

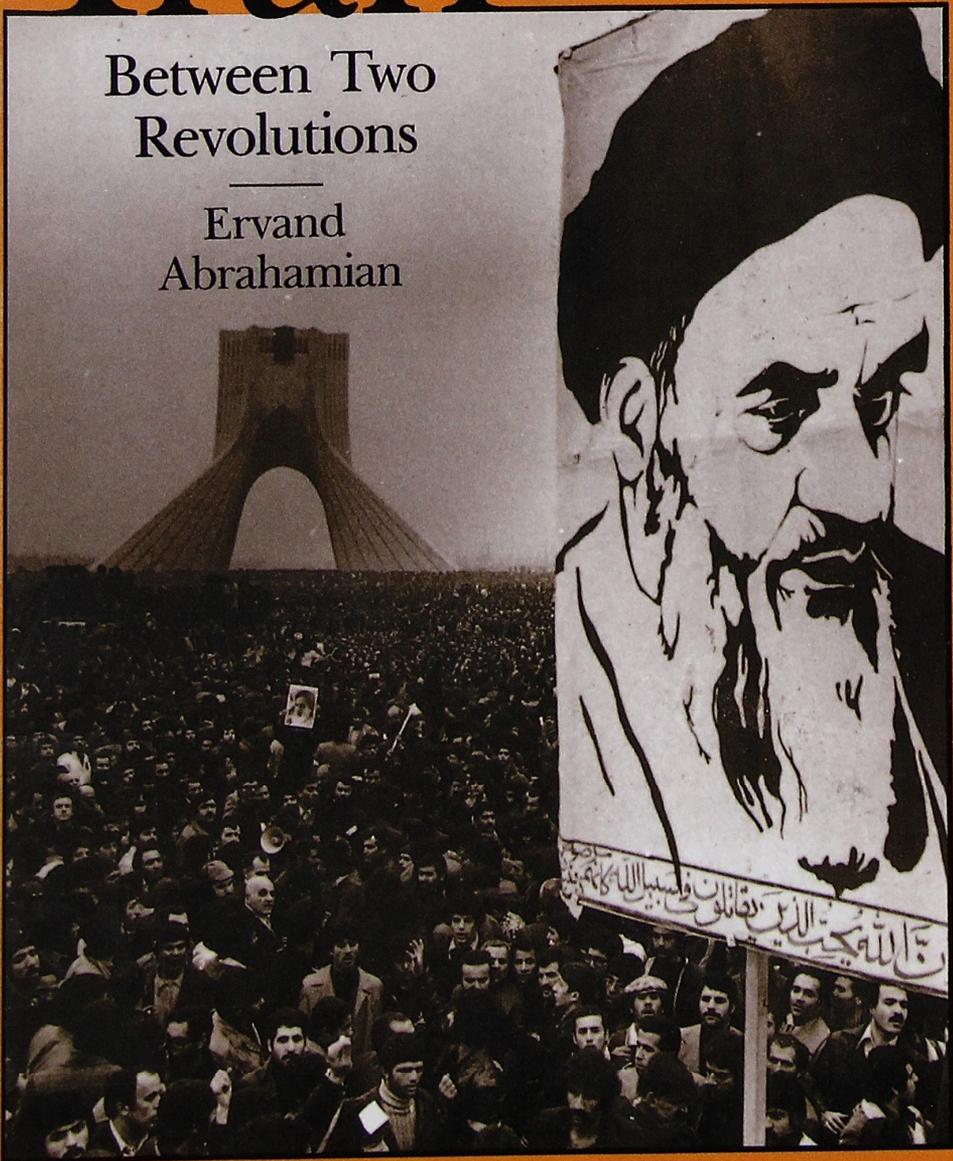


LIMITED PAPERBACK EDITIONS / PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

Iran

Between Two
Revolutions

—
Ervand
Abrahamian

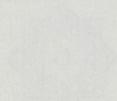


5

1502687

IRAN BETWEEN TWO REVOLUTIONS

Between Two
Revolutions



Ervand
Abrahamian

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

IRAN BETWEEN TWO REVOLUTIONS

PRINCETON STUDIES ON THE NEAR EAST

1532687

5

1532687

IRAN

Between Two Revolutions



Ervand
Abrahamian

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Copyright © 1982 by Princeton University Press
Published by Princeton University Press, 41 William Street,
Princeton, New Jersey
In the United Kingdom: Princeton University Press, Chichester, West Sussex

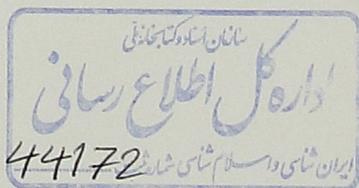
All Rights Reserved
Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data will be found
on the last printed page of this book

This book has been composed in Linotron Baskerville
Princeton University Press books are printed on acid-free paper
and meet the guidelines for permanence and durability of the
Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity of the
Council on Library Resources

Printed in the United States of America
by Princeton Academic Press

Second printing, with corrections, 1983

9 8 7 6



۱۵۳۲۹۸۷

TO THE MEMORY OF
 Jess (Helen) Harbison

Table of Tables and Figures	1
Table	1
Introduction	1
PART I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	
One. The Nineteenth Century	1
Social Structure	1
Commercial Organization	15
Commercial Conflicts	25
Commercial Conflicts and China's Commercialization	25
The Opium Threat	27
Two. The Constitutional Revolution	30
The Impact of the Opium	30
The Republican Movement	34
The 1911 Revolution	37
China's Path to Revolution (1900-1911)	37
The Revolution (June 1911-October 1911)	37
The Struggle for the Constitution (August 1911- June 1912)	38
The 1911 War (June 1911-July 1911)	38
Three. K'ang Shih	102
The Career of the Revolution (1900-1927)	102
The Rise of K'ang Shih (1921-1923)	112
The Reign of K'ang Shih (1926-1941)	125
K'ang Shih's Second Great Society	133

ایران شناسی

DSR

۱۴۰۷

/ ۱۲

الف

۱۳۶۲

Contents

List of Tables and Figure	x
Preface	xi
Introduction	3
PART I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	
One.	
The Nineteenth Century	9
Social Structure	9
Communal Organizations	19
Communal Conflicts	26
Communal Conflicts and Class Consciousness	33
The Qajar Dynasty	37
Two.	
The Constitutional Revolution	50
The Impact of the West	50
The Traditional Middle Class	58
The Intelligentsia	61
From Protest to Revolution (1800-1905)	69
The Revolution (June 1905-August 1906)	81
The Struggle for the Constitution (August 1906- June 1908)	86
The Civil War (June 1908-July 1909)	92
Three.	
Reza Shah	102
The Period of Disintegration (1909-1921)	102
The Rise of Reza Shah (1921-1925)	118
The Reign of Reza Shah (1926-1941)	135
Reza Shah's State and Iran's Society	149

PART II. POLITICS OF SOCIAL CONFLICT

Four.	The Evolving Political System: From Military to Embattled Monarchy	169
	New Beginnings	169
	The Thirteenth Majles (November 1941-November 1943)	176
	The Fourteenth Majles Elections (November 1943-February 1944)	186
	Convening the Fourteenth Majles (February-March 1944)	199
	The Fourteenth Majles (March 1944-March 1946)	203
Five.	The Evolving Political System: From Embattled to Military Monarchy	225
	Qavam as Prime Minister (March 1946-December 1946)	225
	The Fifteenth Majles Elections (December 1946-June 1947)	240
	The Fifteenth Majles (June 1947-June 1949)	242
	The Sixteenth Majles Elections (July 1949-February 1950)	250
	The Sixteenth Majles (February 1950-May 1951)	261
	Premier Mossadeq (May 1951-August 1953)	267
Six.	The Tudeh Party	281
	Formation (September 1941-October 1942)	281
	Expansion North (November 1942-August 1944)	290
	Expansion South (August 1944-October 1946)	299
	Repression (October 1946-February 1950)	305
	Revival (February 1950-August 1953)	318
Seven.	Class Bases of the Tudeh	326
	Class Profile	326
	Salaried Middle Class	328
	Urban Working Class	347
	Propertied Middle Class	371
	Rural Masses	375
Eight.	Ethnic Bases of the Tudeh	383
	Ethnic Profile	383
	Christians	385
	Azeris	388

PART III. CONTEMPORARY IRAN

Nine.	The Politics of Uneven Development	419
	Consolidation of Power (1953-1963)	419
	Socioeconomic Development (1963-1977)	426
	Political Underdevelopment (1963-1977)	435
	Iran on the Verge of Revolution	446
Ten.	The Opposition	450
	Political Parties (1953-1977)	450
	Clerical Opposition (1963-1977)	473
	Guerrilla Organizations (1971-1977)	480
Eleven.	The Islamic Revolution	496
	Middle-Class Protest (May 1977-June 1978)	496
	Middle- and Working-Class Protests (June 1978- December 1978)	510
	The Fall of the Shah (January-February 1979)	525
	Conclusion	530
	Glossary	539
	Bibliography	541
	Index	551

List of Tables and Figure

Table 1.	Ethnic Structure of Iran	12
Table 2.	Leading Personalities of the Early Communist Movement	132
Table 3.	Social and Political Background of the Fifty-Three	156
Table 4.	Early Leaders of the Iran Party	190
Table 5.	Leaders of the Democrat Party	232
Table 6.	Founding Members of the National Front	254
Table 7.	Occupational and Regional Background of Tudeh Rank and File Members	330
Table 8.	Decile Distribution of Urban Household Expenditures	449
Table 9.	Dead Guerrillas	480
Table 10.	Occupations of Dead Guerrillas	481
Figure	Inflation and Major Strikes	351

Preface

This work began in 1964 as a study on the social bases of the Tudeh party, the main communist organization in Iran. Focusing on the short period between the party's formation in 1941 and its drastic repression in 1953, the original work tried to answer the question why an organization that was clearly secular, radical, and Marxist was able to grow into a mass movement in a country noted for its fervent Shi'ism, traditional monarchism, and intense nationalism. The study, however, gradually expanded as I realized that the Tudeh success could not be fully assessed without constant references to the failures, on the one hand, of its many contemporary nationalistic parties; and, on the other hand, of its ideological predecessors, especially the Social Democrats of 1909-1919, the Socialists of the 1920s, and the Communists of the 1930s. The study further expanded as the 1977-1979 revolution unfolded, shattered the Pahlavi regime, and brought to the fore not the Tudeh but the clerical forces. Thus the study has evolved into an analysis of the social bases of Iranian politics, focusing on how socio-economic development has gradually transformed the shape of Iranian politics from the eve of the Constitutional Revolution in the late nineteenth century to the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in February 1979.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I provides a historical background to the understanding of modern Iran, surveying the nineteenth century, the Constitutional Revolution, and the reign of Reza Shah. Part II analyzes the social bases of politics in the period between the fall of Reza Shah's autocracy in August of 1941 and the establishment of Muhammad Reza Shah's autocracy in August 1953. These thirteen years are the only major period in the modern era in which the historian can look below the political surface into the social infrastructure of Iranian politics, and thereby examine in depth the ethnic as well as the class roots of the various political movements. Readers who are not interested in the internal workings of the communist movement in this period are advised to skim Chapters 7 and 8, which examine in detail the class and ethnic bases of the Tudeh

party. Finally, Part III examines contemporary Iran, describing the socioeconomic programs carried out by Muhammad Reza Shah, the political tensions aggravated by these programs, and eventually the eruption of the recent Islamic Revolution.

In working my way through the complex maze of Iranian politics, I have relied as much as possible on three important sources other social scientists have often overlooked: the gold mine of information in the British Foreign Office and India Office in London—especially the weekly, monthly, annual, and detailed survey reports sent from Iran between 1905 and 1949 by provincial consular officials as well as ministers, ambassadors, and special attachés in Tehran; the valuable material revealed in parliamentary debates, particularly from the time of the First Majles in 1906 to the Seventeenth Majles in 1953; these debates have been published under the title of *Mozakerat-i Majles-i Shawra-yi Melli* (The Proceedings of the National Consultative Assembly); and the equally valuable information found in the numerous Persian-language newspapers, journals, and periodicals published from 1905 until 1980 both inside the country and outside Iran. I have also used as much as necessary memoirs, histories, and articles written by active politicians, retired statesmen, and exiles living abroad after 1953. All these sources have their biases, of course. But the social scientist can still obtain a fairly objective picture of Iranian politics by taking into account their biases, double-checking the information with other primary materials, and using as many countervailing sources as possible. It is to be hoped that future historians will be able to test my findings by gaining access to the one major source left unused—the archives of the Soviet Union on Iran.

I would like to thank those who helped in the writing of this book: Professor Donald Zagoria for reading the original monograph; political activists who wish to remain anonymous for their patient interviews, rare documents, and valuable reminiscences; Nikki Keddie, Joseph Upton, E. P. Elwell-Sutton, Bozorg 'Alavi, Hormoz Shahdadi, and the late T. C. Cuyler Young for commenting on earlier drafts of various chapters; and Shahen Abrahamian and Margaret Case for their meticulous editorial work.

I would also like to thank the following institutions for financial assistance: the Research Institute on International Change at Columbia University for Junior Fellowships from 1967 to 1969; the City University of New York for summer travel grants during 1972, 1974, 1976, and 1979; the Social Science Research Council for a postdoctoral grant in 1977; and Baruch College in the City University of New York for a sabbatical fellowship in 1979-1980 to complete the book. Finally, I would like to thank the Controller, H. M. Stationary Office in Britain,

for permission to quote from unpublished Foreign Office documents at the Public Record Office and the India Office in London. Of course, neither these institutions nor the readers thanked above are responsible for any errors or political opinions found in the book.

For the sake of space, I have used footnotes only to cite quotations, to document controversial issues and to refer to highly important primary sources. Secondary works, however distinguished, as well as other important sources have been left for the concluding bibliography. Also for the sake of space, the footnotes contain only translations of article titles from Persian newspapers, journals, and periodicals. They do contain, however, the transliteration as well as the translation of Persian books and pamphlets.

The method of transliteration inevitably needs an explanation, since few linguists agree on a common system, some vowels are not written in Persian, and pronunciation varies greatly from one region to another within Iran. To ease these problems, I have modified the version devised by the Library of Congress. In my modified version, place names well known in the English-speaking world have been kept in their familiar form (e.g. Tehran, Isfahan, and Mashad); letters "o" and "e" have been introduced to denote their equivalent sounds in Persian; diacritical marks have been eliminated on the grounds that this is a work for social scientists, not linguists; and, for the sake of consistency but at the risk of appearing to be a metropolitan chauvinist, I have based my transliteration on the pronunciation of Persian as spoken in contemporary Tehran.

IRAN BETWEEN TWO REVOLUTIONS

Introduction

Sociologists who have stopped the time-machine and, with a good deal of conceptual huffing and puffing, have gone down to the engine-room to look, tell us that nowhere at all have they been able to locate and classify a class. They can only find a multitude of people and different occupations, incomes, status-hierarchies, and the rest. Of course they are right, since class is not this or that part of the machine, but *the way the machine works* once it is set in motion—not this and that interest, but the *friction* of interests, the heat, the thundering noise. . . . Class itself is not a thing, it is a happening.

—E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London, 1968), p. 939.



In the last two decades, social scientists studying Western countries have developed a new discipline called political sociology. Disregarding the nineteenth-century premise that state and society were two separate and contradictory entities, modern social scientists have formulated a less grand but more precise perspective that sees state and society as intricately connected, and state politics as closely related to both political organizations and social forces. Equipped with this three-dimensional perspective, contemporary social scientists have produced not only perceptive theoretical frameworks on political sociology, but also many valuable empirical case studies of Western societies, analyzing the social bases of politics and on the complex relationship between state politics, political organizations and social structures.¹

¹ For examples of empirical case studies on the social bases of politics in the West, see R. Bendix and M. Lipset, *Class, Status, and Power* (New York, 1960); L. Coser, *Political Sociology* (New York, 1966); S. Lipset, *Political Man* (New York, 1960); S. Lipset and S. Rokkan, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments* (New York, 1967); R. Rose and D. Unwin, eds., "Social Structure, Party Systems, and Voting," *Comparative Political Studies*, 2 (April 1969), 2-135; A. Stinchcombe, "Social Structure and Organizations," *Handbook of Organizations*, edited by J. March (Chicago, 1957), pp. 143-97. For an early example of such a case study, see K. Marx, "The Class Struggles in France," *Selected Works* (Moscow, 1958), vol. 1.

Whereas social scientists analyzing Western states have adopted the three-dimensional perspective of political sociology, however, social scientists examining non-Western states have tended to retain the nineteenth-century, two-dimensional outlook. Some, especially political scientists from the structural-functional school, have focused on the state: they have discussed how the state modernizes society, grapples with crises of legitimacy, and builds such new institutions as bureaucracies, armies, and one-party systems. Others, particularly anthropologists and political scientists from the behavioral school, have concentrated on society: the anthropologists on small communities, the political scientists on whole "political cultures" of "developing nations." Social scientists have thus written much on how political systems transform social systems, and social systems at times—through violence, riots, and alienation—disrupt the political systems. But they have produced little on how social struggles shape political conflicts, and how social forces, interacting with political organizations, affect the course of development in non-Western states.²

Similarly, few scholars have examined the social bases of Iranian politics. Whereas the past experts on Iran tended to write broad historical surveys—often stressing the impact of international affairs on internal affairs—contemporary experts focus on specific parts of either the political or the social systems. Some deal with such aspects of the political realm as nationalism, state building, land reform, and crises of legitimacy. Others write microstudies on small communities and major works on the "political culture" of the whole society. The last group argues that a national culture of individual insecurity, distrust, cynicism, rebelliousness, neurotic isolation, and psychological alienation explains the politics—especially the political instability—of twentieth-century Iran. Many analyze either the politics or the society of contemporary Iran; few study the political sociology of modern Iran.³

² Notable among the few that examine the social bases of politics in the non-Western world are Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston, 1967); M. Halpern, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa* (Princeton, 1963); E. Wallerstein, *Africa: The Politics of Independence* (New York, 1961); K. Karpav, *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System* (Princeton, 1959); C. Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New Nations* (Chicago, 1963); J. Bill and C. Leiden, *The Middle East: Politics and Power* (Boston, 1974); H. Batatu, *Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, 1979).

³ For a list of books on modern Iran, see the bibliography. Only two books can be described as studies on the social bases of Iranian politics: J. Upton, *The History of Modern Iran: An Interpretation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968) and J. Bill, *The Politics of Iran: Groups, Classes, and Modernization* (Columbus, Ohio, 1972). The former, while explaining political instability in terms of foreign intervention, provincial insurrections, and the "national character" of "individualistic opportunism," also examines various forces competing within the society. The latter, focusing on power, authority, and methods

The present work intends to examine the politics of modern Iran by analyzing the interaction between political organizations and social forces. These forces can be categorized generally as ethnic groups and social classes. The book will use the phrase "ethnic group" to describe the vertical groupings of individuals with common ties of language, tribal lineage, religion, or regional affiliation. It will apply the term "social class" to the broad horizontal layers composed of individuals with common relationships to the means of production, common interactions with the mode of administration, and, in a developing environment, common attitudes toward economic, social, and political modernization.

Although the concept of social class has been employed, in slightly different forms, by such contrasting authorities as Marx and de Tocqueville, Machiavelli and Tawney, Weber and Dahrendorf, medieval ideologues and Muslim theologians, Roman censors and the American *Federalist Papers*, it has come under fire recently from diverse social scientists. Structural-functionalists have argued that societies are divided not into a few major classes but into many small occupational layers. These layers, they stress, are dependent upon each other because of the division of labor, but are differentiated from each other by various degrees of prestige, honor, and income.⁴ Behavioralists have claimed that individuals in the developing countries attach themselves to ideologies rather than to members of their own socioeconomic class. Political forces, they emphasize, are created by competing ideas, not by conflicting classes. If Marx turned Hegel "right side up" with the formulation that man's consciousness is determined by his social being, the modern behavioralists have reversed Marx with the insistence that man's social being—at least in the Third World—is determined by his consciousness.⁵ Students of political elites, meanwhile, have discarded the concept of social class by relegating

of modernization, answers in depth the reasons why the shah failed to win over the modern intelligentsia.

⁴ T. Parsons, "Social Classes and Class Conflict in the Light of Recent Sociological Theory," *Essays in Sociological Theory* (New York, 1967); R. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Chicago, 1957). For a discussion of whether Middle Eastern societies are divided into classes or occupational strata, see A. Perlmutter, "Egypt and the Myth of the New Middle Class," *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 10 (October 1967), 46-65; M. Halpern, "Egypt and the New Middle Class," *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 11 (January 1969), 97-108.

⁵ L. Pye, *Aspects of Political Development* (Boston, 1966); G. Almond and S. Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Boston, 1965). For a study on the importance of ideology in Iranian politics, see L. Binder, *Iran: Political Development in Changing Society* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962).

everybody else into an amorphous residue labeled the "masses."⁶ At the same time, sociologists who have written on non-Western politics have also questioned the conceptual usefulness of class by arguing that the main conflicts in the Third World revolve around the ethnic divisions of tribe, race, caste, religion, and regional origins.⁷ Classes, they conclude, exist in Europe and America but not in Asia and Africa. Finally, many social scientists in the Third World—together with some sympathizers of the Third World in the West—have tended to emphasize their external differences with the industrialized countries and gloss over their internal social antagonisms. National struggles, they insist, dwarf all social struggles, including class struggles.⁸

This book does not pretend to solve once for all the major theoretical problems of class versus elite, class versus stratum, social issues versus national ones, horizontal groups versus vertical divisions, and consensus versus conflict analyses. But it does intend to analyze the social bases of Iranian politics by examining the central class and ethnic conflicts of the last hundred years, the relationship between socioeconomic modernization and political development, the rise of new classes as well as the decline of old communities, and the social composition, together with the ideological outlook, of the main political parties. The book, in presenting a case study of the social bases of politics, hopes to throw some light both on major issues in political development—especially the role of ethnic conflicts in emerging countries—and on theoretical problems in political sociology—particularly the advantages, as well as the disadvantages, of class analysis. The underlying premise throughout the book will be E. P. Thompson's neo-Marxist approach that the phenomenon of class should be understood not simply in terms of its relation to the mode of production (as orthodox Marxists have often argued), but, on the contrary, in the context of historical time and of social friction with other contemporary classes.

⁶ G. Mosca, *The Ruling Class* (New York, 1939); V. Pareto, *The Mind and Society* (London, 1935); C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York, 1965); C. Van Nieuwenhuijze, *Social Stratification in the Middle East* (Leiden, 1965). For an elite approach to modern Iran, see M. Zonis, *The Political Elite of Iran* (Princeton, 1971).

⁷ C. Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States," in Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New Nations*, pp. 107-57; L. Kuper, "Theories of Revolution and Race Relations," *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 12 (January 1971), 87-107; A. Lewis, *Politics in West Africa* (London, 1965); J. C. Hurewitz, *Middle East Politics: The Military Dimension* (New York, 1969).

⁸ These views are discussed by S. Lipset, "Issues in Social Class Analysis," in *Revolution and Counter-Revolution* (New York, 1970), pp. 157-201. For an interesting example minimizing the importance of internal conflicts in Iran while maximizing the significance of external crises with the West, see B. Nirumand, *Iran: The New Imperialism in Action* (New York, 1969).