

The Role of Events and Power Struggle in Shaping the Islamic Political Order in Post-Revolutionary Iran

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Received: 25/07/2025

Accepted: 21/11/2025

Abstract

How was the political order formed in Iran after the 1979 revolution? The dominant narrative emphasizes that this order arose from the Islamic nature of the Iranian revolution and was the most natural order possible. In contrast, there is another narrative that considers the order to be the result of the power struggle in the post-revolutionary space. By designing a simple theoretical model, the present article analyzes the role of the ideological field, political and social events, and the actions of rival groups in the formation of the post-revolutionary political order, and therefore attempts to present a new reading of the second narrative. Based on the findings of this research, in the ideological (space) field after the revolution, there was a relative balance of power and no group could dominate its ideas alone and at once. According to this research, each event led to the formation of a coalition of supporters and opponents, and the conflict between these two coalitions played a fundamental role in the formation of the post-revolutionary political order. Also, these coalitions were not fixed; that is, they changed with each event. Meanwhile, the jurisprudential Islamists, through temporary alliances with other rivals; institution-building - such as the establishment of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the Revolutionary Council, and the Islamic Republic Party - and ultimately closeness to Imam Khomeini, gradually transformed their ideas - such as the Islamic Republic, the principle of Velayat al-Faqih, and the fundamentalist Islamization of Iranian society - into the hard core of the post-revolutionary Iranian political order, while the ideological differences between the leftists (Marxists) and the nationalists were so fundamental that they could not even have common ideas. Although at the beginning of the revolution, the nationalists and Islamic liberals collaborated with the jurisprudential Islamists, they did not succeed in introducing any ideas into the hard core of the political order. On the other hand, the leftists achieved success in one case; namely, they succeeded in transforming the idea of fighting imperialism and anti-Westernism into part of the hard core of the political order.

Keywords: Political Order, Iranian Revolution of 1979, Jurisprudential Islamists, Power Struggle, Events, Coalition, Institutionalization.

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1. Introduction

Every political order coalesces around a core that is resistant to change.¹ This core comprises a set of ideas and institutions that delineate the permissible and impermissible actions of individuals. Political orders typically undergo transformation during periods of crisis, such as revolutions. Following the 1979 Revolution in Iran, a new political order emerged, predominantly reflecting jurisprudential Islamist ideas. This paper seeks to explore why and how this specific political order, grounded in jurisprudential Islamist ideology, came to be.

Two primary narratives can be distinguished concerning this development. The first narrative posits that the new political order is a direct consequence of the Islamic nature of the 1979 Revolution (Mohammadi,2019). This perspective establishes an inherent connection between the revolution's character and the subsequent order, viewing the Islamist political order as the most natural outcome for post-revolutionary Iran. Key arguments supporting this narrative include: 1. The leader of the Iranian Revolution was a high-ranking Shi'ite jurist who had articulated the theory of Velayat-e Faqih as the foundation of the future political order prior to the revolution (Khomeini,1969), 2. Jurisprudential Islamists constituted the principal and most organized revolutionary group before the revolution, with other groups playing only marginal roles in the revolution's victory; 3. The slogans of the revolution were predominantly Islamic-Shi'ite (Panahi,2013). However, this narrative must address two fundamental questions: 1. What was the role of specific events and the power struggle in shaping Iran's new political order? 2. Did jurisprudential Islamists (including Ayatollah Khomeini) possess a clear vision of the future political order? In other words, this narrative overlooks the ambiguities and uncertainties surrounding the form and nature of the future political order, for instance, neglecting the fact that Ayatollah Khomeini himself offered diverse interpretations of the Velayat-e Faqih theory (Kadivar,1999:21-26).

The second narrative contends that the Iranian Revolution resulted from the collaboration of diverse forces, but following the fall of the Pahlavi

1.This definition of political order is a free interpretation of Chouliaraki and Fairclough's definition of discursive order, which is defined as: "the socially ordered set of genres and discourses associated with a particular field, characterised in terms of the shifting boundaries and flows between them" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough,1999:58).

government, the revolution was "hijacked" by jurisprudential Islamists.¹ Proponents of this view offer several key arguments: 1. Prior to the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini and the Islamists espoused democratic slogans, but after the revolution, they disregarded democratic principles and systematically excluded other groups from the political arena (Behrouz, 2011:199); 2. The divisions within leftist factions, and between leftists and Islamic liberals, were the primary factors contributing to the jurisprudential Islamists' ascendancy (Behrouz, 2011:182-183).

This narrative, however, needs to address a crucial question: What was the role of the jurisprudential Islamists' potential capabilities and capacities, including their mobilization power and Ayatollah Khomeini's leadership, in the dominance of Islamist ideas? It appears that proponents of this narrative possess a simplistic understanding of politics, viewing the struggle among rival actors in the post-revolutionary environment as an unnatural occurrence. As a result, this article attempts to present a new reading of the second narrative. This article first considers the role of the post-revolutionary field (space) and specific events in the formation of the new political order in Iran as important. To this end, it analyzes the actions of different groups in this space and shows the opportunities and possibilities they had. This article puts forward the hypothesis that each event has created a serious power struggle and that this power struggle - in the form of coalition-building and institution-building - has played a fundamental role in the formation of the new political order in Iran.

2. Methodology and Materials

This article is grounded in post-structuralist assumptions, diverging from a linear historical perspective of Iran. Instead, it emphasizes the possibilities and contingencies emerging from the revolution. Consequently, it posits that the post-revolutionary political order is primarily the result of actor contention within a specific socio-political context.

1. Ali Keshtgar, Abbas Milani, Hooshang Nahavandi, and Mehdi Fatahpour are among the proponents of this narrative (see "Did Khomeini and Islamists Steal the Iranian Revolution?" by Keyvan Hosseini, Radio Farda, 20/11/; also "Four Myths About the Revolution," Deutsche Welle Farsi, 2019/02/05; and an interview with Mohammad Reza Moradi, "How Khomeini Stole the Revolution?!" Iran Azadi website; Hooshang Nahavandi's book *Khomeini in Paris*).

The study focuses on the 1979-1981 period in Iran. To reconstruct the post-revolutionary environment and the actions of various actors, it draws upon newspapers and communiqués from rival groups in Iran during these years. Furthermore, this article employs several key concepts to analyze the power struggle in post-revolutionary Iran: field, agency, institution-building, and events.

As defined by Bourdieu and Wacquant, a field is a social arena where agents compete for specific objectives (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:94). Naturally, the characteristics of this field influence the nature of the political order. For instance, in an ideological field, groups with greater capacity to mobilize the masses will be more successful. The second concept is agency, which can be both negative (passive) and positive (active). Negative agency aims to dismantle the previous order or incapacitate rival forces, while positive agency seeks to seize control of the state and society, either through militarization or institution-building. The latter refers to the establishment of new political, military, cultural, and social organizations. Events are defined as incidents that occurred within the post-revolutionary field.

3. Literature Review

There are relatively few publications addressing the process of political order formation in Iran. Most existing works either focus on the process leading to the victory of the revolution or examine the consequences and repercussions of the revolution at domestic, regional, and global levels. Nevertheless, some studies can be found that are closely related to the present article.

For example, Hafeznia and his colleagues, in their 2007 article titled "Modeling the Political Transition Period in Revolutions: A Case Study of the Islamic Revolution of Iran", demonstrate that Islamic ideology played a fundamental role in shaping the legal and governmental structures in the post-revolutionary period. According to their findings, many post-revolutionary events—such as the U.S. embassy takeover, the export of the revolution, internal and ethnic crises like those in Kurdistan and Azerbaijan, and the geopolitical challenges faced by the Islamic Revolution—can be understood in this context. They also argue that the emergence of political rivalries among revolutionary factions and leaders led to tribal-like claims over power and contributed to the formation of revolutionary structures.

Similarly, in their 2016 article "A Comparative Study of the Role of Ideology in Post-Revolutionary Developments in Iran and Egypt", Samiei

Esfahani and Akbari argue that ideology, along with the leadership of Imam Khomeini, played a critical role in consolidating the Iranian revolution.

Homa Omid, in her 1994 book *Islam and the Post-Revolutionary State in Iran*, argues that the Iranian Revolution represents the first successful instance of a political regime led by a religious institution in the Middle East. The book traces the roots of the revolutionary power of the clergy and religious leaders, critically engaging with their views on governance and Islamic economics. Omid contends that the unstable alliance between intellectuals and the clergy—which brought about two successful revolutions in 20th-century Iran—has always been marked by irreconcilable tensions. These tensions continued into the post-revolutionary period, pulling national politics in contradictory directions. Once in power, the Islamic state was compelled to contend with these opposing forces. Moreover, the young and fervent revolutionaries came to assert their right to dictate terms to the post-revolutionary state, resulting in the emergence of revolutionary institutions whose responsibilities often overlapped with those of the formal state apparatus.

In addition, in his 2004 article "Review: Post-Revolutionary Politics in Iran: Continuity and Change," Hessam Vahabzadeh shows that during the first decade after the revolution, the promotion of the Islamization of the state and society, the Cultural Revolution, the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, and the ambition to export the revolution intensified anti-foreign tendencies within Iran. The article argues that despite changes over time, key elements shaping the Islamic Republic—such as the anti-imperialist struggle manifested in anti-Western rhetoric—have remained consistent.

4. The Post-Revolutionary Field: Ideology, Relative Balance of Power, and Ayatollah Khomeini's Charisma

The revolutionary slogans preceding and immediately following the revolution offer insights into the post-revolutionary ideological landscape. According to Hassanzadeh's study of approximately 2630 revolutionary slogans, 375 contained Islamic symbols such as Allah, Quran, Prophet Muhammad, Islam, martyr, mosque, and prayer. About 161 slogans included specific Shi'ite symbols like Imam Ali, Imam Hussein, Imam Zaman, Ashura, and Karbala. Approximately 465 slogans featured national symbols such as Iran, homeland, country, and nation. Furthermore, about 328 slogans expressed xenophobia, calls for independence, and opposition

to the US, Israel, the Soviet Union, imperialism, colonialism, and both East and West (Hassanzadeh,2007:17-28).

Beyond slogans, the manifestos and communiqués of political parties and groups also reflected the ideological climate. For example, the National Front declared its primary goal as national independence and liberation from dependence on dominant powers, based on a nationalist ideology (Principles and Goals of the National Front of Iran,1978). The Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization identified its objective as the destruction of imperialism, seen as the root cause of Iran's societal problems (Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization,n.d.:5). The Islamic Republican Party, on the other hand, aimed to establish Islamic justice (Manifesto of the Islamic Republican Party).

Moreover, around 510 out of 2630 revolutionary slogans directly referenced "Khomeini" (Hassanzadeh,2007:18), underscoring his central role in the revolution. According to Mehdi Bazargan, Ayatollah Khomeini's photograph was the most popular among those circulated during the revolution, with approximately 50 to 60 percent of demonstrators carrying his image (Bazargan,1984:39).¹ Masses and even some political elites sought his image in the moon, and almost both groups used the title "Imam" for him.² Despite disagreements among revolutionary actors, most accepted Ayatollah Khomeini's leadership. For instance, organizations like the Mojahedin-e Khalq addressed Ayatollah Khomeini as "our dear father" (Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization,1979:3).

In the post-revolutionary field, none of the revolutionary actors could unilaterally seize power. Ayatollah Khomeini's alignment with any

1.Even Bijan Jazani, a leader of the Fadaian Guerrillas who was killed in 1976, predicted Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic role in Iran's future two years before the revolution. He wrote: "The event of 15 Khordad 1342 (June 5, 1963) rapidly brought Khomeini from obscurity to fame... The absence of a capable leadership allowed Khomeini and religious groups to take control of the revolution... Ayatollah Khomeini enjoys unprecedented popularity among the masses, especially among tradesmen and the petty bourgeoisie, and if relatively free political activity were possible, he would achieve unprecedented success, far greater than Kashani's power in the oil nationalization movement; therefore, he can be very influential on the main revolutionary forces, namely the bazaar and religious strata" (Jazani, 1999:318).

2.Hashemi Rafsanjani's account of the Imam's picture in the moon, the prohibition of music, and the religious doubt about the "Sultan and Shepherd" series, Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani's interview with Jomhuri Eslami newspaper, on Iranian History website, June 1, 2011 | 19:59 Code: 864.

particular group could significantly tip the balance of power in its favor (Bahrani,2010:289). This relative balance of power was coupled with a form of mass politics, wherein various groups, including the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, nationalists, and leftists, each sought to mobilize the masses in support of their own agendas (Delavari et al.,2020:111). Bazargan believed that the masses' participation and entry into the revolution led to a plurality of governance (Bazargan,1982:134).

Simultaneously, the post-revolutionary field witnessed political and social insecurity due to the absence of established regulatory mechanisms. For example, revolutionary courts sentenced individuals affiliated with the previous regime to execution and imprisonment. Fear-induced emigration was expanding,¹ street assassinations were rampant,² and ethnic and separatist movements (especially in Kurdistan, Gonbad-e Kavus, Turkmen Sahra, and Khuzestan) further exacerbated political and social instability (Bahrani,2010:289). Bazargan described this atmosphere as follows: "...from the formation of the Provisional Government, we generally witnessed dispersion, animosity, and expulsion. Our revolutionary society gradually moved away from alliance, unity, and unity of word. Everyone and every group considered themselves solely entitled and tried to eliminate other ideas, individuals, and groups. While at the beginning of the revolution the main idea was 'all together,' gradually this idea gave way to the idea of 'all with me'" (Bazargan,1984:13).

5. Rival Actors in the Post-Revolutionary Field

Alongside Ayatollah Khomeini, who served as the central figure, various other actors significantly influenced the shaping of the new order through their actions in the post-revolutionary landscape. These actors can be broadly categorized into two main groups based on their ideologies: Islamic actors and secular actors.

1.Oriana Fallaci's interview with Mehdi Bazargan (2010: 26, 36, 40).

2.Ettela'at newspaper, February 13, 1979, p. 3; July 25, 1979, pp. 1 & 2; Kayhan newspaper, March 27, 1979, pp. 1 & 2; March 28, 1979, pp. 1, 2, & 3; May 2, 1979, pp. 1 & 2; May 4, 1979. Ettela'at newspaper, March 21, 1979, p. 1; April 24, 1979, pp. 1, 2, & 8; June 17, 1979, pp. 1 & 2; August 26, 1979, p. 5; September 23, 1979, p. 6; November 3, 1979, pp. 1 & 2. Ettela'at newspaper, May 5, 1979, p. 9; May 21, 1979, pp. 1-3; May 8, 1979, pp. 12 & 1; May 30, 1979, pp. 1 & 2.

5-1. Islamic Actors

5-1-1. Jurisprudential Islamists

Jurisprudential Islamists primarily regarded themselves as followers of Ayatollah Khomeini. They believed that Islam offered a comprehensive socio-political program for Muslims' lives, thus deriving their ideas from Shi'ite jurisprudence and emphasizing the intertwined nature of Islam and politics.¹ They championed concepts such as Velayat-e Faqih (Guardianship of the Jurist), the establishment of an Islamic government, the priority of the ummah (Islamic community) over the Iranian nation, support for the world's oppressed, economic self-sufficiency, the precedence of commitment over expertise, populism, poverty eradication, and confrontation with global arrogance (encapsulated in the slogan "Neither East nor West").

The Islamic Revolution Mojahedin Organization, the Islamic Coalition Party (Hezbe Motalefeh-e Islami), the Combatant Clergy Association of Tehran (Jame'e Rohaniyat-e Mobarez-e Tehran), and the Society of Seminary Teachers of Qom (Jame'e Modarresin-e Howzeh Elmiyeh Qom) were the primary representatives of jurisprudential Islamists in post-revolutionary Iran. In February 1979, they formed the Islamic Republican Party of Iran (Bashiriyeh, 2002:28). This party considered itself the sole authentic revolutionary party. Its founders declared: "The existence of an Islamic, revolutionary, popular, value-oriented organization, committed to imamate and leadership, is the best means for the continuation of the revolution" (Jasbi, 1998:149).

Furthermore, jurisprudential Islamists possessed an extensive mobilization network; they controlled over 8,000 mosques and Husseinyyehs (Milani, 2008:54). They also had significant financial resources, given their organic ties to the traditional bazaar and their access to religious endowments such as Khums, Zakat, and Waqf (Halliday, 1979:228).

5-1-2. Eclectic Islamists

Eclectic Islamists refer to groups that combined Islamic ideology with another ideology, including the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO), the Freedom Movement of Iran (Nehzat-e Azadi), and Islamic Social Democrats. For the MKO, Marxist ideas such as social justice, council democracy, anti-imperialism, class struggle, and a socialist economy were

1. Ayatollah Khomeini, as the spiritual leader of the Islamists, believed: "Islam is entirely politics" (Khomeini, Sahifeh, Vol. 1: 270).

synonymous with core Islamic principles. The MKO was the most significant representative of the Islamic Left in terms of membership and mobilization capacity (Bashirieh,2002:31).

Similarly, the Islamic Social Democracy movement, led by Bani Sadr, presented a socialist interpretation of Islam. It emphasized ideas such as Towhidi economics (a blend of Islamic and socialist economics), non-alignment (non-compromise with foreign powers in terms of political and cultural independence), scientism, and specialization (Mozaffar,2014:43-101).

The Freedom Movement of Iran held a liberal interpretation of Islam, stressing concepts like freedom, rule of law, democracy, free market economy, peaceful relations with the West, Iranian nationalism, specialization (scientism), and the separation of state and religious institutions (Bazargan,1971:207; Bazargan,1967:108-143).¹ While they accepted the social function of Islam, they rejected the organized intervention of religious institutions in politics. More precisely, they believed that the political sphere should be entrusted to its specialists, i.e., technocrats.² Mehdi Bazargan and Ayatollah Mahmoud Taleghani can be considered the main leaders of this current.

5-2.Secular Actors

Secular actors did not assign a political role to Islam as an ideology. Instead, they adopted leftist, rightist, or a combination of ideologies. The main secular actors in the post-revolutionary period included Iranian Marxists (comprising the Tudeh Party, the Fedayeen Guerrillas, and the Peykar Organization), the National Front (Nationalists), and the Muslim People's Republican Party (Secular Muslims).

Leftists considered Marxism the sole path to liberation and emphasized ideas such as anti-imperialism, the unity of oppressed classes, a socialist economy, council democracy, and autonomy for ethnic minorities (Bashiriyeh,2002:32; Behrouz,2011:181-186 and 206-213; Ahmadi Hajikolaie,2010:386-405).

1.Statement of the Freedom Movement Party in Ettela'at newspaper 1979/09/19; Bazargan's speech on Tehran Radio, 1979/06/05.

2.Fallaci's interview with Bazargan.

The National Front, formed around the idea of Iranian nationalism, had two branches: liberal and socialist. Its liberal branch emphasized adherence to the law (especially the Constitutional Law), parliamentary democracy, freedom, secularism, and a free market economy (Statement of the National Democratic Party, *Kayhan* newspaper 1979/02/27; Sanjabi's interview with *Kayhan* newspaper 1979/06/24). The National Democratic Party, led by Hedayatollah Matin-Daftari and Karim Sanjabi, was the main representative of this branch. The National Socialist branch of the National Front emphasized ideas such as nationalization of industries, expropriation of large properties, formation of workers' councils, land reform, and national health plans (Bashiriyeh, 2002:31). The Movement of Militant Muslims (led by Habibollah Peyman) and the People's Freedom Association of Iran (led by Kazem Sami) were the main representatives of this branch (Darabi, 2011: 95-97). Iranian nationalists—especially their liberal branch—were ideologically and politically close to the Freedom Movement of Iran (Islamic liberals).

The Muslim People's Republican Party (Secular Muslims) also held a non-political interpretation of Islam and emphasized democratic ideas such as free elections, the Constitutional Law, ethnic minority rights, the separation of religious and state institutions, and support for the "people" (*khalq*) (Hosseinzadeh, 2010:320). The spiritual leader of this party was Ayatollah Shariatmadari.

6. Events and the Agency of Rival Actors in the Post-Revolutionary Field

While most of these groups collaborated in a fragile alliance to overthrow the Pahlavi monarchy prior to the revolution, the situation shifted dramatically afterward. Each event became a crucible for new contention among these rival groups, prompting them to articulate their positions.

6-1. The First Event: Contention over the Form of the New Political System

The initial serious contention among rival groups revolved around the nature of the new political system. Each group advocated for its preferred system. For instance, Iranian nationalists championed a "secular democratic Iranian republic" (*Kayhan*, March 1, 1979, interview with Sanjabi). Islamic liberals favored an "Islamic democratic republic" (*Kayhan*, March 18, 1979,

interview with Bazargan).¹ Islamic Marxists and Islamic Social Democrats, echoing jurisprudential Islamists, supported an "Islamic Republic" (Kayhan, March 18, 1979).² Even the Mojahedin Organization, in a statement, declared that given the current political and social realities of Iranian society, there was no doubt that the establishment of an Islamic Republic was the demand of the overwhelming majority of the people... hence, opposition to it was a sign of separatism (Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, n.d.:6). Marxists, however, had fundamental disagreements about the future system; while the Tudeh Party supported the Islamic Republic,³ the Fedayeen Guerrillas and the Peykar Organization advocated for a "People's Democratic Republic" (Kar, March 29, 1979; Ettela'at, March 28, 1979: 8; Ettela'at, March 29, 1979: 2). Additionally, the Muslim People's Republican Party initially sought more options for the referendum but later supported the "Islamic Republic" (Milani,2008:281).

Two main discussions dominated the debate over the political system: first, whether "Islamic Republic" was a core pre-revolutionary slogan and if Ayatollah Khomeini, while in Paris (before the revolution), had identified it as Iran's future political system. The second discussion centered on the democratic nature of the Islamic Republic. In fact, the image presented of the Islamic Republic contained democracy in Islam. At the same time, this image was so general and inclusive that opposing it seemed irrational. Ayatollah Khomeini maintained that an Islamic government was a truly democratic government, recognizing the freedom of religious minorities and allowing everyone to express their opinions freely. Ayatollah Khomeini declared: "Islam will converse with all beliefs and respond to all logics with logic. Therefore, there is no need to add the qualifier 'democratic' to the Islamic Republic" (Freedom Movement of Iran,1988:48). In fact, the competition over the title of the future political system was the beginning of a competition between different discourses, each of which would somehow incorporate its central signifier into the future political order. The insistence

1.In Bazargan's view, the adjective "democratic" should be added to the Islamic Republic. This is because the democratic concept is a more general aspect that can later accommodate Islam and any other type of government system (Kayhan, January 24,1979).

2.Interview with Bani Sadr titled "Perceptions of the Iranian People on the Nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the 1979 Referendum," August 20, 2010, Youtube.

3.The Tudeh Party leaders declared: "Our positive vote for the Islamic Republic is not a tactic but our strategy" (Shadlou,2007:59).

of the Islamic jurisprudential Islamists on the title "Islamic Republic" meant that the "Islamic" nature should govern all aspects of society, and the insistence on "republic" instead of "government" can be explained for two reasons: first, they considered the "Islamic government" to be the final stage of history, while the "Islamic Republic" was the stage before it, and second, the elimination of "republic" and its replacement with "government" would cause other revolutionaries, including some of the leftists and Islamic liberals, to separate and split from the Islamic jurisprudential Islamists, because from the leftist perspective, "republic" could be another translation of "people," and for liberals and nationalists, "republic" could be interpreted as "Iranian nation." However, the rejection of the term "democratic" by the Islamic jurisprudence indicated their distancing from Western liberal democracies on the one hand and Eastern social democracies on the other. Furthermore, the acceptance of the title "democratic" could be interpreted as the dominance of democratic values over Islamic values. Ayatollah Khomeini believed that "democratic republic is a Western form, and what the Iranian nation desires is an Islamic Republic, not a republic, not a democratic republic, not an Islamic democratic republic, only an Islamic Republic." In Ayatollah Khomeini's view, only the "Islamic Republic" guaranteed independence, justice, freedom, and welfare (Kayhan, February 19, 1979).

Ultimately, Ayatollah Khomeini's role as the revolution's leader proved decisive. He unequivocally stated: "I vote for the Islamic Republic, not one word more, not one word less, and I ask the noble nation of Iran to vote for the Islamic Republic, which is the only path of the Islamic Revolution" (Kayhan, March 1, 1979; Ettela'at, March 2, 1979). Ayatollah Khomeini's explicit declaration led secular socialist Muslims, Islamic liberals, and a faction of Iranian nationalists (led by Karim Sanjabi) to also support the Islamic Republic option.¹ The most significant reasons for these groups' change of stance and their inclination toward the "Islamic Republic" can be listed as follows: 1. Their optimistic outlook regarding the nature of the

1. Ayatollah Shariatmadari announced his support for the Islamic Republic (Kayhan, March 11, 1979). Mehdi Bazargan also stated: "The Islamic Republic is both Islamic and democratic" (Kayhan, March 18, 1979). Karim Sanjabi also declared: "I am confident that the content of the Islamic Republic is democratic..." (Kayhan, March 1, 1979). He also later said: "The Islamic Republic is the most natural fruit of our revolution" (Kayhan newspaper, March 29, 1979).

Islamic Republic (although this nature was not entirely clear); 2. Their belief that they could pursue their core ideas, including freedom, nationalism, the rule of law, etc., within the framework of the "Islamic Republic." In other words, they hoped to play a more significant role in the ongoing revolution—including in the drafting of the constitution—and incorporate democratic principles into it; 3. Besides the Islamists, most Islamic Marxists, Islamic Socialists, and the Tudeh Party also supported the "Islamic Republic"; 4. Most Shi'ite Grand Ayatollahs—including Ayatollah Golpaygani and Ayatollah Khomeini—also supported the "Islamic Republic" (Kayhan, March 1, 1979). Therefore, considering the religious fabric of Iranian society and Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic power, most groups ultimately voted for the "Islamic Republic."

Despite this, the Fedayeen Guerrillas Organization boycotted the referendum due to the absence of other options (Ettela'at, March 12, 1979: 2). A segment of Iranian nationalists (led by Matin-Daftari) also deemed the Islamic Republic undemocratic and withheld their support. They considered the 1979 revolution to be a continuation of the Constitutional Revolution and its anti-authoritarian movement. In their view, including the term democratic in the title of the new political system meant opposing any kind of tyranny, including religious tyranny. (Ettela'at, March 20, 1979: 2). Most ethnic groups also boycotted the referendum, believing that the Islamic Republic was incompatible with their demand for ethnic autonomy (Ettela'at, March 28, 1979: 8; Ettela'at, March 29, 1979: 2; Ettela'at, March 3, 1979: 7). In fact, the image presented of the Islamic Republic is not much different from modern political systems. That is, it is a general image that opposing it seems irrational. For instance, Ezzatollah Hosseini, the then Imam of Mahabad, did not participate in the referendum due to the ambiguity of the Islamic Republic's content and the issue of Kurdistan's autonomy (Ettela'at newspaper, March 28, 1979).

Ultimately, in the referendum held on March 30 and 31, 1979, 98.2% of participants voted for the Islamic Republic. Thus, the new political system, the "Islamic Republic," formally replaced the "Constitutional Monarchy." From this point onward, the "Islamic Republic" became the most crucial element of the new political order. From then on, all political groups had to clarify their stance on the Islamic Republic of Iran, particularly its Islamic character. Refusing to accept the Islamic Republic of Iran meant exclusion from the sphere of legitimate competition. Consequently, the Fedayeen

Guerrillas Organization, the Peykar Organization, and most ethnic groups, due to their non-vote for the Islamic Republic of Iran, lost the opportunity for official political activity in the post-revolutionary Iranian field and turned towards unofficial (underground) and sometimes violent agency (Shadlou,2007:59).

Overall, the referendum on the form of the new political system yielded several outcomes: 1. It transformed the "Islamic Republic" into the hardest core of the new political order; 2. It strengthened the position of Islamic groups against secular groups, as it excluded most secular groups from the cycle of official struggle and weakened the remaining ones—including some nationalists and the Tudeh Party.

6-2.The Second Event: The Occupation of the US Embassy

On February 4, 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini appointed Mehdi Bazargan, the leader of the Islamic liberals, as the head of the interim government. Bazargan, with the cooperation of Iranian nationalists, formed the provisional cabinet (Mehdi Bazargan,1983:38-40; Shadlou,2007:55-57). Several reasons led Ayatollah Khomeini to entrust the interim government to Islamic liberals and their nationalist allies: 1. Islamists lacked governance experience (Hashemi Rafsanjani,1997:334); 2. Ayatollah Khomeini initially adhered to the principle of clerical supervision rather than direct involvement of clerics in executive politics (Kadivar,1999). Bazargan states: "Ayatollah Khomeini initially did not believe in the intervention of clerics in politics and considered the sacred duty of the clergy to be the guidance of the people, and their main place of service to be the seminary and the mosque" (Bazargan,1984:121); 3. Ayatollah Khomeini initially trusted Mehdi Bazargan (Farsi,1994:466). This trust is evident in his appointment decree: "...due to my trust in your firm faith in the sacred school of Islam and my knowledge of your background in Islamic and national struggles, I task you with forming the interim government, regardless of party affiliations or ties to a specific group..." (Bazargan,1982:1).

Despite this, a parallel government emerged in post-revolutionary Iran. One was the official government, controlled by Islamic liberals, and the other was a hidden government, under the control of Islamists. Alongside state institutions, Islamists established revolutionary institutions, including the Islamic Revolutionary Committees, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Construction Jihad, the Foundation of the Oppressed and Disabled (Bonyad-e Mostazafan), the Executive Headquarters of Imam's

Directive, the Islamic Propaganda Organization, the Basij, and the Islamic Revolutionary Courts.¹ Furthermore, they controlled the judiciary. Thus, a "government within a government" took shape. These two governments had fundamental disagreements about how to administer the country. While the interim government sought gradual changes in the previous regime's governmental institutions (Bazargan,1983:228), Islamists advocated for the rapid replacement of the previous regime with Islamic institutions. The interim government aimed to retain most army commanders, whereas Islamists sought to purge the army. Islamists attempted to replace the army with the IRGC. They also disagreed on how to deal with officials of the previous regime.² Overall, at the time of the interim government's formation, about 30% of the workforce was employed by the government, and government revenue accounted for 35% of the gross national product. Despite this, the interim government had limited influence over the practical processes of politics (Delavari,2020:11).

There was also a fundamental disagreement regarding foreign policy. The interim government emphasized "the interests of the Iranian nation," while Islamists stressed "the welfare of the Islamic ummah." This difference was also evident in their stance on relations with the United States. Islamists, led by Ayatollah Khomeini, opposed any relations with the US. Ayatollah Khomeini stated that anyone contemplating compromise with the West or East would be mercilessly and unhesitatingly erased from the face of the earth (Movement of Muslim Women,1982:160). In contrast, Mehdi Bazargan sought to maintain ties with the US (Movement of Muslim Women,1982:24). Another fundamental disagreement concerned their differing interpretations of Islam and the Islamization of society.³

As time progressed, the divergence between these two governments intensified, making it inevitable that one would prevail. Several factors determined the outcome of this contention: 1. Gradually, Ayatollah Khomeini favored the revolutionary approach of the Islamists over the

1.ANA News Agency, "17 Institutions Formed After the Victory of the Islamic Revolution," News Code: 470433.

2.Fallaci's interview with Bazargan (2010: 36).

3.In a letter to Ayatollah Khomeini on March 13, 1981, Ayatollah Beheshti distinguished between two types of Islam: jurisprudential Islam, which was endorsed by Islamic fundamentalists, and Islam mixed with non-Islamic values, pursued by Bani Sadr, the National Front, the Freedom Movement, and the Mojahedin-e Khalq.

moderate approach of the interim government (Ayatollah Khomeini, Kayhan, March 7, 1979; Jomhuri-ye Eslami, July 26, 1979).¹ For example, in August 1979, the Revolutionary Prosecutor (Ayatollah Azari Qomi), representing Ayatollah Khomeini, shut down 40 critical and opposition newspapers. Also, individuals known as Hezbollah attacked the offices of the National Democratic Front, the Fedayeen-e Khalq, the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, and the Tudeh Party (Kaddei, 2009:27). The Fedayeen-e Khalq, in a statement titled "A Few Guidelines for Supporters," protested with these words, declaring: "The legitimate government is trying to curb the relative freedoms of the past few months and eliminate the possibility of overt political activity such as having offices, official newspapers, distributing leaflets and flyers, selling books, and holding gatherings" (Fedayeen-e Khalq, n.d.). In contrast, Bazargan not only failed to support critics and opponents but also endorsed the closure of newspapers and offices of opposition groups (Bazargan's interview with Fallaci, 2010:38). In essence, the interim government limited its agency to operating within the framework of a formal bureaucratic government and neglected to organize its allied forces or connect with the masses. 2. The newly established institutions—such as the Revolutionary Committees, the Revolutionary Council, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the Foundation of the Oppressed, the Construction Jihad, and the Islamic Republican Party of Iran—alongside traditional institutions like mosques, Husseiniyyehs, religious councils, and the bazaar, granted greater power to the Islamists (Workers' Council, 1995:3). 3. The death of Ayatollah Taleghani meant that Islamic liberals lost one of their powerful supporters. Ayatollah Taleghani was trusted by several groups, including Islamic liberals, a segment of Islamists, and Islamic Marxists. He could be considered the second leader of the Iranian Revolution after Ayatollah Khomeini, capable of mediating among these groups. 4. In the contention between Islamic liberals (the interim government) and Islamists, most groups—including Marxists, Islamic Marxists, and Islamic Social Democrats—supported the Islamists.

1. Ayatollah Khomeini, on several occasions, including March 6, 1980, criticized Bazargan's approach and invited him to revolutionary action (Kayhan newspaper, March 7, 1979). Also, in August 1979, he criticized Bazargan's leniency towards opponents (Sahifeh-ye Imam, 1989:283). In contrast, Bazargan declared: "If acting revolutionarily means beating, spilling blood, killing, and trampling on principles, regulations, law, and order, then he is not revolutionary" (Bazargan, 1983b:228).

Despite their ideological differences with Islamists, leftists supported them for several reasons. One was that they viewed Ayatollah Khomeini as the center of power in Iran and believed that he would replace Islamic liberals with them in the near future (Nameh-ye Mardom, March 14, 1979). Second, the Islamists pursued an anti-imperialist (anti-Western) foreign policy, which aligned with the leftists' desired foreign policy. Third, they considered the interim government to be bourgeois and supportive of the capitalist class (Behrouz, 2011:181).

Ultimately, the occupation of the US embassy on November 4, 1979, by the Students Following the Imam's Line (supporters of Islamic fundamentalists) sealed the fate of the interim government. Leftists also considered the embassy occupation an action in line with the struggle against American capitalist imperialism.¹ The Mojahedin-e Khalq also declared in a statement titled "The Anti-Imperialist Uprising of the Heroic Iranian People, May It Grow Stronger": "This time, the main shah, which is American imperialism itself, was targeted" (Mojahed, A, November 12, 1979).

Ayatollah Khomeini himself called the embassy occupation the "Second Revolution" (Kayhan, November 5, 1979). He declared: "What do we want with relations with America? Our relationship with America is like that of a lamb and a wolf" (Movement of Muslim Women, 1982:35). These explicit statements by Ayatollah Khomeini accelerated the Islamist movement. Ayatollah Khomeini, while supporting the Islamists, declared: "A revolution has occurred again in Iran, a revolution greater than the first revolution." From this point on, the US was considered the main enemy, and the slogan "Death to America" became widespread (Movement of Muslim Women, 1982:33-32).

The event of the US embassy occupation can be considered one of the most important actions by Islamists to remove rivals from Iran's domestic political scene. After this incident, Islamic liberals and Iranian nationalists were severely weakened. At the same time, Islamists became the main standard-bearers of the fight against imperialism, snatching away one of the trump cards of the leftists (Marxists and Islamic Marxists). In sum, the occupation of the US embassy transformed the struggle against imperialism, and especially enmity towards the US, into an integral part of the new order's hard core. In other words, the occupation of the US embassy was

1. Interview with Ebrahim Yazdi, Aftab-e Emrooz newspaper, November 9, 1999.

another stage of otherness for Islamists, allowing them to define themselves in distinction to the West and the US.

In general, it should be said that Islamic liberals and nationalists emphasized Iranian freedom and nationalism before the revolution, but after the revolution they became more involved in political action and failed to form a discourse around freedom and nationalism. After the revolution, Islamic liberals spoke less about the idea of Iranian nationalism and only raised this idea in the field of foreign policy in the sense of pursuing national, defense and economic interests (Darvishi and Fardi, 2008:116). For jurisprudential Islamists and leftists, the idea of Iranian nationalism was also considered dangerous. Because jurisprudential Islamists defended the idea of the Islamic nation and the leftists defended the global struggle against imperialism. While it was possible for Islamic liberals and nationalists to defend the idea of the Muslim nation of Iran against jurisprudential Islamists. The lack of discourse-building and the lack of entering into intellectual discussions played a role in this failure. Islamic liberals also effectively stood against the idea of freedom by supporting the restrictions on citizens' freedoms carried out by jurisprudential Islamists.

6-3. The Third Event: Contention over the Nature and Principles of the New Constitution

Discussions regarding the new constitution began even before the revolution's victory. After the revolution, an initial dispute arose among rival groups regarding the authority responsible for drafting the constitution. However, this disagreement was resolved through the mediation of Ayatollah Taleghani and ultimately by an agreement to establish the Assembly of Experts for the Constitution.¹ Ayatollah Taleghani also proposed the establishment of nationwide associations and councils in every village, district, city, and province; in such councils, representatives of various popular groups could raise all issues and seek solutions (Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization, 1979:18).

In the elections for the Assembly of Experts for the Constitution, Islamists, by promoting slogans such as "priority of commitment over expertise," secured the majority of seats (60 out of 73 seats) (Kayhan, August 1, 1979). Islamic liberals, who advocated for "specialization" and "citizens' rights," won only 9 seats; secular socialist Muslims (supporters of Ayatollah

1. Interview with Sadegh Tabatabaei, *Yas-e No* newspaper (December 9, 2003).

Shariatmadari) gained 3 seats, and 1 seat went to the Kurdish ethnic group (Kurdistan Democratic Party) (Enghelab-e Eslami, August 11, 1979). Other groups suffered a complete defeat (Bashiriyeh,2002:39).¹ Relying on their nationwide network and including prominent Shi'ite jurists and Grand Ayatollahs in their electoral list—such as Hossein-Ali Montazeri, Abdolhossein Dastgheib, Abdullah Javadi Amoli, Nasser Makarem Shirazi, Lotfollah Safi Golpaygani, Jafar Sobhani, and Mohammad Sadouqi Yazdi—Islamists achieved a significant victory (Enghelab-e Eslami, August 11, 1979).

However, the most significant contention within the Assembly of Experts for the Constitution concerned the principle of "Velayat-e Faqih" (Guardianship of the Jurist). While the first and second drafts of the constitution did not include the principle of Velayat-e Faqih, Islamists demanded its inclusion. Within the Assembly of Experts for the Constitution, secular socialist Muslims led by Ayatollah Shariatmadari and Islamic liberals—supported by Ayatollah Taleghani—opposed the principle of Velayat-e Faqih (Ettela'at, October 11, 1979; Milani,2008:292). Bani Sadr also opposed granting extraordinary powers to the Velayat-e Faqih, rather than the principle of Velayat-e Faqih itself (Hosseinizadeh,2010: 300). Outside the Assembly of Experts for the Constitution, Iranian nationalists, Marxists, and Islamic Marxists were the main opponents of the Velayat-e Faqih principle (Milani,2008:291).²

1.Abdolrahman Ghassemlou—the leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party—had secured the necessary votes in the election but was unable to participate in this assembly because the Council of Ministers of the interim government declared the Kurdistan Democratic Party illegal due to separatism and war with the central government (<https://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/104984>). Massoud Rajavi, the main representative of the Islamic Marxist discourse, came in twelfth in the Tehran elections. Also, Ehsan Tabari and Nouredin Kianouri (from the Marxist discourse) were also prevented from entering the Assembly of Experts for the Constitution.

2.Hashemi Rafsanjani believed that the main reason for the Mojahedin's boycott of the constitutional referendum was the existence of this very principle of Velayat-e Faqih (Hashemi Rafsanjani,n.d.:164). In the Mojahedin's view, if the clergy does not fulfill its historical responsibility today, it will disappear from the stage of history... In true Islam, there is a difference between velayat and government, or in other words, between leadership and the form of managing the country's affairs (which is definitely collegial). One must see whether tyranny or freedom emerges from what actually results from this principle (Velayat-e Faqih). Proponents of Velayat-e Faqih's words will lead to nothing more than the political rule of the clerics (Mojahed, B, October 22,1979).

Ayatollah Khomeini, who had articulated the theory of Velayat-e Faqih before the revolution, strongly advocated for its inclusion in the new constitution. In support of the Velayat-e Faqih principle, Ayatollah Khomeini declared: "...Our government is Islamic, and you must support Velayat-e Faqih so that no harm comes to the country... Everyone must obey, and if you do not obey, you will be annihilated" (Kayhan, September 20, 1979). At the same time, he called Velayat-e Faqih a "progressive" principle that would prevent dictatorship (Ettela'at, November 3, 1979). According to Ayatollah Khomeini, if a jurist acted dictatorially in a single instance, he would no longer possess velayat (Guardianship) (Freedom Movement of Iran, 1988:54). Ayatollah Montazeri also reiterated in his Friday prayers sermons that Velayat-e Faqih was not a dictatorship (Ettela'at, September 22, 1979). Additionally, the Islamic Republican Party declared that Velayat-e Faqih was essential for an Islamic society (Islamic Republican Party, 2008:49). Ayatollah Beheshti also stated that independence and freedom were impossible without Velayat-e Faqih (Jomhuri-ye Eslami, September 13, 1979).

Beyond the debate over the principle of Velayat-e Faqih, a fierce contention erupted over Article 115 of the constitution (concerning the qualifications for presidential candidacy). While a segment of Islamists (supported by Ayatollah Golpaygani, one of the Shi'ite Grand Ayatollahs) believed that only "men who believe in Twelver Shi'ism" were eligible for the presidency, Islamic liberals argued that "any Muslim Iranian" was qualified to be president.¹ During the assembly's deliberations, Ayatollah Montazeri stated: "Shi'ism is the official religion of the country, and the overwhelming majority are followers of the Shi'ite school... So the Sunnis will concede to us that the president should be elected according to the majority's view... And regarding the issue of being male, we cannot set aside the definite tenets of Islam... The issue of governance and velayat is a heavy responsibility, and God has placed it upon men, and women are not capable of this responsibility".² However, ultimately, with the opinion of Ayatollah Beheshti, the phrase "religious and political rejal (men)... believing in the foundations of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the official religion of the country" was included in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

1. Interview with Ezzatollah Sahabi (Iran-e Farda magazine, Issue 51).

2. Detailed Minutes of the Final Review of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1985: 1768).

The debate over whether the word "rejal" can be extended to women continues.

Finally, the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran was put to a referendum on December 3, 1979, and was approved with 98.2% of the votes. The approval of the constitution had several major consequences: 1. It made the principle of Velayat-e Faqih an inseparable part of the new political order; 2. It granted clerics a privileged position in the hierarchy of power;¹ 3. It pushed opponents of the Velayat-e Faqih principle—including Islamic Marxists (Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization), secular socialist Muslims (Muslim People's Republican Party), and a segment of national nationalists (most members of the National Front)—out of the sphere of official Iranian politics (Milani, 2008:314).

In general, Islamic liberals and nationalists emphasized freedom and Iranian nationalism before the revolution, but after the revolution, they did not pursue these ideas seriously enough to become part of the political order of post-revolutionary Iran. Islamic liberals discussed the idea of Iranian nationalism less after the revolution and reduced this idea only to the field of foreign policy, especially to establishing relations with the United States. For jurisprudential Islamists and the leftists, the idea of Iranian nationalism was also considered dangerous. Because jurisprudential Islamists defended the idea of Ummah (Unified Islamic Community) and the leftists defended Communist Internationalist and the global struggle against imperialism. While it was possible for Islamic liberals and nationalists to defend at least the idea of the Muslim nation of Iran against jurisprudential Islamists. The lack of discourse and the lack of entering into intellectual discussions played a role in this failure. Islamic liberals also practically stood against the idea of freedom by supporting the restrictions on citizens' freedom carried out by jurisprudential Islamists.

In general, the constitution can be considered a place of competition between Islamic liberals (Freedom Movement) and Islamic jurisprudential Islamists. While Islamic liberals defended the rights of the nation, Islamic freedoms, and the rule of law, the discourse of Islamists defended divine laws, the theory of the guardianship of the jurist, and the Islamic society (Ershadian and Fazeli Tazekand, 2010:21-44). In fact, the main players in

1. Ayatollah Khomeini believed: "Islam is meaningless without the clergy" (Kayhan, September 18, 1979).

the constitution are Islamic jurisprudential Islamists on the one hand and the Freedom Movement on the other, and the leftists and ethnic players did not play much of a role in the constitution because they were prevented from entering the Assembly of Experts on the Constitution; while the weight of Islamists and Islamic liberals in the Assembly of Experts on the Constitution was not equal and Islamists have an advantage in terms of numbers, the Freedom Movement played an important role in including its discourse in the constitution. Therefore, the third chapter of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran can be considered to be derived from the liberal discourse. Another point is that among Islamists, two traditional and moderate attitudes can be distinguished. In fact, moderates, including Ayatollah Beheshti, played a key role in reconciling Islamists and Islamic liberals, including in Article 115 of the Constitution. Finally, the preamble to the Constitution, and ideas such as the necessity of adhering to Islamic laws and standards (Article 4), the official religion and denomination of the country (Article 12), the guardianship of the jurist (Articles 5, 109, and 110), the Islamic community and nation (Articles 10 and 11), the right of divine sovereignty (Article 56), the oath of representatives (Article 67), and the non-conformity of laws and decisions with Islamic precepts (Articles 72, 96, and 105), stem from the discourse of Islamism, and they attempted to limit the liberal discourse by including the Islamic clause in some of the same principles (Articles 10, 21, 24, and 27) (Salehi and Tavana, 1402: 108). In fact, the actions of the actors involved in the constitution can be considered as linguistic actions for the reproduction of discourse.

6-4.The Fourth Event: Contention over Islamization (Hijab, Cultural Revolution, and Qisas Bill)

The Islamization of society was a core demand of the Islamists, but its nature, form, and scope were points of contention among rival groups. Islamists advocated for the Islamization of all spheres of Iranian society, while Islamic liberals championed a more tolerant approach to Islamization that was compatible with individual liberties (Fallaci's interview with Bazargan, 2010: 41).

Overall, Islamists pursued the process of Islamization on two levels: domestic and foreign. Domestically, Islamists sought to replace Western secular culture and laws with Islamic culture and laws. They even opposed elements of Iranian national culture. One of the revolutionaries' programs for Islamization was the closure of discos and liquor stores (Milani, 2008:

360). The Freedom Movement of Iran also defended this in a statement, declaring: "Fortunately, there is little news of the shameful and repulsive manifestations of the past, such as the abundance of liquor stores in public places, open fasting violations, unrestrained beach activities, pleasure houses, cabarets, and gambling dens, films and plays against religious and moral norms, and generally an anti-Islamic and immoral atmosphere. Their emergence is prevented with persistence, violence, and even intrusion into homes" (Freedom Movement of Iran, 1984:7).

However, resistance emerged during the process of societal Islamization, including conflicts over the issue of women's hijab. From the early days of the revolution, the extremist faction of Islamists—under the name of Hezbollah—engaged in verbal and physical violence against unveiled women (Kayhan, March 8, 1979). Ayatollah Khomeini, who advocated for Islamic hijab, declared on March 7, 1979, to seminary students in Qom: "Islamic women must go out with hijab, not adorn themselves... Women's work in offices is not forbidden, but women must wear Islamic hijab... I have been reported that there are unveiled women in ministries, and this is against Islamic law. Women can participate in social activities but with Islamic hijab" (Ettela'at, March 6, 1979).

Nonetheless, some women protested against compulsory hijab (Kayhan newspaper, March 8, 1979). The Mojahedin-e Khalq also declared in a statement on March 12, 1979, that any hostile stance and the imposition of any form of hijab on the women of this country were unreasonable and unacceptable. The Mojahedin proclaimed that "our revolution has no doubt about the full legal, political, and social rights of women" (Mojahedin-e Khalq, 2014). Ayatollah Taleghani adopted a moderate stance, declaring that "hijab is not compulsory" (Ettela'at newspaper, March 11, 1979). Consequently, Ayatollah Khomeini remained silent at this juncture. Ultimately, with the passing of Ayatollah Taleghani, the resignation of the interim government,¹ the approval of the constitution, the formation of a parliament aligned with Islamists, the Cultural Revolution, and the Iran-Iraq War, the balance of power shifted entirely in favor of the Islamists. Finally, in 1983, they passed the mandatory hijab law. Overall, it appears that women were a central focus of Islamization, and most Islamic laws were

1. Bazargan declared at Ayatollah Taleghani's memorial service that women could not be forced to wear the chador (veil) by force or threat.

related to them (including laws on polygamy, temporary marriage, child marriage, denial of women's right to divorce, and taking custody of children from mothers, which were approved in 1981).

Another stage of Islamization was the introduction of the Islamic Penal Code bill (including stoning, execution, flogging, amputation, etc.). Secular political parties and groups believed that the judicial system should be based on human rights, the principle of equal rights for individuals before the law should be observed, and the secular law of 1931 should be preserved. The dispute intensified when Ayatollah Khomeini instructed the head of the Supreme Court (Beheshti) to Islamize the entire judicial and legal system (Abrahamian,2007:71). In contrast, the Mojahedin-e Khalq declared in a statement on March 17, 1979, that issuing and executing punishments such as execution and flogging were inconsistent with the spirit of Islamic criminal laws (Mojahedin-e Khalq,2014). They also called the Qisas (retribution) bill an insult to human dignity, especially that of the heroic Iranian woman in the era of popular awareness (Mojahed, May 14, 1981). Iranian nationalists also demonstrated against the Islamic Penal Code bill on June 15, 1981, and declared in a statement: "Islamic Qisas is inhuman." Ayatollah Khomeini, enraged by this statement, declared: "Opponents of the essential tenets of Islam are apostates" (Kayhan, June 16,1981). Finally, in August 1982, the Supreme Judicial Council (which operated under Ayatollah Khomeini's supervision) annulled all non-Islamic legal laws, and a year later (in August 1983), the Islamic Consultative Assembly passed the Islamic Penal Code, thus replacing secular laws with Islamic laws (Milani, 2008:358).

Another part of the societal Islamization project involved transforming the form and nature of various arts—especially visual arts, including cinema, theater, and television programs. Islamists intended to replace whatever they considered Western, vulgar, and un-Islamic (this program also included Iranian national history and symbols) with Islamic forms and content (Milani,2008:360). In fact, for Islamists, the display of religious symbols in the public sphere was highly significant. Therefore, not only were religious ceremonies such as Friday prayers and mourning rituals broadcast on television and radio, but Islamic, and specifically Shi'ite, images and writings became widespread in public places (Zangi,2019:147).

Islamization also extended to the realm of science and knowledge. For instance, the form and content of textbooks were altered, and some teachers

and professors were purged. The project of Islamizing universities also became a full-blown contention. From April 1980, the rivalry among competing groups, especially Marxists and Islamists, escalated into violence in universities (Kayhan, April 18, 1980). Ultimately, Islamists, by proposing the "Cultural Revolution," first closed universities,¹ then purged students and professors belonging to rival groups, and finally altered curricula (Keddie, 2009:32). Also, an Islamic Law Faculty was established in Isfahan (Enghelab-e Eslami newspaper, July 26, 1979). Additionally, the ideological magazine "Andisheh-ye Eslami" (Islamic Thought), supervised by Mohammad Mojtahed Shabestari, was distributed nationwide (Enghelab-e Eslami newspaper, August 11, 1979).

However, there was an agreement on the project of Islamizing universities between Islamists and Islamic Social Democrats (Bani Sadr delivered a speech in favor of the Cultural Revolution at Tehran University on April 22, 1980). But the Freedom Movement declared: "Fighting Western science and culture; closing universities and political oppression and intellectual dogmatism in education under the titles of Cultural Revolution or Islamization of education and research, will in another way return Islam and Iran to the pre-Islamic Arab ignorance before the Prophet's mission" (Freedom Movement of Iran, 1984:9). Overall, the Islamization of universities was one of the Islamists' political activities to purge opposition forces from universities (Hazeri, 2000:81-106).

Of course, Islamization was also pursued in other dimensions, including the economic dimension, with the introduction of interest-free banking, although it did not create fundamental changes in the economic sphere (Keddie, 2009:43). In the foreign dimension, the most prominent manifestation of Islamization was anti-Western sentiment in general, and the declaration of enmity towards the US and Israel in particular.² In August 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini designated the last Friday of Ramadan as Quds Day (Khomeini; Vol. 9, 267). He introduced Quds Day as a day for Islam

1. On April 18, 1980, Ayatollah Khomeini established the Cultural Revolution Council with the aim of carrying out the Cultural Revolution, which primarily consisted of fundamentalist forces (Kayhan newspaper, April 19, 1980). As a result, universities were closed for about three years.

2. The policy of exporting the revolution can also be considered another manifestation of Islamization in the foreign dimension. On February 11, 1980, Ayatollah Khomeini declared: "We must export our revolution to the world. Because our revolution is Islamic."

against Zionists and their Western supporters—especially the US (Khomeini; Vol. 9, p. 278). Ayatollah Khansari also believed that Muslims should reclaim the land of Quds from the Jews (Enghelab-e Eslami newspaper, August 18, 1979). Most groups—including Islamic liberals—supported Ayatollah Khomeini's decision (Bazargan's speech before Friday prayer sermons, August 17, 1979). Furthermore, Ayatollah Khomeini and the Islamists called for the destruction of Israel (Khomeini; Vol. 9, p. 278). Ayatollah Khomeini considered the establishment of the Israeli regime in the heart of the Middle East a Western conspiracy (Khomeini; Vol. 9, p. 278). Therefore, from August 1979 onwards, the struggle against Israel and the liberation of Palestine became one of the elements of the new political order in Iran. In summary, it appears that the ultimate goal of the Islamists' Islamization was the establishment of an "Islamic society" domestically and the revival of the "Islamic Ummah" externally.

In general, nationalists, Islamic liberals, and Islamic Marxists not only did not strive for a unified discourse, but also adopted either a confrontational approach or remained silent against fundamentalist Islamization. They had the possibility to approach moderate Islamists and form a coalition with them and defend a moderate form of Islamization.

Based on the foregoing, the most important elements of the new political order can be presented as follows:

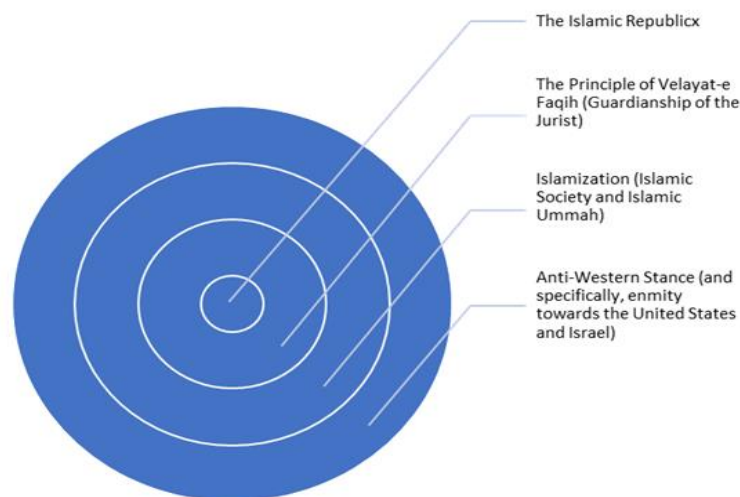


Fig (1): Core Elements of the Post-Revolutionary Political Order in Iran

7. Discussion and Conclusion

While it's crucial not to underestimate the capabilities and resources of the Islamists, including their financial strength and networking abilities, they weren't the hegemonic power in the initial years of the revolution. In other words, a relative balance of power existed among the rival groups. This is why official executive power was initially held by Islamic liberals and then by Islamic social democrats. This paper has demonstrated that events and the actions of Islamists (through institution-building and revolutionary agency) played a fundamental role in constructing the new political order in Iran.

Specifically, Islamists established powerful cultural, social, economic, political, and military institutions such as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Political-Ideological Bureau of the Armed Forces, Construction Jihad, Revolutionary Courts, the Islamic Republican Party, the Foundation of the Oppressed and Disabled (Bonyad-e Mostazafan), and the Headquarters of Friday Prayer Leaders. Through these institutions, they systematically pursued their desired political order. Consequently, Islamists gradually gained control over the public sphere. They initially closed down and then purged opposing institutions like universities. Beyond socio-political organizations, Islamists also took control of higher-level political institutions such as the Revolutionary Council, the Assembly of Experts for the Constitution, and the Islamic Consultative Assembly. Furthermore, through revolutionary actions (such as street demonstrations, the closure of opposition presses, the arrest and execution of former regime members, and the occupation of the US embassy), they sought to eliminate rivals from the political arena and ultimately establish the Islamic political order.

According to this article, the political order in post-revolutionary Iran was not predetermined. There was a competitive field after the revolution that was highly ideological. In other words, ideological groups competed in a heated atmosphere to realize their utopia. In this field, we witness a plurality of groups with different orientations; as a result, there is initially a relative balance of power, such that no group can dominate its ideas and policies alone. Another important issue is that around every event and occurrence, a coalition for and against is formed, while these coalitions are temporary and do not lead to an alliance. That is, groups that agree on one issue face each other on another issue and oppose each other. For example, the Freedom Movement and the People's Mojahedin Organization agreed on the form of

the future political system, but they disagreed strongly on the occupation of the USA embassy and the type of relationship with the West. Jurisprudential Islamists allied with some of the groups in each case. For example, in the event of the occupation of the embassy, they benefit from the support of the left against the Freedom Movement and the National Front, and they attract the support of the Islamic social democrats regarding the Islamization of society. In addition, the institution-building they carry out gives them a lot of influential power. For example, the role of the Cultural Revolution Council in cleansing universities of leftist forces is very important, while the Islamic jurisprudence and the leftists pursued an anti-imperialist foreign policy. The result is that the expansion and deepening of the ideas of the Islamic jurisprudence were not only gradual, but also the result of their coalition-building on the one hand and the weakness in coalition-building of their rivals on the other. For example, the National Front and the Freedom Movement on the one hand and the leftists on the other defined each other as enemies and not opponents, so they could not reach a common vision around ideas such as nationality with freedom. As a result, these ideas never found their way into the hard core of the new political order. In other words, their ideological competition is assumed to be so fundamental and based on a self/other relationship that it eliminates the possibility of dialogue and ultimately the articulation of a strong counter-discourse.

In the end, the initial question is raised again: How was the new political order formed in Iran after the revolution and what role did the competition of competing actors play in the form and nature of this order? According to this article, each of the competing actors in the post-revolutionary field used two types of action, one discursive and the other social, to shape the political order according to their own ideas. Hence, the discursive and social war determined the new political order. In discourse formation, linguistic action and articulation of signifiers play a fundamental role in constructing a semantic system for the audience, differentiating discourses, and ultimately attracting and mobilizing the audience. Hence, the linguistic action of each of these actors becomes important. This article, by analyzing the publications, announcements, and speeches of the competing actors, attempted to extract the linguistic action of each of these actors in each important historical event. For example, what was the linguistic action of the Freedom Movement, the National Front, the Islamic Jurisprudence, the Tudeh Party, the People's Devotion Guerrillas, the People's Mujahideen

Organization, etc. about the type of political system, the constitution, the relationship with America, the Cultural Revolution, etc.? Did they present a precise articulation of their ideas and concepts? For example, did the Freedom Movement provide a precise articulation of the nation, freedom, and the protection of the law? What ideas and concepts did the competitors produce? In contrast to the liberal Islamic discourse of the Freedom Movement, how did the Islamic Jurisprudence discourse benefit from the concept of the Islamic society (Ummah) and emphasize the incompatibility of nationalism and Islam and consider Islam to be the determinant of the framework of freedom; while the Freedom Movement had difficulty in expressing the relationship between Iran and Islam. On the other hand, a discourse needs the support of social action in addition to linguistic action and articulation of signifiers. Institutionalization and street demonstrations were the two main social actions among the Islamic jurisprudentialists through which they strengthened and institutionalized their discourse. In other words, they both had a strong presence in shaping the mentality and language of society and took control of social affairs through institutions. This institutionalization helped the Islamist discourse penetrate deep into the cities and villages. In this way, they imposed their order on post-revolutionary society.

8. Acknowledgment

We thank Dr. Fazlollah Foroughi, Professor of Law and the new Dean of the Faculty of Law and Political Science at the University of Shiraz, for providing the ground for interdisciplinary, critical, and independent studies within a free academic environment. We also thank Amir Nikpey, retired professor of Shahid Beheshti University, who linked interdisciplinary studies in political sociology to public law.

9. Conflict of Interest

The authors acknowledge that in writing this article, they have adhered to academic professional ethics and have had no conflict of interest in the course of research and publication of this article.

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