

BASIC CHANGES IN IRANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM BEFORE AND
AFTER ISLAMIC REVOLUTION

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ABSTRACT

CHANGES IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF IRAN

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This thesis analyzes the changes occurred in the Iranian education system. The changes occurred before and after the Islamic Revolution are main themes. Reform attempts, modernization, westernization, secularization, purification and Islamization of Iranian education system will be discussed along with comments of notable figures. The thesis will also trace the history of modernization and development of Iran as well as introducing political ideas of ruling elites how they defined projects to transform Iranian education system.

Keywords: Iran, education system, reform attempts, Cultural Revolution

ÖZ

İRAN EĞİTİM SİSTEMİNDEKİ DEĞİŞİKLİKLER

Tamer, Yasin

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Bu çalışma, İran eğitim sisteminde gerçekleşen değişiklikleri incelemiştir. İslam Devrimi öncesi ve sonrası değişiklikler tezin temel temalardır. İran eğitim sisteminin reform hareketleri, modernleşmesi, batılılaşması, sekülerleşmesi, arındırılması ve İslamlaştırılması haricinde önemli şahsiyetlerin yorumları da açıklanmıştır. Ayrıca İran'ın modernite ve gelişiminin tarihsel olarak incelenmesinin yanı sıra, yöneten kesimin siyasi fikirlerinin İran'ın eğitim sistemini nasıl değiştirdiği ile ilgili reform hareketleri de anlatılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İran, eğitim sistemi, reform hareketleri, Kültür Devrimi

To My Grand Father, Erdal Üçtaşı and To My Parents, and To My Sister

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to point out the basic changes in the education system of Iran before and after Islamic Revolution. Before introducing changes I want to present some information about methodology that I used during my researches. First of all while I was conducting research on changes I focused on specific time frame. It was the modern history of Iran between 1779 and 1982. I investigated changes in the education system of Qajar dynasty, Pahlavi dynasty and Islamic Republic. Secondly I focused on changes in state institutions. Although some private initiatives were referred in order to evaluate changes in state institutions. Thirdly, during my researches I excluded changes in pre-school education and private tutorship due to lack of sources. Fourthly, I did not conduct researches on madrasa or maktabi education. So, in this thesis there was no information about education system of madrasas or maktab. Finally I observed and analyzed changes in general abstract without focusing on specific education level. Considering methodology of my research, I divided my thesis into three chapters.

The first chapter will introduce historical information about Iran between 1779 and 1982. Acknowledging history of modern Iran is important in order to understand reasons behind the changes in the education system. This chapter has three parts. First part composes of history of Qajar dynasty presenting important

reformist figures. I will try to point of prominent reformist shahs, intellectuals and educationalists in their guess to modernize Iran, where education system was one of the aspects of projects. Second part presents history of Iran under Pahlavi dynasty. The respective monarchs; Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah's conditions to ascend to power, political composition of Iran and their reason to modernize Iran is going to be discussed. Final part of this chapter is committed to evolution of secularist monarchy to theological republic. Political and social backgrounds those prepared ascension of Ayatollah Khomeini as leader figure of the revolution and transformation of 1979 revolution into Islamic Republic will be introduced.

The second chapter is dedicated to on changes in Iranian education system considering modernization attempts of Qajar and Pahlavi dynasties. I will divide this chapter in two parts. In first part I will talk about reformist plans, initiatives and goals of Qajar dynasty. As of yet intellectuals and educationalists comments on shahs' reform attempts are going to be analyzed. The second part is also divided into two sub-sections. While first part is considering the reformist and modernist attempts of Reza Shah, second part will introduce plans and attempts of his son, Mohammad Reza Shah. Moreover I will try to point out how changes in the education system affected the Iranian society in general while indicating certain important plans in this respect.

The third chapter will focus on Islamic Revolution and changes in the education system implemented by Cultural Revolution. I am going to present the Islamic elites' perception on changes in education system of previous reigns. Despite of this I am going to analyze the resentment of Islamic government against those changes and how elites countered them with implementation of Cultural Revolution. Lastly I am going to compare the changes undertaken by Pahlavi dynasty and Islamic Republic considering the respective regimes' political orientations.

CHAPTER 2

BRIEF HISTORY OF IRAN FROM 1779 TO 1982

In this chapter I will briefly inform the history of Iran. I will divide this chapter in three headings starting with Qajar dynasty, Pahlavi dynasty and finally with Islamic Republic. I am going to analyze the historical background of respective regimes. While doing so, I am going to discuss the reasons behind modernization attempts of first two regimes. Moreover I am going to introduce important figures who had significant importance for modernization of Iran as well as education system. It will constitute an outline for the next chapter that I will discuss modernization attempts of the education system in both dynasties. Under the heading of Islamic Republic I will give information about evolution of secular monarchy into a theocratic republic. I am going to discuss the reasons and motivations of that transformation.

In late 18th and early 19th centuries, Western empires became source of imitation for Middle Eastern empires like Ottoman, Egypt and Iran. Technologic, scientific and military advancements of western empires were out dating the state apparatuses used by Middle Eastern counterparts. Reformist rulers like Mahmud II and Nader Shah realized weaknesses in their military and bureaucracy. They

perceived that without modern and developed military and bureaucracy, they could not protect territories of their empires from expansionist policy of west. Considering this reasons reformist rulers sought advice of western countries. It seemed to be a contradiction but they had no other alternative. So, they sought assistance from different western countries in order to modernize their military and bureaucracy. Most of the developments brought in Iran by western military advisors and tutors. However they were not the only sources. Some reformist rulers sent military cadets to study abroad in order to create foreign educated native personnel who would contribute development modernization in general. In this respect Qajar dynasty was one of the best examples in the Middle East that initiated modernization of military and bureaucracy.

2.1. Qajar Dynasty

Qajars were a Turkmen tribe of Iran whom dwelled ancestral lands in present-day Azerbaijan. After death of Zand Dynasty's ruler Karim Khan Zand in 1779, leader of Qajar tribe Agha Mohammad Khan initiated an ambitious goal; to unify Iran. After defeating his rival, Loft Ali Khan, the last heir of Zand dynasty, Agha Mohammad Khan established Qajar dynasty in 1794, reasserting sovereignty of Iran over former Iranian territories in Georgia and Caucasus¹. Capital of new dynasty was Tehran, which was a petty village near the ruins of the ancient city of Ray. A year over his crowning, in 1797, Agha Mohammad Khan was assassinated and succeeded by his nephew, Fath Ali Shah² Upon crowning Fath Ali Shah faced with Russian empire's expansionist policies. Russian Empire was expanding from north into the Caucasus, the area that Iran had interest and influence. At the end of the struggle Qajar armies suffered major military defeats during. Fath Ali Shah forced to accept Treaty of Golestan in 1813. By that treaty Iran recognized Russia's

¹ H. Pir Nia and A. Eghbal Ashtiani. *History of Persia (Tarikh-i Iran)* (Tehran, 2003),655

² N. Donald Wilber. *Four Hundred Forty-Six Kings of Iran* (Tehran, Offset Press Inc. 1972), 92

annexation of Georgia as well as most of the northern Caucasus ceded by Russians. In 1820s Fath Ali Shah undertook another campaign against Russia in order to redress his losses. However second war turned out to be disastrous. Iran was forced to sign Treaty of Turkmanchai³ in 1828, by which it acknowledged Russian sovereignty over entire northern Aras River region-territory comprising present-day Armenia and Republic of Azerbaijan. After treaties Fath Ali Shah saw inefficiency of his outdated army. It was his motivation to initiate diplomatic contacts with European countries to modernize Qajar army. However Fath Ali Shah was not the only figure that initiated modernization of army. At the beginning of 19th century, Crown Prince Abbas Mirza (1789-1833) governor of Azerbaijan- undertook enthusiastic reforms by bringing French and British military instructors to Iran. At the same time he sent military cadets to study in Europe. Returnees of Abbas Mirza brought political, administrative and technical advancements of Europe to Azerbaijan and Iran. Even, reports of returnees created new literary genre; ravel memoirs. In addition to translation of European books, introduction of telegraph and printing press (the first one was set up in Tabriz in 1812, the second in Tehran in 1824) significantly contribute to spread of western ideas. Not so late Fath Ali perceived Abbas Mirza's attempts as threat to his crown and he did not support any further initiations.⁴ At the end Fath Ali Shah realized urgency of modernization of army after his defeats in Russian front. The modernization attempts started with Fath Ali Shah and Prince Abbas Mirza inherited by Nasser al-Din Shah in 1848. Nasser al-Din was considered to be one of the greater reformist figures of Qajar dynasty. His reign was a turning point for modernization of Iran with the introduction of western science and technology accompanied with modern and western educational methods. Along with his reformist visions he was the first shah who visited European countries followed by his son Mohammad al-Din Shah. Like his father Mohammad al-Din Shah saw necessity to modernize Iran in general. For

³ CAIS-SOAS, "Iran" <http://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/Iran/torkmanchai.htm> (accessed March 8, 2010)

⁴ Monika Gronke. translated by Steven Rendall. *Iran A Short History* (New Jersey, Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006), 103

his attempts Mohammad Shah had support from a prominent figure of Qajar reformists who was Mirza Taqi Farahani⁵.

Nasser al-Din awarded Mirza Taqi position of Amir Nezam appointing him as his prime minister as well as honoring him the title of Amir Kabir, the Great Prince. Mirza Taqi was merited with those titles because of the reforms he introduced to modernize and change Iran⁶. Firstly he cut government expenditures, distinguished private (shahs) and public expenditures. He assumed responsibility of bureaucratic reforms in order to ease overhauled central administration. He curtailed foreign interference in domestic affairs. Encouraging exports could be an example in economic perspective.

Beside of his reformist views in bureaucracy and governmental institutions Mirza Taqi could be named as one of the forefathers of modern education in Iran. He issued an edict that banned ornate and excessive formal writing in governmental documents. It was considered as beginning of modern Persian prose in bureaucracy and education. One of his greatest achievements was establishment of *Dar al-Fonun*, first modern higher education institution of Iran. It was established to train bureaucrats acquainted with western techniques. Similar to Prince Abbas Mirza, Mirza Taqi relied on foreign instructors in his new school. Austrian instructors were hired in order to teach variety of subjects from Language to Medicine, Law to Geography, History to Economics and Engineering. Nonetheless his reformist policies caused discontent among notables and power groups of Iranian society. In 1851 pressure of power groups caused Mirza Taqi's dismissal from office of prime ministry. Same year he was assassinated by the order of Nasser al-Din shah. One of the greatest reformists of Iranian education system was assassinated because of political considerations of power groups.

⁵ Abbas Amanat. "The Downfall of Mirza Taqi Amir Kabir and the Problem of Ministerial Authority in Qajar Iran" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.23, No.4, (1991): 578

⁶ Vanessa Martin. "An Evaluation of Reform and Development of the State in Early Qajar Period" *Die Welt Des Islams*, Vol. 36, Issue 1,(2003): 21

Other than Mirza Taqi there were several important figures who contributed overall modernization of Iran as well having significant importance for modernization of education system. However their contributions and comments on education system of Iran are subject matter of the next chapter.

2.2. Pahlavi Dynasty

Before discussing Pahlavi dynasty and its prominent figures historical background that prepared ascension of the dynasty ought to be mention.

Starting from early 1900s Qajar dynasty was experiencing domestic discontent due to economic crises, political oppositions and social unrest. Furthermore territories of empire were under threat of British and Russian invasion. British and Russian empires had their own plans to control Central Asia for strategic purposes. British Empire sought to secure its Indian territories by dominating Central Asia that was coupled with empire's expansionist policies. On the other hand Russian Empire had its own reasons to dominate the region. First Central Asia had historical significance for the empire. Second the recently modernized and industrialized Russian empire started to pursue imperialist policies following examples of western counterparts⁷. The Great Game⁸ reflected British and Russian rivalry in their struggle to be the dominant power in the region. Due to its strategic importance Iran became a pawn in this game. Russian and British empires had intervened internal affairs of Iran⁹. Nevertheless, this intervention created resentments and reactions among intellectuals, educationalists and people. Figures like Malkom Khan and Talibov Tabrizi saw the inefficiency of Qajar shahs.

⁷ Helen Chapin Metz. *Persian Gulf States: A Country Study* (Washington, Library of Congress, 1989)

⁸ Darius Mahdi Nazemroaya. "The "Great Game": Eurasia and History of War" (2005)
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=7064> (accessed July 31,2009)

⁹ W. Morgan Shuster. *The Strangling of Persia* (London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1913)

As reaction intellectuals, educationalists, clergy and people formed reformist 'Constitutional Movement'. The movement was demanding constitutional rule in Iran. It reached its goal in 1906 by forcing Mozaffer al-Din Shah to declaring constitutional rule and conveying the Majlis¹⁰. 1907 Iranian constitution had significant importance for the country's history. By Article 1 clergy incorporated Islam as the official religion of Iran. By Article 2 clergy attained "the right to nominate 20 clerics for the council from whom the deputies would elect at least five members to supervise legislation and to prevent the passage of any law that contradicted religious laws"¹¹. These laws granted Shia clergy right to intervene in state affairs. Furthermore in 1907 Iranians experienced effects of another important document. Britain and Russian empires signed Anglo-Russian Agreement by Iran was divided into spheres of influence. The Russians had exclusive right to pursue their interests in the northern sphere while the British in the south¹². Despite their control in respective sphere of influences, both empires continued to intervene affairs of Qajar dynasty. Tension erupted between Iranian government and Russia when United States administrator, Morgan Shuster was hired as general treasurer to reform the finance of Iran. Shuster sent members of treasury gendarmerie-tax department's police force- into the Russian zone to collect taxes from powerful Russian protégés. Consequently Russia send ultimatum that demands Shuster's dismiss. In December 1911 Majles refused to voice Russian ultimatum. As a response Czar mobilized his troops to occupy the capital. In December 20 in order to prevent invasion of capital and country some of the Bakhtiari chiefs surrounded Majlis. They forced the government to accept the Russian terms. This incident marked end of constitutional government and suspension of constitution under control of Bakhtiari chiefs. Monarchy re-established under the rule of Ahmad Shah.

¹⁰ Ehsan Yarshater. "The Qajar Dynasty 1779-1924". (2005), *Encyclopedia Iranica*. www.iranica.com (accessed March 8, 2010)

¹¹ Nader Sohrabi. "Constitutional Revolutions in the Ottoman Empire, Iran and Russia, 1905-1908" *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol:100, No:6 (1995): 1421

¹² Jennifer Siegel. *Endgame: Britain, Russia and the Final Struggle for Central Asia*. (London, I.B. Tauris, 2002)

However Iran was invaded by foreign troops and monarchy was powerless to prevent dissolution of the country that was explained; “As 1920 drew its close Iran seemed to be upon the verge of collapse, about to disintegrate into a number of separate parts.... Hunger, poverty, insecurity, despair and apathy reigned”¹³.

2.2.1. Reza Shah

During the rule of Ahmad Shah under control of Bakhtiari chiefs two important figures appeared aiming to stabilize the country. One of them was an intellectual, Seyyed Ziya al-Din Tabatabaee¹⁴ and the other one was a military officer, Reza Khan Pahlavi. Despite having different educational backgrounds and ideologies they formed a coalition against foreign intervention in Iran. In 1921 trusting support from military Persian Cossack Brigade officer Reza Khan staged a coup d’etate against Qajar dynasty. Reza Khan forced Ahmad Shah to appoint himself as his Prime Minister. When political power of Reza Khan grew he forced Majlis to depose Ahmad Shah when his was visiting Europe. In this respect ascension of Reza Khan was similar to constitutional government experience. Masses reacted inactivity of Qajar rulers by supporting ascension of Reza Khan. He was considered as “a man of action, not of words”¹⁵

In early years of his reign, Reza Shan considered establishment of a republic, similar to Turkey¹⁶. Reza Shah wanted to reform and modernize Iran in order to transfer country into a progressive, secular state as the example of Turkey. Reza Shah embraced three concepts for his reformist projects. These were Westernization, Modernization and Secularization. Modernization was the key

¹³ Donald N Wilber. *Reza Shah Pahlavi: The Resurrection and Reconstruction of Iran* (New York, Exposition Press, 1975), 17

¹⁴Abdul-Hadi Hairi. *Shiism and Constitutionalism in Iran* (Leiden, Brill Academic Publishers, 1977), 81-83

¹⁵ David Menashri. *Education and the Making of Modern Iran* (New York, Cornell University Press, 1992), 89

¹⁶ Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. *Mission for my Country* (London ,Hutchinson and Co. 1961), 41

concept for centralization of the authority that would lead effective state institutions for reform attempts. Westernization was another concept for development and progress in order to transform Iran to a modern state¹⁷. Secularization was the concept that Reza Shah aimed to distance clergy from state affairs. Clergy granted right to intervene state affairs by 1907 constitution. As a result clergy became one of the main opposition groups against modernization and westernization processes. In order to understand clergy's opposition we have to investigate Reza Shah's reforms. He excluded clergy from judgeships by creating secular court system, and transferring lucrative task of notarizing documents from clerics to state-licensed notaries. He transferred administration of vaqfs (religious endowments) and licensing of graduates of religious seminaries to state apparatuses. He imposed European dress codes on population. He opened schools for women to bring them into work force as well as in academia. In 1936 he abolished veiling. Haddad commented on success of Shah's reforms as follows; "He followed the same course as that of his great contemporary in Turkey, but the changes he introduced were not as far reaching as in Turkey, particularly those related to secularism."¹⁸ Considering his reforms Reza Shah had another motive. In order to sustain continuity of his 'reformist' reign he had planned to create an elite stratum that was loyal to monarchy. He believed that the motherland (vatan) and the nation (millet) were highest valued concepts¹⁹. Crown prince Mohammad Reza Khan commented that being a 'good citizen' is equal to being loyal to Shah and the monarchy²⁰.

During Reza Shah's rule not only domestic politics but also international politics of Iran experienced some reforms. He abolished capitulations. This caused deterioration of relations with several western countries. When he nullified

¹⁷ James A. Bill. "The Military and Modernization in the Middle East" *Comparative Politics*, Vol:2, No:2, (1969): 46

¹⁸ M. George Haddad. "Revolutions and Coups d'etat in the Middle East: A Comparative Study", *Die Welt des Islams*, Vol. 10, Issue 1 / 2, (1965): 20

¹⁹ Menashri, *Education and ...*, 92

²⁰ Samih K. Farsoun. *Iran :Political Culture in the Islamic Republic* (New York, Routledge, 1992), 167

agreement that guaranteed Britain's greater share in oil revenues of APOC's [Anglo-Persian Oil Company], Britain was discontent about Shah's policies. Moreover at the beginning of 1940 Shah hired German and Austrian advisors to counter the influence of British and Russians in Iran. However his attempt in the eve of Second World War presented Iran as a country that was cooperating with Nazi Germany. Despite his declaration of neutrality and non-alliance of Iran in the upcoming war once again Britain and Soviet Russia invaded Iran. In 1941 he was expelled from the country and his son Mohammad Reza was crown as Shah.

2.2.2. Mohammad Reza Shah

The invasion of Iran by Allies had tremendous consequences in domestic politics. In 1942 Majlis passed a law that forbidden government to discuss oil concessions with foreign powers until end of the war. This amendment hindered flow of Caspian oil to Soviets. In order to continue its struggle against Nazi Germany Soviets Russia had to secure this oil flow. So, Soviet government undertook several measures. First Soviet government supported communist Tudeh Party of Iran in exchange of securing Caspian oil²¹. However Tudeh Parth could not attain support for Soviet cause. Second, due to political weakness and administrative inexperience of Mohammad Reza Shah some ethnic groups of Iran, Azeris and Kurds demanded their independence. In 1945 Soviets forced Mohammad Shah to recognize Azeri and Kurdish autonomous republics²². The territories of those republics covered Caspian coasts of Iran. In this respect it was not surprising why Soviets supported autonomy of those republics. Beside of Soviets there were other countries like United States and Britain those had interest in Iranian oil. Both countries perceived Soviet attempts as threat to their interest

²¹ Ervand Abrahamian. *Tortured Confessions: Prisons and Public Recantations in Modern Iran* (California, University of California Press, 1999), 82

²² Peter Avery. *The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol. 7*, (2007): 242

and forced Soviet government to withdraw its troops from autonomous republics. Upon withdrawal of troops and support Azeri and Kurdish autonomous republics collapsed. Mohammad Shah's ineffectiveness as a ruler and foreign countries intervention in Iranian affairs caused ascension of nationalist groups in Majlis.

Mohammad Mossadegh was important figure of National Front²³ which was opposing Shah because of his allegiances with 'imperialist' powers. Mossadeq gained support of well educated but unemployed youth²⁴. They were demanding change and stressing importance of banishing all foreign powers from the country. As a 'nationalist' figure Mossadeq was in favor of non-alliance stratagem. The Majlis under pressure from Mossadeq's National Front rejected Soviet Union's proposal for oil concession. Along with it agreement with AIOC [Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, formerly Anglo-Persian Oil Company] that favors Britain in oil revenues was nullified. Furthermore in 15 March 1951 Majlis voted nationalizing of oil industry. One month later Mohammad Shah appointed Mossadeq as his prime minister. Nationalization of oil industry caused economic hardship due to British technicians leaving the country. However Mossadegh's popularity was continuously growing. United States administration was alerted with increasing nationalism in Iran. At the end of the Second World War a new world order was emerged. There was a constant struggle-war of attrition- between former allies; capitalist Western bloc and communist Eastern bloc. In Cold War it was very important for both blocs to keep, even smallest countries as their allies. If potentially wealthy and powerful country like Iran was matter of concern, the nature of Cold War states mobilization of every means to gain alliance and loyalty of that country. Under the pretext of Cold War United States sanctioned Eisenhower Doctrine, which propagated certain measures in order to 'secure' an ally from communist influence.

²³J. Mark Gasiorowski and Malcolm Byrne. *Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran* (New York, Syracuse University Press, 2004), 243

²⁴S. Joseph Szyliowicz. *Education and Modernization in the Middle East* (New York, Cornell University Press, 1973), 390

CIA and SAS initiated Operation Ajax²⁵ in order to depose Mossadeh and replace him with a monarchy loyal general from the army. The operation was a failure in its early days, until royalist elements of Iranian army became victorious over Mossadeq supporters. He was sentenced to three years of imprisonment for trying to overthrow the monarchy, but it was changed to supervised-house arrest until his death in 1967²⁶. Loyalist elements of Iranian army re-crown Mohammad Reza as Shah. Despite of his support from the army, Shah was still afraid of Soviet influence and internal opposition bolstered by Soviet Union. Along with it the support from United States for his second crowning led him to develop tight relations with Western bloc. As an example of his intentions in October 1955 he signed Baghdad Pact. Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan and Britain were parties of the pact while United States supervised it. However this did not mean that Shah severed all ties with Soviet Union. He visited Moscow in 1956 in a diplomatic mission.

Late 1960s was turning point for Shah's reign. Supported by United States Shah undertook several measures in domestic affairs. He banned Tudeh Party, National Front and other parties, suppressed press, strengthened SAVAK-Sazman-I Ittilaat va Amniyat-I Kishvar-(National Intelligence and Security Organization) and controlled elections. 1970s onwards Shah initiated series of reformist projects to transform Iranian society. In 1971 he celebrated 2500th year of uninterrupted Persian monarchy declaring himself as heir of Cyrus the Great-founder of the Achaemenid Empire. Shah prepared glamorous celebrations and parades trying to show power and wealth of his reign²⁷. On the other hand most of the population was suffering from economic hardship, poverty and unemployment. Eventually an opposition was voiced. Ayatollah Khomeini condemned celebrations because of

²⁵ Moyara De Moraes Ruehsen. "Operation 'Ajax' Revisited Iran:1953" *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.29 No.3, (1993): 476-478

²⁶Ervand Abrahamian. *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1982), 280

²⁷ Cyrus Kadivar, "We are Awake" (2002). <http://www.iranian.com/CyrusKadivar/2002/January/2500/> (accessed May 4, 2010)

praising un-Islamic traditions of Iran as well as presenting country as ‘prosperous’ and ‘wealthy’ disregarding reality of Iranian society. Four years later, in 1975 Majlis proposed replacement of Islamic calendar, Hicri calendar, with modern one which begins with ‘first year of coronation of Cyrus’. Mohammad Shah comment on his reform;

The empire founded by Cyrus the Great was not based on territorial acquisition alone, but also on international tolerance and understanding. The rights of all the subject nations were upheld, and their laws and customs respected. Indeed, I see our first empire something of the spirit of United Nations of nearly 2,500 years later.²⁸

Shah was attributing reform attempts as steps for creation of modern state. Along with this Mohammad Shah and his prime ministers outlined several more reformist policies. Prime Minister Asadollah Alam was one of the reformist intellectuals who proposed reformations in various matters. He initiated land distribution program, profit-sharing measures for industrial workers in private enterprises, nationalization of forests and pastureland, privatization of government factories, amendment of electoral law for representation of workers and farmers. Considering modernization of education Alam was forefather of White Revolution and Literacy Corps²⁹. Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda’s reform attempts were as significant as Alam’s. During his office Hoveyda introduced new civil service code, new tax law as well as adapting meritocracy during appointments at key governmental positions. Also he initiated creation of several ministries in 1967 including the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. In mid-1968 he initiated educational revolution program. The number of higher educational institutions was increased, thus attracting students from lower class families into new colleges and universities.

²⁸ Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country*, p. 21

²⁹ M. Ali Ansari. “The Myth of the White Revolution: Mohammad Reza Shah, ‘Modernization’ and the Consolidation of Power” *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.37, No.3 (2001): 5

However from 1976 to 1978 political unrest and social dissatisfaction towards the monarchy were undeniable factors of Iranian politics. In most of the protests and demonstrations there was considerable number of unemployed university graduates. The protests of modern school graduates and intellectual class granted a trump card to clergy to criticize Shah. They started to present Shah's reformist modernization attempts as un-Islamic and maleficent to society³⁰. In order to content masses Shah dismissed his reformist and modernist Prime Minister Hoveyda. Nonetheless it did not content either graduates or intellectuals or clergy. As he was expressed his ideas about monarchy and Shah during 1971 celebrations Ayatollah Khomeini stressed his political views in his book *Velayet-e Faqih*

...monarchy was a form of government abhorrent of Islam, that true Muslims must strive for the establishment of an Islamic state, and that the leadership of the state belonged by right to the *faqih*, or Islamic jurists.³¹

Despite of outlining establishment of an Islamic regime under guidance of mojtehad Khomeini was also propagating rebellion against monarchy and Shah. In order to discredit Ayatollah Khomeini from public view Mohammad Shah accused him of being a British agent³². However it backfired as violent demonstrations against his regime. Protests were destroying state and private properties such as cinemas and nightclubs which were seen as symbols of un-Islamic and immoral western values imposed by Shah. Despite there was non-violent groups among intellectuals, writers and educationalists who were demanding restoration of constitutional order along with basic liberties, the violent groups were seeking for fundamental change in the state structure. The violent groups forced their attempts into a revolution with a crucial incident. I would like to introduce brief history of that incident; Black Friday.

³⁰ Shaul Bakhash." Iran" *The American Historical Review*, Vol.96, No.5 (1991): 1480

³¹ Metz, *Iran a Country Study*, 41

³² Parviz Daneshvar. *Revolution in Iran* (New York, Palgrave Macmillian, 1996), 100

In 1978 there was a bombing in Rex Cinema causing death of 377 people. Due to Islamic fundamentalists' previous arsonist attacks on cinemas and nightclubs government blamed them. On the other hand opposition groups were blaming SAVAK³³. This incident caused a rift between radical clergy and government that neither side agreed to compromise. In order to discontent mourning mobs Shah replaced Prime Minister Amouzegar with Sharif Emami. According to Metz Emami undertook several measures.

He released a number of imprisoned clerics, revoked the imperial calendar, closed gambling casinos, and obtained from the shah the dismissal from court and public office of members of the Baha'i religion, a sect to which the clerics strongly objected.³⁴

However none of measures that Emami undertook eased the pain of masses. At the end of Ramadan on 4 September 1978, more than 100,000 people gathered for a mass sermon to commemorate deaths. Clergy converted sermon into anti-government and anti-monarchy protest which continued two days with increasing number of participants. Eventually on the nights of 7-8 September 1978 government had to declare martial law in Tehran and other eleven cities. Army granted authority to put down demonstrators. Troop fired on the crowds at Tehran. Eighty-seven were killed during the shootout. This incident was named as Black Friday³⁵. Again Shah replaced his prime minister, this time with a General Gholam-Reza Azhari, the commander of Imperial Guards. In spite of liberalization Azhari adapted different approach to put down the discontented masses. He ordered arrest of former political figures, some government officials as well as high ranking SAVAK officers and former cabinet members. The most striking arrest was Hoveyda's, who served Shah for twelve years as prime minister. Instead of contenting masses Azhari's actions provoked further strikes and demonstrations. In

³³ "Iran: After the Abadan Fire" *TIMES*, (1978), <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,912118-2,00.html> (accessed May 8, 2009)

³⁴ Metz, *Iran A Country Study*, 44

³⁵ Ervand Abrahamian. "The Political Crisis Intensifies" *MERIP Report*, No.71(6) (1978)

December 1978, Shah agreed to initiate talking with leaders of moderate opposition. He compromised with National Front leader Shapour Bakhtiar. At the end of December Bakhtiar stated to Shah that that he would only form the government on the condition of Shah's departure. On 16 January 1979 Shah left the country after Bakhtiar presented his cabinet to Shah's approval. This was celebrated by Iranians which marking end of the Pahlavi dynasty³⁶.

2.3. Islamic Republic

After departure of Mohammad Reza Shah Prime minister Bakhtiar initiated liberalization attempts in order to depower radical clergy. He lifted restrictions on press and newspapers, freed political prisoners, promised dissolution of SAVAK, lifted martial laws on cities, promised free elections. Despite of these to gain support of moderate clergy he had withdrawn Iran from CENTO-Formerly Baghdad Pact which changed its name as CENTO after the withdrawal of Iraq- and announced that Iran would not sell oil to South Africa and Israel³⁷. While Bakhtiar was initiating changes Ayatollah Khomeini decided to return Iran from his exile. On February 1, 1979 Khomeini's plane landed Tehran airport. He was welcomed and cheered by millions of Iranians. Upon his arrival he encouraged masses to continue strikes and demonstrations against Bakhtiar government because of approval by deposed Shah. On 5th of February, Khomeini appointed Mehdi Bazargan as prime minister of provisional government. When air force technicians of Khamati Air Base in Esfahan rebelled against their officers Bakhtiar realized that his government was weakened. Arjomand explained rebellious elements and disintegration of the army as follows;

³⁶ "1979: Shah of Iran flees into exile" *BBC UK* (1979), http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/january/16/newsid_2530000/2530475.stm (accessed May 8, 2010)

³⁷ Martin Wright. *Iran: The Khomeini Revolution* (London, Longman, 1989), 18

There were instances of fraternization with the demonstrators and of desertion; twelve officers were killed by three rebellious soldiers of the Imperial Guards; a mutiny occurred in Tabriz in December; and there were a number of other minor incidents. There was also persistent trouble with paramilitary technicians of the Air Force; known as the Homafaran... ..It was only *after* the Shah's departure that the process of disintegration of the army under political pressure set in seriously³⁸.

Departure of Shah alerted Jimmy Carter administration that had been 'supporter' of the monarchy for a long time. Again referring to Cold War pretext Carter administration did not want to lose an important asset. So United States embraced role of a mediator between loyalist and rebellious factions. However Carter administration concluded that if loyalist factions could not secure the 'alliance' then there should be a compromise with the upcoming government. President Carter sent General Robert E. Huyser to Tehran as special emissary to initiate the negotiations between two factions. General Huyser was responsible for securing integrity of Iranian army and encouraging military support for Bakhtiar government. In spite of this he was preparing army for a coup d'état. Coup d'état had to be initiated when Khomeini arrived in Tehran but the plan failed because of the Iranian commanders' lack of resolve. Two days after arrival of Khomeini in February 3, 1979 General Huyser left Iran. On February 8 and 9 airmen, servicemen and technicians of various military air bases pledged their loyalties to Ayatollah Khomeini. The high ranking officers of Iranian army did not trust loyalty of their soldiers and servicemen. So in February 11 twenty-two senior military commanders announced armed forces neutrality in confrontations between the Bakhtiar government and rebellious groups. Army's withdrawal of support for Bakhtiar government initiated uprisings. By late afternoon of February 12 Bakhtiar was in hiding and key points throughout the capital were held by supporters of Ayatollah Khomeini³⁹.

³⁸ Amir Said Arjomand. "Iran's Islamic Revolution in Comparative Perspective" *World Politics*, Vol:38, No:3 (1986): 86

³⁹ A. Richard Falk. "Khomeini's Promise" *Foreign Policy*, No.34, (1979): 30

Upon collapse of Bakhtiar government Ayatollah Khomeini appointed Mehdi Bazargan as first prime minister of provisional government. Bazargan tried to centralize authority. However masses perceived centralization attempts as continuity of Shah Regime, so they were resenting any governmental figure. Workers, civil servants and students were acting independently. Institutions like factories and schools were occupied by them. They were appointing and dismissing superiors at will. In short Bazargan could not secure centralization of authority. On the other hand radical clergy was considerably successful at the same goal. They established Islamic Revolutionary komitehs⁴⁰ throughout the country in order to control the revolution. On the other hand revolutionary clergy tried to unify its supporters in political environment. For this purpose Ayatollah Mohammad Beheshti established Islamic Republican Party⁴¹. The party was disbanded after it reached its goal; establishment of Islamic Republic. On April 1, 1979 in referendum 98 percent of the population favored establishment of Islamic Republic. Ayatollah Khomeini proposed new constitution for the regime. Again 98 percent of the population was in favor of Islamic constitution. Ayatollah Khomeini granted extensive power and authority over the government by the office of Supreme Leader. He founded the Revolutionary Council. This new institution was replacing powers of Majlis⁴². In order to compromise with Ayatollah Khomeini Bazargan stated that he was willing to accept clergy in the decision making process. However his attempt did not ease the tensions.

The struggle between Bazargan government and clergy erupted when two factions were disputing the fate of revolutionary courts. Those courts were infamous due to trials and executions in daily bases. One of the important figures executed in those courts was Shah's ex-prime minister Abbas Hoveyda. Courts

⁴⁰David Seddon *A Political and Economic Dictionary of the Middle East* (New York, Routledge ,2004) : 325

⁴¹Riaz Hassan "Iran's Islamic Revolutionaries: Before and After the Revolution" *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 3(1984): 678.

⁴² Metz, *Iran: A Country Study*, 49

were disrespectful towards central authority of clergy. Khomeini realized importance of coercive force to subdue 'disloyal' elements of revolution. For this purpose in May 1979 he authorized establishment of Pasdaran-Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Pasdaran was a formed force that was responsible for ensuring stability in the country and ensuring continuity of revolutionary ideas⁴³. As a reaction against power of radical clergy Bazargan proposed dissolution of Assembly of Experts. Despite of being rejected by Khomeini this attempt caused Bazargan's resignation. After resignation of Bazargan, presidential system was introduced in accordance to Islamic constitution. On January 1980 Abdulhassan Banisadr was elected as the first president of Islamic Republic. Banisadr had similar provisions with Bakhtiar and Bazargan against clergy. He tried to limit power of the clergy like banning all revolutionary institutions. However he was not successful due to his actions accountability to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini. The relations between clergy and Banisadr deteriorated due to ongoing trials and executions in revolutionary courts⁴⁴. In order to prevent executions Bani Sadr was resigned from presidency. Neither Bazargan nor Banisadr prevented ascension of radical clergy. Due to failed oppositions revolutionary forces conquered strongholds of moderates and liberals. Iranian society started to shape in the pretext that Ayatollah Khomeini envisaged.

⁴³ Geneive Abdo. "The Rise of Iranian Dictatorship" *Foreign Policy*, (2009)

⁴⁴ Metz, *Iran A Country Study*, 57

CHAPTER 3

MODERNIZATION OF THE IRANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

In this chapter I will briefly introduce the modernization attempts of Iranian education system under Qajar and Pahlavi dynasties. I am going to present prominent reformist intellectuals and educationalists perception about reformation and modernization of Iranian education system. Along with it, plans and reforms of respective rulers are going to be discussed. Beside of these, the clergy's and conservatives resentments against reforms will be introduced.

3.1. Qajar dynasty

Reformist intellectuals and educationalists of Qajar dynasty were influenced from western philosophers and thinkers like Rousseau, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Adam Smith and Jonathan Mill. They proposed modernization of Iranian education in accordance to 'liberal' and 'modern' thinking of western intellectuals⁴⁵. Malkom Khan⁴⁶ was one of those intellectuals. As Menashri indicated in his book, Malkom Khan suggested that modernization attempts ought to be presented in Islamic terms to avoid opposition of clergy. "In 1876, Nazem al-

⁴⁵ Monika , Iran: *A Short History* (New Jersey, Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006), 99

⁴⁶Nikki R Kedie. *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2006), 431-432

Dowla Malkom Khan proposed that reformists should present all the innovations they wished to introduce in Islamic terms, and so make them more easily acceptable to the people.”⁴⁷. Iranian intellectuals like Sepahsalar, tried to show the benefits and effectiveness of modernization of education for Iranian community. In his memoirs Sepahsalar explained his views as follows;

... the key to spiritual and material progress is knowledge, and knowledge alone. In any sphere of life, is it politics... the army... or the administration... one can achieve perfection only by knowledge. What Iran needs more than anything else today are men with experience and know-how.... All the progress of Europe has come from the work and wisdom of men with foresight and experience... A governor cannot understand his duties without education and knowledge of world affairs and of history... enabling him to study the governments that have attained progress...In short, individuals can by perspicacity transform a small nation into a strong and great one; similarly, it is possible for individuals to destroy a great nation by sheer carelessness.⁴⁸

Sepahsalar stressed importance of modern education for good governance, wealth and progress of a country after he witnessed developments in Ottoman Empire during his visits to Istanbul. Another intellectual, Talibov-Tabrizi stated importance of education in these words;

Should we possess the potential, i.e. knowledge, and understand the meaning of property, we should not squander what we dissipate now.... But we don't have potential and we lack education. Why? Because we don't have laws. We don't have [proper] *maktbas*, [new] schools, or teachers, and, other than some mythical books, we have no literature....We have neither motivation nor education. Therefore we don't possess wealth....[Therefore] any Muslim who is a patriot and loyal to the Shah will admit that if we will[only] have a constitution, we will have education, and[consequently] will possess wealth, order (*nazm*) and independence. But if we ignore these truths, we will be nothing but fools who betray their nation, homeland and religion.⁴⁹

Like Sepahsalar, Talebov-Tabrizi was adhering to importance of modernize education for sake of Iran and Islam. Beside of stressing importance of education,

⁴⁷ David , *Education and ...*, 29

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 33

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 36

Talebov indicated importance of introduction in Persian in his work *Kitab-I Ahmad Ya Safina-yi Talibi*. Mehrdad stated the importance of Talebov's work as: "The significance of the book lies in the author's attempt to introduce modern scientific ideas in a simplified Persian that was supposed to be comprehended by the majority of those Iranians who could spread the language"⁵⁰. Intellectuals like Malkom Khan, Sepahsalar and Talebov were stressing out importance of modern education for development and modernization of Iran. Some intellectual, like Ja'far Ibn Ishaq and Hajj Mohammad Ali Sayyah Mahalati, tried to show disposition of clergy towards modernization of education system. Ibn Ishaq was referring clergy as 'bad people' because of their ignorance. "Learned people (ahl-e danesh) were God's superior creatures. Knowledge is more vital than worship. Bad people and creatures of the devil knowledgeable in their speech, but ignorant in their hearts"⁵¹ In accordance to Ibn Ishaq, Hajj Ali Mahalati criticized his colleagues' resentment towards change. He stated that clergy was deliberately keeping people "ignorant, illiterate, in permanent need and dependent on them"⁵². Those intellectuals were criticizing clergy's ignorance as well as keeping people ignorant because of their resentment in the face of change. Considering comments of Ibn Ishaq and Hajj Mahalati in his article *Arasteh* pointed out inclusion of religious education like teaching of Quranic verses and Islamic traditions in the education systems as follows:

In such a stratified society, education varied from one level to other....The source of basic education was the system of *maktabs*, religious schools supported by private contributions and pious foundations, often associative with a mosque....⁵³

⁵⁰ Mehrdad Kia. "Nationalism, Modernism and Islam in the Writings of Talibov-I Tabrizi" *Middle Eastern Studies, Vol:30, No:2*, (1994): 203

⁵¹ Menashri, *Education and...*, 33

⁵² *Ibid.*, 38

⁵³ Reza Arasteh. "Growth of Modern Education in Iran" *Comparative Education Review, Vol.3, No.3* (1960): 33

Beside of commenting on religious curricula, Arasteh pointed out diversity of Iranian education system. Considering reform and modernization of Iranian education system it is important to talk about power and influence of the clergy in order to understand their resentment against changes.

In his book John Malcolm explained power and influence of clergy in a precise way.

It is not easy to describe persons who fill no office, receive no appointment, who have no specific duties, but who are called, from their superior learning, piety and virtue, by the silent but unanimous suffrage of the inhabitants... to be their guides in religion, and their protectors against the violence and oppression of their rulers, and who receive from those by whose feelings they are elevated a respect and duty which lead the proudest king to join the popular voice⁵⁴.

Although introducing reformist policies, none of the Qajar shahs dared to change status quo. They could not openly oppose or depower clergy because of their popularity and respected status among majority of Iranians. Clergy's approval or denial of a reformist draft or bill was important for the sovereign's popularity among the population. Hedayat explained it as "The decrees of the ulama had preference over those of the shah. Had the shah felt compelled to oppose their policies, the people would have toppled the monarchy"⁵⁵. As explained here sometimes power of clergy surpassed power of shahs. Although clergy challenged reformist policies of intellectuals, intellectuals realized importance of compromising with clergy due to their social power. It was the reason why intellectuals and educationalists included clergy in the ranks of constitutional movement.

Reformist constitutional movement envisaged modernization of Iranian education system in certain degrees. Although there were different opinions about the reforms, intellectuals and educationalists agreed on three basic topics. First was

⁵⁴ John Malcolm. *History of Persia* (London, Adamant Media Corporation, 2004), 432

⁵⁵ Hedayat Reza Qoli. *Rowzat al-Safa'ye Naseri*, (Tehran, 1960), 647

introduction of free and compulsory education. Second was spreading and modernizing primary levels of education. Third was founding a native higher education institution. Projects were presented in 1907 with the introduction of Constitutional Law⁵⁶. Menashri stated the governmental measures about reformation of education system. For instances;

By amendments of 1907, government initiated measures such as...each village and urban quarters must have a school (article 19), and that public schools should primarily serve the poor (article 25). Wealthy families from towns were to be made responsible for the upkeep of urban schools, rural landlords for village schools (articles 22-24)...Acquisition of and instruction in all sciences, arts and crafts (article 18) establishment of schools... and the [implementation of] compulsory education are to be regulated by the Ministry of Science and Arts, all schools and colleges...under the supreme control and supervision of [that] ministry (article 19)⁵⁷

The constitutional government had tried to emancipate egalitarian aspect of modern education. As Lenczowski stated inclusion of women into education was one of those aspects; "...the conceding of the principle that education should not be confined to boys was the first step toward the social emancipation of women."⁵⁸

Power of clergy was challenged by the Pahlavi dynasty. Institutions like Ministry of Education and Supreme Council of Education established during constitutional government, flourished during dynastical reign. Beside, the reforms attempts of constitutional regime like introducing free and compulsory education, attracting children of lower families, westernizing education system embraced as main goals by Pahlavi shahs.

In order to emancipate reforms in education system constitutional government established Supreme Council of Education⁵⁹. Although Ministry of Education was responsible for educational policies, the latter body was actual policy maker of the

⁵⁶ Amir Farmanfarma. "Constitutional Law of Iran" *The American Journal of Comparative Law*, Vol.3, No.2(1954): 242

⁵⁷ Menashri, *Education and ...*, 77-78

⁵⁸ George Lenczowski. *Iran Under the Pahlavis* (California, Hoover Institute Publications, 1978), 90

⁵⁹ K.H. Abul Sassani. "Education in Iran", *Studies in Comparative Education*, No.18, (1962): 8

system. It was responsible for planning improvements, implementing regulations, establishing new schools, defining criteria for admission, engaging teachers, sending students abroad, and evolving standards for evaluating their diplomas.

During constitutional government rule although primary levels of education was the primary concern, there was not any considerable development. At the beginning of 1920s the situation of primary levels of education was as follows;

In 1918/1919- more than a century after the first contacts with western education- there were no more than several dozen new elementary schools(with a total of 24,033 pupils) and a few secondary schools(with 2,392 students). Most of them were private schools⁶⁰.

Although clergy was participated in constitutional movement and supported the government, it opposed the foundation of new schools. One of the prominent examples of clergy's opposition was *Roshdiye*⁶¹.

Roshdiye suffered *takfir*, hand his school (Roshdiye, in Tabriz) was destroyed by a mob of *tollab*. Under threats against his life, he was twice compelled to seek sanctuary in Meshded. His father had warned him that by founding new schools "you will provoke the envy of the owners of *maktabs*. They will organize against you... blame you as an infidel, publish manifestoes against you... and depict you and your supporters as faithless."⁶²

When Ahmad Shah supported establishment of modern schools, clergy tried to alienate him from new institutions. They had accused new schools and tutors for spreading anti-Islamic and anti-monarchical sentiments. In her article Lambton revealed the opposition of clergy on new schools;

By the God's Life! Madness and infidelity are leagued together, and folly and greed are allied to destroy religion, to abrogate the Holy Law, and to hand over

⁶⁰ Menashri, *Education and ...*, 60

⁶¹ Arasteh, *Growth of Modern Education...*, 36

⁶² Menashri, *Education and...*, 62

the Home of Islam to foreigners without striking a blow or offering the least resistance.⁶³

Despite accusations and violent methods, new schools managed to secure support of Shah.

Although primary levels of education had great importance for intellectuals and educationalists actual modernization and development occurred in higher education. Qajar shahs encouraged the foundation of a native higher educational institution. That will be called Dar al-Fonun. In this respect, constitutional movement's intellectuals and educationalists attempt to reform and modernize primary levels of education can be understood as a reaction.

3.1.1. Modernist Institution: Dar al-Fonun

When ruling elites of Qajar dynasty realized that sending students abroad could not compensate deficiency of educated personal, Mirza Taqi undertook a native project for higher education. He decided to found a native higher education institution after his visits to Russian and Ottoman empires. He encountered modern schools that he admired. Dar al-Fonun was supported and praised by Nasser al-Din Shah⁶⁴. In 1851, a polytechnic school, Dar al-Fonun-School of Sciences-was established in Tehran. It was the first institution of higher education in Iran. Name and curriculum of the school modeled after the school founded in Istanbul on 1845⁶⁵.

Dar al-Fonun was composed of western teachers with western education methods to train students in the arts of modern warfare. Primary concern of ruling elites was modernization of army. It was the reason of hiring experts for military studies like artillery, engineering, medicine and cavalry. Due to British-Russian

⁶³ K.S. Ann Lambton. "The Impact of the West on Persia", *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)*, Vol.33, No.3 (1994): 18

⁶⁴ Maryam Ekhtiar." Nasir al-Din Shah and the Dar al-Funun: The Evolution of an Institution" *Iranian Studies*, Vol.34, (2001): 154

⁶⁵ Bernard Lewis. *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, Oxford University Press, 1965), 177-178

rivalry on Iranian territories, Qajar shahs turned to France and Austria for experts. The education system of the school was imitation of Austrian *ecole* while secondary language was French⁶⁶. Enrollment age was between fourteen and sixteen, where students spent six to seven years on respected fields that they choose. There were no tuition fees. Enrolled students received free lunches and uniforms. Outstanding students were occasionally rewarded. Beside of military studies, experts also covered curricula in natural sciences, medicine, and other areas as well as theological studies. In this respect establishment of Dar al-Fonun was revolutionary. There were considerable contributes of Dar al-Fonun in the development of Iranian education system. First graduates tried to spread notions of modernization in Iran by either encouraging people to attend modern schools or establishing modern institutions. Second, via those institutions modernization of Iran initiated. Third the institution was not just about education, it was also a cultural center where seminars, debates and discussions taken place. Fourth Dar al-Fonun acted like a publishing center for Persian books and translations⁶⁷. However there were also some deficiencies of the institution. First, it heavily relied on governmental control. Nearly all decisions on administrative, financial and educational matters were under supervision of the government and shah. Consequently it nullifies freedom of academia⁶⁸. Second, students realized that it was training center for bureaucrats. They knew that governmental positions were accessible upon their graduation. So, majority of students, already came from privileged families, did not show significant academic success during their education. Third, although curriculum, literature and methods of teaching were modern in theory, practices originated from religious education. Memorization of certain texts and literature had continued in lectures. Fourth was the language barrier. Most of the foreign instructors did not know Persian. This caused lack of

⁶⁶ Szyliowicz, *Education and Modernization...*, 171

⁶⁷ S. Joseph Szyliowicz. "Education and Political Development in Turkey, Egypt and Iran" *Comparative Education Review*, Vol.31, No.2 (1973): 153-154

⁶⁸ *Op.cit.*, 242

direct communication between students and instructors. Consequently it hindered qualified training of students. Also due to possible subjectivity of translated books, there was concern of quality of books and lecture materials. Those deficiencies were criticized by intellectuals and educationalist. Yahya Dowlatabadi commented that "... a private *maktab* of their parents [land] as if the headmaster and staff were their nannies and nurses"⁶⁹. He perceived the institution as private school of privileged families. On the other hand Sadiq noted that;

The most important thing I have learned in the Versailles seminary was to think.... There was no topic raised which did not require thinking; again and again they stressed that there was no limitation to or restriction on thought and that each and every person is free to say and write whatever he wishes.... In the classrooms of the Kemaliye and Dar-ol Fonun, the only thing the teachers expected from the students was to recite precisely what they had taught him.... Thereby fostering memory only....[in France] they trained us.... in logical thinking.⁷⁰

Both Sadiq and Dowlatabadi criticized Dar al-Fonun as the institution that served for privileged families. Also institution had criticized not having the actual western education system.

As a conclusion it was apparent that experience of Dar al-Fonun influenced Pahlavi dynasty's reformist and modernist policies considering the higher levels of education.

3.2.Pahlavi Dynasty

3.2.1. Reza Shah

When Reza Shah came to power in 1921 he undertook reform and modernization attempts to alter Iran. Considering his reformist policies, he had

⁶⁹ Menashri, *Education and ...*, 56

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 83

three themes. They were Modernization (coupled with Nationalization), Secularization and Westernization. Although there seems to be a contradiction between Modernization-Nationalization- and Westernization themes, they had profound outlines in accordance to reformist policies. Beside reforming and modernizing Iran those themes had purposes in accordance to political authority. Szyliowicz explained the problematic as follows “He was confronted with serious problems including need to strengthen his position, the low level of modernization already achieved, and existence of strong divisive and reactionary forces in the country”⁷¹. Reza Shah tried to eliminate those problems with implementation of his reformist themes. Consequently, modernization of education system was one of the branches of reforms.

3.2.1.i. Themes of Modernization of Education

Reza Shah’s first theme was Modernization, which was intermingled with Nationalization. Taken example from Turkish experience Shah included nationalist provisions like loyalty to nation, national unity and national independence into his modernization attempt⁷². First reform was establishment of Department of Public Education in 1925 as a branch of Ministry of Education in order to introduce nationalism in Iranian education system. Common and mandatory syllabus was introduced into primary schools. Final examinations for last year students-sixth grade, ninth grade and twelfth grade were introduced. Along with it private schools became accountable to Ministry of Education and obliged to follow its programs. In Foreign schools also subjugated under authority of the Ministry, which were obliged to follow the official program along with using Persian as language of instruction because of glorification and purification of Persian as Shah’s

⁷¹ Szyliowicz, *Education and Political...*, 156

⁷² Celal Metin. *Türk Modernleşmesi ve İran (1890-1936)* (Ankara, 2006): 282

nationalism⁷³. Despite of youth, inspired from Turkish experience, Reza Shah initiated literacy and education campaigns for Iranian adults via adult classes. In 1937 Department of Public Enlightenment was founded with an aim of providing moral education to public. Shah formulated his theme point as follows: “For too long my countrymen have relied on others. I want to teach them their own value, so that they may be independent in mind and action”⁷⁴. Contradicting to his nationalist statement, Reza Shah relied on French model to modernize education system⁷⁵. Another important aspect of nationalization of education was purification of Persian language. It was presented by intellectuals of Qajar dynasty like Malkom Khan and Talebov. In order to unify ethnically diversified Iran, Reza Shah ordered to pressed textbooks and school materials in Persian acknowledging Persian language, history, literature and folklore to create a sense of unified citizenship. Lecturers were obliged to use official dialect disregarding local ones. In this respect purification of Persian language was important matter for Shah’s nationalism. In his articles Mehrdad attributed purification of Persian to the Shah’s nationalism and glorification of pre-Islamic Iranian culture. Mehrdad argued that “Reza Shah’s modernization proceeded hand in hand with secularization and Persianization, which glorified the pre-Islamic elements of the Iranian culture and called for the elimination of all Arabic words from Persian”⁷⁶. Considering Mehrdad’s argument purification of Persian from Arabic words empowered nationalization attempts of Shah. However due to composition of Persian language there were some challenges. First, Persian language had a unique epigraphic and grammatical rules traced back to Sassanid Empire, when Arabic script introduced in the language. Introduction of Arabic script made calligraphic, linguistic and grammatical skills necessity to read and write Persian. The formation of the language hindered

⁷³ Kia, *Persian Nationalism and ...*, 20

⁷⁴ Menashri, *Education and ...*, 99

⁷⁵ Arasteh, *Growth of Modern Education....*, 37

⁷⁶ Kia, *Persian Nationalism*, 19

translation of foreign materials into Persian. Secondly, while Shah was trying to purify Persian from Arabic words, there was problem of ‘European’ words. There was not equivalent of some European terms either in Arabic or Persia. So inclusion of those words was inevitable despite of purification attempts⁷⁷. Moreover in order to promote Persian nationalism via purification of language, Shah reintroduced works of poets like Ferdowsi and Omer Khayyam. Veneration of Ferdowsi as a national poet was introduced in 1934⁷⁸. Concluding, purification of Persian language was one of the major aspects of nationalization of education system. Also nationalization theme of Shah had correlation with secularization of education system.

Second theme of Reza Shah was Secularization. Historically Iranian society had strong religious sentiments. First Zoroastrianism, later Islam became prominent element of Iranian society and ruling dynasties. In Zoroastrian belief religion was not distinctly distinguished from public and private affairs. This vagueness continued until the introduction of Islam. Islam strictly resented separation of religion from private and public affairs. Islam can be seen as an all-embracing religion. It tries to guide individuals in their private lives, while clergy and conservatives were presenting Islam as the correct form of ‘good governance’. So, in Iranian society any attempt to change the traditional life style or removal of religious aspects from public life opposed by religious establishments. In the aspect of secularization, Reza Shah’s attempts were different from other secularized regimes like Turkey. In Turkey religion was separated from state affairs. In early 1924 madrasas and other religion institutions those had educational functions were banned. Arabic alphabet replaced by Latin alphabet in order to introduce modern, western style education⁷⁹. Correlated with nationalization attempts elites of Turkey tried to create national identity by depriving term of citizenship from religion. In

⁷⁷ Ibid., 15

⁷⁸ Ibid., 21

⁷⁹Niyazi Berkes. *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal, McGill University Press, 1964), 3-5

Iran those secular measures could not undertake because of powerful clerical opposition. Similar to nationalization attempt, Reza Shah tried to incorporate new ideologies and notions over old customs and traditions. While doing so he also introduced his personality cult.

Books, pamphlets, and articles were widely distributed and numerous lectures given by university students and others on civic responsibility, patriotism and similar subjects; in 1937, 700 such lectures attended by 181,250 persons were organized. One reason for their popularity was that many persons feared to decline invitations to attend.⁸⁰

Incorporation of Shah's personality cult along with secularization had served to create monarchy loyal administrative cadre. Creation of new secular strata was empowered by secularization of certain state apparatuses like judiciary. Secular implementations of penal, civil and commercial codes were aimed to depower the supremacy of religious laws. In 1927 Ministry of Justice was rejuvenated cleansing posts from clerics. Secular, modern and western educated lawyers appointed to ministry's offices. Further more in 1932 Shah introduced; "law requiring the registration of all deeds and similar legal documents by the state courts"⁸¹. This enactment prohibited clergy to take place in public affairs like marriages and divorces. Shah knew that slurring power of clergy was originated from ignorance of Iranian population. Beside of that Shah believed clergy was also ignorant. He pointed out his view as; "Throughout Iran, a primary condition for being a *Shaykh al-Islam*, is ignorance. Therefore I, who cannot read or write, am more a *Shaykh al-Islam*, than any [real] *Shaykh al-Islam*"⁸². He believed that only enlightened people would understand the logic of his goal. In this respect secularization was necessary to embrace his goals. However despite of facing clergy openly he adapted indirect ways to deprive their power and resolve their opposition. He conscripted tollabs (Madrasa students) into army and implemented laws and regulations on maktabas

⁸⁰ Szyliowicz, *Education and Modernization...*, 245

⁸¹ Menashri, *Education and...*, 104

⁸² Reza Shah Pahlavi, *Safarname-ye Mazanderan* (Tehran, 1964), 54-55

and madrasas to check and control them. As another measure to promote secularization, and also depower the clergy was abolishment of veiling. Shah explained it as "...because of our women's custom to wear the veil, due to their ignorance and illiteracy, the Europeans have always taunted and despised us."⁸³ By this attempt shah was aiming to enlist woman into education and labor market. The secularization of the country and the education system resulted emergence of new elite strata in urban centers like Tehran. However in rural areas maktab and madrasa were predominant elements of education. As a supplement for modernization and secularization attempts, Reza Shah introduced westernization in order to transform the country along with its education system.

Third main theme of reforms was Westernization. The westernization of education system was targeted the higher levels of education. Though there was considerable number of developments in primary levels of education⁸⁴. It had two interrelated aspects. First expanding modern education system nationwide and opening of modern schools. Second was veneration of 'west' in those new schools. Westernization of education system included exporting scientific and technologic developments of west. That consequently brought western cultural values and social structures. Emancipation of women in academia and economic life was one of the examples. Women had been subjected to westernization similar to secularization. During one of his visits to Turkey in 1934, Reza Shah witnessed differences between Turkish and Iranian women and compared level of modernization that the countries reached. He was relating Iran's backwardness due to Iranian women's inferior positions in the society. Despite of unsuccessful unveiling of women, Shah managed to incorporate them into educational environment. However educating women caused a split among intellectuals. Although most of them agreed education of women, they were split on the contents of education. Finally it was decided that curriculum for education of women should

⁸³ Menashri, *Education and ...*, 108

⁸⁴ Szyliowicz, *Education and Modernization...*, 239

include both academic and practical courses. Academic courses were preparing women for academic career if they desired. Practical courses were preparing women for duties that they were responsible in household⁸⁵. Although westernization of education system was propagated by Shah Arabic and Islamic courses were taught in schools as well as adult classes⁸⁶. That was proving that despite of Shah's reformist attempts, traditional education endured during modernization processes⁸⁷.

3.2.1.ii. Aims and Problems of Modernization

Considering his themes mentioned above, Reza Shah and his government planned to reform certain aspects of Iranian education system. Due to attempts to incorporate modern education while traditional system was in practice, Reza Shah witnessed several problems during modernization processes. How to 'prioritize' reforms had been the main concern of Shah. I had concluded six main problems considering the 'prioritization' of reform attempts. I will try to explain problems of prioritization, which were correlated with each other.

First problem was prioritizing of amuzesh or parvaresh. In Persian Amuzesh [ta'lim in Arabic] means acquiring knowledge ('ilm). Amuzegar [mo'alleem] was teacher. Parvaresh [tarbiyat in Arabic] means passing knowledge customs, traditions, habits, ideas and values of a generation to the next one. It can be explained as disciplining. Primarily Shah and intellectuals considered parvaresh as major theme of new education system. Shah stated that:

The purpose of education was not only to provide 'ilm but also to impart to the citizens attitudes likely to be useful to the regime, to convince them of the wisdom and justice of the existing leadership and render them willing to sacrifice their lives for its cause.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Metin, *Türk Modernleşmesi...*, 150

⁸⁶ Lenczowski, *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, 91

⁸⁷ Arasteh, *Growth of Modern Education...*, 37

⁸⁸ Menashri, *Education and...*, 111

Considering the statement of Shah, intellectuals were divided among themselves. Some of them supported prioritization of amuzesh rather than parvareh. Other intellectuals like Dashti and Sadiq were supporters of parvareh. By promoting amuzesh Shah was aiming to compensate lack of qualified staff for administration. Beside of this he was planning to gain the loyalty of new strata who praised Shah for their positions in the administration. Intellectuals, who were favoring amuzesh, believed that population would understand the meaning of liberty and freedom only with enlightenment. On the other than intellectuals who were favoring parvareh over amuzesh were supporters of transmission of norms and cultures of the society. Beside of Islamic virtues manufacturing skills and abilities were highly significant. Also parvareh embraced as a method to struggle against foreign influence as well as monarchical rule in Iran. Eventually considering the reformist themes of Shah's as well as his power to implement reforms, amuzesh overran parvareh. In modern schools students were attaining modern, scientific and western oriented education. Introduction of Islamic cultures and norms were limited through the new strata. As Shah proposed students had trained qualified administrative cadres who should praise Reza Shah for their positions and wealth.

Second problem was prioritizing quality or quantity of education. The existing education system could not be considered as modern due to certain deficiencies. First, as most of the educationalists and intellectuals agreed on, there was immense amount of knowledge those had to be taught to students. It was a problem in front of qualified education. Second, due to lack of qualified teachers who were capable of transmitting modern knowledge and understanding, students could not train properly. Both quality and quantity of education were severed by lack of qualified teachers. Third, obsolete curriculums and textbooks those had to be reform. Dashti, who was in favor of parvareh, summarized the educational materials as: "We want schools to produce educated carpenters, educated farmers, and craftsmen and so... Merchants, we do not want them to deprive us of

carpenters, farmers, craftsmen and merchants by turning them into parasites and useless idlers”⁸⁹. Although curriculums include modern materials like medicine, engineering, agriculture and law, intellectuals like Dashti criticized the system for producing useless- unqualified-graduates. So beside of the problem of quality or quantity, there was also a debate on the usefulness of quality. Despite criticisms from intellectuals, education system had expanded rapidly in expense of qualified education. Expansion was a political decision of Shah and ruling elites. They were planning to spread notions of loyalty to monarchy and shah among rural youth. While a new loyal stratum was aimed to be created by higher levels of education, expansion of primary levels of education served measure of quantity. In this respect, the third problem of prioritization occurred.

Third problem, referencing from quality over quantity issue, was promotion of either sectarian education or public education. Intellectuals were stressing out the importance of public education. In order to close social gaps and to enlighten population wide spread of public education was a necessity. Considering the issue one of their statements was “everybody had to experience the enlightenment of the education”⁹⁰. In 1927 they forced government to initiate series of decrees to encourage public education. First was introducing free public schools. Second was opening public schools in provinces those were only available for children of lower strata families. Third, considering the outstanding academic performance of orphans, children of teachers and handicapped parents, they were subjected to receive free education for higher levels. However intellectuals’ attempts could not close social gaps. While certain groups of the society had access to relatively qualified education, the rest were subjected to poorer one. As an example, students from rural areas who were successful to admit into university faced considerable problems. Ali Eqbali mentioned the hardships in his memoirs during his travel to Tehran from Hamadan.

⁸⁹ Menashri, *Education and...*,113

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 118

There were no dormitories; travel was expensive (and often dangerous); and living expenses in Tehran were high. Moreover, the Tehran University entrance examinations and the examinations to select candidates for study abroad were held only in Tehran. All this put higher education beyond the reach of the poor, even assuming that, despite their weak elementary and secondary education, they were able to qualify for university studies. On balance, only very few students from a lower-class background made their way into the schools⁹¹

Besides lack of these difficulties students had to face opposition from different groups. Clergy was opposing modernization and reform of education system at all. Urban elites were opposing wide spread of public education while had not opposing sectarian education. They were trying to protect their children's accession into governmental positions via sectarian education.

During modernization of Iranian education system Reza Shah faced with problem of prioritizing whether higher or primary levels of education. Shah considered modernization of higher levels of education with utmost importance. I concluded that there were two basic reasons. First, higher education was necessity for developing sectors those needed qualified staff⁹². Second, with higher education Shah would create new strata in accordance to his themes. However intellectuals like Taqizade had different views. Taqizade perceived that primary levels of education would address to rural youth. In that way notions of liberty and freedom would spread among the rural youth. Considering perception of Taqizade Shah had a different agenda. He thought that sanction of nationalism, secularism and westernization would have been incorporated into rural youth. Due to sectarian education overran public one, respectively higher levels of education developed further than primary levels of education. Some of the developments occurred considering the higher levels of education were; sending higher school students for education to Europe, founding Tehran University and expanding higher school teacher's seminar. Eventually training of new stratum attracted concern of Reza Shah compared to public education.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 120

⁹² Monika, *Iran: A Short History*, 118-119

Fifth was prioritizing reform attempts of either vocational training or academic training. Reza Shah gave importance to vocational education after all foreign teachers expelled from Iran in 1940 by his decree. In spite of this Shah declared that every foreign company that had concession in Iran obliged to open a vocational school for providing technicians and workers to Iran. Various vocational schools and polytechnics opened to train qualified employees for governmental institutions⁹³. While vocational schools were developing, academic schools, which were responsible for training qualified teachers, remained underdeveloped. Arasteh summarized the lack of qualified teacher in his article as; “With increased urbanization there has been an added demand for education, but facilities (schools, equipments, and teacher training) have not kept pace, and the quality of education has steadily declined”⁹⁴

Sixth problem of prioritization was either continuing abroad study or encouraging native education. Due to problem’s essentiality I am going to separate the issue into two parts; first abroad study, second native higher education. During Qajar dynasty, students who had studied abroad were from wealthy families. They were educated in European countries to import developments⁹⁵. Like Qajar shahs, Reza Shah stressed out the importance of abroad study when he was sending his son to Switzerland for education; “It is very hard for me to part with my beloved son, but one must think of the country. Iran needs educated and enlightened rulers; we, the old and ignorant must go”⁹⁶. Although he was implementing an old practice, he incorporated sanctions of new system. Admission and selection of students amended in accordance to European models. Shah’s concern of creation of qualified administrative cadre reflected itself in this implementation. He tried to address children of lower strata for this aim. However despite of modernized laws

⁹³Arasteh, *Growth of Modern Education...*, 39

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 40

⁹⁵ Szyliowicz, *Education and Modernization...*, 246-247

⁹⁶ Menashri, *Education and...*, 127

and regulations it was still hard for rural students to access abroad study. In this matter intellectuals like Taqizade and Dashti approved sanctions of Shah. They argued that rich families had been able to send their children without government grants, while middle and lower strata families did not had any opportunity. Also they argued that while the returnees of wealthy families benefit from the experience as improving their family estates, the poorer returnees had no means except being civil servant⁹⁷. That caused discrimination between returnees and ‘native’ educated students. Returnees could start their careers from higher offices and promoted rapidly, while native graduates had to struggle for same positions. Consequently this discrimination was resented by Iranian students as Menashri explained;

Although the shah... stressed that the best use should be made of the educated youngsters, the environment in the administration was suffocating. They [the veteran bureaucrats] accused us of lacking experience, and they were in fact right. We did not have what they thought of as experience.⁹⁸

Returnees had contributed spread of western norms and understandings of world ranging from human rights to economy, women rights to environmental issues. This was the reason of returnees’ ability to understand reason and pace of Reza Shah’s reforms⁹⁹. Their understanding of reform attempts granted them favors of Shah until some returnees started to demand for democratization and liberty. In the respect returnees were divided. Some of them sought democratization in liberal means, while some others sought by radical methods. As a consequence Shah expressed his disappointment on those students with these sentences;

Look at this group of young people whom we sent abroad with a heart full of hope, and whom we supported for year, so that they would return to their homeland and serve it. Now that they are back... they brought us Bolshevism in their saddlebags.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Menashri, *Education and...*, 130

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 138

⁹⁹ Szyliowicz, *Education and...*, 250

¹⁰⁰ *Op.cit.*, *Education and ...*, 142

After returnees' demands for democratization and liberty, Reza Shah initiated foundation of native higher education, Tehran University.

Reza Shah was impressed from university education of European countries. Although establishment of a university was unique for a country, similar to most of his education reforms, he also imitated the university education. On February 4, 1934 various colleges and higher educational institutions joined together to form Tehran University¹⁰¹. However establishment of a university was resented by some educationalists. For example, Sadiq strongly opposed the establishment. He suggested, unless primary levels of education modernize and develop, there should not be any revolutionary development in higher levels of education. Nonetheless Shah disregarded the opposition and sought formulation of the university. Despite of his resentment Sadiq agreed with Shah to prepare an outline for the institution. He drafted a detailed plan. He defined quota for every department for student admission process. He assessed cost of students, listing the necessary requirements, defining the length and curriculums of the courses for each department. He defined qualifications of academia as well as specific entrance requirements of departments¹⁰². The official announcement of founding a native university was declared by Hekmat. In accordance with Sadiq's outline, Hekmat made a proposal on 13 March 1934, outlining features of university. The new institution named *Daneshgan* in Persian [university in English]. Although some other names suggested as Dar al-Fonun, Dar al-Ulum and Jamae, they were dropped. Dar-al-Fonun was used before and it had a narrow meaning as center of science. The new school was planned as an institution that had variety of disciplines and faculties. Dar al-ulum and Jamae were dropped because of religious connotation. Considering Reza Shah's primary goal of the university was to train skilled professionals for government. Also Shah tried to promote nationalist sentiments among adults. In his book *Menashri* quoted from Shah on the new university; "With the huge sums

¹⁰¹ Arasteh, *Growth of Modern Education...*, 34

¹⁰² *Op.cit.*, 145

of money we spend on students abroad we could establish an excellent university in Iran, allowing more students to study [and to do so] according to our own customs and national traditions”¹⁰³. While planning the university, laws and regulations granted a degree of autonomy to the institution. However Ministry of Education had absolute control over the institution from financial means to administrative cadres. This explains reveals the Shah’s reason to found the institution. Another example was Faculty of Theology. Faculty was responsible for training clergy. That granted government opportunity and right to intervene in the affairs of traditional educated- maktab and madrasa educated- ulama. As a consequence like rest of the reform and modernization attempts of education system, clergy strongly opposed foundation of the university.

As conclusion, Reza Shah’s and his government’s dilemma to prioritize educational reforms created contradicting reforms attempts. Beside of it, socio-cultural disposition of Iranian society was another significant aspect in front of reforms. Urban elites and clergy were resented the reforms attempts due to fear of losing their power in the society. On the other hand rural dwellers along with Bazaaris¹⁰⁴ approached reform and modernization attempts with prejudice. They were also afraid either losing or worsening of their positions in the society. All in all Reza Shah enforced his modernization-nationalization, secularization and westernization themes into education system of Iran. Those three themes under the aspect of modernization of Iran and education system adhered by Mohammad Reza Shah, who was perceived his father as a role figure.

3.2.2. Mohammad Reza Shah

3.2.2.i. Presentation of Modernization of Education

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 148

¹⁰⁴ Moradi M. Salehi. *Insurgency through Culture and Religion: The Islamic Revolution of Iran*, (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1988), 18

Zonis stated that Mohammad Reza Shah was considered to be the “more powerful than any previous Iranian rulers”¹⁰⁵. So it was expected from him to implement reformist and modernist attempts with great enthusiasm. However, Mohammad Shah’s power had a trend. That trend could be divided into three distinct periods, where initiation and implementation of educational reforms varied. During the first period between 1941 and 1953, Shah’s was vulnerable due to lack public support and political turmoil in the country. In this period the outline of educational reforms were drafted by intellectuals and educationalists for approval of Shah. In second period from 1953 to 1963, Shah had considerable power and authority compared the first one. He entrusted his power to undertake revolutionary measures for modernization of Iranian education system, such as White Revolution (Enqelab-e Safid) in 1963. Third period, which was between 1963 and 1979, Shah’s power was in decline although reforms continued. From White Revolution to his downfall, Shah had tried to implement most serious educational reforms despite of his weakening power. Also it can be understood that he initiated reforms in order to prevent weakening of his power.

Mohammad Shah expressed that he was influenced from his father considering his own educational reforms. He adhered to his father’s vision;

Reza Shah did more for Persian education than to construct buildings, train teachers, and send people abroad for study. He transformed the whole spirit and philosophy of our educational system. As he saw it, education must first of all serve to create the patriotic devotion... He understood that the country’s genuine Westernization and modernization required much more than factories and paved streets; of far greater importance were changes in the basic Persian culture and psychology.... He was energetically reshaping our thinking and action to meet the challenge of the present and the future.¹⁰⁶

Like his father Shah wanted to transform Iran with reformed and modernized education system. As Watson indicated in his article, Shah was believed in

¹⁰⁵ Marvin Zonis. *The Political Elite of Iran* (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1971), 18

¹⁰⁶ Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country*, 242

education for national and social development¹⁰⁷. Mohammad Shah initiated sets of comprehensive modernization plans. However like his father's those attempts were targeting the traditional power groups of Iran as Menashri explained in his book:

The land lords resented talks of land reform; the Bazaris were disgruntled by growing economic regimentation (witness the Seven-Year Plan); the ulama resented his westernizing and secularizing policies; the tribal chiefs were, as always, apprehensive of any sign of greater control from the center; and the intellectuals were antagonized by the retreat from the comparative liberalization of the preceding years.¹⁰⁸

Mohammad Shah's power started to flourish after he expelled Allied troops from Iran in late-1946¹⁰⁹. However political turmoil caused decline in his power that ended with ascension of Mohammad Mossadeq. In 1953 Mossadeq send Shah to exile. The nationalist and anti-monarchical Mossadeq regime altered United States and Britain in Cold War pretext. So with the Operation Ajax and Shah was re-crowned in 1957. The second crowning of Shah was turning point several reasons. First, he appointed Manuchehr Eqbal, who was a monarchy loyal figure, as his Prime Minister. So he prevented ascension of another 'Mossadeq'. Second, he established a 'loyal opposition' party, Mardom (People's) Party under the leadership of Asadollah 'Alam. Now, he could keep eye on and control the opposition. Third, he established SAVAK. The agency was targeting anti-monarchical elements to detain and silence them. Consequently, these protested by opposition groups. Left wing opposition was dominated by Marxist-communist groups like Mojehiden-e Khalq and Tudeh Party. Main conservative parties were Ayatollah Khomeini, Shapur Bakhtiar leader of National Resistance Movement and Freedom Movement under the leaderships of Mehdi Bazargan and Ayatollah Mahmud Taleqani. SAVAK under orders from Shah initiated decisive measures

¹⁰⁷ Keith Watson. "The Shah's White Revolution- Education and Reform in Iran" *Comparative Education*, Vol.12, No.1, (1976): 27

¹⁰⁸ Menashri, *Education and ...*,156

¹⁰⁹ Leonard Bier. *Iran: Political Development in Changing Society* (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1962), 66-68

against opposition leaders; Bazargan and Taleqani were arrested, Bakhtiar and Khomeini were sent to exile¹¹⁰. After suppression of opposition Shah initiated his reformist and modernist policies.

Between 1963 and 1979, Shah had induced an absolute monarchy. Decisive reformist projects had started. One of the prominent was the White Revolution-“Revolution of the Shah and the People” (Enqelab-e Shah va Mardom)-of 1970s. Shah presented it as a national revolution that would unify country (vahdat) and ensure total independence (esteqlal). He wanted to rejuvenate glorious Iran “Great Civilization” (Tamaaddon-e Bozorz). He was promoting pre-Islamic Iranian culture incorporating it with achievements and developments of western countries. Ansari commented on Shah’s attempt as follows: “This was his conception of a new order which would successfully amalgamate monarchical tradition with ‘modernity’: a monarchy based on the support of a grateful and liberated peasantry.”¹¹¹ Before stating sanctions of White Revolution it is essential to mention how Shah had altered the rhetoric of ‘revolution’. In early stages of White Revolution, Shah proposed “total loyalty to God (Khoda), Shah and Homeland (Mihan)”¹¹². After securing his power by several governmental apparatuses he altered previous rhetoric. He emphasized loyalty to monarchy, constitution and White Revolution was important than religious connotation as follows; “Loyalty to the *Monarchial order* was the primary duty of an individual, which was followed by fidelity to Islam, national unity, independence of the country, and territorial integrity and attachment to democracy”¹¹³. He was pointing out the importance of monarchy and his rule for the development and sake of Iran¹¹⁴.

¹¹⁰Ministry of Security: *SAVAK* (2010) www.fas.org (accessed July 12, 2010)

¹¹¹ Ansari, *The Myth of the White Revolution*...., 13

¹¹² Menashri, *Education and*...., 161

¹¹³ Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. *The White Revolution*, (Tehran 1967), 9

¹¹⁴ Norman Jacobs. *The Sociology of Development: Iran as an Asian Case Study* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1966), 416-419

White Revolution included series of reforms aiming to modernize Iran in various socio-political aspects. Development of infra-structures country wide, modernization of Iranian economy and society, replacing tribal loyalty with national loyalty were some of the projects. Like his father Mohammad Shah believe that success of revolution relied on replacing archaic order with new order. The new order should consist of educated bureaucrats who were pledged their loyalties to monarchy. Beside of White Revolution Shah had other prominent ones reform and modernization attempts considering the education system. Third Plan and Fourth Plan were two of them. He believed that by correct reforms and modernizations he could attain national unity, political and economical independence of the country as well as attaining certain level of development via modern education.

However Shah was not the sole actor who realized importance of education. Intellectuals, educationalists, and clergy-and as well as society itself, had their own conceptualization modernization of education system. I will make a quick overlook considering their understandings. Clergy was opposing nearly all of the reform attempts. Intellectuals and educationalists perceived reformation of education as a goal rather than a tool. Similar to intellectuals of Reza Shah's era, they believed that educated individuals would realize importance of their freedom and liberty. Beyond that they were demanding democratization via education. As an intellectual and educationalist Siyasi stated explained their perception;

A preliminary condition for a democratic regime is general and compulsory education. If we wish to have democratic rule, we must implement this principle.... A democratic reign is based on its members being aware of their rights and duties... [For this, they must] be able to read and write and have some knowledge of the geography and history of their country... One of the reasons for the existence of dictatorship is lack of knowledge and illiteracy and the peoples' ignorance of their rights... [In the past] periods of... strength always occurred under the leadership... [of] dictators. Upon their downfall, the country became weak ... It is not appropriate any more to continue along these lines. People must govern their own affairs and become

themselves the source of their progress and happiness...And this is possible [only by] advancing education.¹¹⁵

Public had mixed attitudes about reforms. Rural families perceived education as a tool that introduced values of the society to their children. Moreover it was a mean to secure future of their children by granting them access to prestigious governmental positions. However those families were afraid of moral corruption that their children would face in modern schools. Bazaaris, artisans and merchants, responded education more critical. They saw it as a force that deprived their children from productivity and creating idle and useless individuals. On the other hand urban families agreed that education was a tool that contributed social and economic mobility. Mobility could be attained by having highest level of education and it had to be only available for their children. So they wanted to restrain the wide spread of education among rural areas. It can be summarized that power groups and Shah perceived education system as a 'tool' to reach their goals. So modernization and expansion had undergone considering both pre-university and university education levels.

3.2.2.ii. Reforms in Education System

This section was dedicated to basic changes that were assembled by White Revolution in basic education system of Iran. By basic education system I am referring to primary, secondary and higher levels of education. I did not include pre-primary education (kodestan) due to their bare existence priory to Mohammad Shah's reign. Also madrasa and maktabi education was not included because of their autonomy from governmental decrees.

Considering oil revenues in early 1960s Shah proposes White (bloodless) Revolution. This revolution aimed to create tantalizing changes in overall

¹¹⁵ Menashri, *Education and...*, 176

modernization of Iran. Regarding the primary education (Dabestan) there were several attempts like promotion of literacy among population and widespread of primary education¹¹⁶. In articles of White Revolution, Mohammad Shah had verified important aspects as Menashri presented in his books. Those were;

To provide free and compulsory education for all children from kindergarten through intermediate school (i.e. aged five to fourteen), and at the same time to improve the quality of instruction for these age groups. To provide reach child with a free daily school meal. To prepare plans for the use of television for educational programs. To report to him, within a month, on the progress made¹¹⁷

Shah was aware of importance of primary education. The developments in primary education was addressing the rural youth who were more illiterate than their urban counterparts¹¹⁸. Considering his political philosophy, which was considerably influenced by intellectuals, he aimed to transform primary education from ‘privilege of the few’ to ‘right of all’. The intellectuals and educationalists those effected Shah were residuals of 1906 constitutional government. Prior to Pahlavi dynasty, constitutional government proposed ‘Compulsory Education Law’ in 1906. After ascension of Pahlavi dynasty intellectuals of constitutional government had found key positions in Pahlavi dynasty. During his ministry of education in 1940s Siyasi criticized Mohammad Shah’s interest in expanding university education. Siyasi claimed that Shah was showing off to the few in expense of the many. So in 28 June 1943 he drafted a law for approval of Shah. The law was proposing six years of free and compulsory education throughout the country for the duration of ten years¹¹⁹. Landlords and village councils were obliged to support and finance the schools. Beside, parents were obliged to send their children. Altogether Siyasi also proposed expansion of primary education although it meant sacrificing quality for quantity. As general perception of intellectuals and

¹¹⁶ Watson, *The Shah’s White Revolution...*, 28

¹¹⁷ *Op.cit.*, 184

¹¹⁸ *Op.cit.*, 26

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 28

educationalists, Siyasi thought it would be beneficial for the country if masses were educated and enlightened rather than having qualified but qualified few. Despite compulsory education was integrated in early years of his reign, Shah perceived that it was not sufficient. So he drafted several plans to modernize and reform primary education. The first decisive innovation of comprehensive primary education was Third Plan. It had distinct outlines about reforming education system. The basic tenet was creating a balance between rural and urban institutions, vocational and academic schools. Beside of this, plan was devised in order to compensate lack of qualified teachers. Expansion of primary education brought necessity for qualified teachers who were fitting the requirements of modern system¹²⁰. Also teaching methods, curriculums and course materials were subjected to reformation. Mohammad Shah demanded replacement of pristine teaching methods and materials with modern ones. Furthermore he initiated second plan for reformation of primary education. Fourth Plan was a general abstract for reorganization and rearrangement of the education system. According to new plan 6-6 education system will be divided into 5-3-4 years. While first 5 years of education became compulsory, 3 years were intermediary education between primary and secondary education levels, where in those 3 years students suppose to define and direct themselves to the fields of their interests. In comprehensive to those plans Literacy Corps, Sepah-e Danesh was introduced in order to promote primary education and literacy country wise. The corps was composed of high school graduates who were at the age of military services. Graduates would fulfill their military obligations by teaching rural dwellers for two years¹²¹. Corps was serving specific purposes. First was improving quality of village life with the introducing of modern sanitation and agricultural methods. Second, it was devised to implement solidarity and unity among rural population. Third, it was a mediator. It was propagating advancements of modernization and introducing of philosophy

¹²⁰ Sassani, *Education in Iran*, 9

¹²¹ Farian Sabahi Seyed. "The Literacy Corps in Pahlavi Iran (1963-1979) Political, Social and Literary Implications" *Cahiers d'etudes sur la Mediterranee orientale et le monde turco-iranien* No:31, (2001): 12-13

of White Revolution. Literacy Corps was successful in its primary goal of eradication of illiteracy among rural Iranian population. Watson summarized the success of literacy corps indicating data about them. “By 1973, 50,000 villages had been reached, 12,000 schools established and special textbooks were distributed to over 600,000 students”¹²². The successes of corps could be attributed to being imitation of a successful example. The formation of corps and methodology of teaching were exemplified from Village Institutions of Turkey¹²³. Respective leadership of Turkey and Iran had been planning to reduce illiteracy among population. Whereas, leaders and elite cadre shared similar desires to modernize their countries along with improving living conditions of rural dwellers. The Literacy Corps and the Village Institutions were agents of social change. They were undermining power of landlords and rural elites with the incorporation of personality cult of respected leadership. Considering educational reforms, both institutions were success in an account. Beside of proving their efficiency by introducing modernization of infrastructure and eradicating literacy in villages, unfortunately they could not contribute significant improvement in general abstract of education systems.

In spite of their successes, Literacy Corps had some problems. The ranks were composed of inexperienced teachers. However Mohammad Shah supported his initiation; “Incompletely prepared teachers can help our children incomparably more than no teachers at all”¹²⁴. He had borrowed this idea from intellectuals like Siyasi. The number of teachers corresponding number of students were inappropriate. This was causing a difference in quality of education among villages. Proximity to Tehran, or a major city like Isfahan, granted the surrounding villages relatively qualified corpsmen. When distance of villages increased from major cities, number and quality of corpsmen dwindled. Due to lack of equality in

¹²² Watson, *The Shah's White Revolution...*,14

¹²³ Çetin Gülseren. “Cumhuriyet Dönemi Eğitim Stratejileri” *Milli Eğitim Dergisi Vol.160*, (2003), <http://yayim.meb.gov.tr/dergiler/160/cetin-gulseren.htm> (accessed August 15, 2009)

¹²⁴ Pahlavi, *White Revolution*, 251

qualified teachers contributed with distance to major cities, there was high dropout rate among rural students through higher levels of education. In this respect families' perception of education was essential. As it was stated previous chapter, most rural and some urban families had negative tendencies towards modern education. They were resenting for sending their children to modern schools. Although children of rural families were successful to access higher education, families did not have financial means to support them. So they questioned the practicality of education. All in all, via White Revolution and specific plans primary education was developed and illiteracy was considerably eliminated¹²⁵. However the gap between primary and secondary education could not compensated.

Prior to White Revolution secondary education (Dabirestan) was divided into two six year period similar to French model. Before reforms secondary schools were considered as institutions those supplied diplomas to the students for accessing prestigious occupations and university education. Underdevelopment of secondary education caused chronic problems for entire education system. Also intellectuals were warning dangers of unproductive secondary education. Upon realizing importance of secondary education as preparatory education for vocational schools and university education, Mohammad Shah proposed several reform attempts¹²⁶. 1950s onwards restructuring of system was on the agenda. In 1960s it was incorporated to White Revolution and Fourth Plan. Shah had plans to transform "... secondary schools becoming "diploma factories" likely to turn out functionally illiterate and useless graduates"¹²⁷ into institutions those would train qualified graduates. So he devised secondary education as 4 years. It could be extended up to 6 or 8 years according to student's field of interest¹²⁸. However due

¹²⁵ Seyed Sabahi, *The Literacy Corps in Pahlavi...*, 21

¹²⁶ Watson, *The Shah's White Revolution*, 29

¹²⁷ Pahlavi, *Mission for my Country*, 256

¹²⁸ Szyliowicz, *Education and Modernization...*, 399

to lack of qualified teachers students were subjected to attend must courses instead of elective courses. Similar to primary education there was gap between rural and urban graduates. Rural students had opportunities provided only by the state while urban students could make choices between private tutoring and private secondary schools. So secondary school graduates in urban areas were relatively qualified than their rural counterparts. This granted them advantage in university entrance exams. However the weaknesses of secondary education surfaced during early years of higher education. University academia was concerned about level of knowledge and study habits of graduates. Sadiq, who was a lecturer in a university stated that “What I teach today (he said in 1968) fits graduates of elementary rather than secondary schools”¹²⁹. During early years of university education students tried to catch up knowledge of ‘secondary education’. From 1950s restructuring of the system was continues until the changes were ratified in 1971/72. However the changes in secondary education system could not reflected itself in higher education because of neglecting the secondary schools for a long time¹³⁰.

Higher levels of education had undergone reformation and modernization starting from mid-1960s and late 1970s. While previous attempts were named as reform-Eslahat, Mohammad Reza Shah considered his attempts as revolution-Enqelab. There were three main reasons of whole scale ‘revolution’ in 1967. First, it was the period when Shah secured his power without any considerable political opposition. Second, due to oil boom in late 1960s, Iran had undergone transformation in different sectors. So, from public and private sectors there was a demand of educated manpower. Third, intellectuals discontent considering the existing higher education system. Although, they had been stressing out the importance of primary education, they shifted their attention to higher levels of education. This could be attributed to demand from public where intellectuals and educationalists acted as populist figures. Eventually universities like Ferdowsi and

¹²⁹ Menashri, *Education and ...*, 191

¹³⁰ Watson, *The Shah's White Revolution...*, 28

Isfahan were established¹³¹. Also three more universities; Gondi Shapur, National University and Aryamehr were founded. Gondi Shapur had similar provisions with previous establishments. On the other hand, National University and Aryamehr were founded under the precept of new approaches in higher education. Both universities were private and they were imitations of United States university experience. They concentrated on specific subjects, respectively social sciences and economics, and technology¹³². Beside of this, they constituted backgrounds for establishment of Pahlavi University. Pahlavi University was founded in 1963. It had outline of United States higher education. Academia was composed of graduates of American universities. The language of instruction was in English. The university merited quality over quantity, advocating students to specialize in specific fields. It was devised to become regional center for higher education that would attract students and academia to Iran¹³³. For the further modernization and development of higher education Ministry of Science and Higher Education was founded in 1967. It was granted greater autonomy on educational matters than Ministry of Education. It was responsible for opening and closing universities and colleges, supervising their curriculums and academic activities as well as controlling abroad study programs. The ministry was convening annual conferences called Conferences for the Evaluation of the Achievements of the Educational Revolution (Konferans-e Arzyabi-ye Enqelab-e Amuzeshi) to assess implementation, success and development of reforms plans for improving the higher education¹³⁴. Although planning and policy making processes were improved, implementation of them was fragmented. Menashri explained the situation as follows;

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 31

¹³² Joel B. Slocum. *Iran: A Study of the Educational System and Guide to the Admission and Academic Placement of Iranian Students in Colleges and Universities in United States* (New York, 1969), 65

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 66

¹³⁴ Watson, *The Shah's White Revolution...*, 32

... the plan prescribed that by 1973 some 55 percent of the students would be in science, engineering, and technology, but the actual figure was around 48 percent. The plan had provided for an aggregate of 56,420 students to graduate during the five years; the actual figure was 81,952., with a surplus of 19,000 in the humanities and of 8,000 in science, but a shortfall of 8,000 in engineering, 4,600 in agriculture and 1,100 in medicine.¹³⁵

Prior to White Revolution Shah commented on how academia should have developed;

A great university professor is essentially research minded. He possesses an attitude of deep humility towards the wonders of nature.... He is a modest man of almost childlike curiosity and thirst of knowledge. Constantly he nourishes his teaching with fresh research. To him, the subject-matter that he is teaching is never a dead body of knowledge, to be repeated parrot-fashion year after year; instead it is something living and constantly growing through his own research and that of others, including his students, whose contributions he gladly acknowledges. But upon the slightest provocation certain our professors will tell you what distinguished men they are and how many distinguished positions they hold, their intellectual arrogance betrays their lack of the scientific spirit. Some of them conduct no real research of their own but copy their lectures from foreign works, I with or without credit being given to the original authors; or they originate some writing which they support with no scientific evidence; or they deliver the same lectures year after year without ever bothering to bring them up to date. If a university professor knows nothing of scientific methods, how can he reach it to his students?¹³⁶

Mohammad Shah's this statement originated from another one

Some of our professors still regard themselves as little gods whose opinions must not be disputed and whose time must not be wasted upon the students. Such a professor may march into his classroom, deliver his lecture, and march out again. He may believe a student is disrespectful if he asks for supporting evidence for one of the professor's statements or presumes to suggest an alternative interpretation. Without any advance notification the professor may repeatedly fail to come to his class. He may neglect to establish office hours for students' consultation, and except for lecture she [sic] may spend virtually no time in the precincts.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Menashri, *Education and....*, 225

¹³⁶ Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country*, 258-259

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 258

In this respect, why Shah made such statement had to be investigated. Before expansion of higher education, university career was a prestigious occupation. It was second to none after administrative positions. After expansion of the system and initiation of White Revolution, income, prestige and availability of higher positions in academia turned upside down. Menashri explained the deteriorating position of academia;

The financial problem could have been less significant had the position of a professor contained more prestige in society. The prevalent view is that the prestige of professors has considerably declined. Power and prestige are now [1969] in other places-government administration and the industry.¹³⁸

After 1960s professors were subsumed all their benefits in exchange for Shah's policies. Upon losing their prestige in the society, academia started to prioritize their wealth. They started to work in two or three different occupations. Most of the academia had second jobs either in government, industrial or private sectors. Considering this situation, they had been forced to make choice between academia and other occupations, where most of them abandoned their positions in academia. This was causing brain drain in universities. So, Shah had to make his first statement on the bases of this presumption. On the other hand, academic staff of Pahlavi University, which was favored by Shah, was an exception. Board of Trustees ensured full time employment for its academic staff. Adequate salaries, means of teaching, researching and publishing were possible and far more effective compared to other universities. In accordance to their deteriorating prestige and wealth, the 'exception' of Pahlavi University discouraged academia to conduct research. Beside of these, there were others reasons of academicians' unwillingness to conduct research or publish articles. They could be summarized as lack of budget and equipments, lack of incentives from government or private sector, unqualified researches and publishing in circulation and lack of existing date and research materials¹³⁹. Consequently, situation of academia affected the students. Students did

¹³⁸ Menashri, *Education and...*, 229

¹³⁹ Harry Melville. *Iran: Science Policy and Organization* (Paris, 1981), 9

not seek to undertake any genuine project. That was causing lack of genuine projects leading to devaluation of intellect in education system. This made the system dependent on translations and abstracts of foreign projects and publications. Although some incentives like research councils in universities initiated they could made a significant change in overall system¹⁴⁰.

It was apparent that Mohammad Shah planned serious reform and modernization attempts in order to change the Iranian education system. Third and Fourth Plans were introduced comprehensive educational reforms along with articles of White Revolution. Expansion of primary and secondary schools were experienced as well as their curriculums, teaching materials and lecturers aimed to modernize. University education experience immense changes. New institutions were founded, private and public colleges started to wide spread, ministry and councils established in order to change the pristine system. Despite of Mohammad Shah, intellectuals and educationalists had great impact to change the education system. Due to constitutional government's experience to modernize education system both intellectuals and educationalists presented their outlines in similar context. As a conclusion similar to Reza Shah's reign, there were considerable reformation and modernization of education system under the rule of Mohammad Reza Shah either cooperating with intellectuals or opposing them.

¹⁴⁰ Watson, *The Shah's White Revolution...*, 32

CHAPTER 4

ISLAMIC REVOLUTION AND CHANGES IN IRANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

In this chapter I will present information about the background of ascension of Islamic Republic. Politicization of Shia Islam, clergy as an opposition, and ascension of revolutionary ideas against the monarchial rule will compose the main body of the chapter. Moreover, I am going to talk about abstract of Cultural Revolution in the context of revision of the education system. Then I am going to introduce how ‘revolution’ changed the education system of Iran comparing education system of Pahlavi dynasty.

4.1. INSIGHT ISLAMIC REVOLUTION

In order to understand rise of Islamic rhetoric as an opposition, it is crucial to observe history of political Shiism in Iran. Starting from late 19th century Twelver Shiism played a major role against monarchical rule. Iranian clergy, now on it will be mentioned as ulama, presented itself as conservative and nationalist element of Iranian society. They perceived themselves as guardian of Islam, people and the country against arbitrary monarchs and foreign powers. In rural areas they were respected due to their knowledge on Islam and Islamic laws as well as

offering guidance to people. In urban areas ulama's conservatism and nationalism originated from their preference to preserve the status quo of the society. In most cases ulama came from social strata close to people like Bazaaris-local merchants and artisans-whom shared common interests that strengthen their ties with them. When, interests or ties tried to be intervened by monarchs or rulers, ulama became the constituent body of the opposition. One of the prominent examples of the opposition was 1891 Tobacco Protest. In 1890 Nasser al-Din shah approved British consortium-The Imperial Tobacco Corporation of Persia, which would be a monopoly on producing, purchasing and exporting Iranian tobacco for fifty-year. Although the concession was initially kept secret, eventually it was publicized causing mass protests. On December 1891, a religious edict (fatwa) was issued by one of the leading ulama, Mirza Muhammad Hasan Shirazi. Hasan Shirazi declared that using tobacco was an offense against the hidden twelfth imam. The fatwa initiated tobacco boycott throughout the country. In early 1892 the tobacco concession was rescinded. After rescission of concession, Shirazi was verdict another fatwa that allowed the reusing of tobacco. This example shows us that ulama were one of the main groups which could mobilize masses for protests. Besides, it shows that ulama had considerable power forcing rulers to alter their decisions. Realizing the power of ulama, intellectuals in 1906 intellectuals aggregated the power of ulama in order to oppose rule of Qajar dynasty. In his article Bakhsh stated the power of ulama as;

Many historians have noted the prominence of the ulama in major movements of political protest since nineteenth century, including the tobacco protest movement of 1890-1891, the constitutional revolution of 1905-1911, the oil nationalization crisis of 1951-1953...¹⁴¹

This statement proved that majority of the society, rural and urban dwellers, were showing deference to ulama.

¹⁴¹ Bakhsh, *Iran...*, 1479

Ulama's political opposition was perpetuated by Jalal al Ahmad and Ali Shariati. In his work *Gharbzadigi- Weststruckness-* Al-Ahmad claimed Western ideologies were authoritarian, capitalist and abusive as well as alien to Iranian culture. He suggested that Iranian cultural values and the religion, Shiism, did not spoiled by western influence. It was the reason why they had to be adapted to struggle against influence of Western ideologies¹⁴². He was strictly criticizing imitation of west, stating the alienation of Iranian people from their own culture. In this sense, he was a nationalist, who was aiming to liberate Iran from foreign influence. Like his precursor Ali Shariati attacked cultural colonization of Iran. Like Al-Ahmad, Shariati adhered to Islam as sole solution¹⁴³. Considering his understanding, Shariati presented two interpretations of Shia Islam. First was 'Alid or Red Shiism' and second was 'Safavid or Black Shiism'. This distinction was essential to understand the political Islamist interpretation of Shariati. Shariati segregated Shia community, affiliating one party with obedient, the other one with rebellious character. He was favoring the 'rebellious' Red Shiism. He presented it as representative of true, original and uncorrupt Shiism that constituted notions of active participation, progress, revolution and rebellion against unjust rulers. Beside of these, Red Shiism was against all kind of foreign intervention and influence. On the other hand, he described Black Shiism as a form of religion that was focused on worldly matters of monarchs and exploiters. It was an interpretation deprived from virtues sanctions of Red Shiism. Shariati was opposing Black Shiism due to its replacement of holy martyrdom of Karbala with pathetic mourning of Muharram celebrations. He claimed that revolutionary, progressive and rebellious elements of Red Shiism could overcome authoritarian, dogmatic and unreligious sanctions of Black Shiism. Moreover, he had integrated two revolutionary interpretations of Shia ideology in to Red Shiism.¹⁴⁴ First, he stated that whole population had to act

¹⁴²Jalal Al-Ahmad. *Gharbzadigi(Weststruckness* (Tehran, Mazda Publishers, 1982)

¹⁴³ Salehi, *Insurgency through Culture...*, 124

¹⁴⁴ Idem, 124

as representative of hidden twelfth Imam. So, every individual was responsible for establishment of just order in the society as the hidden Imam expected. Second, he tried to associate Shiism into very essence of minds and daily lives of Iranians. In this respected he claimed “every place is Karbala, every month is Muharram, every day is Ashura”¹⁴⁵. He tried to explain, commemoration of martyrs of Karbala was neither sufficient nor useful for Shia community. In order to act like true and faithful Muslim, individuals had to practice revolutionary ideas of martyrs. It can be concluded that Al-Ahmad and Shariati transformed Shiism into a political ideology themed around religion, rebellion and revolution against monarchs and western influence¹⁴⁶. So, prior to Islamic Revolution rebellious and revolutionary ideas against monarchy were introduced among Iranians. However there was a need for catalyze to initiate the ‘actions’. In this context rise of Ruhollah Khomeini as Ayatollah and initiation of Islamic Revolution should be introduced.

After death of Ayatollah Husayn Burujirdi, Ruhollah Khomeini granted the highest honorary title of mujtahid; Ayatollah, which means sign of Allah. Praising his title, Khomeini started to attack monarchy and Mohammad Reza Shah using ideas of Al-Ahmad and Shariati¹⁴⁷. In time, protests and demonstrations started to address establishment of an ‘Islamic Republic’. The outbreak of revolution started in January 1978. Ulama and students started to protest Shah’s regime in Qom, one of the holy cities of Shia Muslims. Protestors were suppressed by armed forces. Later on in order to commemorate martyrs of Qom another demonstration was held in Tabriz, which was again suppressed by armed forces. Commemorating martyrs and suppressing them by forces was the vicious circle of 1978 Iranian life. Shah realized that this vicious circle and increasing number of discontented masses would lead to a regime change in Iran. So, he sought assistance from United States. Due to Cold War pretext, Iran was an important asset for United States because of

¹⁴⁵ Monika, *Iran A Short History*, 127

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 128

¹⁴⁷ Daneshvar, *Revolution in Iran*, 98

its proximity to Soviet Russia and valuable oil reserves. However, during the last decades of Pahlavi monarchy, atrocities and violation of human rights severed the relations between United States and Iran. Although being an important asset in the region, there was a disagreement among high ranking officials of United States. While some believed a revolution could not be possible in Iran despite of atrocities and violations, some others believed that upcoming of a revolution- or a regime change-was unpreventable. President of the United States Jimmy Carter agreed with latter officials. Carter suggested that if a revolution was inevitable, then United States should withdraw its support from current regime. It was a measure for not losing an important 'ally' by trying to find ways to comprise with upcoming regime. At the end of 1978 Black Friday had occurred¹⁴⁸. After the incident Shah declared that he was leaving Iran using his illness as an excuse to travel United States. The incident along with Iran hostage crisis marked depletion of United States chances to create a dialogue with upcoming regime¹⁴⁹. Opposition against Shah united different groups like Islamists, liberals, seculars, Marxists, and Communist, as well as Bazaaris, merchants, secular middle classes and lower income groups¹⁵⁰. However after the departure of Mohammad Reza Shah the alliance was collapsed. Each group tried to lead the 'revolution' in accordance to their political or social orientations. However Islamist and conservatives were more successful to attract support of the majority. There were three basic reasons of it. First, religious establishments like madrasas and mosques were considered as liberated zones, where Shah's grip could not reach. People could express their opinions freely in those places. This granted trustworthiness to the ulama. Second, ulama and conservatives had close ties with the people rather than their secularist counterparts. Majority of the rural and lower class families saw secularists as agents of Shah. This hindered secularists' support among rural community. Third,

¹⁴⁸ M.F. Hassnain. *The Islamic Revolution in Iran* (New Delhi, Serials Publications, 1989), 22

¹⁴⁹ Herman Franssen and Elaine Morton. "A Review of US unilateral Sanctions Against Iran" *The Middle East Economic Survey*, Vol:45:,No:34 (2002)

¹⁵⁰ Gilles Kepel. *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge, Belknap Press, 2002), 112

Marxists and communist factions were supported by Soviet Union and Communist China. Due to those countries proximity with Mohammad Shah during his last years, the majority of the population was resent to support the leftist factions¹⁵¹. Dissolution of alliance and separation of power worked for the benefit of Islamist and conservatives. They used it in their advantage considering the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini.

On March 10 and 11, 1979, Iranians voted in favor of Islamic Republic with 98 percentages. According to guidance of Velayet-e Faqih, Assembly of Experts drafted a constitution the new republic. However, Khomeini rejected the draft because of excluding Council of Guardians as judiciary institution. From August to November Assembly of Experts drafted another constitution. The new constitution included all principles of Velayet-e Faqih, as well as introducing Supreme Leadership. Ayatollah Khomeini became the first Supreme Leader of Islamic Republic. He had total control over military and security forces as well as powers of execution. The establishment of Supreme Leadership had contributed the ascendance of Council of Guardians. It was a powerful institution that could vetoes un-Islamic legislations. This showed that body started to act as a legislative body along with the parliament. Although new constitution was opposed by some clerics and secular groups again it gained 98 percent support of the population. Upon consolidation Velayet-e Faqih rule and designed Islamic Republic in which he would be the Supreme Leader¹⁵². Despite of institutions which were verified by new constitution, Ayatollah Khomeini initiated foundation of new ones. He was planning to establish institutions and bodies those were loyal to him and Islamic revolution. First was Council of Islamic Revolution. It was devised to control and preserve the Islamic revolution. Second was Islamic Republican Party. It acted as political branch of revolutionary ideology. It was responsible for suppressing political opposition in the Majlis and gaining political support among population.

¹⁵¹ Ervand Abrahamian. "Iran in Revolution: The Opposition Forces" *MERIP Reports*, No. 75/76, (1979): 8

¹⁵² Metz, *Iran: A Country Study*, 86

Third was Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. It was military branch of revolutionary ideology that was responsible for battling against leftists, monarchists and other factions opposing the Islamic republic. Those institutions and bodies constituted backbone of Islamic Republic. In addition to these, Ayatollah Khomeini was planning a grand scale project in order to transform Iran in accordance to Velayet-e Faqih. His plan was also a ‘revolution’, which would alter lives of Iranians by imposing Islamic ways of life. It was the Cultural Revolution of Islamic Republic that changed the Iranian society by outdoing modernization, secularization and westernization attempts of previous rulers.

4.2. CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The sets of beliefs, habits and experience of a society define the political culture of the state. Every state had created its own ideology and tried to implement it on public via certain apparatuses. The education system is most formidable and preferable apparatus due to its accession to various social strata. It could serve attaining legitimization of the regime and imposing the ideology of state. The education system was more formidable apparatus that manipulates society indistinctively. Instead of coercive apparatuses like military it does not attract challenge from opposition¹⁵³. Although manipulation and transformation of the society via education needed prolong time frame, its effects were more lasting. Instead of these, education system served for ‘delayed effects’. It meant temporary postponing of demands of the population in political, economical or social concepts. Pahlavi dynasty was an important example showing how a regime can use delayed effects via education system. In order to ensure modernization and development of Iran, along with securing his power, Reza Shah proposed modernization of Iranian education system. In this perspective he used

¹⁵³ Farsoun, *Iran: Political Culture...*, 161

modernization of education system as delayed effect as ‘immediate demand for democracy ought to be postponed until all Iranians become literate’¹⁵⁴. Another leader who used education system for delayed effects was Ayatollah Khomeini. Prior to Islamic revolution Khomeini and radical ulama were presenting students and teachers of modern schools as threats for Iranian society. Khomeini was blaming institutions for being hotbeds of immorality and corruption, alienating Iranian youth from their own culture. In this context Khomeini initiated contrast perception compared to Pahlavi shahs’ reformation of Iranian education system. He proposed purification of the education system rather than reformation or modernization of it¹⁵⁵. Considering the definition of delayed effects Cultural Revolution was an example of Islamic Republic.

Ayatollah Khomeini initiated the Cultural Revolution around autumn of 1979¹⁵⁶. He declared that education system of Iran was culprit of communism and westernized ideologies. Those un-Islamic notions had to be purified from the education system. However, Khomeini was not always addressing the system with harsh criticisms and blames. Prior to Islamic revolution he was talking positively about university students and academia. “Those who saved our nation are the people, these beloved universities, these beloved theological students”¹⁵⁷. He was praising the courage of the students who were killed during demonstrations against Mohammad Reza Shah. He stated that Shah attacked universities because of centers of knowledge and learning, civilization and progress. He was connoting student in demonstrations as virtuous and pious actions. His rhetoric underwent transformation after the Islamic revolution. In his speeches Khomeini was pointing out importance of ‘Islam’ and ‘Islamic virtues’ during the course of revolution. It

¹⁵⁴ Habib Ladjevardi. “The Origins of US Support for an Autocratic Iran” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 15(1983): 223-224

¹⁵⁵ Ruhollah Khomeini translated by Hamid Alger, *Islam and Revolution* (Berkeley, Mizan Press, 2002), 274

¹⁵⁶ Sepehr Zabih. *Iran Since the Revolution* (Maryland, John Hopkins University Press, 1982), 91

¹⁵⁷ Suroosh Irfani. *Iran’s Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship?* (London, Zed Books, 1983), 204

would be informative to explain why Khomeini altered his stance towards students from allies to enemies. Before Islamic revolution, university educated students, either from left or right wing oriented, struggled against Pahlavi monarchy. Khomeini was aware that the 'revolution' had being organized among university students and academia long before his existence in political scheme. After revolution, Khomeini's power had been challenged by university students. In order to ensure continuity of Islamic revolution he started to address universities as centers of corruption. On this issue he stated that "We waged the revolution of Islam not for nationalism or democracy. Our martyrs died for Islam and nothing else"¹⁵⁸. Even he absolved Shah from his crimes against the nation and he put the blame on university students and intellectuals for all misfortunes in country's history¹⁵⁹. Eventually in order to purge intellectuals, educationalist and students who were opposing Islamic regime, Khomeini initiated Cultural Revolution.

In spring of 1980 Islamic regime was witnessing gradual emergence of universities as bastions of resistance. In the eve of 18th of April, Cultural Revolution had begun after Khomeini's speech in Friday prayer. Islamist and conservative elements were attacking opponents of Islamic regime. They had two main objectives. First was purging universities from groups like Fedayen and Mojahedin. Second was re-installing law and order in the country¹⁶⁰. Due to university students challenged authority of Khomeini, universities had to be attended with prejudice. In June 1980 under the pretext of Cultural Revolution regime initiated Jahadeh Daneshgahi(Universities Holy War). It was stated as "link the universities to the mass of the people and ensure the prevalence of Islamic faith in every aspect of university life"¹⁶¹. Hezbollahis were attacking Tehran's Teachers

¹⁵⁸ *Op.cit.*, 92

¹⁵⁹ Irfani, *Iran's Islamic Revolution...*, 205

¹⁶⁰ Abol-Hassan Banisadr and Fred Halliday. "I defeated the ideology of the Regime" *MERIP Reports*, No.104 (1982)

¹⁶¹ Omid Homa. *Islam and the Post-Revolutionary State in Iran* (New York, St Martin's Press, 1994), 161

Training College and universities in Shiraz, Mashad and Isfahan¹⁶². The imminent danger from fundamentalists led intellectuals to create a front. They proposed that all anti-regime factions and organizations had to unite in order to preserve democratic and anti-imperialist goals of revolutionary movement. The proposal made by intellectuals from centre and left-of-centre. However they failed in their attempts. Most of them chose flee from Iran, like Shah while some others joined extremist groups like Mojahedin. Khomeini stressed his opinions against leftist elements in one of his speeches;

Your sacred duty is to protect the sanctity of schools against the inroads which anti-Islamic and anti-revolutionary forces may make into your hearts and your minds. Leftists and dissident teachers and pupils alike should be forcibly ejected from amongst you.¹⁶³

The escalating conflict between pro and anti government groups had reached to Tehran with the death of 50 Fedayeen supporters. In this respect it is crucial to introduce statement of a Fedayeen supporter about the clashes; “the bullets that should be used against America are being bored into our anti-imperialist chests”¹⁶⁴. It could be understood that the anti-regime groups were fighting in the pretexts of anti-imperialism. As retaliation opposition groups were addressing regime with rhetorics that were used by Khomeini when he was criticizing Shah. They were claiming that Khomeini supporters were wicker than Hosein’s murderer because; even Shimr had given Hosein a night to accept the terms of Yezid. Yet, the mobs attacked Fedayeen and Mojahedin supporters before the ultimatum of Khomeini expired. It was an ironic situation. Once upon a time groups were handing out pamphlets stating; “Imperialism and its mercenary agents are lying in ambush, waiting for a suitable moment to create chaos in our society by bringing about the

¹⁶² Farhad Khosrokhavar and Olivier Roy. translated by İsmail Yerguz. *İran: Bir Devrimin Tükenişi* (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 2000), 144-145

¹⁶³Zabih, *Iran Since the Revolution*, 95

¹⁶⁴ Irfani, *Iran’s Islamic Revolution...*,207

closure of our cultural, educational and productive centers”¹⁶⁵. With initiation of Cultural Revolution, anti-monarchical allies were battling with each other in order to attain control of the government.

After universities purged from un-Islamic elements, Khomeini established Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution in order to revise the Iranian education system. The council was a body assembled responsibilities of purification and Islamization of education system. First all schools and universities were closed down. All primary and secondary schools along with foreign-run schools were closed and un-Islamic academia was purged from the educational ranks. 40,000 teachers were expelled or forced to retire. Second textbooks and education materials were collected in order to be purified from un-Islamic sanctions. Third Islamic culture was incorporated into education system¹⁶⁶. During the phase of purification and Islamization maktabi practice was introduced in education system. Pupils- boys-from 12 and higher age could enlist in any course and level of education system including university education. All lecturers and staff were male that restricted accession of women in both classes and vacant positions in the education system. However, Cultural Revolution and purification of the education system faced with some problems. First there was a gap of academic staff. In order to compensate this gap regime had to reinstall expelled teachers after giving them proper Islamic education. Second, due to budgetary issues development of education system in respect to council’s advice was hindered. Although ulama and conservatives were against, government had to rely on incomes of private schools. Two fee-paying universities, Free Islamic University and Open University were opened¹⁶⁷. Third, government promised to guarantee all its citizens to access “education and physical training, free of charge of all at all levels”¹⁶⁸. However it

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 209

¹⁶⁶ Homa, *Islam and the Post-Revolutionary...*, 156

¹⁶⁷ Ayatollah Yahya Allama Noori. *Islamic Government and The Revolution in Iran* (Glasgow, Royston, 1985),52-53

¹⁶⁸ *Op.cit.*, 160

turned out to be an obsolete statement considering the former problems of the system. 'Islamization' feature of Cultural Revolution was distinctively important for survival of the regime. During the Cultural Revolution term *Jahiliya* used in order to refer pre-Islamic commendation of Iran along with any form of nationalism and Iranism. It was propagating that the Iranians were Jahil before Islam. However reactions from Iranians forced the council to step back. Iranism and its pre-Islamic culture started to nominate as 'best among the worst of Jahiliya'. The regime emancipated pre-Islamic Iranian culture. Worthiness of Persians like "Salman the Pure One" had been commented by hadiths¹⁶⁹. Eventually it was assumed that Cultural Revolution managed to eradicate un-Islamic elements from the education system. Three years after purge and purification of universities medicine and engineering faculties were reopened. On the other hand, humanities and social sciences faculties were remained close due to their corrupted and immoral groups like Fedayen and Mojahedin.

Concluding, despite of Cultural Revolution and attempts initiated in the name of Islamization, regime depleted already diminished resources of Iran. Eventually regime could not fund the Cultural Revolution because of several reasons. Increasing number of pupils and high demand for education among the public were prominent ones. So, the regime had to adapt methods like privatization of schools and university that ulama had been opposing since modernization of education system. An explicit explanation for problems and marginalization of Cultural Revolution was expressed by son of Ayatollah Khomeini, who criticized the leaders succeeded his father;

All these anti-religious films, videos and music, these un-Islamic ways of dressing and these anti-Islamic books and magazines... they are leading our youths astray. If we are not careful the entire social culture will become anti-Islamic... Our unsuspecting youth is being lured away the shiny tinsels of worldly materialism and self-centeredness of careless living. The more we oppose these, the more they think it fashionable to adopt these ungodly ways. We have failed to produce anything like as attractive a material to woo our

¹⁶⁹ Shireen Hunter. *Iran after Khomeini* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1992), 93

youth back. We are losing our Populist touch. With our dear leader dead, our new leaders no longer queue in the bus stops along with their people. The leadership is too busy amassing wealth and aping the West. We are in danger of losing our revolutions to Western values and ideas.¹⁷⁰

4.2.1. Comparison of Changes in the Education System

Historically and culturally Iran had two distinct traditions, pre-Islamic and Islamic traditions, considering importance and essence of teaching and education. Zoroastrianism, pre-Islamic tradition, granted importance in attaining and transmitting knowledge. It was an attribution of an individual to acquire ‘good and decent’ personality. Zoroastrian clergy encouraged children to be “educated” with “culture (ba-tarbiyaat) and knowledge (dana)” referring to statements of Zoroaster’s father; “The most esteemed divine gift is knowledge; wealth and status are transitional... but *danesh* and *tarbiyyat* persists”¹⁷¹. The ideal and enlightened Zoroastrian ought to promote “Correct thought (*pondar-e nik*), correct talk (*goftar-e nik*) and correct behavior (*raftar-e nik*)”, where all these attributes make the believer as “useful member (*ozv-e mofid*)” of the society which ensures personal happiness and salvation¹⁷². It is apparent that pre-Islamic belief of Iran stressed out importance of education for individuals to attain good deeds and personality. It was apparent that education had significant importance in Zoroastrian belief. Islam also proposed similar provisions about education¹⁷³. Glorification and valuing individuals who attained knowledge is an adorable concept in Muslim religion. In Islam knowledge-‘ilm- had cohesion with Islamic culture. In Sunni tradition, leader of believers, *Caliph*, required to be an individual who was decorated with ‘knowledge’. In Shia tradition, which Iranians pledged to, had comparable notion of

¹⁷⁰ Homa, *Islam and the Post-Revolutionary...*, 177

¹⁷¹, Arthur H. Bleek. *Avesta: The Religious Books of The Parsees* (New York, Adamant Media Corporation, 2001), 46-47

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 46-47

¹⁷³ Franz Rosenthal. *Classical Heritage in Islam* (London, Routledge, 1994), 200

knowledge with Sunni tradition. In Shia Islam there was a notion of ‘Imamate’. Imam guided Shia believers into righteous path in accordance to tradition of Imam Ali, whom considered being the most knowledgeable Muslim of all times. His knowledge was bestowed upon him by grace of God, and passed on successor imams, who acquired the title of marje-e taqlid¹⁷⁴. Marja-e taqlid, source of imitation, was main theme of Imamate. Marja-e taqlid is most learned (a’lim) cleric. Acknowledging this information, Shia tradition merged ‘ilm (knowledge) and iman (faith) together. They were taught in maktabas and madrasas. Although religious subjects like fiqh, kalam and tefsir were taught, there was incomparable knowledge and information about Foun-science. Famous philosophers and scientists of Islamic golden age such as Ibn Sina, Al-Tusi and al-Rahman Jami were trained in those schools. Beside of philosophers and scientists, other intellectuals, famous Iranian poets like Omar Khayyam and Hafez had attained their education in those schools. These philosophers, scientists and intellectuals advocated religious teachings (*din*) in their works, in respect with the instruction of worldly (*dunya*) affairs, which made their respected works and literatures invaluable. It is evident that historically and culturally attaining knowledge was important in pre-Islamic and Islamic traditions of Iran.

In late 1800s and early 1900s, ruling elites of Iran perceived necessity to reform and modernize education system of the country that had a prolonged history. The necessity of reforms and modernization attempts originated from two distinct reasons. First, considering the level of development and prosperity of western countries, Iranian ruling elites and intellectuals sought urgent need for improvements. So, the revision of education system had to be initiated in order to catch up the west. Second was depowering clergy due to its resistance against change and transformation. Clergy and its institutions had been prominent elements of education system. However, ruling elites demand for reform and modernization of the system was a threat for clergy’s position. So, clergy formed an opposition in

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 251-255

front of changes, where ‘modernist’ rulers continued to insist on their attempts. Due to correlation of two reasons modernist ruling elites and clergy had confronting with each other in the aspect of modernization of education system as well as transformation of society. The confrontation between two was witnessed during Qajar and Pahlavi dynasties. Both dynasties were aimed to modernize and transform Iranian education system according to the western models. They had initiated several attempts those were discussed previously. Although clergy opposed attempts they could not reverse them until ascension of Islamic Republic. After the Islamic regime, clergy granted full autonomy to implement measures in Iranian education system considering their perception. In this respect I am going to point out how education system of Iran experienced different ‘revision’ and ‘reform’ attempts in comparison of Pahlavi dynasty, focusing of Mohammad Reza Shah, with Islamic Republic. Before starting to comparison, ideologies of elites of Pahlavi dynasty and Islamic Republic had to be briefly memorized. Mohammad Reza was adhering to myths, traditions and historical figures of pre-Islamic Iranian culture. Iranian nationalism, patriotism and loyalty to monarchy were taught major considerations of him and also his father. On the other hand, elites of Islamic regime were adhering Islamic culture of Iran. Patriotism, nationalism, loyalty to monarchy was replaced with rebellious and revolutionary sanctions considering the Shia belief. While Pahlavi dynasty was seeking power and wealth as part of Iranian pride, Islamic Republic was concerned about ephemeral issues rather than perennial ones. Although regimes had different and contrasting ideologies, elites realized the importance of education system in order to transform the society according to respective envisions. They had adapted different paths. While Pahlavi dynasty pursued modernization and westernization, Islamic Republic pursued purification and Islamization. In order to make my comparison implicit I proposed four categorizations considering reflection of their ideologies in revision of Iranian education system. For this purpose I had evaluated tables from the article of Farsoun¹⁷⁵ in order to present ideological changes taken place in education system.

¹⁷⁵Farsoun, *Iran: Political Culture...*, 168-167

First categorization considers perception religiosity. Pahlavi monarchs were adhered to Secularism, while elites of Islamic Republic adhered to the Religiousness-Islam¹⁷⁶. Pahlavi shahs were secularist figures who tried to separate religion from state. With the separation of religion and state, they tried to control power of clergy, which was the social strata that was opposing reform and modernization attempts of shahs. In his article Akhavi stated how Mohammad Reza Shah perceived interference of clergy in state affairs as a threat to nation "...interference of Zoroastrian clergy in the running of the political affairs of the country was an important reason for the defeat of the Persian Empire by the Muslims"¹⁷⁷. Contrasting to Pahlavi monarchy, the Islamic Republic declared inseparability of religion from either state or society. Government revealed its stance against western oriented ideologies, like secularism presenting the political Islam as an alternative;

Another important difference about the conception of politics between Western - scholars and Islam is that the West politics is more related to worldly issues... In Islam, however, [politics] is for guiding the human being towards human perfection... which results in... his eternal happiness.¹⁷⁸

Beside of that, clergy was presenting Prophet as a virtuous example of what they were trying for. Muslim society had to be led by Islamic jurists, whose legitimacy relied knowledge of Islam and Sharia. Glorification of religion was prioritization of clergy; "In Iran there is a distinct clergy, called the ulama, meaning those learned in Islamic law, who play a much greater role in interpreting Islam for the faithful than in other branches of Islam"¹⁷⁹. Islamic regime's reliance on Islam was one of the major differences from Pahlavi dynasty considering revision of education system.

¹⁷⁶ J. Milton Yinger, "Pluralism, Religion and Secularism" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol 6, No.1(1967) 18-20

¹⁷⁷ Shahrough Akhavi. *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran: Clergy- State Relations in the Pahlavi Period* (Albany, 1980), 23-24

¹⁷⁸ Saeed Rahnama and Sohrab Behdad. *Iran after the Revolution: Crisis of an Islamic State* (New York, I.B: Tauris, 1996), 205

¹⁷⁹ Grant Farr. *Modern Iran* (Boston, 1999), 47

Second categorization was perception of economic system. Pahlavi dynasty was in favor of Economic Growth, while Islamic Republic adhered to Economic Distribution, Due to valuing Iranian pride and Iranism Pahlavi dynasty emphasizes on economic growth of the country, generally neglecting equal distribution of wealth. During the Pahlavi regime Iran was a developing country that had undertook series of reform and modernization attempts in various aspect of society. The main aim of the shah was to establish ‘modernity’ over ‘tradition’. In the concept of economical culture, Pahlavi regime aimed to replace obsolete *Bazaaris*, with ‘modern factories and firms. Although series of reform attempts initiated considering the economic structure of country, there was lack of general knowledge about existing economic system. The abstracts of course materials were deprived of certain definitions like ‘neo-colonialism’¹⁸⁰. As in previous issue, Islamic Republic adapted contrasting approach. Rather than emphasizing economic growth, elites of regime propagated economic redistribution. It was originated due to regime’s rhetoric of just and equal order propagated by Islamists during campaign against monarchy. Palma explained regime’s enthusiasm on economic redistribution in his article as follows; “In contrast to the modernization approach of the pre-revolutionary textbooks, the Islamic Republic has introduced high-school students to the dependency theory of underdevelopment”¹⁸¹. Just order and egalitarian aspects of society originated from Khomeini’s perception of ‘classless society’¹⁸². This demarcation showed that regimes adapted different economical approaches to considering their political ideologies.

Third categorization considered approaches of foreign relations of regimes; where Pahlavi dynasty preferred Alliance stratagem, while Islamic Republic adapted Non-alliance approach. In the Cold War era, Mohammad Reza Shah allied itself with United States. Pahlavi monarchy was condemning communist regimes

¹⁸⁰ Leon Tikly. “Education and New Imperialism” *Comparative Education*, Vol.40, No.2 (2004):181

¹⁸¹ Gabriel Palma. “Dependency and Development: A critical overview”, *World Development*, 6/7-8,(1978)

¹⁸² Imam Humeyni. *Konuşmalar* (İstanbul, Metis Yayınları, 1991), 43

for exercising authoritarian and dictatorial powers. However both Pahlavi monarchs expressed similar coercive powers. Modernizing and secularizing reform attempts undertaken in respect to westernization along with development of the country. That prolonged affliction caused monarchs to declare other regimes as dictator or authoritarian if they were not cooperating with United States- or west. On the other hand, the Islamic Republic, beginning from its very foundations, was anti-imperialist and anti-monarchy oriented. Ayatollah Khomeini was condemning both western and eastern blocs for being oppressors in neo-colonial power struggle. The educational materials presented historical events of both camps in their neo-colonial struggle. United States intervention in Lebanese affairs under sanction of Eisenhower Doctrine and hindrance of ascending Arab Nationalism in Egypt and Syria were examples of western bloc's corruption. On the other hand Soviet Union's suppression of Hungarian and Polish uprisings against Kremlin bureaucracy referred as eastern bloc's corruption. By these examples Islamic Republic tried to validate its rhetoric of 'Western domination' Khomeini adapted non-alliance stratagem in order to preserve Iranian culture, economy and politics from influence of any foreign elements¹⁸³. In context of education, decisive measures had taken during Cultural Revolution. Khomeini had attributed causes of decline in morality of Iranians, economic hardship, political resentments and public discontent on influence of western countries in Iran. Their corrupted moral values were destroying the country. So in order to preserve Iran's, economical, political and social independence, strict measures ought to be initiated. *Rahnema* presented how Khomeini's perception was reflected during the purification of education system.

The cultural weapon, according to the textbooks, has great potency than economic and political tools because it affects the soul of a community. Through humiliation, brainwashing and the spread of consumerism, it is asserted, the imperial powers manipulate the identity of the oppressed nations.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ Ibid, 71

¹⁸⁴ *Rahnema, Iran after the Revolution...*, 210

Regimes' perception of Cold War and responses to international affairs included in educational materials distinctively reflected their ideologies

Fourth categorization considered domestic stance of the regimes differentiation from Monarchism to Revolutionism. Pahlavi regime was secular, western, modernist and authoritarian. First three characteristics were praised by Western countries while the latter one was condemned. Mohammad Reza Shah was praising the monarchical rules as follows. "History has shown that whenever the monarchical institution established itself firmly, the economy, industry, and varieties of art and educational fields have progressed as well."¹⁸⁵ (Rahnema, 1996). He was adhering to monarchical rule originated from glorification of pre-Islamic Iranian dynasties like Achaemenid dynasty. Also he experienced monarchical rule of his father and witnessed transformation of Iran. On the other hand, elites Islamic Republic criticized and opposed monarchy Rahnema explained the incorporated perception of clergy into education system as follows;

In its description of the history of prophet's movements, [the Quran] has portrayed the anti-revolutionary and anti-monotheism of monarchs. Wherever [the Quran] has hinted at the attempts of the prophets in...establishing God's sovereignty has shown the monarchs as the heads of the opposition [to the prophets].¹⁸⁶

The clergy was attributing its anti-monarchical sentiments based on Islam, where monarch had been the leaders who had opposed Prophet and his successors. Islamic Republic described source of sovereignty as rule of many-democracy-rather than rule of one-monarchy. However, the rule of many there has to be supervised by a body, which was described in Ayatollah Khomeini's work, Velayet-e Faqih. Ayatollah Khomeini presented populist and revolutionaries sanctions of Islamic government in pretext of equality as follows;

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 209

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 212

By casting a decisive vote in favor of the Islamic Republic, you have established a government of divine Justice, a government in which all segments of the population shall enjoy equal consideration...Blessed for you be this government that knows no difference of race, whether between black and white, or between, Turk, Persian, Kurd and Baluchi. All are brothers and equals.¹⁸⁷

So, Islamist used referendums and votes during early stage of the revolution considering the statements of Ayatollah Khomeini about equality.¹⁸⁸

Conclusively these categorizations pointed out differences on political, economical and cultural understandings of pre and post Islam revolution regimes. Despite their apparent differences both regimes had a common understanding of importance of education system. It was the one of the main motives why both regimens were paid utmost importance for ‘revision’ and ‘reformation’ of Iranian education system respecting to their own understandings.

¹⁸⁷Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, 266

¹⁸⁸Reza Afshari. “An Essay on Scholarship, Human Rights and State Legitimacy: The Case of Islamic Republic of Iran” *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol.18, No.8 (1996): 568/579

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis was aimed to point out basic revisions and changes that Iranian education system was subjected to before and after Islamic Republic. Due to Iran's considerable experience on education and education system, the history of changes was constrained between 1772 and 1982 in order to focus the subject matter.

The first chapter served as an introduction to modern Iranian history starting from Qajar dynasty to early years of Islamic Republic. First part of the chapter informed the ascension of Qajar dynasty, along with its prominent reformist and revisionist leaders, intellectuals and educationalists. The second part was dedicated to embrace the Pahlavi dynasty. Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah were introduced along with their reformist, modernist and transformative plans and projects. Also a general outline was drawn in order to understand their reformist and revisionists attempts undergone in Iranian education system. Beside of these, Pahlavi era's intellectuals' and educationalists' comments and ideas, both negative and positive, on transformation of Iranian education system were briefly mentioned. As last part of this chapter, Shia clergy's resentment against transformation and change of Iranian society as well as opposition against Pahlavi monarchy was introduced. Moreover, how the opposition and demands of clergy, and also public,

to get rid of monarchy was presented. As a result ascension of Islamic revolution and later on foundation Islamic Republic composed last section of the first chapter.

The second chapter dealt with modernization attempts of the education system prior to Islamic Revolution. The first part of this chapter introduced reasons and logics behind modernization and revision of Iranian education system under Qajar dynasty. Qajar shahs, intellectuals and educationalists roles in order to change the education system were discussed, while the results of those attempts were showed. As a prominent example, foundation of Dar al-Fonun had a significant importance considering modernization and transformation of Iranian education system under Qajar rule. Second part outlined Pahlavi shahs' reformist projects in first in a general context, later on specific matters. Reza Shah's and Mohammad Reza Shah's policies considering transformation of the education system were distinctly acknowledged. Reza Shah's three themes; Modernization, Westernization and Secularization were explained in the pretext of transformation and modernization of Iran and Iranian society. Considering this general abstract those themes specific considerations about transformation and modernization of Iranian education system was deliberately mentioned. Reza Shah's reform attempts those had been tried to emancipated in primary, secondary and higher levels of education presented as well as another prominent development of the system; foundation of Tehran University. After succession Mohammad Reza Shah tried to continue reformation of education system in respect to his father's visions. Mohammad Shah had specific plans and ideas about how the modernize and reform the education system. In this respect, the contemporary intellectuals and educationalists comments and explanations of changes in Iranian education system were presented for objectivity of the study. Primarily, Mohammad Shah's plans and devised 'revolution' were introduced to grasps context of the changes undergone in education system. Later then, reform and modernization of the education system was acknowledged by creating a clear and definite abstract with results.

The last chapter composed of information about Islamic Revolution and Cultural Revolution. Due to importance of respective revolutions on Iranian history, the history of formation and organization of Islamic opposition was presented primarily. The historical background, reasons, methods and measures considering the ascension of Islamic Revolution were discussed in the pretext of change. In this respect the prominent figure of the revolution Ayatollah Khomeini and his works on the new regime also introduced. Khomeini's perception of 'revision' and 'transformation' of Iran and respectively Iranian education system were presented via contemporary intellectuals and educationalists. Along with it, the mechanizations that Khomeini devised in order to promote changes that he envisaged were briefly mentioned. After popular support for foundation of Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khomeini initiated the Cultural Revolution. The political and social reasoning and understanding, like purification and Islamization of education system, underlies the Cultural Revolution were acknowledged. Basic changes and revisions in Iranian education system during the Cultural Revolution were represented in accordance to understand the Islamic regime. The last section of this chapter was dedicated compare and analyze how and why regimes before and after the Islamic revolution undertook revision and change of Iranian education system of Iran. In this respect, due to chronology, as well as being the complete contrast of each other, I compared Islamic Republic and its elites' attempts to change and transform education system of Iran with attempts of Pahlavi Shah, Mohammad Reza. Elites of both regimes were aware of the fact that it was not going to be easy to transform the country, so they undertook transformation of the education system that would eventually led transformation and change of the society. I concluded that the political orientations of respective regimes' had undeniable affects on revisionist and change of Iranian education system.

To conclude, I had presented basic changes occurred in education system of Iran before and after the Islam Revolution. I could state that modernization, secularization and westernization or purification and Islamization of education

system, all those attempts were correlated with respective ideologies of ruling elites. Revision and transformation of Iranian education system was immutable reality of the country when it was subjected to a change like White Revolution or Cultural Revolution. Although pre and post revolutionary regimes realized that short term revisions and transformation could have presented via coercive force, in order to have more prolonged effects mind set of the people had to be altered. So, the respective White Revolution and Cultural Revolution were devised for similar purposes. They were attempts to change Iranian education system in very essence which would have create a prolonged effects on the society by transforming people according to envisages of ruling elites. It was the reason why altering education system had attracted utmost priority from both pre and post revolutionary regimes. Ruling elite undertook specific and in-detailed plans where it was the most ample way to understand them by presenting the basic changes of the reform attempts.

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