



The Role and Position of Iranism in Political Development

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ABSTRACT

Abstract

Objective: This article, based on the premise that national identity, as a country's definition of its place in various, diverse, and sometimes contradictory approaches, is one of the main axes of attention in this research. The aim is to answer the question of how Iran's political development, within the framework of "Iranism," has been defined, recovered, pursued, and ultimately led to specific outcomes. In response to this question, the authors' hypothesis is that, based on the definition provided for the variables of this research—Iranian culture and identity and political development—a part of Iran's political culture teachings has played both negative and positive roles in shaping the political transformations of Iranian society in different periods. To maximize the constructive capacity of Iranian identity in the path of the country's political development, a transformation in its role-playing and perspective is deemed necessary.

Method: To this aim, an analytical-descriptive method has been used, and data collection in this research is based on documentary library studies.

Results: The results indicate that three main axes were considered. In the first axis, titled "Definition of Concepts," the main concepts under consideration are explained, and a historical overview is provided. The second axis elucidates the fundamental characteristics of Iranian identity and Iran's political development from the perspective of experts. The third axis, by referring to the view on national identity and the lack of public participation in the Pahlavi era government, describes the existing obstacles and capacities for creating transformation towards Iran's political development in the present.

Conclusions: The conclusion is that a positive view of national identity is in line with strengthening and transforming political development, and in this regard, minorities, parties, and groups should be seen as opportunities for the comprehensive development of Islamic Iran

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Introduction

Political development has been defined in various ways across different approaches. Each of these definitions considers different indicators or signs. More importantly, the definitions provided sometimes describe the processes that specify the mechanism for achieving political development, and sometimes they describe the goals of political development itself. Therefore, it is clear that a predefined and simple definition of this concept cannot be provided. However, clarifying the dimensions of this concept is not out of reach, given the large volume of existing works.

In this paper, we intend to address the important and fundamental question of how Iran's political development, within the framework of "Iranism" is defined, recovered, pursued, and ultimately leads to specific outcomes. The most important question this research seeks to unravel is how Iran's geopolitics and the ideas derived from it have played a role in the formation and development of Iranian political development.

١. Definition of "Political Development"

Various definitions of political development have been offered. In this paper, political development refers to the political participation of citizens and group competition, which scholars such as Robert Dahl, Adam Przeworski, David Apter, and S.N. Eisenstadt have identified as criteria for political development (Bashirieh, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 11). Daniel Lerner and Lucian Pye also identified participation in elections as an indicator of political participation (Badi', 1996 AD/1375 SH: 41). One of the concepts and goals of political development is the expansion of participation and competition in political life. In this sense, political development is largely considered synonymous with democracy (Bashirieh, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 11).

٢. History of Political Development

The theoretical history of political development, in the sense of democracy, dates back to ancient Greece. Although ancient Greek political philosophers, namely Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, criticized the democratic political system with a negative approach, these very oppositions and agreements prepared the ground for the permanence of democratic thought.

After the Middle Ages and the emergence of representative political systems, the discourse of popular government and democracy re-emerged. Later, the political thought of John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and other modern thinkers gave special prominence to political theories. In the 18th century, French intellectuals, by proposing the "Progress" project, which in fact laid the groundwork for the French Revolution, provided the theoretical and social foundations for the theories of development and political development. Although the discussion of development existed in the historical horizon of the Enlightenment era and had political, economic, and social dimensions under the category of "Progress," development theories were mainly put forward after World War II. In fact, new theories of political development grew from the 1950s onwards (Saei, 2005 AD/1384 SH: 8).

۳. Political Development in Contemporary Iranian History

Iran's political development in the pre-Constitutional era was characterized by the sultan's absolute power and dominance, the bureaucratic servitude of the people (Ra'īyyat), and authoritarian regimes relying on religious appearances, which led to political inactivity among the people (lack of participation and lack or ineffectiveness of social classes), thus placing it in a state of political underdevelopment.

In Article 57 of the Iranian Constitution, the ruling powers in the Islamic Republic of Iran are independent of each other, but these powers are administered under the supervision of the Supreme Leader (Velayat-e Faqih). What is stated in this article is the separation of the three branches of government—legislative, judicial, and executive—which operate under the supervision of the Leader. However, the Leader's supervision does not mean the elimination of the independence of the powers, as the Leader, based on paragraph 7 of Article 110 of the Constitution, is responsible for resolving disputes and regulating the relations between the powers. In other words, after accepting its most important principle—the absolute Velayat-e Faqih (Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist), which the general public has accepted—the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the Velayat-e Faqih and the leadership as the connecting point of the ruling powers, and the exercise of sovereignty by these powers is deemed legitimate and lawful solely based on the Leader's opinion and supervision. Therefore, Article 57 emphasizes two issues:

- First, there are three branches of government in Iran, and these three branches are independent of each other, such that none of them can dissolve another branch, prevent it from performing its duties, or influence it to take specific actions;
- Second, these powers are under the supervision of the Leader, who is himself elected by the people. In fact, the supervision of the Velayat-e Faqih over the three branches means that the drafters of the Constitution and the people who approved it deemed the supervision of their highest elected representative necessary to preserve the independence of the powers. In other words, the leadership in the Islamic Republic system possesses qualities such as justice and piety, and this provides reassurance to the people that none of the powers will be able to abuse or centralize power (Constitution, 1989 AD/1368 SH: Article 57).

The emergence of the Islamic Revolution is closely linked to the lack of political development during the Pahlavi era. Therefore, after its victory, the Islamic Republic endeavored to pursue political development in various dimensions, including the expansion of party activities, freedom of the press and media, and increased political participation. The forty-year experience of the Islamic Republic system serves as a criterion for evaluating the results of the Islamic Revolution in terms of achieving political development. This experience, which has been in line with the realization of the important ideals and slogans of the Islamic Revolution, covers the manner of achieving political development through increasing the system's capacity, equality, and structural differentiation. In this regard, indicators such as human development, achievement of social justice, economic and industrial independence, and freedom and democracy are noteworthy, which collectively indicate the capacities of the Islamic Republic system in terms of differentiation and specialization of affairs and the creation of equality (Shafieifar, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 108-109).

٤. Capacity Assessment of National Infrastructures for Political Development

To examine the capacities and potentials of national infrastructures for political development, we must refer to Iran's political thought and its encounters with Western modernism. In the history of political thought in Iran, the nineteenth century holds a special importance and position. This is because this century is considered the beginning of the modern era, which also brought about major changes in Iran's political structure and is referred to as the semi-

modernist rule. The rise and dominance of governmental and non-governmental semi-modernism in Iran were based on two pillars: first, the negation of all Iranian traditions, institutions, and values that were considered "Backward" and the source of national humiliations; and second, the superficial eagerness and emotional excitement of a small but growing group of the urban society. Hossein Bashirieh considers Reza Shah's rule as a period in which the modernization of Iran (in a Western manner), culturally and economically, was preferred over other goals, especially changing the relationship and method of exercising power and increasing political participation. The nature of the political system in Iran had such an impact on the level of social and economic life that independent classes such as the aristocracy, guilds, and clergy were unable to grow and influence the definitive limits of autocratic power, and often the will of the Shah was considered law (Bashirieh, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 67).

◦. Obstacles of Iranian Culture in Political Development

Many factors and components influence Iran's political development as obstacles embedded in Iranian culture. Some of these are briefly mentioned here:

Tribal or Mechanical Society Structure: "Rational societies that have achieved relative development at all levels and have moved beyond the tribal structure possess, in a sense, organic solidarity. Specialized division of labor in these societies has led individuals to develop an organic dependence on the entire society. Just as hands, eyes, and ears all serve the person, while each undertakes a separate task, in an organic society, work is specialized, and its elements are not interchangeable, yet all serve the life of the main body. This analogy can, to some extent, clarify the differences in culture. In organic solidarity, the spirit of collective cooperation is significant and considerable. If one participates in overthrowing a government, they know the reasons for it and the nature of their participation. They participate for reform and improvement, not in the hope of engaging in trade or seizing the positions of former individuals. Organic solidarity does not believe in overthrowing the government to freely exploit national resources. Rather, it overthrows the government because it does not perform its specialized duties well, and because more qualified individuals should replace them. In a culture of organic solidarity, the interests of society are also noteworthy, and individuals see their interests within the interests of society. In mechanical solidarity, individual interests take

precedence over societal interests, and this alone is sufficient to dismantle society. In organic solidarity, society requires sacrifice and demands sacrifices for its growth, while in mechanical solidarity, individuals expect society to sacrifice for them, which is, of course, impossible. Such a distinction between the two models is an excellent example that does not appear purely in the social context; a mixture of these two exists. The more elements of one type are present, the more society tends towards that type." (Rezagholi, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 196)

Short-Term Society: "The lack of long-term continuity led to significant change from one short-term period to the next, such that history became a series of interconnected short-term periods. Therefore, in this respect, changes were more frequent and usually more fundamental, and social mobility from one class to another was much more intense than in traditional European societies. However, by definition, these conditions made it very difficult to accumulate long-term changes, including the long-term accumulation of assets, wealth, capital, social and private institutions, and even educational institutions. All of these progressed normally or existed in each short-term period, but in the next short-term period, they had to be re-established or fundamentally changed."

Stability-Seeking: "This is an activity that so integrates an individual into the present that they cannot imagine a future for themselves. Hence, activities aimed at earning a livelihood are pursued with despair. This despair drives us to submit to our current situation. It was in this adaptation to despair that we tried to be content with what we have or what is given to us, considering it our destined fate. For example, the concept of contentment has gained validity in Iranian culture because contentment is essentially an expression of adaptation to despair. In contentment, one confronts the act of striving to achieve something, not the hope of realizing it if they already possess it. So, all that remains is to try to be content with our current situation, lest it worsen. Adaptation to despair has so enslaved us that it seems we have lost the ability to imagine a better situation. Thus, we do not even know what work and effort are for. In this state, all that remains is to endure the undesirable present by waiting for what we know it is." (Qazi Moradi, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 148)

Concealment: "The social and cultural structure of Iranian life is based on a fundamental oppositional structure between the inner and outer. For Iranians, the outer realm presents conflicts, insecurities, lack of trust and confidence, and a kind of unethical struggle for survival. However, the inner realm is one of trust, confidence, tranquility, predictability,

mutual understanding, fulfillment of rights and moral virtues, and is generally full of altruism and self-sacrifice for others. For this reason, the private sphere and the governmental sphere were in opposition in Iranian life, and the public sphere had little vitality. Living in such a situation leads to a situation in Iran where a person's outward appearance indicates a contrasting nature within them. Outwardly, especially in power relations, they are compelled not to engage in direct conflict in any way, and therefore, they tend strongly towards maintaining appearances and externalizing. The spirit of flattery and sycophancy, coupled with the politeness and respect that always accompanies Iranian behavior, reinforces this externalization. As a result, in Iran, everything is summarized in external appearance, and reputation is the most important tool for self-confidence." (Mirzaei and Rahmani, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 39)

Self-Centeredness: "Contrary to the theory that individuality or individualism is considered one of the strong foundations of human development and flourishing, and the basis of the social citizen's will in the process of forming political parties and organized groups. Of course, its cause must be sought in the traditional culture of Iranian society. This means that individuals at various social levels, while maintaining their individualistic pattern, have only subscribed to collective organizations in specific religious matters. In these gatherings, due to the traditional fear of the government, political and social issues were never raised; whereas individualism in the Western tradition had a different outcome. In Western societies, political participation takes place through influential parties and groups, which individuals consider a suitable place for achieving their individual goals, while in Iran; such a belief has not emerged and become internalized."

٦. Ruptures and Continuities of Political Development and Stability/Instability

Achieving development is a complex, difficult, and time-consuming process. On the one hand, it requires great effort and perseverance, steadfastness, strong determination, and the mobilization of all resources to achieve it. On the other hand, it requires a calm and stable political and social environment as a prerequisite for its realization. Any goal we consider for development, including economic development, political or social development, or comprehensive development, requires political stability for its realization.

Essentially, a "Developmental State" that seeks to achieve development must first provide the prerequisites for its realization, including stability in various governmental spheres, such as policy stability, management stability, legal stability, and so on. Successive changes in policies, laws, strategies, and confusion in pursuing various development goals lead to the depletion of necessary societal resources and opportunities for development. Furthermore, any political instability such as war, coup, widespread riots, and threats to the survival of the system, shift development out of priority and divert societal resources and capabilities towards goals other than development. The importance of a stable environment for achieving development has been affirmed by various thinkers. For example, according to Huntington, "The difference between states in achieving growth and equality or failing to achieve either, depends on the environment in which growth occurs," and "The importance of political stability and instability in different countries is more significant than the difference between democracy and autocracy." (Huntington, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 5)

Dr. Sariolghalam writes in this regard and the necessity of political stability in achieving development: "Development requires political tranquility for individuals and human collectives to engage in innovation and creativity. Political ups and downs and indecision in the field of political legitimacy delay the realization of development and ultimately make it impossible. Political unrest disrupts confidence and hope for the future, which are the foundations of development, and pollutes the decision-making and policymaking environment of society, ultimately leading to reduced efficiency and desirability." (Sariolghalam, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 93).

Given that achieving development requires the strong will of elites and the government, mobilization of resources and facilities, and providing a safe and calm environment, political instabilities such as internal and external wars, social unrest, security threats to society and the political system, etc., have a negative and destructive impact on economic and social growth and development, domestic and foreign investment, and the flight of financial and human capital. In addition, they cause development to fall out of priority and attention to be directed towards goals other than development. Furthermore, instability in management, policies, and laws due to political disputes and the lack of agreement among elites and main groups in society, the lack of a clear strategy and plan, etc., by making the future unpredictable and increasing risk, lead to the destruction of a suitable environment for economic investment, and instead, short-term and mostly destructive economic activities become prevalent. Moreover,

with frequent changes in executives due to political and factional issues and a lack of attention to national goals, replaced by attention to group and party goals and continuous changes in development policies, priorities, and goals, none of those goals and priorities are achieved. The country's resources and facilities are wasted through fluctuations and repeated changes in pursuing different and sometimes contradictory goals and in political disputes. This very issue makes the achievement and realization of development goals impossible (Movathaqi and Karamzadi, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 338-339).

۷. Nationalization of the "Political System" and the Rebirth of "Political Development"

Essentially, the discourse of Iranian nationalism is characterized by components such as historical grandeur and glory, independence, and aversion to foreigners. The discourse of political expansion is characterized by attention to Western civilizational components, modernity, intellectual revolution, and structural reforms of power. According to this view, a country interested in development is obliged to achieve a kind of internal coherence in its intellectual sphere. This is because this coherence is the result of intellectual coherence, and the focal point of intellectual coherence is the elites who must reach a shared understanding among themselves (Tohidfam, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 154).

The decline of individuals, groups, and civilizations begins from within. Similarly, the flourishing and glory of individuals, groups, and civilizations also begin from within. What happens in the essence and nature of phenomena is more important than external forces that intend to influence and penetrate. Therefore, whether in underdevelopment, progress and dynamism, civilization-building, or backwardness, downfall, disintegration, and decline, the internal is more important than the external. The crisis of internal coherence—or, in other words, the nationalization of the political system—has always been one of the major obstacles to political development throughout Iranian history. If we consider political participation as one of the indicators of political development, the most important reason for the lack of political participation is related to internal issues of Iranian society. This issue is not only due to the lack of coordination among the wealthy, knowledgeable, and powerful in Iranian society but, more importantly, to the absence of intellectual coherence and the imaginary and dominant perceptions prevalent in this society. Solving this crisis and paving the way for the

realization of one of the indicators of political development—such as changing political participation, which itself guarantees security—requires fundamental reforms (Tohidfam, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 154-155).

^ Waves of National Reforms as Discontent with Political Development

Although academic discussions of political development at the international level only have a fifty-year history, the ideals and indicators of political development have always been humanity's lost quest. Especially in recent centuries, continuous and costly efforts and struggles have been made to achieve these indicators in various countries and societies, and Iran has been no exception to this rule, experiencing changes and transformations in the last hundred years to achieve this goal. Among the major political transformations in contemporary Iranian history, one can refer to the Constitutional Revolution (1906 AD/1285 SH), the open political atmosphere resulting from the change of power in the Pahlavi dynasty (1941 AD/1320 SH), the nationalization of the oil industry and the subsequent formation of Dr. Mossadegh's popular government (1950-1953 AD/1329-1332 SH), and the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 AD/1357 SH. These waves have played the most significant role in the country's political scene and its pursuit of development (Akhavan Kazemi et al., 2018 AD/1397 SH: 209).

However, it should be noted that the process of Iranian society achieving political development and its sublime indicators has become a time-consuming and lengthy cycle. This unusually long process has always threatened the institutionalization of political development with weakening and regression, despite the costly struggles and movements formed throughout contemporary history. Studying the trend of this cycle shows that after every developmental movement, a kind of fearful reaction has also formed in the political arena in Iran. Furthermore, studying the trend of Iranians' political development shows that the waves formed in contemporary Iranian history have so far been "Incomplete waves". Although each of these waves has contributed to the advancement of political development, there is still a distance to reach the desired point of political development in Iranian society. The trend research conducted, as well as the explanation of the conditions and situation of political development in Iran, indicate the existence of potential drivers on the one hand, and the continuation of existing structural and cultural barriers on the path of political development on

the other. This demonstrates that for the completion of the political development cycle, the formation of a new wave in Iranian society in this field is highly probable in the future, and the existing drivers herald its formation (Akhavan Kazemi et al., 2018 AD/1397 SH: 242-243).

Studies on political development in Iran show that the policies and orientations of governments have played a major role in achieving or not achieving political development. In fact, political development in Iran has been more "state-centric" and "Top-down" than "Society-centric" and "Bottom-up". However, the growth of civil society institutions and the expansion of development-oriented demands in the political sphere from below will lead to the formation of political developmental states in the future and will ensure the advancement of political development in Iran more than ever before (Akhavan Kazemi et al., 2018 AD/1397 SH: 243).

۹. Centralism, Federalism, and the Theology of Iranian Political Development

In contemporary Iranian history, centralization and decentralization, alongside political underdevelopment and development, have been accompanied by short and long fluctuations. During this period, we have sometimes approached political development and sometimes moved away from it. In the contemporary period of Iranian history, we have experienced centralization more and decentralization less, but more serious attention has been paid to the relationship between centralization and political underdevelopment, and decentralization and political development. Therefore, the impact of centralization and decentralization on the realization of development and political underdevelopment has not been discovered. Hence, the question arises: What is the meaningful relationship between centralization and decentralization with political underdevelopment and political development?

Centralization is a system and method in which decisions on all public matters (national and local) are made and implemented by the political and administrative center, usually located in the capital. In this state, the power and authority to administer and execute affairs are also completely concentrated in the central organization. In other words, the central government supervises all local administrations and determines their level of power; it may even temporarily assume the role of local administration in some cases. The central government can impose its decisions on all local units, regardless of whether these decisions are respected

and accepted by the people of those regions. The formation of a centralized geographical-political system in Iran dates back to the Constitutional Movement. Although the main basis for adopting a centralized system in democratic societies, in addition to preserving territorial integrity, is economic justice and social cohesion, in Iran, in the early years, the choice of such a system for managing the country might have stemmed from such intentions. However, during the Pahlavi eras and beyond, it must be stated with certainty that the preservation of territorial integrity was the focus of political managers. This system, in its short lifespan, has left the following strategic consequences in Iran: 1) The centralized political-administrative system gave heterogeneous Iran its modern shape and form. In fact, the genesis of the concept of a nation-state began with the Constitutional Revolution;

2) Country divisions with their centralizing characteristic have helped balance ethnic groups in the provinces by creating demographic-ethnic compositions.

Thus, in most cases, provincial borders do not coincide with ethnic settlement borders. The question here is, given the ethnic and religious diversity in Iran's geographical space and specific ecological differences across the land: Although a centralized governmental system has been considered a suitable model for countries facing separatism or war and conflict, is it the best governmental model for national cohesion? (Akhbari et al., 2015 AD/1394 SH: 43-44)

۱۰. Ethno-Religious Policymaking, Security, and Sustainable Political Development in Iran

Iran is a multi-ethnic country. What matters in this context are the varying degrees of power-sharing and different ethnic groups' access to various economic and political resources, which lead to differences in their sense of identity and belonging to collective identities such as belonging to Iran and Iranian nationality. Of course, various religious and cultural factors can strengthen or weaken cohesion. Based on the two distinct elements of religion and language, distinctions exist among Iranian ethnic groups, dividing them into several categories. A significant portion of Kurdish speakers in western Iran and Baluch people follow Sunni Islam, which differs from the country's official religion. Meanwhile, Turks, Lurs, and a large portion of Arabs belong to a linguistic sphere different from the country's official language—Persian;

however, religiously, since they follow Shia Islam, they have no difference with the country's official religion.

The existence of these differences, alongside the relative underdevelopment of the provinces inhabited by these ethnic groups compared to the Shia Persian-speaking provinces, creates a feeling of discrimination, inequality, and oppression. This forms the hypothesis that their sense of belonging to the collective Iranian identity is, at least politically, weaker. According to studies on Kurdish and Arab ethnic groups, a new development occurred in the relationship with ethnic groups in Iranian history from the time of Reza Shah onwards (and similarly in Turkey after Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and in Iraq after the emergence of the Ba'ath regime), which was unknown and unprecedented in earlier history despite bloody conflicts and wars. This involved the implementation of a type of nationalism that led to the emergence of new forms of dominance and hegemony, based on an ideology that targeted the identity of the "Other" and their culture and language, resulting in subsequent conflicts, discriminations, and oppressions, and even legitimizing war and physical elimination (Haghmoradi, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 232).

It is important to note that in developed political systems, there is an organic relationship between the government and society. Governments are responsive and responsible towards people's participatory demands and political, social, cultural, and economic demands. As mentioned, political participation in a society is manifested through elections and people's votes. Therefore, the process of involving all popular or ethnic groups of a society in all stages of development will be effective in improving, emerging capabilities and capacities, and consequently, material and spiritual growth and elevation. To the same extent that political legitimacy and the participation of ethnic groups are weaker; the political stability of a system is undermined.

We have always witnessed political discrimination by the central government in our contemporary political history, which has been the most effective type of discrimination leading to the exclusion of these ethnic groups from the pyramid of political power. In fact, governments, with their predetermined plans and political authority, have led to the marginalization of ethnic groups. For example, in the second Pahlavi era, we witness the lack of participation of ethnic groups at various levels. This mutual lack of attention can be attributed, to some extent, to the lack of trust between the structure and ethnic communities on the one hand, and to the lack of interaction between the government and Iranian society on the

other, stemming from negative bilateral attitudes. This is because with the consolidation of the second Pahlavi and under the influence of its autocratic and cultural policies, about three decades of political inactivity and isolationist policies prevailed over ethnic groups and minorities within the country. On the eve of the Islamic Revolution, with the collapse of despotism, each of Iran's ethnic groups, factions, classes, and segments of society saw their political, social, economic, and cultural status in the social structure of Pahlavi Iran as unequal and oppressed. Alongside other political-social and professional groups, they cooperated in their struggles to overthrow the Pahlavi regime (Barzegar et al., 2019 AD/1398 SH: 434-435).

Conclusion

The lack of political development during the Pahlavi era is considered one of the causes of the Islamic Revolution. After the Islamic Revolution, efforts were made to address various aspects of political development, including the expansion of political participation and party activities, and freedom of the press and media. These efforts were evaluated within the framework of increasing the system's capacity, equality, and structural differentiation, using indicators such as freedom and democracy, human development, achievement of social justice, economic independence, and industrial independence. Collectively, these indicate the capacities of the Islamic Republic system towards differentiation and specialization of affairs and the creation of equality.

The achievement or non-achievement of political development in Iran, due to the role played by governments based on their policies and orientations, has been more "State-centric" and "Top-down" than "Society-centric" and "Bottom-up." The slogan of the Republic and the central axis of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, based on the aspirations of the great architect of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini, has been the people. Furthermore, the growth of civil society institutions and the expansion of development-oriented demands in the political sphere from below have led to the formation of political developmental states and have given the advancement of political development in Iran increased growth and speed.

In the Pahlavi era, due to the government's lack of interaction with Iranian society, resulting from negative attitudes and the nature of rentier states, we witnessed the lack of participation of ethnic groups at all levels. With the adoption of autocratic and cultural policies, we witnessed political inactivity and isolationist policies towards ethnic groups and minorities within the country, and a threat to national identity. On this basis, each of Iran's ethnic groups,

groups, classes, and segments of society saw their political, social, economic, and cultural status—in a word, their identity—in overthrowing the Pahlavi regime, and cooperated with other political-social and professional groups in the struggles against the regime.

One of the manifestations of a society's political participation is the extent of public participation in elections and voting. The involvement of popular or ethnic groups in all stages of development contributes to the emergence of capabilities and capacities, and consequently, the material and spiritual growth and elevation of society. To the same extent that political legitimacy and the participation of ethnic groups are more prominent, the political stability of a system is greater and its foundation stronger. Therefore, political development requires the firm determination of elites and the government, mobilization of resources and capabilities, and providing a safe and calm environment. Political stability, in the sense of social security and tranquility, and the neutralization of internal and external security threats to society and the political system, contribute to economic and social growth and development, domestic and foreign investment, and the attraction of financial and human capital. Failure to address this leads to negative and destructive impacts, causing development to fall out of priority and attention to be directed towards other goals.

Furthermore, instability in management, policies, and laws due to political conflicts and a lack of agreement among elites and major societal groups, the absence of a clear strategy and plan, etc., by making the future unpredictable and increasing risk, leads to the destruction of a suitable environment for economic investment, and instead, short-term and mostly destructive economic activities become prevalent. Moreover, with frequent changes in executives due to political and factional issues and a lack of attention to national goals, replaced by attention to group and party goals and continuous changes in development policies, priorities, and objectives, none of those goals and priorities is achieved. The country's resources and capabilities are wasted through fluctuations and repeated changes in pursuing different and sometimes contradictory goals and in political disputes. This very issue makes the achievement and realization of development goals impossible.

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