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# Pahlavi Government Policies Regarding The Mourning Ceremonies of Imam Ḥusayn (AS) (1951-1978 AD/1330-1357 AH) Case Study: Isfahan

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) are Shia religious rituals that have been observed throughout various historical periods. With the rise of the Pahlavi government, restrictions on these mourning ceremonies became part of a broader effort towards secularization and modernization of Iranian society, leading to conflict and challenges with the clergy and the people. Isfahan, due to its concentration of prominent Shia scholars and the establishment of a theological seminary, is the primary focus of this research.

**Method:** The research methodology is descriptive-analytical, based on documentary and library sources, focusing on Isfahan.

**Results:** The main research question is: 'What policies did the Pahlavi government (1925-1978 AD/1304-1357 AH) adopt regarding religious ceremonies in Isfahan, and what was the public reaction?' The findings indicated that the Pahlavi government implemented policies regarding the mourning ceremonies of Imam Ḥusayn (AS) as a tool to consolidate its authority and shape social behavior according to its political agenda. Through measures such as monitoring the execution of mourning ceremonies, controlling preachers and clerics, preventing the presence of Europeans in mourning ceremonies, issuing announcements and notifications, and verifying the credentials of eulogy readers by the police force, the government managed to partially enforce restrictions on the ceremonies of Imam Ḥusayn (AS); however, it could not completely prevent their observance.

**Conclusions:** The holding of mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) during the Pahlavi era occurred with two distinct approaches. Initially, Reza Shah allowed such ceremonies to gain public favor, but after coming to power, he began to impose prohibitions and restrictions. This trend continued until Mohammad Reza Shah came to power. Mourning ceremonies were gradually restricted by the government, and this was part of a broader effort to modernize and secularize the country. The prohibition of mourning ceremonies was seen as a way to reduce the influence of religious practices and clergy in public life.

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## **Introduction**

The mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) were considered a fundamental religious manifestation, and the holding of religious ceremonies, including the important Shia rituals and symbols, was a starting point through which Iranian Shia rulers established the foundation of their rule by promoting and propagating the religion. This tradition continued throughout successive historical periods until it underwent a transformation during the reign of Reza Shah Pahlavi.

Throughout this period, the holding of mourning ceremonies and recitations of elegies continued, albeit to varying degrees, in most Iranian cities. However, they gradually became static due to government-imposed restrictions. This policy began in larger cities such as Tehran, Isfahan, Khorasan, and others, gradually extending to villages and remote areas. Mourning ceremonies were never completely halted, and until their complete prohibition under Reza Shah Pahlavi, the tradition of mourning and recitation of elegies remained widespread among the people, even more so in towns and cities than in Tehran. Therefore, understanding and re-examining the Pahlavi government's policies regarding the holding of mourning ceremonies and recitations of elegies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) (1925-1978 AD/1304-1357 AH) within the timeframe of Muharram and Safar, their popular base (urban and rural), and in the traditional and religious city of Isfahan, is of great importance. Unpublished documents in the archives of the National Archives and Library can be instrumental in analyzing this topic.

Regarding the research background, it should be added that no independent research has been conducted on the Pahlavi government's religious policies regarding the holding of mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn in Isfahan based on documents. Although numerous studies have been written on religious ceremonies during the Pahlavi era, none have examined mourning ceremonies in Isfahan during the Pahlavi period based on documents. The time frame of this research is limited to 1330-1357 AH, and the geographical scope is limited to the city of Isfahan, to allow for a deeper and more accurate analysis by focusing on a single city. In addition, the surviving archival documents from Isfahan regarding the holding of mourning ceremonies and the Pahlavi government's policies are more abundant than those from other cities.

### **1. Theoretical Framework**

"Mourning" in the lexicon means patience and perseverance in mourning and signifies grief and affliction. Numerous compounds are derived from the word "Mourning," such as "Days of Mourning": days of mourning, "Mourner" means the state of mourning, "Mourning," "To mourn" means the state of grief resulting from an unfortunate event or the loss or failure to obtain something valuable to the person (Dehkhoda, 1974 AD/1354 SH: under "Mourning"). Mourning for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) and his companions, expressing love for them, and showing sympathy for their suffering, are considered among the most important manifestations of honoring religious rituals and a sign of piety (Mohammadi Rey Shahri, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 11). This mourning is performed in various forms, including: Ta'zieh (passion plays), burning of tents, recitation of elegies, and recitation of lamentations, chanting of elegies, chest-beating, and chain-swinging (Mohaddethi, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 256). In this research, "Mourning" refers to the description of how the mourning of Imam Ḥusayn (AS) is conducted and observed.

### **2. The History of the Mourning Ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) until the Rise of Pahlavi I**

The practice of religious mourning ceremonies and Rouzeh-khwani as religious rites of Iranians began in the Buyid era. In subsequent periods, despite the rise of Sunni governments, Shia mourning ceremonies were held, albeit with limitations. With the official declaration of Twelver Shia Islam during the Safavid era, the rulers considered themselves obligated to establish and promote the school of Ahl al-Bayt and spread the Shia faith (Homayouni, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 48). The style of mourning in the Safavid era was simple; however, in the Qajar era, particularly during the Nasser al-Din Shah's reign, mourning gained a special prominence and splendor. The grandeur of the mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) in the Qajar era was characterized by a variety of forms and styles, and Ta'zieh, Shabih-khani (dramatic reenactments), Rouzeh-khwani, and mourning processions were held with great fervor and magnificence.

In the Qajar era, mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) were publicly held in the capital, Tehran, and other cities and villages, and were considered a kind of religious obligation (Najmi, 1977 AD/1356 SH: 348). The erection of Alam (religious banners) and

Kutal, the setting up of tents, and the fulfillment of individual and collective vows were among the actions of the people. Mourning was not limited to a specific class or group of people but was held publicly, with wealthy individuals bearing the expenses of the ceremonies in the main Ḥusayniyas (religious centers) and Tekiyehs (religious buildings) of the city. The general public, through their participation, demonstrated their devotion and sincerity to Imam Ḥusayn (AS). John Wishard, who visited Tabriz during the Constitutional Revolution, adds in this regard: "Muharram is the month of mourning, and almost all classes participate in it, performing ceremonies in commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn. All people, from the Shah to the beggar, do not merely wear a simple band on their collar or hat, but wear black hats."

Those who are able, regardless of the heat, dress entirely in black, even children who chant elegies for Ḥusayn and Hassan in the streets often wear dark clothing. Small black flags on the doors of houses serve as an invitation to passersby to participate in religious ceremonies and prayers held in those houses for the public (Wishard, 1984 AD/1363 SH: 163-162).

The variety of mourning ceremonies during the Qajar era was extensive, including events such as Ta'zieh (passion plays), Rouzeh-khani (recitation of elegies), Chehel eanbar (forty pulpits), Qameh-zani (self-flagellation), and others. Women's presence in the commemorations of Muharram was significant. In this regard, Mahdi Gholi Khan Hedayat writes: "In the government Tekiyeh, the area around the platform was filled with women; nearly six thousand, the men could not find a way in due to the large number of women." (Hedayat, 1964 AD/1344 SH: 88) From a quantitative perspective, mourning ceremonies were held with a massive public turnout, the most prominent and elaborate of which in Tehran was at the mosque of Haj Sheikh Abdolhossein, where the attendees numbered over ten thousand men and women (Mostafavi, 1982 AD/1361 SH: 1, 414; Delrish, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 72). In terms of timing, mourning was limited to Muharram before the Safavid era; however, during the Qajar period, it gained more popularity, and in many neighborhoods of Tehran and other cities, people observed Rouzeh-khani for at least 60 days during Muharram and Safar (Mostofi, 1944 AD/1324 SH: 286-276; Polak: 236).

Flandin, a renowned traveler of the Qajar period who witnessed the mourning of Imam Ḥusayn (AS) in Tehran, reports on the performance of Ta'ziyeh in mosques, Tekiyehs, public thoroughfares, and the large palaces of Tehran, adding: "During the mourning period, some of



the saints in the city would go out and express from the depths of their being the virtues of Ḥusayn and Ali (AS). Some would strike iron chains on their bare chests, injuring themselves.

Others, barefoot and bloodied, with blackened faces, would speak of Ḥusayn (AS) in the streets and claim they would endure thirst and heat." (Flandin, 1976 AD/1356 SH: 118)

Japanese Masaharu and Charles James Wills, who visited Isfahan during the Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar era, described the city's mourning rituals, noting the widespread public participation and the closure of shops and markets out of respect (Masaharu, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 137; Wills, 1987 AD/1366 SH: 16). Wills adds: "Besides numerous lamentation gatherings, some provincial governors, out of respect and to strengthen the performance of Ta'ziyeh and mourning for the martyrs, spent large sums of their own money and provided very good Ta'ziyeh performances." (Wills, 1987 AD/1366 SH: 265)

### **3. Mourning Ceremonies during the Pahlavi Era (1304-1320 AH)**

With the rise of the Pahlavi I government (1304-1320 AH), changes occurred in the interaction between the government and religion, particularly regarding lamentation gatherings and mourning ceremonies. However, in the early years, these ceremonies continued. Mostofi notes that at the beginning of Muharram 1300 AH, "Reza Khan ordered a large tent to be erected in the Cossack barracks during the ten days of Muharram, and a detailed and magnificent lamentation gathering was held. Neighborhood groups renewed the old custom of going to the Cossack barracks. They started from the beginning of the ten days and every day a large number came to the Cossack barracks and beat their chests. Meanwhile, Reza Khan and the army officers, like the host of the gathering, entertained the mourners. The level of participation was such that all classes of people attended this lamentation gathering." (Mostofi, 1944 AD/1324 SH: 3, 461) Hasan Ezam Qodsi, a prominent figure during Reza Khan's reign, wrote in his memoirs: "Reza Khan participated in the lamentation gatherings of the guilds at night. In these gatherings, some preachers and lamentation readers praised him from the pulpit and prayed for him. On 'Āshūrā Day, Reza Khan Mirpanj led the Cossack group, with a delegation of officers in front and individuals, flags, and standards in a specific order and formation, from the Cossack barracks, moving from Topkhaneh Square, along Naser al-Din Shah Street to the bazaar. While Reza Khan (Sardar Sepah) entered the market with his collar open, straw on his head, and most of his

entourage with flowers on their heads and barefooted." (Ezam Qodsi, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 692-693)

Reza Khan's presence at mourning ceremonies and his demonstrated approval of religious rituals show that in his early days in power, he feigned religious piety to gain the support of the people and the clergy, who played a significant role in Iranian society. However, their relationship gradually deteriorated, and ultimately, his actions removed the clergy from power. Once the foundations of Reza Shah's rule were solidified and he no longer needed the support of the clergy and the masses, his behavior changed. Before ascending to the throne, Reza Shah was committed to upholding the dignity of Islam and the clergy, but he believed that the religious scholars lacked the scientific and practical tools to address the challenges of the modern era. Therefore, by proposing the separation of religion and politics, he sought to reduce the social influence of the clergy, which inevitably entailed political power (Heyro, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 47-48).

From 1306 AH, changes were observed in Reza Shah's religious behavior. He was no longer as committed to religious norms as before and, in practice, put pressure on the religious community, namely the clergy. The assassination and exile of Ayatollah Madres, the beating of Ayatollah Bafghi, the diminishing role of the clergy in the judiciary, the replacement of a large portion of Sharia law with French, Italian, and other legal codes, the unveiling of women (Keshf-e Hijab), and the suppression of religious ceremonies such as mourning rituals are examples of this (Fallahzadeh, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 157-158).

Reza Shah's first action was to restrict religious ceremonies, especially the mourning rituals for Imam Ḥusayn (AS). To this end, he first moved the Qazakhaneh mourning hall to the Tekieh-e Dowlat and reduced the splendor, grandeur, and duration of the ceremonies. On the ninth of Muharram 1310 AH (Solar Hijri), while many ceremonies such as chain-swinging, stone-throwing, and processions were banned, he attended the Tekieh-e Dowlat, where a simple mourning ceremony was held. In the following year, to further restrict Muharram mourning ceremonies, Reza Khan apparently did not participate in the mourning ceremonies, and only a brief mourning ceremony was held in the municipality (Baldiyeh). To diminish the soldiers' love and devotion to Imam Ḥusayn (AS), elaborate military parades, large musical bands, and much fanfare were organized to divert their attention to the Shah (Basiratmanesh, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 139).

Opposition to the mourning ceremonies of Imam Ḥusayn (AS) reached the point where, instead of mourning processions, celebratory carnivals were organized during Muharram. Various guilds were compelled to participate, each forming its own contingent. By the late reign of Reza Shah, these carnivals coincided with ‘Āshūrā night, with dancing troupes, music, and singing filling the streets with revelry and dance (Maki, 1982 AD/1361 SH: 4, 19). Marit Hacks corroborates this, stating that in 1311 AH/1933 AD, the Pahlavi government significantly altered ‘Āshūrā observances. She writes: "This year, to divert the soldiers’ affection from Imam Ḥusayn (AS), they organized special parades, large musical bands, and a great deal of noise." (Hacks, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 192)

These restrictions were ostensibly part of a policy promoting "Modern Lifestyles," aiming to distance the people from the commemoration of Imam Ḥusayn. Consequently, propaganda promoted the idea that the culture of mourning should be forgotten. Opponents of traditional mourning practices, under the pretext that the philosophy of mourning and, particularly, the uprising of Imam Ḥusayn (AS) were unclear to the people, or that preachers disseminated inaccurate news and narrations from the pulpit, criticized the mourning traditions. Instead of striving to eliminate superfluous elements, they opposed mourning ceremonies altogether (Basiratmanesh, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 141). Gradually, restrictions intensified after 1310 AH, and mourning processions faced strong government opposition. Marit Hacks’ report emphasizes this: "In most cities, the movement of processions was restricted to specific areas, such as marketplaces and squares with several sides closed off, and the religious were forced to move around them. The governorate believed that confining the processions to relatively deserted areas would diminish the grandeur of the martyrs." (Hacks, 1989 AD/1368 SH: 191)

Restrictions on mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) began in large cities and gradually spread to smaller ones. Reports from European travelers during Reza Shah’s reign in Isfahan emphasize the limitations imposed on mourning ceremonies. According to Richards’ report from Isfahan in 1309 AH, restrictions had begun, and mourning ceremonies were held in specific locations and areas.

Richards, citing the public's strong belief in mourning rituals, considered the government's chances of success in restricting these rituals to be low (Richards, 1963 AD/1343 SH: 29). A report by Hunt, referring to Muharram in Isfahan, states: "Every year on this day, Isfahan would become completely deserted; not a single taxi could be seen in the streets. The radio did not broadcast any music, and television programs were solely dedicated to news. No



cinemas were operating, and black flags were displayed above all the shops, which were completely closed" (Hunt, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 43). In another report, Gabriel refers to the village of *'Arūsān* (in Khor and Biabanak), noting the low-key nature of the Muharram mourning ceremonies in 1333/1312 AH: "This day, which usually unfolded with pomp, splendor, and noise, passed very quietly in little *'Arūsān*." (Gabriel, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 62)

Documents and reports indicate that in the early years of Reza Shah's reign, there were no restrictions or prohibitions in Isfahan, and the people of Isfahan observed mourning rituals during the first ten days of Muharram (SAKMA: 3930/293/97). Indeed, the Ministry of the Interior issued an order to the police department permitting the holding of mourning ceremonies on the nights of Muharram in 1302 AH (SAKMA: 82087/293). In this regard, mourning and Rawzah gatherings were mostly held peacefully in Isfahan homes during the first ten days of Muharram (SAKMA: 60211/310). After a time, following Reza Shah's trip to Turkey on June 3, 1934, fundamental consequences arose in cultural matters, particularly regarding mourning rituals. During this period, while following the transformations in Turkey under Atatürk, Reza Shah attempted to emulate those changes in the expansion and establishment of a republic (Rahmanian, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 138). Observing Turkey's economic and social progress, he remarked: "I never imagined that the Turks had progressed so much and advanced so far in adopting European civilization; now I see that we are far behind and must strive with all our might for the country's progress, especially in the liberation of women." (Maki, 1982 AD/1361 SH: 6, 157; Alamuti, 1982 AD/1361 SH: 175)

Inspired by Atatürk's secularization policies, Reza Shah sought to counter religion with nationalism, aiming to diminish the influence of religion in social and political spheres. To this end, he established state schools to compete with religious schools, removed the clergy from official registration offices, implemented European-style laws, prohibited visas for Hajj and other religious pilgrimages, confiscated religious endowments (Waqf), and restricted religious mourning ceremonies (Agheli, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 51; Gholfi, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 132). However, Reza Shah's forceful policies, implemented without considering the context differing from Turkey, only resulted in popular resistance and confrontation with the authorities. Gradually, during the middle years of Reza Shah's reign, increasing restrictions led to the suppression of mourning ceremonies and lamentations. Orders were issued to prevent Muharram and Safar mourning ceremonies (SAKMA: 343/291), and the arrest of

mourners and passion play performers in Isfahan in 1316 AH (solar Hijri calendar) became common practice, spreading throughout the country (SAKMA: 1860/291).

The clergy and religious scholars of Isfahan strongly opposed the restrictions and prohibitions on mourning for Imam Ḥusayn, protesting the prevention of mourning ceremonies (SAKMA: 18364/310). Consequently, they began holding these ceremonies in private homes. For example, Ayatollah Akhund Mulla Mohammad Javad Safi of Golpayegan sent a protest telegram regarding the police preventing Muharram mourning in mosques, religious lodges (Tekyeh), and public places. Ultimately, the government permitted the ceremonies to be held in private homes (SAKMA: 16682/310) (cf. Appendix 1). Reza Shah's order inadvertently led to the rise of a new form of mourning: Home-based mourning ceremonies. During this period, people maintained the spirit of mourning for Imam Ḥusayn by holding weekly or monthly mourning gatherings in their homes.

During the latter half of Reza Shah's reign, mourning ceremonies during Muharram and Safar were banned in many cities of Isfahan, including: Golpayegan (SAKMA: 17570/293/97), Chamgerdan-e-Riz (Lengan) (SAKMA: 2327/293/97), Shah Reza (SAKMA: 21399/293/97; 83431/293), Lengan (SAKMA: 1742/291), Koushk Sadeh village (SAKMA: 732/339/97; 49/339/97), and Nain (SAKMA: 10745/293/97). The restriction and prohibition of mourning for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) during Reza Shah's rule was a means of controlling public behavior and promoting a specific view of modern Iranian society. Generally, news of the restrictions and prohibitions on mourning ceremonies was met with strong resistance from the people of Isfahan, but in subsequent years, this resistance was gradually controlled and suppressed by the government to a significant degree, to the point where, during this period, people participated in mourning ceremonies while accepting the government's conditions and laws.

#### **4. Pahlavi II's Policies Regarding the Mourning Ceremonies of Imam Ḥusayn (1950-1977 AD/1330-1357 SH)**

During the Pahlavi II era, from the 1950s onward, mourning ceremonies were held officially and openly, but according to specific laws and regulations, and in a limited manner. Avery points to the importance of holding mourning ceremonies, writing: "Although Reza Shah and his son Mohammad Reza Shah attempted to implement a policy of secularizing the country, the 'Āshūrā ceremonies remained important days on the Iranian calendar." (Avery, 1988 AD/1367 SH: 139)

Another report by the Japanese researcher Ono, refer to the religious restrictions of the Pahlavi government after 1342 SH, states that "They were extremely careful about the situation and kept the Muharram mourning ceremonies very limited. For more than ten years, I witnessed how (the government) limited and controlled the Muharram mourning ceremonies in various ways. This kind of suppression, which restricted ceremonies in which most people participated, was excessive." (Ono, 2017 AD/1396 SH: 103-104) Reports from European travelers about mourning ceremonies during the Pahlavi era (1925-1979 AD/1304-1357 SH) emphasize the restrictions and prohibitions, which ultimately led to more serious measures. The holding of these ceremonies within the framework of laws and regulations determined by the government demonstrates the importance of holding mourning ceremonies and the significance of this event.

Indeed, it can be acknowledged that the commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn (AS) had long been ingrained in the Shiite culture of the people, and despite limitations, it gained even greater popularity.

#### **4.1. Supervision of Mourning Ceremonies**

Supervision of the mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) and the prevention of religious matters from being exploited for political incitement were among the first actions of the Pahlavi government regarding the Muharram mourning ceremonies in 1330 SH (SAKMA: 6668/293/97). In this regard, the government issued instructions on how to conduct the mourning ceremonies, especially for mourning processions on the days of *Tāsū'ā* and *'Āshūrā* (SAKMA: 322/364/97; 2687/293/97). Governmental documents and reports emphasized the maintenance of order and security during Muharram and Safar in Isfahan (SAKMA: 2583/291). For example, the report of the Isfahan police chief on the necessity of vigilance states: "During the first ten days of Muharram, the people of Isfahan engaged in mourning in their homes, Takayas (religious houses), and mosques, and on the nights and days of *Tāsū'ā* and *'Āshūrā*, organized groups of chest-beaters formed for mourning, moving through the relevant sections with complete order. With the prior preparations and the vigilance of the police officers, no untoward incident occurred, and order was maintained." (SAKMA: 3930/293/97) In this context, the government, in cooperation with the police, instructed all its officers to be fully prepared to deal with any possible incident on *Tāsū'ā* and *'Āshūrā* to prevent clashes and unrest. The action, follow-up, and emphasis on vigilance, maintaining

order, and security in mourning ceremonies were consistently implemented in most of Isfahan's counties. Examples include Shah Reza (SAKMA: 923/364/97), Najafabad (SAKMA: 79948/293), Golpayegan (SAKMA: 17304/293/97), Khansar (SAKMA: 33139/293/97), and Sade (Khomeini Shahr) (SAKMA: 154/339/97). The maintenance of order and security through supervision of mourning ceremonies was so widespread and effective that officers and village headmen who were unwilling to cooperate with the government were sometimes forced to do so in response to the government's needs, and they were careful to avoid direct or indirect anti-government propaganda.

The Pahlavi government, to exert stricter control and surveillance over religious ceremonies, mandated the cooperation of village headmen (Kadkhoda) and gendarmes throughout the country. The aim was to control and monitor even the most remote towns and villages. To this end, the Isfahan police department annually identified all mosques and religious gatherings (Hey'at) to oversee and maintain order during mourning ceremonies, publishing a register of mourning gatherings to ensure the cooperation of village headmen and gendarmes (SAKMA: 526/364/97). The Isfahan police department issued a confidential circular stating: "During Muharram, it is imperative to reiterate – and this has been sufficiently instructed before – that utmost care must be taken to maintain public order and prevent any actions contrary to central directives and regulations, ensuring that no untoward incident occurs." A copy of this letter was sent to the village headmen of all Isfahan counties, including: the headmen of Mobarakeh, Ghahderijan Langan, Bagh Baderan, Gazbarkhar, Dowlatabad Barkhar, Khorasgan, Rinan, and the municipality of Sade (SAKMA: 1942/291). Village headmen, attending mourning and mourning recitation ceremonies, were obligated to submit reports to the Isfahan police department (SAKMA: 401/364/97). Simultaneously, a police officer was present in mosques and homes during mourning recitations, reporting the proceedings and sermons to the police department (Sadr, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 308). Any negligence or shortcomings by village headmen and officers in controlling mourning recitations and ceremonies were punished by the police department (SAKMA: 469/364/97). Despite this, numerous reports indicate that these directives did not significantly alter the conduct of mourning ceremonies. The report of the village headman of Mobarakeh, Isfahan, supports this; he wrote in part: "By giving the necessary instructions to the headmen of the area of responsibility and taking the necessary precautions in this village, no incident occurred. Mourning recitations were held regularly in all villages and homes." (SAKMA:

2000/291) (cf. Appendix 3). Reports filed by village headmen and police officers regarding strict control and surveillance led the Pahlavi government to exert even greater pressure on the conduct of mourning ceremonies.

This demonstrates complete infiltration of mourning processions and locations, enabling rapid information gathering and reporting to the police.

#### **4.2. The Necessity of Controlling and Monitoring Preachers and Clerics**

The popularity and fame of preachers and clerics in the mourning ceremonies of Imam Ḥusayn, due to their elegies and lamentations, gave them power and popular support. During mourning periods, especially on *Tāsū‘ā* and *‘Āshūrā*, they recounted the events of Karbala to the people. However, some preachers also addressed contemporary political and social issues, using the pulpit to criticize the government and incite and mobilize the people for political action (Mazaheri, 2022 AD/1402 AH: 510). Fear of the power and influence of the clergy during this period led to stricter control and surveillance of preachers and clerics during mourning ceremonies (Muharram), with clerics (preachers) often required to adhere to specific guidelines (SAKMA: 632/364/97). The aim of this control mechanism was to maintain social order and political stability by controlling and monitoring clerics (preachers) as a tool for ideological control. Clerics' and preachers' speeches, especially in mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn, provided the best opportunity to criticize the Pahlavi regime. Therefore, to prevent speeches against government policies and contemporary social issues (inflammatory speeches), clerics in Isfahan were required to sign pledges in 1345 SH (SAKMA: 372/364/97; 2687/293/97). In addition, the police forced those organizing mourning ceremonies and lamentation gatherings during Muharram to obtain permits and sign pledges (SAKMA: 965/364/97). Meanwhile, some clerics in Isfahan were permitted to perform Ta'ziyeh (passion plays) and deliver laments (SAKMA: 2563/291), but preachers and clerics whose backgrounds were not previously approved and who were banned from preaching had their names announced annually by the Isfahan police during Muharram and Safar. This strict government and police approach to mourning ceremonies continued until the end of the 1940s, with the gendarmerie adding to the list of banned preachers each year. A list of banned preachers and clerics during Muharram and Safar in Isfahan and other cities is available in archival documents (SAKMA: 814/364/97; 402/364/97; 3685/291; 406/364/97; 912/364/97).



The Pahlavi government aimed to centralize power and limit the influence of traditional religious authorities, often leading to tensions with religious communities. Controlling and monitoring the clergy (preachers) was so important to the Pahlavi government that it provoked various reactions among the general public. In fact, the government's goal was to reduce their social interaction with society and the people, and ultimately diminish their power and influence.

#### **4.3. Preventing the Presence of Europeans at Mourning Ceremonies**

The presence of Europeans during Muharram, especially on *Tāsū'ā* and *'Āshūrā*, was a major concern for Iranians. Some travel accounts from the Qajar and Pahlavi periods show that the presence of Europeans, due to their Christianity, was sometimes unobstructed, and Iranians treated them with tolerance. Flandin, who himself observed mourning ceremonies, writes in his travelogue: "During the mourning period, foreigners are respected." (Flandin, 1976 AD/1356 SH: 118) However, Wishard notes that foreign Christians, fearing potential attacks by Muslims during Muharram, preferred not to be in public places (Wishard, 1984 AD/1363 SH: 168). Benjamin explains this by stating that Iranians believe that the sacred scenes of Ta'ziyeh should not be witnessed by the impure eyes of a foreigner or someone outside the faith, and generally advises foreigners not to watch Ta'ziyeh at all; because the religious sentiments of the people are so aroused that they cannot tolerate a foreigner beside them (Benjamin, 1984 AD/1363 SH: 275). Therefore, it can be said that the reason for this might be some interactions and reactions with travelers who were religious minorities in some religious ceremonies, but this cannot be generalized to all travelers, as some travelers attended mourning ceremonies without hindrance.

During the second Pahlavi era, the presence of Europeans at mourning ceremonies was prevented. Richards, in his travelogue, refers to the dangers of "The presence of Westerners" at religious ceremonies in Iran and writes that "It is only in recent years that British subjects have been free to come and go in the streets during the Muharram ceremonies."

While the British consul previously requested that they remain in their homes and gardens during these days, Richards similarly advised Europeans residing in Iran to avoid mourning ceremonies. He further wrote that, "With all the rapid transformations currently underway in Iran, for the masses whose faith remains unshaken, the Muharram ceremonies are not merely an old tradition but a deeply religious practice, and they cannot tolerate the interference or

criticism of non-Muslims." (Richards, 1963 AD/1343 SH: 120) Rosen, emphasizing the Europeans' absence from mourning ceremonies, suggested: "You must promise that tomorrow, your lips will never part, nor will you smile. If the crowd feels insulted, you will never succeed in escaping their wrath or their clutches. Furthermore, our journey to this region will cause strained relations and misunderstandings between foreigners and Iranians. Never use a camera; the production and dissemination of religious ceremonies is an unforgivable crime." (Rosen, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 305) The sensitivity surrounding the presence of Europeans during these days continued until 1357 SH. This is well illustrated in the reports of travelers like Hunt in the final years of the Pahlavi regime, who noted that "I knew that foreigners were always advised to avoid such ceremonies, the reason being the unpleasantness of observing foreigners at such fervent religious ceremonies." (Hunt, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 43) A noteworthy point in this regard is that the meticulous recording of observations, hearsay, and Iranian behavior regarding the presence of Europeans during the Muharram mourning period in their travelogues demonstrates the people's reluctance to have Europeans present at the mourning ceremonies.

Government documents and reports show that serious measures were taken to prevent the presence of Europeans on the days of *Tāsū'ā* and *'Āshūrā* in Isfahan. The Isfahan police issued orders prohibiting and preventing the entry of foreign nationals into mourning processions (SAKMA: 3663/293/97; 6281/293/97). Photographing mourning ceremonies was another matter for which Europeans were prohibited (SAKMA: 558/293/97; 5165/293/97).

In this regard, while issuing a warning and emphasizing, the head of the Isfahan Tourist Organization, Cyrus Esfandiary, in 1345 AH (1966 AD), prohibited photography by Europeans, stating that: "Considering that during mourning periods, especially on *Tāsū'ā* and *'Āshūrā*, foreign tourists visiting Isfahan may wish to visit mosques, old neighborhoods, and mourning ceremonies, and may even wish to take photographs and videos, and this may hurt the feelings of mourners, and although, according to the order of the Isfahan Provincial Police Department, this organization has issued the necessary instructions to all travel and tourist agencies and hotels where foreign tourists usually stay, to strongly prevent guiding tourists, especially female tourists, to the aforementioned places, nevertheless, it is requested that your esteemed office also cooperate in this matter and strictly prohibit foreign tourists from visiting and photographing the aforementioned places." (SAKMA: 486/264/97) (cf. Appendix 5) The head of the Isfahan Provincial Police Department, Brigadier General Norouzi, emphasized

that "To avoid any inappropriate encounters, order that foreigners refrain from entering mosques, Takayas, holy places, and religious sites in the city for sightseeing, and also from photographing mourning ceremonies and processions." (SAKMA: 478/264/97) Preventing the entry of Europeans and foreigners into religious places and prohibiting filming of religious ceremonies aroused the religious and devout feelings of the people, which was carefully monitored and controlled in Isfahan.

#### **4.4. Publication of Advertisements and Announcements**

The police department, while announcing its readiness to prevent riots, obstacles, and problems, obliged the heads of mourning ceremonies and the owners of the venues to obtain permission to hold mourning ceremonies in Muharram. Otherwise, if mourning ceremonies were held secretly and clandestinely in some houses, the homeowners would be prosecuted and imprisoned. In the 1960s (1340s AH), the head of the national police department issued a notice to the head of the Isfahan police department (Brigadier General Porto):

With the arrival of Muharram, particularly the days of *Tāsū‘ā* and *‘Āshūrā*, when the esteemed residents of Isfahan are engaged in mourning ceremonies, it is requested that you cooperate wholeheartedly with your police colleagues, who bear a heavy responsibility for maintaining order and peace. Efforts should be made to conduct the mourning ceremonies in a manner befitting the religion and the dignity of the country. Therefore, refrain from activities such as self-flagellation (Qameh zani), reenactments, self-imprisonment, displaying effigies, using Kotal (a type of mourning implement), constructing a symbolic marriage bed (Hejleh), displaying a symbolic two-winged steed (Dhū al-Janāh), displaying offerings (Khancheh), and other practices lacking religious sanction. Observe the following points: 1) All liquor stores and cafes/restaurants will be closed from 24:00 on the 8th of Muharram until 18:00 on the 12th of Muharram; 2) All cinemas and theaters will be closed from 24:00 on the 8th until 18:00 on the 12th of Muharram; 3) From 24:00 on the 8th of Muharram until 18:00 on the 12th of Muharram, the sound of music should not be heard in public places. 4. For the comfort and well-being of the esteemed residents of Isfahan, the installation of loudspeakers outside mosques and religious houses is strictly prohibited. Their use inside mosques and religious houses is contingent upon obtaining prior permission from the gendarmerie, and even then, it will be permitted only until 21:00 (SAKMA: 402/364/97) (cf. Appendix 2). The sensitivity surrounding the enforcement of these regulations was such that this announcement

was sent to all counties of Isfahan to ensure that mourning ceremonies were conducted under closer supervision (SAKMA: 1098/293/97). Following this order, the gendarmerie administration emphasized that the people should cooperate in implementing this order. It is important to note that documents and reports indicate that the people of Isfahan cooperated fully with the gendarmerie (SAKMA: 921/364/97). The points mentioned above demonstrate the Pahlavi government's insistence on and the people's cooperation in observing the laws and regulations governing mourning ceremonies. The government's determination to enforce this law in Isfahan was of particular importance.

#### **4.5. Mandatory Verification of the Backgrounds of Preachers by the Gendarmerie**

The Pahlavi government instructed the gendarmerie that, in order to plan for more precise control of mourning ceremonies, the backgrounds of preachers and those who delivered sermons had to be verified.

Therefore, verifying the backgrounds of religious reciters and obtaining commitments from them was another policy of the Pahlavi government to further restrict mourning ceremonies and recitations (Rawzah) in Isfahan (SAKMA: 543/364/97; 24968/293/97). Statistics on all mourning ceremonies and recitations (Rawzah) were recorded for more precise control and supervision by the Shahr bani (Gendarmerie). Preachers and persons who recited Rawzah in Isfahan were required to give commitments to prevent inflammatory speeches against the Pahlavi government (SAKMA: 509/364/97; 945/364/97; 943/364/97) (cf. Appendix 4). In this regard, Reciting Rawzah was conducted in coordination with the Shahr bani to prevent banned preachers in the counties of Isfahan (SAKMA: 403/364/97). Shah Reza (SAKMA: 544/364/97) and Qomsheh (SAKMA: 956/364/97) were among the counties that held mourning ceremonies after verifying the backgrounds of the Rawzah reciters. Statistics on the backgrounds of Rawzah (SAKMA: 920/364/97) and a list of the Rawzah reciting ceremonies of preachers and the control of Rawza reciting ceremonies in Isfahan (SAKMA: 542/364/97) show that the Pahlavi government closely monitored the backgrounds of Rawzah reciters and required government officials to assist the government with accurate reports and prevent inflammatory speeches by some of them.

## **Conclusion**

The holding of mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) during the Pahlavi era occurred with two distinct approaches. Initially, Reza Shah allowed such ceremonies to gain public favor, but after coming to power, he began to impose prohibitions and restrictions. This trend continued until Mohammad Reza Shah came to power. Mourning ceremonies were gradually restricted by the government, and this was part of a broader effort to modernize and secularize the country. The prohibition of mourning ceremonies was seen as a way to reduce the influence of religious practices and clergy in public life. At this time, the Pahlavi government decided to consider policies for the performance of mourning ceremonies for Imam Ḥusayn (AS) in both cities and other regions, so that they would be carried out according to a plan and with greater control.

This research selected Isfahan province due to the abundance of available documents. Analysis of archival documents reveals that the policies implemented by the Pahlavi government were unsatisfactory due to the forced interaction between the clergy and the government. Therefore, the Pahlavi government, through measures such as monitoring mourning ceremonies, controlling preachers and clerics, preventing European participation in mourning ceremonies, disseminating advertisements and announcements, and requiring police verification of the backgrounds of religious orators, sought to reduce the power and influence of religion in society. The Pahlavi government rigorously pursued religious restrictions, aiming for social control and preventing political discussions that might be initiated by preachers and clerics among the public. However, despite these restrictions and imposed pledges, these measures did not prevent the holding of ceremonies. Through the efforts of the people, Muharram and Safar mourning ceremonies and other mourning rituals continued during the Pahlavi era, albeit in more private and subdued forms. Ultimately, the conflicts surrounding these prohibitions highlighted the tension between modernization efforts and the preservation of traditional values in Iranian society, leading to increased dissatisfaction with the Pahlavi regime.



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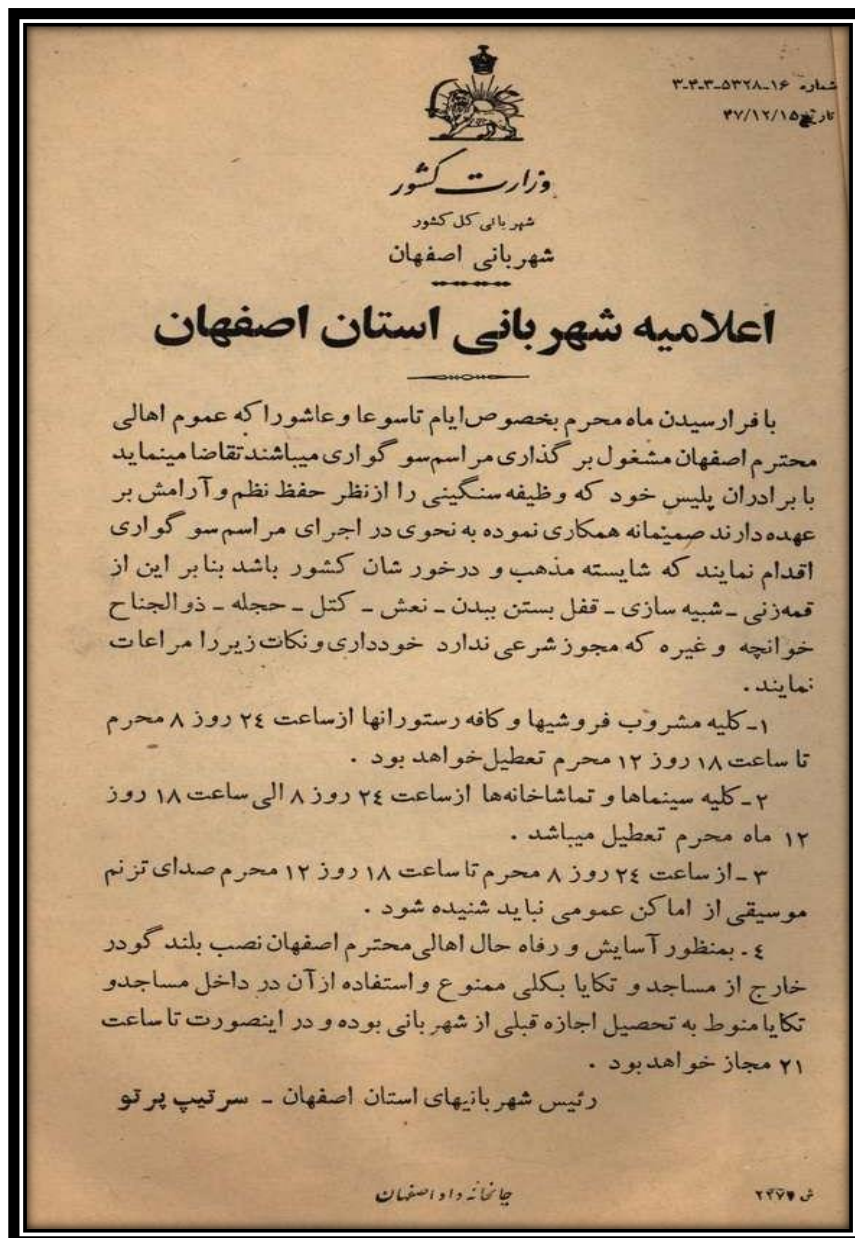
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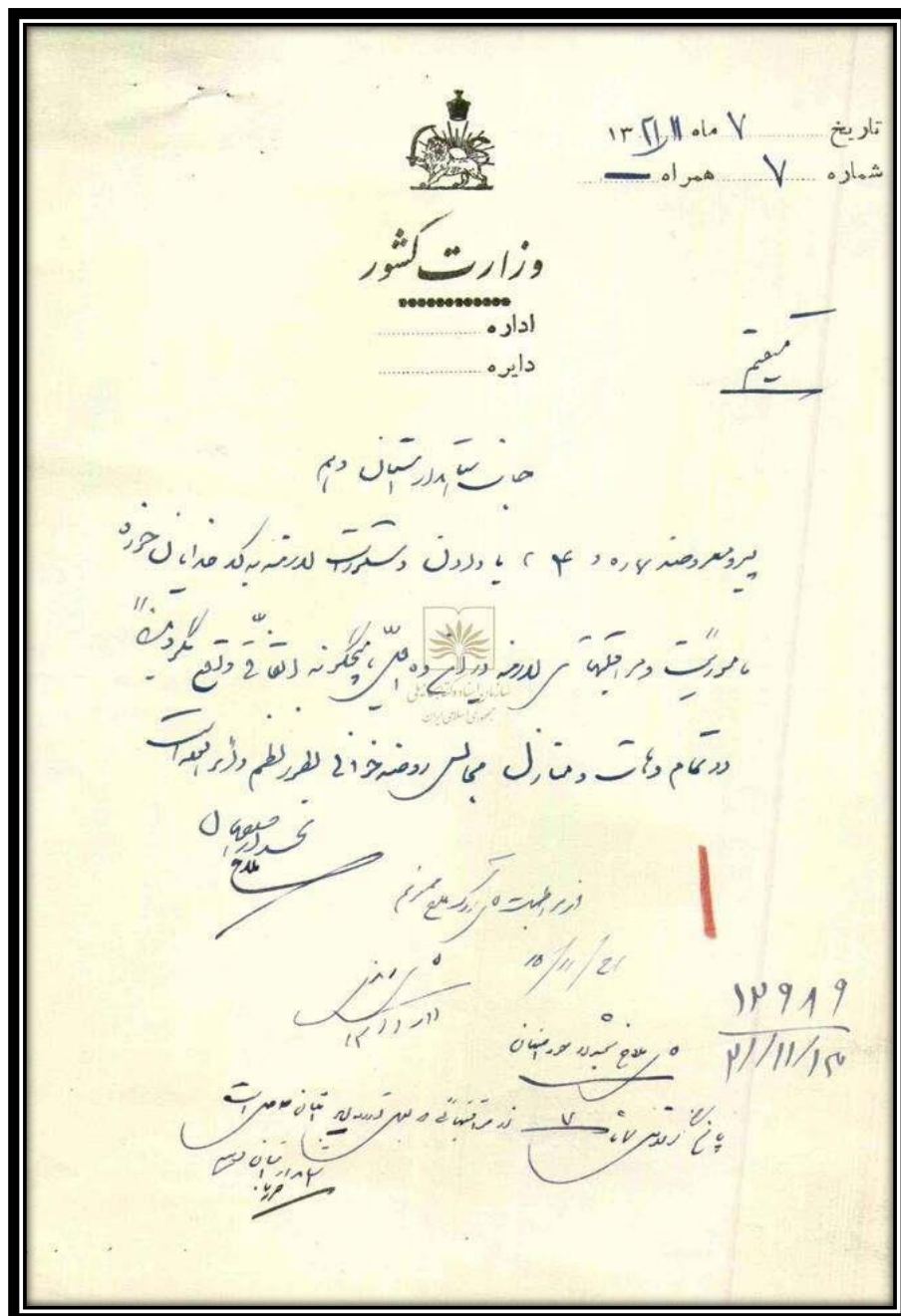


Attachment (2): Isfahan Province Police Department announcement regarding the observance of regulations during Muharram (Tāsū'ā and 'Āshūrā), 1348 AH.



(SAKMA: 97/364/402)

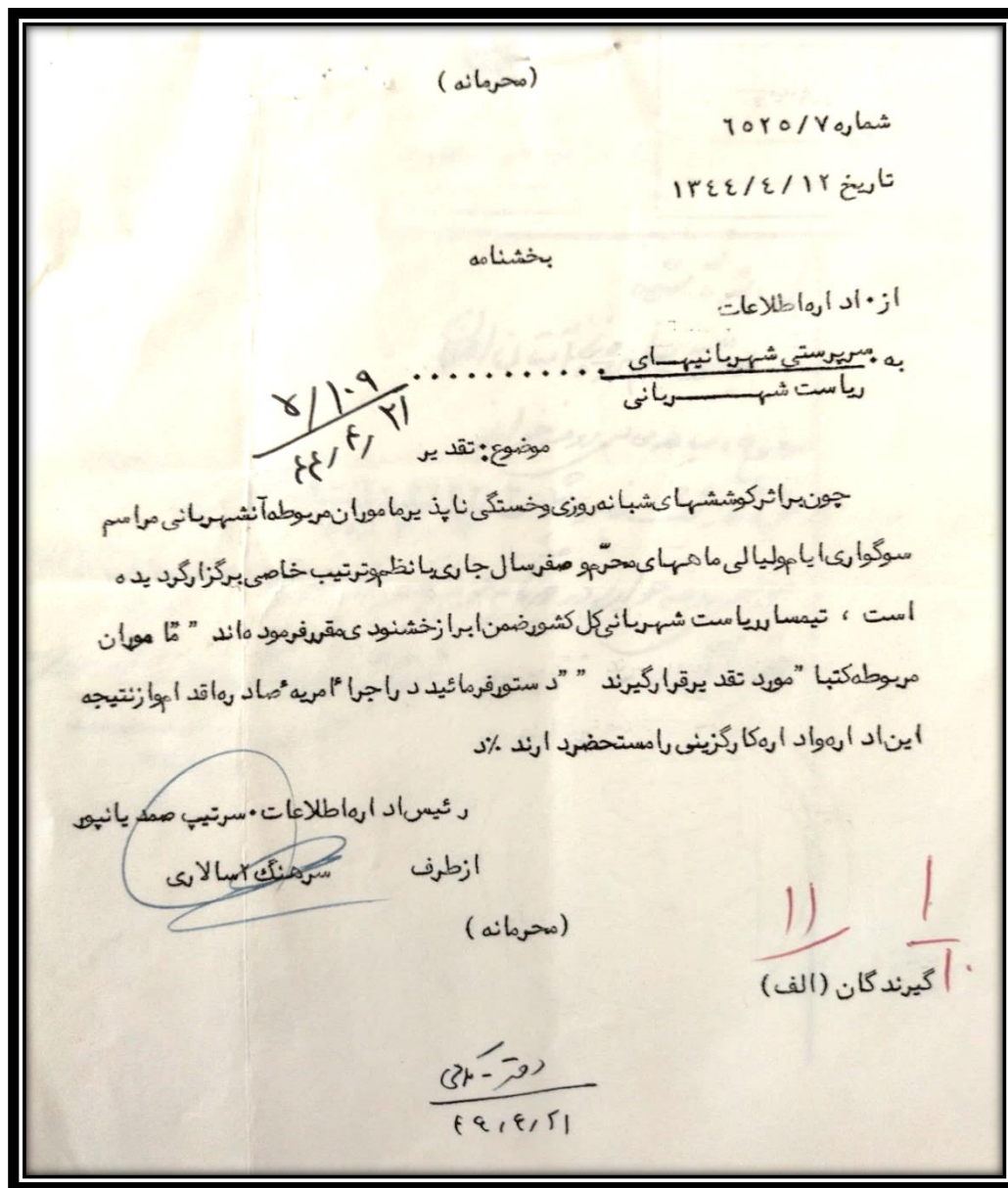
**Attachment (3):** Obligation of village headmen and gendarmerie to control Muharram mourning ceremonies in Mubarak, Isfahan, 1321 AH.



(SAKMA: 291/2000)

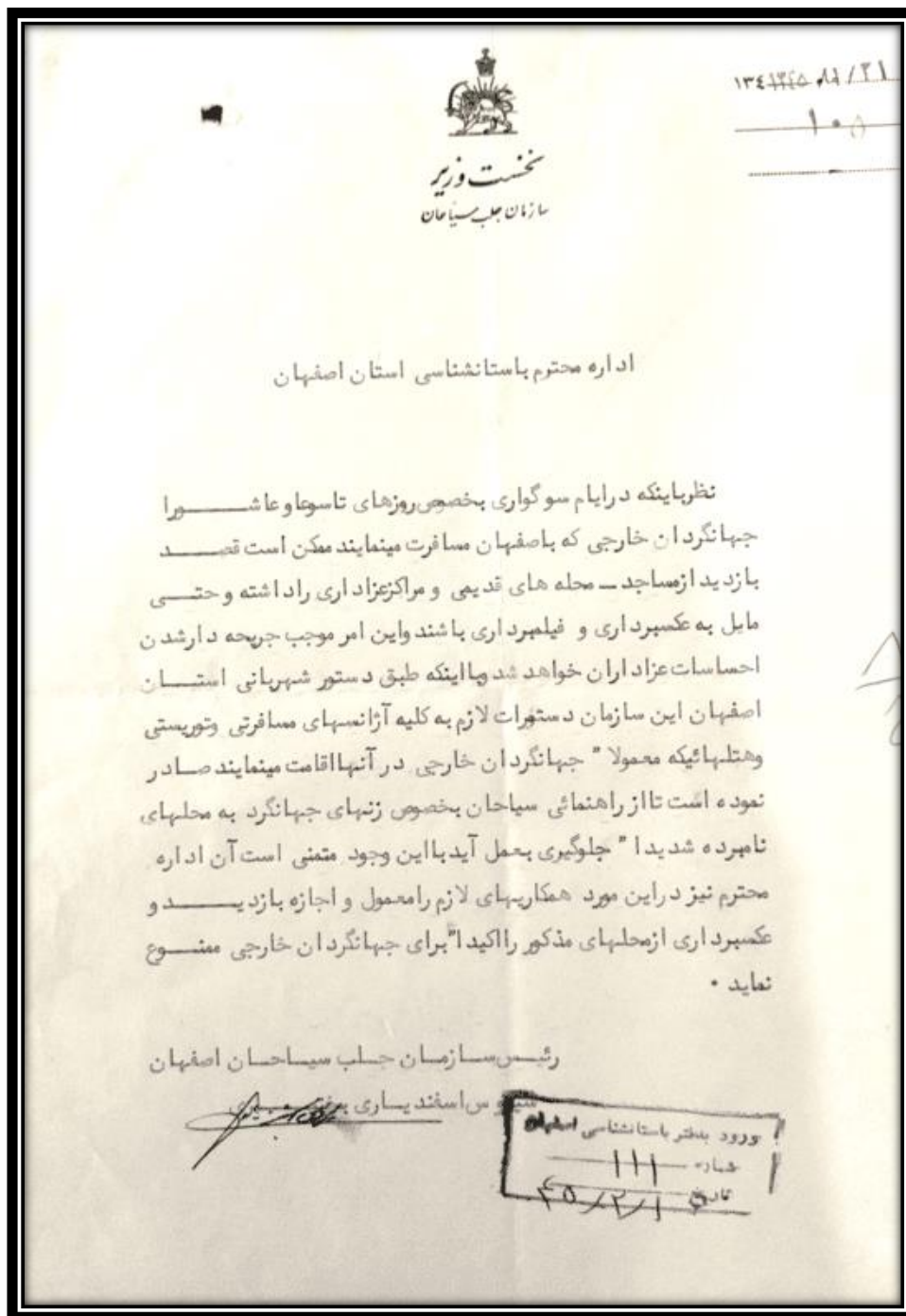


Attachment (4): Appreciation of officers for controlling Muharram and Safar mourning ceremonies in Isfahan, 1344 AH.



(SAKMA: 97/364/943)

Attachment (5): Prevention of European presence in Muharram and Safar mourning ceremonies in Isfahan, 1345 AH.



(SAKMA: 97/264/486)

# A Comparative Study of the Nature of Violence in the French, Russian, and Iranian Revolutions

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This research conducts a comparative study of the nature of violence in three significant contemporary revolutions: the 1789 French Revolution, the 1917 Russian Revolution, and the 1979 Iranian Revolution. These revolutions are recognized as pivotal moments in the political and social history of each country as well as in global history. The aim of this research is to analyze the causes and consequences of violence in these three historical events. The study employs a qualitative method and a descriptive-analytical approach, identifying patterns of violence and the social, economic, and political contexts through an in-depth examination of each revolution. The findings reveal that in the French Revolution, violence was utilized as an effective tool for achieving social and political change, with the synergy among social classes contributing to its intensification. In the Russian Revolution, specific historical conditions, particularly the aftermath of World War I and widespread poverty, led to increased violence and the outbreak of civil war. In contrast, the Iranian Revolution demonstrates a different approach, where protesters sought to achieve social change through non-violent strategies. Ultimately, this research highlights that social, economic, and political factors, especially feelings of deprivation and the ability to mobilize resources, have direct impacts on the nature of violence and revolutionary outcomes, and can contribute to a better understanding of contemporary social transformations.

**Method:** The study was conducted using a qualitative method and a descriptive-analytical approach, and through an in-depth investigation of each revolution, patterns of violence and social, economic and political contexts have been identified.

**Results:** In the French Revolution, violence as an effective tool for social and political changes and synergy between social classes has helped to intensify it. In the Russian Revolution, the consequences of the First World War and widespread poverty have led to an increase in violence and the occurrence of civil war. In the Iranian revolution, protesters tried to achieve social changes by using non-violent strategies.

**Conclusions:** Social, economic and political factors, especially the feeling of deprivation and the ability to mobilize resources, have direct effects on the nature of violence and revolutionary outcomes.

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## **Introduction**

The United Nations, in 2002, defined violence as the physical threat, exertion of power against a person, others, or a group/society, leading to psychological harm, injury, death, or deprivation. Violence is also identified and defined in various types, including political, economic, social, and institutional violence, encompassing military terrorism, quasi-guerrilla conflicts, and armed political conflicts. One of the important issues in the study of revolutions is examining the extent and role of violence in these transformative processes. Revolutions are historical events that utilize violence to achieve goals and demands. By examining many revolutions, including the French, Russian, and Iranian revolutions, it can be seen that such revolutions often have diverse and sometimes contradictory aspects with the existing intellectual and social system. These revolutions have often occurred to achieve specific political and ideological goals and have employed both peaceful approaches and violence. . . .

Revolutions, as fundamental transformations in the political, economic, and social structures of societies, have always been the focus of researchers and experts. Some scholars believe that violence is an integral and even driving force behind revolutions. They argue that revolutions are inherently shaped by the use of force and violence and are impossible without it. Conversely, another group of researchers believe that revolutions can occur peacefully and without the use of violence, and that violence can even lead to the failure of revolutions. Therefore, this article undertakes a comparative study of the nature of violence in three major historical revolutions: The French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, and the Iranian Revolution. The aim of this research is to answer the main question: ‘What are the similarities and differences in the nature of violence in the Iranian, French, and Russian revolutions?’ This article also seeks to provide a comprehensive analytical framework to facilitate a comparative study of the nature of violence in other historical revolutions. To achieve these objectives, the article will use Charles Tilly's resource mobilization theory and Robert Ted Gurr's relative deprivation theory, and a review of the existing literature on the relationship between violence and revolution, to conduct a comparative study of violence in the three aforementioned revolutions. This analysis will be conducted using qualitative methods and based on historical sources and documents. The results of this research can open up new horizons in a better understanding of the relationship between violence and revolutions, as well as better management of revolutionary processes.

### **1. Theoretical Foundations of the Research**

This article is written to conduct a comparative study of the level of violence in the French, Russian, and Iranian revolutions, in order to gain a better understanding of the extent of violence in these revolutions. To achieve this goal, the second-generation framework of revolution theories is used. The first generation of these theories, known as the "Natural History School," was the dominant framework for explaining and comparing revolutions in the 1920s and 1930s. The second generation included general theories of political violence, which were presented in the 1960s and early 1970s by theorists such as Charles Tilly, Robert Gurr, and others. The third generation of revolution theories emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s, focusing on structural factors.

This second generation sought to explain the causes of revolutions within the modernization process across various societies. Therefore, the structure of this article will be based on Charles Tilly's "Resource Mobilization" theory and Ted Robert Gurr's "Relative Deprivation" theory.

Charles Tilly is one of the most important theorists of resource mobilization. Using existing studies and his own research, he presented a comprehensive resource mobilization theory in his book "From Mobilization to Revolution." Tilly argues that the history of revolutions shows a significant growth of political organizations among deprived groups before a revolution occurs. These organizations, whose protests are suppressed by governments, resort to violence as a strategy and tactic to gain political power. Therefore, revolution is a type of organized, conscious, and purposeful political violence by deprived and protesting groups against the system. He emphasizes that dissatisfaction and conflict are natural parts of the political arena, arguing that the likelihood of political violence only exists when dissatisfied parties possess the necessary tools and resources to carry out effective violence; in other words, they have the resources and organization necessary for significant action (Ahmadimanesh et al., 2014 AD/1394 SH: 76-77).

In Tilly's view, revolution involves purposeful, voluntary, and organized political violence by dissatisfied groups. This violence stems from the facilities and organizations at the disposal of the movement, the potential for popular rebellion, the regime's attempts at suppression, and deprivation of power. He considers dissatisfaction and conflict natural components of



political life, but political violence is only possible when dissatisfied parties have the necessary resources to engage in violence (Tilly, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 81-82).

Psychological theories of revolution also view revolutions as the product of transformations in individuals' mental processes. These theories focus on frustration-aggression theory, arguing that if obstacles arise in individuals' pursuit of their goals, the natural result is frustration and dissatisfaction. If the source of deprivation is identified and accessible, aggression becomes a natural means of reducing psychological tension.

One of these theorists is Ted Robert Gurr, who, in his book "Why Men Rebel," presents a detailed discussion of a complex model based on frustration-aggression theory. In this research, the main dependent variable is political violence, which may or may not take the form of a socio-political movement. He answers three main questions in this research:

- 1) What are the potential psychological and social sources of collective violence? 2) What factors influence the degree to which this potential is focused on the political system?
- 3) What social conditions affect the volume, form, and consequences of violence? (Daliri, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 815)

Ted Robert Gurr, by tracing the roots of collective political violence, considers it to encompass all collective attacks within a political community against the political regime and its actors; namely, rival political groups and office holders. He considers relative deprivation the main cause of collective violence, defining it as the difference between people's value expectations and their value capabilities. According to Robert Gurr, political, economic and social deprivation initially leads people towards dissatisfaction, then transforms into political dissatisfaction, and finally culminates in violent action against political actors (Mirzaei et al., 2017 AD/1397 SH: 123).

The feeling of relative deprivation can be an important indicator in analyzing economic well-being. Researchers have shown that feelings of deprivation at the individual level lead to increased anxiety, turmoil, alienation, and social isolation. In contrast, feelings of deprivation at the group and collective levels lead to decreased normative participation and increased political violence in the form of riots, internal conflicts, and the like. Therefore, in analyzing the theory of relative deprivation, attention to the level of analysis (individual or collective) is of particular importance. This helps researchers to better understand how feelings of deprivation affect the political and social behaviors of individuals and groups. Research on relative deprivation shows that social violence and protest behaviors stem from feelings of

injustice and uneven resource distribution, increased inequality between economic and social groups causes marginalized groups to become alienated from society.

This issue will ultimately lead to the expansion of internal conflicts and the outbreak of collective violence (Imam Jomehzadeh et al., 2015 AD/1395 SH: 30).

## 2. Research Background

Scattered research has addressed the issue of psychological and political violence, but not violence in revolutions. Various studies have also used the theories of relative deprivation by Ted Robert Gurr and resource mobilization by Charles Tilly as theoretical bases to explain revolutions, including the Iranian, French, and Russian revolutions. However, no research has used both Charles Tilly's and Ted Robert Gurr's theories to examine and analyze violence in these revolutions. The table below shows a list of relevant research literature, each of which analyzes political and psychological violence in revolutions from a specific theoretical perspective.

**Table 1. Title or Brief Explanation**

Row	Author(s) (Year of Research)	Research Title	Research Methodology	Most Important Findings and Results Related to the Research
1	Alireza Zamzam (2024 AD/1403 SH)	Leadership in the Islamic Revolution and the Russian Revolution (A Comparative Study)	Comparative-Analytical	Russian Revolution, leadership was limited to the post-revolution period and lacked a unified leadership.  Examines the role and extent of leadership in the Iranian Islamic Revolution and the February 1917 Russian Revolution, showing that in the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini's leadership was comprehensive and widespread, while in the
2	Abbasali Talebi (2024 AD/1403	Examining the Reflection of the	Descriptive-Analytical	The occurrence of the Islamic Revolution led to the inability of

	SH)	Islamic Revolution on Revolution Theories with Emphasis on the Fourth Generation		the first three generations of theories to explain this revolution and led to the formation of the fourth generation of theories; it also had significant effects on Skocpol's and modernist ideas and led to greater attention to cultural components and the role of leadership in mass mobilization in explaining revolutions.
3	Taha Ashayeri (2023 AD/1402 SH)	Meta-analysis of Research Related to Ethno-Political Violence: The Period 1386 to 1400	Meta-analysis Method	Ethno-political violence is the result of sudden and disorganized development and changes that lead to social anomie and social cleavages and are exacerbated by cultural, social, political, psychological, and contextual factors.
4	Hossein Nourinia (2023 AD/1402 SH)	A Sociological Explanation of the Distinctions in Political Violence Before and After the Iranian Constitutional Revolution	Historical Analysis	The article demonstrates that before the triumph of the Constitutional Revolution, political violence was based on collective identities and the divine legitimacy of power, whereas after the revolution, with the emergence of organizational identities and revolutionary ideals, political violence shifted to written rules and acquired identities.
5	Najaf Shaykh Saraei (2023 AD/1402 SH)	Examining the Results of the French Revolution in the Thought of Hannah Arendt and Edmund Burke.	Comparative	This research examines the differences in the perspectives of Hannah Arendt and Edmund Burke regarding the outcomes of the French Revolution and concludes that Arendt has a tragic perspective and Burke a dramatic one, which

				can provide a theoretical framework for comparative studies of revolutions.
6	Hossein Mohammadi Sirt (2023 AD/1402 SH)	A Comparative Study of Provisional Governments in Major Revolutions (Case Study: The French, Russian, Algerian, and Islamic Revolutions)	Comparative	Provisional governments undertake common actions such as determining the judicial and security status of the former regime's political elites, drafting new regulations for the revolutionary government, and providing the necessities for establishing stable structures of the new political system.
7	Ali Tadayyon Rad (2022 AD/1401 SH)	Examining the Relationship Between Violence, War, and Politics with an Emphasis on the Ideas of Hannah Arendt.	Descriptive-Analytical	From a realist perspective, politics is intertwined with deceit and trickery, while Hannah Arendt views politics as a human and dialogical action that is in contrast to violence, such that the beginning of violence signifies the end of politics.
8	Ismail Bayat ( 2021 AD/1400 SH)	Mechanisms for the Export of the Iranian Islamic Revolution and the Russian Revolution: Similarities and Differences.	Historical-Documentary	The article critiques various explanations of the Islamic Revolution, including theories of mass society, the new world order, and the weakness of the Shah's repressive apparatus, and examines how these theories have been used to explain the Islamic Revolution.

The present study focuses on a comparative study of the nature of violence in three major revolutions of modern history: The French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, and the Iranian Revolution. It offers a more precise analysis of the dynamics of violence in these transformations. While other studies primarily focus on explaining the causes, leadership, or

outcomes of revolutions, this research, based on the theories of Charles Tilly and Robert Ted Gurr, examines the economic, social, and political factors influencing the emergence of violence. Another distinguishing feature of this article is its use of a qualitative and descriptive analytical approach, which allows for a deeper understanding of the specific conditions of each revolution and the varying levels of violence within them. While many studies have examined violence qualitatively or quantitatively, this research attempts to examine the evolution of violence more comprehensively, considering historical and cultural contexts. These aspects clearly distinguish and enhance my research compared to existing literature and demonstrate that this study can be a significant step towards a better understanding of the dynamics of violence in revolutions.

### **3. Research Innovation**

This research conducts a comparative study of the nature of violence in revolutions, particularly in the French, Russian, and Iranian Revolutions, utilizing two important theoretical frameworks: Charles Tilly's theory and Robert Ted Gurr's relative deprivation theory. This innovative theoretical combination allows for a deeper analysis of the social and economic factors influencing the outbreak of violence and helps to understand the complexities of this phenomenon. Specifically, the research identifies the relationship between social inequalities and the emergence of violence, showing how feelings of relative deprivation lead not only to tensions but also to the formation of collective identities and ultimately to organized violence. The comparative analysis of the nature of violence in three different revolutions is a key aspect of this research. This approach helps identify common patterns and specific differences in the emergence of violence and examines in detail how the cultural, economic, and political contexts of each revolution affect the type and intensity of violence.

For example, in the French Revolution, violence was employed as a means to achieve the ideals of liberty and equality, whereas in the Russian Revolution, violence was primarily used as a tool to overthrow the old regime and exert control over the new society. This comparative analysis can lead to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of violence in each context and how they interacted. This research, by offering a multifaceted and comprehensive analysis of violence in revolutions, adds to the existing body of literature in this field and serves as a reference for future research in sociology and political science. With this analytical and

multidimensional approach, the research clarifies the relationships between various factors and their impact on the outbreak of violence in revolutions, providing a better understanding of this complex and multi-layered phenomenon. Furthermore, the use of primary sources in this research enhances the richness of the analyses and adds novel perspectives, contributing to new insights regarding violence in revolutions.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

This research is written using an analytical-descriptive method and data was collected using a review of primary and secondary historical texts, employing a library research approach.

Qualitative analysis was used to examine the collected information. This research utilizes the theories of Robert Dahl and Charles Tilly regarding the nature of violence in the Iranian, Russian, and French revolutions within its theoretical framework.

#### **5. Violence and Revolution**

Violence refers to any type of planned physical and non-physical behavior that uses material and immaterial means to eliminate an opponent or rival. This elimination can range from reducing the power and ability of an individual or society to complete physical elimination, as well as the elimination of social relations and the creation of new ones.

Political violence is also directed at political power and is employed by both the dominant political power and by groups vying for power and engaged in power struggles, sometimes accompanied by mass violence. This political violence, as coercive force directed at political power and possessing cultural legitimacy, has been used by both sides throughout Iranian history and has always been accompanied by the use of various tools (Nourinia et al., 2023 AD/1402 SH: 131).

Arendt argues that despite the significant role violence has always played in history; it has rarely been subject to reflection, appearing as "A taken-for-granted premise." She believes that "Anyone searching for meaning in historical documents can hardly fail to see violence as a serious phenomenon." (Tadayyo Rad, 2022 AD/1401 SH: 95).

One undeniable characteristic of the political phenomenon of revolution is its violent nature. Specifically, examining all global revolutions reveals that both during their occurrence and following the major changes they bring, various forms of violence, such as murder, assassination, exile, etc., have always been present. Contemporary national history also



demonstrates the truth of this regarding the 1357 Iranian Revolution, with the methods of struggle employed by certain political groups clearly illustrating this point. To clarify the concept of violence, constantly referenced here, it must be said that no comprehensive definition has been offered, and each individual, based on their social and cultural background, holds a different view. Generally, violence is defined as rage, intensity, brutality, and opposition to gentleness. Furthermore, other terminological definitions exist; such as the use of force or power, unlawful attacks on freedoms granted by society to its members, and harsh or sudden behaviors that can be harmful, threatening, and sometimes lethal (Rezaei, 2020 AD/1399 SH: 12-13).

Hannah Arendt defines violence as "An action performed without discussion and dialogue and without thinking about its consequences, or in other words, the use of force (both physical and non-physical) to coerce individuals, inflict harm, negate autonomy and legitimate freedoms, and violate the laws and regulations of society." In Arendt's view, "Violence stems from the failure of action in our world and also requires specific tools and means." (Arendt, 1979 AD/1359 SH: 11 and 14)

Furthermore, Hannah Arendt, in her book "On Revolution," examines the concept of revolution and writes: "Humanity hopes that revolution will liberate all people." She views revolution as a momentous event that ultimately leads to human freedom.

He views revolution as a significant event ultimately leading to human liberation. Arendt also notes that "historically, war is one of the oldest phenomena in modern human history, while the concept of revolution, in its true sense, did not exist before the modern era and is one of the newest concepts among political data" (Arendt, 1982 AD/1361 SH: 10).

In discussions on the study of revolutions, a fundamental distinction is clearly seen, stemming from the commitment and diversity of definitions of revolution among researchers. Aristotle points out that revolution are the result of a sense of inequality; those in lower positions seek equality. Tilly believes that the definition and concept of revolution are not fixed. However, his approximate definition of revolution is: "Revolution is the violent replacement of part of the ruling elite under conditions of multiple governances."

He also believes that "Revolutions will not continue in their former form, because governments are also not fixed." The factors and mechanisms that characterize revolution are subjects that must be examined; in other words, how power is concentrated in a governing system and consequently the likelihood of a revolution and its nature, result from the

functioning of each governing system (Harati, 2018 AD/1398 SH: 67). Ted Robert Gurr considers revolution a type of political violence and defines it as: "Political violence includes all collective attacks within a political society against the ruling regime, its actors, including rival political groups and office holders or its policies." (Ghajari, 2013 AD/1393 SH: 8)

### **5.1. The Nature of Violence in the 1789 French Revolution**

Revolutions have roots. In 18th-century France, known as the wealthiest country of its time, the revolution was largely caused by a financial crisis and internal conflicts within the privileged class. In the 1780s, after two decades of attempts at financial and economic reforms, the king realized that the tax system could no longer generate sufficient revenue to meet the country's administrative and military needs. He asked the government's grandees for help, but the financial system was heavily intertwined with the privileges of the aristocracy, and finding a simple solution was impossible.

Instead, these conditions caused conflicts between the king and various groups of the privileged class, leading to the formation of a National Assembly and the beginning of debates among them; the conflicts between the government and the privileged class, along with intense protests, encouraged peasants and workers to effect changes in their favor. In 1788, there was a poor harvest, and peasants refused to pay taxes and attacked landowners' offices. Urban workers also realized that the king's supporters were obstructing reforms that would lead to lower bread prices (Goldstone, 2017 AD/1397 SH: 260). Therefore, the despotism of the kings, the oppressive class system, the unstable economic conditions, increased taxes and heavy pressure on the Third Estate, the army's defeat in foreign wars, and the extremely harsh and arduous winter of 1789, drove the people of Paris to the streets (Kazemi, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 3). Finally, on July 14, 1789, the people of Paris stormed the Bastille to collect gunpowder and also issue a political statement marking the beginning of the revolution. The rebels killed many of the Bastille's defenders, including Commander Bernard René Jourdan, whose head was severed and then carried on a pike. Following the start of the revolution, the need to suppress counter-revolutionaries was felt. In these circumstances, the September Massacres resulted in thousands of deaths. Hobsbawm, as a Marxist, considers the violence of the French Revolution the sole agent of social change (Chatzakou, 2023). The role of the Reign of Terror (1793-1794) should not be overlooked. The Jacobins, as the

dominant revolutionary group, attempted to prevent counter-revolutionary activities and proceeded to arrest, execute, and suppress individual liberties. During this period, the queen and king were executed in January 1793. Although the revolutionaries represented the ideals of the Enlightenment, thinkers like John Locke believed that violence should always be used as a last resort (Chatzakou, 2023). Therefore, the French Revolution of 1789 caused tremendous transformations not only in France but throughout the world. In Hannah Arendt's words, "This revolution set the world on fire." (Shirkhani, 2018 AD/1398 SH: 91)

More has been said, written, mythologized, and debated about the French Revolution than any similar event in the past two hundred years (Sayyar, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 107-108).

In the turbulent revolutionary century of France after 1780, historians of collective action such as Charles Tilly have highlighted a significant shift in the forms of collective protest after the mid-nineteenth century. This ranges from "reactive" violence against new state and capitalist interventions, food riots and anti-tax revolts, to "Proactive" mobilization through unions, election campaigns, strikes, and demonstrations. These new tactics sought to gain influence and control over national institutions (Mc Fee, 2020: 347). Initially, the level of violence in this revolution was relatively low, with the highest casualties occurring during the storming of the Bastille, where 200 people were killed. Although slogans of equality and liberty were raised in France, in the early stages of the revolution, the revolutionaries focused more on abolishing feudalism and the tax exemptions of the aristocracy and establishing liberty. However, this liberty did not initially imply the establishment of a republic. The 1791 Constitution established a constitutional monarchy, but due to the king's collaboration with counter-revolutionaries and foreign support, the French people accused him of inviting foreign forces for military intervention. This situation led to the growth of republicanism. Moderate republicans, led by Danton, came to power in 1792, and Louis XVI was subsequently arrested and executed by a vote of the Assembly. In 1793, radical republicans led by Robespierre revolted and seized power when Paris was threatened with occupation. At this time, the French Revolution emphasized liberty more and marginalized equality (Malakoutiyan et al., 2010 AD/1390 SH: 35-36).

In fact, violence in the revolution contributed to creating a kind of historical change; however, violence is a factor, not an actor, in history. Widespread violence in various forms continued in France despite the existence of three constitutions (1791, 1795, and 1799) and their claims to end the revolution.

The popular violence that began in 1789 contributed to the dismantling of feudal remnants and the abolition of hereditary privileges. In 1792, rural uprisings, urban riots, and foreign wars facilitated the fall of the monarchy and the promotion of social equality. The collapse of the ancient régime provoked widespread reactions, leading to state-sponsored terror, unprecedented mass executions, and severe repression in 1793-1794 (Brown, 2023: 224).

According to the Trigger theory of revolution, revolutions typically stem from deprivation and a sense of dissatisfaction with the existing order. The masses in France were discontent with the monarchy. The French Revolution represented a shift from absolute monarchy towards a limited, constitutional monarchy. The financial crisis engulfing the ancient régime exacerbated its authoritarian nature. The absolute monarchy was suffering from a confluence of crises. Externally, France was perceived as a weak and ineffective power. By the late 1780s, it was rapidly losing its diplomatic influence in central Europe and had lost significant portions of its colonies in North America and India (Novagwani, 2016: 82).

Charles Tilly also argues that the repressive apparatus and coercive force play a key role in the shaping of revolutions. He posits that every revolution comprises two main elements: a revolutionary situation and revolutionary outcomes. The combination of these two elements leads to the actual occurrence of a revolution, namely the transfer of power through coercive force. In a revolutionary situation, three factors simultaneously interact, considered as the direct causes of a revolution:

- 1) The emergence of individuals or coalitions with competing claims to power in the country or parts thereof;
- 2) Widespread popular support for these claims;
- 3) The incumbent power holders are unable to suppress the successor coalition or its supporters.

Revolutionary outcomes, in turn, stem from four factors:

- 1) The population opposes the regime;
- 2) Revolutionary coalitions gain access to armed forces;
- 3) The regime's armed forces declare neutrality or join the opposing groups;
- 4) Members of revolutionary coalitions seize control of the governmental apparatus and dominate governmental institutions and structures (Azimi Dolatabadi, 2016 AD/1396 SH: 143).

Royalism, Jacobinism, religious resistance, and the continuation of war all intensified cyclical violence after 1794. These unstable, multifaceted forces could only be controlled by strengthening the repressive powers of the state. Attempts to stabilize the Republic and control violence, particularly through the militarization of society, increased repression, and the curtailment of democracy, led to the emergence of a growing authoritarian liberalism after 1797, which contributed to the formation of a security state and personal dictatorship in 1802 (Brown, 2023: 224).

## **5.2. The Nature of Violence in the 1917 Russian Revolution**

To understand the role of violence in the 1917 Russian Revolution, we must be familiar with its historical context. Peasants and workers began organizing as early as 1813, and by 1845, strikes were deemed illegal. In 1905, a group led by a priest attempted to petition the Tsar for civil rights, but were fired upon by police before reaching the Winter Palace. This event escalated strikes and uprisings into widespread political protest. Despite the scale of the 1905 events, no fundamental or systematic change occurred. Tsar Nicholas II failed to quell the internal unrest, which intensified after Russia's entry into World War I. Furthermore, the controversial presence of Rasputin<sup>1</sup> at court increased distrust of the Tsar. In February 1917, men and women took to the streets of St. Petersburg, a movement driven not by the leadership of a political group, but by hunger, poverty, war, and exhaustion. Under these circumstances, the Tsar's army refused to suppress the protesters and instead sided with them (Hobsbawm, 2015). Unlike the 1905 revolution, the February Revolution led to the collapse of the regime. At this stage, violence was primarily exerted by the regime, not the revolutionaries.

The Tsarist dictatorship was replaced by a provisional government that failed to meet the demands of the people. This revolution did not yet have a Marxist character. Workers demanded their rights, but not within the framework of a proletarian state. The Bolsheviks introduced Marxist elements into the October 1917 revolution. This time, revolutionaries led by Lenin employed violent methods to overthrow the provisional government. Lenin considered violence necessary for such a revolution (Chatzako: 2023).

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<sup>1</sup>. Grigori Rasputin was a controversial and significant figure in Russian history, living in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He was known as a religious mystic and seer, and wielded considerable influence over the court of Tsar Nicholas II.

In fact, in the Russian Revolution, the Bolsheviks, as its main organizers, held a positive view of the use of violence and armed struggle. Lenin, as the leader of the Bolsheviks, emphasized that organizing the proletariat for armed uprising, equipping the workers, and leading this uprising were the main tasks of the Bolshevik party. In contrast, the Mensheviks consistently disagreed with the Bolsheviks' use of these violent methods and differed on this issue. Indeed, the differing viewpoints of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks regarding the use of violence in the revolution were one of the fundamental disagreements between these two

political factions. Lenin, as the most important leader of the Russian Revolution, stressed that one of the main tasks of the Bolshevik party was to strive to arm and equip the workers. This shows that the Bolsheviks, especially Lenin, believed that resorting to force and armed struggle was necessary to advance revolutionary goals. Unlike other political factions in Russia, the Bolsheviks considered this violent approach one of their primary duties (Morshedizadeh et al., 2014 AD/1394 SH: 67). Therefore, the bloodiest phase of the revolution occurred during the civil war. The Red Army, striving to defend the Bolshevik government, clashed with the White Army and nationalist movements. During the Red Terror, crimes were also committed against civilians (Chatzako: 2023).

In the Russian Revolution, the use of various tools and methods of mobilization and protest is clearly evident. From 1917 to 1918, Russia's political, economic, and governmental systems completely collapsed. During this period, various social classes, especially workers, peasants, and soldiers, actively sought the overthrow of the ruling regime.

Peasants, suffering from harsh economic conditions and severe poverty, sought change through local protests and uprisings, demanding land reforms. Soldiers, themselves burdened by the hardships of World War I, joined the protesters, many rising up in support of the Bolshevik Revolution. These protests manifested not only in rallies and strikes but also through the dissemination of publications, proclamations, and revolutionary slogans. These methods rapidly spread public discontent, ultimately leading to the collapse of the Tsarist regime and the rise of the Bolshevik government. In this process, solidarity among different social classes played a key role in shaping the revolution and its political and social transformations. Protesters demanding bread took to the streets of Petrograd. Supported by a large number of striking industrial workers, they clashed with police and refused to disperse.



On March 11th, garrison forces in Petrograd were called in to suppress the uprising. In some clashes, regiments opened fire on protesters, killing several, but the protesters continued their violence and demonstrations, causing the forces to waver and eventually disintegrate. The Duma formed a provisional government on March 12th. A few days later, Tsar Nicholas abdicated, ending centuries of Romanov rule in Russia (Siyansiala, 2024). This revolution, with its internal conflicts within the vast remnants of the Russian Empire, dragged on and resulted in the deaths of millions in less than eight years (Nouri, 2019: 65). Ultimately, the Russian Revolution of 1917 occurred when workers' strikes and uprisings prompted soldiers to join them. This spontaneous movement, lacking prior planning or leadership, led to the downfall of the 300-year-old Romanov regime in Russia, plunging the country into a major crisis. Notably, this revolution unfolded spontaneously, without pre-determined guidance or organization. No one anticipated that this sudden, unplanned movement could topple the powerful Romanov regime and confront Russia with such immense challenges (Mohammadi Sirat, 2023 AD/1402 SH: 166).

### **5.3. The Nature of Violence in the 1979 Iranian Revolution**

Historically, non-violent revolutions were virtually inconceivable. From the enraged Parisians storming the Bastille with torches to the Russian workers rising up against the Tsar, revolutions were synonymous with violence. However, when unarmed people, after a prolonged struggle, forced Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the last Shah of Iran, to flee Tehran on January 16, 1979, they presented the world with a new and seemingly paradoxical phenomenon: a non-violent revolution (Philip, 2010: abstract).

The first wave of revolutions associated with the post-World War I era, encompassed political and social changes in Europe and Asia. This wave, fueled by new ideologies like communism and fascism, led to the overthrow of old regimes and the establishment of new governments. The second wave, in the post-World War II period (1945-1960), comprised anti-colonial revolutions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This wave resulted in struggles for independence and self-determination, pushing many nations towards democracy and nationalism. Following these two waves, a third wave of revolutions (1974-1980) emerged. During this period, an increasing number of non-violent popular uprisings against authoritarian governments took place. One of the most significant revolutions of this wave

was the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, which largely employed non-violent resistance, although government attacks on peaceful demonstrations resulted in significant bloodshed. While revolutionary movements utilizing violent tactics have not entirely disappeared, the use of non-violent methods appears to be increasing (Goodwin, 2022: 529).

The non-violent nature of the Iranian Revolution can be understood by examining the statistics of those killed. In historical research, Emadoddin Baqi, in an interview with "Agahi-ye No" magazine and in his book "Evalouating the Iran Revolution," analyzed the number of casualties from 1963 to 1978. Specifically, he cited 3164 casualties. However, the Martyrs Foundation reported a lower figure of 2781.

In this regard, Baqi has pointed out that some groups, such as Marxists, are not included in the official statistics. Baqi also did not rule out the possibility of some cases not being registered and mentioned this in his book: "Given the geographical scope of this foundation and more than two decades having passed since the revolution, it is possible that only the names of a very small number of victims were not recorded." He believes that although there may be some cases, their number is so small that it will not significantly affect the overall statistics.

On the other hand, he also points to the possibility of reverse cases, where some individuals may have been identified as martyrs, while these claims are not provable. These exceptional cases should be carefully examined and considered in future analyses (Baqi, 2024 AD/1403 SH: 235).

In fact, in the late 1970s, the Islamic Revolution in Iran surprised the global community and ended the long-standing monarchy. The anti-Shah protests and general strikes in the country constitute a major popular uprising in world history, with at least 10 percent of the population participating. This proportion is higher than the number of people who participated in the French Revolution (less than 2 percent) and the overthrow of Soviet communism (less than 1 percent). Furthermore, the Iranian Revolution resulted in fewer casualties compared to other movements. For example, while the South African anti-apartheid movement left more than 7,000 revolutionary martyrs, the available statistics in Iran indicate much lower casualties. The Martyrs Foundation identified 744 martyrs in Tehran, the main center of the Islamic Revolution. Also, the statistics of the Legal Medicine Organization and the main cemetery of Tehran, Behesht-e Zahra, reported 895 and 768 martyrs, respectively. These numbers show that the Iranian Revolution was relatively accompanied by fewer casualties and can be considered the minimum number of victims of the revolution. A primary study conducted in

1982 by Sahlollah Amiri, an employee of the Martyrs Foundation, examined the number of deaths directly related to the revolution. Amiri excluded deaths due to accidents and natural causes in this research and then compared the statistics of his foundation with the records of the Tehran Legal Medicine Organization and the main cemetery of Tehran.

This comparison revealed similar figures, suggesting that approximately 700 to 900 Iranians lost their lives in Tehran during the year of the revolution. These numbers indicate a relatively low level of violence and casualties in the Iranian Revolution (Farzanegan, 2022: 2062).

Between 1979 and 1981, with the gradual formation of the ideology of "Vilayat-e Faqih" (Guardianship of the Jurist) and the belief in it, nationalist, national-religious, eclectic, Marxist-leftist, and other ethnic groups joined the opposition. In the early 1980s, the political forces primarily comprised groups within the regime, operating through organizations such as the Islamic Republic Party and the Organization of the Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution. Some smaller opposition groups, such as the Freedom Movement and the Melli Iran Party, remained active within the country with limited activities, while others, after engaging in overthrow attempts and armed conflict, were suppressed and largely left the country. In the 1980s, there was no legal opposition, and particularly during the war years, the political system operated in a centralized and authoritarian manner. The overthrow-seeking opposition mainly consisted of eclectic and ethnic groups such as the Democratic Party and Komalah, which were considered major threats to internal security. After the war, although opposition activities continued with less intensity, they still affected the country's security. The "Bloody Summer" of 1981 demonstrated that few days passed without incidents stemming from the opposition. The most important opposition group in the 1980s was the People's Mujahedin Organization (PMOI), which, through bombings of the Islamic Republic Party offices, the Prime Minister's office, and the Prosecutor General's office, assassinated many key regime figures. This organization also engaged in espionage for foreign powers; for example, a commander of the army's naval forces, who was a member of the Tudeh Party, provided sensitive information to enemies. Another activity of this opposition was planning a coup in 1980, in collaboration with foreign countries, which was uncovered before its execution. The increase in violence during this period stemmed from several key factors. First, the terrorist and bombing activities of the PMOI fueled insecurity and fear in society.

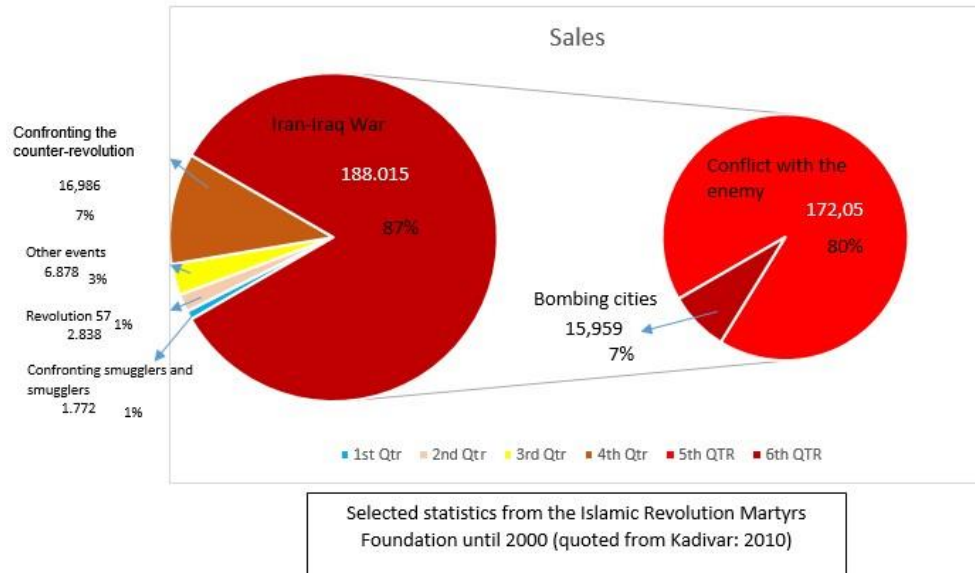
Secondly, the group's collaboration with foreign entities and attempts to overthrow the regime led to increased tensions and strong government reactions. Ultimately, this situation resulted

in a tense and violent atmosphere, the effects of which were profound and lasting on Iranian society (Haghpanah, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 17-18).

This escalation of violence occurred for several reasons. Political conflicts and the lack of a legal opposition drove opposition groups to violent actions. Furthermore, the war and the regime's repressive responses to opponents created a cycle of violence that exacerbated tensions. As a result, the political climate was extremely volatile and violent. The Iraqi invasion of Iran in 1359 SH (1980 AD), triggered by the revolution and a shift in the balance of power in the Middle East, resulted in significantly greater human and economic losses. This war remains the deadliest in Middle Eastern history and the longest war of the 20th century. More reliable data on total casualties has been presented, indicating that the number of killed and missing reached 680,000. Iran's share of the total casualties was approximately 73% (500,000 Iranians), in addition to 1.5 million wounded and injured. 85% of those killed were soldiers, with the number of Iranian soldiers killed being 3.5 times higher than that of Iraqi soldiers. The number of civilians killed in bombings accounted for about 3% of the total casualties. The remaining 12% of civilian casualties included Kurds killed by both Iraqis and Iranians. Approximately 115,000 soldiers were taken prisoner (70,000 Iraqis and 45,000 Iranians) (Farzanegan, 2022: 2063).

According to the Martyrs Foundation statistics in Esfand 1380 (February/March 2002), during the Iran-Iraq war and the imposed war, the number of martyrs was considerably higher than the number of martyrs of the revolution. More than 216,000 individuals are registered as martyrs, of whom approximately 87%, or more than 188,000, died in the Iran-Iraq war. Of this number, more than 172,000 were killed in direct confrontations with the enemy, and nearly 16,000 were killed in missile attacks on cities. During the war, Iraq fired 532 missiles at 25 Iranian cities, with 410 missiles hitting residential areas (Kadivar: 2019 AD/1399 SH). Excerpts from the statistics of the Martyrs Foundation of the Islamic Revolution up to 1380 (according to Kadivar: 2021)

**Selected statistics from the Islamic Revolution Martyrs Foundation until 1380 (quoted from Kaddivar: 2010 AD/1399 SH)**



The level of violence in the post-revolutionary period, particularly during the Iran-Iraq war, was extremely high. The high casualty figures demonstrate the intensity of the fighting and bombardments, which affected not only military personnel but also the lives of civilians. This situation created an atmosphere of fear and insecurity in society and had a profound impact on the collective psyche of the people. The missile bombardments and widespread civilian casualties highlight the intensity and terror of the war during this period.

Based on Tilly's theory, the Iranian Revolution can be examined from various perspectives, as it possesses the two essential conditions Tilly outlines: revolutionary situation and revolutionary outcome. During the Iranian Revolution, the Shah's regime, the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini, and the growth of leftist movements were three major forces vying for complete control of the government. The Shah's moral corruption prompted Ayatollah Khomeini's mobilization against him. The Shah's authoritarian rule also angered many in the middle class who desired political reforms. Generally, disruptions in social and economic patterns stemming from the inequitable distribution of oil wealth, difficulties in political participation for citizens, and the lack of Islam's influence contributed to popular mobilization. As Tilly's theory notes, the structure of a state influences revolutions. In the Iranian Revolution, the socio-economic conditions indicated the potential trajectory of the revolution. According to Tilly's theory, for an event to be considered a revolution, it must occur. During the Iranian Revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini initiated what he termed "Moral

Assault" on the Shah's armed forces and, through oil workers' protests, created an economic collapse aimed at neutralizing the regime's military. Four factors contribute to revolutionary outcomes. As seen in the case of Ayatollah Khomeini, he utilized demonstrations to achieve these outcomes. Regarding the execution of his "Moral Assault," he explained his strategy: "We must fight the soldier in the hearts of the soldiers. We must fight through martyrdom, for the martyr is the essence of history."

"Let the army kill as much as it wants until the soldiers are shaken in their hearts by the killing they have done, and the army collapses" (Lezczynski, 2021). In Tilly's view, some opposition groups are members of the political community who claim representation within the governing system, while others are challengers seeking to gain political power. The most important challengers in the Islamic Revolution included the traditional middle class (merchants and clerics), the new middle class (intellectuals and academics), and industrial workers (Keshavarzi et al., 2011 AD/1390 SH: 107). In the Islamic Revolution, revolutionary groups, in response to emerging opportunities, mobilized their resources to achieve demands they had not previously recognized as their rights. The opening up of the country's political and social space through the facilitating actions of the government and the court, the revolutionaries' success in some revolutionary actions such as holding peaceful demonstrations, and incidents such as the Cinema Rex fire in Abadan and the 17 Shahrivar (Black Friday) events, along with the decisive, widespread, and charismatic leadership of Imam Khomeini, served as accelerating factors at the disposal of the mobilizing core. These conditions created a suitable opportunity for the movement's leaders and the nation to challenge the government and raise new demands such as the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime and the establishment of the Islamic Republic system, thus shaping the aggressive mobilization of the revolutionaries (Keshavarz Shokri, 2013 AD/1393 SH: 122). In the Todger theory, in explaining the cause of the Islamic Revolution, the middle class faced deprivation in gaining access to power and political participation through institutional mechanisms. Workers and farmers also faced numerous problems, especially in terms of livelihood, due to land reforms. Furthermore, Mohammad Reza Shah's quasi-modernist and quasi-nationalist policies led to the expansion of the authoritarian system into that part of urban society, namely the religious authorities and the religious community, which usually enjoyed considerable independence in its relationship with the government. Mohammad Reza Shah's quasi-modernist actions plunged the Pahlavi regime into a crisis stemming from the



mismatch between the government and society. The combination of these factors created the conditions for the revolution, with the release of pent-up forces leading to the 1979 Iranian Revolution (Imam Jom'e Zadeh, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 55-56). According to relative deprivation theory, it can be argued that in the late Pahlavi era, various segments of Iranian society felt deprived and experienced severe relative deprivation due to the disregard of their political, social, economic, and cultural demands and fundamental rights. On the other hand, the revolutionary ideology led by Imam Khomeini successfully promoted political and religious rights, personal security, and economic welfare as widespread public expectations. Imam Khomeini succeeded in uniting various dissatisfied groups, paving the way for the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the end of the monarchical regime. Considering these facts and using the theory of relative deprivation, it can be concluded that the widespread relative deprivation among Iranians was a factor in the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution in February 1979 (Taliban, 2017 AD/1397 SH: 7-8).

## **6. Commonalities of the Three Revolutions**

### **6.1. Mobilization of Resources**

In all three revolutions, the ability of social groups to mobilize and cooperate played a key role in the creation and escalation of violence. In the French Revolution, the bourgeoisie and workers cooperated to overthrow the royal system. This synergy demonstrates how different groups can create a powerful force by sharing resources and common goals. In the Russian Revolution, the Bolsheviks, by exploiting public discontent and mobilizing the masses, quickly seized power. This collective mobilization, especially in situations where feelings of deprivation and inequality are deeply rooted in society, can lead to widespread violence. In Iran, too, various groups, including religious and nationalist groups, united to overthrow the Shah's regime. These experiences show that effective mobilization of resources and cooperation between social groups can lead to revolutionary violence (Shokri, 2010 AD/1390 SH: 83).

### **6.2. Feeling of Deprivation**

The concept of relative deprivation plays a significant role, especially in the analysis of revolutionary violence. In each of these three revolutions, social and economic inequalities

fueled feelings of deprivation. In France, the financial pressures resulting from continuous wars and famines severely burdened the lower classes of society. This discontent led to the formation of protest movements that ultimately resulted in revolutionary violence.

In Russia, widespread poverty and dissatisfaction with the Tsarist regime, particularly among workers and peasants, intensified feelings of deprivation. This situation enabled the Bolsheviks to exploit these grievances and incite the masses towards violence. In Iran, political and economic corruption and the Shah's continuous repression brought feelings of deprivation among the people to a peak, leading to revolutionary violence. These experiences demonstrate that feelings of deprivation, especially when coupled with severe inequalities, can lead to widespread violence (Ghasemi, 2017 AD/1397 SH: 38).

### **6.3. State Repression**

Brutal state repression in each of these revolutions fueled the escalation of violence. In France, the monarchy's attempts to suppress dissent led to massacres and widespread terror, ultimately culminating in a bloody revolution. In Russia, the Tsarist regime's severe repression of protests, particularly in the years leading up to the 1917 revolution, increased tensions and severely exacerbated grievances. In Iran, the Shah's repression, especially during the 1970s, led to increased violence and protests. This vicious cycle of repression and violence demonstrates that whenever governments resort to repression instead of responding to grievances, the likelihood of revolutionary violence increases.

### **6.4. Leadership and Organization**

Effective leadership and cohesive organization were vital factors in guiding and shaping revolutionary violence. Leaders such as Robespierre in France, Lenin in Russia, and Khomeini in Iran were able to mobilize the masses and direct revolutionary goals towards fundamental changes. This leadership not only demonstrates the ability to garner social support but also showcases the ability to organize and manage resources. In all three revolutions, strong leadership acted as an accelerating factor in transforming public discontent into revolutionary violence (Karimi Keshe, 2023 AD/1402 SH: 107).

### 6.5. Consequences of Violence

The consequences of violence in each of these revolutions also reveal significant commonalities. The French and Russian revolutions, after widespread violence, led to profound political changes that overthrew the old regimes and established new ones. In Iran, violence against the Shah's regime led to the establishment of the Islamic Republic.

These results indicate that violence can act as a catalyst for profound social change, although its consequences may differ across countries.

**Table 1. Commonalities of the French, Russian, and Iranian Revolutions**

Aspect	French Revolution	Russian Revolution	Iranian Revolution
Mass Mobilization	Financial crisis and increased taxes on the Third Estate created pressure.	World War I and widespread poverty exacerbated public discontent.	Economic corruption and government inefficiency caused public dissatisfaction.
Sense of Deprivation	Collaboration between various classes, especially the working class and the bourgeoisie.	Workers and peasants as the main pillars of the Bolshevik movement.	Unity among various social groups, from nationalists to clerics.
State Violence and Repression	September Massacres and Jacobin terror.	Severe repression of protests using military forces.	Strong government response to peaceful, but more controlled, demonstrations.
Leadership and Organization	Establishment of a republic and the end of feudalism.	Establishment of a communist state and structural changes.	Major changes achieved largely without violence, positive impact on the new structure.
Casualties and Civil War Aftermath	High human losses and civil war.	Millions of casualties and civil war.	Approximately 3164 casualties and reduced negative social consequences.

(Source: Author)

## 7. Points of Divergence among the Three Revolutions

### 7.1. Nature of Violence

**French Revolution:** In this revolution, violence was used as a tool to achieve political and social goals. Revolutionaries targeted their opponents by creating an atmosphere of terror and

repression. This use of violence indicates that the revolutionaries used every tool (including mass killings) to consolidate power and achieve their ideals. This process gradually led to ruthless massacres that also involved many innocent people, demonstrating the complex psychological and social dynamics within the revolutionary society (Ghanifi, 2018: 912).

**Russian Revolution:** This revolution systematically used violence as a strategic tool. The Bolsheviks severely repressed their opponents to achieve Marxist ideology. From this perspective, violence in the Russian Revolution was considered an essential component for establishing a communist regime. This approach to the Russian Civil War resulted in extensive human casualties, demonstrating the Bolsheviks' commitment to their goals and their inability to control the consequences of this violence (Finckenauer, 2001: 8). **The Iranian Revolution:** Despite severe repression by the Shah's regime, this revolution largely proceeded non-violently. Protesters, relying on peaceful demonstrations and moral arguments, sought to overthrow the monarchy. This non-violent approach not only helped reduce human casualties but also contributed to maintaining social cohesion and reducing internal tensions. This difference in approach reflects Iran's specific political and social culture, as well as the historical influences on social movements.

## **7.2. Consequences and Results of Violence**

**The French Revolution:** Violence in this revolution led to severe instability and insecurity in society. The Reign of Terror, which followed the revolution, exemplifies the negative consequences of this violence. This situation gradually led to the creation of a dynamic but tense political environment where power was constantly shifting. This demonstrates that violence can not only cause rapid changes in political systems but can also lead to deeper instability and social crises (Brown, 2023: 198). **The Russian Revolution:** The violence and high human casualties in this revolution had profound and lasting consequences for society. The civil war and the Bolsheviks' severe repression created an atmosphere of terror and fear, leading to the establishment of a dictatorial regime. These consequences demonstrate that violence can significantly impact a country's political and social structure and contribute to the consolidation of authoritarian regimes (Smith, 2014: 200). **The Iranian Revolution:** Although the Iranian Revolution was largely non-violent, the government's response to peaceful demonstrations resulted in some violence. However, the number of casualties was

significantly lower than in the other two revolutions. This reduction in casualties demonstrates that the Iranian Revolution was able to achieve significant political changes without widespread violence. Furthermore, this helped maintain social cohesion and prevent deeper tensions.

### **7.3. Number of Victims**

**French Revolution:** The number of victims of this revolution reaches thousands, including widespread massacres and civil wars. This high number of victims indicates that violence was pursued in France with great intensity and extent, and was considered part of the process of social change. This situation was particularly evident during the Reign of Terror, when revolutionaries used every means to maintain their power (Costa, 2013: 3).

**Russian Revolution:** Human casualties in this revolution also reached 7 to 12 million, and the civil war and severe repression by the Bolsheviks severely weakened society. These casualty figures demonstrate the violent consequences of this revolution and, in particular, its negative impact on the country's social and political structure (Falconer, 2017: 148).

**Iranian Revolution:** The number of victims of the Iranian Revolution is estimated at approximately 3,164, which is much lower compared to the other two revolutions. This figure indicates the non-violent approach of the protesters and the more controlled responses of the government. This difference in the number of victims can be attributed to various factors, including the non-violent strategies of the protesters and the specific historical and cultural conditions of Iran (Baqi, 2024 AD/1403 SH: 235).

### **7.4. Experience of Civil War and Post-Revolution Unrest**

**French Revolution:** This revolution was accompanied by instability and civil wars after the revolution. This unrest shows that violence not only acts as a factor in creating change, but can also lead to long-term social consequences and crises. After the revolution in France, a large group of opponents were executed on charges of opposing the revolution, and in less than a year, about 1376 people were sent to the guillotine (Koulai, 2018 AD/1398 SH: 170-171).

**Russian Revolution:** Civil war, as a natural consequence of the initial violence, was accompanied by very high human and economic losses. In Russia, the limited revolt of

factory workers and soldiers of the Petrograd garrison was a turning point in the political history of the country, leading to the fall of the Romanov dynasty. This revolt occurred as deep economic and social discontent resulting from World War I and the corruption of the Tsarist regime reached its peak.

Rebels, utilizing violence as a tool to express discontent and effect fundamental change, rapidly seized power and challenged the ruling regime. This behavior not only indicated the collapse of the then-existing socio-political structure but also shaped a violent model for future protest groups (Korzin, 2018 AD/1398 SH: 122).

The Iranian Revolution: Although the revolution began non-violently, the Iran-Iraq war resulted in significant human casualties. However, this war is considered a separate consequence from the revolution itself, not part of the process of change. This demonstrates that the Iranian Revolution, despite the challenges it faced, managed to prevent major internal crises.

**Table 2. Distinguishing Points of the Nature of Violence in the French, Russian, and Iranian Revolutions**

Component	French Revolution	Russian Revolution	Iranian Revolution
Nature of Violence	Widespread use of violence to suppress opponents and achieve political goals.	Violence as a strategy to consolidate Bolshevik power and suppress opponents.	Primarily non-violent, with controlled government suppression.
Consequences of Violence	Instability and insecurity, a period of terror and widespread killings.	Civil war and high human casualties, a climate of terror in society.	Fewer casualties and less negative social impact.
Number of Victims	Millions of victims, including killings and civil wars.	Millions of victims in civil war and repression.	Approximately 3164, fewer compared to the other two revolutions.
Experience of Civil War and Unrest	Instability and civil wars after the revolution.	Civil war as a natural consequence of initial violence.	The Iran-Iraq war as a consequence separate from the revolution.

### Conclusion and Suggestions

This research conducted a comparative study of the nature of violence in the French, Russian, and Iranian Revolutions. Through a deeper analysis of these events, we have achieved a better



understanding of the causes and consequences of violence in each. In the French Revolution, violence was used as a tool for social and political change. This revolution, not only due to economic and social grievances but also due to the strong mobilization of various social classes, quickly led to widespread violence.

This synergy demonstrates how a shared sense of deprivation can fuel violence and advance revolutionary goals. In the case of the Russian Revolution, specific historical and social conditions, particularly the aftermath of World War I and widespread poverty, created the groundwork for intense violence and civil war. The Bolsheviks leveraged this discontent as an opportunity to mobilize the masses, significantly escalating violence. Analysis of this revolution reveals how repressive policies and economic injustices can exacerbate social violence. In contrast, the Iranian Revolution represents a different approach to violence. Despite the regime's severe repression, protesters sought social change using non-violent strategies. This approach helped maintain social cohesion and reduce casualties, illustrating how, in critical situations, adopting different strategies can significantly impact the final outcome. Ultimately, this research, by examining various aspects of all three revolutions, concludes that social, economic, and political factors, especially the feeling of deprivation and the ability to mobilize resources, directly influence the nature of violence and revolutionary outcomes. This analysis suggests that a deeper understanding of these factors can help us better analyze contemporary social transformations and extract lessons for the future.

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# Analyzing Speech Acts in Ayatollah Khamenei's Letter to Students Supporting the Palestinian People in American Universities

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The study aims to analyze the speech acts used by Ayatollah Khamenei in his letter to students supporting the Palestinian people in American universities, focusing on the implications of these acts for understanding his political and social messages regarding the Palestinian issue.

**Method:** A descriptive-analytical approach was employed to examine the speech acts in the text. The analysis categorized speech acts into direct and indirect forms, identifying their frequencies and contexts within the letter.

**Results:** The findings revealed that the majority of direct speech acts were declarative, while indirect speech acts predominantly revolved around persuasive elements. This indicates a strategic use of language to convey clear positions while engaging the audience emotionally and intellectually.

**Conclusions:** Ayatollah Khamenei's letter not only seeks to explain the historical context of the Palestinian issue to the students but also encourages them to remain steadfast in their support, showcasing a blend of informative and motivational rhetoric that aligns with his broader political vision.

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## **Introduction**

The Palestinian issue, as one of the most contentious and significant political and social topics globally, has always been at the center of international attention. Following the genocide by the Zionist regime, students at American universities began sit-ins on campus to support the oppressed people of Gaza from early Ordibehesht, and these protests escalated to the point where they extended to some Western countries (Australia, Canada, France, Italy, and England). In this context, the positions and actions of leaders from various countries, particularly Islamic leaders, significantly influence public perception and attitudes towards the Palestinian crisis. The correspondence and statements of these leaders can serve as tools to affect public opinion and encourage the younger generation's involvement in social and political activities. Recently, Ayatollah Khamenei, the leader of the Islamic Revolution, expressed solidarity with the anti-Zionist protests of these students in a letter, deeming them part of the resistance front and emphasizing the need to change the situation and destiny of the sensitive region of West Asia.

Speech acts, as one of the key tools in human communication, can convey meanings and messages that are often presented to audiences either directly or indirectly. In this regard, analyzing and examining speech acts enables us to better understand the expressive and linguistic strategies of political leaders and see how they can influence public opinion. From this perspective, Ayatollah Khamenei's letter to students supporting the Palestinian people in American universities is a significant political text that can contribute to a deeper investigation of speech acts and the motivations behind them. This letter, as a strategic text, reflects the attitudes and speech acts of the leader of the Islamic Revolution concerning the Palestinian issue. It contains not only political messages but can also aid researchers and enthusiasts in gaining a better understanding of how positions related to this topic are articulated from a linguistic and speech act analysis perspective. The present study aims to delve deeper into the mechanisms of speech acts and their impact on audiences, particularly in the form of letters with ethical and social themes. Therefore, this study intends to analyze the speech acts in this important letter. It will address two fundamental questions: 'What direct and indirect speech acts did the leader of the Revolution use more frequently?' And 'What is the reason for the selection and frequency of these acts?'



### **Background of the Research**

Regarding the background of the research, it should be noted that, regarding the novelty of the topic, as far as the authors are aware, no research work has yet been conducted. However, there are some articles related to the subject of the research. In the article "The Analysis of Speech Acts Patterns in Two Egyptian Inaugural Speeches" by Imad Samir (2017), two inaugural speeches by Egyptian leaders Sadat and Sisi from different periods were analyzed using Searle's speech act theory to determine whether there are differences in this genre within the same culture. This study showed that there is very little difference between the two speeches in terms of speech acts.

Additionally, Andrea Viridian in the article "Discourse Analysis from the Perspective of Austin's Speech Act Theory and Searle's Taxonomy of Illocutionary Acts: A Case Study of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper*" (2021) utilized John Searle's discourse analysis theory, focusing on the writings of Charlotte P. Gilman regarding gender differences in how men and women use language, illustrating ways in which language can serve as a tool to silence the other.

The article "Discourse Analysis of the Letters Issued by Amir Masoud in Volume One of the History of Bayhaqi (Based on Searle's Speech Act Theory)" by Tahereh Eshani and Nahid Mehrafruz (2021 AD/1400 SH) indicates that the results of this research demonstrate the relevance and coordination of each of these speech acts with the goals of Amir Masoud. The prevalence of assertive speech acts in this linguistic corpus can symbolize his power in discourse. Additionally, the frequency of persuasive acts within the framework of this goal is notable, and a significant percentage of emotional acts appear as the third most recurrent act in one of the letters. The function of other speech acts in these letters is shown in the conclusion section.

The article "Analysis of the Speech Acts in the Friday Prayer Sermon of the Supreme Leader Following the Martyrdom of General Soleimani (27/10/1398)" by Reza Mohammadi and Ali Ghofrani (2022 AD/1401 SH) reveals that given the prevalence of assertive acts among the speech acts of the Islamic Revolution leader, it can be said that they aimed to explain the situation and enlighten and inform the people during significant events such as the assassination of General Qasem Soleimani, the attack on the Ain al-Asad base, and the plane crash.

The article "Speech Acts Revisited: Examining Illocutionary Speech Acts in Speeches of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk" by Alp Bugra Oder (2023) aims to analyze the non-verbal speech acts in two speeches by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (the speech at the tenth anniversary of the Republic of Turkey and the address to Turkish youth) based on John Searle's theory. After a thorough analysis, this qualitative study concludes that Atatürk utilized more speech acts addressed to Turkish youth in his speech at the tenth anniversary of the Republic of Turkey.

Another notable article in this regard is "An Analysis of Directive Speech Acts Utilized in Contemporary Islamic Sermons: A Case Study of Dr. Haifaa Younis's Sermons" by Noor Ilya Mohd (2024), which aims to analyze selected Islamic sermons delivered by Dr. Haifa Younis, examining the use of directive speech acts in her speeches using John Searle's method.

The article "An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts in Joe Biden's Victory Speech Regarding United States Election" by Zaenurdin and Sri Supiah Cahyati (2024) analyzes the speech acts in Joe Biden's 2020 electoral victory speech based on John Searle's speech act theory, concluding that most of Biden's acts in this speech are of a persuasive nature.

### **Combined Methodology**

The research method in this article is of a combined nature. The combined approach, or multidimensional/methodological research, quantitative and qualitative, mixed, intertwined, is a type of research in which the researcher or researchers employ a set of quantitative and qualitative methods based on various paradigms to enable the investigation of an uncertain situation and facilitate the process (Bazargan, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 156). In other words, this type of research, which is philosophically based on a pragmatic approach, aims to combine both quantitative and qualitative approaches within a single study simultaneously, sequentially, or interchangeably (Mohammadpour et al., 2010 AD/1389 SH: 77) and analyzes data in both numerical and verbal forms, emphasizing deductive and inductive reasoning (Hakimzadeh, Abdolmaleki, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 28). In this rapidly expanding approach, the question posed in the research is more important than the research method itself (Hasani, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 151). Therefore, as a methodology, it focuses on the collection, analysis, and integration of quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or a series of studies (Creswell, Clark, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 5-6). Ultimately, the combined approach leads to a broader understanding of research issues (Creswell, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 346).

In light of this, we have decided to examine the application of this research method in political studies, emphasizing the letters of the Supreme Leader. Therefore, it is necessary first to study the qualitative data, namely the text of the letter and its historical context, and then to refer to the quantitative data regarding the frequency of speech acts and the count of each act, and finally, we will analyze the combined data.

### **Speech Act Theory**

Speech Act Theory is one of the most important theories in linguistics originated by John Austin and further developed by John Searle. This theory examines the relationships between language and social actions, emphasizing that utterances and linguistic performances are more than just a set of symbols and structures; they possess social and cultural significance.

Speech Act Theory emphasizes that language and speech are used as a means to perform social and interactive functions. This theory focuses on the idea that language and speech are utilized not only to convey information and concepts but also to perform actions and create social connections. In other words, utterances and language, according to Speech Act Theory, are viewed as tools for performing social and cultural functions (Green, 2020).

One of the fundamental concepts in Speech Act Theory is the concept of "Speech Act." In general, a speech act refers to all the actions and activities performed through language and speech. These acts can include making statements, questioning and answering, describing, inviting, threatening, committing, absolving, and so on. In fact, any utterance that is made and has a reciprocal effect on one or more individuals can be considered a speech act in Speech Act Theory (Fotion, 2014: 61–62).

In Speech Act Theory, the primary linguistic unit is the speech act, which is produced as a piece of speech or writing by a specific individual for another individual in a particular context. A speech act consists of three components: The manner of speaking, the verbal message, and the illocutionary effect. The manner of speaking refers to the acoustic and semantic characteristics of the sentence. The verbal message pertains to the communication goals and intentions of the speaker, and the illocutionary effect describes the impact on the audience (Green, 2020).

John R. Searle, one of the key theorists in Speech Act Theory, identifies five basic types of speech acts (Dirven, R; Verspoor, 2004: 152) and elaborates on distinctions among them:

**1. Assertive Acts:** In this speech act, the speaker expresses their belief about the truth or falsity of a statement. Assertive acts are the most prevalent in the Holy Qur'an and are found in many chapters and verses.

**2. Directive or Persuasive Acts:** The goal of the persuasive speech act is to encourage the audience to do something and to place them in a state of obligation to perform an action.

**3. Commissive Acts:** The main point of this speech act is that the speaker commits themselves (to varying degrees) to perform an action in the future by making a statement.

**4. Expressive Acts:** These are acts in which the speaker's mental state and emotions are expressed. The speaker conveys their feelings through appreciation, thanks, apologies, congratulations, curses, and similar expressions.

**5. Declarative Acts:** A declarative speech act announces new conditions to the audience. The speaker creates new changes through their declarations. This act is based on the correspondence between language and the external world and occurs when the speaker has the authority and capacity to state new events (Abedini, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 52-53).

These five speech acts are specific linguistic tools that clearly indicate the intended speech act. For example, verbs like "Congratulate," "Insist," "Warn," or "Request" can signify which speech act is being used. Phrases like "I promise" or "I forgive you" demonstrate the illocutionary force that the speaker is conveying. These linguistic tools are known as "Performative Utterances" because they are active in the first-person singular, declarative, present tense, and indicative form. Often, the phrase "Hereby" can be added to them. Furthermore, the illocutionary force refers to other tools that can also be used. For instance, words like "Please" can enhance the effectiveness of a request, as seen in the three main types of sentences: Declarative, interrogative, and imperative (Yule, 1996: 54).

Speech acts that resemble sentences may function as requests, while speech acts that resemble announcements may act as warnings or threats. Searle also refers to indirect speech acts alongside direct ones (Searle, 1966: 30). In indirect speech acts, speakers perform the speech act (the primary act) through another speech act (the secondary act). Both speech acts must be assessed, and they can only be understood when considered as two interdependent sentences, one depending on the other. Again, these indirect speech acts may be highly conventional and reliant on the principles of linguistic cooperation, playing a crucial role in assessing linguistic politeness. For example, a simple request like "Could you please pass the

salt to me?" would prompt the listener more to hand the salt to the speaker than to respond with "Yes." (cf. Norgaard, 2015 AD/1394 SH)

### **The Leader's Letter to Western Youth**

In response to the Israeli regime's attacks on Gaza, peaceful protests by students began on April 17, 2024, in reaction to the genocide and killing of the people in Gaza by Israel, starting from universities in the United States and gradually extending to universities in other Western countries. The crackdown, detention, and expulsion of protesting students by the U.S. government and other Western governments elicited various reactions. Among them, Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, expressed solidarity and empathy with their actions in a letter addressed to the Palestinian-supporting students.

His letter to the students supporting the Palestinian people in U.S. universities marks the third letter by Ayatollah Khamenei to Western youth in the past ten years, issued in 1403 (corresponding to 2024). He expressed solidarity with the anti-Zionist protests of these students, regarded them as part of the resistance front, and emphasized the need for change in the situation and fate of the sensitive region of West Asia.

In the text of Ayatollah Khamenei's letter, it is stated:

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

I write this letter to the young people whose awakened conscience has compelled them to defend the oppressed children and women of Gaza.

Dear student youth in the United States! This is our message of empathy and solidarity with you. You are now standing on the right side of history—which is being turned.

You have now become part of the resistance front, and under the relentless pressure of your government—which openly defends the illegitimate and ruthless Zionist regime—you have embarked on a noble struggle.

The great resistance front has been fighting for years with the very awareness and sentiments you hold today. The goal of this struggle is to stop the blatant injustice that has been inflicted upon the Palestinian people by a terrorist and ruthless network known as the "Zionists," which has subjected them to the harshest pressures and tortures since the occupation of their land. The genocide today carried out by the Zionist apartheid regime is a continuation of the extremely oppressive behavior of previous decades.

Palestine is an independent land with a nation composed of Muslims, Christians, and Jews, and with a long historical legacy. Following World War II, Zionist capitalists, with the assistance of the British government, gradually brought in a few thousand terrorists to this land; they invaded its cities and villages; killing tens of thousands or driving them into neighboring countries; stripping them of their homes, markets, and farms; and establishing a state called Israel in the occupied land of Palestine.

The largest supporter of this usurping regime, after the initial British aid, is the United States of America, which has continued its political, economic, and military support for that regime without interruption and has even, with an unforgivable carelessness, opened the way for it to produce nuclear weapons and aided it in this endeavor.

From the very first day, the Zionist regime employed the policy of an "Iron Fist" against the defenseless Palestinian people, indifferent to all moral, human, and religious values, increasing its ruthlessness, terror, and oppression day by day.

The U.S. government and its partners have even refrained from a frown against this state terrorism and continuous oppression. Today, some statements from the U.S. government regarding the horrific crimes in Gaza are more hypocritical than they are genuine.

The "Resistance Front" has emerged from this dark and despairing atmosphere, and the establishment of the "Islamic Republic" in Iran has expanded and empowered it.

The leaders of international Zionism, who control or influence the majority of media outlets in the United States and Europe with their money and bribery, have labeled this courageous and humanitarian resistance as terrorism! Is a nation that defends itself against the crimes of occupying Zionists in its own land a terrorist? And is humanitarian assistance to this nation and strengthening its arms considered support for terrorism?

The leaders of global violent domination show no mercy even towards human concepts. They portray the terrorist and ruthless regime of Israel as defending itself, while they label the Palestinian resistance, which is fighting for its freedom, security, and the right to self-determination, as "Terrorists!"

I want to assure you that today, the situation is changing. Another destiny awaits the sensitive region of West Asia. Many consciences around the world have awakened, and the truth is coming to light. The resistance front has also become stronger and will continue to strengthen. History is turning.



In addition to you students from dozens of universities in the United States, universities and people in other countries have also risen up. The solidarity and support of university professors for you students is a significant and impactful development. This can provide some solace in the face of the government's heavy-handed police actions and the pressures put on you. I also empathize with you young people and appreciate your steadfastness.

The lesson of the Quran for us Muslims and all people of the world is to stand firm for the truth: "So remain steadfast as you have been commanded." (Hūd/112) The lesson of the Quran regarding human relations is: "Do not commit oppression, nor be subjected to oppression." (al-Baqarah/279) The resistance front progresses and will achieve victory by adhering to these instructions and hundreds of similar ones, with God's permission.

I recommend that you become familiar with the Quran.

Sayyid Ali Khamenei

1403/3/5

### **Historical Context of the Letter's Writing**

Numerous factors led to widespread protests by students at universities in the United States and the writing of this letter. Among the most important reasons for these events are the actions of the Zionists in Palestine, the occupation of Palestinian land, the imposition of the harshest pressures and torture on the Palestinian people, the genocide by the Zionist apartheid regime, and the continuation of extremely oppressive behavior over the past decades.

To examine the history of this region, it should first be stated that the initial name of Palestine, considering the settlement of the Canaanite Arabs, was known as "The Land of Canaan." This region was later renamed Palestine due to the presence of one of the Cretan tribes (Za'itar, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 34).

During the reign of Joshua bin Nun, the Jews crossed into this area from the Jordan River and attacked the city of Jericho. In the Old Testament, the journey of Joshua bin Nun is described in Chapter 6:

"Israelites killed all the people of Jericho, men and women, old and young, and even passed the animals through the sword. They set fire to everything found in the city, except for gold, silver, copper vessels, and iron implements, which they did not destroy and collected in the treasury of the "Lord." After Jericho, they seized some other cities in Palestine; however,

the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Jebus) resisted and ultimately did not surrender, and the shores of Palestine remained in the hands of the Palestinians." (Zaytar, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 38)

Then, about two hundred years later, Prophet David established the first Israeli government in this region (Ahmadi, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 21). In 587 BC, the kingdom of Israel was completely destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and the Jews were taken captive. George Friedman writes about this: "The twelve tribes of the Israelites were exiled to the Caucasus, Armenia, and especially Babylon, and thus, the Jewish people with all their essence, along with their race, national, and religious community, disappeared forever." (Behmanesh, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 250-251)

Of course, after the Iranian attack of Cyrus on Babylon, the Jews were freed, and some returned to Palestine; however, they were never able to establish a government again and fell under the control of the Macedonians and Romans. Most Jews in Babylon also remained in Babylon (Ivanov, 1977 AD/1356 SH: 21).

Subsequently, until the establishment of the state of Israel, few Jews lived in this region, and even Namn Jarvandi states that in the year 1267 AD, only two Jewish families lived in Jerusalem (Katan, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 16). Therefore, historically, contrary to the claims of Zionists, the region of Palestine cannot be exclusively assigned to the Jews, nor can they be considered the rightful owners of this land; as Maxime Rodinson, a French Jewish researcher, states: "The people of Palestine are, in every sense, the indigenous Palestinians of old and the descendants of the Canaanites and other early tribes of Palestine." (Katan, 1990 AD/1369 SH: 21)

Throughout these years, governance of these regions was mainly in the hands of Christians and then Muslims, with the last rulers of this area being the Ottoman Caliphs, whose rule was destroyed after World War I, and their territory was divided among Europeans, with the region of Palestine being allocated to the British.

Historically, the idea of forming a Zionist state and an independent Jewish state dates back to the late 19th century and the views of Benjamin Theodor Herzl. In his book "The Jewish State," he considered the establishment of a Jewish country as the only solution for the salvation of the Jews (Cleveland, 2004: 224). Herzl states that the Jewish issue is "Neither a social issue nor a religious issue; neither can be justified. This issue is, in fact, a national issue. A national issue that, to address it, we must present it as a political issue in international relations... In fact, we are a nation, a united nation." (Galina, 1976 AD/1356 SH: 23)

In 1896, the first Zionist Congress was held in the city of Basel, Switzerland, and it was presided over by Herzl. The result of this congress was to create a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine and to establish the World Zionist Organization (Lenchewski, 1956 AD/1336 SH: 322). At the first Zionist Congress, it was determined that: "The goal of Zionism is to establish a homeland for the Jewish nation in Palestine, this homeland is guaranteed by public law." (Kiyali, 1987 AD/1366 SH: 39) Herzl had several meetings with the Ottoman government regarding the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine; however, the Ottoman government opposed it (Nasiri, 2014 AD/1394 SH: 410). He also met with the wealthy Rothschild family to seek their support for the establishment of such a state. The Rothschild family, realizing that the formation of a Jewish state and Zionism in this region was in their interest, provided financial support for this approach (al-Masiri, 2004 AD/1383 SH: 6, 201).

In 1916, three countries—England, Russia, and France—signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement, agreeing that after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Palestine would be administered under British control (Safataj, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 83-84). On November 2, 1917, in the Balfour Declaration, Britain agreed to the establishment of a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine and promised to use its best efforts to bring this homeland into being (Sajjadi, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 47; Sewidan, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 258). After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I in 1918, Britain occupied Palestine in September 1918 and appointed Zionist Jews to administer the region (Sajjadi, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 50). Subsequently, many Jews migrated from across Europe to Palestine (Joodaki & Fallahi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 42) and established numerous organizations and institutions in the region (Sewidan, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 259). In 1948, with the end of British governance in the region of Palestine, David Ben-Gurion, the leader of the Zionists at the time, declared the establishment of the State of Israel (Zaidabadi, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 128; Kaffash et al., 2013 AD/1392 SH: 186).

One day after the official announcement of the establishment of the State of Israel, the armies of five Arab countries—Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Iraq—fought against the Zionists in Israel. This war ended after several months with the defeat of the Arab countries' armies (Haddad, 2022). After this war, Israelis continued to occupy other areas of Palestine, a situation that persists to this day.

As a result, on October 7, 2023, Hamas forces launched an operation known as "Storm of al-Aqsa" against Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories. The motivation behind this operation for Hamas has been identified as a response to the occupation and violations of human rights by Israel. Hamas-supporting media have also stated that the reasons for this operation are in reaction to the ongoing crimes of Israel in the massacre of Palestinians, the desecration of al-Aqsa Mosque, assaults on its guardians, and support for the incursions of Zionist settlers against Palestinians. In the announcement from the military commander of Hamas, published on the third day of the battle, the justification for the operation referred to the desecration of Muslim sanctities by Zionists, the suffering endured by them, and the aggression against Palestinian land. (<https://fa.wikishia.net/view>)

In the narrative of Hamas regarding the "Storm of al-Aqsa," it is stated:

"The battle of our nation against the Zionist regime did not begin on October 7; it began 105 years ago. Our nation has been under British colonialism for 30 years and under the occupation of the Zionist regime for 75 years. Over the past decades, our nation has experienced various forms of oppression, injustices, and apartheid policies. The Gaza Strip has been under siege for 17 years and has become the largest open-air prison in the world. The Gaza Strip has experienced five devastating wars, and in all these wars, the Zionist regime was the aggressor. From the year 2000 until September 2023, the Zionist regime has martyred 11,299 Palestinians and injured 156,768 others, most of whom were civilians." (<https://www.isna.ir/news/1402110100719>)

### **Speech Acts in the Letter**

The extraction of concepts and speech acts from the text of the letter of Ayatollah Khamenei is based on speech segments. These speech segments are small or large pieces of language, the meaning of which arises from the interaction of language and the context of its production, which can be a word, a paragraph, or several pages of text. This interactive interpretation is a factor in the production of hashtags in the virtual space. In other words, a speech segment is a short or long segment of language whose meaning is the result of the interaction of language and its production context. This perspective increases the researcher's flexibility in analyzing the communicative process in the text, as from the standpoint of speech acts, it can be a single word, a complete discourse, or a literary work; however, the principles of analyzing a single-sentence speech act and a lengthy piece are the same, thus

allowing for the selection and analysis of a portion of a text. In the following section, direct and indirect speech acts in the text of the letter will be presented in a table.

**Table 1: Types of Direct and Indirect Speech Acts**

Speech Acts	Direct Speech Acts	Indirect Speech Acts
In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful( <a href="https://khl.ink/f/56567">https://khl.ink/f/56567</a> )	Statement	Persuasive
I am writing this letter to the young people whose awakened conscience has urged them to defend the oppressed children and women of Gaza.	Statement	Persuasive
Dear student youths in the United States!	Emotional	Persuasive
This is our message of empathy and solidarity with you.	Emotional	Persuasive
You are now standing on the right side of history — which is currently being turned.	Statement	Persuasive
You have now formed a part of the resistance front.	Statement	Persuasive
And under the ruthless pressure of your government — which openly defends the usurping and ruthless Zionist regime — you have begun a honorable struggle.	Statement	Persuasive
The great front of resistance has been fighting for years with the same perceptions and feelings you have today.	Statement	Persuasive
The goal of this struggle is to stop the blatant oppression inflicted on the Palestinian people by a ruthless terrorist network known as "Zionists," which has subjected them to the harshest pressures and tortures since the usurpation of their land. The genocide being committed by the Zionist apartheid regime today is a continuation of the extremely cruel behavior of the past decades.	Statement	Persuasive
Palestine is an independent land with a nation comprised of Muslims, Christians, and Jews, with a long historical background.	Statement	Persuasive
After World War II, the Zionist capitalists, with the aid of the British government, gradually brought in several thousand terrorists to this land.	Statement	Persuasive
They attacked its cities and villages; tens of thousands were killed.	Statement	Persuasive
Or they were driven to neighboring countries; homes,	Statement	Persuasive

markets, and farms were taken from them, and a state named Israel was established in the usurped land of Palestine.		
The largest supporter of this usurping regime, after the initial aid from the British, is the United States government, which has continued its political, economic, and military support for the regime, and even, with unforgivable recklessness, opened the way for the production of nuclear weapons for it and assisted it in this regard.	Persuasive	Statement
The Zionist regime, from the very first day, employed an "iron fist" policy against the defenseless Palestinian people and, disregarding all moral, human, and religious values, has increasingly resorted to ruthlessness, terrorism, and oppression.	Statement	Persuasive
The U.S. government and its partners have even hesitated to frown upon this state terrorism and ongoing oppression. Even today, some statements from the United States regarding the horrific crimes in Gaza are more hypocritical than genuine.	Statement	Persuasive
The "Resistance Front" emerged from this dark and despairing atmosphere, and the establishment of the "Islamic Republic" in Iran expanded and empowered it.	Statement	Persuasive
The leaders of international Zionism, who own or exert influence over most media outlets in the U.S. and Europe through money and bribery, have labeled this courageous and human resistance as terrorism.	Statement	Persuasive
Is a nation that defends itself in its rightful land against the crimes of the occupying Zionists a terrorist?	Persuasive	Persuasive
And does humanitarian assistance to this nation and strengthening its arms count as aiding terrorism?	Persuasive	Persuasive
The leaders of global violent dominance do not spare even human concepts. They portray the terrorist and ruthless Israeli regime as the defender of itself	Statement	Persuasive
And label the Palestinian resistance, which defends freedom, security, and the right to self-determination, as "Terrorists"!	Statement	Persuasive
I want to assure you that today the situation is changing.	Commitment	Persuasive
A different fate awaits the sensitive region of West Asia.	Commitment	Persuasive
Many consciences on a global scale have awakened, and the truth is becoming apparent.	Commitment	Persuasive
The resistance front has also become stronger and will	Commitment	Persuasive

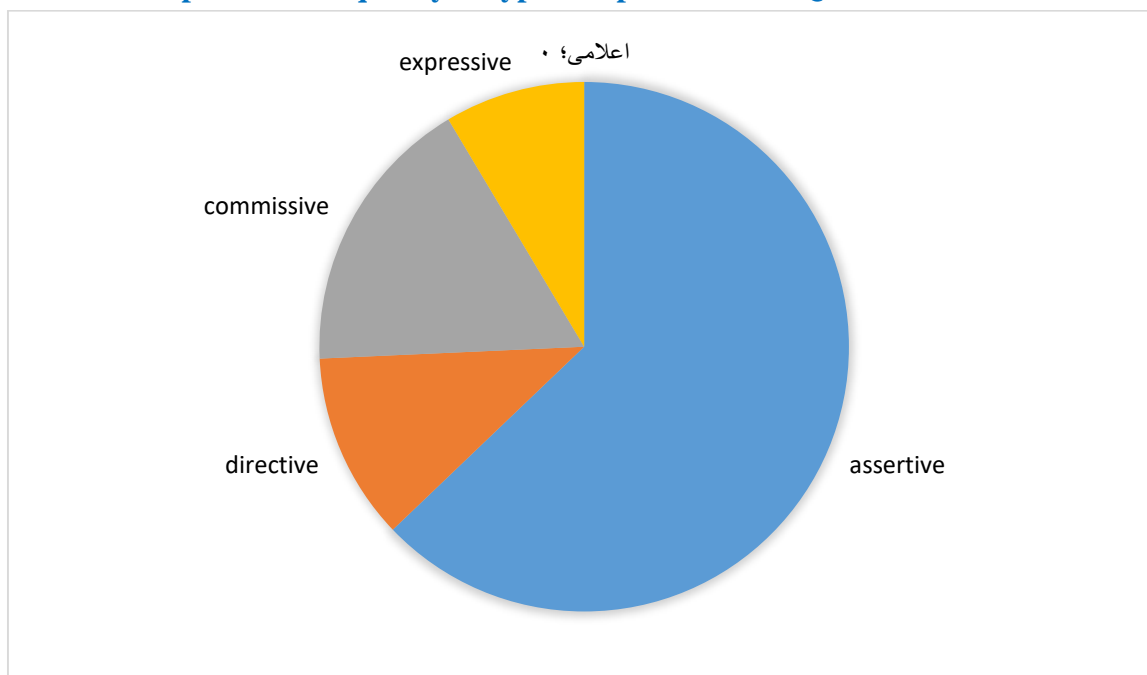


become even stronger.		
History is also being turned.	Commitment	Persuasive
In addition to you students from dozens of universities in the United States, universities and people in other countries have also risen up. The support of university professors for you students is a significant and influential event.	Statement	Persuasive
This can somewhat soothe the impact of the government's police actions and the pressures you face.	Statement	Persuasive
I also feel solidarity with you youths and admire your resilience.	Emotional	Persuasive
The lesson of the Quran for us Muslims and for all the people of the world is to stand firm in the path of truth:	Statement	Persuasive
"So remain steadfast as you have been commanded." (Hūd/112)	Statement	Persuasive
And the lesson of the Quran regarding human interactions is: do not commit oppression, nor submit to oppression.	Statement	Persuasive
"Do not oppress one another, nor be oppressed."(al-Baqarah/279)	Statement	Persuasive
The resistance front advances and will achieve victory by embracing and acting upon these commandments and hundreds of similar teachings.	Commitment	Persuasive
By the permission of God.	Statement	Persuasive
I urge you to become acquainted with the Quran.	Persuasive	Persuasive

According to Table 1, the most frequent speech act is declarative acts, accounting for 62.85%. In second place are commitment acts at 17.14%, followed by persuasive acts at 11.42%, and finally emotional acts at 8.57%, which occupy the last position. No instances of performative acts were found.

**Table 2: Frequency of Types of Speech Acts**

Row	Assertive	Directives	Commissive	Expressive	Declaration	Total
Count	22	4	6	3	0	35
Percentage	62.85	11.42	17.14	8.57	0	99.98

**Graph of the frequency of types of speech acts in Quranic references**

## Conclusion

The present study, after examining the letter of the Supreme Leader, arrived at the following results within the framework of Searle's speech act theory. Since Ayatollah Khamenei, as a religious-political leader, consistently needs to consider the interests of the country, Islam, and the world, he has articulated appropriate speech acts in his statements under various political and cultural conditions. Given the crises, conflicts, and changing political circumstances, the statements of the Leader of the Revolution can assist the people in choosing the right path and making appropriate decisions.

A good communication between the Leader, as a religious figure, and the youth and students requires a clear understanding of events and enlightenment. Consequently, assertive speech acts hold the highest status and importance in Ayatollah Khamenei's letter. For example, at the beginning of his letter, he stated, "I write this letter to the young people whose awakened conscience has driven them to defend the oppressed children and women of Gaza." The use of this type of speech act reflects his sincerity towards the students.

In the second place among speech acts, commissive acts account for 17.14% in the leader's discourse. For example, he mentioned, "I want to assure you that today the situation is changing." This indicates that after explaining and clarifying issues, the commitment to

victory, supported by divine promises and past experiences, is certain, instilling hope in the Palestinians and the axis of resistance, as well as the students that they will prevail with patience and steadfastness.

Next, persuasive acts make up 11.42% and rank third. For instance, he advises, "I recommend that you become familiar with the Quran." The goal of persuasive acts is to motivate and encourage students to take action, which is achieved through such acts and the use of verses like "So remain steadfast as you have been commanded, and do not oppress one another, nor be oppressed." Finally, emotional acts, accounting for 8.57%, occupy the last position. For example, the Leader begins the letter with an emotional appeal, addressing "Dear student youth in the United States!" Among the indirect speech acts in the letter, the most frequent were the persuasive acts.

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# The Concept and Method of Humanities in the Thoughts of Iranian Thinkers with Emphasis on the Views of Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The present study aims to examine the concept and methodology of the humanities in the thoughts of Iranian thinkers, focusing on the opinions and ideas of Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush". With the expansion of natural sciences from the 15th century and the stagnation of the humanities in the 18th and 19th centuries, debates emerged among scholars regarding whether the humanities follow the rules of natural sciences or have their own distinct principles. Some thinkers believed that if the humanities adhered to the methodologies of natural sciences, they would be similar to them; others believed that the humanities have their own specific methods. The latter group strove to establish the foundations for legitimizing the humanities. In Iran society, influenced both by philosophical and methodological debates in academic circles and by the ideological and intellectual climate following the intellectual situation of Iran society, various interpretations of the humanities emerged. Among the Iranian thinkers who theorized about the humanities, influenced by these conditions, are Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush.

**Method:** To this aim was used an analytical-descriptive method and data collection in this study is documentary library research.

**Results:** The results indicated that in Iran after the 1979 revolution, Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush, on one hand, were influenced by the intellectual and methodological debates of scientism and hermeneutics in international academic circles and, on the other hand, by the intellectual situation of Iran society, engaged with the subject of the humanities. Reza Davari Ardakani regards the humanities as a product of the crisis of Western modernity, while Abdulkarim Soroush considers humanity method to be the same as that of natural sciences and understands it based on this method.

**Conclusions:** the common point for both thinkers is that they regard the humanities as certain branches of human knowledge that are indispensable and mandatory for the development and organization of contemporary human life

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## Introduction

Humanity is one of the controversial concepts in academic circles. Since the 15th century, with the expansion of natural sciences and the subsequent dominance of scientism and positivism in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the stagnation of the humanities, debates arose among scholars regarding what the humanities are and whether the humanities, in terms of methodology, follow the rules of natural sciences or have their own distinct principles. Some believed that if the humanities adhere to the rules and values of natural sciences, they are similar to and a branch of natural sciences; others denied this and argued that the humanities, like natural sciences, have their own specific rules. The latter group attempted to establish the foundations for objectivity in the humanities and to organize and legitimize specific rules for the humanities, similar to those of natural sciences.

Thus, the growth of natural sciences and the stagnation of the humanities caused a gap and distance between the two fields, raising questions in the minds of researchers. Some proponents of scientism and positivism did not make a distinction between the humanities and natural sciences in response to the issue of their differences. This group viewed society as part of nature (Little: 2009, 17). In contrast to this approach, some believed that because human actions are purposeful and humans are intentional agents, it is not possible to analyze the humanities and human thought based on natural sciences.

In Iranian society, especially after the 1979 revolution, various interpretations emerged among scholars and on the other hand, shaped by the intellectual disputes in Iran post-revolution, the concept of the humanities gained attention. Consequently, numerous debates and questions arose among Iranian thinkers, such as whether a concept such as the humanities actually exists, whether this knowledge can be produced, whether it is a Western science that is not adaptable, or whether it can be adapted, and ultimately, whether it has the capability of being Islamic.

Based on the previous discussion, two of the most important thinkers who have engaged with the topic of the humanities in Iranian society are Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush. These two thinkers are influenced both by Western philosophical and methodological debates and by the intellectual discussions in Iranian society post-revolution regarding the concept of the humanities. Reza Davari Ardakani is recognized among Iranian thinkers as a follower of Heidegger's ideas. Following Heidegger's methodology in defense of

philosophy, he critiques the science and rationality of the modern world, considering modernity to be the result of human science and rationality during the modern era and rejecting many concepts of the new world, including the humanities, as products of rationality, science, and subjectivity in the modern world. He examines the humanities within the framework of Western studies and critiques of modernity. In his view, the humanities are the outcome of the crisis of Western modernity and the historical conditions that have emerged in the West (Davari, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 14). However, despite his critique of the humanities, he sees them as essential for organizing society. Abdulkarim Soroush, influenced by Popper's ideas and based on a methodology of science and scientism, has also engaged with the topic of the humanities.

He considers the methodology of the humanities to be the same as that of the natural sciences and essentially draws on his own understanding of the philosophy of science and the history of sciences to distinguish philosophy, science, and religion, demonstrating that philosophy and religion do not replace the humanities. He sees the humanities as part of the empirical sciences and does not consider empirical science to be morality or philosophy. In his view, if the humanities have a defining characteristic, it is that these sciences are empirical anthropology (Soroush, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 19).

### **Research Question.**

The question that arises in this research is: How have Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush understood the humanities based on their philosophical viewpoint and methodology and what concept of humanities have they expressed?

### **Research Method.**

The method used to investigate this research is analytical-descriptive, relying on library resources and with an inferential approach. In this method, while examining the concept of humanities in the thought of Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush, the formation of the humanities, the explanation of the concept of humanities, and the encounter with the concept of humanities in the thinking of these two thinkers will be examined.

### **Research Background.**

In terms of the background and literature of the research on the concept of humanities in the thought of two thinkers, no specific article, book or work has been compiled, and in this regard, the present research is new. However, Dr. Reza Davari himself has compiled a book entitled *Humanities and Development Planning*, which consists of a collection of articles that have irregularly expressed topics about the humanities. Abdulkarim Soroush, since he has been referring to science to, He defends the concept of science and humanities and has compiled a book titled *What is Science, what is Philosophy*, in which the book specifically describes the subject of philosophy and methodological discussions. In his other book, titled, "*Tafarruj Şun‘ or Watching the creation*", he discussed the humanities, in which he elaborated on the humanities and its methodology. A thesis entitled "*The Impact of Continental and Analytical Philosophy on New Thinkers in the Islamic Republic Period*" has been compiled by Aref barkhordari at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of Tehran, in which discussions about the humanities in the thought of Abdulkarim Soroush and Reza Davari Ardakani were expressed.

### **Research Objective.**

The purpose of compiling these topics is to investigate the concept of humanities in the thought of Iranian thinkers with an emphasis on Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush, based on their methodology and how to explain this discussion and their encounter with such a concept.

### **Results.**

The findings of the present study show that Reza Davari Ardakani examines and criticizes the humanities in the form of his Western studies project. In fact, in his view, crises have formed in modernity that the humanities have been formed to regulate and resolve these crises, however, he considers the humanities to be inevitable for organizing life. Abdulkarim Soroush defends the humanities. He considers the method of humanities to be the same as that of natural sciences and tries to show the humanities as distinct from philosophy, theology, and ethics by using the philosophy of science. In his view, the humanities are science in the specific sense of the word, and the characteristic of the humanities is that the humanities are empirical anthropology, and for this reason, they are similar to the natural sciences in method.

### **Theoretical Discussions**

Carl Löwith believed that Voltaire (1649-1778) was the first to replace divine providence with human will in the improvement of living conditions and human relationships through human self-sufficiency and reason (Riescher, 2016). Centered on humanity, humans became the focus of the discourse of the sciences, leading to the emergence and promotion of the discourse of the humanities, which had humans as both the subject and object (Fazeli and Fotouhi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 162).

Regarding the emergence and establishment of the humanities, it can be said that the humanities appeared and then became established successively in Western societies. From the beginning, the humanities became prevalent in the form of discourse in Europe, as during the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment, the natural sciences such as physics, chemistry, medicine, biology, etc., saw advancements. Gradually, from this period onward, humanity became the central focus, leading to self-exploration, and during this time, the discourse of the humanities promoted and strengthened ideas from Descartes, Kant, Hume, Hegel, and others. Subsequently, the humanities were institutionalized with the establishment of an educational institution in Paris in 1795, where the foundations of law, management, economics, history, and geography were laid (Moradi, <https://www.phalsafe.com/node/917>). Furthermore, the humanities were solidified as a field of knowledge and understanding in various disciplines by thinkers such as Durkheim, Taylor, Wilhelm Wundt, and eventually Wilhelm Dilthey (Fazeli and Fotouhi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 162).

If we wish to discuss the process of the formation of the humanities in more detail, it must be acknowledged that since the fifteenth century, with Bacon's empiricism followed by the discussions of Descartes, Kant, Auguste Comte, and John Stuart Mill, the natural sciences expanded. The expansion of the natural sciences was so pleasing that it led everyone to think that science is synonymous with natural science and that the criterion for scientific validity is based on the natural sciences.

With this situation, Kant bent the knee before Newtonian science and rejected metaphysics. Auguste Comte and John Stuart Mill founded sociology based on natural science, proceeding in the manner of the natural sciences and employing an inductive method to arrive at mathematical laws for predictions concerning individuals and groups, thereby creating empirical sociology (Little, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 17). Following this, in the 18th and 19th

centuries, scholars of science and then positivists adhered to the methods of the natural sciences, leading to the growth of natural sciences (Little, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 374).

The increasing growth of natural sciences created a rift and distance from the humanities. The growth of natural sciences and the stagnation of the humanities raised questions in the minds of researchers. Since scientism and positivism were the dominant approaches in the 18th and 19th centuries, in response to the issue of the difference between the humanities and natural sciences, some positivists did not make a distinction between the two. This group considered society as part of nature and, instead of regarding humans as purposeful and active beings, viewed them as physical entities... (ibid: 17).

In contrast to this approach, some thinkers believed that because human action is purposeful, it cannot be studied in the same manner as natural sciences; thus, thought cannot be analyzed based on natural science. They argued that social phenomena inherently possess meaning and are contingent upon the meanings of their actors and that the explanation of social phenomena is only possible through the discovery of their interpretive meanings (Little, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 390). They acknowledged that the natural sciences and the humanities have different characteristics, and that the issue of the humanities pertains to the spirit of humanity. The foremost thinker of this perspective is Dilthey. He considers the humanities distinct from natural sciences in terms of their foundations. According to him, the humanities, as a concept distinct from the natural sciences, are rooted in the depths and totality of human consciousness (Dilthey, 1989: 58). He refers to the disciplines that focus on the socio-historical reality of human beings as the humanities (Dilthey, 1989: 56).

Dilthey was influenced by Kant, Hegel, Schleier Macher and others in his discussions. Dilthey's critique of historical reason was influenced by Kant; he drew on Hegel's theories regarding historicity and objective spirit. Another philosopher who impacted Dilthey's thought was Schleiermacher. He believed that understanding is possible through a shared human consciousness, which influenced Dilthey's theory (Vaezi, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 97).

According to Dilthey, the totality of natural sciences is based on solid foundations, while the foundations of the humanities are weak. This issue raised a question in Dilthey's mind: Just as certain, objective, and reliable understanding and awareness are possible in the natural sciences, 'How is that feasible in the humanities?' Dilthey considers hermeneutics to be a suitable method for the humanities and based on this foundation, he examined the humanities in two intellectual periods. In the first period, he acknowledged that the concept of science is

divided into two categories: Natural sciences and humanities (Dilthey 1989: 58). He views the foundation and structure of the humanities as different from those of the natural sciences. According to him, the humanities have their own subject, method, and goal. He names the disciplines of history, economics, politics, law, government, religion, literature, poetry, architecture, music, worldviews, philosophical systems, and psychology as the humanities (Dilthey 2002: 101 and 324). Dilthey refers to the disciplines that study the socio-historical reality of humans as the humanities (Dilthey 1989: 56). For him, the subject of the humanities consists of units that are not inferred but rather exist and are assumed, units that can be understood from within (ibid: 58).

Dilthey articulated the distinctions of the humanities from the natural sciences as follows:

- The dominant flow in the natural world is mechanical, whereas human behavior is based on will and choice (ibid: 57-58);
- The subject matter of the humanities is an internal matter related to spirit and psychological states, while the subject matter of the natural sciences is external (external objects) (ibid: 60-88; Dilthey, 2002: 92, 141 and 160);
- The appropriate method for the humanities is self-reflection or introspection (though this view was later revised to consider the understanding and interpretation of inner states), while the appropriate method for the natural sciences is empirical or explanatory (Dilthey, 1989: 143-144);
- The world of human spirit is productive and creative, and is dependent on values and goals, whereas the natural world is silent and devoid of values and goals (Dilthey, 2002: 175).

Dilthey then discusses the subject of the humanities, namely the question of whether knowledge of socio-historical reality (the human world) as a whole is possible, and if so, how this reality can be known and by what method. Dilthey's response to this question involves two approaches: psychological and based on the science of interpretation. In the first approach, he views the method of the humanities as self-reflection or introspection. According to him, inner experience is more certain than external experience (Dilthey, 1989: 136, 140, 143-144). In examining this subject, Dilthey chose a descriptive-analytical method, as he believed that spiritual life reveals itself to us in a different way and is based on immediate knowledge (Dilthey, 1977: 53). He argues that descriptive psychology arises from lived experiences surrounding mental life, aiming to understand and describe life in its entirety. According to Dilthey, this type of psychology describes a network that emerges from



the depths of life itself. For this reason, it is capable of providing the inherent regularities of spiritual life based on a descriptive approach (ibid: 35).

Dilthey considers the advantages of descriptive psychology to lie in the fact that the psychic network is represented directly and vividly as lived reality. The lived experience of this foundational network constitutes the basis for understanding all social, historical, and spiritual realities (Maleki and Davari, 2019(A) AD/1398 SH: 232).

Dilthey views the understanding of the psychic network as a factor in human relationships and states that the humanities would be a collection of elements without meaningful connections among them without psychology and the understanding of the psychic nexus. He asserts: "Cultural systems, economy, law, religion, art, science, and external organizations of society have emerged from the living network of human spirit in communities such as family, society, church, and government; thus, they can be understood in relation to it." (Dilthey, 1977: 31)

Therefore, Dilthey strives to achieve universal, absolute, and objective laws by believing in the shared life experiences of humanity. He believed that our direct awareness of our inner experiences, which is direct data, forms an objective and universal foundation for interpretive psychology. The role and status of this psychology in the entire humanities is akin to that of mathematics in the empirical sciences (Vaezi, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 117).

The principles of Dilthey's philosophy in the first period of his thinking were based on two principles: Phenomenality and the psychic nexus. Phenomenality means that object (the external world) are presented to me in awareness as realities just like feelings (the inner world) and are subject to the conditions of awareness (Dilthey, 1989: 245-253). The realities related to consciousness, lived experience, or mental states or internal life are those that are directly present to the mind or human awareness. Dilthey explains the principle of the psychic nexus based on the principle of phenomenality. The psychic nexus encompasses all our perceptions, whether external, internal, or realities of consciousness. The psychic nexus is embedded in psychic life (ibid, 1989: 143-144).

Based on the aforementioned concepts, in the first period of his thinking, Dilthey regarded the immediate awareness of every person of their inner experiences as a direct perception and based his work in the humanities on this direct recognition. He faced criticism during his first intellectual phase and entered a second phase. The achievement of the second phase was that the humanities could not be established solely by the method of introspection because the

method of introspection does not fundamentally serve as a medium for understanding and comprehension; one must reflect on history in order to attain self-knowledge.

To reconsider his thoughts, Dilthey wrote new works in his second phase, the most important of which is the article "The Emergence of Hermeneutics and the Formation of Historical World in the Humanities." In the article "The Emergence of Hermeneutics," Dilthey believes that understanding oneself is only possible externally, and he sees interpreting the objectifications of life as a condition for trusting that understanding. Therefore, he considers the only suitable way to knowledge to be through history and understanding the objectifications of the spirit.

Dilthey's effort in the second phase is to systematize the method of historical understanding. Dilthey refers to the systematic understanding of the stable and relatively permanent objectifications of life as hermeneutics. The science of hermeneutics enables a universally valid interpretation based on the analysis of understanding and ultimately leads to a solution for the problem of objectivity. The analysis of understanding and inner experience is considered together, demonstrating the possibilities and limits of universally valid knowledge in the humanities (Dilthey, 1996: 237-238).

In the article "The Formation of the Historical World," Dilthey views the objectifications of life as the subjects of the humanities. According to Dilthey, objectifications are related to lived experience, through which a person becomes aware of the meaning and content of their life and can interpret the meaning and content of others' lives. Thus, the concept of the humanities is defined by the objectifications of life in the external world. The human spirit can only understand what it has created itself; anything that a person affirms to have produced is the subject of the humanities (Dilthey, 2002: 170-190).

According to Dilthey, we do not import any meaning from the world into life; rather, it is life that gives meaning to the world and opens up possibilities for humans to realize meaning in their historical existence, as humans are historical beings. Therefore, people do not only understand themselves through introspection but also attain self-knowledge in the mirror of history. Hence, the historical world should be considered as a whole, this whole as a generative system, and also as the originator of values and purposes (ibid: 177) and (Maleki and Davari, 2019(B) AD/1398 SH: 233).

In the second phase of his thought, Dilthey considers several concepts to elucidate his theory, which include:

- 1) Lived experience (cf. Palmer, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 119 and Dilthey, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 369 and 318, and Dilthey, 2002: 44);
- 2) Objectification of the spirit (cf. Dilthey, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 258 and *ibid*: 229);
- 3) Understanding (cf. Palmer, 1969: 127; Rickman, 1979: 184);
- 4) Historicity (cf. Dilthey, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 440);
- 5) Hermeneutic circle (cf. Dilthey, 2003: 174; Maleki and Davari, 2019(B) AD/1398 SH: 240);
- 6) Categories of life (cf. Dilthey, 2002: 219-220-253; Dilthey, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 315-365).

## **1. The Concept and Method of the Humanities in the Thoughts of Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush**

### **1.1. Reza Davari Ardakani: The Humanities as a Product of the Crisis of Modernity**

Reza Davari Ardakani critiques the science and rationality of the modern world, influenced by Heidegger's methodology. He considers modernity as the result of science and human rationality during the modern era and sees many concepts of the new world as products of rationality, science, and the subjectivity of the modern world. He believes that many concepts and components of the new world, such as the humanities, freedom, liberalism, human rights, pluralism, modernity, etc., are all concepts shaped by new rationality.

He critiques this type of rationality and its achievements (though he has somewhat revised his thoughts in recent times). Based on this mindset, Reza Davari Ardakani approaches the humanities from three angles: First, the reasons and contexts for the formation of the humanities; second, the principles, definitions, and critiques of the humanities; and third, its inevitability. Accordingly, he first presents a concept and several definitions that elucidate the contexts and reasons for the emergence of the humanities:

1. The Concept of Development: Development fundamentally concerns the building of the world, improving livelihoods, welfare and security politics, establishing a sound administrative order, as well as advancements in science, technology, health, and education. This is a goal that the modern world has envisioned, pursued, and in this pursuit, has led to the emergence of the humanities and social sciences (Davari, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 23);

2. Development is a continuation of the path of modernity;
3. In a modern world that seeks development, crises have arisen, and the humanities and social sciences have emerged in the process of the modernity crisis to systematize the formation of modernity (ibid: 21).

First, he goes to the reasons and grounds for the formation of humanities. According to him, social sciences and humanities have emerged in the history of modernity, covering its inconsistencies. He believes that the humanities articulate the legal rationality of the Western world, which Weber positioned against value rationality. Max Weber considered the era of modernity as a period in which the humanities and social sciences have attempted to disenchant and resolve the crises of the modern world (Davari, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 2).

From Reza Davari's perspective, the humanities and social sciences emerged in the West at a time when rapid transformation and growth were accompanied by freedom, when awareness and freedom took shape and humans reached a point where they could participate and intervene in affairs, allowing them to contemplate issues that led to various conflicts and complexities within modernity. He argues that when modernity took shape, and conflicts and complexities arose within it, the dangers of its future became apparent. The humanities and social sciences—including economics, psychology, ontology, anthropology, sociology, law, and politics—emerged during this period (Davari, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 14).

However, he emphasizes two points in this process: One is that we must pay attention to the socio-historical and political conditions of a society in which these sciences have developed, such as the historical background and crises of the modern and Western world where the humanities took shape.

Second, many sciences did not exist beforehand, or we could not create concepts such as physics, chemistry, or humanities beforehand and say that, in this regard, we will produce science. Rather, in a process where certain problems or research issues arise, a thinker conducts research to solve those problems, which is later refined by other thinkers who label it as physics, chemistry, or the humanities (ibid: 12). Thus, science is the result of a research process aimed at addressing the problems of each society, corresponding to its historical and social conditions and background. Consequently, the humanities are also specific to the Western world.

Reza Davari Ardakani then turns to the foundations and definitions of the humanities. He generally considers modern and human science to belong to the modern world and to be based on the principles of modernity (ibid: 23 and 27). Since Reza Davari Ardakani believes that modern sciences have no divine basis, he argues that the humanities likewise lack a divine foundation; if we place these sciences alongside jurisprudence, mysticism, theology, and poetry, which do have a divine basis, we would create an inappropriate combination (ibid: 35). In other words, Reza Davari Ardakani believes that science, in its new sense, whatever it may be, is objective, and scientific judgments must be reached by adhering to methodological rules and principles. In other words, scientific judgments are factual judgments that enter the realm of science through research, whereas in jurisprudence, theology, and literature, we do not have factual judgments; in mysticism and philosophy, the scientific method is not applicable, and objectivity is not relevant (ibid: 35).

In defining the concept of the humanities, Reza Davari Ardakani provides several definitions. He initially considers the humanities to be an ambiguous concept: The humanities are an ambiguous concept, and sometimes there are substantial judgments made about it without regard to this ambiguity, and perhaps through a careless mixing of the meanings of Humanities and Social Science, not only literature and philosophy, but also interpretation, theology, jurisprudence, and principles are included in the category of humanities (ibid: 193). Reza Davari critiques this from two angles: One is that it mixes old literature and thought with new literature and philosophy, especially science and non-science, leading to confusion. The other is the concealment of the status, dignity, and function of social sciences, and neglecting the differences between these sciences and philosophy, literature, and divine knowledge.

Reza Davari further argues that when we equate jurisprudence, philosophy, and sociology, we fall into the mistake of misjudging their status and forget that sociology, economics, and other social sciences and humanities are the sciences of modern societies. Non-modern societies had ethics, mysticism, literature, wisdom, and philosophy. The reason these societies did not have sociology, economics, psychology, and history is that they did not need these sciences; these societies were organized around religion and tradition (ibid: 195).

Davari then defines the humanities by stating: "The humanities are indeed instrumental in the development of science and contemporary society, and the world, in its path toward development—whose ultimate goal is to benefit more from consumable goods and material

wealth—will not achieve this development without these sciences." In philosophy, theology, mysticism, jurisprudence, principles, and interpretation, we have great researchers and experts, but the humanities and social sciences must be learned from elsewhere (ibid: 196).

In another definition, Davari views the humanities and social sciences as the result of the crises, conflicts, and complexities of modernity and as a means to organize them. He includes economics, psychology, ethnology, anthropology, demography, law, politics, and more, asserting that the core of all these sciences is human-centered, capable of transforming and organizing the world through will and knowledge (ibid: 14).

Ultimately, Davari considers the humanities to be unavoidable and believes regarding the need for the humanities: "There are two types of needs: Psychological need and true-historical need. Our need for the humanities has been a psychological one. Perhaps we need the humanities because they exist in the West, and whatever exists in the West should also be present here. However, the humanities in the West help solve problems; but 'Do we also want to use them to address our issues?' This is a good aspiration, provided that we do not aim to create science before reaching the problem, and it should also be acknowledged that imitative and manipulated science does not resolve any needs."

Continuing, in order to utilize the humanities and answer the question of 'What our issues are?' Davari states: "Undoubtedly, the main issues of our society and politics are development issues. It is certain that everyone desires development. Growth in today's world, especially in the context of developing countries, occurs through planning, and such planning cannot happen without economics, sociology, psychology, statistics, and history. These sciences as they are and with their non-religious foundations are the guides for development, and their principles cannot be separated from their foundations." (ibid: 268-269)

Reza Davari Ardakani considers Iranian society to be in need of the humanities and believes that we require the humanities for organizing and structuring our way of life, education, economy, agriculture, and consumption (ibid: 273).

Davari further states regarding the necessity of paying attention to the humanities, arguing that modernization and development are impossible without the humanities: "We must reform our administration, schools, universities, markets, hospitals, courts, and sports, and think of solutions to prevent addiction and other social ills. These tasks cannot be accomplished without referring to social and human sciences. This means that the formulation and implementation of development programs in the modern world depend on progress in social

sciences." (ibid: 4) The Western humanities cannot be disregarded in a context where the whole world has modernized (ibid: 25).

Ultimately, Reza Davari Ardakani addresses several issues: First, that social sciences and humanities belong to the modern world and are Western in nature. Second, all peoples of the world have, in some way, experienced the process of modernization and have become acquainted with human and social sciences; therefore, the process of this familiarity was not based on research, and for this reason, it is met with a kind of conflict. Third, the Western humanities cannot be disregarded in a context where the entire world is engaged in modernization. Fourth, the current world is a unified one, and all are subject to the law of expansion and technological development.

## **1.2. Abdulkarim Soroush, Scientific Nature of Humanities**

Abdulkarim Soroush was influenced by Islamic insights, Popper's philosophy of science, and the logical and epistemological precision of analytical philosophy. He used logical reasoning, falsifiability, and testability as scientific criteria, applied the methodologies of the natural sciences to the humanities, and drew on the gradual development of science in Popper's thinking to formulate opinions regarding various concepts, including science and the humanities.

Based on his methodology—namely, science and scientism—he examined the discussion around the humanities. He considers the methods of social and human sciences to be the same as those of the natural sciences and, in fact, uses philosophy of science to show that philosophy and religion do not replace the humanities. Influenced by this methodology, he considers human sciences as part of experimental sciences and considers experimental science neither ethics, nor philosophy, nor theology.

Abdulkarim Soroush explores the humanities in his book "Tafarruj Şun‘ or Watching the creation" He defended science in general, including both basic sciences and humanities. His defense of modern sciences and humanities occurred during a period when he was a member of the Cultural Revolution Headquarters and was confronting modernity, anti-Western sentiment, and the rejection of all things associated with the West (Barkhordari, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 845).



During that time, Soroush sought to show those opposed to the humanities that, on one hand, we should not be tempted by totalitarianism in science, and on the other hand, to prove that although science is investigation and collection based on presuppositions (in the context of discovery), in the context of justification, it is intersubjective and objective, and therefore reliable and trustworthy, regardless of whether it is Eastern, Western, Islamic, or non-Islamic. The audience for Soroush's statements in that environment included both individuals like Fardid and his followers (including Davari and others), who considered the humanities to be a form of Westernization, and traditionalists who viewed Islamic sciences as a substitute for the humanities. Abdulkarim Soroush discusses the subject, methods, credibility, issues, and problems of the humanities, actively engaging in a scientific-philosophical defense of fields such as sociology, educational sciences, political science, economics, psychology, and similar disciplines.

Soroush first examines the reasons for skepticism towards the humanities and then defends them by providing reasons for their empirical nature, concluding that the humanities are, in the specific sense, sciences and encompass those aspects of human affairs, behaviors, and actions that experience allows (Soroush, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 19). Regarding the reasons for skepticism towards the humanities in Iranian society, he believes the first reason is that the humanities, due to their scientific and empirical nature, present humans within a society and categorize their behaviors into frameworks that sometimes deviate from the rudimentary and conventional understandings of that society. Another reason is that the human defined by the humanities is not the one we previously recognized and expected; rather, these sciences depict and interpret the human as they are.

Soroush identifies another reason related to deeper cultural roots, asserting that although we do not have knowledge resembling modern humanities in our society, we do have philosophy (ibid: 7). However, in the humanities, there is no mention of a philosophical human, and while philosophical anthropology is addressed in Eastern philosophy, such matters are absent in modern humanities (ibid: 7).

He considers the growth of mysticism alongside the growth of philosophy in the East as another reason. According to him, the humanities aim to present human identity and character in a easily digestible manner, but mystical anthropology consciously or unconsciously resists this and believes that these sciences seek to express what exceptional figures like Rumi could not fully articulate, suggesting that the human is an ocean of complexity that one cannot fully

reach the end of despite deep exploration. For this reason, Abdulkarim Soroush argues that the mystic and mysticism are also absent in the humanities.

Abdulkarim Soroush identifies religious knowledge within society as another reason. He believes that according to Islamic beliefs, the Shari'a, and the teachings received from leaders and scholars regarding humanity reveal aspects of human character that the humanities do not discuss (ibid: 9).

The anthropology of the people of Iran, influenced by their culture and religion, is, in Soroush's view, another reason for skepticism towards modern humanities. He argues that in a religion-influenced anthropology, individuals who can reveal themselves in this world are akin to prophets and possess a form of knowledge known as revelation; however, in empirical humanities, there is no discussion of prophecy and revelation (ibid: 10).

Abdul Karim Soroush sees another reason for doubting human sciences in the fact that human sciences deal with ordinary people, who have more or less similar emotions and understanding, not exceptional and rare people. According to Abdul Karim Soroush, human sciences have no choice but to study repeatable and similar phenomena, and if it does not do this, it will not become science and it will not be able to legislate and discover laws (ibid., 12).

Abdul Karim Soroush then defines human sciences and its limitations. He considers humanities as a name that was given to a field of human studies today, the same studies and fields that are currently in universities and are called humanities in the custom of academic societies. He considers several restrictions for humanities: firstly, theoretical and productive humanities are desired, not humanities that consume theories such as banking and management, etc. Secondly, nowadays they talk about the humanities in which philosophy and theology are also included, but philosophy and theology are not part of the humanities, and several scientific disciplines, including sociology, educational sciences, political sciences, economics and psychology, are part of the humanities. The third issue is that humanities are credit sciences and law, ethics, language and literature are also excluded from humanities (ibid., 17).

Abdulkarim Soroush's other discussion regarding the humanities is that he considers them a part of the empirical sciences. In his view, if there is one characteristic of the humanities, it is that these sciences represent empirical anthropology, not anthropology in the broader sense of the term, and this applies exactly to the natural sciences as well. Natural sciences are about

the study of nature, but not philosophical or mystical nature studies; they are empirical studies of nature. Therefore, the humanities are sciences in the stricter sense of the term, meaning they are empirical human sciences. The humanities claim to cover those aspects of human affairs, behaviors, and actions that experience allows (ibid: 19).

In this part, it is necessary to have a brief critique on the thought of Abdul Karim Soroush, who, based on his methodology, which is scientism, examines human sciences and considers the method of human sciences to be the same as the method of natural sciences. First of all, the humanities are a science that includes the values, needs, and rights of human beings. The world of human spirit is productive and creative, and is dependent on values and goals, whereas the natural world is silent and devoid of values and goals. If we consider human beings as physical bodies that lack free will, values, needs, and goals, based on the method of natural sciences, it is questionable. In other words, if we consider the humanities based on the method of natural sciences as law-oriented and causalistic and ignore the free will, validity, and goals of human beings in order to reach scientific laws based on them, it is not a suitable method for the humanities. Why instead of examining and understanding the meaning of human behavior, ignore the meaning of their behavior based on the causation and the framework of the natural sciences? In other words, the natural sciences are different from the humanities in terms of method, substance, and matter. The subject of the humanities is the meaningful behavior and actions of human beings, and man is also an intentional and purposeful being, and in order to understand the purpose and intention of human beings, the method of interpretation and semantic analysis must be used, while the subject of natural sciences is physical objects and bodies whose method is measurement. Therefore, how can the laws of natural and empirical sciences be applied to the humanities?

Regarding the difference between the humanities and natural sciences, Dr. Emad Afrough believes that the humanities are concerned with the values, needs, and rights of human beings, but the means to achieve the goals are the responsibility of the exact sciences (natural sciences), so the instrumental role of the exact sciences should not be imposed on the humanities (Emad Afrough <https://www.irna.ir/news/9664754/1>).

Therefore, in contrast to the approach of Abdolkarim Soroush, who considers the humanities as a part of the natural and empirical sciences, it should be acknowledged that the issue of the humanities is within human beings and human consciousness and cannot be studied like the natural sciences, according to Taylor, human beings are active and purposeful beings, and

because human action is purposeful, it cannot be studied like the natural sciences, so it is not possible to study thought on the basis of naturalistic science. According to Taylor, Social phenomena are inherently meaningful and based on the meanings of their actors, and the explanation of social phenomena is only possible through the interpretive discovery of their meaning (Little, 2009, 390). Or, according to Dilthey, the subject of the humanities is the human soul, and the humanities, as a concept different from the natural sciences, are rooted in the depths and totality of human self-consciousness, so the humanities are distinct from the natural sciences (Dilthey 1989, 58).

Another problem with Abdul Karim Soroush's view in investigation the humanities within the framework of experimental sciences is that he examines the humanities without considering the conditions of its formation and without considering the society in which it was formed. He generally believes that human sciences should be created based on experimental rules and used, this method is actually a kind of copying and without considering native science.

If we look at the process of forming science in societies, science usually arises to solve problems. In other words, in the historical and social conditions of a society and because of the problems that are formed in that society, some researchers and thinkers find solutions through research, which are called science, that is, science is the result of the research process, so there is no science beforehand, and sciences are created in historical-social conditions and in the research process, and later they take the name of science.

In this regard, in the previous pages, Reza Davari Ardakani has been quoted as saying that he has considered several issues regarding science and humanities. First, we must pay attention to the socio-historical and political conditions of a society in which the sciences were formed, for example, the historical background of the West in which the humanities were formed. Second, many sciences did not exist before that we could say that we should produce science in this direction 'Rather, in a process some sciences have been created and the name of science has been given to them, and thirdly, in the process in which some problems or the subject of research have arisen, a thinker conducted research to solve those problems, which was later completed by other thinkers and the name of science, ... Physics, chemistry or humanities have been applied to it (Davari. 2010, 12).

Therefore, the humanities are the result of the historical and social conditions of the western world and the result of the research of some thinkers to solve the problems of that society. Without considering the historical and social conditions of a society and without wanting to

localize science, human sciences cannot be investigated and used based on the laws of natural sciences.

In the following, after investigation the criticisms of Abdolkarim Soroush's thought, which examined the humanities in the framework of natural sciences, the issue of understanding the humanities and social sciences, the definition of these sciences, their method, and their differences with other branches of knowledge in his thought will be discussed. According to him, "The humanities are sciences that categorize collective and individual, voluntary and involuntary, and conscious and unconscious human behaviors into frameworks that are subject to experience." (ibid: 24). The attribute of experience-ability ensures the scientific and objective nature of these disciplines, keeping them separate from fields such as philosophy, mysticism, and ethics. Abdulkarim Soroush defines the humanities through their goals and views their objective as providing empirically testable predictions about human behaviors.

For a thorough examination of the humanities, Abdulkarim Soroush differentiates between two concepts or two positions regarding science: One being the position of hunting and gathering, and the other the position of judgment (ibid: 50). He considers the issues that the humanities depend on regarding the scholar's personal perspective, or those that are scientific and removed from the individual's worldview, to be errors resulting from the lack of differentiation between the position of hunting and the position of judgment. He attributes the main cause of this error to positivists, who have introduced empirical science in the sense of experience-producing science, whereas empirical science should be understood as science governed by experience. Abdulkarim Soroush believes that if we make this distinction, we can achieve both objectives; in his view, both aspects are acceptable. On one hand, humanities are influenced by ideology, worldview, and the cultural environment of the scholar (in the position of gathering and hunting), and on the other hand, they are objective and empirical (in the position of judgment). He posits that the character of the scholar influences the nature of this inquiry not only in the humanities but also in the natural sciences. Thus, in his view, even in natural sciences, the issue remains similar, as science takes on the coloration of the scholar's personality. As mentioned, being scientific or not is related to the position of judgment, and both the humanities and the natural and empirical sciences are similar in the gathering position as well as in the judgment position, meaning both are influenced by the scholar's culture and tested against general experience (ibid: 54).

Abdulkarim Soroush views science as akin to a social construct that has an intersubjective nature; therefore, he opposes the holistic nature of the humanities. He also disagrees with the idea of not recognizing the world of other humans (ibid: 58).

He considers the important issue in science to be the "Net of Capture" and the appropriateness of that net with which we seek to ensnare the various aspects of human spirit and behavior. After this experience, we can then judge whether what we have obtained and the empirical order we have imposed on them is correct or not. He believes that if someone thinks they can create a net that captures and encompasses the entire personality and all dimensions and aspects of an individual or a human phenomenon, such a net does not exist.

Lastly, Abdulkarim Soroush states that in order to Islamize the humanities, the space of the mind and conscience must become Islamic and scientific. Since the fundamental principle in producing the humanities lies in creating this fertile ground in the land of the consciousness of thinkers and scholars in the humanities, the consciousness and mind must be made Islamic and scientific. Thereafter, whatever emerges from that vessel will be Islamic knowledge, and the way to Islamize the humanities in this land is precisely this (ibid: 60).

## **2. A Comparison of the Concept and Method of the Humanities in the Thoughts of Abdulkarim Soroush and Reza Davari Ardakani**

In conclusion, if we want to make a brief comparison between the theories of both thinkers regarding the humanities, we can express their viewpoints from four angles.

1. Methodology: Reza Davari Ardakani, influenced by Heidegger's methodology, examines knowledge and rationality in the modern world. He considers modernity to be the result of human knowledge and rationality during the modern era and believes that many concepts in the modern world, including the humanities, are results of this. Therefore, he analyzes and critiques the humanities within the framework of Western studies and Heideggerian methodology. In contrast, Abdulkarim Soroush is influenced by Popper's philosophy of science and the logical and epistemological nuances of analytical philosophy. Based on his methodology, which he terms science and scientific orientation, he considers the method of the humanities to be the same as that of the natural sciences and, as a result, views the humanities as part of the empirical sciences.

2. **The Origin of the Humanities:** Reza Davari Ardakani views the humanities as belonging to the modern world. According to him, when modernity took shape, the conflicts and complexities within modernity emerged, and the dangers of its future became apparent. The humanities and social sciences—including economics, psychology, ontology, anthropology, sociology, law, politics, etc.—emerged to address the crises of modernity. On the other hand, Abdulkarim Soroush considers science and the humanities to be akin to a social construct that has an intersubjective nature; because he sees the humanities as intersubjective, he believes they are derived from the consciousness and mental space of thinkers. Furthermore, he asserts that the humanities and natural sciences are similar both in the gathering and judgment phases, meaning they are both influenced by the worldview and cultural environment of the scholar, and both are tested and obtained by general experience.
3. **The Concept of the Humanities:** In his most comprehensive definition, Reza Davari Ardakani considers the humanities and social sciences to be the result of the crises, conflicts, and complexities of modernity, aiming to organize and order them. He includes economics, psychology, ethnology, anthropology, sociology, law, politics, etc., and asserts that the central focus of all these sciences is human beings, who can transform and organize the world with their will and knowledge. Abdulkarim Soroush, on the other hand, regards the humanities as a body of conventional knowledge, and he considers disciplines such as sociology, educational sciences, political sciences, economics, and psychology to be part of this knowledge. He later defines the humanities as empirical sciences and believes that the humanities, in a specific sense, are sciences that encompass the aspects and behaviors of human beings that experience allows. In his view, the humanities are sciences that frame collective and individual behaviors—voluntary and involuntary, conscious and unconscious—into the mold of experienceable orders.
4. Ultimately, the common point for both thinkers is that they regard the humanities as certain branches of human knowledge that are indispensable and mandatory for the development and organization of contemporary human life.



## **Conclusion**

The humanities, as an academic discipline, are an obvious subject. In recent centuries, with the rise of naturalism, the credibility of the humanities has been called into question. The fact that some thinkers deem the reality of the humanities as unacceptable because they developed under the historical and social conditions of the Western world, or because they are scientifically doubtful, is a debatable point. However, it is evident that with the rise of scientific thinking in the fifteenth century and the dissemination of the ideas of Newton, Descartes, Kant, Auguste Comte, and others, the natural sciences took control of the world through experience and the discovery of their own laws. The dominance of the natural sciences and the beneficial results they provided for the world led to widespread attention toward them and skepticism about the humanities. Doubt and criticism of the humanities peaked in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the emergence of positivists and logical empiricists. In any case, the successes of the natural sciences called into question the credibility of the humanities. In this conflict, some thinkers such as Dilthey have sought to establish a solid foundation for humanities in the position of humanities scholars.

In Iran, influenced both by global intellectual disputes and by the intellectual climate following the revolution, the humanities garnered attention from thinkers. Questions arose regarding whether a concept called the humanities exists, whether the humanities can be generated, whether this knowledge is Western and inapplicable in other contexts, and ultimately, whether this field can be made Islamic. These topics were among the discussions among Iranian thinkers regarding the humanities. Reza Davari Ardakani and Abdulkarim Soroush were among the scholars who engaged with the humanities. Abdulkarim Soroush, influenced by scientific epistemology, considered the humanities to be a science, equating the methods of the humanities with those of the natural sciences. Furthermore, in the intellectual debates in Iran society, he defended the concept of the humanities as well as their scientific nature. Davari Ardakani, influenced by Heidegger's methodology and phenomenology, also raised some issues about the humanities. On the one hand, influenced by the global environment and in the framework of his Westernization project, he considered and criticized the humanities as a concept derived from the political and historical conditions of the Western world and the result of the crisis of modernity, and on the other hand, influenced by the intellectual conflicts of Iranian society and also in opposition to the scientologists and Abdulkarim Soroush, he considered the humanities as an ambiguous concept in the West as a

whole and considered it to belong to the Western world and modernity And he criticized it, although in recent times he considers it inevitable.

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The author declares that research ethics have been observed in this research and Issues such as avoiding plagiarism, data fabrication, falsification of sources, and replication of others' research have been fully observed.

### **Conflict of interest**

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# The Role of Cinema in the Modernization of Iran during the Pahlavi II Era: Cinema as a Tool for Modernization (1940-1978 AD/1320-1357 SH)

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The present research aims to dissect the role of cinema as a tool for modernization during the Pahlavi II era (1940-1978 AD/1320-1357 SH). The central question of this research is how cinema was employed by the Pahlavi government to advance modernism in Iran. In fact, this study will focus on the diverse roles of Iranian cinema during the Pahlavi II era as a tool, addressing the consequences and functions of Iranian cinema during the period (1978-1940 AD/1320-1357 SH).

**Method:** The author employs qualitative methods, including documentary analysis and interviews with Political and artistic elites, to strive for a new interpretation of the role of cinema in the modernization of Iranian society from a different perspective.

**Results:** Cinema, as one of the most important mass media, played a significant role in accelerating and advancing the modernization project of the Pahlavi dynasty. The political elites of the Pahlavi regime consciously utilized the medium of cinema to implement cultural and social modernization programs. Similar to all aspects of Pahlavi modernization policies, which conflicted with the realities of Iranian society, the top-down authoritative modernization disregarded historical, cultural, religious, and political conditions in its pursuit to create a modern and westernized society. In this context, cinema, regarding its visual capabilities and attractive imagery, became one of the most effective forms of mass media. The transmission of Western values to Iranian society and the representation of a modern, secular, and westernized image of Iran for both Iranian and foreign audiences were the primary mission of cinema from the perspective of the Pahlavi political elites. Political elites of the Pahlavi regime consciously used the power of cinema as a tool to transfer Western culture, weaken Islamic-Iranian traditions, present a modern image of Iranian society, blur public-private boundaries, promote ideology, and gain political legitimacy while constructing a unified nation-state.

**Conclusions:** The question of the consequences of modernity on Iranian society remains an unfinished concern. In this context, cinema has played a significant role as one of the main carriers of modernity in transferring Western values to Iranian society. From the moment cinema entered Iran, it served nationalism, modernity, and Westernization. Undoubtedly, when cinema entered the country, Iranian society was not one in a vacuum but was filled with a glorious history and deep-rooted Islamic and Iranian traditions. During the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah, Iranian cinema, supported by the Pahlavi regime, became a tool for advancing the modernization of Iranian society. The detrimental consequences of authoritative modernization and the use of cinema as a modernization tool left profound negative impacts on the structure of Islamic-Iranian identity.

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## **Introduction**

"Cinema in the West emerged from the scientific laboratories of the industrial world, but began with a public display for ordinary people, just as the world of film analysis and criticism came from philosophical and theoretical experiences and became accessible to audiences for a clearer, more rational, or more internal understanding of film. These films were produced during the granting of concessions, the raising of customs revenues in the north and south, and during the second wave of industrialization of the country, which was accompanied by an open-door policy; a period when the spectacles of the West dazzled and attracted us. The dictatorship was not satisfied with expanding the opportunities of the new world for the public but was also drawn to its great and revealing mirrors, namely photography and cinema. Until it found ways to impose this on audiences, it did not allow any image of itself to be shown on the cinema screen, as showing it to the public meant accepting the participation of the people in seeing and experiencing the world." (Baharlu et al., 2000 AD/1379 SH: 12)

Cinema, as one of the most important mass media, played a significant role in accelerating and advancing the modernization project of the Pahlavi dynasty. The political elites of the Pahlavi regime consciously utilized the medium of cinema to implement cultural and social modernization programs. Similar to all aspects of Pahlavi modernization policies, which conflicted with the realities of Iranian society, the top-down authoritative modernization disregarded historical, cultural, religious, and political conditions in its pursuit to create a modern and westernized society. In this context, cinema, regarding its visual capabilities and attractive imagery, became one of the most effective forms of mass media. The transmission of Western values to Iranian society and the representation of a modern, secular, and westernized image of Iran for both Iranian and foreign audiences were the primary mission of cinema from the perspective of the Pahlavi political elites. The depiction and presentation of concepts and ideas from Western civilization often led to conflict and opposition between religious classes and the Pahlavi government considering their contradiction with Islamic-Iranian traditions. For example, Shaykh Fazlollah condemned the films of Sahafbashi's cinema because they featured women with uncovered heads or were said to promote irreligion and numb the populace. He referred to Westernization and modernity as a "Sleeping Drug" or a "Deadly Poison" brought to the "Pure Soil of Iran" by proponents of naturalism and other Western schools of thought. Shaykh Fazlollah Nouri likened Western-style freedom to a

"Smooth-talking snake" that first enchants its victim and then subjugates them. This struggle and conflict between social classes and the Pahlavi government over the role, functions, and consequences of cinema has formed one of the deep disputes in contemporary Iranian history. Therefore, the present research seeks to elucidate the role of cinema as a tool in advancing authoritative modernization. In fact, this study will focus on the diverse roles of Iranian cinema during the Pahlavi II era as a tool, addressing the consequences and functions of Iranian cinema during the period (1978-1940 AD/1320-1357 SH). Accordingly, the author employs qualitative methods, including documentary analysis and interviews with cinema elites, to strive for a new interpretation of the role of cinema in the modernization of Iranian society from a different perspective.

### **1. Research Background**

Cinema and modernism, as two major subjects, have each received considerable attention from many Iranian and foreign researchers and thinkers. However, there is a scarcity of research regarding the role of cinema in the modernization process of Iranian society during the Pahlavi era. A brief look at the most important existing research works in the two realms of cinema and modernity can assist researchers in their studies: Mahdi Rahbari and Saeed Mohammadzadeh, in their article "Cinema and the Occurrence of the Islamic Revolution in Iran," have analyzed the impact of cinema as a cultural factor on the formation of the Islamic Revolution using content analysis. They believe that cinema, as one of the most important mass media, has played a crucial role in shaping a mass society and revolutionary ideas in Iran regarding the mismanagement and some of its inherent characteristics (Rahbari & Mohammadzadeh, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 83). Jahanbakhsh Thavaqib et al., in a research article titled "The Impact of the Clash Between Tradition and Modernity on Iranian Cinema During the Second Pahlavi Era (1953-1979 AD/1332-1357 SH)," evaluated the trends in film production in Iran and the changes and developments therein, as well as the implications of audience reactions to cinema during the Pahlavi regime between 1953 AD/1332 SH and 1979 AD/1357 SH. They argue that the uneven modernization during Mohammad Reza Shah's reign created a rift between society and the government. This divide, which arose between tradition and modernity among the audience of this era due to social and economic modernization, also affected Iranian cinema and its productions, leading to bankruptcy and a



crisis in cinema in the years leading up to the Islamic Revolution (Thavaqib et al., 2019 AD/1398 SH: 41-42). Mojtaba Ashrafi and Shokrollah Khakrand, in their article "Examining the Role and Position of Iranian Cinema in the Cultural and Political Transformations Leading to the Islamic Revolution of Iran During the Second Pahlavi Era," argue that cinema, as a governmental medium, serves as a steward of cultural, social, political, and economic policymaking, presenting caricature-like and incomplete images of developments and conditions in Iran. Ultimately, factors such as the prevalence of banality within Persian cinema and the support of this medium for the regime led to the disappointment of the people with the cultural policies of the government during the revolution, as cinema was one of the main elements of the cultural, political, and social structure of the Pahlavi regime (Ashrafi & Khakrand, 2017 AD/1396 SH: 93).

Despite the wide variety of research works related to the fields of cinema and modernity, it should be noted that there are fewer works in the area of the relationship between these two concepts, that is, cinema and modernity in general, and particularly between cinema and modernism. The distinguishing features of the present research compared to previous studies can be summarized in several key points:

- 1) Unlike previous research, the present study positions cinema as an independent variable and modernity as a dependent variable;
- 2) Attention to the role of cinema as a tool of modernism is another point of differentiation between the current research and existing studies;
- 3) Focusing on the consequences and results derived from the application of cinema as a tool to accelerate and advance the process of the modernism project is another innovation of the present writing.

## **2. Method**

In this research, the author has benefited from the interview method in order to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions. Interview is one of the old techniques in order to obtain information in social sciences, and it is considered one of the common methods in political sciences, especially in the form of interviews with political elites. The author employs qualitative methods, including documentary analysis and interviews with Political and artistic elites, to strive for a new interpretation of the role of cinema in the modernization of Iranian society from a different perspective.

### **3. Act One: Iranian Cinema During the Qajar Period (1878-1905 AD/1279-1304 SH)**

The entry of cinema into Iran coincided with the country's entry into a new era, namely modernity. The arrival of the railroad, automobiles, electricity, telephones, and cinematographs were among the first signs of the onset of modernization in Iran (Azkia et al., 2007 AD/1386 SH: 30). Mozaffar al-Din Shah, during a trip to Europe on Farvardin 24, 1279, became acquainted with the cinematograph in France and brought it to Iran (Omid, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 20-21). Due to opposition from the clergy and religious people, the Shah was afraid to introduce this strange device widely into the country. Therefore, the establishment of cinema halls and, by extension, the production of Iranian films occurred with a 20-year delay after the arrival of the first camera in Iran. For this reason, the filming device first went to the royal court and remained within that sphere (Nabavi, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 28-29). From the very beginning, cinema in Iran did not have a favorable relationship with religion, to the extent that in the early years of public cinema usage, the simultaneous showing of films and the performance of *Ta'zīyah* (Shia passion plays) was noteworthy. It was presumed that this simultaneity was a premeditated strategy aimed at sidelining *Ta'zīyah*. Furthermore, from the outset, clergy were generally opposed to cinema; in the early years of cinema's introduction, Shaykh Fazlollah Nouri issued a fatwa against attending cinemas (Mehrabi, 1984 AD/1363 SH: 18-19).

### **4. Act Two: Iranian Cinema During the Reza Shah Era (1921-1942 AD/1304/1320 SH)**

The period of consolidating Reza Shah's rule was not one where Iranian cinema could engage in continuous film production. The cinematic works from 1920 AD/1299 SH to 1926 AD/1305 SH were limited to a few feature films and short documentary pieces shot by a handful of filmmakers who had access to cameras. In Aban 1304, Reza Khan ascended to power and established his dictatorship with the support of foreign powers and Western-minded intellectuals. The years of his rise to power did not witness a complete entry of Western manifestations into Iran. It was only when modern currents in governance and the establishment of a governmental pyramid and a Western model solidified their place as the method of systematic governance that cinema gradually found its cultural footing: "Western-

style modernization in Iran during Reza Shah's reign was prioritized culturally and economically over other goals, especially changing the relationship and method of exercising power and increasing political participation." (Bashiriye, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 67)

Reza Shah used cinema as a tool for modernization and to promote himself as the savior of Iran. "Documenting scenes of the opening of telecommunications facilities, railways, the construction of bridges and roads, court ceremonies, and military parades were examples of films that were documented by Khan Baba Khan Motazed, the court filmmaker of Reza Khan, commissioned by the Shah himself. Khan Baba Khan Motazed was the first person to combine scenes from various parts of Iran with images of Reza Shah and the royal anthem to create a clip that would play before films in cinemas, prompting audiences to stand in its presence. Later, until the late ۱۳۴۰s, the royal anthem remained on screen with images of Mohammad Reza Shah, and audiences were compelled to rise from their seats, listen to the royal anthem while viewing images of the Shah, and then settle down to watch the films." (Sadr, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 37)

### **5. Act Three: Iranian Cinema During the Second Pahlavi Period (1957-1941 AD/1320-1357 SH)**

After the fall of Reza Khan following the Allied occupation of Iran, screening restrictions in cinemas limited film exhibitions during the early months of the occupation due to wartime conditions, and the film industry nearly came to a halt. Many cinema halls closed, and some were dedicated to screening newsreels of the Allies' victory in the war against Axis countries, which were selected for screening by the political representatives of the Allies in Iran. With the rise of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to power, the support and perceptions regarding cinema changed. The number of cinemas increased, and the audiovisual format as an important strategy took on a new shape in its approach to propaganda (Kashani, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 68-69).

The first decade of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's rule (the 1320s) was considered a period of weakness for his power. In the years of Iran's occupation, the American efforts to influence Iranian cinema were significant, to the point that of the 400 films screened in Iranian cinemas during the 1320s, 300 were American productions (Saedi, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 34). The United States intelligence agency began plans for the exhibition and production of films in non-

communist countries like Iran. As part of this plan, a group of professors and filmmakers from Syracuse University visited Iran in the early 1950s to establish film development laboratories and train Iranians to produce documentaries and educational films. Regarding the lack of television, they also made short films titled "News of Iran," which were produced with the approval of the Shah and the United States. 402 copies of these short films were screened in public halls throughout the country (Neville Smith, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 790).

## **6. Results**

### **1.6. The Role of Cinema as a Tool for Modernization During the Second Pahlavi**

The government of Mohammad Reza Shah did not allow cinema to develop beyond its nature and form as entertainment. Entertainment and propaganda for the state were recognized as the two bases of cinema's non-political functions, receiving attention and support. Regarding this trend, in statistics presented a few years later, cinema, especially among societal classes, was introduced primarily as a mechanism of entertainment. As a result, the factors of entertainment, escape, and fantasy in seeking refuge in cinema halls were among the fundamental elements (Ali Asadi, Culture and Life, No. 13 and 14, p. 14).

In general, it can be said that cinema during the Second Pahlavi period had two evident and hidden functions. The overt function of cinema was based on entertainment and leisure, while the hidden function, which was significantly more important and occurred in the underlying layers of identity and politics, was the exploitation of the power of propaganda and the impact of cinema as a tool of modernization aimed at transforming Iranian society in line with the Pahlavi ideology. In this context, the political elites of the Second Pahlavi consciously utilized the power of cinema as a modernization tool to transfer Western culture, undermine Islamic-Iranian traditions, present a modern image of Iranian society, blur the boundaries between the public and private spheres, promote ideology, gain political legitimacy, and construct a unified nation-state.

In this section, we will discuss the various roles and functions of cinema as a tool of modernization and its consequences during the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah:

## **2.6. Cinema as a Tool for Transmitting Western Culture to Iranian Society**

From its inception, cinema has acted as a carrier and transmitter of the values of Western civilization to Iranian society. Among the long list of elements of Westernization in Iran, cinema was the most recent and last item. The political and artistic elites of the Pahlavi era sought to use cinema as a tool to convey modern concepts from Western civilization to Iranian society. In other words, during the Pahlavi period, cinema served as one of the bearers of Western modernity, leading to the spread, dissemination, and infiltration of Western modernity concepts. This means that during the Pahlavi period, cinema played a role as a tool for transferring culture, thought, and concepts of modernity to Iranian society. This process of consciously transferring and injecting Western values into Iranian society during the Pahlavi era was entirely one-sided. While cinema, due to its numerous facilities and capabilities, could have significantly contributed to the representation and introduction of authentic Islamic-Iranian culture in cinematic films for both Iranian viewers and foreign audiences.

According to most of the ruling political elites from the Qajar period until the end of the Pahlavi dynasty, third-world countries must follow the same path taken by Western societies to reach the peak of progress and development; thus, they had a universal perspective on the experience of modernity. In this context, the political elites of the Pahlavi era believed that cinema could also be utilized as one of the tools of the modern age in the transition from a traditional society to a modern one. Accordingly, the Pahlavi government, especially Mohammad Reza Shah, used cinema primarily as a tool to negate religion and combat the symbols of traditional and religious society; according to one communication professor: "Iranians during the Pahlavi era, both in the media and in terms of messages, were always consumers. The main indicators of modern Iran emerged first in Iranian society and later in Iranian cinema starting from the 1340s. The modernization of Iranian society during the Second Pahlavi was rooted in the dramatic increase in government revenues from oil sales. Filmfarsi emerged during this period, based on singing, dancing, cabaret, and unconventional sexual scenes, which had no relevance to Iranian culture and society. Interestingly, one of the main roots of the emergence and occurrence of the Islamic Revolution is cinema. Through star-making and cultural shaping as a Western media, cinema has initiated profound social and cultural transformations that are in contradiction with Iranian values and norms. For instance, the depiction of sexual scenes in a theater during the 2,500-year celebrations of the

monarchy was in stark contrast to the religious and traditional society of Iran." (Interview with Faiq Hosseini, 25/04/1403)

A film director said: "Until the revolution, this path was a one-way street. That is, until the early 1360s, cinema was primarily an importer to Iran, and we were unable to export elements of Iranian culture to the West. For example, the influence of American westerns, Italian westerns, French poetic cinema, and film noir had a profound effect on the culture and attire of Iranians, while we could not use cinema as a tool to export our values, traditions, and identity to the West, and this issue did not occur until the 1360s. Until that time, Iranian cinema was more akin to Egyptian cinema and Filmfarsi. It was a melodramatic and musical cinema that was heavily focused on entertainment through a series of superficial heroes. After the 1360s, filmmakers like Naderi, Beyzae, Majidi, and Kiarostami sought to introduce the Iranian ecosystem and return to national and Islamic-Iranian identity in Iranian cinema through the representation of moral and humanitarian concepts such as human compassion." (Interview with Babak Lotfi Khajeh Pasha, 29/03/1403)

It seems that cinema has only been able to convey a distorted image of modernity to Iranian society during that period and has been incapable of transmitting the concepts and ideas of modernity. One film critic says: "Iranian cinema does not create any contemplation or pause regarding the relationship between a traditional and religious society and the modern. Iranian cinema during the Filmfarsi era, according to critics, presents a completely distorted image of a period of cultural crisis and turmoil. In this crisis, cinema does not create a modern experience for us; rather, it creates an image that is highly fantastical and city-like. Therefore, we are faced with an image of modernity. In reality, we Iranians have always experienced an image of modernity rather than a real experience of modernity or modern thought. Cinema acts as a tool and a colorful, fantastical image of modernity. This means that the perception of the West as a safe place and an ideal city has been entrenched in the Iranian mindset." (Interview with Mahdi Nazemi, 07/04/1403)

### **3.6. Cinema as a Tool for Undermining Indigenous (Islamic-Iranian) Traditions**

From the moment cinema entered Iran, it served nationalism, modernity, and westernization. Undoubtedly, when cinema arrived in Iran, the Iranian society was not a society in a vacuum; rather, it was filled with a glorious history and deep-rooted Iranian and Islamic traditions with

multiple layers of identity. The deep oral tradition, along with a rich visual tradition and performing arts, faced indifference from the political elite of the Pahlavi era. During this time, artistic and political elites played a crucial role in the anti-traditional stance of cinema. In fact, cinema mostly developed in opposition to and in contrast with Iranian and Islamic traditions. Cinema not only did not contribute to the revival and reproduction of traditions but also sought to undermine them. The earliest films screened in Iran were foreign imports that Iranian audiences accepted as visual models or references. For example, figures and gestures such as smoking, styles of dress, and social customs influenced Iranian audiences. Mid-era filmmakers paid little attention to the main concerns of Iranian society. Early filmmakers inspired by and referencing foreign films and the modern concepts within them, created similar cinematic works.

Considering the different historical conditions of Iran compared to other countries, cinema has decisively led to the weakening of traditions during that historical period. Cinema in Iran has never been able to connect with tradition. One communication professor says: "In the films of the Pahlavi era, rather than establishing a connection between tradition and modernity, there is a pronounced conflict between the two. In fact, cinema carries a series of narratives that have not only failed to create a link between indigenous traditions and modernity but have also ignited the flames of anger and conflict between tradition and modernity, with the Islamic Revolution being a prominent symbol of this issue. The conflict between tradition and modernity is evident in the films of the Pahlavi period." (Interview with Karim Aalam, 18/04/1403) One film critic believes that: "The image has played an important role in the Iranian mindset from the beginning until now, especially during the Pahlavi era. During that time, we faced artificial, greenhouse, legendary, and illusory relationships, with the urban Iranian portrayed as the person of the progressive era in the Pahlavi period. The Pahlavi outlook was not based on absolute opposition to tradition or complete anti-traditionalism; rather, it sought to purify it and preserve parts of tradition that could contribute to modernity. This aimed to create a sense of calm among audiences, so they would not worry about losing traditions, as a significant portion of indigenous traditions remained intact." (Interview with Mahdi Nazemi, 07/04/1403)

Until the onset of the New Wave of Iranian cinema, one cannot speak of cinema's role in strengthening Islamic and Iranian traditions. From the late 1330s onwards, with the emergence of the New Wave of Iranian cinema and the arrival of intellectual filmmakers,



greater attention to producing profound cinematic works based on customs, rituals, and local folklore led to the formation of a new dynamic in Iranian cinema. For example, Ali Hatami, as a symbol of Iranianizing cinematic drama, addresses the carpet-washing tradition of Ardahal in Kashan in a scene from his film "Tughi." Bahram Beyzaee adopts a mythical perspective on Iranian history through cinema. Masoud Kimiai, basing his work on popular culture and emphasizing themes such as honor, zeal, and chivalry, has contributed to the Iranianization of the New Wave of Iranian cinema. Here, a new line in cinema, known as documentary cinema, emerges, which bears a stronger Iranian essence and aroma compared to narrative cinema. Nasser Taghvai's documentary film "Badjen" showcases the Zar ceremony in southern Iran, specifically in Bushehr Province. Similarly, the documentary "Holy Pit" by Hajir Daryush introduces the ancient sport of wrestling in the 1340s. In fact, documentary cinema is significantly more aligned with indigenous and Iranian concepts and themes and has been able to convey these ideas to the audience as well (Interview with Hossein Poursattar, 03/05/1403). After the revolution, one of the first places that was immediately shut down by the revolutionaries was the cinema. This indicates that there is not a proper connection between cinema and society. According to one filmmaker: "Ali Hatami can perhaps be considered one of the few filmmakers who was concerned with the revival of Iranian traditions through cinema. Filmmakers like Ali Hatami created lasting films rooted in Iranian tradition when the intense pressure of modernity led to the marginalization of tradition. The profound, charming, and intelligent dialogues in Hatami's films have become part of the everyday literature of contemporary Iran. Despite addressing social, cultural, and political themes, Hatami's films are interwoven with everyday culture and Iranian and Islamic identity. In fact, some Iranian intellectuals, emphasizing the concept of a return to self, were seeking to revive the greatness of Iranian and Islamic identity." (Interview with Faeq Hosseini, 25/04/1403)

#### **4.6. Cinema as a Tool for Presenting a Modern and Progressive Image of Iranian Society**

Cinema, as a medium, is the best tool for presentation and representation. Media outlets, including radio, television, and cinema, tend to showcase political ideologies through a specific type of aesthetic that stands in contrast to the aesthetic structure of the preceding era, namely the Qajar period. Political authorities aimed to introduce and attribute all misfortunes

to the previous political regime using this aesthetic structure. The Pahlavi regime sought to create an aesthetic and epistemic rupture with the Qajar era. Consequently, it questioned all elements of the previous regime and aimed to reproduce an ideology aligned with its own goals. The triangular ideology of the Pahlavi government can be traced in three principles: Ancient nationalism, secularism, and westernization. With the help of cinema and by promoting the ideology of the Pahlavi regime, they showcased Iran in alignment with Western values and sought to create a distinction between Iranians and the people of the East, especially Arabs and Turks, while highlighting similarities between Iranians and Europeans as well as Western civilization.

In Iran, rulers have utilized narrative film not to explore the fundamental social, moral, and psychological transformations of the native culture, but fundamentally to impose a contemporary image of Iran and to instill the desirability and inevitability of a Western-style modernization among Iranians. These policies, in the first half of this century, suited the worldview and aspirations of many educated Iranians who, for various reasons, viewed many aspects of traditional Iranian life as inferior to the progressive features of Western life. It wasn't long before an infatuation with the West led to imitation and a following of its cultural products. The growth and development of the Iranian film industry is a primary example of this. During the Pahlavi dynasty, the Iranian government, with foreign support, pursued Westernization and used film and television as major vehicles for this policy. This movement served both the interests of foreigners and the objectives of the Iranian regime. The interests of foreigners, especially the United States, thus paved the way to create a consumer market trapped in Iran, including the market for feature films and television programs. In return, the Iranian government presented a contemporary, alluring, pre-packaged image as an ideal for Iranian audiences (Nafisi, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 30-31).

During the Pahlavi era, the main red line in the production of feature films was the principle of the monarchy and the king himself. Political power during the Pahlavi period sought to display the profound transformations of Iranian society through a few limited cinematic productions in documentary form. For example, in the documentary "Wind of Change" by the French documentarian Albert Lamorisse, the government aimed to showcase the progress, development, and industrialization of Iran during the reign of the Pahlavi dynasty. The most straightforward policy for managing demand in cinema was censorship, which governments employed in various forms such as bans, altering dialogues, using graphics to manipulate

scenes, and editing out shots and sequences. During that period, the main sensitivities revolved around the royal family, political activities, and avoiding the portrayal of a poor and struggling image of Iranian society, especially in the eyes of foreign countries. As evident, this demand management was pursued not by focusing on the foundations of modernity, but rather on short-term damages to power and governance (Shafaqi, 2021: 115-116).

### **5.6. Cinema as a Tool for Disturbing Public-Private Boundaries**

During the Pahlavi era, the main cultural difference between Iran and Europe lay in the social relationships between European men and women and the presence of European women in public spaces. Pahlavi modernity promised women inclusion in the public sphere and recognition of modern, educated women as citizens and compatriots. Accordingly, the policy of public visibility and mixing social relations contributed to the creation of a new social space in contrast to the cultural, social, and ideological environment of Iranian society. It seems that cinema during the Pahlavi period fostered changes, dismantling, and disturbances of the public-private boundaries. According to one director, "Cinema has transformed and shifted certain concepts and boundaries to such an extent that even at that time, it was impossible to screen films with themes of sex and sexual relations. For instance, the film "Naked until Noon," directed by Khosrow Haritash, was screened with very limited release due to its sexual scenes. Similarly, the film "Calmness in the Presence of Others" by Nasser Taghavi was also screened under restrictions regarding the violating certain social boundaries. At first glance, the popular cinema or Filmfarsi seems to defend the slogans of traditional society, such as honor, dignity, masculinity, chastity, and so forth. However, the real function of mainstream cinema is to portray sexual issues unconsciously, in contrast to the Nouvelle Vague cinema, which consciously seeks to depict social concerns and struggles. In a sense, Iranian society draws more from the surface than from its depths. In "Calmness in the Presence of Others," Nasser Taghavi aims to depict a society in decay and a raw and unfiltered portrayal, without fear, of an Iranian society that breaks down the boundaries between the public and private spheres.

In other words, issues that could not be openly discussed in public became visible on the cinema screen, such as smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, using opium, and sexual relations. The desensitization of certain social taboos, such as drinking alcohol and smoking

cigarettes, by beloved cinema stars like Behrouz Vothoughi, Fardin, and Malek Moti'i contributed to the transfer of private issues into the public sphere, thus altering and disturbing the public-private boundaries." (Interview with Hossein Poursattar, 03/05/1403)

Cinema was able to disturb and disrupt the public-private boundaries, rather than transform them. Cinema imposes its distinct and new structure on any society it enters. According to one actor, "In the era before cinema entered Iranian society, the private lives of individuals, such as personal issues, sexual desires, and so on, were not visible. Cinema revealed and exposed the private-public space and, in other words, unified them. This is because, in cinema, there is no boundary between the public and private spheres. Before cinema, there was a wall between the inner and outer spaces. However, with cinema's help, the inner and outer become combined. As a result, the inability to tolerate such degradation of traditional boundaries led to an explosion in society and laid the groundwork for the Islamic Revolution of 1979." (Interview with Alireza Mazaheri, 11/05/1403)

According to one director, "The change in public-private boundaries is a demand of modern life. Everyday Iranian life has been based on a set of specific beliefs, customs, and traditions. One of the main reasons for the opposition to cinema was the alteration of the boundaries between the public and private spheres, which was itself related to the issue of women. The expansion of the public sphere and the restriction of the private sphere were among the impacts of cinema and cinematic films. The greatest issue and challenge facing cinema at that time was the entry of women into the frame of the cinema camera." (Interview with Bagher Piran, 19/05/1403)

## **6.6 Cinema as a Tool for Promoting Ideology and Gaining Political Legitimacy**

According to Lenin, cinema is an art that can serve the ruling authority. This also occurred in Iran. The first films in Iranian cinema indirectly contained the thoughts of the governing authorities of the country. In these films, issues such as national security (as seen in "The Lur Girl") and the ancient values of Iran (depicted in "The Conquest of Lahore by Nader Shah Afshar" in the film *Ferdowsi*) were brought to attention (Shapur Azimi, "Mirrors Facing Each Other," *Farabi Quarterly*, No. 37, p. 58). During the era of Mohammad Reza Shah's second reign, Iranian society faced significant fractures, crises, and challenges considering the imbalanced modernization policies and development. For example, the threat of rebellion

from the peasant and rural class was very evident due to prevalent discrimination and injustice. Social relations in the form of landlord-peasant dynamics had reached such a level of corruption that, if it were not reformed from above in a more reformist manner, it might have pushed the entire society toward an inevitable revolution (Ishqi, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 104).

The land reform policy had numerous consequences. The migration from rural areas to cities and the increasing urban population in Iran, especially the marginalized urban population in Tehran, were significant repercussions of land reform (Sadr, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 167). In the early 1340s, with the onset of top-down modernization policies aimed at transforming Iranian society, commercial cinema in Iran became a tool to support the reform policies of the government, particularly land reform. The Shah aimed to end the landlord-peasant system in the villages and provide agricultural land to the peasants. In cinema, the oppression of peasants by landlords was depicted, alongside a positive portrayal of the wealthy urban class and the working class, who were popular at that time. However, this situation was entirely temporary; as the flow of rural migrants to Tehran and other large cities intensified, the seeds of social and political transformation were being sown, changing the face of Iran. Films began to emerge centered around migration and the arrival of peasants in cities, portraying landlords as oppressors while factory owners and workers (who were beloved by the public during that era) were shown as benevolent and kind (Mohammadi et al., 2020 AD/1400 SH: 223-224).

It seems that political systems have utilized cinema as a source of power for political ideology promotion and gaining political legitimacy. One director says: "In the era of Reza Shah, the awareness among elites regarding the power and influence of cinema was formed, albeit in a limited way. In this context, the Pahlavi government sought to support cinema and filmmakers while also trying to control and supervise it. Additionally, by enacting laws related to cinema and employing a tool called censorship, they established a framework for cinematic activities. A crucial question here is why, during the first Pahlavi era, laws were created for cinema but not for other arts such as painting, etc. This was because the elites recognized cinema's destructive and creative powers as a double-edged sword, and for this reason, they sought to create a structured framework to legally control and oversee cinema. During the Pahlavi era, state organizations such as the National Iranian Oil Company entered into lucrative contracts with renowned filmmakers like Ebrahim Golestan to produce documentaries concerning the activities of the National Iranian Oil Company. Ebrahim

Golestan's documentary "Wave, Coral, and Granite" showcased the workings of the Iranian oil company. During that period, several enduring commissioned films were produced and distributed by prominent figures in Iranian cinema. All these factors led the political power to realize that it could record and utilize its actions in history. If cinematic films were produced outside the framework and regulations of the Pahlavi regime, they would be confiscated by a tool called censorship.

For example, a simple event directed by Sohrab Shahid Thaleth was banned due to its portrayal of naked poverty in Iranian society. Similarly, the film "The Deers" by Masoud Kimiai, which represents an armed group and references the events at Siyahkal, was also banned because of its ending, and permission for the film to be screened was contingent upon altering that final sequence. After these changes and corrections, the film received permission for distribution and screening from the government.

In general, it can be said that the Pahlavi political regime did not utilize cinematic films for political transformation in a positive capacity; however, in a negative sense, the government prevented the production and screening of any cinematic film that contradicted the regulations and frameworks of the Pahlavi regime. In fact, cinema acted as a double-edged sword for the political regime. It could serve both the ruling class and the established regime alongside its official ideology, while also being in conflict with the societal norms and overarching goals of the political system. In other words, governments had no issues with the production, distribution, and screening of films as long as they didn't threaten the interests of the ruling regime; however, if the films contradicted the interests of the established regime or deviated from the frameworks of the Pahlavi regime, they would be censored and banned." (Interview with Hossein Poursattar, 03/05/1403)

## **7.6 Cinema as a Tool for Constructing a Unified Nation-State (National Cohesion and Social Integration)**

One of the challenges facing political systems is national cohesion and social integration. Iranian society, as a transitioning society, has active and diverse social divides such as ethnic, linguistic, religious, center-periphery, and most importantly, tradition-modernity divides. More or less since the time of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, political elites have sought to present a standard model of Iranian national identity, highlighting the threats to national

identity while proposing solutions. In this context, the Pahlavi regime aimed to achieve ethnic and linguistic homogenization by promoting stereotypes and constructed identities. A sociology professor says: "Iran is an ethnically and linguistically diverse society. The nation-state building process attempts to impose uniformity and coordination on the society, eliminating ethnic, linguistic, religious, and racial diversities. From the era of Reza Shah, when the fundamental idea of the state was based on state-building and purification, to the present, cinema has served as a tool for homogenizing society, such as solidifying Persian as the national language, especially the Tehran dialect, as the standard language of Iranians. Beyond language, cinema is also utilized as a means to introduce a singular and unified image, appearance, and attire of Iranians for all citizens. During the Pahlavi era, cinema served as a tool for the cultural integration of Iranian society and the introduction of a standard language and standard modes of thinking to the community. However, this cultural integration could not take place simultaneously with economic integration. Cinema was able to touch on the cultural integration of Iranian society, but economic integration was absent. This contradiction and lack of coordination between cultural and economic integration is the source of many conflicts in society." (Interview with Kamal Khaleqpanah, 23/05/1403)

According to another cinema actor: "One of the most important questions raised in the field of Iranian cinema is why Iranian cinema is monolingual and why local films or films in local languages have never been considered mainstream in Iranian cinema. Even when local Iranian languages do appear in cinema, they are mostly portrayed in a comedic manner; languages such as Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic, Lorish, Gilaki, etc., when they found their way into cinema, entered Iranian cinema as subjects of ridicule. For this reason, they were not influential; however, the reality is that one of the important tools of the modern state for the expansion and stabilization of the official language in Iran has been cinema itself. In other words, being able to watch cinematic films meant that knowing the national language, which was Persian at that time, was considered media literacy and the audience had to learn Persian to see, understand the story's subject, and enjoy the film. Generally, it can be said that the political system used cinema more for institutionalizing national sovereignty than for social and national cohesion and integration. Cinema during that historical period did not create social cohesion and integration because it mocked all Iranian dialects in cinematic films, which was entirely contrary to national cohesion. Throughout its existence, cinema also solidified



incorrect cultural transformations, as cinema, like other modern media, has numerous disadvantages as well as advantages." (Interview with Alireza Mazaheri, 11/05/1403)

Another interviewee says: "During the Pahlavi era, Iranian cinema played a role in establishing Persian as the national and standard language for Iranian society. Cinema also helped to represent Persian dialects alongside the national language. One of the contradictions found in cinematic films during the Pahlavi era is the portrayal of local clothing, which was never removed. In these films, women wear local attire but do not have hijab. In fact, there is a conscious emphasis on displaying local clothing alongside the unveiled appearance of women in cinematic films." (Interview with Mahdi Nazemi, 07/04/1403)

## **Conclusion**

From the moment cinema entered Iran, it served nationalism, modernity, and Westernization. Undoubtedly, when cinema arrived in Iran, it did not encounter a society in a vacuum; rather, it was filled with a rich history and deep-rooted Iranian and Islamic traditions, along with multiple layers of different identities. Cinema, as a new communication medium that was introduced to Iran by the Qajar king from the West, was controlled and managed by the government from the very beginning. The fear of the government regarding the reactions of traditional and religious classes, especially political and religious elites, led to cinema being relegated to a form of entertainment reserved for the king, the court, and those close to the country's leader.

When cinema managed to break beyond the walls of the Qajar palaces and spread into society, engaging a significant portion of social classes, it transformed into a tool of power and propaganda. The public access of cinema marked the beginning of conflicts among various social classes regarding its nature, control, and utilization for political, cultural, and economic purposes. The reality is that cinema in the West arose from the fundamental changes in the scientific, technological, and artistic realms of European society and civilization, while in Iran; cinema was introduced as an imported Western commodity to the court of Mozaffar ad-Din Shah and the circle of political elites. Iranian cinema quickly caught the attention of the ruling class for their utilization and exploitation, becoming a tool of political power.

During the Qajar period, despite being situated within the power structure and the interest of elites, cinema was still regarded as a form of entertainment and leisure. Regarding the very

limited access of the general public to cinema, its influence was not widespread. On one hand, cinema was viewed as a luxury entertainment that was exclusive to a specific class of aristocrats and elites, and on the other hand, those involved in cinema and the political elite were not seeking to exploit its power, as they were fundamentally unaware of cinema's influence and potential.

Cinema only transformed into a tool of modernity when political or artistic elites reached a clear understanding of its status, importance, and influential power, and consciously utilized its capabilities to transmit Western culture, undermine Islamic-Iranian traditions, present a modern and renewed image of Iranian society, blur the boundaries between the public and private spheres, promote ideology, and gain political legitimacy, as well as to construct a unified nation-state and facilitate political and social transformation. This process was deliberately and systematically initiated during the Pahlavi II era.

During the Pahlavi dynasty, cinema was consciously turned into a tool for transferring Western values and concepts from European civilization to Iranian society. Iranian cinema in the era of Pahlavi II became a tool for advancing modernization in Iranian society, thanks to the financial and non-financial support from Pahlavi state institutions and the king himself. The detrimental consequences of the top-down modernization imposed by Mohammad Reza Shah, in general, and the use of cinema as a means of modernizing Iranian society in particular, left deep negative impacts on the Islamic-Iranian identity of the nation. The attacks on cinemas and the burning of theater halls at the end of the Pahlavi era and the beginning of the Islamic Republic serve as the best evidence of the contradiction between cinema during the Pahlavi period and the desires, aspirations, norms, and authentic values of the native culture.

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# Cooperation and Conflict in the New Century: Strategic Implications for the Islamic Republic of Iran

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:**Following the end of the Cold War, the new world order was defined in terms of cooperation patterns in an interdependent world, even in the form of increasing globalization. However, contrary to what was proposed in theory, the practical realm and the operational arena of the world witnessed increasing competition and endless conflicts, confronting countries with emergent properties in the strategic environment. The Islamic Republic of Iran is among the countries that have been severely affected by such emergent properties and requires the create of a new strategic environment, a subject that has rendered international relations literature highly inefficient in both theoretical and applied domains, failing to address the strategic considerations of countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, in such a situation. In this regard, the question arises: ‘What are the strategic implications commensurate with the intensification and increase of regional and international conflicts?’ The answer is that regarding the emergence of a network of emergent conflicts that are sensitively dependent, the strategic decisions and necessities of countries will be influenced by this network. The present study examines the hypothesis by applying the abduction method and based on a complexity-chaos approach. The findings indicated that the Islamic Republic of Iran should formulate policies based on increasing complexity, enduring conflicts, and immediate deterrence by employing power diversity, and avoid any restriction of power elements and disruption in scientific-technological development. Otherwise, it may suffer an irreparable power gap with other actors, as in the past two centuries, and then face an existential threat.”

Achieving an understanding based on new international realities is crucial for governments, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran, to formulate effective policies tailored to the evolving international landscape.

**Method:** The present study employs abduction and a complexity-chaos perspective to examine the hypothesis. Emerging conflicts are emphasized, and existing data on the escalating competition among actors and the state of conflicts are analyzed. Ultimately, the research seeks to complete its model through theoretical inference. Data collection relies on credible and primary library and online resources.

**Results:** The findings indicate that, given the international system's shift towards increasing complexity and the presence of sensitive dependence, the Islamic Republic of Iran should formulate policies centered on escalating complexity, persistent conflicts, and based on immediate deterrence through the application of power diversification.

**Conclusions:** The Islamic Republic of Iran must avoid any limitation of power elements and disruption in scientific-technological development. Otherwise, it may experience an irreparable power gap with other actors, as in the past two centuries, and subsequently face an existential threat.

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## **1-Introduction**

With the end of the bipolar international order and the Cold War, academic literature in international relations addressed issues related to the new world order and increasing cooperation in a globalized and interdependent world. The literature on globalization and interdependence, which was considered to pave the way for actor cooperation and avoidance of conflicts, expanded. In practice, with the decline of one of the two superpowers, the strengthening of the Western bloc, and the expansion of institutions emanating from liberal international ideas, a relative decline in some areas of conflict was observable; however, gradually and contrary to the analyses and prescriptions of theories of increasing cooperation and sustained conflict reduction, conflicts manifested in emerging forms and patterns. Intense rivalries and conflicts escalated in military, economic, geopolitical, and even scientific-technical domains and patterns, which contradicted previous predictions. The Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI), as a growing power seeking to continuously strengthen its power, faced a strategic response from regional rivals and hostile global powers who, in politics, economics, and even in the field of science and technology, have sought to contain its growth and empowerment; and have adopted strategic policies to curb the growth and limit the elements of power of the IRI. Alongside this, there has been a kind of consensus among global powers to prevent the IRI from reaching the level of a global power, and numerous challenges and conflicts have been imposed on it. According to the predictions and theoretical prescriptions put forward, the IRI should also have faced a decline in the pattern of conflicts and sustainable trends of cooperation at the regional and international levels. However, in practice, especially over the past two decades, it has faced a diverse set of complex and emerging regional and international threats and conflicts that cannot be easily analyzed based on prevailing theories and analytical frameworks; and for this reason, these theories are not effective and successful tools for analysis and strategic decision-making.

## **2-Research Background**

In examining the state of cooperation and conflict and its impact on the IRI in the existing literature, this issue is mainly discussed within the framework of the security environment. The concept of the security environment refers to the separation of the inside and outside of a

political entity by a distance and boundary and includes all elements, forces, and conditions beyond the control and will of the actor.

Based on *Shiping Tang's* definition, the security environment, with a realist perspective, can be identified by four components: Geographical barriers, interactions between states, the international structure, and military power and technology. According to *Tang*, the less permeability a state's borders are and the lower its vulnerability to external forces, the better and more favorable its security environment will be.

State interactions encompass a state's internal development and the accumulation of power, with a greater accumulation leading to a more favorable security environment for that state. The second aspect of state interactions is external behavior based on self-restraint, aimed at balancing external threats originating from other states. *Tang* argues that a state needs to project a non-destructive and benign image to other states to benefit from a suitable security environment, and the main factor is a state's self-restraint to reduce other states' fear of it. The third component shaping the security environment is the international (or regional) structure, which refers to the polarization of power relations among major actors at the regional and international levels. However, this does not mean that the international structure has the same effect on all states; a similar structure imposes different constraints on different states. Military and dual-use technologies are the fourth element constituting the security environment, and *Tang* argues that they are the most effective factor in disrupting the first element of the security environment, namely geographical barriers. In every revolution in military affairs in human history, a new type of warfare emerges, which changes the calculations and war conditions of states (Tang, 2004: 4-8). *Assariyan Nejad and Pourgholi*, in their study, sought a model for the security environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran based on the views of the Supreme Leader, focusing on interests and ideals (Assariyan Nejad et al., 2015). *Hasan Khani* has examined changes in Iran's security environment, believing that a realistic understanding of each actor's capabilities and resources, as well as the goals and national security interests, should be formulated based on "What is" rather than "What should be." (Hasankhani, 2021) *Minaei*, examining the security environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran based on its unique geopolitical and geostrategic position, has pointed to its variability (Minaei, 2003).

*Karami and Alizadeh*, considering the unique geopolitical and geostrategic position of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the variability of its surrounding security environment, believe

that the formation of powerful and capable states to manage internal conflicts and instabilities, increase cooperation and participation among the region's states, and limit the role of extra-regional powers will improve the region's security situation (Karami et al., 2012).

Aghaei et al., in examining the relationship between a state's foreign and security policy and its security environment, concluded that the state's security environment is the input and basis of its foreign and security policy, which manifests itself in the form of doctrines, policies, and strategies based on the perceptions of its leaders and decision-makers (Aghaei et al., 2019). Adami et al., drawing on the views of *Shiping Tang* and emphasizing a systemic approach, have examined the security environment of the I.R.I. and assessed the security environment of the I.R.I. as favorable and the probability of war as low (Adami et al., 2021). All this is happening while the aforementioned research has not specifically covered the developments of recent years leading up to 1403 AH (2024 AD) or effectively considered the most important determining factor of the strategic environment of the I.R. of Iran, namely the consequences of increasing complexity and the intensification of conflict patterns. Novelty in the arena of conflict and disputes after the Cold War, i.e., the intensification and reproduction of rivalries and conflicts in various forms and territories, is one of the most important determining factors of the regional and international environment of the I.R. of Iran. In the three decades after the Cold War (after the brief period of the 1990s, which was accompanied by a reduction in some interstate conflicts), the international environment has undergone a transformation towards complexity and an increase in conflicts in the political, economic, scientific-technological, and geopolitical domains between actors. In West Asia, too, the conflict situation has intensified in the recent period (2000-2024), and a network of internal and regional conflicts has occurred, along with the widespread intervention of extra-regional powers, some of which have reached a state of persistent conflict; internal conflicts in Bahrain, Yemen, the Saudi-American coalition's invasion of Yemen, the conflict and civil war in Syria with the widespread intervention of regional and global powers, the strengthening and expansion of the role of terrorist groups with state-like influence (such as ISIS and Tahrir al-Sham, etc.) by extra-regional powers, and recently the Gaza war, indicate profound changes in recent years that determine the strategic orientations of states.

In other words, in the West Asian environment surrounding the actions of the I.R. of Iran, conflicts between regional powers have grown, and internal conflicts within important regional states (Iraq, Syria, Egypt, etc.) have intensified and become unstable. These conflicts

have been accompanied by extensive intervention from extra-regional powers, leading to increasing complexity and an intensified pattern of conflict in the regional environment. On the other hand, in a broader transformation, the state of the international system, contrary to the predictions and prescriptions of liberal theories of international relations, has also shifted towards increasing complexity and an intensified pattern of conflict. Tensions between global powers, and even Cold War allies, have been steadily increasing. The US-China geopolitical conflict in Taiwan and the South China Sea, the US-China trade war, and the US-European Union trade conflict have all occurred. In addition, other significant developments, such as Britain's exit from the European Union and the recent outbreak of the Ukraine conflict, have taken place, all of which indicate the dominance of unilateral, non-cooperative considerations and the formation of emerging patterns of conflict. The totality of these developments means that the increasing trend of conflicts in the complex international and regional strategic environment of the I.R. of Iran has significant stability and continuity, and the prospect of intensifying conflict patterns is evident in the future.

Therefore, the most prominent concern in the theoretical and practical domain, which forms the core of the present research, is the emergence of new developments related to conflicts and strategic security competitions of countries, including the I.R. of Iran, in the new situation. This can be framed in the following question: Given the evolution of cooperation and conflict trends in recent years towards increasing complexity and an intensified pattern of conflict, 'What are the strategic imperatives commensurate with these developments for the I.R. of Iran?' (Or, in other words, under conditions of increasing complexity and intensified regional and international conflicts, on what imperatives and considerations should the strategic policymaking of the I.R. of Iran be based?)

In response to this question, the hypothesis is proposed that after the end of the Cold War, a new network of conflicts, or an emerging pattern of networked conflicts, has formed, which are sensitive to interdependence.

This emerging pattern of conflicts and the threats arising from them create and necessitate new implications and requirements for countries, compelling them to make decisions based on these. Otherwise, they will face numerous problems and severe consequences, including existential threats.

### **3- Method**

Answering the question and hypothesis requires analysis through qualitative and abduction methods. In the abduction method, induction and deduction are used simultaneously in the research. That is, first, emergence and emerging conflicts are emphasized, and the available data on the intensification of actors' competition and the escalation of conflict situations are examined. Then, an attempt is made to present a preliminary theoretical framework based on the theoretical basis of the article, namely complexity-chaos. In the next stage, the cases are carefully analyzed, and finally, through theoretical inference, an attempt is made to complete the initial theoretical model. Accordingly, the research is organized based on the four main steps mentioned. Data collection is also from reliable and primary library and internet sources.

### **4-Theoretical Foundations of the Research**

With the extensive transformations following the end of the Cold War, the pattern of the international order is evolving towards increasing complexity. One of the most useful analytical frameworks developed for examining international developments is the complexity-chaos theory or approach. From this perspective, the international system is considered a super system or a system of systems, a complex-chaotic system, and the corresponding analytical approach is the complexity-chaos approach. The first attempts to apply complexity theory to the study of international relations and global politics occurred in the early 1990s, after the end of the Cold War. This led to numerous scholarly debates about the limitations of traditional international relations and foreign policy concepts and theories in explaining the changes that had occurred. Complexity emerged as a framework for explanation as a result of these debates and discussions (Lehmann, 2012). *Kavalski*, in 2007, proposes a complex theory of international relations, stating that this theory introduces the fifth debate in the study of international life (*Kavalski*, 2007). Complexity theory, or the theory of complex systems, encompasses a range of theories developed to describe and explain the behavior of physical and social systems. The theory of complex systems highlights non-linear, adaptive, network-based, emergent, and co-evolutionary behaviors and characteristics. It has been used to adopt a critical approach to conventional theories of international relations, such as realism, liberal institutionalism, constructivism, and critical approaches that have been dominant approaches throughout the twentieth century (*Janzwood and Piereder*, 2020). *Homer-Dixon* states that complex systems exhibit non-linear behavior and possess the characteristic of emergence.

Emergence is a characteristic that is sufficient for the attribute of complexity and the complexity of a system, meaning that the system as a whole exhibits entirely new characteristics that are not understandable based on previous states and behaviors and are probably not predictable based on the state and components of the system individually (Homer-Dixon, 2011).

Pegram and Kreienkamp also mention key features of complex systems, including openness, emergence, nonlinear results, and self-organization (Pegram et al., 2019). To apply a complexity-chaos perspective, it is necessary to identify the logical principles governing the international order in the complexity-chaos situation of the post-Cold War era. This involves several systemic principles or logics that exist simultaneously. In other words, the complexity-chaos analytical framework encompasses several fundamental principles that conceptually and theoretically form its pillars, which are: systemic logic (within this logic, the analysis of system dynamics and values should be considered instead of individuals and micro-components), transition logic (transition logic observes that the international system is always in a state of transition, and analyses should always be based on this logic), the logic of branching order (systems under pressure branch out and create new branches), the logic of dynamic or multi-equilibrium (the international and regional system has multiple equilibrium points, unlike the order pattern in the pre-Cold War era, where equilibrium had a static characteristic), the logic of asymmetry (order in the new international and regional system is asymmetric), and finally, the principle of sensitive dependence; in complex-chaotic systems, conditions of sensitive dependence exist between the components of the system, which lead to nonlinear behaviors and create surprises. Sensitive dependence is a condition where a slight change in the values of the system may create very large and, so to speak, nonlinear consequences in other components and values (Ghasemi, 2017: 8-9, 197 and 219). The first definitions of sensitive dependence are attributed to *Henri Poincaré* (with the three-body problem) and *Edward Lorenz* (the butterfly effect). Lorenz said that the flapping of a butterfly's wings in Brazil could lead to a tornado in Texas in 6 weeks. Although there is no common and precise definition of a complex-chaotic system, there is a maximum consensus that its main factor or indicator is sensitive dependence. Sensitive dependence on initial conditions, or sensitive dependence, is the key feature of complex-chaotic systems, the degree of which determines the degree of complexity and chaos of a system. *Hasselblatt* and *Katok*

state that the chaotic nature of a system implies sensitive dependence (Hasselblatt et al., 2003: 209).

*Sobottka* and *de Oliveira* (2006: 415-24) consider sensitive dependence to be the most important factor in the unpredictability of chaotic systems, stating that it is this effect of sensitive dependence on initial conditions that hinders prediction. *Scheffran* (2015: 229-230) argues that in complex self-organizing systems, each individual component of the system can lead to emergent patterns that do not exist individually for the units and are different from the sum of the parts. He identifies the characteristics of complex systems as including a tendency to produce surprises, a sensitive reaction to variables (sensitive dependence), and unpredictability. In examining the complexity of the new international order, he points out that its landscape is entirely fractal and encompasses a high diversity of actors and factors that are interacting with each other in a very complex and dynamic way. He refers to the issue of sensitive dependence, where seemingly minor events, and even individuals and points within the system, can alter the course of history in rapidly changing and unstable conditions. *Scheffran* states that when everything is connected, a change in one point can have a tremendous effect on another point, which is the same as sensitive dependence. *Robert Jervis* (1997: 210-52), in examining the effects of complexity, raises the paradox of stability-instability, questioning how the efforts of a country's statesmen to strengthen national security may exacerbate external threats to that country. He cites the example of nuclear weapons, which, while pursued with the aim of preventing war, can encourage and escalate conventional wars. He considers the deepest effect of complexity on international relations to be the neutralization and ineffectiveness of linear actions and policies of actors due to systemic and complex characteristics, resulting from the intertwined and complex relationships of units with each other in a space much larger and more complex than the limited interactions of two or more actors.

By examining the developments after the end of the bipolar international order, the most important distinction between the pattern of the international order before and after the Cold War can be seen as the transformation of the nature and manner of conflict patterns influenced by the main characteristic of the international system: complexity-chaos.

Based on this premise, in the complex-chaotic state, classical conflicts and wars have become largely irrelevant, and new and emergent patterns of conflicts and wars have appeared. These new patterns of conflict and war are based on the function of the three traditional and major



dynamics of international relations (power, economics, and culture-identity), and at their head, the dynamic of power and the new dynamic of communication-cybernetics have been formed. These dynamics have been reproduced in a way in the post-Cold War international order. In fact, the fundamental dynamics of the international order in the bipolar order, in the so-called globalized world (as expressed by liberal theories claiming a sustained reduction in conflicts), have also been reproduced and are functioning again in the new conditions. In the transformed space of the post-Cold War international order, due to factors such as increasing complexity, the branching of order, the formation of regional orders, the re-closure of the system in terms of territorial changes (after slight changes), and nuclear strategic stalemate, the patterns of classical conflict and war have faded. This fading and change in the pattern of conflict and war has been discussed within the framework of proxy war, civil war, the agency of anti-system groups, and hybrid warfare (Ghasemi, 2021: 216). International relations in complex-chaotic transition are faced with a variety of sub-orders and their transformation into each other, and for this reason, they have a very high diversity in terms of causal mechanisms and control mechanisms. From this perspective, the controlling action of actors towards each other (which has a conflictual nature) must be focused on diversity because diversity can be controlled by diversity; and the type and nature of control must be proportional to the nature of the system. That is, the diversity of causal mechanisms causes the diversity of control mechanisms. In these conditions, the dynamics and control mechanisms are transformed towards homogeneity and are proportional to the new conditions of the system, and control in a complex-chaotic state has become fluid and diverse. Based on this, states must have the ability to convert power in its various forms into other forms of power at the operational level in order to be able to activate and use control mechanisms in complex and chaotic transition conditions.

Naturally, this issue has a complete impact on the entire spectrum of government actions: from military statecraft (strategy, operations, and tactics), economic governance (sanctions, economic aid, and economic cooperation), and political governance (general policy, foreign policy, and diplomacy). Another important issue in hybrid conflicts is the emergence of new phenomena and the formation of chaos and surprise in the moment, which requires the implementation of a high-speed decision-making system by units, which in turn depends on rapid and real-time access to scene information. The next characteristic of hybrid conflicts is

their dynamism and the existence of new equilibrium points that are formed based on non-static and dynamic stability (Ghasemi, 2018: 109).

Conflict and war theories from the perspective of complex systems are related to conflict patterns and the relationship of these patterns to change and how power values change; how the amount of change in the power differential leads to changes in the behavior of other actors and the pattern of conflict and war. The units of the international system, through their actions and reactions, try to control these behaviors.

### **5-Patterns of Conflict Escalation in Complex-Chaos Conditions After the Cold War**

In the period under study (2000-2024), a set of observable data and evidence indicates a relative decline in cooperation patterns and a shift in the international environment and the West Asia region towards conflict patterns. They have mentioned the unipolar moment.

The trend analysis of events in the three decades following the Cold War indicates a period of relative conflict reduction in the 1990s, coinciding with the collapse of the bipolar system and the decline of one of the two superpowers, and a brief period of American global unipolarity, which some scholars have referred to as the unipolar moment (Wohlforth, 1990: 5). In this regard, two time periods can be distinguished: first, a period of global unipolarity and the globalization of liberal international institutions, with the majority of the world's states joining them, laying the groundwork for the expansion of cooperation patterns around liberal principles; second, the intensification of conflict patterns, particularly from the end of the 2010s. This intensification of conflict patterns can be divided into four sections.

#### **5-1-Military-Arms Pattern of Conflicts**

*The Expansion of Armed Conflicts in West Asia:* The interactions of West Asian states encompass tension and conflicts in economic, political, military, and arms issues. The armed conflicts in Syria and Iraq, the Saudi-led coalition's aggression against Yemen, and the alignment of regional states around them can be assessed in this context. More notably, some states, guided by Western powers, are seeking to create a regional alliance (such as the Arab NATO) or a joint coalition with global powers to confront the I.R. Iran (Deutsche welle, 2022).

*Crossing Nuclear Proliferation Boundaries:* While for about twenty years, Western powers and the United States have forged a high degree of unity and cohesion against the I.R. Iran to

limit its nuclear capacity, many of the states in the I.R. Iran's surrounding environment possess nuclear capabilities and even weapons (India, Pakistan, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Turkey through the presence of the US military, etc.); furthermore, the United States and Britain, in a move contrary to the non-proliferation regime, have equipped their non-nuclear allies with nuclear devices and, by granting nuclear submarines to Australia, have crossed one of the non-proliferation boundaries. Although a submarine with a nuclear propulsion engine is not considered a weapon of mass destruction, it is a type of proliferation of military nuclear equipment. China has strongly condemned this agreement as irresponsible, referring to Australia's lack of commitment to non-proliferation and calling it a tool for advancing geostrategic games. The Chinese Foreign Minister called it a weakening of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (Washington Post, 2021; Sheng, 2021).

*Continuous Increase in Military Expenditures:* With the continuous increase in military expenditures and the growth of its share of GDP, it can be expected that this will affect the quantity or quality of the pattern of military conflicts. A look at actors in West Asia and allies of the United States, Japan, Germany, South Korea, etc., indicates the growth of military spending as one of the pillars shaping the security environment. In 2021, the total military expenditure of governments worldwide was \$2100 billion, marking the seventh consecutive year of increased global military spending. (SIPRI, 2021; SIPRI, 2024) NATO has also approved and announced to its members the allocation of at least 2% of GDP to military budgets (Gray and Siebold, 2023; NATO, 2024). A significant number of the world's top 10 arms importers are located in the West Asia region.

*Continuous Increase in Military Conflict Preparations:* Governments around the world have made a clear shift towards increasing military readiness. During a visit to the Chinese army after a large-scale military exercise in the Taiwan Strait, the President of China called on them to prepare for a real war. The Prime Minister of Japan has announced a change in the country's military strategy, according to which the military budget should double to 2% of GDP within the next 5 years (Johnson et al., 2022). Japan is deviating from its defensive military policy (Guardian, 2023) and is preparing a program to produce long-range and hypersonic missiles to create deterrence against Russia and China. In addition, a plan has been prepared to deploy 1,000 long-range missiles to deter China (Johnson, 2022; Liang et al., 2023). Germany is also playing a military role in distant regions by sending warships to the Indian and Pacific Oceans; General Eberhard Zorn says he will do so to participate in

exercises with allies and defend freedom of navigation and international norms (Reuters, 2023).

*Changing Strategic and Nuclear Documents towards Intensifying the Military Pattern:* Two revisions of Britain's foreign and defense policy document after Brexit with a conflict-oriented approach under the title "Global Britain in an Age of Competition"; Britain's nuclear deterrence document mentions increasing threats in scale, diversity, and complexity (GOV.UK, 2023; *ibid.*, 2024; UK Government, 2021).

Budget amendments to supply the British army with ammunition (Kirk-Wade, 2024); investment in the Australian nuclear submarine contract, increasing it to £5 billion; the antagonism of Russia, China, and their collaboration with Iran (Reuters, 2023); and the pivot to Asia strategy of the United States during the Obama administration, continued through the Biden administration, are indicative of these changes (Wyne, 2023). Britain and the United States have also revised their nuclear doctrines, with the most significant issue being a move closer to the potential use of nuclear weapons. North Korea has also passed a law allowing it to launch preemptive nuclear strikes (Smith, 2022).

### **5-2-Economic-Trade Pattern of Conflicts**

Violation of free trade and the failure of interdependence to reduce conflicts; the United States, through political pressure and threats to other governments, especially its allies, forced them to exclude leading Chinese companies in telecommunications and information technology from all telecommunications infrastructure projects and the development of fifth-generation telecommunications. To achieve this, the United States resorted to threatening strategic allies with the termination of military and intelligence cooperation if they did not expel Huawei. After the end of the Trump era, the Chinese ambassador to the United States stated that Biden had not changed the positions of the Trump era and that the United States was acting based on a Cold War mentality (UK Government, 2020; Artyukhina, 2021; The guardian, 2019; Financial Times, 2019; Mason et al., 2021). In another development, interdependence has led to more intense and deeper tensions, evident in two prominent cases: Russia-Europe and the United States-China. Years of diplomacy aimed at creating economic interdependence between Russia and Europe, particularly in the energy sector, failed to prevent the escalation of conflict between Russia and Europe (Atlantic Council, 2022). On the other hand, despite the very extensive economic relations between the United States and

China, the world's two largest economies have entered into conflict and trade war (Project Syndicate, 2024; BBC, 2021).

### **5-3-Geopolitical Pattern of Conflicts**

Increased geopolitical competition and the dominance of high politics over low politics; conflicts such as those in Taiwan, Ukraine and Yemen have demonstrated that geopolitical priorities and hard power are of decisive importance to states and powers.

Amidst the escalating Taiwan conflict, the United States seeks to establish a balance of power in the regions and promote regional order against countries like China and Russia, in order to create order and stability that secures its strategic interests and those of its allies (Rasmussen, 2022; Mohan, 2022). In the United States, Huawei, ZTE, Hytera Communications, Hikvision, and Dahua were blacklisted in March 2021 as threats to national security (Shepardson, 2021). Disagreement between strategic allies and the desire for strategic autonomy; another fact is visible in the desire for strategic independence of US allies. France has been seeking to launch a unified European army. The annexation of Crimea by Russia and the lack of operational involvement of the United States in the Russia-Ukraine military conflict, the occurrence of Brexit, and the trilateral US-Australia-UK agreement have been noteworthy for non-Anglo-Saxon governments. The President of France and the President of the European Council, referring to the above, have expressed dissatisfaction with Europe's dependence on the United States in security and strategic matters. During his visit to China, Macron emphasized the need for Europe not to interfere in the Taiwan conflict and to pursue the implementation of France's and the European Union's policy of strategic independence from the United States and non-interference in crises that are not related to Europe (Welle, 2023). The President of the European Council has also welcomed the strategic independence from the United States proposed by Macron (Grady, 2021; Anderlini et al., 2023; Goujard, 2023).

The decline of cooperation in the symbol of convergence and cooperation; with Britain's challenging exit from the European Union and the militarization of the Ukraine conflict, the most prominent example of cooperation has faced serious challenges. European integration, the site of two world wars with extensive casualties and destruction, is evidence of the reversal of the pattern of cooperation after the Cold War towards a pattern of conflict.

#### **5-4-The Scientific-Technological Paradigm of Conflicts**

Scientific-technical innovations have consistently driven strategic political-economic-security transformations. Certain fields of science and technology, in particular, possess a distinct characteristic in accelerating states' capabilities and generating economic value-added. These technologies have been analyzed using terms such as game-changing, emerging, or disruptive. Disruptive technology does not perpetuate changes in previous and existing technologies but creates high levels of transformation, such as artificial intelligence and its derivatives (e.g., machine vision and voice processing, natural language processing, machine learning, expert systems, etc.). Leading states in advanced specialized fields define the direction, manner, and future horizon of advanced tools and artifacts. The horizon envisioned for some technologies indicates momentous changes, similar to what the steam engine, railways, and new weaponry brought about in the 18th-20th centuries. Artificial intelligence, for example, has the potential to create significant changes in the economy, defense, and national security of states (Manning, 2020; Guillot, 2016). These technologies are important drivers of change and, therefore, have become a source of conflict among states because they create empowering and even exclusive tools for control and oversight in economics, politics, and strategic affairs. According to a Pentagon report, China is producing new technologies faster than the United States, giving it an advantage in competition with the U.S. until 2032 (Erwin, 2024; Albon, 2022). The U.S. Department of Commerce has added Chinese artificial intelligence and semiconductor companies to its blacklist to restrict China's access to them, including two major chip manufacturers, Cambricon and Yangtze Memory Technologies (The White House, 2022; Mark and Roberts, 2023). The European Union is also seeking to develop power and leadership in power-generating technologies to be a global player (Ringhof and Torreblanca, 2022).

In West Asia, the establishment of artificial intelligence centers indicates their importance in gaining national advantages. Turkey, Kuwait, and Qatar have formulated and implemented national artificial intelligence strategies (MCIT, 2019; CAIT, 2024; Yilmaz and others, 2021). Saudi Arabia plans to invest \$40 billion in artificial intelligence (Farrell and Copeland, 2024; Satariano and Mozur, 2024). Iraq is seeking to develop its nuclear infrastructure, ostensibly for power generation, but has initiated nuclear development negotiations with China and Russia, in addition to Western governments (Mehrnews, 2021; AlAnsary and DiPaola, 2021; Lee, 2022). The United Arab Emirates is also striving to expand its nuclear infrastructure,

with its fourth nuclear reactor scheduled to begin operations in 2024. The Pakistani Foreign Minister, within the framework of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between the UAE and Pakistan, has announced his country's readiness to share its nuclear expertise with the UAE (Dalton, 2024; Pid.gov.pk, 2024). Furthermore, Saudi Arabia and Turkey have also invested heavily in developing nuclear infrastructure and even acquiring the enrichment cycle. For example, Turkey is in negotiations with Rosatom to build its second nuclear power plant and with China to build its third. All of this indicates a kind of competition with a conflict pattern for enabling and superior technologies (Gallagher, 2019; WNN, 2024).

### **6-Results: Network of Emergent Conflict (Emergent Network of Conflicts)**

The above four patterns of emergent conflicts operate interdependently within the complexity-chaos state of the international order. This dependence and influence, based on the characteristic of sensitive dependence, constantly causes the system to fluctuate between equilibrium and disequilibrium, leading to the reproduction of conflicts in various domains. It is observable that the sum of the four emergent conflict patterns, within the complexity-chaos conditions of the order, forms a network of interconnected conflicts and threats for actors in a general conflict model. Controlling and countering this network of conflicts (or network-based conflicts) and the threats arising from it requires the application of network requirements based on the determinants of complexity, namely sensitive dependence, extroversion, etc. States' confrontation with these four emergent conflict patterns in the form of a network pattern of conflicts (or a network of conflicts and threats) and the threats emanating from it necessitates strategies commensurate with the determinants of complexity-chaos.

The expansion of network-based conflict patterns within a complex-chaotic system leads to surprise and the continuous generation of threats for actors. Furthermore, the post-Cold War international order, which has become increasingly complex, lacks a stabilized and institutionalized status.

The aforementioned four patterns, under conditions of sensitive dependence, possess a high potential for spreading to different domains and transforming into one another. For example, Britain's exit from the European Union has geopolitical, economic, and military dimensions, as seen in the delivery of nuclear submarines to Australia (following the cancellation of the



contract with France); or, the scientific-technological pattern of conflict has a strong potential to create a sensitive dependence effect on the military and economic patterns of conflict. A prime example is artificial intelligence-related technologies, which, due to creating a significant capability gap in the military and economic spheres, can transform the military and economic patterns of conflict.

### **7- Discussion: Intensification of Network-Based Conflict Patterns and Strategic Implications for Countries**

The international order, as a complex-chaotic system, encompasses three determining factors or characteristics of the system: sensitive dependence, emergence, and perpetual balance-imbalance. The existence of sensitive dependence means that with slight manipulation and alteration of some components, the system undergoes nonlinear and substantial transformations in other parts, meaning the sensitive dependence effect will create a high disproportion in the system's inputs and outputs. Emergence refers to a behavior and effect in the system that is new and not predictable based on its components and history. The third determining factor is the system's constant oscillation between balance and imbalance, which affects the stability and strategic position of actors. Of these three factors, sensitive dependence is the cause of emergence and the shift of the system's state from balance to imbalance, creating a very significant danger for actors: surprise. As examined, the international order in the recent period, due to the reproduction and re-functioning of the main dynamics of international relations (power, economy, culture-identity, and communications), has become intensely competitive and conflictual.

Following the recovery of Russia's power and the rapid growth of China, along with other developments stemming from the reproduction and functioning of the primary dynamics of international relations, we are witnessing a resurgence of non-cooperative rivalries and an intensification of conflict patterns, leading to the formation of a network-based conflict model. The characteristic of sensitive dependence creates emergence and oscillation of the system between equilibrium-disequilibrium, pushing the system to the edge of chaos. The lack of preparedness of actors to confront these conditions creates significant risks, ranging from surprise to existential threat. In this context, the most important mechanism and the most effective tool for actors to remain secure is maintaining immediate deterrence in the face of a network-based and escalating conflict pattern; states in a fragmented and complex-chaotic

regional order need to maintain immediate deterrence through the production and application of power diversity and the continuous strengthening of national power elements based on it. Any impairment of immediate deterrence may, due to the sensitive dependence effect and its immediate consequences in the emerging conflict network, lead to completely surprising and irreversible outcomes, shifting the system's behavior towards instability against the security and interests of the actors. Furthermore, considering the sensitive dependence effect and the possibility of surprise, actors must, in addition to continuously strengthening national power elements and avoiding any limiting factors, take action to counter its consequences. Another dimension of the intensification of conflict patterns is related to the scientific-technological pattern of conflict. The nature and essence of new scientific-technological developments indicate a kind of intense and revolutionary impact, creating a high power differential and a potentially irreparable (or at least difficult to repair) power gap between those who possess it and others.

On the other hand, the issue of conflict termination is also raised. With the intensification of the network-based conflict pattern, what becomes fundamentally important is the extent of actors' susceptibility to potential conflicts, and then the issue of conflict termination and the factors influencing it. The most fundamental determining factor regarding an actor's vulnerability, the interests given or taken in conflicts, how control is exercised and will is imposed, and ultimately the termination of conflicts, will be the capabilities and controlling tools of each actor.

For this reason, the issue of conflict termination becomes doubly important and is dependent on the capabilities and control instruments of each actor. Furthermore, all of these factors, until the occurrence of the highest and most intense form of conflict, namely war, are relevant. In war, the primary mechanism and factor for conflict termination is force, which is entirely dependent on the power and capabilities of the actors in possessing effective means of self-defense and protecting their interests, inflicting damage on the adversary (damaging the adversary's ability to inflict damage or destroying its existence), and ultimately exerting control and will. It is noteworthy that even entering the negotiation and bargaining phase for conflict termination will not reduce the impact of the aforementioned factors; rather, the level of capabilities and instruments of the parties will still determine the outcome of the negotiation and bargaining. Consequently, the quantitative and qualitative increase in conflicts and the issue of conflict termination necessitate specific strategic requirements for

the actors, tailored to the situation. This has been observed in the changing strategic documents of global and nuclear powers. These requirements can be inferred to revolve around maintaining and strengthening capabilities and the absence of limitations on an actor. As mentioned, one of the domains of state conflict that has expanded despite the expectations of many theorists is conflict in the scientific-technological realm, particularly in enabling and disruptive technologies. The main reason for this lies in the possibility of a leap in capabilities and a significant upgrade in the control instruments of the actor possessing them, which allows for the creation of an effective and even irreparable power gap between the possessing actor and others. From the perspective of conflict termination, it is acceptable that the mechanisms for conflict termination through the unilateral imposition of will and conflict resolution by resorting to force or bargaining based on capabilities are being strengthened. Even the role of international institutions and regimes that promote cooperation has been severely reduced from what theorists had in mind and has even become ineffective. In this regard, the strategic requirements for countering the network-based conflict model include the following: Production and application of power diversity; creation of immediate deterrence based on power diversity; continuous growth of national power elements; suppression of threats in the security environment; non-acceptance of restrictive commitments and treaties; development of enabling technologies, especially disruptive ones.

These strategic implications will serve as guidelines for strategic decision-making and policymaking.

### **Strategic Implications of the I.R. of Iran in the Face of the New Model of Intensified Network Conflicts**

The political system emerging from the Islamic Revolution has succeeded in realizing all components and elements of the national state and sovereign authority in its modern and Westphalian sense for Iran, and it is necessary to continue these trends and power dynamics without disruption. Continuously strengthening and upgrading the elements of hard power (as a primary priority), with a focus on the strengths and advantages created after the Islamic Revolution (as exemplified in the aerospace industry), is essential to enable continued growth in other areas and the production of possible and feasible power diversification; and to create immunity against the intensification of the network conflict model in its strategic environment, in order to avoid strategic surprise in the face of regional and international rivals

and hostile actors. Transformation in the regional and international environment and its interaction with the sensitive dependence effect, the emergence and fluctuation of the balance-imbalance of the international system is observable by analyzing the collected evidence and data; which has been accompanied by an increase in the quantity and qualitative intensification of non-cooperative conflicts and competitions of regional and international actors, and in the foreseeable future, the intensification of the network model of conflicts will be sustained. The occurrence of war as the most important form of conflict also has numerous instances in the strategic environment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the intensification of the network conflict model in the form of new and hybrid wars is also emerging. In this regard, considering strategic implications commensurate with the effects of complexity-chaos and sensitive dependence and its consequences should be decisive for the strategic decision-making of the I.R. of Iran. For this reason, the Islamic Republic of Iran must avoid any internal and external restrictions on its elements of power. Insufficient and untimely access to power diversification and enabling technological tools is very effective, and any restrictions on the growth and development of vital and disruptive scientific-technological fields should also be avoided due to their strategic consequences.

These strategic and security consequences may lead to an inadequate and untimely response to the novel pattern of network-based conflicts in the strategic and security environment. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a growing power in a highly competitive, transformative, and uncertain security environment resulting from the effect of sensitive dependence, must fully observe the strategic requirements mentioned in the face of the network-based conflict pattern. In particular, it is essential to establish and continuously renew immediate deterrence against rivals and hostile states based on the characteristics of the complex-chaotic international order and the effect of sensitive dependence.

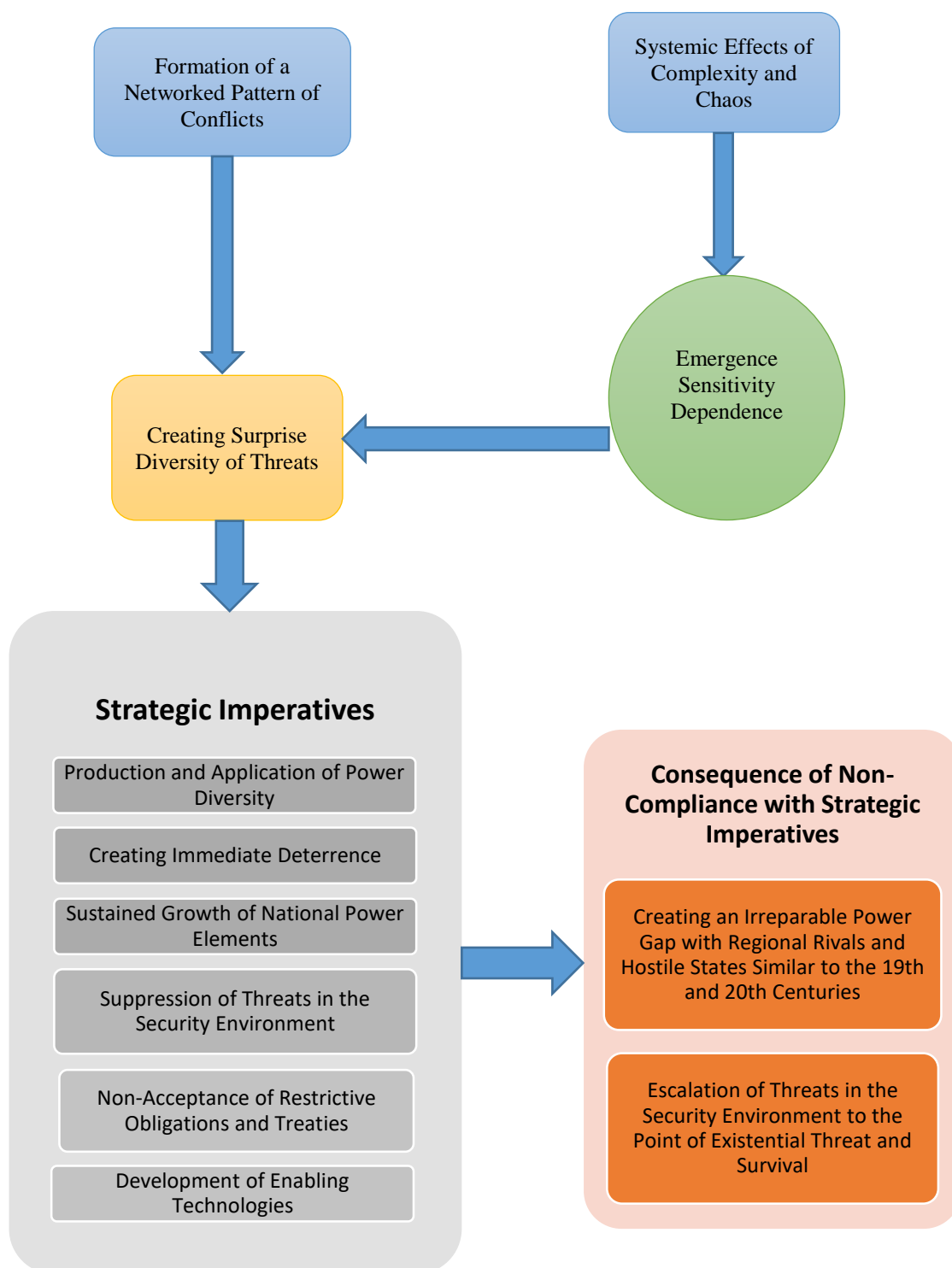
Therefore, any policy-making and action, including membership in pacts and treaties that lead to long-term commitments or in any way limit the current state or future growth of its power elements and components in the three areas of political-geopolitical, economic-industrial, and scientific-technological (because it can lead to an existential threat in the future), must be prevented. In this regard, the strategic requirements for the Islamic Republic of Iran in the face of threats arising from the novel pattern of network-based conflicts (section 3.6.) and the risk of facing strategic surprises and unpredictable developments (resulting from the nature of the complex-chaotic international order) can be summarized as follows: All elements of

power and dimensions of power, including hard, soft, smart, and communicative, should be activated in line with the main dynamics of international relations, and power diversity should be generated (with a focus on and priority of hard power); immediate deterrence should be created against threatening actors and existing threats in the security and strategic environment; any actual security threat in the security environment should be confronted; acceptance and membership in treaties, agreements, and regimes with restrictive characteristics should be rejected; research and development in the fields of superiority-creating and disruptive scientific-technological fields should be expanded continuously at the state level and at the level of private and knowledge-based institutions.

To achieve a desirable strategic and security environment with long-term stability, the Islamic Republic of Iran must strictly avoid any action and policy that limits the elements of national power and access to empowering technological tools.

Otherwise, due to the potential for an irreparable power gap with regional rivals and hostile states (similar to the 19th and 20th centuries), it may face an existential threat. Failure to comply with the above requirements could lay the groundwork for the erosion of sovereign authority, followed by severe security consequences. In a manner similar to the nineteenth century, insufficient growth of national power and erosion of sovereign authority could lead to the postponement or prevention of national growth and development of the Islamic Republic of Iran and create an irreparable power gap with other competitors for many years to come. Furthermore, this gap in power and capabilities could prevent it from playing a suitable role in the new international order and from reaching the level of a global power in the future, ultimately leading to an existential threat. Such conditions in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries were also manifested in national poverty, repeated territorial separations, and significant military defeats, along with their irreparable political, economic, and cultural consequences. All this is happening in a context where the complex and chaotic international order and the existence of sensitive interdependence have led to the formation of a new network-based model of conflict, creating high uncertainty and a greater likelihood of strategic surprise.

**Figure 1. How to Deduce Strategic Implications**



## **Conclusions**

The performance of the monarchical systems governing Iran during the so-called Westphalian system or the modern era, despite their ups and downs and differences, have had complete similarities in some cases: strategic neglect of developments in the international order, being surprised by the consequences of these developments, and ultimately harming national interests, weakening national sovereignty, and existential threats against the existence of Greater Iran, one of the costs of which was the separation of large territorial parts.

Only the system emerging from the Islamic Revolution has realized all the elements of modern statehood for Iran, continuously developed all elements of national power, and provided a high level of national capability; and alongside that, it has created deep and practical awareness and insight into the developments of the international order, even in one of the most important periods of human history (namely, the collapse of the bipolar system and the formation of a new international order characterized by complexity and chaos), in all governmental and non-governmental pillars of Iran.

The post-Cold War transformations and the unpredictable consequences of a complex-chaotic order, along with the sensitive dependence effect, have made the continuation of this trend even more necessary, transforming it into a strategic imperative. The issues and difficulties that have arisen and been imposed in the domestic and foreign arenas should not cause a disruption in this growing trend for the Islamic Republic of Iran. The continuation of this trend is also dependent on observing the aforementioned strategic requirements, and failure to observe them may, as in the 18th and 19th centuries and the first half of the 20th century, cause Iran to suffer a significant gap in power and capability with its rivals and hostile states; an issue that could have severe and potentially irreparable consequences, and even endanger the existence of a great and historical Iran.

## **Author Contributions**

“Conceptualization, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; methodology, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; software, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; validation, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee and; investigation, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; resources, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; data curation, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; writing—original draft preparation, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; writing—review and editing, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; visualization, Bijan Pirouz and Saleh Motiee; supervision, Bijan Pirouz; project



administration, Bijan Pirouz; All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.” Please turn to the [CRediT](#) taxonomy for the term explanation. Authorship must be limited to those who have contributed substantially to the work re-reported.

All authors contributed equally to the conceptualization of the article and writing of the original and subsequent drafts.

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