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The Iranian Revolution: Five Frames for Understanding

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I am interested in the Islamic form of the Iranian revolution first as part of the sociology and anthropology of the Islamic world, second as part of general questions of comparative sociology about the possibilities for revolution in the late twentieth century, and third as part of general questions about the role of ideologies in relation to changes in class structure. The late twentieth century provides quite different conditions for revolutionary initiatives than did the early modern world of Europe (the time of the English, American, and French revolutions). In part this is because of the hegemonic force of the modern interdependent world economy. The current Islamic resurgence is perhaps parallel in some ways to the upheaval in the Buddhist world during the 1950s and 1960s.

Let me suggest two preliminary thoughts about the role of religion in sociopolitical context. Religion is a kind of language or idiom and, like all languages, it is used as a medium of debate, dispute, and conflict. It is never just a list of dogmas that can be looked up in a canonic source such as the Qur'an; interpretation and point of view are always necessary components. Moreover, religious interpretations differ in sociologically patterned ways. Think, for instance, of the sociology of Protestantism—the best-developed area of the sociology of religion—and the correlation between class and denomination. In New England, Unitarians and Congregationalists tend to be in the upper strata of society, Methodists and Presbyterians at the next level, Baptists and Pentecostals below that. So too, there are rough class-linked differences in the interpretations of Islam. Differences in religious interpretation can provide an important tool for comprehending critical social cleavages within a society.

In the following pages, I want to suggest five frames for thinking about the current Islamic revolution in Iran, the most dramatic example of the recent Islamic currents of renewal. The first two frames are historical: first, we need to place this revolution within the context of five generations of Islamic movements over the past two centuries; and second, we need to place it within the history of Iran itself over the past century. The third frame reminds us that revolutions have a processual form—they are not events, but unfold over time—and to ask whether this revolution fits into the pattern of other revolutions. Fourth, we need

to consider the Shi'ite form which served as the mobilizing idiom of this revolution. Finally, we need to consider the social agendas of the revolution.

The high drama of religious revolt has marked the turn of the fifteenth century of the Islamic era. The overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty on behalf of an Islamic republic in Iran; the seizure of the grand mosque in Mecca by anti-Saudi dissidents in the name of a *mahdi* (or "messiah"); the assassination of President Anwar Sadat, a series of armed confrontations with the state, and militant withdrawals (*hijra*, patterned after the tactical withdrawal of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina) by fundamentalist groups in Egypt; the millenarian revolt, resulting in bloodbath in Kano, Nigeria; and even the attempted assassination of the pope by a member of the Turkish National Action Party, possibly hired by the Russians under the cover of defense of Islam against the imperialist, Westernizing, Christian "crusades"—all have focused attention on painful social discontents in the Islamic world.

What these revolts seem to have in common is their class basis and their traditionalizing, but nontraditional, ideology. These traditionalizing ideologies may claim to be a return to pure, original Islam, but are in fact responses to a modern situation and would have looked quite out of place thirteen or even three centuries ago.

Middle Eastern intellectuals describe the development of ideologies in the Islamic world over the past two centuries as progressive changes in response to challenges from the West, with various initiatives that did not work, ranging from liberalism in the 1930s to socialism in the 1950s. These failures, Moroccan social historian Abdullah Laroui suggests, produced a crisis: Middle Eastern intellectuals seemed to face a choice between two unpalatable alternatives. On the one hand, they could attempt to speak the language of the masses (Islam) in an effort at political mobilization. The problem here, according to Laroui, is that religious language is not tailored to modern politics and, at a certain point leads to obscurantism. It is fine for mobilizing, less appropriate for analysis of strategic moves.

On the other hand, intellectuals can turn to revolutionary Marxism. The problem here is that since this is not the language of the masses, it leads to isolation of the intellectuals from the masses and the need to develop a disciplined cadre of activists. Should this cadre be able to seize power (as happened in South Yemen and more messily in Afghanistan), then the more backward the country is at the time of the coup, the more totalitarian the succeeding regime will have to be. Laroui and other intellectuals have posed the dilemmas in intellectual terms. As an anthropologist, I see them as not merely intellectual or strategic dilemmas, but as fundamentally linked to shifts in the class structure of most Middle Eastern countries.

An important question is why intellectuals and politicians in the 1930s were able to take a public position that Islam was what kept the Muslim world backward, while no public figure dared to take such a secularist stand in the 1970s. The quick answer is that there has been a massive demographic shift in many Middle Eastern countries toward ruralization of the urban political arenas. The rural folk who come to the city bring with them their traditional styles of religion, and in the city they become politicized. While they cannot control or direct politics, they can constrain politics through strikes and demonstrations. A few statistics may indicate the dimensions of the problem. Between 1960 and 1979, Cairo doubled in size from four to eight million people, without commensurate increases in infrastructure and services; similar growth affected other major cities of the Middle East, including Tehran.

As important as simple growth are the bottlenecks in the structure of opportunity. In the 1970s, some 300,000 high school graduates took the university entrance examination, but only some 30,000 places were available at the universities. In Cairo, the ratio of males to females at the top three universities in 1952 was 13–1; by 1975 the ratio was 2–1, and the overall number of students had increased fivefold. The consequences are deeply upsetting for young people from provincial and relatively traditional families who are suddenly thrown into the anonymous, fast-paced big-city life: traditional patterns of behavioral propriety are put under tremendous strain at these big universities, and many students react by withdrawing into the safety of tradition. Women who went without veils in the provincial towns might now veil in the big city. Young members of the Muslim Brotherhood of both sexes interviewed in jail said that among their deep concerns was to find a pure member of the opposite sex.

Let us review the five generations of Islamic response to the challenges of Westernization and modernization (see chart 1). Each generation has left a positive legacy that could be incorporated by the following generations; each generation also experienced flaws and failures that limited its own effectiveness. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there was what may be called a movement of puritanical religious reform. This was the age of the Wahhābis who eventually created the state of Saudi Arabia, the Sanūsi who similarly provided the backbone of a state in Libya, the Fulani movements in West Africa, the Mahdi of the Sudan who was briefly able to expel the British, and in Iran, the Usulis who were to become the dominant school of clerics to the present day.

The four key characteristics of this "generation" of Islamic ideology were: (a) the effort to purify Islam of superstitious accretions such as shrine worship and mindless ritualism; (b) the free use of *ijtihād*, a disciplined form of reasoning by which new problems could be submitted to theological solutions; (c) the primacy of sociomoral issues over metaphysical-philosophical ones, and (d) political militancy. All of these slogans and efforts are still visible today. That early generation, however, was criticized by its children for lack of modern technological skills, and for too quickly jettisoning the critical intellectual skills of traditional scholarship.

The second generation followed at the turn of the twentieth century, initiating what is often called modernist reformism. This was the period of constitutional experiments in Egypt, Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. It is the era of Sayyid Jamāl ad-Din al-Afghāni, of Muhammad 'Abduh in Egypt, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan in India, and Sir Muhammad Iqbāl in Pakistan. The modernists operated under the conviction that Islam was fully compatible with science and democracy. There were efforts to reinterpret Islamic terminology to fit liberal ideas. Thus *shūrā*, which traditionally meant "consultation," now came to mean parliamentary democracy; *ijmā*, which traditionally meant "consensus of the learned," now was equated with public opinion. It was a period of experimentation with secularization, of separation of state and religion, the time of Kemal Atatürk's (1881–1938) modernization of Turkey and Reza Shah Pahlavi's (1878–1944) similar efforts in Iran. Perhaps the leading defects of this generation were the underestimation of the political economy of dependency: simple adoption of Western education and constitutional forms would not be sufficient to catch up with European economic, technological, and military superiority, and a sense of elitism pitted the upper class and educated middle-class modernizers against the lower class. (They knew best, they assumed, and would force the backward lower classes to change.)

The 1930s saw the peak of secularist, Westernizing, and constitutionalist faith. Both politicians (Atatürk, Reza Shah) and intellectuals (Taha Hussein in Egypt, Sādeq Hedāyat and Ahmad Kasravi in Iran) openly spoke of Islam as keeping their countries backward. Atatürk's reforms were the most drastic: outlawing traditional garb, having the state control prayer leaders, banning Sufi orders, imposing the Latin script (even for a time having the call to prayer in Turkish instead of Arabic). But the 1930s also saw the rise of anticolonialist movements incorporating fundamentalist reactions to the failures of the modernists and appealing to the frustrations of the increasing numbers of migrants from rural areas into the urban lower classes. The success of Japan in 1905 against Russia, and the rise of the Bolsheviks and the Nazis suggested that the ways of Western Europe were neither invincible nor necessarily the way of the future.

This was the period of the founding in Egypt of the Muslim Brotherhood, which grew into the second largest political party, with 1,200,000 members by 1952. Led by déclassé intellectuals and professionals (the educated who could find jobs commensurate with their capabilities), the Muslim Brotherhood's rank and file were largely the rural migrants who had become urban workers. On the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent, Abu al-Ala Mawdudi's (1903–1979) Jama'at-i Islami was a parallel movement. In Iran, there was the smaller Fida'iyyan-i Islam, led by Mujtaba Nawwab Safavi (1923–1955, now honored on a stamp of the Islamic Republic of Iran): in 1946, the Fida'iyyan assassinated Ahmad Kasravi as well as two prime ministers, but was suppressed in 1955 with the execution of its major leaders. The enduring legacy of this generation of neofundamentalists was

the development of political organization and an Islamic-language populism that called for a single leader (an "amir" ["emir"] or "imam"), for consultation rather than democracy, and an activist Islam freed of the dominance by clerics interested only in ritual. Despite the involvement of key clerics, these movements were led by committed laymen. The failings of the neofundamentalists were their continued devaluation of historical skills and their totalitarian attitudes towards nonmembers.

The 1950s and 1960s saw the growth of what may loosely be called Islamic socialisms: Gamal Nasser (1918–1970) in Egypt, the Destour party in Tunisia, the Ba'th in Syria and Iraq, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1928–1979) a bit later in Pakistan, and the White Revolution of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1919–1980) in Iran. This was the beginning of serious democratic mass politics, responding to the demands of the politicized masses, recognizing the responsibility of governments for economic reconstruction and social welfare, and taking full account of the unequal trade relations and dependency structures of the world economy which had vitiated the liberals' hopes. The strategy—like that of Germany and Japan before them—was to use the state to coordinate economic and social modernization. On the debit side, the need for control easily decayed into corrupt authoritarianisms.

The Islamic resurgence or renewal of the 1970s and 1980s thus came as a series of reactions against these corrupt authoritarianisms, constituting a search for moral identity in the language pioneered by the neofundamentalists of the 1930s. The problems, of course, are those of inability to live up to Islamic ideals of justice (corruption by power) and lack of clarity about fundamentalist-versus-modernist programs.

It should be clear from this brief and schematic review that Islam is not a single ideology but a language used in rich and diverse ways, to articulate varying ideologies. Muslims themselves are ambivalent about the relative weight to assign to Islamic rhetoric, as (1) a decayed cultural legacy about which the masses can be reeducated by *mujaddid* ("renewers"); (2) a vehicle for anti-imperialist nationalism (*ta'asob* is a key slogan word, meaning "fanaticism" perjoratively but "tenacity of moral purpose" positively); (3) a language of class conflict (against Western-educated, secularized elites—the *taqhuti*, or "idolators" of materialism, in the rhetoric of Iranian revolution—and against hidebound conservative clerics, the *ulama-yi gishri* who teach a *din-i khoshk* or dry, lifeless religion); (4) a cynical tool of elites' foreign policy and domestic efforts to mobilize symbols of legitimacy; or (5) an irrationalist force against which vigilance must be vigorous.

II

We shall now turn more directly to Iran. It is certainly possible to apply the five-generation schema to the history of Iran (see chart 2). But for our purposes

it may suffice to remind ourselves of two basic things: that the 1977–1979 revolution did not come from nowhere—it has a history almost a century long; and that it is a revolutionary process that needs to be seen as an unfolding temporal structure, not as a unified event.

The 1977–1979 revolution is not the first, but the fifth time since 1872 that an alliance between secular reformers and religious leaders has forced either major policy change on the government or indeed change in the form of the government itself. For the secularist middle-class faction of the revolution, the most important predecessors were the second and fourth generations by the schema of section 1, the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1911 and the effort in 1952–1953 under Mohammad Mosaddeq (1880–1967) to replace the monarchy with a republic and to seize control of Iranian resources. For these middle classes, the 1977–1979 revolution was supposed to be the completion of a bourgeois revolution that would transfer political power into their hands.

Although the 1977–1979 revolution was the fifth time a powerful alliance between similar forces was formed, it was the first time the religious leaders were able to seize control of such an alliance. This was due in large part to the Pahlavi monarchy's success in suppressing open political discourse during the 1960s and 1970s, so that Islam became the umbrella language of protest for all factions, however different their objectives. This gave special prominence to the voice of the clerics who were masters of Islamic moral discourse and could speak for the interests of more powerful sectors of society. It is indeed an old political tactic of merchants in the bazaar to fund clerical speakers, so as to deflect attention from their own direct political interests, while indirectly furthering such interests.

This time it was not only the merchants who allowed the clerics to speak for them. For the religious leaders, the 1977–1979 revolution was also a third revolution: in their eyes the 1905–1911 Constitutional Revolution had been betrayed by the secularists, and Ayatollah Abu al-Qasim Kashani (initially an ally of Mosaddeq) had been betrayed by Mosaddeq; hence the determination of the religious leaders not to be sold out again in this revolution. This is one reason offered for the insistence on placing a *faqih* or religious expert over the officials of the government, and a Council of Guardians as well as a Supreme Judicial Council in the new constitution. The 1905 Constitution had a clause empowering a panel of five *mujtahids* (experts in Islamic jurisprudence) to veto any proposed legislation not in accord with Islam. But this clause had been ignored, and the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini faction of the 1977–1979 revolution wanted to make sure that such betrayal would not occur again.

Other factions of the 1977–1979 revolution had other visions of what the revolution was supposed to be. There were important clerics such as the more liberal Ayatollah Mohammad Kazim Shariatmadari and the more leftist Sayyid Mahmud Taleqani who opposed the new constitution proposed by the Khomeini faction. The secular Marxists, and the Tudeh party (Moscow-linked communists) in particular, thought there would be a two-stage revolution, in which first the liberals and the mullahs would seize control, and after their ability to govern had collapsed, conditions would be ripe for a marxist or communist coup. The Islamic leftists, the Mujāhidin-i Khalq (People's Mujāhidin Organization of Iran), after 1982 the most important remaining opposition faction to Khomeini's Islamic Republican Party, attracted a constituency of progressive Muslim political thinkers and actors, all of whom, however, were outmaneuvered by the Khomeini faction. Their lineage is grounded in the activities of laymen such as Engineer Mehdi Bazargan and clerics such as Sayyid Mahmud Taleqani in the 1960s and especially the 1970s lay leader, 'Ali Shariati (1933–1977), who contemplated the renewal of Islam in the context of the modern technological world and who launched a major critique against the monopoly of religion by the clerics.

In other words, it is of primary importance to remember that political alliances such as the revolutionary coalition of 1977–1979 have a long history in Iran. To understand the fate of changing balance within these alliances, one needs to look at both a class-linkage of different religious ideologies or formulations and at the dynamics of the revolutionary process itself.

The 1977–1979 revolution fits remarkably well the schematic pattern of revolution analyzed by Crane Brinton in his *Anatomy of Revolution* (1938). Brinton drew his schema from a comparison of the four great democratic, popular revolutions of England, America, France, and Russia. In all these cases, and in Iran as well, the initial conditions were those of a society with a rising prosperity and standard of living that suddenly encountered a severe recession or depression, placing a financial squeeze upon the government. The government reacted by taxing the leading sectors of society, thereby turning what had been its primary social base of support into part of the opposition. These leading sectors joined an oppositional ideology that saw the government as illegitimate. (In Iran, of course, this oppositional ideology was Shi'ism.) The attribution of illegitimacy to the government in turn paralyzed the operation of the government, blocking it from using the means of force normally available to it, and allowing the first phase of the revolution to proceed with an ease unanticipated by the revolutionary coalition. This first phase, the sweeping away of the old regime, is then followed by a stage of dual sovereignty (a public government, with a private power cabal behind the scenes), a reign of terror, and a series of crises which gradually narrow the social base of the revolution. Finally there is a third state, thermidor, consisting of the long painful period of reconstruction.

In the Iranian case, one should distinguish the long-term structural causes of the revolution and the short-term ones. The long-term causes are manifold, but for our purposes can conveniently be collapsed into two: unbalanced economic growth (with support being given to large-scale enterprises at the expense of smaller and traditional enterprises), and refusal to allow the gradual increasing

participation of wider segments of society in the political arena (oil revenues, in effect, made the state financially independent of its own population, and this in turn translated into indifference or inability to gather feedback from or negotiate among the interests of the various segments of the society). Radicals of the 1960s and 1970s predicted that Iran would blow up in the 1990s, when it was estimated that Iran would run out of easily recoverable oil reserves. That the revolution came much sooner has to do with the short-term causes, and these fit Crane Brinton's model quite well.

In 1973 oil prices increased tremendously. This led to reckless spending so that within eighteen months Iran had become overcommitted, suffered serious cash flow problems, and had become a major borrower on the international capital markets. Inflation followed. An initial construction boom increased the flow of rural migrants into the cities where excellent wages could be earned for simple manual labor. Problems with bottlenecks in the transportation and supply systems in conjunction with inflation, caused the implementation of recessionary policies. The first to be hurt were construction workers, who were laid off and remained as an unemployed mass in Tehran and other big cities. But almost all sectors had serious complaints. The swollen bureaucracy chafed under a three-year wage freeze during the period of high inflation. Since 1975 the government had complained that consumer prices were due to the illegitimate markups by middle men, making the bazaar a scapegoat for the inflation. The business community complained of capricious changes in the laws allowing foreign capital investment and mandating the sale of public shares. As early as 1975 many businessmen were already stripping their assets and moving their money abroad. At the same time as these economic pressures mounted, there was political tightening. A new party, the Rastakhiz Party (National Resurrection Party), was formed, and all Iranians were intimidated into joining.

In other words, when the revolution arrived it was not simply an explosion of fanatics and powerful mullahs. On the contrary, it was a revolution by all parts of the society against a repressive government. The first stage began in the summer and fall of 1977. At that point President Carter's human rights initiatives encouraged Iran's writers and lawyers to demand to be allowed to form public organizations. Slum dwellers were bulldozed from their homes in south Tehran. In the fall Khomeini's elder son mysteriously died; many thought he had died at the hands of the secret police, a suspicion exacerbated by not being allowed to publicly mourn him. There was an ill-advised attack on Khomeini in a government-controlled newspaper and in January 1978, demonstrators in Qum were killed. This initiated a cycle of demonstrations spaced forty days apart. For Muslims, the fortieth day is an important memorial date after death and as deaths of each demonstration were memorialized, new clashes between government forces and demonstrators brought new deaths. These demonstrations spread to cities throughout Iran. On August 19, the Rex Cinema in Abadan was torched; 430 people were trapped inside and died: this radicalized the revolutionary movement. A second turning point came on September 8, when troops opened fire on a demonstration in Tehran, the day after a massive march that ended the month Ramadān. Demonstrations increased in size during the following months, with millions turning out on the ninth and tenth of Muharram (anniversary of the martyrdom of Husayn—see below—and a key Islamic holy day), December 19-20. Violence increased throughout December and in January the shah was finally eased out (he left the country on January 16). On February 1 Khomeini triumphantly returned from exile. Important events of 1978 included not only the street demonstrations, but strikes by such critical sectors of the economy as oil workers, bank employees, and public utilities employees.

The second stage—dual sovereignty—followed: a public government was formed under Engineer Mehdi Bazargan, with Houstonian Ibrahim Yazdi as Foreign Minister; behind the scenes a Revolutionary Council made its own decisions. This dual sovereignty lasted until the hostage crisis of November 1979. A reign of terror was part of this second stage. It began with executions of generals and members of SAVAK (secret police). Bazargan attempted to speak out against the escalation of executions as early as March, but the executions seemed to operate as a way of political muscle flexing by certain factions of the revolution. Cycles of executions can be correlated with political competition between factions. The great fury of executions began after the bombing of the Islamic Republican Party headquarters in June 1980, when "seventy-two" IRP leaders were killed. Some 2,000 were executed in the next four months.

Through the competition of political factions, the base of the revolution began to narrow. The liberals were forced out and dual sovereignty ended by November 1979. At this time the American embassy was taken and its staff held hostage. It was a spectacular device which worked to ward off the efforts of the liberals to reestablish relations with the United States (and thereby short-circuit the revolution, or so the activists thought) and to ensure the passage of the new constitution which had been facing widespread opposition. Bani-Sadr was forced out in June 1980, and the next year saw a concerted campaign against the Islamic leftists (Mujahidin). The conservative-liberal Ayatollah Shariatmadari was put under house arrest in April 1982. During December 1983–January 1984, the Tudeh Party was rounded up. As the Islamic Republican Party consolidated control, the most interesting political arena was the struggle of factions within the party. But before we turn to that, or rather to the associated agendas for the Revolution, we need to slow down and retrace the momentum of the revolution in terms of the Shi'ite ideology that was used to mobilize it.

III

Shi'ism, the branch of Islam to which the vast majority of Iranians belong, distinguishes itself from Sunni Islam, the branch of Islam to which most of the

Arab world belongs, originally through a dispute over the succession to the Prophet Muhammad through his cousin and son-in-law 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib, to 'Ali's sons Hasan and Husayn, and then through the line of the Twelve Imams (spiritual leaders succeeding Muhammad through 'Ali). (The twelfth Imam did not die, but withdrew from this world and will return at the end of time as the Mahdi or messiah.) Sunnis say that the succession should go, as it historically did, through a consultative-elective process. Muhammad was succeeded by four caliphs—Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali. After 'Ali, the political leadership of the new Islamic empire went to the Umayyad Dynasty, centered in Damascus, and led by Mu'awiyah and his son Yazid. Husayn, the grandson of the prophet, contested the leadership of Yazid in the Battle of Karbalā'.

Husayn was martyred on the tenth of Muharram in the Battle of Karbalā', and his story is central to Shi'ite notions of identity and sense of purpose. It is known in all its details by every Iranian. Each year it is reenacted in "passion plays" and parade floats: how after the hajj (annual pilgrimage to Mecca), during which Yazid tried to have Husayn killed, the people of al-Kufa in southern Iraq asked Husayn to come and lead them in a revolt against the tyrannical Yazid; how Husayn set out with seventy-two loyal followers; how by the time he reached southern Iran the Kufans had been co-opted by Yazid; how the seventy-two were encircled by the Syrian forces; how in the desert heat they were inhumanely denied water; and how each of them was martyred. The stories are told in rich, tear-jerking detail: 'Abbas, the half-brother of Husayn, slipped through the enemy lines to the Euphrates to get water for the thirsty women and children; he was caught as he returned; his hand carrying the goatskin was cut by a Syrian sword, so he grabbed the waterskin by his other hand; it was slashed, so he grabbed the skin with his teeth; the skin was punctured and he suffered martyrdom. Even more dolorous is the story of Husain's three-year-old daughter, who cried and cried for her father and would not sleep: "What have I done, " she cried, "that my father does not come to me?" Finally, when Husayn's head was brought to her on a platter, she looked at it, was quiet, and died. These stories are not only enacted and retold during the month of Muharram, but are reference frames for sermons throughout the year.

The story of Karbala' is the key Shi'ite paradigm of existential tragedy: In this world evil usually triumphs over good and justice, yet there is a need for Muslims to fight for justice. Husayn knew he would die, but he went to Karbala' to witness for the truth. He wanted his martyrdom to shock people into recognizing and returning to the just cause. Tears shed at the commemoration of Husayn's martyrdom are partly over the corruption of Islam imposed by the Umayyids and their Sunni followers, and partly because Husayn will act as an intercessor for his partisans at their judgment in the hereafter. Mainly, however, the lamentation is rooted in a remorseful identification with the people of al-Kufa who allowed evil to triumph, and in the spirit of rededication to the fight for the values of Husayn. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, preachers identified the arch-tyrant Yazid with the shah, and the goals of Islamic justice with such figures as Ayatollah Khomeini.

This political inflection of the Karbala' story was a powerful device, not only for honing political consciousness in the prerevolutionary era, but for mobilizing demonstrators during the revolution. Remember the young men dressed in shrouds who positioned themselves in the vanguard between ordinary demonstrators and the shah's troops. During Muharram 1978 (December–January 1978–1979), as the first phase of the revolution came to its emotional climax, Khomeini still in Paris called on people to abandon the traditional processions of flagellation and mourning for Husayn, and to honor Husayn instead by marching in the largest political demonstrations Tehran could muster. A year later, during Muharram 1979, there should have been thanksgiving for the overthrow of the shah, but the United States, by announcing it would allow the entry of the shah for medical treatment handed Khomeini a powerful device for getting his new constitution. "How," Khomeini thundered, "is this year different from all other years? Last year we faced the offspring of the mother of corruption [the shah] but this year we face the mother of corruption herself" [American imperialism and the fear that the U.S. would bring back the shah].

We have seen that the first phase of the revolution was carried by a coalition, that mullahs could speak in behalf of factions with differing objectives, and that Shi'ite Islam served as an umbrella language. In this context the Karbala' story could serve as a powerful umbrella device for unifying demonstrations. But we also need to see how Shi'ism is used by different portions of the coalition and by different strata of the society.

Before the revolution and during the revolution's first phase, the dramatic enactments during Muharram of the Karbala' story were associated with village and working-class neighborhoods. It was a colorful, community-organized religious idiom. It was ambivalently viewed by the more learned members of the clergy, who thought it smacked a bit too much of idolatry—too much passion and too little reason.

The traditional middle classes (the clergy, the old-style landowners and bazaar merchants) practiced a different style of religion, focused on weekly discussion groups that were rationalistic, argumentative, and more concerned with a social code of morality. Islam, they insisted, requires each Muslim to think for himself or herself; only when a Muslim is no longer competent may he or she turn to someone more learned for guidance. These "more learned ones" are, of course, the clergy. They formed a hierarchy, at the top of which were a series of ayatollahs who were not merely legal experts but who also administered religious taxes which they redistributed in such a manner as to run and control the religious institution. This financial independence of the clergy is one of their greatest sources of strength (one that the new Islamic Republican Party wanted to central-

ize under its own control). For this traditional set of middle classes, religion was not merely a personal code of ethics, but a socially enforced code for creating a just world. It included a legal system with rules of evidence and witnesses.

One often hears from yellow journalists about the severe penalties of Islamic law: the stoning of an adulteress, the cutting off of the hand of a thief. Less often does one hear that, to impose such a severe penalty on a thief, twenty-two separate conditions of evidence must be met; or that, technically, for an adulteress to be stoned there must be four witnesses to the act (hence, in the hands of a liberal judge, it is a penalty that could almost never be imposed). Islamic law includes a set of economic rules as well: individual rights to property are protected, but ultimately all property belongs to God or the community. The individual has usufruct privileges as long as the property is productive and taxes are paid so as to redistribute some of the inequalities of wealth that inevitably build up. The ultimate ownership by God and the community provides a rationale for the regulation of trade relations as well: there are rules of fair price and rules against biting usury (even—in conservative interpretations—against all interest entirely).

A third interpretation of Shi'ism was that of the new middle and upper classes with secular education. For these people, religion was a more individualistic and privatized ethic. Often, such people were interested in mystical traditions of Islam. They rejected both excessive ritualism and the old tax, judicial, and economic rules elaborated by the clergy as outdated, as nonessential to the spirit of Islam.

Finally, a fourth, critical interpretation was that of modernizers such as Ali Shariati, S. Mahmud Taleqani, and Engineer Mehdi Bazargan who attempted to find a mediating path between the traditional middle class and the individualized secular middle-class interpretations. They wished to reform and to renew Islam—possibly even without the clergy—so as to provide a moral support for a modern technological society. Ali Shariati, in particular, appealed to the newly literate youth of Iran to help him recover such an Islam. Being literate, this new generation had no need, and no right to depend upon the clergy to tell them what Islam required. They could read the old books for themselves, and they could reason for themselves. Shariati's appeal was enormously infectious, and one the clergy has treated cautiously. The Islamic Republican Party is attempting to claim Shariati's legacy for itself and to reedit his works in a manner helpful to its own objective. The Mujahidin is attempting to preserve Shariati's legacy as a source of opposition to the Islamic Republican Party.

These four interpretations of Shi'ism, and their associated social strata, provide a simplified way of understanding the struggle over the definition of what an Islamic Republic of Iran should be. For more detailed understandings of the struggle in the current phase of the revolution, one must turn to the factional struggles within the Islamic Republican Party and especially to the social agendas being proposed for the revolution. The factions themselves are somewhat shifting and difficult to chart, though they have some interesting ideological forms resonant still with the ideological battles of the nineteenth century.

The Hojjatiyya faction took the conservative nineteenth-century position that the world will be renewed only after it has fallen into corruption. It will be renewed by the mahdi, and one cannot force the pace. Indeed, to do so is blasphemous. Members of this faction went so far as to question Khomeini's claim that he is a representative of the imam or mahdi. This faction only paid lip service to the export of the revolution, and was opposed to the notion of a unitary *faqih* (Islamic law expert) as authoritative leader of the community. The dominant Maktabi faction, by contrast, took up the cry of the Shaikhis and the Babis of the nineteenth century: one cannot wait for the Mahdi, but must prepare the way; revolution will help precipitate the return of the Mahdi, and it must be exported; there should be a unitary *faqih*. Of key importance for institution building are such Maktabi notions as the transformation of the consciousness of the masses, an enforceable authoritative set of interpretations of Islam which are *maktabi* (by the Book as interpreted by the *faqih* or party), and the absence of class conflict or interest-group politics since an Islamic society is *tawhidi* ("one," that is, classless).

IV

The social agendas of the revolution are of course still being fought over. But one can at least construct a series of questions about the political system, economic policy, and social policy. Let us first consider the political system.

Initially, the slogans of the revolution in 1977–1978 were to implement the 1905 Constitution. First, there was a demand to allow Parliament to be more than a rubber stamp for the shah's programs, and to implement the clause allowing five mujtahids to veto legislation that conflicted with Islam. Second, there was a call to reform the judicial system and allow open trials and due process. Third, there was a call for political pluralism, decentralization, and regional autonomy, particularly in allowing education in languages other than Persian and in allowing greater freedom for the local administration of revenues.

With the radicalization of the revolution during 1979–1981, a new Islamic constitution replaced the 1905 Constitution. Khomeini laid stress on swift justice, criticizing the graft in long trials, and the ability of criminals to be released on technicalities. Criminals need no defense lawyers, he repeatedly insisted, despite the stress in Shi'ism on its own due-process procedures. Although he criticized democratic elections as mindless popularity contests, Khomeini was forced to respect the form of electoral processes. The Islamic Republican Party in large part simply seized the existing state, and added to it parallel institutions under its own aegis. Thus, the Revolutionary Guards became a parallel military force, and revolutionary committees were set up in ministries and economic enterprises.

The Maktabi faction was very much opposed to any decentralization. It was as insistent as was the shah on Persian as the single language of government and education. The establishment of a new legal system has been slow. Much of the workings of the court system in the early postrevolutionary years must be considered revolutionary justice rather than Islamic justice, and the government admitted its need for trained lawyers.

Slowly the Islamic Republic consolidated itself. There have been regular elections. A parliamentary structure has been set up, overseen by a Council of Guardians (six mujtahids and six lawyers) as well as by the *faqih* (Khomeini, succeeded by Ali Khamenei). A party structure was established—despite the assassination of more than eighty of its leaders in June 1980—with a politburo, central committee, central committee secretariat, and military (Revolutionary Guards) and paramilitary (Basij) units. A far-reaching ideological campaign was instituted, including a purging of the universities, utilization of prisons for reeducation, calls on children to turn in their parents for antistate activities, and use of the Hajj and international conferences as forums for spreading the message of the new republic. Struggle for control of these institutions continues.

In the economic sphere, the original slogans of the revolution concerned the reduction of oil production, so as to more effectively utilize its revenue to stimulate other domestic economic production, and reorientation of trade so as to break out of dependency relations with the West, especially the United States. Iran lowered its oil production from the six million barrels a day it produced before the revolution to between two and three million barrels a day, and was able to maintain this production despite the war with Iraq. It shifted the pattern of trade, reducing its exports to developed countries from 88% in 1977 to 74% in 1983. It expanded its markets in Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Brazil, Turkey, and India. Trade with India doubled, trade with Turkey went up from $41 million in 1977 to $774 million in 1982. Trade relations with Japan returned to near-prerevolutionary levels by 1983 (some $2 billion). One-third of its imports came from Germany, Japan, and Italy. There were efforts to settle claims with the United States; in 1982 the U.S. exported some $200 million worth of wheat, rice, and manufactured goods to Iran, buying in return 1.8 million barrels of Iranian oil for its strategic reserves. There have been various negotiations to get economic projects going again. The Russian-built steel mill outside Isfahan opened a second furnace in 1984. Yugoslavs helped put the Sar Chesmeh copper mines back into production. Japan continued construction on a petrochemical complex. There is talk about completing two nuclear power plants that were 85% and 70% complete at the time of the revolution. Banks have been nationalized, and foreign trade has been centralized. New land reform legislation has been debated repeatedly, if somewhat inconclusively, by parliament.

As in the political sphere, so in economic policy much remains to be worked out. The war with Iraq created shortages, need for rationing, and fluctuations in trade policy depending on a tightrope negotiation between sound management of foreign reserves and placating of consumer demand. There are antiprofiteering squads, as there were under the shah, now called *ansar ul-allah* ("helpers of God"), who harass and regulate shopkeepers and merchants. There have been a series of industrial strikes (as little reported as under the shah) over broken promises for higher pay, rehiring fired workers, and casting aspersions on the workers as troublemakers.

In social policy, women's rights and the position of minorities have been two contested arenas over the course of the revolution. During the first phase of the revolution, women's rights became an important component of the campaign for general civil rights. As the liberals were beginning to be pushed aside after the return of Khomeini, there were several marches and counterdemonstrations in which women's rights remained a last open battle for the liberal program. Since then the age of permitted marriage for women has been lowered from sixteen to thirteen, coeducation has been abolished, dress codes established, the middle-class feminist movement driven underground (or abroad), and the rules for polygamy eased. Yet there is also new legislation making it easier (under contract law, rather than family law, so as to circumvent conservative opinions on the latter) for women to obtain divorces and support. In the area of minority rights, the first phase of the revolution was remarkably protective of non-Muslims and non-Shi'ite Muslims. Since then, non-Muslims have been driven from public sector jobs; even non-Muslim schools now have Muslim principals and teachers. Armenian schools have been closed because their teachers refused to teach religion classes in Persian rather than Armenian. Bahā'is are subject to a campaign of constant harassment, their leaders imprisoned, tortured and executed, often on bogus charges of being spies.

A government has been consolidated, but political, social, and economic agendas have not yet been fully worked out. There is still considerable political competition occurring within the forces of the revolution. It is impossible to tell how much active and passive resistance there is to the government. One hears jokes about people asking for American rice but fearing to name the imperialist satan, and so asking for the *bereng-i marq bar amrika* ("death-to-American rice"), an indication that a long tradition of coping with repressive politics is not likely to be dead. The credible showing Iran kept up in the war against Iraq is an indication that Iranian nationalism remains strong.

Iran remains a fascinating exemplar of change in the modern world. In the 1970s Iran served as a principal model for modernization theory. Here was a case of a third-world country that had the best chance, so one thought, to break into the industrial first world, because it was a case where the constraint of capital had been removed. In the 1980s Iran served as a major case for thinking about what happens under conditions of demographic explosion, economic strain, and social change for a population with strong cultural traditions that feels oppressed

by an alien culture and world economy, and that attempts to use its traditional religious resources as a vehicle of moral protest. An important part of what is at issue is the reconstruction of a meaningful world in which people do not feel themselves devalued by more powerful outside forces, and in which they can feel proud of their identity and in control of their own destiny.

Many ugly things take place in revolutions, yet one cannot but hope and wish the Iranian people well in their painful struggle. They are in the midst of a dynamic process the results of which are as yet very unclear. To monitor and make sense of this process we need to continue to ask the kinds of questions I hope I have suggested in the five frameworks posed above, frameworks that take account of generations of Islamic response to Westernization, of the history of Iranian revolutions, of the structural pattern of revolutions, of the dynamics of Shi'ism and of the social agendas being contested and proposed.

Chart 1. Contributions and Failings of the Five Generations

	Enduring Contributions	Failings
Puritanical religious reformism (premodern fundamentalism—18th–19th centuries)	Ijtihad Sociopolitical engagements	Loss of old scholarly historical and evaluative skills. Lack of new technocratic skills.
Modernist reformism (Afghani, Abduh, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Ataturk, Iqbal—early 20th century)	Science and technology Democracy	Underestimation of the political economy of dependency. Elitism vis-à-vis the lower classes.
Neofundamentalists (Muslim Brotherhood, Maududi's *Jamiat-i Islam*—1930s, 1940s	Political organization Populism (ademocratic)	Continued devaluation of historical skills. Totalitarian (antiplurist attitude toward nonmembers).
Islamic socialism (Nasser, Destour, Ba'th, Bhutto—post-World War II	Economic reconstruction Social Welfare	Need for dictatorial means: decay into corrupt authoritarianism.
Islamic Resurgence of the 1970s, 1980s	Leverage against corruption Search for moral identity	Inability to live up to Islamic ideals of justice (corruption). Lack of clarity about fundamentalist versus modernist program.

Chart 2. Clerical Struggles in Iran

Generation (1-5)	Internal Factions (a vs b vs c)	State-Clergy Relations	No. of Seminary Students
Safavid Dynasty (1501–1722)			
	a. activist, dominance-seeking immigrant clergy (Majlesi) vs b. native gentry, tolerant, philosophically catholic	[patronage by the state of:] seminary students, shaykh-ul-Islam, judges, and endowments administrators	
Afghan invasion		[withdrawl of clergy to Iraq and into quietism (Akhbari)]	
Qajar Dynasty (1785–1925)			
[1. puritanical reformism]	a. activist, dominance-seeking Usulis vs b. scholarly, quietist (Ansari)	[competition]	
[2. modernist reformism: al-Afghani, Dowlatabadi, Roshdiyeh]	a. conservatives: anticonstitution and antimodernist (Nuri, Imam, Jom'eh) b. moderates: proconsitution, antimodern schools (Khorasani, Behbehani, Modarris) c. modernists: Dowlatabadi, Roshdiyeh	[struggles for constitution and against foreign debt-enslavement:] 1873 de Reuter protest 1891–1892 tobacco protest 1905–1911 constitutional revolution	
secularization of schools		1851 Dar al-Fanun 1911 123 elementary schools (Tehran)	

Pahlavi Dynasty (1925–1979)

1925–1941		
[3. neofundamentalists: Fada'iyan-e Islam; Kashani]	[suppression of clergy]	1924: 5,000–6,000
	secularization of schools, law, endowments, dress code	1935: 3,000 1940: 740
[4. "socialist" issues: Mosaddeq]		
1941–1960	[reemergence of clergy]	
a. conservative, clerical elite: prostability (Borujerdi, Behbehani, Shahrestani)	cooperation with the crown:	1947: 5,000–6,000
	1949 Borujerdi convocation	
b. neofundamentalist, nonelite clergy: Kashani	1953 Behbehani and Sharestani praise shah; state puts more religion in schools;	
	1955 anti-Bahai campaign	
c. leftist clergy (Borqe'i, Lajevardi)		
1960–1977		
[5. Islamic revival]	[opposition to the state in parliament and extralegally; struggle against becoming a déclassé stratum]	
a. conservative, clerical elite (Shari'atmadari, Golpayegani, Khonsari, Kho'i	1960 Borujerdi breaks state-clergy truce	
	1960–1963 Goftar-e Mah; an inquiry into the	
	1962 principle of Marja'iyyat and the clergy	
b. oppositional clerics (Islamic renewal: Khomeini, Shirazi, Sadeq Rohani, Taleqani, Mahallati, Montazeri)	1963 15th of Khordad—demonstrations against the White Revolution	
	1965–1973 Hosayniyeh Ershad	
	1970 arrest of Taleqani; exile of 48 Qum teachers	
c. mediating reformers (Motahhari, Beheshti)	1971 Khomeini: stay away from 25,000-year celebrations; guerillas	
	1972 five Mojahedin guerillas executed (students of Taleqani)	
d. royalists (Mahdavi, Imam Jum'eh of Tehran)	1975 15th of Khordad demonstrations against the Rastakhiz Party	
	1977–1979 revolution against Pahlavi monarchy	

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Nuclear Ethics— "The Challenge of Peace"

Kenneth Keulman

The intensity of critical national debates often rises and falls according to some obscure rhythm. Ultimately they either become archaic, when the times have so changed that they are trivial, or else they are resolved and left behind as a settled matter. The arousal of anxiety over nuclear weapons issues in the early 1980s, particularly in Western Europe and the United States, was unprecedented in scope. Previous public concern centered on specific issues: the early protests of the Committee on Nuclear Disarmament in England focused on the placement of antiballistic missiles in suburban areas. The renewal of activity in the 1980s possibly had its origins in the prolonged negotiations of SALT II and the anticlimax of its not being ratified. Then the beginning of the Reagan administration marked further deterioration of U.S.-Soviet relations. An accelerated U.S. military buildup was accompanied by rhetoric that emphasized the war-fighting capabilities of United States' nuclear weaponry.

The commitment to democratic politics is one the policy of nuclear deterrence claims to sustain. Yet a case can be made that in fact, the two are in opposition—that the inherent structural logic of deterrence strategy is not conducive to public debate and democratic choice, both among the populace at large and their elected representatives. How menacing is the world we live in? To what degree is that precariousness generated, and to what degree limited, by deterrence strategies? If people are unable to provide reasonably informed answers to questions such as these, the possibility of democratic choice is weakened. But many believe they cannot answer—because of the complexities of the issues, the all-pervasive secrecy, and because of the abstruse character of whatever technical data is made public.[1]

The collective effect of all these dynamics has been to focus the attention of many Americans on the possibility of nuclear war, perhaps for the first time. Organizations such as Physicians for Social Responsibility expanded this aware-

[1]For a development of this argument, see Michael Walzer, "Deterrence and Democracy," *The New Republic* (2 July 1984): 16-21.