

## **An Analysis of Causes of Iranian Revolution and Its Impact On Social and Religious Practices in Islam:**

By

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### **Abstract:**

*Iran the strongest Islamic country has the enriched culture that represents the ancient legacy extended as distant as substitution millennium BCE. Islamic Republic of Iran possess the important position in the growing domination of Middle East and it is quite unfair to ignore the position of the country. The paper discusses the main causes of the Iranian revolution the impact of the Iranian Revolution on social and religious practices in Iran. The results of the study indicated that the causes of the Iranian revolution were modernization in political, social, economic status of Iran, Impressive Leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini and Iranian People Dissatisfaction with Reza Shah's government and modernization.*

**Keywords:** Iranian revolution, Religious impact, Social Impact, Iran.

### **Introduction:**

Iran the strongest Islamic country has the enriched culture that represents the ancient legacy extended as distant as substitution millennium BCE (Zabih, & Sepehr, 1979; Fischer, & Michael, 1987). Islamic Republic of Iran possess the important position in the growing domination of Middle East and it is quite unfair to ignore the position of the country (Afkhami & Gholam 1985; Society, 2011). Hence it is quite important to analyze the reasons of the revolutionary change in the culture of Iran that also impacts the political position of other countries present in the same region (Gurbuz, 2004; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979).

Extensive controversies related to the Iranian revolution including the reasons and outcomes exist in the history of Iran that depicts the whole picture of Iranian revolution in very clear way (Akhavi and Shahrough, 1983). History also depicts that Iranian Revolution is not similar to the modern revolutions but the reasons of the revolution are quite parallel to them (Hosseini, 1982). The Iranian Revolution raised when discontented

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though hushed social groups contradict (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979).

Analyzing and understanding the revolutionary history of Iran needs a clear expertise and it becomes quite challenging for the researchers to clearly identify the revolution theory of Iran (Fischer, & Michael, 1987). The famous scientist Theda Skocpol who also formulated amendments in social revolution theory also related to the Iranian Revolution (Zabih, & Sepehr, 1979; Fischer, & Michael, 1987; Keddie, 1983; Kramer, 1987; Milani, 1988).

The Iranian Revolution is termed as the main historical event of the past decades that showed a huge impact on the Country's political regime (Society, 2011). A revolution refers to a mass movement that aims to formulate a set of a new political regime by viciously amending the existing government (Zabih, & Sepehr, 1979). The 1978-1979 revolution in Iran viciously ended the monarchy of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (1919–1980) and replaced his monarchy with Ayatollah Ruhollah (1901-1989) theocracy (Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Green, 1982; Society, 2011).

### **Shah's Regime and Its Impact on Iran:**

Mohammad Reza Shah (1941-1979) as a leader of Iran ignored the Islamic Principle while planning and executing the laws and gave much concentration to economic growth and foreign policies. The policies of Shah were much attracted by the western tradition and modernization was promoted on high level in Iran that results in weaken Islamic rules in the country (Society, 2011). All the policies regarding foreign, social and economic in the era of Shah was totally in favor of western culture that highly impacted the culture of Iran which was based on Islamic rules and regulations that leads to the frustration in the country regarding the Shah's decision (Fischer, & Michael, 1987; Hosseini, 1982). Under the leadership of Shah Iran, the richest culture of Iran was weakened (Zabih, & Sepehr, 1979; Cheryl, & Zalmay, 1984). Shah's main focus was to introduce the modernization in the culture for his society and he was also against the clergies of Iran (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979). In 1963 Shah also started the White Revolution to plan a land regime (Cherly, & Zalmay, 1984; Gurbuz, 2004).

Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadeq (1881-1967) briefly interrupted in the preeminence of Shah in 1951 to 1953. This interruption by Prime Minister becomes the main turning point and attracted the attention of Islamic Scholars and Islamic World to safeguard the Iranian culture (Afkhami, & Gholam, 1985; Fischer, & Michael, 1987). This revolution makes the states holders to analyze the importance of country's richest culture and also to safeguard the rich resources of country like oil and other assets (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979).

Shah also supported royalist against the Republicans in civil war and he was considered as monarchists' monarch (Society, 2011). The

monarchy of Shah was overturned on February 11, 1979 and he was restricted from visiting his region (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979). Shah as an exile then spent his life in different countries and admits that following the western culture and policies was not a good idea but his alliances and supporter government or countries could not help him in improving his condition (Afkhami, & Gholam, 1985; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Heinz, 1997; Mustunsir, 2012). He died in Egypt in 1980 and always regret on his policies and wished to follow the different policies for the better consequences (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979).

### **Ayatollah Khomeini's Regime:**

Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979 became the famous leader of Iran who had immense contributions in making the country as Islamic Republic of Iran (Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979). Ayatollah Khomeini rejected the policies proposed by Shah and put all his effort to make him realize about his anti-Islam policies and drawbacks of adopting the western policies (Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Amjad, 1989). His efforts regarding the political and religious autocracy were appreciated by political leaders and Islamic scholars and also by the public of Iran that helped him in introducing back the Islamic rules in the country (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968). He made the Islamic dress code compulsory for the men and women according to the Shariah (Islamic Laws) and also highlighted the important social problems in the light of Islam (Cherly, & Zalmay, 1984). Ayatollah Khomeini put all his effort in making Iran the totally Islamic country by introducing the rules and regulations of Islam in the country that also helped in bringing back the original culture of the country.

### **Legacy and Political Thought of Imam Khomeini:**

- He rejected the idea of monarchy because according to him Shariat-e-Muhammad was insecure due to the misleading views of Islamic Jurist.
- He also highlighted the negative impact of the western culture that was effecting the youth of the country Afkhami, & Gholam, 1985; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Heinz, 1997; Mustunsir, 2012). His final goal was to safeguard the prestige of the Islamic country.
- Khomeini advocated in the favor for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by stating that "We would prefer to follow the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We would prefer to be free. And independent.
- Imam Khomeini was interested in mysticism and led an ascetic life, and he was highly against the accumulation of wealth and land by the clergy.
- Before Revolution Khomeini's religious and political ideas were considered to be reformist and progressive by the activists and intellectuals (Afkhami, & Gholam, 1985; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Heinz, 1997; Mustunsir, 2012).

- Khomeini definition of democracy was portrayed in the Islamic framework. In his last will, he focused on encouraging the populace of Iranian generally, in particular, the lower economic classes and the clergy to promote the Islamic revolutionary ideals.

### **Literature Review:**

The literature of Iran possesses the much information about the revolutionary history of Iran due to the importance of the topic given by many researchers and scholars (Afkhami, & Gholam, 1985; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Heinz, 1997; Mustunsir, 2012). Persian literature highlights the message and dedication of the first Empire Achaemenid times from 550 to 330 BC towards the culture of Iran (Akhavi and Shahrugh, 1983; Heinz, 1997). Literature has played a vital role in highlighting the importance of the religious, political and cultural history of Iran (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968; Keddie, 1983; Heinz, 1997). The sophisticated political awareness in the literature of Iran cultivated on the full times around the revolution (Afkhami, & Gholam, 1985; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Heinz, 1997; Mustunsir, 2012).

Modernization in the country introduced by the Shah leads to the economic disparity that resulted in disturbance in the society and economic downfall of the country (Afkhami, & Gholam, 1985; Mustunsir, 2012). Shah being the puppet of west damaged the Islamic society by introducing the western culture that leads to tensions and frustration among the people of the country (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979). This makes the people of Iran to stand against the Shah to protect their national, cultural and religious heritage (Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Cherly, & Zalmay, 1984; Heinz, 1997; Mustunsir, 2012). The group of Islamic Scholars has also felt the changes in the country due to adoption of the western policies by Shah. So they join hands against Shah for sustaining the Islamic State as a substitute of monarchy (Weber, Max, and Eisenstadt, 1968; Heinz, 1997). The radical antagonism comprised of intellectuals, authors, students, poet, and playwright Saeed Soltanpour.

### **Research Questions:**

The present study poses the following research questions

1. What are the prime causes of the Iranian Revolution in Iran?
2. What is the impact of the Iranian Revolution on social and religious practices in Iran?

### **Research Methodology:**

The current study employed the qualitative research design, as qualitative research design provides the in-depth understanding of the particular phenomenon. It was done by carrying out a systematic literature review so, as to answer the main formulated research question. Books, Journal articles, Internet Blogs, and peer reviews have been consulted to gather the relevant information. The impacts of the Iranian Revolution on

social and religious practices in Iran have also been determined by analyzing the existing archive data. The Iranian Literature has been going through to collect the causes and effects of the Iranian Revolution.

### Results:

**Table 1.1**

Following table showing the books and articles of causes of the Iranian Revolution

Author	Year of Publication	Article/Book	Causes of Iranian revolution mentioned in the book/article
Looney,	1981	Book	Rapid Modernization in Economical status was the chief reason of Iranian Revolution.
Mustansir	2012	Article	Iranian People Dissatisfaction with Reza Shad government and modernization
Zare et al.	(2014)	Book	inequality in health care expenditures in Iran that adversely affecting the economic growth
Ansari	2001	Article	Western authority control over Iran
Ansari	2001	Article	Rapid Modernization in

Social status			
Keddie,	1983	Book	Rapid Modernization in Political status
Shahi	2009	Book	Religion Infirmity
Mustansir	2012	Article	Impressive Leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini

**Table 1.2**

*Evidence Table for the Research Effects of Iranian Revolution on Social and religious aspects in this Research Study*

Author	Year of Publication	Study Design	Effects
<b>Religion</b>			
Shahi	2009	Book	<i>The Iran-Iraq War</i>
Mustansir	2012	Article	Status of Female
Shahi	2009	Book	Religion freedom
<b>Social Effects</b>			

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Ansari	2001	Article	Rapid Modernization in Social status
Mustansir	2012	Article	Cultural Heritage
Zare et al.	(2014)	Book	Economic condition
Ansari	2001	Article	Peace and freedom

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Above results depicts that the position of the women in Iran were changed and females again gained their status according to Islam after the revolution in the country. Further the results depict that Iran gets back its rich culture after revolution. Economic condition of the country was also enhanced and the people of Iran gets back an opportunity to lead their lives according to the teachings of Islam.

The Iranian revolution resulted in enhancement of economic condition of the country that leads to improved education quality, economic growth of the country, peace and freedom in the country, status of women were improved and resulted in satisfactory environment in the country.

#### **Limitations of the Study:**

The current study was a qualitative study, for that purpose, the archival data has been viewed. There was some website enriched with the Iranian revolution oriented content, but the access was not available for foreigners. The website, journal, and books that were accessible were not having the in-depth content. Therefore, the in-depth data is still missing in the study. Furthermore, the survey with the students of Islamic studies could provide the in-depth information regarding the post effects of the Iranian revolution.

#### **Conclusion:**

The efforts of Khomeini against the Shah of Iran bring back the peace and honor of the Iranian society. The adoption of the western policies by the Shah and introducing modernization in the country had blurred the vision of Islam in the country and this leads to the dissatisfaction in the society that made the Khomeini to start the revolution to bring back the original cultural prestige of Iranian society back to the country. This revolution resulted in the positive as well as negative impact on the society. Positive impact is that the country was

again made to run under Islamization and Islamic rules and regulations were imposed in the country. The negative effect was of war between Iran and Iraq because of the insecurities of the president of Iraq. The culture, and social and religion heritage restored and people of diverse groups began to accept the post-revolution effects (Afkhami, & Gholam, 1985; Ruhollah, & Carpozi, 1979; Heinz, 1997; Mustunsir, 2012). The success and prosperity of any nation depends on the leadership of the country because leadership represents the country and creates the position of the country. The current study depicts how both the leadership led the positive and negative consequences on the people of Iran.

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