as well as international diplomacy, as American strategy sought to build an international platform against Iran's nuclear activities. The growing confrontation with the US prompted Iran to rely on strategic deterrence through resistance front composed of Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas. Iran's strategy relied on playing a greater role both in the Persian Gulf and the Levant. Moreover Iran also engulfed itself to reconstruction and rebuilding of Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon and became an integral part of the politics and socio-economic development of these polities. Iran's foreign policy in the region testified the attempts for multiscalar constitution of the state. In such vein, isolating Iran became more difficult and power calculus got complicated.

As noted repeatedly, Iran's foreign policy toward the US has never been solely a "foreign" policy issue, for encounter with the US and devising proper strategies entailed domestic politics, power struggles, self-definition of the polity as much as the future of the development and normalization of the polity. In the latest epoch, the regime through use of nationalist discourse and the theme of anti-imperialism sought to rally Iranian people from all walks of life including those that have no regard for the system behind the regime with its mantle of resisting oppression, injustice and double standards of the international system as well as defense of Iran's inalienable national rights. Interestingly while the regime sought to reserve the initiative to decide over American policy solely to the Supreme Leader, one of the most significant aspects of its nuclear policy has been integrating people to Iran's quest for nuclear technology which turned Iran's years of silent and sustained programme into a populist project and gave the message that the regime was duty-bound to pursue this policy in line with its people's demands. However, such policy also raised popular expectations and made it much harder for the regime to climb down. Meanwhile, US policies were equally divisive for already strained relations between state and society. During the Bush administration, the decision of the US to fund Iranian NGOs to promote democracy as well as reports informing plans to play the ethnic card and instigate unrest within the ethnic groups served as a pretext for crackdown on social dissent in Iran. Securitization of state-society relations boosted the understanding that the enemy was lurking behind every corner. This perception further eroded republican pillars of the regime. The pervasive sense of insecurity became obvious in the aftermath of 2009 election crisis, which reinstated Ahmadinejad for a second term amidst controversy. Thereafter the political scene was marked by growing clash between political elites, as the elites were literally at war and the regime in the words of an ex-diplomat quoted in the text was caught in "existential crisis." The elite wars accompanied street demonstrations which could only be suppressed through regime's brutal crackdown by early 2010. The residues of the 2009 crisis was reflected in growing factionalism in post-2009 era in Iran's nuclear diplomacy especially at the critical juncture of fuel swap offer by the Obama Administration and

the following shift of the new American government to sanctions track that got stricter each time the Gordian Knot of Iran's international crisis remained unresolved.

Reflections through the Post-Revolutionary Epochs and Future Prospects

The point where this study leaves Iran-US relations and Iran's foreign policy is the context of growing confrontation and the incessant prospect of military attack which is used either to force Iran to compromise or because hard-liner policy circles genuinely wish to do so. Furthermore, the grave threat of military attack is only checked by an economic war that has started to cripple Iran's economy and society and is likely to have long-term repercussions on the social and developmental trajectory of the state. Moreover, looking through the developments since 2010, it would be plausible to add cyber wars, sabotages and killing of nuclear scientists inside Iran into emerging patterns of confrontation. Therefore, the way the Islamic Republic manages its conflictual relations with the US is of utmost significance for the security of the state and the regime, development of society and future of freedoms for the reasons elaborated throughout the text and briefly mentioned above. The sense of insecurity entrusts the control of political, military, economic and cultural space to the security elite which assume the mantle of guarantors of the existing political order. In such a setting, the ruling elites tend to portray the state as a national-territorial container and a shield against threats emanating from the international, whereas the state also turns authoritarian and repressive when its Janus face looks through its society. The imminence of military assault may have extended the autonomy of the state from social forces and led to shrinking of the political field by decapacitating moderate forces, economic interests or social demands and aspirations; yet it would not be inconvenient to argue that prolongation of crisis and growing costs of defiance and confrontation opens up new contestations within the state over how to deal with crisis and where the interests of the regime lie. The demands for development, social justice, freedoms and normalization continue to stimulate debate and are likely to act as constraints to state's policy of confrontation in the long run.

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Identities, Interests and Agency of the State

Even though American policies and ideological rigor of Iran's neoconservatives resulted in strengthening of anti-Americanism and in a sense justified the regime's deep-seated mistrust of the US, the analysis has shown that the Islamic Republic has retained its strategic calculus and pursued brokering a favorable strategic deal with the United States, as it tried to do in 2003 before the invasion of Iraq. It is important to recall that Iran and the United States engaged in direct talks over Iraq and have diplomatic contact over nuclear programme within the framework of P5+1 negotiations with Iran. Indeed, in the epoch of confrontation Iran preserved strategic decision-making, which started to flourish particularly in the 1990s, as the revolutionary movement crystallized into the state and revolutionary ideals are reframed in a way that would not clash with state's pursuit of development and stable relations with the world. Such a perspective does not necessarily seek a full-fledged normalization but a strategic understanding that would spare Iran of constant threats to its security and survival of the regime. Therefore, the current state of engagement is mainly construed in strategic terms and it differs from the epoch of reform during which the Khatami Administration aimed at a broader transformation of affairs on the basis of dialogue and mutual trust. However, such strategizing cannot be divorced from ideological constraints, as the normative environment and its impact on competing agencies of different power actors bear upon politics of foreign policy. Iran's position and policy towards the US is still paved with mistrust and an ontological animosity and therefore it is not a smooth and uncontested decision at all. International crisis and possibility of a military assault revive radicalism, historical hatred and resentment vis-à-vis the United States both because of geopolitical reasons and ideological propensity to do so and complicates the politics of foreign policy towards the United States further. Therefore, Iran's foreign policy toward the US is neither purely explicable through strategic perspectives, nor merely ideological vision and norms. Material and ideational factors are in constant interplay and depending on the historical conjuncture they may reinforce each other, as they may contradict and compete. Moreover, as demonstrated in the text, it is not accurate to define identity in a

monolithic and static way and the complexity of states and its agents bring forth contending visions as to the political identity of the state and framework of action drawn by the state's envisioned identity. This study argued that contestation over state power involves contending interests and identities of different agents. Inside Iran, particularly in the last decade the political fight entailed either a civilian or militarized/securitized definition of the state, beside deep-running tensions between republicanism and authoritarianism, liberal economy and industrialization versus autocracy and mercantilism. International context and US policies directly and indirectly stimulated and shaped the outcomes of these fights and continue to do so.

In the process of search for a strategic modus vivendi with the United States, the ruling elite repeatedly underlined the significance of a real change in US deeds towards Iran rather than merely discursive shifts. It would be appropriate to argue that since the early 2000s, particularly after United States ran into difficulties in Iraq, while removing Tehran's foes in Afghanistan and Iraq, Iran wants to set the terms of this reintegration and show that it can confront the West and not yield to pressure. In this regard, Iran seeks after "real" negotiations that would offer significant sanctions relief and put an end to what has literally turned out into an economic war that isolates Iran from financial transactions and cripples trade and investment. Nuclear negotiations, in this sense are quite vital, for they could break the myth and enduring perception inside Iran that United States solely seeks to keep the Islamic Republic weak and underdeveloped. The negotiations could also help Iran build bridges with the international community by greater commitment to dialogue and transparency over its intensions. Yet, insistence on sanctions track and economic estrangement of the state does not provide an environment conducive to strategic deal, let alone for possible normalization. As Iran-US relations and Iran's foreign policy are largely entangled in nuclear crisis, it is the security logic that prevails and overshadows developmental trajectory of the state which has started to suffer with the impact of sanctions. This study has analyzed why reaching a modus vivendi with the US matters for Iran and why it remains unjustifiable so long as Iran faces sanctions and estrangement.

Revolution, Expectations and Foreign Policy

Iran's foreign policy towards the US has been a factional battlefield mimicking the state arena and Iran through its policy toward United States aimed to balance multiple concerns related to its political identity; its quest for recognition and reintegration as well as development. Instituted as the ideological pillar of the revolution, opposition to the US had an enduring legacy and Iran's foreign policy towards US and search for breakthrough in the 1990s bore upon the meaning of the revolution. As a matter of fact, the revolution has been evolving concomitant to the transformation of state and its internal and external setting. Iran is no long after revisionism, as it had acted in the 1980s and it spent the 1990s through struggles for moderation and prudent foreign policy that would strengthen the state and help its rejuvenation. Iran's return to hardline rhetoric in international relations and the discourse of social justice, anti-imperialism and revolutionary principles sought to re-enact revolutionary mobilization and political hegemony of the conservative and neo-conservative bloc in the face of growing challenges from the international and Iran's "post-Islamist" society. In the early 2000s, United States turned into a grave geopolitical threat in strategic-military terms, whereas it also remained as an existential enemy for hardliners with their doubts seemingly justified because of the radical discourse and policies of the Bush Administration. The Obama Administration's sanctions policy for the Iranian rulers once against justified insincerity of the US in reaching out Iran. In the 2000s the dominant political actors of Iranian politics assumed confrontation as the best policy to preserve the revolutionary order, whereas a decade earlier, the pragmatists and reformists embraced moderation as the guarantee of revolution and prosperity.

However, given the political, socio-economic and cultural problems facing Iran, the meaning of revolution and what it shall offer to the Iranians, one of the most vibrant, dynamic and young societies of the Middle East is highly significant and it pertains to how Iran would manage its crisis-laden international affairs and the path of confrontation. If the revolution aims at social justice, Iran has to resolve its structural

economic problems, achieve economic growth and create jobs for its young population. The limits of confrontation will be determined by economic concerns as well. Having said that, sanctions, albeit hurting economy and society did not change Iran's behavior so far, for the red line of Iran's nuclear diplomacy has been recognition of its nuclear rights under NPT and it did not move back so long as the international powers demanded the complete halt of uranium enrichment. When there was a tacit recognition of this right under the swap deal, Iran's domestic turmoil and American reservation on strict timetable prevented a viable solution. Nevertheless, normalization is a key to economic development. In the long run, sanctions and black market economy are not sustainable and they are likely to breed new tensions among the political elites and state-society affairs. What makes these tensions even harder to resolve is the fact that in Iran, decades of sanctions and domestic political dynamics have structured the state as a shield that dominated the major segments of the economy and made it tremendously difficult for aspirants of reform to challenge the stronghold of state, semi-state foundations and beneficiaries of the government over economy.

Opposing subjugation to imperialism and return of American influence in Iran has been a defining element of the revolution. However, since the mid-1990s, the political elite started to debate the possibility of a relationship, built on mutual respect and recognition of Iran's presence and interests in the region. Relations with the US is no longer a taboo and anti-Americanism does not find resonance within the society as compared to 1970s and 1980s, since Iranians support improvement of relations with the US, while they have been critical of American policies in the region and vis-à-vis Iran. Therefore, talking to the US or seeking to a strategic deal that is justifiable in terms of the interests of the Islamic Republic does not involve a legitimacy cost for the regime, so long as the process and framework is determined by the dominant power centers. The analysis has shown that the crux of Iran's foreign policy toward the US entailed who would be in control and charge of one of the most vital issues of Iran's post-revolutionary politics. The history of the Islamic Republic was mostly drawn by international crisis which indeed helped the Islamic regime to consolidate its grip over state and society. In times

of international crises, among them war seems to be the most tumultuous one, the autonomy of the state vis-à-vis society grew; yet increasing costs of crises on state's reproductive capacities and the heavy burden falling on the shoulders of the society eventually leads to contestations, falters fragile consensus and strains state-society affairs. Continuous crises indeed work to the detriment of a state aspiring to be strong and developed as well as for a dynamic society seeking reintegration and dignity. Even though Iran relied on the "East" to cope with the political and strategic challenges emanating from the West, for normalization of the polity, it has to handle its crisis with the West and resolve the protracted and deepening problems.

Processual Analysis of the Trajectory of Iran's Foreign Policy and Relations with the US

The historical sociological analysis of Iran's foreign policy toward the United States has shown that in the 1980s Iran was in search of itself as a revolutionary state, a search which entailed self-definition of the state in both realms of its Janus-faced existence. In the 1990s, Iran's foreign policy embarked on seeking reintegration into international political and economic structures and portrayed itself as a norm-abiding, status quo power interested in the stability and security of its borders and regional environment. This study contends that the process of reintegration in the 2000s turned into a resolute quest for recognition and attaining the strategic leverage and capability to set the terms of its engagement. This search is boosted by Iran's sense of grandeur out of favorable geopolitical developments which weakened the influence of the US and its allies in the region. In each process referred above United States assumed a key role and American agency and attitude towards Iran's expectations matter as much as Iran's agency in the direction of these processes. Iran's agency in the epoch of confrontation aimed at securing the regime and bringing it recognition through multi-scalar constitution of the state in the region through involvement in reconstruction of Afghanistan, Lebanon and Iraq as well as its nuclear diplomacy searching for recognition of its right to nuclear research. The latest epoch testified the growing multi-spatiality of Iran's foreign policy

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which created new fault-lines and sites for strategic competition, as the US pursues containment policy against Iran.

In the ongoing epoch of confrontation that is further compounded by challenges of rapidly shifting geopolitical and social terrain of the region with the "Arab Spring", state in Iran grapples with multiple challenges which structure political relations, strategies and political economy of the regime. The future of Syria proves to be a major concern for Iran, for loss of Syria means loss of Iran's only ally among the Arab states as well as its stronghold in the Levant. The economy falters in the absence of good management and rising sanctions and state-society relations could not heal after the brutal crackdown of the Green Movement, as many inside the country and those who flee Iran to seek refuge abroad doubt the future of republicanism and democracy in the country. A modus vivendi with the US is not a magical panacea for protracted problems that state and society face in contemporary Iran; yet undeniably, Iran's conflictual relations with the US had adverse repercussions for politics and economy of the country and improvement in relations is desirable for amelioration of the political climate, economic prospects and social demands and aspirations of its population. In the shadow of war, sanctions and marginalization, normalization remains elusive and security rationale and antagonism set the terms of Iran's international affairs with the US.

This dissertation aimed at establishing a meaningful ontological linkage between the domestic and the international that were hitherto conceptualized separately, not solely for methodological reasons but also because of an understanding based on strict ontological differentiation. This study through analysis of state transformation aimed to show constitutive linkages between the domestic and the international and argued that the state is being carved out through forces emanating from both domestic and international realms. It analyzed foreign policy through underlying processes of interaction which reconfigure the state; therefore this study argued that foreign policy shall be examined through dynamic relationship between state, state-society and state-international relations within which the state is defined as partially autonomous from

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both realms, albeit without a fixed autonomy for it's embeddedness both in its domestic society and the international realm. Through the analysis of complex political and social relations that have structured the state, the state ceased to be a black box and this perspective allowed us to see the politics and contestations over order beyond the "national-territorial container" image of the state. The dissertation aimed to apply the insights derived from burgeoning interaction of Historical Sociology with IR into foreign policy analysis and make a contribution through bringing ontological, epistemological and methodological standpoints of the HS and rethinking over the notions of state, international, agency, structures and processes in the context of foreign policy. Reflecting on the research conducted, it would be accurate to argue that Historical Sociology without doubt provided a deeper reflection over the concepts that the discipline of IR employed rather generically. One of the most challenging aspects of historical sociological research has been striking a balance between historical variation and details with proper abstractions and pattern-building. This has also been the case for analysis of foreign policy through historical sociology. Moreover, given the fact that historical sociology is not a monochrome and it comprises a variety of perspectives; taking a position within this broad tradition was another challenge. Looking through the state and conceptualizing the state provided a significant entry point. This study has purported that Historical Sociology not only should analyze state formation, but it should scrutinize state "transformation" for the state has never been a completed project, but an emergent structure. In the context of foreign policy, which denoted the agency of state, state held the means to transform itself and its environment, even though the extent of this change is drawn by the confluence of different contexts.

By analyzing Iran's post-revolutionary transformation and agency, this study aimed to utilize Historical Sociological analysis within a non-European context. It has studied Iran through the dynamic interaction of Iran's own historical and structural specificities with the ruptures to decouple and attempts at reintegration into international system and global capitalism. The dissertation reflected on an evolving and dynamic politics and society and it focused on the agency of the Iranian state vis-à-vis the United States,

analyzing the patterns and evolution of this troubled relationship for the last three decades. As argued throughout the dissertation, the epoch of confrontation still continues, until Iran and the US reach some sort of understanding and defuse tensions over protracted and deepening problems. The worst case scenario seems to be the intensification of confrontation that would make diplomatic quest redundant and unleash a spiral of violence and catastrophes that would burn not only Iran, but the region. Therefore, the agency of both Iran and the US prove to be of enormous significance for the future of relations and analysis of Iran-US relations in the coming years seem to pledge a challenging yet vital undertaking in order to grasp the politics of the region, the trajectory of state, society, development and politics in Iran as much as the achievements and limitations of the American diplomacy in the Middle East.

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A. TURKISH SUMMARY

DEVRİM SONRASI DÖNEMDE İRAN'IN ABD POLİTİKASI: DEVLET DÖNÜŞÜMÜ VE DIŞ POLİTİKANIN TARİHSEL SOSYOLOJİK BİR ANALİZİ

Bu çalışmanın amacı devrim sonrası dönemde İran'ın Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'ne (ABD) karşı sürdürdüğü dış politikayı incelemektir. ABD'nin Orta Doğu'ya ve İran'a yönelik siyaseti yazında yer alsa da, İranlı akademisyen Muhsin Milani'nin de belirttiği üzere özellikle 2000'li yılların başından itibaren bölge siyasetinde nüfuzu giderek artan İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'nin ABD'ye karşı izlediği siyasete dair kapsamlı ve sistematik çalışmaların azlığı dikkat çekmektedir. Bu tezin diğer bir amacı ise İran'ı "deli mollalar"ın yönettiği "irrasyonel" bir ülke olarak betimleyen söylemlerin ötesinde, bölgenin değişime açık, hareketli bir siyasası olarak tahlil etmek ve İran'da devlet ve toplumun devrimden günümüze yaşadığı dönüşüme ışık tutmaktır.

Çalışma konuyu Tarihsel Sosyoloji (TS) tasavvurunun sağladığı ontolojik, epistemolojik ve yöntemsel bakış açısı ile ele alacaktır. Theda Skocpol Tarihsel Sosyoloji'yi 19. yüzyılda gerçekleşen Sanayi Devrimi'nden günümüze yaşanmakta olan büyük dönüşümleri araştıran köklü bir araştırma geleneği olarak tanımlar. İçinde barındırdığı farklı yaklaşımlar nedeniyle George Lawson TS tasavvurunu açık toplum (*open society*) olarak nitelendirmektedir. Bu nedenle TS yaklaşımının yekpare bir kavramsallaştırma sunmadığının, ancak TS'den ilham alan çalışmaların özü itibariyle bazı ortaklıklar taşıdığının altı çizilmelidir. Philip Abrams'a göre en temel ortaklık Tarihsel Sosyoloji'nin tarihsel zamanın akışı içerisinde özne ve yapıların birbirlerini nasıl kurduğunu ve dönüştürdüğünü incelemesidir. Bu tasavvurun Uluslararası İlişkiler (Uİ) disiplini ile artan etkileşimi ise 1980'li yıllara rastlamaktadır. 1990'larda daha da artan bu etkileşim Uİ disiplinine uluslararası sistemlerin tarihsel gelişimi, Westfalya düzenin tarihsel eleştirisi, devrimler, modernite ve sosyal gerçekliğin uluslararası boyutu gibi konular hakkında kapsamlı, tarihsel ve sosyolojik çözümlemelerden beslenen çalışmaları

kazandırmıştır. Uİ teorileri ve Tarihsel Sosyolojik perspektif arasında bağ kuran kuramsal çalışmalar da yazında giderek daha sık karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

TS'nin dış politika tahlillerinde kullanılması Fred Halliday tarafından önerilmişse bu yaklaşımın bir vaka incelemesi aracılığıyla nasıl somutlanacağı konusunda fazla bir çalışma sunulmamıştır. Tez kavramsal olarak dış politikanın tarihsel sosyolojisi nasıl yapılır?'' sorusuna yanıt aramakta ve Tarihsel Sosyoloji'nin hem bir tasavvur biçimi hem de yöntem olarak devletin ve uluslararası alanın kavramsallaştırılmasına ve dış politika tahlillerine sunacağı katkıyı araştırmaktadır.

Çalışmanın kavramsal çıkarımları tezin vaka incelemesi bölümünde İran'ın devrim sonrası dönüşümünü ve 1979 sonrasında ABD'ye karşı izlediği siyaseti analiz etmek üzere kullanılacaktır. İran'ın 1979 sonrası dış politikasını ABD ile ilişkisi çerçevesinde tahlil ederken tezin cevap aradığı belli başlı sorular şöyledir: İran-ABD ilişkilerindeki devamlılık ve kopuşlar nelerdir? İran'ın ABD siyasetini belirleyen unsurlar nelerdir? ABD'nin İran'da devlet ve devlet-toplum ilişkilerinin şekillenmesindeki rolü nedir ve İran'da devlet-toplum kompleksinin dış siyaset aracılığıyla bölgesel ve uluslararası siyaseti ve yapıları etkileme kabiliyeti farklı dönemlerde nasıl şekillenmiştir? Çalışma İran'ın 1979 yılından 2012 yılının ikinci yarısına kadar olan dönemde ABD'ye karşı sürdürdüğü siyasetin tarihsel, sosyolojik ve jeo-stratejik boyutlarını ortaya koyacaktır. İran'ın dış siyasetini devlet, devlet-toplum ve devlet-uluslararası eksenleri üzerinden tahlil eden çalışmanın ağırlık merkezi 2005 yılı ve sonrasıdır.

Giriş ve kavramsal ve yöntemsel çerçeve bölümlerinin ardından çalışma Pehlevi Monarşisi döneminde İran-ABD ilişkilerinin gelişimini ve mahiyetini inceleyen tarihsel bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Çalışmanın geri kalan kısmı Devrim ve Savaş (1979-1989), Yeniden Yapılanma ve Reform (1989-1997 ve 1997-2005) ve Karşılaşma (2005'ten 2012'nin ikinci yarısına dek) Dönemleri olarak adlandırılan tarihsel devirler içinde, İran'da devletin dönüşümünü ve bu bağlamda İran'ın ABD siyasetini tahlil etmektedir. Her dönemi kendine özgü ulusal, bölgesel ve uluslararası bağlamı içinde inceleyen

çalışma, iç ve dış'ın kurucu etkileşimini kurumlar, siyasal iktisat ve ideolojik alan üzerinden okumakta, İran toplum ve siyasetinin aktörlerini, yapılarını, süreç ve değişimlerini ve bunların İran'ın ABD siyasetine etkilerini araştırmaktadır. Ülkenin yaşadığı sosyal ve jeopolitik değişimleri analiz eden metin, bu değişimlerin İran dış politikasına sunduğu imkân ve kısıtların yanı sıra, dış politikanın toplumsal ve uluslararası sonuçlarını ve devletin çok-uzamsal yapısının onun ideolojik ve maddi örgütleniş biçimine ve devlet-toplum ilişkilerine etkisini araştırmaktadır.

Tarihsel sosyoloji perspektifinin hedefi dış politika için büyük bir teori inşa etmek değildir; ampirik ve analitik olarak bu denli kapsamlı ve karmaşık bir alanın tahlili için bu mümkün görünmemektedir. Dahası, çalışma kullandığı eleştirel gerçekçilik epistemolojisi ile pozitivizme ait böylesine bir çabayı eleştirmektedir. Öte yandan Christopher Hill'in de belirttiği üzere dış politikayı anlamak ve değerlendirmek, farklı meydan okumalar karşısında varlığını dönüşerek sürdüren devletin eylemlerini ve özneliğini (*agency*) anlamak açısından önemlidir. Bu çalışma günümüzde Uİ disiplininde öznelik meselesinin önemli bir ayağı olan dış politika pratiğinin kavramsal olarak çalışılmasının önemini savunmakta, ancak genelleştirilmiş, tek faktörlü veyahut tek düzlemde yapılan analizlerin yerine tarihsel, sosyolojik, çok-nedenli, çok-uzamsal ve süreçler üzerinden yapılacak analizleri önermektedir. Tarihsel Sosyoloji'nin bu bağlamda önemli bir rehberlik sunacağı düşünülmektedir.

2. Kavramsal çerçeve ve yöntem

Çalışma kavramsal çerçeve ve yöntem bölümünde Uİ teorilerinin ve disiplinin bir alt dalı olarak varlığını sürdüren Dış Politika Analizleri (DPA)'nın dış politika yaklaşımlarında üç temel eksen tespit etmektedir. Bu eksenleri genel hatlarıyla iç ve dış, özne ve yapı ile kimlik ve çıkar ikilemleri üzerinden tanımlamak mümkündür. TS tasavvuru iç ve dış karşıtlığının ötesine geçerek, hem "iç" hem de "dış"ın, bir başka deyişle, dünya siyasetinin sınırlar üzerinden tanımlanması nedeniyle ulusal ve uluslararası olarak kavramsallaştırılan ve kimi yaklaşımlar tarafından keskin hatlarla

ayrılan bu iki alanın ontolojik anlamda sosyal gerçekliğin ayrılmaz parçaları olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu anlayışa göre iç ve dış "kurucu" ve "dönüştürücü" bir etkileşim içindedir ve bu dönüşüm özgün tarihsel koşullar içinde her iki alanda da yapısal değişikliklere neden olmaktadır. Çalışma devleti iç ve dış olarak anılan bu iki kalanın kesiştiği noktada, orta (*meso*) düzlemde değerlendirmektedir.

Çalışmanın tespit ettiği ikinci eksen özne ve yapı ilişkisinin kavramsallaştırılmasına ilişkindir. Uİ disiplininin hâkim paradigması olan neo-realizm devleti uluslararası sistemin tanımlayıcı ilkesi olarak betimlediği anarşik yapının gereklerine uyum sağlamakla yükümlü bir birim olarak tahlil etmiş ve yapısal faktörleri vurgulamıştır. Bu anlayışa göre dış politika yekpare ve işlevsel bir birim olarak tanımlanan devletin anarşik yapıya sunduğu mekanik tepkilerin ötesine geçmemekte, devletin iradi eylemleri ve devlet içindeki öznelerin siyaset kabiliyetleri göz ardı edilmektedir. Disiplinde 1970'lerde ağırlık kazanan "Dünya Sistemleri Kuramı" anarşik yapı yerine devletin küresel kapitalizm içindeki yapısal konumunu vurgulamış ancak sonuç itibariyle özne-yapı anlatısında yapısal faktörlere ağırlık vermiştir. Öte yandan dış politika analizlerinde davranışsalcı ekol ve hâkim pozitivist epistemolojinin devletten ziyade devleti yönetenlerin, bilhassa lider ve karar verici kurum ve kişilerin davranışlarına odaklanması yapısal faktörlerin göz ardı edilmesi ve dış politikanın somut olarak "ölçülebilen" bir davranış kalıbına indirgenmesi ile sonuçlanmaktadır. Böylelikle hem disiplin içindeki kuramsal yaklaşımlar, hem de dış politika çalışmaları ya sadece özneye veyahut yapıya vurgu yapan bir tavır benimseyerek, ikisi arasındaki kurucu ve dönüştürücü ilişkiye gereken önemi göstermemiştir.

Çalışmanın tespit ettiği üçüncü eksen dış politika tahlillerinde bilhassa neorealizm ve inşacılık arasındaki tartışmalarda rastlanan çıkar ve kimlik tartışmalarıdır. Sosyal inşacılık yaklaşımı çıkarların belirlenmesinde kimliğin belirleyici olduğunu savunurken, "ulusal çıkar" olarak "şey"leştirilen kavramın sosyal boyutuna ve ardında yatan inşa sürecine dikkat çeker. Bu anlayışa göre ulusal çıkar kavramı realizm ve neorealizmin betimlediği gibi dış-kaynaklı (*exogenous*) bir kavram değildir ve etkileşim içinde

oluşmaktadır. Sosyal inşacılık'un sunduğu yaklaşım önemli olmakla birlikte Checkel'in de belirttiği üzere kimlik ve çıkar eksenindeki tartışmalar kimliğin ve çıkarların inşasında rol oynayan öznelerin kavramsallaştırılması konusunda yetersiz kalmaktadır. TS, Uİ disiplinini sosyolojik ve tarihsel analizlerle yeniden tanıştıran sosyal inşacılık ve eleştirel teori gibi yaklaşımlarla ontolojik ve yöntemsel yakınlık içinde olsa da, bir tasavvur olarak özne ve yapının bütünlüğüne yaptığı vurgu ile inşacılık'ın eksik yönlerini tamamlamaktadır. Kimlik ve çıkar gibi kavramların durağan ve yekpare tanımlamalarını eleştiren çalışma, iki kavramın birbirini dönüştürücü etkileşimine ve devletin kimlik ve çıkarları yeniden üretme ve tanımlama konusundaki rolüne dikkat çekmektedir.

Çalışma dış politikanın tarihsel sosyoloji ile *nasıl* ele alınacağını araştırırken böyle bir yaklaşımın öncelikle devletin ve uluslararası alanın tarihsel sosyolojisinin yapılması ile mümkün olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu nedenle çalışmanın odağında devlet ve devletin içkin olduğu toplumsal ve uluslararası alan ile birlikte kavramsallaştırılması fikri yer almaktadır. Fred Halliday'in de savunduğu üzere "ekonomik fikirler ve sosyal güçler gibi diğer kurucu faktörlerin rolünü tespit etmek ancak devleti tahlil ederek mümkün olmaktadır." Fakat Uİ disiplininde devlet-merkezli kuramların hâkimiyetine rağmen bu yaklaşımlar devleti tanımlamak ve onun sosyal bir kuramını formüle etmek konusunda gerekli adımları atmamıştır. Devlet çoğunlukla "devleti adamları" üzerinden okunmuş, "territoryal bir kap" ya da hukuki-territoryal bir analiz birimi olarak değerlendirilmiştir. UI teorilerine göre kıyasla dış politika analizleri tarihsel analiz ve toplumsal etmenlere daha duyarlı olsa da, dış politika analizlerinin temel meselelerinden birisi de devletin sosyal teorisini ihmal etmesi ve dış politikayı yalnızca karar-verme süreçleri üzerinden analiz ederek dış politikanın formüle edildiği büyük yapısal bağlamı gözden kaçırmasıdır.

Disiplin içinde sıklıkla kullanılan ancak yeterince kavramsallaştırılmayan devletin tarihsel kökeni ve gelişimi ile ilgili kapsamlı çalışmalar 1970'li yıllardan itibaren Tarihsel Sosyoloji tasavvurunun önemli temsilcilerinden Charles Tilly, Theda Skocpol

ve Michael Mann gibi ünlü sosyologların eserleri ile ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu yaklaşımların genel anlamda en temel katkısı Poggi'nin belirttiği üzere o dönemde sosyoloji disiplinine hâkim toplum-merkezli çalışmalara meydan okuyarak devleti kendi başına önem arz eden özerk bir kurum olarak incelemeleri olmuştur. Tilly, Mann ve Skocpol, Max Weber'in kuram ve tahlillerini yeniden sosyolojinin gündemine sokmuştur. Bununla birlikte bu yaklaşımların devlet oluşumunda jeopolitik faktörlere yaptıkları vurgu ve devletin özekliğini vurgularken devletin toplumdan tamamen soyutlanmasına varan bazı yaklaşımları eleştirilere neden olmuştur. Neo-Weberyan yaklaşımların ilk Weberci akımın devlet anlayışına önemli değişiklikler sunduğu gözlemlenmektedir. Bu noktada Uİ açısından en önemli değişiklik devletin uluslararası alanda özneliğine yapılan vurgudur. Devlet-toplum ilişkileri bağlamında da devletin topluma içkin ve gömülü (*embedded*) olduğu görüşü ağırlık kazanmakta, mutlak bir özerklik anlayışı eleştirilmektedir.

Diğer yandan neo-Marksist kuramcılar da devleti yeniden düşünerek devletin toplumsal ilişkilerden *göreli özerkliği* üzerinde durmuşlardır. Poulantzas'ın 1970'lerde savunduğu kavram devlete özerk bir alan tanımış, fakat son kertede devletin siyasetini belirleyici gücün ekonomik ilişkiler olduğunu savunmuştur. Çalışma Marksist devlet kuramına önemli katkılar sunan Bob Jessop gibi teorisyenlerin devleti karmaşık kurumsal yapısı, siyasi kabiliyetleri ve devlet arenasında yaşanan mücadeleler üzerinden tahlil eden yaklaşımından da faydalanmaktadır. Jessop yaklaşımı ile benzerlik gösteren ve devletin maddi ve düşünsel öğelerini ortaya koyan ve kurumsallığına vurgu yapan Bieler ve Morton gibi akademisyenlerin tespitlerinden de yararlanılmaktadır.

Her ne kadar neo-Weberyan ve neo-Marksist yaklaşımlar birbiri ile tam manasıyla bir mutabakata varmış olmasa da, bu çalışma devleti toplumsallığı ve uluslararası alan ile kurduğu kurucu ilişkiler üzerinden okumayı amaçlamakta ve dolayısıyla devleti neo-Weberyan ve neo-Marksist yazının yakınlaştığı bir çerçeve üzerinden ele almaktadır. Devlet hep toplum hem de uluslararası/bölgesel aktör ve yapılar tarafından şekillenen bir arenadır. Aynı zamanda iradi eylemleri ve devlet-toplum kompleksinde meydana gelen

toplumsal dönüşümler ile içinde bulunduğu farklı düzeyleri de dönüştürme kabiliyetine sahiptir. Bu nedenle devleti hem tarihsel hem de uluslararası bağlamında analiz etmenin elzem olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Bu çalışmanın devlet analizi ile ilgili benimsediği diğer bir önemli nokta ise UI disiplininde hayli yaygın olan ve devletin sosyal teorizasyonu fikrini benimseyen 1980'lerin daha sosyolojik yaklaşımlarında dahi karşımıza çıkan "state-as-agent" tezinin eleştirisidir. Devleti kişilere ait özellikler taşıyan, bireymişçesine kurulan analojiler üzerinden okumak yerine, bu tez Bob Jessop ve Colin Wight gibi düşünürlerin ele aldığı şekilde devleti yapısal ilişkilerden örülü bir yapı (*structuratum*) olarak görmekte ve bu yapının içinde farklı kurum ve kişilerin oynadığı farklı özne rollerinin tespit edilmesini savunmaktadır. Devletin eylemi her zaman imkân tanıdığı ve kapsadığı sosyal ve yapısal ilişkilerin özneleri tarafından gerçekleştirilmektedir. Farklı devir ve koşullarda devlet adına adım atan ve siyaset üreten özneler değişmektedir ve bu değişimde hem toplumsal siyasi mücadeleler hem de uluslararası alanın kurucu ve şekillendirici yönleri rol oynamaktadır. Çalışma özne ve yapıya dair kavramsal tartışmaları devlet üzerinden okurken yukarıda anılan Jessop ve Wight gibi düşünürlerin benimsediği eleştirel gerçekçilik (*critical realism*) epistemolojisini kullanmaktadır.

Çalışma uluslararası alanı Fred Halliday'in 1994 yılında vurguladığı üzere "iç"te meydana gelen tarihsel gelişmeler için bir "bağlam ve katalizör" olarak değerlendirmekte; "uluslararası" nın normatif, sosyo-ekonomik ve jeopolitik yönleri ile birlikte ele alınması gerektiğini savunmaktadır. TS tasavvuru iç ve dışın sosyal gerçekliğin ayrılmaz parçaları olduğunun altını çizmektedir. Justin Rosenberg'e göre bu çıkarım, uluslararası ilişkilerin sosyolojik perspektife duyduğu gereksinim kadar, sosyal kuramın da "uluslararası" bir perspektife ihtiyaç duyduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Kuramsal ve yöntemsel analiz bölümünde irdelenen başka bir husus ise özne-yapı ikiliğine dair tartışmaların ve yapılanma kavramının devlet ve dış politika üzerinden nasıl ele alınması gerektiği sorusudur. Çalışma devlet dönüşümünü yapılanma üzerinden

tartışmaktadır; ancak yapılanmanın tarihsel bir süreç ve devamlılık içinde gerçekleştiği ve dünün kararları ve koşulları ile oluşan yapıların bugünün karar ve eylemlerini şekillendirdiği fikrini benimseyerek Margaret Archer'ın morfogenetik (*morphogenetic*) yaklaşımının daha anlamlı olduğu düşüncesini taşımaktadır.

Dış politikanın yapısal dönüşümlerdeki yeri ve rolünü incelerken devletin uluslar arası ve ulusal alanın sürekli etkileşimi içinde nasıl dönüştüğünü araştırmakta ve bunun devletin eylemliliğini simgeleyen dış politikaya yansımalarını incelemektedir. Buna göre devleti Cox, Bieler ve Morton'un belirttiği gibi kurumlar, fikirler ve maddi kabiliyetlerin oluşturduğu bütünlük üzerinden okursak devlet içindeki farklı kurumsallaşmalar, devletin siyasi iktisadı ve devletin ideolojisi yapısal dönüşümler ile değişmekte ve dış politikaya farklı imkân ve kısıtlar getirmektedir. Yapısal öğeler dışında devlet adına eylemde bulunan farklı öznelerin hareket alanı ve devletin otonomisi ve stratejileri de değişimden etkilenmektedir. Kavramsal çerçeve bölümünde çok yönlü olarak ele alınan devlet, uluslararası alan ve yapılanma ilişkileri hakkında varılan fikir ve tespitler çalışmanın izleyen bölümlerinde İran'da devrim sonrası devlet dönüşümünün ve İran'ın ABD siyasetinin tahlilinde analitik ve yöntemsel bir rehber olarak kullanılmaktadır.

3. Devrim öncesi ilişkiler: Modern İran'ın yükselişi ve İran-ABD İlişkileri

Çalışma İran'ın devrim sonrasında yaşadığı dönüşümü ve 1979 sonrası ABD'ye karşı sürdürdüğü siyaseti incelemeden önce üçüncü bölümde Pehlevi Monarşisi döneminde büyüyen ve konsolide olan devletin ABD ile içkin ilişkilerini incelemiştir. Bu analiz İran'ın ABD ile dönüşen ilişkilerinin tarihsel kökenlerini ve mahiyetini anlamak bakımından önemlidir. İran-ABD ilişkileri Soğuk Savaş'ın ağırlığını hissettirdiği bölgesel ve uluslararası konjünktür içinde Şah rejimi farklı toplumsal meydan okumalar karşısında iktidarını inşa etmeye çabalarken gelişmiştir. 1941-1945 yıllarında İran'ı işgal eden üç güçten biri olan ABD'nin ülke siyasetinde ağırlığı Soğuk Savaş'ın ilk krizi olarak anılan İran Azerbaycan'ı Krizi sırasında artmaya başlamıştır. Ancak ABD-İran ilişkilerinin dönüm noktası ABD'nin 1953 yılında İran petrollerini ulusallaştıran

Musaddık Hükümeti'ni İngiltere ile ortaklaşa planladığı darbe ile düşürmesi olmuştur. Takip eden dönemde ABD, Pehlevi Devleti'nin kurumsallaşmasında, devlet-toplum ilişkilerinin şekillenmesinde ve devletin uluslararası siyasi ve ekonomik sistem ile kurduğu bağlar üzerinde kurucu rol oynamıştır. 1950'lerde toplumsal güçler karşısında zayıf bir konumda olan Monarşi sağladığı dış destek ile gücünü yeniden tesis etmiştir. Kuşkusuz bu bağlamda, ABD'nin ülkede askeri ve istihbarat altyapısının gelişmesinde ve siyasi ve toplumsal muhalefete karşı monarşinin desteklenmesinde oynadığı rolü vurgulamak gerekir. Pehlevi rejimi altında kurulan ulusal birliğin ve rejimin teminatı haline gelen ordu yapısal olarak Amerikan yardımlarına, teknolojisine ve uzmanlığına bağlı gelişmiştir. Yine Şah rejiminin despot ve otoriter karakterinin bir nişanesi olan ve toplumsal muhalefetin kırılmasında ve cezalandırılmasında kilit önem taşıyan SAVAK gizli servis teşkilatının kuruluşunda ve kök salmasında Amerika'nın rolü anılmalıdır. İran'da toprak reformu gibi yapısal değişimlerin ardındaki itici güç ABD olmuştur. 1970'ler ise İran'ın muazzam bir şekilde artan petrol gelirlerini ABD'den ithal ettiği gelişmiş silah ve askeri teknolojilere, lüks tüketim mallarına harcadığı ve stratejik ilişkilerin İran'ın Fars Körfezi'nde artan etkinliği ile derinleştiği bir dönem olmuştur. Vietnam'da çıkmaza saplanan ABD, güçlerinin yeni bir alanda konuşlandırılmasını tercih etmemiş, bunun yerine bölgedeki müttefiklerinin Amerikan çıkarlarını savunmasını uygun bulmuştur. Bu siyaset Muhammet Rıza Şah'ın İran'ın Körfez'de hegemonya kurmasını arzu eden siyaseti ile örtüşmüştür. Aynı dönemde İran'da devlet toplum ilişkilerinde yabancılaşma ve gerilimler artmaktadır. Bu gerilimlerin bir eksenini de Şah'ın ABD ile artan ilişkileri oluşturmaktaydı. Muhalefete göre İran'ın Fars Körfezi'nde üstlendiği rol "Amerika'nın jandarması" olmasıydı. İran'ın modern ve geleneksel kesimlerinde Şah'ın ABD'nin emperyal isteklerine boyun eğdiği algısına karşı büyüyen huzursuzluğun gerek İran'ın, gerekse İran-ABD ilişkilerinin geleceğini etkileyecek en önemli unsurlardan biri olduğunu belirtmek gerekir. İran Devrimi'nde ve sonrasında ABD'nin ifade ettiği anlam ve ilişkilerdeki yapısal değişiklikler, tezin esas konusunu oluşturan devrim sonrası İran ve İran-ABD ilişkilerini inceleyen bölümlerde detaylı bir şekilde ele alınmaktadır.

4. Devrim ve Savaş Dönemi

Bu dönem hem İran'daki siyasi yapı ve devlet-toplum ilişkileri, hem de İran-ABD ilişkileri açısından "kurucu" bir dönem olmuştur. İran'da devlet ideolojisi ve kurumları 1979 sonrasında devrimi gerçekleştiren geniş tabanlı sosyal koalisyonun liderliğini üstlenen Ayetullah Humeyni liderliğindeki din adamlarının görüş ve tasavvurları, ülke içinde şiddetlenen etnik ve sınıfsal çatışmalar ve çetin bir iktidar savaşı ile yeniden şekillendirilmiştir. Bir yandan Pehlevi devletinin kurumları korunurken, devrimci ve popülist kurumlar ile paralel bir devlet yaratılmıştır. Ayetullah Humeyni'nin sürgündeyken geliştirdiği "İslami Hükümet" ilkesi uyarınca din adamlarının devleti yönetmesini öngören *Velayet-e Fakih* sistemi ile teokrasiye geçilmiş; teokrasi ve halk egemenliğine dayanan cumhuriyet rejiminin birbiriyle bağdaşması zor ikiliği üzerine inşa edilen İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'nde devlet adeta melez bir yapı halini almıştır. İran'da devlet hem devlet, hem de devrimci hareketin karışımıdır ve bu yapısal özellik iç ve dış siyaset için önemli dinamikleri beraberinde getirecektir. Bu bölümde tarihsel sosyoloji tasavvurunun sunduğu iç ve dışın birbirini kurucu ve şekillendirici ilişkilerinin devrim ve savaş üzerinden gerçekleştiği savunulmaktadır. Fred Halliday'in de belirttiği üzere devrimler uluslararası olaylardır ve İran'da devrim bir iç tecrübe olmanın ötesinde bölgesel ve uluslararası dinamikleri etkileyen önemli bir siyasal ve toplumsal değişime denk düşmektedir. Devrimci liderliğin sınırları aşan ümmet anlayışı ve "devrim ihracı" politikası Orta Doğu siyasetindeki dengeleri tehdit etmeye başlamış, öte yandan devrim sonrasında İran'da devletin zayıf düştüğüne hükmeden Saddam Hüseyin bu durumu İran'ın Arap nüfusun yoğun olduğu petrol zengini bölgesi Kuzistan'ı sınırlarına katmak için kullanarak İran-Irak Savaşı'nı başlatmıştır. Savaş devletin toplumu, uluslararası aktörler ve yapılar ile kurduğu ilişkiler üzerinde derin ve kalıcı izler bırakmıştır. Bir bakıma İran'a devrim geçirmiş bir siyasa olduğu kadar sekiz yıl süren yıkıcı bir savaşı tecrübe etmiş bir siyasa olarak bakmak da önemlidir. Savaş rejim ve devletin konsolidasyonunda, toplumsal mücadelelerin baskılanmasında ve kontrol edilmesinde ve devletin gerek askeri gerek idari anlamda genişlemesinde temel etken olmuştur.

İran'da devletin devrim sonrası uluslararası ilişkileri açısından kuşkusuz en temel değişim ülkenin Batı yanlısı duruşu ve ABD ile sürdürdüğü köklü ilişkilerde yaşanmıştır. Ervand Abrahamian'ın da ifade ettiği üzere, İran Devrimi, ABD'nin "istikrar adası" olarak övdüğü, Amerika'nın gelişmiş silah ve askeri teknolojilerinin sadık müşterisi, Körfez'in güvenilir ve ucuz petrol tedarikçisi, İsrail'in bölgedeki gizli müttefiki Pehlevi rejimini yıkmış, Nixon Doktrini'nin sonunu getirmiştir. İran'da devrimci koalisyon, bilhassa sol güçler ve İslamcı kesim devrim öncesi güç kazanan Amerikan karşıtlığını devrim sonrasında da sürdürmüş, Pehlevi Monarşisi'nin yıkılışını ABD'ye karşı da kazanılmış bir zafer (*piroozi*) olarak görmüşlerdir.

İran-ABD ilişkileri aslında Devrim'den hemen sonra kopmamıştır. Bu ara dönem İran'da farklı güç odaklarının ülkenin Batı, özellikle de ABD ile yeni dönemde kuracağı ilişkilerin niteliğine dair karşıt görüşlerin birbiriyle yarıştığı bir zaman olmuştur. Başbakan Mehdi Bazargan'ın başını çektiği Ilımlı-İslamcı seçkinler bağlantısızlık prensibini benimsemişlerse de, onların nazarında bu ilke İran'ın ABD ile ilişkilerinin yeniden tesisi için bir engel teşkil etmemektedir. Oysa Ayetullah Humeyni önderliğindeki radikaller İran'ın ABD'den topyekûn kopmasını ve Amerikan nüfuzunun İran'dan ilelebet uzak kalmasını savunmuşlardır. Devrim sonrasında radikal kanatın yönetimi ele geçirmesiyle İran-ABD ilişkilerinin seyrini ikinci görüş belirlemiştir.

Devrim ve Savaş dönemi İran-ABD ilişkilerinin maddi temellerinin derinden sarsılmasına tanıklık etmiştir. İran ABD ile kurduğu askeri ve stratejik ilişkiyi değiştirmeye başlamış, devrimden sonra CENTO'dan ayrılmış, ABD ile silah anlaşmalarını iptal etmiştir. Ancak İran ve ABD arasındaki diplomatik ilişkilerin kopuşu Rehine Krizi ile gerçekleşmiştir. "İmam'ın Çizgisini İzleyen" bir grup radikal öğrencinin Tahran'daki Amerikan Büyükelçiliği'ni basarak Amerikalı diplomatları 444 gün boyunca rehin almaları İran'da devrim sonrası siyaset ve İran-ABD ilişkileri açısından son derece kritiktir. Eylemi gerçekleştirenlerin "İkinci İslam Devrimi" olarak andıkları olay rejimin ve eylemcilerin gözünde Şah'a karşı gerçekleştiren ilk devrimi tamamlamış, 1953 yılında Musaddık'ı deviren emperyalizmden tarihin rövanşını almıştır. Humeyni

bu dönemde ABD'yi "Büyük Şeytan" olarak tanımlamaya başlamış ve İran'da devrim sonrası siyasetin temel söylemi bu dönemde oluşmaya başlamıştır. Amerikan-karşıtı bu söylem adeta rejime sadakatin bir kıstası haline gelmiş, Humeyni yanlılarını "Devrim'e ihanet içinde olanlardan" ayıran bir turnasol kâğıdı işlevi görmüştür. Amerikan düşmanlığı rejimin sosyal adalet ve ezilmişlerin hakkını gözettiğini vurgulayan ekonomik popülizminin yanında benimsediği siyasi popülizminin temel öğesi olmuştur. İran maddi anlamda ABD ile ilişkilerini keserken, ABD'nin İran'da siyasi söylem ve eylemde merkezi konumu onu düşünsel ve normatif anlamda devrim sonrası siyasetin ayrılmaz bir parçası yapmıştır. ABD karşıtlığı Humeyni önderliğindeki İslamcılar ile İran'da sol örgütlerin bir kısmının saflarını sıklaştırmış, Bazargan gibi ılımlı isimlerin siyaset sahnesinden uzaklaştırılmasını sağlamıştır. Bu anlamda ABD-karşıtlığı rejimin konsolidasyonu açısından Irak ile başlayacak savaş gibi önemli rol oynamıştır. Rehine Krizi'nin ABD iç siyaseti ve sonraki dönemde İran'a karşı sürdürülecek dış politika açısından da belirleyici bir rolü ve derin bir mirası olmuştur. İran'ın ABD'yi oldukça zor ve çaresiz duruma soktuğu bu kriz, ABD'de hem Demokrat hem de Cumhuriyetçi Parti içerisinde İran-karşıtı cephenin oluşmasına zemin hazırlamış ve İran'ın sonraki dönemlerde izleyeceği siyasete engel teşkil edecek normatif bir yapı halini almıştır.

İran, Saddam Hüseyin'in saldırısı ile başlayan savaşı da "emperyal güçlerin empoze ettiği" bir müdahale olarak görmüş ve "kazanana dek savaş" sloganları ve devrimin ihracı ile Irak'ta kurulacak bir İslam Cumhuriyeti ülküsü ile savaşı 1982 yılında bitirebilecekken sürdürmüştür. İran-ABD ilişkilerinin savaş bağlamında seyri rejimin ideoloji ve pragmatizm arasındaki tercihleri açısından ilginç dinamikler getirmiştir. Bu noktada ABD'nin bu savaştan beklentileri ve izlediği siyaset önemlidir. ABD bir yandan İran'ın devrimci ideolojisi ile şekillenen revizyonist amaçlarının ve özellikle Körfez ülkelerine ulaşacak nüfuzunun engellemesini amaçlarken diğer yandan Irak'ın başlattığı savaşın İran'da rejimi zayıflatıp Sovyet nüfuzuna açık hale getimesinden kaygı duymaktaydı. Bu nedenle İran ve Irak'ın birbirini yorup zayıflattığı ancak kazananın olmadığı bir savaş ABD'nin çıkarınaydı. Devrime rağmen İran'ın ABD silahlarına olan bağımlılığı devam etmekteydi ve savaşta zarar gören silahların yerine yedek parça ve

yeni silah bulmak üzere İran İsrail aracılığıyla ABD'ye ulaşmaktan ve İran-Kontra olarak bilinen gizli görüşmelere katılmaktan çekinmeyecekti. Bu durum rejimin varlığını sürdürmek adına hakim ideolojisine ters düşen pragmatik adımları atmaktan geri durmayacağına ve İran yönetimi içinde pragmatik siyaseti savunan kesimin artan nüfuzuna bir işaretti. Görüşmelerin İran'da rejim içi muhalif gruplarca sızdırılmasından sonra itibarı zedelenen ABD ise Tanker Savaşları'nın başlaması ile bilfiil Körfez'deki çatışmalara dâhil olacak ve koşullar İran ve ABD'yi savaşın eşiğine getirecekti. Toplumsal moralin ve mobilizasyonun azalması ve ardarda gelen askeri yenilgiler İran'ı 1988 yılında ateşkesi koşulsuz şartsız kabul etmeye zorlayacaktı.

ABD'nin savaşta sergilediği siyaset ve uluslararası toplumun Irak'ın savaşı başlatan taraf olduğunu kabul etmekteki isteksizliği İran'da devrimci düşüncenin uluslararası alanın eşitliksiz ve adaletsiz olduğu anlayışını perçinledi. Devrim sonrası ilk on yılda İran'da yaşadığı bölgeyi ve hatta dünya siyasetini dönüştürmek isteyen bir revizyonizm hâkimdi. Bu tasavvurda ABD aslında bu adaletsiz sistemin sadece bir parçası değildi, bilakis 1979'dan sonra ABD bu sistemin ta kendisi olarak görülüyordu. Her ne kadar İran, "ne Doğu, ne Batı, İslam Cumhuriyeti" sloganından hareketle kapitalist ve sosyalist gelişme modellerini ve bu ülkelerle kurulacak ilişkileri reddetse de siyasi jargon ve eylemde Batı karşıtlığı, özellikle de ABD düşmanlığı öne çıkmaktaydı.

Anoush Ehteshami gibi düşünürlerin de belirttiği üzere İran'da devrim sonrası dış politika daha çok ideolojik sloganların ve pan-İslamcı vizyonun etkisinde kalmıştır. Ancak 1990'lardan itibaren hem devlet hem de dış politika anlayışı ve amaçları İran'ın içinde yer aldığı bölgesel ve küresel siyaset gibi değişmeye başlamıştı. Savaş sonrasında İran'da ekonominin aldığı yaraları sarmak en acil görevdi. 1980'lerin sonlarına gelindiğinde rejim içinde değişimin ve İran'ın yeniden inşasının gerekliliğine dair tartışmalar başlamıştı. Devletin ve rejimin devamlılığı ekonomideki darboğazın aşılması ve rejimin topluma vaad ettiği refahın sunulmasına bağlıydı. Devrim sonrası mücadeleler ve savaşla geçen bir on yılın ardından rejimin çıkardığı dersler ile İran'ın dış siyaseti uluslararası sistem ile uzlaşma arayan bir yola girmiş oldu. Bu değişim

İran'da yönetici seçkinlerin uluslararası sisteme dair olumsuz düşüncelerinin değiştiği anlamına gelmiyordu, ancak rejim içinde yükselen modern sağ kanat savaş sonrası dönemde uluslararası sistemi İran'ın yapısal dönüşümüne katkı sunacak bir fırsat alanı olarak görmekteydi. İran'ın ekonomide yapısal dönüşümleri gerçekleştirmek için uluslararası sermayeye ve özellikle ekonomisi ve güvenliği için önem arz eden Körfez Bölgesi'nde yapıcı ve olumlu ilişkilere ihtiyacı vardı. Rejimin siyasi iktisadi yapısı ve savaşın getirdiği yıkım İran'ın dış siyasetini ve uluslararası yönelimlerini şekillendiren temel etkendi. Öte yandan İran'ın ideolojik bakış açısında da değişimler yaşanıyordu. Yapısal olarak bu durum bir bakıma İran'da devrimci hareketin devletleşmesi ve devletin maddi olarak yeniden üretiminin uluslararası aktör ve yapılar ile kuracağı ilişkilere bağlı olması ile yakından ilgiliydi. İran 1990'larda küreselleşen siyasi ve ekonomik sistem ile yeniden bütünleşmek istiyordu. Elbette, bu bütünleşmenin hangi zeminlerde yaşanacağı ve sınırları ise yeni dönemde İran siyasetinin temel mücadele alanlarından biri olacaktı.

5. Yeniden İnşa ve Reform Dönemleri

Haşemi Rafsanjani ve Muhammed Khatami'nin cumhurbaşkanlığı yaptıkları yılları kapsayan devir, yukarıda da anıldığı üzere, İran'ın Batı-merkezli sistemden kopuşundan bu sisteme yeniden eklemlenmeye giden yolda çabalarını ve dış siyasetini incelemekte ve bu tematik ortaklık nedeniyle çalışma iki dönemi birlikte değerlendirmektedir. 1989-1997 yıllarını kapsayan ilk bölüm, hem İran düzeyinde, hem de bölgesel ve küresel siyasette önemli değişim ve kırılmaların yaşandığı bir bağlama denk düşmektedir. İran'da değişim talebi ve yeniden inşa kararı Devrim'in lideri Ayetullah Humeyni'nin vefatı, İran-Irak Savaşı'nın ve Soğuk Savaş'ın sona erişi ile şekillenen yeni bir konjonktürde hayata geçirildi. Bazı yazarlar İran'da 1990'lı yılları Devrim'in Thermidor evresi veyahut İran'da "İkinci Cumhuriyet" tabirleri ile anmaktadır. Bu dönemde Ayetullah Humeyni'nin yerine Ali Hamaney Dini Lider seçilmiş, fakih'in anayasal statüsü "mutlak" yetkiler ile genişletilmiş, Başbakanlık kaldırılarak yürütme erki yetkileri arttırılan Cumhurbaşkanlığı makamında toplanmıştı. Bu güç düzenlemesi İran

siyasi sistemine çift başlı ve bölünmüş liderliği getirmiş oldu. Zaman içinde Hamaney ve Rafsanjani'nin yürüttüğü bu görevler devrim ve devlet arasındaki ikiliğin de siyasi merkezleri olarak işlev görecekti.

Bu dönemde devlet savaşan devletten kalkınma-odaklı devlete dönüşüyordu. Bunun ideolojik anlamda getirdiği değişim ise Stalin ve Sovyetler analojisi üzerinden geliştirilen "tek ülkede devrim" siyasetiydi. İran içeride devrimin ideolojik ve toplumsal zeminini muhafaza etmeye çalışırken, sürdürdüğü dış siyaset ve söylem ile önceki dönemde izlediği revizyonizm ve radikalizmden uzak bir resim çizmeye çabalıyordu. Dış siyasette etkinliği artan devrimci askeri ve ekonomik kurumlara (*bonyads*) sınırlamalar getirilirken, Rafsanjani dışişleri bakanlığının yeniden profesyonelleştirilmesi ve dış politikanın cumhurbaşkanı ve bakanlığın kontrolüne geçmesi için çalışmalarını arttırmıştı. Bu dönemin İran'ın ABD siyaseti açısından önemi ise Rafsanjani Hükümeti'nin İran'ın kalkınma ve kendisini yeniden inşa hedefinin, rejimin özellike Soğuk Savaş sonrasında Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılması ile rakipsiz kalan ABD ile kuracağı olumlu ilişkilere bağlı olduğu düşüncesinde yatmaktaydı. İran tepki toplayan ve kendisini yalnızlaştıran devrimin ihracı siyasetini yumuşatıyor, kendi replikalarını yaratmak ve sistemi dönüştürmek gayesinden uzaklaşarak, sürdürdüğü siyaseti Dini Lider Hamaney'in ifade ettiği üzere İran'ın "diğer uluslara bütün ulusların kendi ayakları üzerinde durabileceğini ve tutsaklığa karşı direnip mücadele etmeleri gerektiğini gösteren" örnek ülke olması şeklinde yeniden tanımlıyordu.

İran'ın yeniden bütünleşme arayışının seyrinde hiç kuşkusuz ABD'nin İran'a ve bölgeye karşı izleyeceği siyasetin önemi büyüktü. İran'ın kalkınma, normalleşme ve güvenlik siyaseti ABD'nin atacağı adımlar ile yakından ilgiliydi. ABD, İran'ın savaş sonrası yeniden inşasına hem jeopolitik ve ekonomik bir aktör olarak, hem de İran'ın fraksiyonlarla parçalanmış iç siyasetinin ayrılmaz normatif/söylemsel bir parçası olarak müdahildi. 1990'lı yıllarda ABD'nin öngördüğü "Yeni Dünya Düzeni" Orta Doğu'daki Amerikan güç ve hegemonyasının gitgide daha da kuvvetlendiği bir duruma işaret etmekteydi. 1990-91 Körfez Savaşı sonrasında ABD Körfez'in güvenliğini İran'ı da

kapsayan bölgesel bir çerçevede ele almak yerine Arap ülkeleri ile ikili güvenlik anlaşmaları yapmaya karar vermiş, Körfez'deki askeri varlığını arttırmış ve savaş sırasında İran'ın ABD'li yetkilileri şaşırtan yapıcı tutumuna rağmen yeni dönemde stratejisini İran ve Irak'ı çevrelemek üzerine kurmuştu. İran'ın eski Sovyet coğrafyası üzerinde nüfuz arayışları, stratejik konumu ve kaynakları itibariyle enerji politikalarına müdahil olma arzusu ve küresel ekonomik sistem ile yeniden tesis etmeye çalıştığı ekonomik ilişkiler ABD'nin çevreleme politikası ve İran-ABD ilişkilerinin temel öğelerinden biri haline gelen yaptırımlar nedeniyle sekteye uğramaktaydı. 1990'lı yılların başında İran için önem taşıyan başka bir konu ise Orta Doğu Barış Süreci'nin başlamasıydı. Sürecin dışında bırakılan İran aynı zamanda Arap dünyasındaki tek müttefiki Suriye'nin İsrail ile barış yapıp Batı saflarına katılmasından da kaygı duymaktaydı. İran zamanla İsrail-karşıtı Filistinli İslamcı grupların hamisi haline geldi. Bu dönemde İran'ın Hamas ve İslami Jihad gibi örgütlerle ilişkileri artmaktaydı. Küresel sisteme eklemlenme çabaları dışlanma, çevrelenme ve yaptırımlarla karşılaşan İran'da koşullar muhafazakâr güçlerin iç siyasetteki gücünü arttırıyordu. Konjonktür devrimci ideoloji ve söylemin yeniden üretilmesine fırsat tanıyor, dış politikada sergilenen ılımlı çabaların iç siyasetteki meşruiyetini zora sokuyordu.

Muhammed Khatami'nin özellikle genç nüfus ve kadınlardan aldığı büyük destek ile İran'da orta sınıfın oylarıyla Cumhurbaşkanı olmasıyla İran'da reformcu düşünce önemli bir siyasi zafer kazanmış oldu. Reform Dönemi pek çok açıdan bir önceki dönemin devamı niteliğindeydi, fakat bu dönemi diğerinden ayıran en belirgin fark değişim düşüncesinin ekonomik yenilenme anlayışını aşarak siyasal bir değişim arayışını barındırması ve toplumun farklı kesimlerinin cumhuriyet rejiminden beklentilerini de içine alacak şekilde genişlemesiydi. İran'da savaş sonrası toplum devrimin ilk on senesi içinde tartışılamayan konuları ve gerçekleşmeyen siyasi talepleri artık daha açık şekilde ifade etmeye başlamıştı. Devlet bir yandan kalkınma odaklı yaklaşımını sürdürürken, siyasi arenada güç kazanan reformcu koalisyon devletin ideolojik anlamda yeniden tanımlanmasını ve devrimin özünde saklı olduğunu savundukları cumhuriyetçi değerlerin hayata geçirilmesini talep etmekteydi. Reformcu güçler İran'ın ihtiyaç

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duyduğu ekonomik reformların devlet kurumlarının ve siyasi sistemin yenilenmesi ile gerçekleşeceğini savunuyorlardı. İran'ın uluslararası ilişkilerinin normalleşmesi de toplumsal talepler içinde önemli yer tutmaktaydı. Bu bağlamda İran'ın Batı ile- bilhassa ABD ile-süregiden gergin ilişkilerinin normalleşmesi hem iç siyaset hem de İran'ın uluslararası sisteme entegrasyonu açısından önemliydi ve Reform Dönemi'nin en önemli gündem maddelerinden biri olacaktı.

Cumhurbaşkanı Khatami'nin "Medeniyetler-arası Diyalog" mesajı İran-ABD ilişkilerini temelden dönüştürmeyi, iki devlet arasındaki "güvensizlik duvarı"nı yıkmayı amaçlıyordu. Khatami'nin uluslararası vizyonu körü körüne bir Batı karşıtlığı üzerine inşa edilmemişti. Karşılıklı saygı ve güven temelinde İran'ın uluslararası toplumda hak ettiği yeri alması gerektiğini savunan Khatami İran'ın devrim ve savaş döneminde şekillenen uluslararası imajını düzeltmek gayesindeydi. İran'da İslamcı Sol 1990'larda geçirdiği dönüşüm ile Amerikan-karşıtı ideolojik duruşunu değiştirmiş, İran'ın kuracağı sağlıklı ilişkilerde Batı ile de bir anlaşıya ulaşması gerektiğini görmüştü. Ülke içinde Batı-karşıtı ideoloji artık muhafazakâr güçlerin kontrolündeydi. Bu duruş 1990'lı yılların ilk yarısında Rafsanjani döneminde de modern ve geleneksel sağ arasındaki çekişmenin önemli bir öğesi olmuştu. Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde İran'da muhafazakâr güçlerin temel söylemi İran ve diğer pek çok ülkenin "Batı'nın kültürel istilası"na maruz kaldığı söylemiydi. Reform-karşıtı gruplar İran'da yenilik arayışını "Amerikan projesi" olmakla itham etmiş ve Khatami'nin hareket alanı içeride reformcuları sistem için tehdit olarak gören muhafazakârların engellemeleri nedeniyle bir hayli daralmıştı. Reformcu hükümet daha en başından beri yasa önerilerinin veto edilmesi, reformcu basın ve yayın organlarının kapatılması, entelektüellere karşı düzenlenen seri cinayetler ile zor günler geçiriyordu. Ülkede artan gerilimde ve siyasetin güvenlikleştirilmesinde (*securitization*) uluslararası aktör ve yapıların, özellikle ABD'nin rolünü anlamak önemlidir. Khatami başkanlığındaki hükümetin İran'ın dış ilişkilerinin normalleşmesi için ABD ile Afganistan'da Taliban'ın devrilmesi hususunda yaptığı işbirliğine rağmen ABD Başkanı Bush, İran'ı Irak ve Kuzey Kore ile birlikte "şer ekseni" ülkesi olarak nitelendirmiş, bu söylem reformcu seçkinlerin itibarını ve iç siyasetteki güçlerini zedelemiştir. ABD bu

söylemi 11 Eylül sonrasında oluşturduğu Milli Güvenlik Stratejisi'nde de sürdürmüş, örneğin 2006 yılında yenilenen strateji İran'ı ABD'nin güvenliği için en büyük tehdit olarak tanımlamıştır. 2002'de yayınlanan strateji ile ABD "önleyici savaş doktrini"ni ilan etmiş, Irak'a yapılan askeri müdahalenin daha sonra İran'a da genişletilmesini savunan Amerikan yeni-muhafazakârlarının propagandaları ile ABD'nin İran stratejisi çevreleme politikasından rejim değişikliğine geçmiştir. Rejim değişikliği söylemi İran'da siyasetin iklimi değiştirmiş, içte güvenlikleştirmeyi ve askerileşmeyi arttırmıştır. ABD hem ideolojik hem de askeri bir tehdide dönüşmüştür. Tehditler ve yaklaşan askeri müdahale korkusu İran'da güvenlik elitinin etkinlik alanını genişletmiştir.

6. Karşılaşma Dönemi

Mahmud Ahmadinejad'ın cumhurbaşkanlığı sırasında İran'da devlet, devlet-toplum ilişkileri ve İran-ABD ilişkilerini inceleyen "Karşılaşma Dönemi" İran'da siyaset, toplum ve dış politikanın giderek militerleştiği 2005 sonrası döneme ışık tutmuştur. Çalışmanın da iddia ettiği üzere İran toplum ve siyasetinde 1990'lı yıllarda iki türlü değişimi gözlemlemek mümkündür. Bunlardan bir tanesi rejimin cumhuriyetçi değerlerinin hayata geçirilmesini, kişisel hakların ve özgürlüklerin teminat altına alınmasını savunan, özgür, müreffeh ve dünya ile barışık bir İran görmeyi isteyen reformcuların yükselişidir. Öte yandan savaş ve yıkımın uzun vadedeki etkilerini İran'da 1990'larda ortaya çıkan ve 2000'li yıllarda güç kazanan yeni-muhafazakâr sınıfta görürüz. Ehteshami ve Ansari gibi İran uzmanlarının da belirttiği gibi İran-Irak Savaşı'nın gazileri Devrim'in ve İslam Cumhuriyeti'nin gidişatını-bilhassa uygulamaya konulan neoliberal yapısal dönüşüm politikalarını ve reform düşüncesini-tasvip etmemiş, sistem içinde kendileri için daha büyük yer talep etmiştir. İran'ın içinde bulunduğu zorluklar için teknokrat seçkinlerin devrimden ve İslam'dan sapan politikalarını suçlamışlardır. İran'da Mahmud Ahmedinejad'ın cumhurbaşkanlığı ile başlayan dönem Devrim Muhafızları'nın siyaset ve ekonomide sarsılmaz güç elde ettiği bir dönem olmuştur. Bu güç 1990'larda ekonomik olarak büyüyen muhafızların, reformcu güçlerin sisteme sunduğu "tehdit" karşısında bir iç güvenlik aktörü ve "rejimin ve devrimin

teminatı" olarak oynadıkları rol ile daha da büyümüştür. Ahmadinejad'ın iktidarı ile İran'da güvenlik eliti Cumhurbaşkanlığı makamını elde etmiş, böylelikle 2003'ten itibaren seçimle işleyen yerel konseyler ve parlamentonun ardından bu makamı da kontrol etmeye başlamıştır. İran'da 2005 sonrasını da Devrim Muhafızları'nın ekonomide, siyasette ve dış politikada artan etkinlikleri üzerinden okumak mümkündür. Bu tez Charles Tripp'in kullandığı şekliyle İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'nin 2000'li yılların başından itibaren "ulusal güvenlik devleti" ne dönüştüğünü iddia etmektedir. İran'da devrim sonrası siyasette her daim bir güvensizlik ve tehdit algısı olsa da bu tehdidin doksanların sonu ile arttığını gözlemlemek mümkündür ve şüphesiz İran'da rejimin toplumsal ve jeopolitik tehdit algısında ABD'nin rolü son derece önemlidir. Güvenlik iklimi ve yaşanan jeopolitik kriz devletin kalkınma öncelikli hedeflerini gölgelemiş ve güvenlik zihniyetini ön plana çıkarmıştır.

Uluslararası bağlamın içteki aktör, yapı ve süreçler üzerinde kurucu rolünü tespit etmeye çalışan tez, özellikle 11 Eylül olaylarından itibaren ABD'nin Orta Doğu'da ve İran'a karşı sürdürdüğü saldırgan ve yayılmacı siyasetin İran'da devletin otoriterleşmesinde, siyasi konfigürasyonda, kalkınma ve sosyal sınıfların yapısında ve ülke içindeki siyasi tartışmaların, demokrasi ve sivil haklar hareketinin meşruiyeti üzerinde derin etkileri olduğunu tespit emiştir. İran'da devlet-toplum ilişkilerindeki gerilimin bir boyutu da devletin uluslararası ilişkileri üzerinden şekillenmiştir ve bu gerilimin 2009 sonrası dönemde İran'ın nükleer müzakerelerindeki tutuma yansıdığı savunulabilir.

Aslında İran'da karşıtlık ve zıtlaşma siyaseti her daim belirgin bir özellik olsa da, 1990'lı yıllarda dış siyasete hakim olmaya başlayan ılımlı ve yapıcı ton yerini ABD siyasetinin bir replikası olarak daha katı, saldırgan ve krizlere açık bir söyleme bırakmıştır. Bu dönemde devlet hem uluslararası sistem, hem de toplumu ile kavgalıdır. İran'da bu zıtlaşma siyasetini sadece ideoloji üzerinden okumak yanlış olacaktır. İran devrim sonrsı süreçte edindiği tecrübe ile dış siyasetinde ideoloji ile stratejik hesaplarını dengeleyen bir tutum benimsemeye başlamıştır. İran'ın sürdürdüğü siyasetin bazı maddi temelleri vardır. Bunlardan ilki özellikle ABD'nin 2003 yılında Irak'ın

işgalinin ardında bölgede jeopolitik dengelerin İran'ın lehine değişmesi ve zorlu işgal yıllarının ABD'nin başka askeri operasyonlara kalkışmasını zorlaştırmasıdır. Diğer bir neden 2003 sonrası dönemde dünya piyasalarında petrol fiyatındaki artış ile İran'ın petrol gelirlerinin muazzam biçimde yükselmesi ve bunun ülkeye kazandırdığı stratejik ve sosyo-ekonomik güçtür. Petrol gelirleri İran ekonomisini yaptırımlara karşı ayakta tutan ve dış siyasetinde uzlaşmaz tavrını besleyen temel etmen olmuştur. Öte yandan, İran'ın Batı'ya kafa tutan siyasetinin ardında yine son dönemde oldukça önem kazanan Doğu'ya Bakış siyasetinin ve İran'ın Rusya ve Çin gibi "Doğu'nun büyük güçleri" ile kurduğu askeri, ekonomik ve stratejik ilişkileri Batı'ya, bilhassa Birleşmiş Milletler'de aleyhinde şekillenecek kararlara karşı bir kalkan olarak kullanma arzusudur. Anılan son dönem içinde İran'ın Orta Doğu siyasetinde nüfuzu belirgin bir şekilde artmıştır. Bu hem ABD'nin jeopolitik müdahaleleri ve bölge halkları nezdinde güvenilirliğini iyice yitirmesi, hem de İran'ın bölgesel dengeleri pragmatik bir biçimde kendi lehine yönetebilmesi sonucu olmuştur.

Çalışma İran'ın 2005 sonrası dönemde artan jeopolitik ve ideolojik nüfuzu ve maddi imkânları ile Irak, Lübnan ve Afganistan gibi savaş veyahut iç savaşın yıkımından geçen coğrafyalarda bu siyasalara içkin bir sosyo-ekonomik aktör olarak inşa ettiğini göstermektedir. Şüphesiz İran'ın bölgesel siyasetinde Devrim Muhafızları'nın ve bonyad'ların rolü önem kazanmış, Dini Lider Hamaney kişisel elçileri aracılığıyla Cumhurbaşkanlığı makamından bağımsız bir şekilde kendi dış politikasını yürütmeye başlamıştır. Devletin özneliğini devlet içinde kökleşen ve iktidar bloğunu temsil eden askeri yapı ve şahsiyetlerin üstlendiği göze çarpmaktadır.

Çalışma İran-ABD ilişkilerinin bu bir bakıma en karmaşık ve savaşın eşiğinde olduğu dönemde ilişkilerdeki temel fay hatlarını ve ayrışmaları da detaylı bir biçimde incelemiştir. Jeopolitik ve ideolojik karşıtlığın bölge düzeyinde Fars Körfezi ve Doğu Akdeniz gibi geniş bir coğrafyayı içine aldığını ve nükleer kriz ile İran-ABD ilişkilerindeki gerilimin uluslararası düzeyde de karşılığını bulduğunu tespit etmiştir. Bu anlamda İran-ABD ilişkilerini ikili bir ilişki olarak okumak imkânsızdır. Devrim sonrası

dönemde, bilhassa 2000'li yıllarda İran-ABD ilişkileri çok aktörlü bir ilişki halini almış ve bu nedenle ulusal, bölgesel ve uluslararası düzeylerin birlikte ele alındığı analizleri gerekli kılmıştır. Tezin bu bölümü İran'ın İsrail ve Körfez ülkeleri ile ilişkilerinin İran-ABD ilişkilerine ve İran'ın dış siyasetine yansımalarını da dikkate almıştır. Özellikle Ahmadinejad'ın cumhurbaşkanlığı döneminde İran-ABD ilişkileri İran'ın İsrail ile artan gerilimine içkin bir şekilde seyretmektedir.

7. Sonuç

Bu tezde kullanılan tarihsel yaklaşım İran'ın ABD'ye karşı izlediği dış politikanın aslında geleneksel anlamda bir dış politika olmadığını, İran-ABD ilişkilerinin devletin siyasi kompozisyonunu, sosyo-ekonomik gelişmesini, devletin kendisini tanımlama biçimini ve hâkim ideolojisini de ilgilendiren oldukça tartışmalı bir konu olduğunu savunmaktadır. ABD İran'ın ideolojik ve jeostratejik düşmanı olduğu kadar, İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'nin küresel siyaset ve ekonomi ile yeniden bütünleşme çabalarının önünde kararlı bir engeldir. İran'ın ABD ile ilişkileri jeo-stratejik ilişkilerin ötesinde kalkınma ve kimlik gibi konular ile yakından ilgilidir ve İran'ın ABD siyasetini stratejik faktörler üzerinden olduğu kadar siyasal iktisat ve kimlik gibi faktörler üzerinden de değerlendirmek gerekmektedir. Bu noktada Tarihsel Sosyoloji'nin olay ve olguların ardında çok-nedenliliğe vurgu yapan yaklaşımı anlam kazanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda İran'ın dış politikasını yalnızca stratejik faktörleri ele alarak ya da yalnızca söylem ve prensipler üzerinden okumak doğru olmayacaktır. Maddi ve düşünsel etmenler birbirleriyle sürekli ilişki halindedir ve hangi faktörlerin ön plana çıkacağı tarihsel koşulların mahiyeti ile alakalıdır. Koşullar uyarınca bu etmenler birbiri ile uyum sergileyebilir veyahut çatışabilir.

Çalışma İran'da kimliğin çok parçalı ve değişken yapısını incelemiş ve yekpare bir kimlik ve devlet anlayışını eleştirmiştir. Devletin farklı yapısal ilişkiler üzerine bina edilmiş yapısallığı içerisinde farklı öznelerin devleti, kimliğini ve çıkarlarını tanımlama mücadelelerini İran'ın devrim sonrası dönüşümünü tahlil ederek göstermiştir. Çalışma

İran'da devletin bir mücadele arenası olarak içinde barındırdığı farklı aktör ve süreçleri aydınlatmıştır. İran'da son on yıl içerisinde bu çatışma ve mücadeleler üç temel başlık altında incelenebilir: Sivil ya da militer/güvenlik üzerinden tanımlanan devlet; cumhuriyetçilik ve otoriterleşme eğilimleri arasındaki gerilim ve sanayileşme ve liberal bir ekonomi karşısında otokrasi ve ticarete dayalı geleneksel ekonominin varlığı.

Tarihsel Sosyolojik tasavvurun vurgu yaptığı süreçsel analiz üzerinden İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'nin son otuz yılını değerlendirecek olursak, 1980'lerin İran'da devrim ve konsolidasyon sürecindeki devlet ve toplumun hem içte hem de dışta kendisini aradığı, yapısal ve ideolojik dönüşümlerden geçtiği yıllar olduğunu savunabiliriz. 1990'larda İran uluslararası siyasi ve ekonomik yapı ve ilişkilere yeniden eklemlenmenin mücadelesini vermektedir. Bir yandan kendisini kurallara uyan, bölgesinin istikrarlı ve statükocu gücü olarak tanımlarken, öte yandan önceki dönemde kopmaya ve dönüştürmeye çalıştığı sisteme geri dönme çabasının yarattığı ideolojik çelişkileri ve yapısal riskleri çözmeye uğraşıyordu. 2000'ler ise İran'ın bölgede artan gücünün, nüfuzunun ve meşru taleplerinin tanınmasını talep ettiği ve Batı ile girdiği ilişkileri denetlemek, kontrol etmek ve yönlendirmek istediği bir dönem olmuştur. İran'ın boyun eğmez ve tahakküm kabul etmez tavır ve söyleminin ardında yatan düşünce budur. Bahsedilen dönemde İran'ın bölgesel ve küresel hareket alanı genişlemiş ve devlet askeri seçkinlerin ekonomik, ideolojik ve askeri çıkarları eşliğinde bölgesinde Irak, Lübnan ve Afganistan gibi ülkelerde kendisini farklı düzeylerde kurmaya başlamıştır. Bu eylemler kavramsal olarak Marjo Koivisto'nun altını çizdiği devletin farklı düzlemlerde kurulması prensibi ile de örtüşmektedir. Çalışmanın incelediği son dönem İran'ın ABD ile ilişkilerinde baskılara boyun eğmeden, siyasi, stratejik ve ideolojik açıdan önem arz eden proje ve politikaları Batı'nın zoruyla terk etmeye yanaşmadan ilişkilerde belirleyici taraf olmak istediğini göstermiştir. İran Amerika'dan politikalarını değiştirmesini, hedeflerini tanımlamasını ve yaptırımlara son vermesini istemektedir.

İran'ın ABD'ye karşı sürdürdüğü siyasetin belli başlı odakları ve kısıtları bulunmaktadır. Tarihsel süreç içinde İran'ın ABD siyaseti devrimin ve rejimin bekası ile özdeşleşmiştir.

İç siyasette hizipçiliğin temel tartışmalarından biri olan ABD ile ilişkiler İran'ı karar verirken ideoloji, kalkınma ve güvenlik gibi birçok etmeni değerlendirmeye ve dikkate almaya zorlamaktadır. İran'ın ABD siyasetini bu nedenle sadece ideolojik ya da artık tam anlamıyla jeostratejik olarak okumak anlamlı değildir. Tarihsel koşullar ve devlet arenasında etkili güçlerin vereceği kararlar önem kazanmaktadır. Amerikan-karşıtlığı Devrim'in ve rejimin ideolojik sütunlarından birisidir. Fakat 1990'lar bu vizyonu az da olsa değiştirmiş, İran karşılıklı saygı ve güven prensibi temelinde Amerika ile ilişki kurmanın yolunu aramaya başlamıştır. İdeolojik ve siyasi iklimi değiştiren ABD'nin İran siyasetinin düşmanlaşması ve rejime yönelik tehditlerin artması olmuştur; bu tutum İran'da ABD karşıtı tavrını koruyan ve Amerika'yı güvenilmez bulan güç odaklarının savını ve sistem içindeki konumunu güçlendirmiş, iki ülkenin ilişkilerindeki gerilimi tırmandırmıştır. Ancak 1990'lı yıllarda İran'ı yöneten pragmatik ve reformcu iktidarlar döneminde yaşanan toplumsal ve siyasal dönüşümler İran-ABD ilişkilerini bir tabu olmaktan çıkarmıştır. 1970'lerin ve 1980'lerin ideolojik koşulları içinde geniş destek bulan ABD karşıtlığı günümüzde yerini ABD ile normalleşme beklentisine bırakmıştır. İranlılar ABD'nin İran'a ve bölgeye yönelik siyasetini eleştirseler de, İran ve ABD ilişkilerinin İran'ın çıkarlarını zedelemeyecek bir şekilde normalleşmesini arzu etmektedir. Bu nedenle siyasi iktidarların ABD'ye yönelik politikalarının meşru bir zemini oluşmuştur. Ancak İran'ın ABD siyasetini tahlil eden çalışma, İran'da ABD'ye yönelik adımların kim tarafından atılacağı ve kontrolün kimde olacağı sorularının daha önemli olduğunu teyit etmiştir. Buna göre Dini Lider Hamaney ve kendisine yakın iktidar odaklarının onay vermeyeceği ya da ikna edilemeyeceği adımların atılması siyaseten mümkün değildir. Fakat gerilimin sürmesi devlet içindeki ayrışmaları artıracak, kalkınma, sosyal adalet ve normalleşme beklentilerini bileyecektir. Aslında İran-ABD ilişkileri tam anlamıyla normalleşmese de, ABD'nin İran'a karşı sürdürdüğü yaptırım ve tecrit siyasetinin yumuşaması İran'da devlet ve devlet-toplum ilişkileri açısından mühimdir ve Devrim'in anlamı ve İranlılara sunacağı kazanımlar artık büyük ölçüde devletin krizlerle örülü uluslararası siyasetini nasıl yürüteceği ile yakından ilgilidir.

Çalışma kavramsal çerçevesinde benimsediği Tarihsel Sosyoloji tasavvuru ve İran'da devrim sonrası dönüşüme yaptığı vurgu ile TS'nin devletin ortaya çıkışı kadar, nasıl ve neden dönüştüğünü de cevaplamaya muktedir olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu tezde sıklıkla yinelenen argüman devletin tamamlanmış ve bitmiş bir proje olmadığıdır ve dolayısıyla devleti oluşum halinde (*emergentist*) bir yaklaşımla ele almak daha yerinde olacaktır. Devletin karmaşık siyasi ve ekonomik ağlarına İran özelinde ışık tutan çalışma devleti "kara kutu" veyahut "territoryal kap" olarak nitelendiren anlayışların ötesine geçmiştir. Devletlerin dış politikasını devlet-toplum ve devlet-uluslararası/bölgesel alan eksenleri arasındaki değişken dinamikler üzerinden okumak gereklidir. Dış politika Janus'un iki yüzü metaforu ile düşünebileceğimiz devletin eylemini simgelemekte ve devletin karmaşık yapısı içinde yer alan öznelerin devlet adına eylemleri hem toplumu hem de devletin içinde yer aldığı sistemi farklı ölçülerde değiştirme gücüne sahiptir. Bu çalışmanın temel amaçlarından birisi ontolojik ayrımlar üzerinden okunan "iç" ve "dış" ın birbirini kurucu ve dönüştürücü gücünü devlet üzerinden okumak ve dış politikanın bu dönüşümdeki rolünü tespit etmektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda tez devleti ve uluslararası alanı sosyolojik ve uluslararası boyutlarıyla yeniden düşünmüş ve özne-yapı gibi sosyal gerçekliğin mühim süreçlerini İran dış politikası kapsamında tartışmıştır. Çalışma Tarihsel Sosyolojik tasavvuru Avrupa-dışı bir bağlamda kullanmış ve İran'ı kendine özgü yapısal ve tarihsel koşulları içinde anlamaya çalışırken, küresel kapitalizm ve uluslararası devlet sistemi ile kurduğu değişken ilişkiye de dikkat çekmiştir. İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'nin kuruluşundan günümüze İran'ın ABD ile ilişkilerini ve sürdürdüğü dış politikayı ele alan çalışma güncel ve bölge siyaseti açısından önemli bir meselenin tahlilini sunmaktadır. Bitirirken, İran ve ABD arasındaki "karşılaşma" döneminin halen devam ettiğini ve ilişkilerin normalleşmesinin her iki ülkeden gelecek yapıcı adımlara bağlı olduğunu belirtmek gerekir. İran-Amerika ilişkilerinin analizi yalnızca bölge siyasetini anlamak açısından değil, İran'da devlet-toplum ilişkilerini, siyasi ve ekonomik gelişmenin imkân ve kısıtlarını anlamak açısından da önem arz etmektedir. Dahası ilişkilerin ve İran dış siyasetinin seyri Amerika'nın Orta Doğu'daki diplomasisinin başarılarını ve zafiyetlerini anlamak bakımından da önem taşımaktadır.

B. CURRICULUM VITAE

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PUBLICATIONS

1. Şen, Gülriz. "İran ve 'Arap Baharı': Bağlam, Söylem ve Siyaset", *OrtaDoğu Etütleri*, Vol. 3, No.2, (January 2012), pp. 95-118.

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YAZARIN

Soyadı : ŞEN
Adı   : GÜLRİZ
Bölümü :ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER

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