

Achieving the Unexpected:  
Social Change in Iran since 1963

by

Jenny Lo  
Class of 2010

A thesis submitted to the  
faculty of Wesleyan University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Bachelor of Arts  
with Departmental Honors from the College of Social Studies

In Loving Memory of my Grandmother

## A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

---

In writing this thesis on social movements in Iran, I owe my deepest gratitude to Professor Giulio Gallarotti for his endless support and valuable suggestions. I am also deeply grateful to Professor Asya El-Meehy for her invaluable help and guidance on this thesis. I am indebted to many of my Iranian friends who had tried to assist me in reaching Tehran in June 2009, and again in Winter 2009. And finally, I would like to extend my thanks to Katherine Eyster, Miranda Becker, Vivian Ho and Oriana Korol for providing me with valuable suggestions and support on this thesis.

---

# C O N T E N T S

---

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. The Meaning of Social Movements</b>	<b>14</b>
What are Social Movements?	15
An Alternative Framework: What are Successful Social Movements?	19
<i>On Outcome</i>	
<i>On Sustainability</i>	
<i>Relationship between Outcome and Sustainability</i>	
The Meaning of Success	33
<i>William A. Gamson</i>	
<i>Paul Burstein</i>	
<i>Marc Giugni</i>	
Proposed Method of Study	41
<i>Resource Mobilization Theory</i>	
<i>Political Opportunity Theory</i>	
<i>New Social Movement Theory</i>	
Conclusion	46
<b>2. The Making of the Islamic Republic of Iran: The Nahzat (1963-1979)</b>	<b>48</b>
Identifying the Movement	50
<i>Liberation Movement of Iran</i>	
<i>The Nahzat</i>	
Movement Objectives	60
<i>Objective Attainment</i>	
Movement Sustainability	66
Movement Success or Failure?	69
Explaining Success of Movement	72
<i>Political Opportunity Structure</i>	
<i>Resource Mobilization Theory</i>	
<i>New Social Movement Theory</i>	
Conclusion	89

<b>3. The Rise of Khatami: The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad Movement (1997-2005)</b>	<b>91</b>
Identifying the Movement: 2 <sup>nd</sup> of Khordad	93
Movement Objectives	96
<i>Objective Attainment</i>	
Movement Sustainability	106
Movement Success or Failure?	111
Explaining the Unsuccessful Movement	113
<i>Political Opportunity Structure</i>	
<i>Resource Mobilization Theory</i>	
<i>New Social Movement Theory</i>	
Conclusion	124
<b>4. Youth and Social Change: The Green Movement (2009-Present)</b>	<b>126</b>
Identifying the Movement: The Green Movement	128
Movement Objectives	130
<i>Objective Attainment</i>	
Movement Sustainability	139
Movement Success or Failure?	145
Explaining a Marginally Successful Movement	148
<i>Political Opportunity Structure</i>	
<i>Resource Mobilization Theory</i>	
<i>New Social Movement Theory</i>	
Conclusion	164
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>173</b>

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

## Social Change in Iran

On June 9<sup>th</sup> 2009, I was on my way to the Hong Kong airport to catch a flight to the Islamic Republic of Iran, until I received a call from my friend in Iran. “I’m sorry” she said, “but the situation in Iran has become too chaotic, and we’re expecting it to get worse. We’ve decided that you should stay in Hong Kong.” Five days later, massive protests broke out in response to the 2009 presidential election results. Hearing first-hand accounts of the protests and the relentless reports from news agencies, I decided to postpone my ticket to December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009, hoping that the situation in Iran would settle by then. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009, my Iranian friend told me that my visa application was transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but the application did not manage to reach the Iranian Embassy in Hong Kong, the location where I would pick up my pre-departure visa. Only a day before departure, several sources assured me that landing visas were still available in Iran and would not be an issue. With this in mind, I took the risk.

On December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009, I made my way from Hong Kong to Dubai without an Iranian visa, only to be stranded in the Dubai airport for hours waiting for my transfer flight that was overbooked and then delayed to Tehran. As I sat in the

---

waiting area, a large group of Chinese travelers passed by asking for their transfer ticket to Tehran. I quickly asked them whether Chinese nationals needed visas prior to departure, and whether landing visas still existed. Sadly, to my greatest disappointment, I found out that travel policies had changed and that landing visas no longer existed. From Dubai, I then returned home. Ten days later, there were widespread protests and violent clashes after the death of Ayatollah Montazeri, a prominent Islamic theologian who was an icon for change and human rights in Iran.

Again and again, my travel expeditions to Iran failed. Even though I never made it to Iran before the writing of this thesis, in retrospect, both of my experiences allowed me to personally understand the uncertainty and instability of the situation in Iran today. Iran received world focus in the late 1970s for its defiance of international expectations when a revolution ousted Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Since then, Iran has continued to shock the world with its unconventional behavior and still continues to today.

The Islamic regime's continuous provocative statements to the West and defiant attitude to the nuclear issue have masked the reality of happening within Iran. In Iran, there continues to be a broad-based inclination to change the leadership and the regime, but the government's harsh crackdown on dissent had silenced any oppositionists. Millions of dissidents have been detained, several executed and others have gone missing. As foreigners, it is hard to uncover the artificial anti-West portrayal of Iran and see that a majority of Iranians oppose the government. As for non-Iranian specialists, it is even harder to decipher the intricate power dynamics of an Islamic regime that is neither democratic nor authoritarian, but a theocracy

---

combined with aspects of democracy. For this reason, I hope my thesis will provide a deeper understanding into social movements in an unfamiliar political system and cultural context.

Focusing on the Islamic Republic of Iran, this thesis examines the reasons for the successes and failures of creating political change in Iran by exploring three cases of social movements – the Nahzat, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad and the Green Movement. I have selected the topic on social movements in Iran for various reasons, but mostly because collective action in Iran has been the only way of opposing the government than any other form of dissent. Social movements in Iran will also allow readers to understand the conditions that brought about the removal of the authoritarian leadership, produced social and political change, and continued to be the preferred method for Iranians today in seeking accountability from the government.

### **The Three Test Cases**

This thesis will review the social movements in Iran since the beginning of the Islamic revolutionary movement (Nahzat) in 1963 to the present day. I identify what I believe to be three large social movements in Iran: Khomeini's Revolutionary Movement (1963 to 1979), the Second of Khordad (1996-2005) and finally, the Green Movement (2009 to present).

The first test case is Khomeini's Revolutionary Movement, the Nahzat (1963-1979). I will begin by analyzing the Islamic Revolution of 1979 because it continues to be an interesting case for scholars and theorists Third World social change, and because it dramatically altered political activism within Iran. Literature on the causes of the revolution only started to become available several years after the revolution.

Even though there is still no unified agreement on the exact causes of the revolution, it is generally agreed that the increasing dependencies on external powers, repressive policies enforced by the state, and the gradual economic downturn encouraged the dissidents to call for the collapse of the Shah's regime.<sup>1</sup>

During the spring of 1980, the Islamic Republic of Iran decided to silence all oppositional forces and purged all university campuses of students and intellectuals who opposed the government. This period was defined as the "cultural revolution" as all major opportunities for cultural and political expression were closed; thus began the "Islamization project." From 1983-1989, the number of social movements dramatically decreased and as Mahdi describes, "This was the end of the independent student movement."<sup>2</sup> The silencing of protests was partially assisted by strict university admission regulations limiting non-religious students entrance to university as an attempt to silence all secular opposition voices fighting for democratic freedom. Some analysts refer to this as a period of silence as all dissident voices, including the students', were suppressed by the Islamic regime.<sup>3</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad reform movement from 1997-2005 will be the second test case for social movement analysis. In 1997, the presidential election and victory of Mohammad Khatami has been noted by scholars as the beginning of a revival of student movements. As Afshin Molavi, an Iranian journalist covering the 1997 elections said, "Iran's university campuses, dormant since playing a critical role in the

---

<sup>1</sup> John Foran, *A Century of Revolution: Social Movements in Iran* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1994).p 169.

<sup>2</sup>Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).p 304.

<sup>3</sup> Mehrdad Mashayekhi, "The Revival of the Student Movement in Post-Revolutionary Iran," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 15, no. 2 (Dec 2001).

thundering 1979 revolution, sprang alive once again, agitating for more social and political freedoms; student protests became a familiar feature of campus life.”<sup>4</sup> In the late 1990s, the Iranian conservative ruling clerics reasserted their position of power by initiating a series of arrests of journalists and supporters of political reform. Most notably, the 1999 bloody raid of the student dormitory in University of Tehran brought about the biggest student mobilization in Iran. The events at the university were followed by a crackdown on the press which reflected President Khatami’s lack of real bureaucratic power in the system.

There were major cultural shifts before and after the Islamic Revolution in 1979. The radical socialistic subculture of the pre-1979 regime had developed into a radical Islamist culture by the 1980s. Only by the early 1990s did a democratic subculture form. Students were the most active social group in this subculture and suffered dramatically after the raids in the dormitory by the military. Immediately after the political unrest in 1999, a series of conservative events dramatically decreased opportunities for more political expression. By the beginning of 2000, revolutionary political Islam could be defined by the entrance of a new generation of student activists into the political scene called the generation of “unknown elite.”<sup>5</sup>

The third period of social movement analysis will look at the Green Movement that is currently taking place in Iran. The outbreak of protests in 2009 was largely in response to the outcry and frustration from the controversial June 2009 presidential election, with a majority of voters accusing the incumbent president Ahmadinejad of vote rigging. Voters were highly skeptical of where their votes went

---

<sup>4</sup> Afshin Molavi, *The Soul of Iran: A Nation's Journey to Freedom* (W. W. Norton, 2005).p 5.

<sup>5</sup> Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*.p 532.

and began to demonstrate publicly. These protests gained widespread international attention, influencing viewers around the world, including many international politicians. The movement's objective has evolved as time progresses, and the potential outcome of this movement is still unknown. However, this project will evaluate how the movement has progressed from its beginning through March of 2010.

## **Organization of Thesis**

In the first chapter I will explore the meaning and the defining characteristics of social movements. I will also review previous social movement literature and then provide a new original framework for evaluating the degree of success for social movements in Iran. This developed analytical framework will then be applied throughout this thesis in evaluating the three peak movement periods in Iran. I will conclude this chapter by explaining the changes that have developed in social movements and explaining how the relationship between political opportunity and organizational activism has demonstrated new sets of meanings, values, images and constructed "realities" in the discussion of social movements.

Following the first chapter, I will analyze each of the three test cases by answering two main questions: Was the social movement successful? And why was the movement successful or not? For the former question, a movement's success is evaluated according to my typology developed in chapter 1. If a movement performs well for both of my assessment criteria, the movement will be considered a success. For the latter question, movement success will be explained by using three

---

predominant social movement theories: resource mobilization theory, political opportunity structure theory, and new social movement theory.

In my second chapter, I will review how the Nahzat started in 1963, evolved and finally managed to establish a new political regime in Iran by 1979. The former part of the chapter will identify the objectives of the movement and answer whether the movement was able to succeed in attaining its movement objectives and maintain sustainability. The latter part of the chapter will provide an explanation as to why the movement was a success based on the three social movement theories. The three social movement theories will provide a better understanding of the general changes in the organization, management and strategies of the social movement. Due to the large scope of historical facts and figures prior to and after the Iranian Revolution, only events pertinent to the understanding of the Nahzat will be addressed.

The third chapter will apply the original theoretical framework as outlined in Chapter one, and will examine the degree of success for the second test case roughly from the year of 1997 to 2005. Through this application, I will evaluate whether the Second of Khordad reform movement was a success or a failure. I will also try to address how the second test case overcame its failures and eventually evolved into a new wave of youth social movements.

The fourth chapter will focus on assessing the third test case, the Green Movement. Unlike the previous two test cases, I will first evaluate the progress of the Green Movement using the theoretical framework, and then provide a prediction on the possible outcome of the movement. Based on my prediction, I will use the three social movement theories to explain the reasons for my prediction on the movement.

In the final chapter, all findings will be summarized and the reasons behind the most successful movement will be explained. The chapter will end by examining the potential of the current social movement in the years to come, and its implications for the people in Iran.

## CHAPTER 1

## The Meaning of Social Movements

The power of the mass is the ability of individuals to organize and challenge the power-holders, those who control the jurisdiction. When individuals are organized in the hope of expressing their message through public demonstrations and protests, they want their message to be heard by both the power-holders and the general public. They target the power-holders because they want their action to be recognized and to have their demands met. They aim to involve the general public because they require public support and public sensitization for their cause. Most movements can generally identify their objectives and their target audience, but determining how they can achieve their goal is the biggest challenge. For this reason, many social scientists have developed various theories to explain why some movements succeed and others fall short of their goals.

Although the study of social movements has undergone a deep and remarkable development from a disorganized area of research into a solid and established field of study, virtually missing in the existing literature on social movements is the discussion of movement outcomes in evaluating movement success. Various scholars on movement mobilization had identified an array of factors that are relevant to the study of movement success, but attempts to explain movement success were often unbalanced by addressing either agency or structure. In my thesis, I will

use both agency and structural perspectives to outline the development and explain the outcomes of the three cases of social movements.

In this chapter, the organization is split into two parts: presentation of the social movement typology and the justification on the development of my typology. First, I will review and define what constitutes as a social movement. Afterwards, I will present my typology and explain the assessment criterions for movement success. There will be an extensive analysis on each of the two criterions for measuring success, and its relation to each other. Following the section, there will be justifications on the development of the typology and references to various social movement theorists, such as William A. Gamson, Marco Giugni and Burnstein. Finally, the last section will explain the purpose of developing a typology applicable to the study of social movements in Iran.

## **What are Social Movements?**

To understand what social movements are, one must first understand the broader field of study: contentious politics. Contentious politics, as Charles Tilly defines it, are interactions where actors produce claims that interest a larger pool of people “leading to coordinating efforts on behalf of shared interests.”<sup>6</sup> The target, or the “object of claims” is usually the government.<sup>7</sup> There are various forms of contentious politics, such as: revolutions, social movements, religious conflicts, transnational and civil rights. The various forms of contentious politics constantly change and evolve with respect to the needs and conditions of the people in organizing collective action.

---

<sup>6</sup> Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (Paradigm, 2007).p 201.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

The use of the term “social movements” has broadened, and many scholars offer different interpretations of the term. Given the broad usage of this term, this study will specifically focus on John Wilson’s definition of social movements, that is, “a conscious, collective, organized attempt to bring about or resist large-scale change in the social order by non-institutionalized means.”<sup>8</sup> A social movement is a conscious effort to achieve a group’s objectives by challenging the authorities, power-holders and cultural beliefs through extra-institutional means.<sup>9</sup> Many assume that social movements are only aimed at achieving social goals, but political goals are also common objectives of social movements. Some movements with political objectives aim to achieve new rights, while some act in response to violence and suppression.

In a social movement, members or leaders of the social movement must select the means and processes in order to best achieve their goals. Means and processes of collective action can be violent or nonviolent means, illegal or legal activities, and extremism or moderation. Whether the group chooses to use previous means of action or innovative ways to express their contention, their purpose is to achieve their goals. The goal of a social movement must be a large-scale community interest, not a goal related to only a particular entity.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the objective of the movement must be relatively broad in order to be considered a movement.

Another important defining characteristic of a movement is sustainability. A brief episode or a single large protest definitely reflects the amount of frustration

---

<sup>8</sup> John Wilson, *Introduction to Social Movements* (Basic Books, 1973).p 11.

<sup>9</sup> James M. Jasper Jeff Goodwin, *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*, Second ed. (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2009).p 3.

<sup>10</sup> Theodore Abel, "The Pattern of a Successful Political Movement," *American Sociological Review* 2, no. 3 (1937).p 347-352.

present in a society, but it does not have the sufficient organization and structure present to be identified as a movement. As Bert Klandermans, a professor of applied social psychology, noted, “Only by sustaining collective action does an actor turn a contentious episode into a social movement.”<sup>11</sup> Therefore, contentious episodes, such as, isolated protests are not social movements. For movement sustainability to occur, there must be “sustained participation.”<sup>12</sup> Participation, as Klandermans described, can be different in *time* and *amount of effort*.<sup>13</sup> Significance of movement sustainability will be fully developed in the latter portions of this chapter.

For a more nuanced definition of social movements, Charles Tilly, the lead thinker in the study of social movements, identified three major elements in every social movement: Campaigns, repertoires, and “worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment” displays (WUNC).<sup>14</sup> A *campaign*, Tilly argued, “is recognized as a sustained and organized effort to make collective claims on target authorities.”<sup>15</sup> A *social movement repertoire* is the form of political action that a group decides to adopt to express their social or political message.<sup>16</sup> Forms of action include, but are not limited to “marches, rallies, demonstrations, occupations, picket lines, blockages, public meetings, delegations, petition drives, letter-writing, lobbying and the establishment of coalitions.”<sup>17</sup> It is possible to have a single or a combination of

---

<sup>11</sup> Bert Klandermans, "Why Social Movements Come into Being and Why People Join Them," in *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology*, ed. Judith R. Blau (Malden: Blackwell Publishing).p 269

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Charles Tilly, *Social Movements, 1768-2004* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> ———, *Regimes and Repertoires* (London: The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., 2006).p 54

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

various forms of political action in a social movement repertoire.<sup>18</sup> Finally, the *WUNC* is the demonstration of “worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment” through statements, slogans and labels.<sup>19</sup>

Tilly used the above three characteristics to identify social movements. In theory, such characteristics seem to be easily identifiable, but in reality, it can be extremely difficult to distinguish. It is difficult because individuals’ concerted efforts in organizing a social movement often do not turn out as planned, and a movement can consist of several subgroups with different opinions on the campaign, repertoire, and *WUNC* displays.

Social movement repertoires are movement forms that are used for political mobilization. Sidney Tarrow, co-author of the book “Contentious Politics” with Tilly, she described Tilly’s concept of repertoires were beyond just the form of collective action, but were also “learned cultural creations that result from the history of struggle.”<sup>20</sup> Tilly’s reference to culture highlighted a unique relationship between the form and organization of political struggle, and the cultural norms in which the movement was occurring. Some repertoires of contention include: sit-ins, peaceful protests, boycotts, petitions, marches and violent confrontations. In other words, Iran’s repertoire of contention is unique to the politics and culture of the country. In the case of Iran, street protests and demonstrations continue to be major form of movement repertoire, but in addition, Iranians had pursued other creative forms of contention. In December 2009, Iranian dissidents started to write anti-government

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Sidney Tarrow, "The People's Two Rhythms: Charles Tilly and the Study of Contentious Politics. A Review Article," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38, no. 3 (1996).p 11.

slogans on banknotes that achieved wide circulation.<sup>21</sup> Expanding on Tilly's explanation, repertoire of contention is definitely influenced by cultural factors, but can also be influenced by technological advances. Some social movement repertoires that were used in the past may still be used today, or combined with newer and more creative forms, whichever is more effective in expressing a movement's interests.

Despite the difference in terminology, revolutionary movements and reform movement are also forms of social movements.<sup>22</sup> James DeFronzo, a sociology professor, defines a revolutionary movement as "a social movement in which participants are organized to alter drastically or replace totally existing social, economic, or political institutions."<sup>23</sup> A reform movement, on the other hand, only seeks to create a certain degree of change to the society, whilst major sociopolitical institutions remain.<sup>24</sup> There are many similarities between the two forms, but the major difference between the two types of movement is the magnitude of change. Revolutionary movements' goal is to *remove* certain existing institutions, whereas reform movements seek to *alter* institutions. This thesis will be addressing these two types of movements in the following chapters.

## **What is a successful social movement?**

Most of the developed theories on social movements try to explain why some movements achieve their goals while some do not. Trying to understand the complexities of the organization and strategies of a social movement is definitely

---

<sup>21</sup> Trevor J. Murphy, "Iran Deems "Green" Banknotes Invalid," in *Fortress Paper* (2009).

<sup>22</sup> Jeff Goodwin, *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*; Abel, "The Pattern of a Successful Political Movement."

<sup>23</sup> James DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2007).p 8.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

crucial in predicting the outcome of a movement, but unfortunately there has been little effort among social movement scholars on defining what is a successful social movement.

For this reason, I have developed a framework in analyzing what is a successful social movement. A successful social movement must possess the three core characteristics of a social movement outlined by Tilly in the previous section, but in addition, I argued that the movement must 1) *achieve its objectives* and 2) *be sustainable*. The following section will be explaining the framework in detail. As illustrated in Figure 1.1, the two criteria for movement success are indicated on the vertical and horizontal axis.

**Figure 1.1 Illustration of the Objective attainment-Sustainability Framework**

**Framework**



**The first criterion for a successful social movement is achieving objectives.** Even if a movement was not able to obtain its objective, the assessment

will include whether the movement was able to gain advantages in increasing the possibility in advancing its goal. There are three levels of goal attainment: *no concessions*, *slight concessions*, and *full response*.

*No concessions:* In this situation, the power-holders heavily repress all dissident voices and provide no concessions to the opposing movements. The power-holders do not recognize the legitimacy of the opposition movement and engage all efforts in silencing the opponents.

*Slight concessions:* The power-holders provide some response to the dissidents by submitting to some of the movement demands. The power-holders may or may not recognize the opposition movement.

*Full Response:* The social movement may or may not be recognized by the power-holders as a legitimate form of expression, but demands are largely met. All movement objectives may not be completely met, but the power-holders agree to negotiate and establish a settlement between the movement and the power-holders.

**The second criterion for a successful social movement is**

**sustainability.** This assessment will evaluate the different levels of participation in the movement and the degree of sustained participation. The level of sustainability will be divided into four categories: *persistence*, *abeyance*, *waning participation* and *disengagement*.

*Persistence:* Movement continues and also grows stronger, either by attracting greater number of participants or increased available resources.

*Abeyance:* Movement still exists but is temporarily at a halt. In a waiting period in order for the movement for continue under more preferable conditions. Allowing undesirable conditions to pass or waiting to reorganize movement.

*Waning Participation:* Movement is still active, but participants are decreasing. Movement is struggling to keep motivating participants to act.

*Disengagement:* Movement has either publicly announced its loss or movement activity has almost completely stopped. A small group of individuals are still active members, while most members have already disengaged with the movement. Only a few number of participants remain.

A sustained movement not only needs to maintain participants' interest and motivation and create a strong sense of value in the movement outcome, but it must also maximize movement membership. It is only with a large movement membership that a social movement can exert the power of the masses. A large membership provides the broad support base for the social movement, the necessary networks to transfer information and resources, and more. As Joseph Luders, a professor at Yeshiva University said, "If majorities support a movement's demands, the main task for movement activists is attracting mass attention to boost the salience of the issue and thereby encourage elected officials to respond to majoritarian preferences."<sup>25</sup> A large volume of participants can be seen as a threat to the power-holders by the movement's mass public attention. In this sense, movements that maximize their membership are powerful in forcing power-holders to grant movement's demands. A large and broad movement membership is paramount to the success of a movement.

## **On Outcome**

Since every movement has a collective objective, a movement's success should be partially distinguished by its ability to gain movement demands. It is logical to assume that the process of gaining movement objectives cannot be immediately achieved, but instead occurs over a period of time. Movement demands are often met

---

<sup>25</sup> Luders, Joseph E. 2007. Social Movements and Political Success: Civil Rights Outcomes in Public School Desegregation and Voting Rights. In *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*. Chicago, IL: Yeshiva University.

through a gradual process by gaining concessions. Some other forms of gaining movement demands include co-optation and integration.

There are several reasons for using the term “concessions” as opposed to “co-optation” as a standard for evaluating the movement’s achievements. Ronald Francisco applied Gurr and Lichbach’s (1979) complex model, “the mobilization of discontent,” for the revolutions in German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovak, and presented a similar methodological argument.<sup>26</sup> He advocated for concessions rather than co-optation for evaluation.<sup>27</sup> Francisco explained, “Co-optation is difficult to measure, but concessions can be represented in a model as a binary variable, since in any given time period a regime does or does not accept at least one dissident demand.”<sup>28</sup> Concessions are either granted or not, whereas successful co-optation is more difficult to identify. For this reason, this thesis will use “concessions” as a means of evaluating movement progress in achieving objectives.

There are many specific methodological and conceptual problems in assessing movement success. The concept of “success” is understated and frequently ignored in social movement literature. Many theorists try to gauge the impact of certain factors and their influence on movement success without first defining what success means. Since the purpose behind movements is to reach a desired outcome, “success” becomes a crucial concept in the study and evaluation of social movements. However, consensus and identification of success is difficult, and some scholars even questioned if it is possible. As Edwin Amenta explained, efforts to reach an

---

<sup>26</sup> Ronald A. Francisco, "Theories of Protest and the Revolutions of 1989," *American Journal of Political Science* 37, no. 3 (1993):p 663

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

agreement on “success” is more difficult than other concepts that movement scholars have addressed, such as resource mobilization, participation, or collective identity.<sup>29</sup> In general, the usage of the word “success” is highly subjective. In order to evaluate movement outcomes, “success” is an unavoidable term that must be discussed, understood, and defined.

There are also many methodological issues in evaluating movement success and outcome. Measuring the outcomes of the social movement can be a difficult and challenging task, due to the inherent complexity in identifying the causes for social movements. Marco Giugni, a professor at University of Geneva, explained that the biggest problem in evaluating movement outcomes is “to establish a causal relationship between a series of events that we can reasonably classify as social movement actions and an observed change in society, be it minor or fundamental, durable or temporary.”<sup>30</sup> Whether the participant of a movement is able to create an impact is one issue, and whether his or her impact is able to create a causal effect is another issue. Causal arguments are very complex, making the process of evaluating outcomes more difficult. This thesis will seek to evaluate and identify the possible causal relation between actions and results, in order to gain a clear understanding of how the outcome was developed.

The causal argument relating action to result is important because it is possible that some results were unexpected. Identifying the causal relation between

---

<sup>29</sup> Edwin Amenta, *When Movements Matter: The Townsend Plan and the Rise of Social Security* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006).

<sup>30</sup> Marco G. Giugni, "Was It Worth the Effort? The Outcomes and Consequences of Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24(1998),p 373.

action and result will help indicate whether a result was unintentional.<sup>31</sup> As I evaluate the movement successes and failures in modern Iran, I will assess each movement based on the overall outcome, even if certain results were unintended. I will take into account of unintentional consequences and attempt to provide an understanding of such a scenario. Referencing back to the causal relationship model, an outcome is predetermined by the set of decisions made in the first place. Therefore, in my evaluation on the movement outcome, I will not discriminate against unintended scenarios, but will instead discuss the reasons for their occurrence.

In terms of defining the movement objective, there are many significant considerations that require attention. For example, it is possible that a movement had an objective to change the situation Y and to achieve goal X. Once the movement develops, the power-holders – who may be the government – may make serious considerations in providing concessions to the movement. If power-holders do decide to give a concession to the movement, the situation at Y would be changed, but perhaps this would not reach X – the goal of the movement. This scenario illustrates the several degrees of objective achievement. It is possible that a movement was capable of creating influence and change that would further their goals, but it did not necessarily reach its final objective. If such an occasion does arise during my evaluation of the three social movements in Iran, I will term the attainment of objectives as *slight concessions*, in between *full concessions* and *no response*.

Social movement objectives differ in nature and degree of change. Some movements may be seeking short-term and low cost goals, while others may be

---

<sup>31</sup> Marco Giugni, *Social Protest and Policy Change: Ecology, Anti-Nuclear, and Peace Movements in Comparative Perspective* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004).p 31.

seeking long-term and highly political objectives. Roberta Ash points out that every movement will have to consider three aspects when setting their objectives: single or multiple demands, radical or non-radical demands, and influencing or replacing the elites.<sup>32</sup> In addition, movement objectives are not fixed or permanent, and it is possible for a movement to change its objectives defined at the outset. Some movement leaders may attempt to sustain the movement by changing goals or internal organization, in order to maintain active membership and commitment.<sup>33</sup> In some situations, a leader may lower his or her expectations or call for smaller movement demands in order to achieve a more realistic goal. Ash develops this further and explains that movements with more conservative objectives will have a higher chance of success compared to movements that are seeking multiple, radical, and elite replacing objectives. Movements that are realistic in perspective, and demand for reasonable changes, are more likely to achieve what they had targeted.

Social movements may not always be aimed at pursuing changes, but could perhaps be aimed at preventing changes from occurring. Kriesi identified this prospect when analyzing possible movement impacts and outcomes.<sup>34</sup> He created the term “reactive effects” to describe the “prevention of new disadvantages” and “proactive effects” as the “introduction of new advantages.”<sup>35</sup> Therefore, movement objectives can be a case of prevention or a case of achievement. It is worthwhile to identify the “preventive” or “reactive” nature of the movement at the outset, because

---

<sup>32</sup> Roberta Ash Mayer N. Zald, "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change," *Social Forces* 44, no. 3 (1966).p 336.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Hanspeter Kriesi, *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*, vol. 5 (University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

---

as sociopolitical circumstances change, the nature of a movement may fluctuate between a preventive' movement and a reactive movement. When this occurs, movement objectives tend to change as well since the nature of the movement has been changed.

A major concern in evaluating movement objective attainment is the initial identification of social movements. The lack of primary sources and empirical data makes it difficult to conclude whether certain movements are actually sub-movements, and therefore whether they should or should not be classified as independent movements. In Iran, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was a reform movement that embodied several "sub-movements," such as the student movement, women's movement, and more, all united upon the goal of changing the country. Although each "sub-movement" is also a social movement of its own, the lack of literature and sources on such movements makes it difficult to analyze them. Also, each "sub-movement" recognized itself as a part of the larger movement, such as the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad. This hierarchical structure of social movement is very common. For this thesis, I will be focusing on the larger movement that encompasses these various "sub-movements," but will take into account any major activities performed by these "sub-movements."

Another challenge is the assessment of movements with no concrete objectives. Many leaders of newly constructed movements try to gain widespread constituency by making a grand appeal, and they postpone publicizing any specifics regarding their intentions. After capturing a broad base of movement actors, movement leaders will often narrow down and re-define the movement's original objectives. To avoid

movement factionalism, leaders may not reveal specifics of movement objectives until movement has become more mature, therefore movement objectives may remain unclear for the majority of the time. In evaluating movement objectives in this thesis, there will be discussions of setting movement objectives and the consequences of achieving such objectives.

## **On Sustainability**

Sustainability is a defining characteristic of social movements, but it has not been well explored in the field of social movements. Tarrow's definition of a social movement is the "sustained and coordinated collectivities that engage in contentious collective action."<sup>36</sup> A social movement is not an episodic eruption of a collective discontent, but is instead a prolonged struggle among a united group of individuals trying to advance their goals. It must be able to sustain itself in order to achieve the movement's objectives. Furthermore, Jack M. Balkin, a law professor at Yale University, explained that even if a movement was able to achieve its goals but could not sustain its popular support, there would be no lasting victory.<sup>37</sup>

Sustainability has a strong connection to movement success. The meaning of sustainability for this thesis is the number of actively participating movement members and the degree of collective action throughout the movement. William A. Gamson explains the importance of sustainability as one of his criterion for movement success. He specifies the need to observe how opponents or new members are recruited and mobilized in a movement. Gamson's contribution to the discussion of

---

<sup>36</sup> Sidney G. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>37</sup> Jack M. Balkin, "How Social Movements Change (or Fail to Change) the Constitution: The Case of the New Departure," *Suffolk University Law Review* XXXIX, no. 27 (2005), p 28.

movement success will be more thoroughly discussed in the section on the meaning of success. Generally, incorporating new members does not translate directly into a successful movement. In “The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups,” Mancur Olson explained in his rational choice theory that a large movement membership can have detrimental effects on the overall movement.<sup>38</sup> With a larger pool of people, Olsen explained, there is also a greater possibility for people to free ride.<sup>39</sup>

To some extent, Olsen’s discussion of the negative effects of a large movement membership is a plausible argument. He argues that a large movement membership can lead to poor movement management and an inability to effectively mobilize resources.<sup>40</sup> In addition, he notes that rational actors act according to cost and benefit analysis, and that can encourage people to free ride.<sup>41</sup> Following Olson’s line of argument, rational movement actors are unlikely to take risk to achieve movement goals. Therefore, his argument has failed to explain why certain movement actors still act even if it requires them to take significant risks.

For people to participate in a movement, they must identify themselves with the cause in order to be motivated to join the movement. Participation from the individual level looks closely at the initial engagement activity. This concerns the first stage of engagement, transforming an individual into a member of the social movement. This initial engagement is crucial, since it reflects the individual’s

---

<sup>38</sup> Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, 2nd ed. (Harvard University Press, 1971).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

willingness to be identified with the movement causes. Whether he or she will continue to actively participate in the movement is another issue. Since movements occur over a period of time, during this time members may alter their level of participation. Their interest and commitment to the movement objectives may wane and they may decide to disengage.

The degree of individual participation in a social movement can vary. Catherine Corrigan-Brown identifies four trajectories of individual participation, ranking from the strongest to weakest degree of participation: persistence, transfer, abeyance, and disengagement.<sup>42</sup> Corrigan-Brown's four trajectories of individual participation are some of the common stages of actors' participation in social movements. However, Corrigan-Brown's four stages of individual participation seem to lack a crucial stage on individual participation. Abeyance indicates that actors are not mobilized, but still recognize themselves as movement actors. If actors are at the stage of abeyance, and collective action reappears, then actors' participation will change from "abeyance" to "persistence," passing through "transfer." In some cases, transferring a movement actor from one movement to an opposition movement could be more detrimental than abeyance. Corrigan-Brown has identified some of the necessary stages of movement actor participation, but the ranking in actor's degree of participation does not take into account all possible scenarios.

It is in a movement's general interest to recruit as many participants as possible. If a movement was initiated and supported by individuals of a certain social

---

<sup>42</sup> Catherine Corrigan-Brown, "Staying in or Getting Out? Predicting Sustained Participation or Disengagement from Two Social Movements," in *American Sociological Association* (Montreal Convention Center 2006).

status, other social movements would find a way to compete. It is therefore in the movement's best interest to win over "both elite and popular opinion."<sup>43</sup> As mentioned earlier, the initial participation from individuals is important, and after that, the second most important emphasis is on sustaining member participation. Corrigan-Brown identified the possibility of members transferring their participation to other movements; it is therefore essential that a movement should sustain members' participation in the same movement.<sup>44</sup>

When a movement takes off, its participants hold expectations of gaining concessions or achieving group objectives. If this does not happen, there can be feelings of hopelessness and failure, signaling the possible downfall of a movement. When movements begin to gain wider recognition, they are often challenged by the power-holders seeking to destroy the movement through tools such as repression. Such a stage is usually a focal point in determining whether the movement is able to continue or not. It is possible for a successful movement to lose supporters during this time and sustain itself, but it is important to focus on the remaining participants and strategies to regain supporters.

### **The relationship between "outcome" and "sustainability"**

In the field of social psychology, the "value-expectancy" theory best illustrates the relationship between the two-assessment criterion: objective attainment and movement sustainability. Martin Fishbein created the value-expectancy theory, and in the theory, he argued that individual's expectancy of success was correlated to the

---

<sup>43</sup> Balkin, "How Social Movements Change (or Fail to Change) the Constitution: The Case of the New Departure."

<sup>44</sup> Corrigan-Brown, "Staying in or Getting Out? Predicting Sustained Participation or Disengagement from Two Social Movements."

value of the movement success.<sup>45</sup> Before discussing the relationship between value of movement success and expectations from members, the role of “motivation” in the “value-expectancy” model must be explained.

An individual’s motivation to participate in a movement is strongly influenced by the degree of concessions attained by the movement. In discussing an actor’s motivation to participate in a movement, John Atkinson, an American psychologist of human behavior, defined three variables: *motive, expectancy, and incentive*.<sup>46</sup> Each of the three variables, Atkinson argues, influences an individual’s motivation and provides the backbone of the “value-expectancy” model. In the model, individuals develop a belief according to existing information. Once the belief is developed, the participant in the movement assigns a defined “value” for their belief. As a result, an expectation is created based on calculating the “values” of multiple beliefs. In general, this theory describes that individuals’ attitudes are based on beliefs and values.<sup>47</sup>

The value-expectation theory illustrates a strong connection between expectation, value, mobilization, and movement success. As Karen Rasler describes, “Value-expectancy models assert that people will rebel if they become convinced that dissent will achieve the collective good.”<sup>48</sup> Expectations can change after new information is introduced. For example, if a movement actor highly values the goals of one certain movement in comparison to another movement, he or she might

---

<sup>45</sup> Dolores Albarracín Icek Ajzen, "Predicting and Changing Behavior: A Reasoned Action Approach," in *Prediction and Change of Health Behavior: Applying the Reasoned Action Approach*, ed. Icek Ajzen Martin Fishbein, Robert C. Hornik (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2007).p 3.

<sup>46</sup> John W. Atkinson, "Motivational Determinants of Risk-Taking Behavior," *Psychological review* 64, no. 6 (1957).p 360.

<sup>47</sup> Martin Fishbein, "An Investigation of Relationships between Beliefs About an Object and the Attitude toward That Object," *Human Relations* 16(1963).p. 235

<sup>48</sup> Karen Rasler, "Concessions, Repression, and Political Protest in the Iranian Revolution," *American Sociological Review* 61, no. 1 (1996).

therefore decide to participate in the former movement. Actors decide to participate and mobilize expecting to achieve their valued goals. The attainment of movement concessions can further increase an actor's expectations of achieving the movement goal, further encouraging his or her decision to mobilize.

It is also possible that some movements that are less capable of sustaining member participation will switch goals in order to best match the interests of their actors. Roberta Ash explains that in order to sustain the movement, movement leaders may take on three possible actions: goal transformation, a shift to organizational maintenance, and oligarchization.<sup>49</sup> Ash's explanation combined with the value-expectancy model creates a fuller picture of how movement outcomes and sustainability have an inherent relationship. The value-expectancy model shows how gaining concessions is a very obvious factor that influences interest, because it allows individuals to recognize that their actions are effectively gaining some level of movement demands. However, if movement demands are too broad and unrealistic, leaders may redefine goals to be more conservative in order to distill a feeling of satisfaction to movement actors. If the amount of satisfaction exceeds "activation motivation" in Gamson's terminology, then there is a strong likelihood that the movement will continue to grow, become more powerful and succeed in reaching its objectives.

### **The meaning of success**

Relating movement success to movement outcome may seem to be a logical and well-established relationship, but in fact, the connection has lacked attention in

---

<sup>49</sup> Mayer N. Zald and Roberta Ash, "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change," *Social Forces* 44, no. 3 (1966).p 332.

the field of social movements. There is a need to improve the present theoretical and conceptual arguments on movement outcomes and mobilization by developing a foundation for assessing and evaluating movement success and exploring the broader implications of movement success in social movement literature. The challenge to establish a framework for evaluating movement success is further complicated by social movement analysts' tendency to specialize the study of social movements by type and region. Therefore, definitions of movement success for certain movement theorists may differ. This is especially true for theorists on revolutions as well as social movement theorists that study more general movements, such as gay and labor movements.<sup>50</sup>

Social movement analysts tend to have a different focus compared to analysts on revolutions. Social movement analysts often focus on the origins, organization, and social foundations of the movement. In contrast, analysts of revolutions put a greater emphasis on the outcomes and agency.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, analysts of social movements and revolutionary movements focus on opposite aspects of movement development. Since this paper will analyze two social movements (2<sup>nd</sup> of Khoradad and the Green Movement) and a revolution (Islamic Revolution of 1979), I have developed a unique typology in an effort to bridge the two perspectives on analyzing different types of social movements as well as revolutions.

---

<sup>50</sup> Recalling from the first section of this chapter, a revolutionary movement *is* a social movement. Some forms of social movements include: reform movements, revolutionary movements, revivalist movements, resistance movements, utopian movements, and more.

<sup>51</sup> Alan S. Zuckerman Mark Irving Lichbach, *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).p 143.

My typology for evaluating movement success stems from my analysis of various social movement scholars. There are very few scholars specializing in the study of movement outcomes, but amongst the few, William A. Gamson and Marco Giugni's analysis of social movement outcomes deeply influenced my perspectives on evaluating movement success and outcomes. I will explain their contributions in the development of my typology in the following section.

### *William A. Gamson*

In "The Strategy of Social Protest," William A. Gamson comes very close to developing a framework for addressing the relationship between different organizational variables and the possibility for a successful social movement.<sup>52</sup> He constructs an approach for measuring movement success. A movement's success, he says, can be measured through a set of outcomes: "the acceptance of challengers as legitimate claimants, and the obtaining of new advantages for constituents."<sup>53</sup>

The first criterion for movement success concerns the ability of the movement to project its power on to the power-holders and win *acceptance* as a legitimate entity.<sup>54</sup> For the power-holders to accept the interest groups as a legitimate entity, the challengers are considered by the power-holders as a "valid spokesman for a legitimate set of interests."<sup>55</sup> By acceptance, Gamson refers to the change in the relationship between the power-holders and the challengers from a hostile to a more

---

<sup>52</sup> William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1975).p 63.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.p 66.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas R. Rochon and Daniel A. Mazmanian, "Social Movements and the Policy Process," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 528(1993).

<sup>55</sup> Giugni, "Was It Worth the Effort? The Outcomes and Consequences of Movements."p 376.

favorable relationship.<sup>56</sup> Gamson identifies four stages of “acceptance” in the relationship between power-holders and challengers: *consultation, negotiation, formal recognition, and inclusion*.<sup>57</sup> The final stage of acceptance, *inclusion*, is when challengers are included in the governmental structure.<sup>58</sup> For Gamson, the second criterion in assessing movement success was *gaining new advantages*. There are many degrees in gaining new advantages, but Gamson only specified two categories: full or none. From Gamson’s two characteristics of success—gaining acceptance and new advantages—he has identified four possible movement outcomes. He lists them as: full response, co-optation, preemption and collapse.<sup>59</sup> The following is Gamson’s illustration of his framework on assessing movement success:

**Figure 1.2 – William A. Gamson’s “Outcome of Resolved Challenges”**

		Acceptance	
		Full	None
New Advantages	Many	Full Response	Preemption
	None	Co-optation	Collapse

William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*, p 32

Gamson’s framework for measuring success, based on assessing the movement’s ability to project its power on to the power-holders and win acceptance as a legitimate identity, provides a solid basis for the creation of my framework. In

<sup>56</sup> Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*.p 31.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.p 32.

<sup>59</sup> Steven M. Beuchler, "The Strange Career of Strain and Breakdown Theories of Collective Action," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. Sarah Anne Soule David A. Snow, Hanspeter Kriesi (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004).

---

relation to the social movement typology (Figure 1.1), Gamson's four degrees of acceptance and two levels of gaining new advantages were implicitly applied in the "objective attainment" criterion of the social movement typology. However, Gamson's framework for movement analysis focuses predominately on assessing movement outcomes. In other words, his two criterion addresses two fundamental questions on potentially successful movements: What has been changed, and to what degree has it been changed? The former question was explicitly answered by assessing whether there were "new advantages" and whether the movement has gained "acceptance." The latter question was implicitly answered by categorizing the change in different degrees.

While Gamson has made major contributions in the study of social movements, serious criticisms remain regarding his methodological and theoretical approach. Many later theorists followed his framework on evaluating a movement's success, but with additional criteria. Gamson's two evaluating criteria, ability for the movement to project their power on to the power-holders and win acceptance as a legitimate identity, are considered as the classic determinants for a successful movement, but they are overly simplistic. His lack of consideration for other evaluating criteria calls for a deeper examination.

In addition, Gamson's two criteria for a successful movement did not specifically assess on the organization or structure of the movement itself. Comparing Gamson's framework with the social movement typology presented earlier in this chapter, the typology in this thesis has incorporated "sustainability," a variable

concerning the development of the movement. Thus, the variable “sustainability” relates the development of the movement with the movements’ outcomes.

Furthermore, Gamsons’ framework was only applicable for social movements in democratic societies. In non-democratic societies, the power-holders are less likely to allow any forms of collective action, thus the relationship between power-holders and challengers are extremely different in a non-democratic context. Gamson makes it specific that his research focuses on social movements in American politics, where interest groups are more likely to be able to challenge any government policies through institutional and non-institutional means. Gamson contends, “In the pluralist image of American society, the political system is relatively open, offering access at many points for effective non-violent protest and efforts at change.”<sup>60</sup> For that reason, Gamson asserts that violence may not be effective for social groups challenging the government in a democratic setting.<sup>61</sup>

### *Paul Burstein*

Paul Burstein developed a similar approach to measuring the success of social movements, but argued the need to incorporate public opinion and social values in the assessment of social movement outcomes, especially in the form of public policy.<sup>62</sup> In “The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy,” Paul Burstein conducts an extensive review on the literature of public policy and suggests that in addressing policy change, there is a lack of emphasis on the importance of public opinion.<sup>63</sup> For

---

<sup>60</sup> Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*.p 73.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Paul Burstein, "The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda " *Political Research Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (2003).

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.p 30.

Burstein, this was a pressing issue because public opinion can strongly influence public policy.<sup>64</sup> In other words, since social movements take an important role in affecting public opinion, *successful social movements* are defined by its ability to gain public sympathy, affect public opinion and create changes in public policy.<sup>65</sup>

Even though Burstein's focus was primarily on social movements with the goal in creating policy change, his identification on the relationship between public opinion and policy change strongly applies to social movements with various movement objectives. If a movement makes the public care about the issue and attract a large number of members--demonstrating the resource mobilization approach whereby members are a key resource for a movement--this would mean that the movement has become successful.<sup>66</sup>

Burstein's perspective on public opinion and public policy is only true for democratic governments, where challengers have more of an opportunity to communicate to the public and attract them to join their collective cause. In non-democratic societies, disseminating information and educating the public to become aware, and to inspire them to become more engaged in the topic is challenging and extremely difficult. Moreover, as Burstein said, "Democratic governments often do what their citizens wants, and they are especially likely to do so when an issue is important to the public and its wishes are clear."<sup>67</sup> His rationale was based on a responsive government accountable to its citizens.

---

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Giugni, *Social Protest and Policy Change: Ecology, Anti-Nuclear, and Peace Movements in Comparative Perspective*.p 6.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Burstein, "The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda ".

## *Marco Guigni*

Marco Giugni, author of “Social Protest and Policy Change,” agrees with Burstein on the need to emphasize on public opinion, and also pays tribute to Gamson for his contribution in developing an approach for understanding movement success. Giugni does not offer a framework or any definitions on what constitutes as a successful social movement, but he develops a strong argument on the need to look at policy change through social movements, political opportunity structures and public opinion.<sup>68</sup> His method of inquiry into studying social movements is to observe the development of social movements through its external, but also internal conditions, a point that he expanded from Tilly’s “The problem of identifying social movement outcomes.”<sup>69</sup>

Even though Tilly argues that movement outcomes often completely different from demands and objectives made at the outset of the movement, Giugni offers a detailed explanation on the reasons why evaluation of movement outcomes is necessary and analysis on movement success and failure is still relevant and important in studying social movements. A major point of argument is that causal relationships are only clear if movement outcomes are well studied and researched. Currently, in the field of social movement literature, there are gaps on the understanding of movement outcomes and consequences. Therefore, if more was developed and researched in the scant field of movement outcomes, then movement scholars may

---

<sup>68</sup> Giugni, *Social Protest and Policy Change: Ecology, Anti-Nuclear, and Peace Movements in Comparative Perspective*.p 9.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.p 33.

have a deeper understanding on how the interplay of movement actions affects broader cultural and political issues.

Gamson, Burstein and Giugni different perspectives on what are successful social movements, but all agreed on the need of studying movement outcomes. As for the development of the social movement typology in this chapter, the framework takes into account all three perspectives offered by the three scholars, but changed according to the political and cultural setting in Iran. Both Gamson and Burstein's approach to assess movements placed an assumption on the government's willingness to respond to public's concern. In a non-democratic society, heavy suppression forces were often the case in quieting the masses of protests. Therefore, the developed typology in this chapter incorporated Gamson, Burstein and Giugni's perspectives on social movement outcomes and success, but further expanded into a framework that can be applied for movements in an Iranian setting.

### **Proposed Method on Studying Social Movements in Iran**

Most of the existing social movement literature focuses only on evaluating movements that are in a politically democratic and economically developed setting. Moreover, the inadequate literature on studying social movement outcomes further complicates the goal of this thesis. For these reasons, the study of social movements in Iran requires an original framework to evaluate social movement success and a new approach to study the development of social movements appropriate for the Iranian political setting. The framework for assessing the success of Iranian social movements was developed earlier in this chapter, and now I will discuss the proposed method for studying social movements in Iran.

In an attempt to address the problem of agency and structural imbalance in explaining social movements, I will adopt three existing social movement theories to assess movements in Iran. Resource mobilization theory, which emphasizes the leader's management and coordination of movement resources, will be used to evaluate movement agency.<sup>70</sup> Political opportunity theory, which argues that structural or "external" conditions dictate a movement's development path, will provide the structural point of view for assessing social movements.<sup>71</sup> However, both theories assume that all individuals are rational beings, but in some cases, individuals are less rational and act according to various personal interests and beliefs. Therefore, new social movement theorists, such as Hank Johnston and Joseph R. Gusfield, presents a view based on movement identity and ideology that will explain actors' non-economic incentives in pursuing collective action.<sup>72</sup>

## **Resource Mobilization Theory**

The resource mobilization theory has been the predominant theory in the study of collective action. The reasoning behind this theory lies in the assumption that rational actors, through formal organization, allocate its resources to effectively mobilize and achieve their set of goals. This theory specifies that the key factor in creating successful and sustainable movements are through acquiring resources and mobilizing people to achieve movement objectives. Resources can be in various

---

<sup>70</sup> John D. McCarthy & Mayer N. Zald, *Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory* (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers from Social Movements in an Organizational Society, 1987).p 121

<sup>71</sup> Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*; Hank Johnston Enrique Larana, Joseph R. Gusfield, "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements," in *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, ed. Hank Johnston Enrique Larana, Joseph R. Gusfield (Temple University, 1994).p 18.

<sup>72</sup> Enrique Larana, "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements."

forms, such as money, property, access to media, people and more.<sup>73</sup> Therefore, the resource mobilization theory would assume that economic and political resources are necessary in making a movement successful.

According to this theory, the relationship between the media, wealth and other resources and social movements is a determinant factor in their success. However, even if a movement had an abundance of resources, the focus remains on how the movement manages, employs and distributes the resources. As Bob Edwards and John D. McCarthy said, “The simple availability of resources is not sufficient: coordination and strategic effort is typically required in order to convert available pools of individually held resources into collective resources in order that they can help enable collective action.”<sup>74</sup> Agency, in resource mobilization theory is of crucial importance, because leaders and actors are both involved in acquiring and organizing resources to further movement objectives.

## **Political Opportunity Structure Theory**

Also known as the political process structure, the political opportunity theory argues that outside opportunities can help or hurt a movement’s mobilization. Doug McAdam was able to establish this theory through analyzing the Civil Rights Movement.<sup>75</sup> McAdam saw great value in the rational choice theory and resource mobilization approach, but he considered them to be “deficient in their approach to

---

<sup>73</sup> Diana Kendall, *Sociology in Our Times: The Essentials* (Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2007).p 556.

<sup>74</sup> Andrew W. Martin, "Resources for Success: Social Movements, Strategic Resource Allocation, and Union Organizing Outcomes," *Social Problems* 55, no. 4 (2008).p 503.

<sup>75</sup> Michael Armato and Neal Caren, "Mobilizing the Single Case Study: Doug Mcadam's Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970," *Qualitative Sociology* 25, no. 1 (2002).p 93.

social movements.”<sup>76</sup> He does not reject them, but contends to add another dimension to the resource mobilization and rational choice approach. McAdam explains the possibility for once excluded groups to make a return and bring a structural change to the movement when the opportunity is right.

This theory emphasizes on the importance of political opportunities, where surrounding conditions affects movement actors’ decisions. . Political opportunities are described as “any event or broad social process that serves to undermine the calculations and assumptions on which the political establishment is structured.”<sup>77</sup> Large demographic shifts, deep unemployment issues, wars, and industrialization are all possible examples of political opportunities, whereby the political status quo changes, and creates a shift in the opportunity structure. It is during these moments when groups of individuals could take advantage of the instability of the political system and begin mobilization.

## **New Social Movement Theory**

A new paradigm, known as the new social movement theory emerged largely due to the inadequacies of the classical Marxism approach for analyzing collective action. The Marxist understanding elevated the significance of proletarian revolutions in the sphere of production and misrepresented the significance of other forms of social protest.<sup>78</sup> New social movement theorists identify non-economically related factors, such as ideology and culture, as reasons for collective action. This approach is mainly concerned with movements that do not heavily relate to “politics

---

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Kate Nash, "Introduction," in *Readings in Contemporary Political Sociology* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2000).

at the level of the state, but which contest cultural conflicts in civil society.”<sup>79</sup> The women’s movement, gay rights movement, and peace movements are a few of the many examples classified as new social movements.

For new social movement theorists, collective identity and movement ideology influence individuals to mobilize and take action. As Hank Johnston described a common feature of new social movements mobilization is “nonviolence and civil disobedience that, while often challenging dominant norms of conduct through dramatic display, draw equally on strategies influenced by Gandhi, Thoreau, and Kropotkin.”<sup>80</sup> New social movements, unlike traditional movement theories, focus on establishing movement identities or ideologies to maintain a movement unity, sustainability and cohesion. Resource mobilization and political opportunity assume that individuals act rationally, but in many cases, individuals do not. Therefore, new social movement theories seek to answer this by referring to collective identity, ideology and culture.

Alberto Melucci introduced the term “new social movement” into the sociological lexicon in 1980.<sup>81</sup> He argued that in the post-modern society, new forms of societal pressures and controls are born and will involve the expression of identity. Symbolic codes, identity claims and personal expression are all ways of expressing identity. Therefore, Melucci’s unique approach accentuated the role of a collective identity. In his sense, collective identity unites a group of individuals who share an identity and have similar expectations of society.

---

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.p 126

<sup>80</sup> Enrique Larana, "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements."p 8.

<sup>81</sup> Alberto Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).p 150.

The basis of new social movement theory is the understanding of a collective identity expressed in various forms. Melucci described the need to break away from classical theories, because, “collective action itself produces orientations and meanings which actors are able to recognize.”<sup>82</sup> Much of identity formation relates back to cultural factors. The use of culture as a framework in analyzing social movements may not be a revolutionary idea, but many characteristics of culture hold common themes with social movements. Eric Selbin explained that “it is imperative that agents and the world they manufacture, the culture they create, be included in any serious analysis of revolution.”<sup>83</sup> Bringing people and culture back into focus is a serious task, but it can similarly be argued that using culture as a factor can make the approach too broad.

Collective identity can be used to unify a group of individuals with similar interests and can take a larger role in mobilizing individuals, making a great impact in political processes. To manipulate a new social movement, actors can strategize, modify and reinterpret the collective identity to their advantage. This understanding, illustrates how collective identities are part of movement strategies and how they can affect the outcome of the movement.

## **Conclusion**

For this thesis, the study of social movements in Iran, which is neither democratic nor economically developed country, required a new methodology on studying social movements and a new framework for studying movement success.

---

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Eric Selbin, "Revolution in the Real World: Bringing Agency Back In," in *Theorizing Revolutions*, ed. John Foran (New York: Routledge, 1997).p 120.

The new framework on studying movement success or failure was developed in the early portions of this chapter (figure 1.1). Due to the lack of social movement literature on movement outcomes and successes, I have established a different perspective on evaluating movement success. My proposed methodology was to analyze the social movements in Iran based on three social movement theories, because among all existing social movement theories, the resource mobilization theory and the political opportunity theory best reflect the agency and structural perspectives on social movements. But since both theories assume that individuals are rational actors, the theories do not provide a complete illustration on the reasons for movement success. Therefore, the new social movement theory is able to fill in the gaps between other two theories.

In the following chapter, I will explore the first test case of social movement in Iran, the Nahzat. Analysis of the Nahzat will be based on the frameworks and methodology explicated in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 2

## The Making of the Islamic Republic of Iran

1963-1979

*“I ask God Almighty that He grant success to all of you, and I proclaim to all of you that it is our duty to continue this movement until all elements of the Shah’s regime have been eliminated and we have established a Constituent Assembly based on the votes of the people and the first permanent government of the Islamic Government.”*

*-Ayatollah Khomeini, Address at Bihisht-I Zahra,  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1979<sup>84</sup>*

In the previous chapter, I developed a typology on assessing movement success based on achievement of objectives and movement sustainability. My aim in this chapter is to offer two new perspectives to the existing literature on the Iranian revolution. In most of the existing literature on Iran, political scientists have been trying to discover the causes and consequences of the Iranian revolution in 1979, and among them, only a handful of scholars have focused their research on the Nahzat movement. For this reason, my first contribution is the close evaluation of Khomeini’s movement, the Nahzat, using my framework for movement success developed in chapter 1. Based on my assessment, I have concluded that Khomeini’s movement was a successful movement. My second contribution is my interpretation of the reasons why the Nahzat was a successful movement using three predominant

---

<sup>84</sup> Hamid Algar Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, trans. Hamid Algar (Mizan Press, 1981).p 254.

social movement theories: resource mobilization theory, political opportunity structure, and new social movement theory.

On December 31<sup>st</sup> 1978, President Jimmy Carter visited Iran and toasted the Shah for his great leadership in making Iran “an island of stability” in an unstable region.<sup>85</sup> At that time, the appraisal of Iran’s stability and strong development from the West was an effort to disguise the continuous street demonstrations in Iran. A few months later, on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1979, the Pahlavi regime was overthrown and the Islamic Republic of Iran was established under *valiyat-e faqih*, the regime based on the guardianship of the jurist. The unique political regime, produced by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (24 September 1902 – 3 June 1989) and his revolutionary movement, defied the general understanding of government systems as being either a democracy or a dictatorship. In order to fully comprehend how this government functioned outside of the norms, and what conditions made this revolution possible, we must review the rise of Khomeini and the creation of his revolutionary movement, the Nahzat. The consequences of the Islamic revolution, led by the Nahzat, created an Islamic order in Iran that continues to prevail in the Iranian society today.

As observers from around the world watched the Islamic Revolution unfold, the majority of social movement scholars could not fathom the cause of the event, for Iran was believed to be a stable country. Cases of civil unrest did exist, but the monarchy possessed an abundance of resources and support from foreign countries that indicated that any opposition to the monarchy would be highly unlikely to succeed. Homa Katouzian, an Iranian professor at the University of Oxford, called

---

<sup>85</sup> "The Presidency: 1977-1981," PBS Online.

the Islamic Revolution a “puzzle” even if it was “eclipsed by the massive peaceful processions, the solidarity and virtual unanimity of the society to overthrow the state, and the blood sacrifice.”<sup>86</sup> The revolution was clearly unexpected for the majority of people.

Since the early 1960s, there were emerging signs of instability, such as the slow spreading of an anti-Shah sentiment around Iran. One of the signs of instability in the early 1960s was the anti-Shah sentiment prevalent among all classes of society, other than the elite in Iran.<sup>87</sup> Ruhollah Khomeini, unlike other religious scholars, opposed the Shi’ite doctrine on political “quietism” and insisted on the participation of Iranians in political issues.<sup>88</sup> Combined with the existing hostility against the Shah, Khomeini gained widespread popularity for his reinterpretation of political duties and acted as a focal point for those who disapproved of the Shah. In an increasingly fragile regime, Khomeini and his movement took advantage of the political opportunity and were able to direct the masses to rebel and ultimately overthrow the Shah.

## **Identifying the Movement**

The Nahzat movement brought the ultimate collapse of the monarchy, but at the beginning the Nahzat was the weakest and smallest anti-Shah organization in comparison to the nationalist and communist political organizations. The emergence of the Nahzat as the leader of the revolutionary movement was not immediate and

---

<sup>86</sup> Homa Katouzian, "The Iranian Revolution at 30: The Dialectic of State and Society," *Middle East Critique* 19, no. 1 (March 2010).

<sup>87</sup> Nikki R. Keddie, "Iranian Revolutions in Comparative Perspective," *The American Historical Review* 88, no. 3 (June 1983), p 275.

<sup>88</sup> Stephen C. Poulson, *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005), p 249.

was only possible due to the popular revolutionary ideologue that had been established during the early 1950s. This ideology, however, was not created by the Nahzat, but was rather a product of Ali Shari'ati, a prominent Islamic revolutionary, who culminated the ideology that Islam is a social and political doctrine. To understand how Shari'ati's controversial perspective was acquired and implemented into the works of the Nahzat, and how it successfully changed the traditional view of Islam, I will systematically examine the origins and development of this ideologue.

Ali Shari'ati's contribution to shaping a "religious modernist" revolutionary ideal was paramount in setting the foundations for emerging resistance movements. Shari'ati began his career of political activism through his membership with the National Resistance Movement (NRM) in Iran, but following arrest and exile to Paris in 1974, he was deeply influenced by Marxism.<sup>89</sup> Fusing his Marxist beliefs of a classless society through revolution and his insistence to reconcile modern Islam with Islamic fundamentals, he directed the people of Iran in following a revolutionary ideology, justifying the need for Shi'ite to participate in politics in order to allow Islam to establish itself in a changing sociopolitical environment. The consolidation of religion and politics by Shari'ati provided a guiding principal for the Islamic revolutionary movements that followed. As for the "religious modernist" aspect, Chehabi described it as "an intellectual endeavor to reinterpret religion so that it will no longer contradict the dominant spirit of the times in the more successful societies,

---

<sup>89</sup> Abdul Mabud Khan, *Encyclopaedia of the World Muslims* (2002: Global Vision Publishing Ho, 2001).p 61.

and accepted notions of individual rights,” meaning that religion and the modern world are not mutually exclusive.<sup>90</sup> In fact, they are potentially compatible.

Sharia’i’s affinity for Marxist ideology was not peculiar for Iranians.<sup>91</sup> From 1941-53, the educated class and many Islamic and professional associations were largely secular with a strong Marxist ideology. During this period of popular Marxist ideology, Taqlani and Bazargan, who would later establish the Liberation Movement of Iran, advocated for Islamic modernism, a combination of the Marxist and Islamic discourse interpreted by Sharia’i.<sup>92</sup> Only after the 1953 coup d’etat that led to the collapse of the NRM, the Liberation Movement of Iran (LMI) - directed by previous members of the NRM, such as Sharia’i, Bazargan and Taliqani - was established underground and adopted Sharia’i’s revolutionary ideal as the pillar of the LMI.<sup>93</sup>

### *The Liberation Movement in Iran (LMI)*

The LMI and the Nahzat were two completely separate political groups, with the LMI as one of the oldest continuously functioning political groups in Iran.<sup>94</sup> The four principles that define the LMI illustrate the movement’s combination of religious modernist elements as well as traditional Islam, a mixture of ideology that made a grand appeal to all segments of the Iranian society. In order to achieve freedom in Iran, the LMI proposed that individuals must act with a sense of religious duty. A speech by Bazargan summarized the four major principles of the LMI. The first

---

<sup>90</sup> Houchang E. Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran* (London: Cornell University Press, 1990).p 26.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Forough Jahanbakhsh, *Islam, Democracy and Religious Modernism in Iran (1953-2000): From Bazargan to Soroush* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).p 86.

<sup>93</sup> Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran*.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.p 2.

principle, he said, was to “recognize freedom as a primary divine gift and its achievement and keeping are for us an Islamic tradition and a hallmark of Shi’ism.”<sup>95</sup> The second principle was to respect other’s opinions and not to project themselves as a superior to others.<sup>96</sup> The third principle of the LMI set the movement apart from the Nahzat movement. Bazargan insisted on abiding by the Iranian Constitution, including its “basic principles, namely the freedom of thought, press, and reunions, the independence of judges, the separation of powers, and finally honest elections.”<sup>97</sup> Bazargan’s fourth and last principle of the LMI was to support Mosaddeq in the 1953 coup d’etat.<sup>98</sup> This principle changed after Mosaddeq was deposed as prime minister. These four principles appealed to both modern and traditional Iranians, which increased the movement’s support base.

The structure of the LMI as a political party, instead of a political or religious movement, impelled LMI to conform to the legal boundaries set forth by the Shah. Although oppositional voices have seldom been allowed in the history of Iran and in the LMI, the LMI used such voices to initiate a revolutionary ideology but the monarchy soon ended their operation. The Shah officially banned all political opposition parties in 1965, forcing the LMI to operate underground or abroad.<sup>99</sup> Conversely, the Nahzat was easily able to operate under the Shah since it was structured as a political religious movement, rather than as a party regulated by the monarchy. Despite the suspension of the LMI, the LMI played a significant role in manifesting a “religious modernist” revolutionary ideology in an authoritarian setting,

---

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.p 158.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran*.p 65.

which laid the foundations for Khomeini's revolutionary movement in the late 1960s.<sup>100</sup>

Despite constructing a revolutionary ideology that combined elements of modernity and Islam, the LMI struggled to maintain an identity that reflected both values. The leaders of the LMI were all nationalists and Shi'ites, but in terms of the group identity, the Islamic orientation was more prominent than the nationalist orientation. Bazargan, Taleqani, and Sahabi were more concerned about the party's stance on religious issues; whereas, Ata'i, Radnia and Sami'i were more attentive to nationalist issues.<sup>101</sup> From the beginning, the divide in interests among the LMI members set a difficult challenge for the LMI in maintaining unity. For the Nahzat, the issue on heterogeneity of opinions was less significant, since most of the Nahzat members were students or supporters of Khomeini. Khomeini set the character of the Nahzat movement and shaped the movement's ideology; others merely followed him.

LMI revitalized the concept of Islamic modernism, but the restricted boundaries on political parties and the increasingly repressive conditions in Iran limited the LMI from continuing its efforts of expanding its revolutionary ideology. Instead, the Nahzat took advantage of the revolutionary momentum established by the LMI and staged its popular uprising in 1963.<sup>102</sup> As Chehabi explained, LMI made a remarkable achievement in revitalizing religion, and without the efforts of the LMI, Khomeini may have never been able to successfully incorporate diverse elements of

---

<sup>100</sup> Jahanbakhsh, *Islam, Democracy and Religious Modernism in Iran (1953-2000): From Bazargan to Soroush*.p65

<sup>101</sup> Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran*.p160.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

Iranian society together.<sup>103</sup> Khomeini said, “there could be no motivation other than religious belief and the tenets of Islam...for [the Nahzat], Islam was the basic motivation of our social and political activism.”<sup>104</sup> Therefore, the LMI had laid the groundwork for Khomeini to return and instigate a new revolutionary ideology.

The Liberation Movement of Iran had the organizational experience and intellectual backing to attract a large support base. It carried forth the ideals of the religious modernists’ view of an Islamic Republic, and it was established much earlier than Khomeini’s movement. Despite its early establishment, the movement struggled to sustain members and remain active. Moreover, the LMI was repeatedly immobilized each time that Bazargan and the other leaders were arrested by the government.<sup>105</sup> On the other hand, Khomeini’s movement, identified as Nahzat, began to gather momentum, taking over a wider constituency than the LMI.

### *Khomeini’s movement: Nahzat*

Ruhollah Khomeini was deeply committed to his religious beliefs and became a lecturer and educator in Najaf and Qom seminaries in the early 1930s.<sup>106</sup> As a teacher in Qom, he was originally opposed by the primary religious figure, Ayatollah Seyyed Hossein Borujerdi (1875-1961), for taking on a political agenda within the religious community. In 1945, Borujerdi succeeded Sayyid Abul Hassan Isfahani’s role as the *marja-i taqlid*, translated as “source of imitation and follow,” the key religious figure in leading religious affairs in Iran who provided guidance to the

---

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Jahanbakhsh, *Islam, Democracy and Religious Modernism in Iran (1953-2000): From Bazargan to Soroush*. p 207

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.p 83.

<sup>106</sup> Baqer Moin, *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah, Volume 1999* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2000).p 29.

diverse views of the Shi'ism in Iran.<sup>107</sup> As the twelfth Shi'a *marja*, Borujirdi consolidated the diversified Shi'ite teachings and provided the followers of Shi'ite Islam a source of imitation. Borujirdi, unlike Khomeini, led the religious community by teaching Shi'ites the policy of quietism by separating religion from politics and remain apolitical, a point that Khomeini strongly disapproved of.

Khomeini's interpretation of politics and Islam broke away from traditional religious understanding on quietism by advocating for political action. Borujirdi insisted on separating religion and politics, and he remained apolitical. But in contrast to the traditional practice of a *marja*, he initiated an agreement with Muhammad Reza Shah stipulating that the clergy would not take part in politics if the Shah agreed to not interfere with any religious affairs.<sup>108</sup> This agreement did not imply the clerics and the monarchy were in absolute solidarity. In fact, Borujirdi opposed the Shah's agrarian reforms but was insistent on taking a passive form of dissent.<sup>109</sup> Khomeini rejected this form of Shi'ite quietism, but as a religious scholar under Borujirdi's authority, Khomeini was limited in his methods of voicing dissent.<sup>110</sup> However, the situation immediately changed after the death of Borujirdi. After Khomeini was chosen as *marja*, he openly denounced the Shah mainly through his teachings in Qom and lectures in other areas, and in response, Khomeini received

---

<sup>107</sup> Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic* (Summertown: Westview Press Inc., 1988).p. 87

<sup>108</sup> Vanessa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2000).p 51.

<sup>109</sup> Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran*.p 342.

<sup>110</sup> Meri Javedanfar Yossi Melman, *The Nuclear Sphinx of Tehran* (New York: Basic Books, 2007).p 93.

a large crowd of individuals who were against the Shah and became Khomeini's support group.<sup>111</sup>

It was Khomeini's outspoken attitude against the state and his courage, despite being arrested multiple times, that earned him widespread support from the religious students in Qom and allowed him to assume a major political role. Unlike Borujirdi, Khomeini did not support the policy of quietism, because he felt that Iranians should not be afraid of politics, and that there was an urgent need to incorporate the understanding of politics in the religious beliefs of Shi'ites. His teachings focused on encouraging individual thinking and questioning, and he attracted students of a more radical and progressive background.<sup>112</sup> Khomeini's influence in and around the seminary grew as more individuals learned of his teachings. But what allowed the movement to gather momentum was the "15 Khurdad" uprising, also known as the 1963 protests in Qom. Small landowners and students of various religious schools in Qom were furious when the land reforms were passed.<sup>113</sup> Anti-Shah mentality grew as Khomeini focused his teachings on the negative outcome of the Shah's reforms, implemented only to provide the Shah with additional revenue. The growing resistance against the Shah finally led way to the 1963 protests.

During the 1963 protests, a majority of the clerical elites had ceased following Borujirdi's teaching on quietism and had transformed their frustration into action during the 1963 protests. It was this significant turn of events that Khomeini identified

---

<sup>111</sup> Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*.p 60.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid.p 58; Land Reforms in Iran were introduced by the Shah in 1962 until 1971 to redistribute land to peasants.

as the beginning of the revolutionary movement.<sup>114</sup> The Qom 1963 protest was a call against the Shah for not representing the views of the Islamic clergy in the parliament, conducting “government in an un-Islamic manner.”<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, the Shah was called a corrupt leader, spending oil profits extravagantly. The various “un-Islamic” factors of the government had pushed a majority of the clergy away from a long tradition of quietism and towards collective action. In the memoirs of Fatemeh Pakravan, wife of General Pakravan, she described her account of the 1963 Moharram protests as “not a revolution, but the beginning of it.”<sup>116</sup> In response to the uprising, the Shah attempted to stop the demonstrations by sending out troops, but this resulted in a total of 86 deaths, escalating the protests to a larger scale.<sup>117</sup> The Shah also ordered the arrest of Khomeini, from which Khomeini “emerged as the most popular religious leader in Iran.”<sup>118</sup>

The Qom protests consolidated Khomeini’s efforts in transforming the passive dissent into an open and direct opposition, while also situating himself as the leader of the revolutionary movement. Khomeini’s leadership was recognized through the 1963 protests and after his immediate arrest. Since Khomeini’s qualifications for leadership were exemplary, including his undeniable religious authority as the *marja’i taqlid*, source for emulation for Shi’ites, expecting and following his religious teachings was described as a “shari’a duty.”<sup>119</sup> As *marja’i taqlid* of Iran, Khomeini was faced with

---

<sup>114</sup> A. Marashi, "Iran," in *World and Its Peoples: The Middle East, Western Asia, and Northern Africa*, ed. Marshall Cavendish (Marshall Cavendish), p 495.

<sup>115</sup> DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*, p 242.

<sup>116</sup> Habib Ladjevardi, "Interview with Fatemeh Pakravan," in *Iranian Oral History Collection*, ed. Habib Ladjevardi (Paris: Harvard University, 7 March 1983).

<sup>117</sup> DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*, p 242.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p 242.

<sup>119</sup> Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, p 68.

very few oppositionists, and taking advantage of this role, he tied his political orientations with religious connotations, creating a powerful strategy of mobilization for the Nahzat.<sup>120</sup>

Despite the religious component in LMI and the similar objectives between the LMI and Khomeini's movement, there was never a solid alliance between the two movements and Khomeini was eager to identify the Nahzat as a separate entity. Bazargan and Taqelani, leaders of the LMI, wanted more participation from the religious community, but unlike Khomeini, the LMI could not make a grand appeal to them.<sup>121</sup> LMI was in favor of a liberal approach to Islam and stood away from a direct application of the Qu'ranic laws in Iran. Khomeini's movement recognized the importance of "religious modernism," but devoted a larger emphasis on "religious fundamentalism," to gain the support of the clergy. As religious scholars, the clergy brought religious authority and authenticity to the Nahzat. To create a coalition between Khomeini's movement and LMI, Khomeini momentarily emphasized the common issues that the groups opposed, rather than focusing on the different goals of each movement. It was very obvious that the two movements each had their own ideological direction, but for the sake of removing the Shah, these differences were temporarily overlooked.

## **Movement Objectives**

Using the developed framework in Chapter 1, I will now attempt to answer whether the revolutionary movement in 1979 was a success. The framework will first assess whether the movement was able to achieve its objectives, and then it will assess

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.p 59.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

whether the movement was sustainable. Following an evaluation of the movement based on the two assessments, I will explain why the movement was a success using three social movement theories: resource mobilization, political opportunity and new social movement theory.

### *The Nahzat's objectives*

The two main objectives of Khomeini's revolutionary movement were to remove the Shah and his monarchy, and to install an Islamic Republic that was independent and free from foreign forces. Originally, opposition against the Shah was unnoticeable since most people refrained from taking political action or expressing their anger and fear. Since opposition was heavily repressed, the general hostility against the Shah only occurred progressively in a slow process. Opposition against the Shah intensified during the years of the White Revolution, when the Shah forced modernization and ordered deep cutting changes to the traditional social structures of Iran.<sup>122</sup> The eradication of the Shah eventually became a popular sentiment among all social classes and became the common objective amongst all opposition groups. As for the Nahzat's secondary objective, the implementation of an Islamic government was largely supported by the religious community and found fewer advocates from the non-fundamentalist circle. How Khomeini and his movement managed to succeed the popular objective in overthrowing the Shah, as well as their own objective in establishing a theocracy, demands a close analysis of the events preceding the movement's rise to power.

---

<sup>122</sup> Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*.p 9.

The Nahzat's first objective was to remove the Shah from power. Khomeini's hostility against the Shah was obvious through his religious teachings and his lectures, but Khomeini was forced to refrain from publicly denouncing him due to Borujerdi's insistence on Islamic quietism.<sup>123</sup> Hostility against the Shah existed in the late 1960s, but Khomeini was unique in his method and language of expressing his interests. For Khomeini and the religious community, aversion to the Shah intensified after the bloodshed in the 1963 Qom protests. As Khomeini said, "The crimes at Fayqiya Madrasa were committed on [the Shah's] orders," directing anger at the Shah for his cruel acts of violence.<sup>124</sup>

Since the popular sentiment against the Shah was not evenly spread across all social groups in Iran, the public's acceptance of Nahzat's anti-Shah ideology was not immediate, but a gradual process. The liberal elites and intellectuals had the greatest hostility against the Shah, while many of the poor and the illiterate rural majority was passive or neutral on their opinion on the Shah.<sup>125</sup> Reasons for the Iranians' opposition, support, or noncommittal behavior towards the Shah were broad and diverse. The Shah made genuine efforts to improve the livelihood of his people, as seen by the creation of the White Revolution, but the results were not always optimal, and in some cases, it created many socioeconomic problems that caused a detrimental impact on the people.<sup>126</sup> The regime's development strategy, in most cases, did not

---

<sup>123</sup> Yossi Melman, *The Nuclear Sphinx of Tehran*, p 93.

<sup>124</sup> Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islamic Government*, trans. George Carpozi (Michigan: Manor Books, 1979), p 175

<sup>125</sup> Jahangir Amuzegar, *The Dynamics of the Iranian Revolution: The Pahlavis' Triumph and Tragedy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), p 295.

<sup>126</sup> The White Revolution was a series of reforms to modernize Iran. The reforms were implemented in 1963 by the Shah.

cultivate more supporters, but led to a broad displacement of people from a rural, traditional setting to an urbanized, industrial environment.

The majority of Iranians saw the eradication of the Shah as the ultimate solution to the widening gap between the monarchy and the people of Iran, but for Khomeini, he saw a solution beyond the removal of the Shah. Khomeini presented the creation of an Islamic government, devoid of all Western ills, and a system of governance through the help of God. The greatest problem of the Shah's regime, as Khomeini explained, was due to the non-Islamic structures of the political system. Khomeini proposed to adopt Shar'ia laws in Iran instead of constitutionalism, since constitutionalism was a system built from the West.<sup>127</sup> The ultimate form of governance, as Khomeini suggested, was the achievement of an "Islamic government," founded by adhering to God and obeying to Shar'ia laws. Through his 13 years of exile to Najaf in 1965, Khomeini traveled and lectured intensively around Najaf, carefully describing how to create an "Islamic government."<sup>128</sup> His lectures addressed his political goals in the movement and carried a strong revolutionary language, emphasizing the need to "work for destroying the corrupt" and to "destroy the symbol of treason and the unjust among the rulers of peoples" by establishing an "Islamic government."<sup>129</sup>

Embedded in Khomeini's "Islamic Government" was the appointment of a *vali-e faqih*, literally known as a guardian jurist, who would lead the implementation and protection of the Islamic government by providing the final decision on all

---

<sup>127</sup> Said Amir Arjomand, *After Khomeini: Iran under His Successors* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2009), p 267.

<sup>128</sup> "1979: Exiled Ayatollah Khomeini Returns to Iran," *BBC*, February 1 1979.

<sup>129</sup> Khomeini, *Islamic Government*.26

Islamic matters. In such a political system, “there is no place for opinions and whims in the government of Islam. The prophet, the imams and the people obey God’s will and Shari’a.”<sup>130</sup> The individual granted with this title, later named as the Supreme Ayatollah, would hold the greatest responsibility by interpreting and providing guidance for Shar’ia laws. Khomeini thus outlined the two conditions that a ruler must possess: knowledge of Islamic law and justice.<sup>131</sup>

### **Objective Attainment**

In leading the Nahzat, Khomeini did succeed in overthrowing the Shah and the monarchy, achieving the first objective set by Khomeini and his movement. On January 16th 1979, the Shah had already fled the country, leaving Iran in the hands of his prime minister, Shapour Bahktiar.<sup>132</sup> On February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1979, Khomeini returned to Tehran and announced the Nahzat’s success in removing the Shah: “You have accomplished the first step toward a complete victory by removing Muhammad Reza, the chief traitor, from the scene.”<sup>133</sup> At the time of his speech, the Shah had already been removed; however, the armed forces of the monarchy were still present. In order to successfully remove the monarchy, Khomeini had to win over the armed forces.

The Nahzat did not successfully remove the Shah and the monarchy until February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1979, when the Shah’s army forces rejected the use of the force and surrendered to Khomeini’s movement. Prior to the announcement of the military’s neutrality through the radio, there were several days of intense conflicts between the

---

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.32.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr Ali Gheissari, *Democracy in Iran: History and the Quest for Liberty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).p 73.

<sup>133</sup> Khomeini, *Islamic Government*.p 252

military and protestors, but the volume of dissidents were so great that the situation was already uncontrollable by force. The announcement said, "With due consideration to the circumstances, the army's Supreme Council held a meeting today at 10:20AM and, in order to prevent further anarchy and bloodshed, decided to announce that army's neutrality in the present political crisis and ordered the troops to return to their garrisons."<sup>134</sup> From that moment onwards, the Pahlavi regime was officially over, signifying the success of Khomeini and the Nahzat; they had achieved their first objective.

Soon after toppling the Shah, Khomeini achieved his second objective in establishing an Islamic government in Iran. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1979, Khomeini declared the creation of a provisional government and announced the creation of the Islamic republic as an "achievement that Moslem clergymen across the Middle East have dreamed of, but never accomplished."<sup>135</sup> After the Islamic Republic was established, Khomeini assumed the role as the Supreme Leader and appointed Bazargan as the prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Ayatollah Allama Norri, a prominent Tehran religious figure and a strong supporter of the Islamic government, said, "Iranians seek not only national sovereignty but also an Islamic government encompassing both national government and local justice."<sup>136</sup> The specific details on the provisional government structure were not clear, perhaps an intention by Khomeini to avoid segregation of factions until the official conflict with the army had ended on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1979.

---

<sup>134</sup> Nicholas Gage, "Army Withdraws Its Support for Bakhtiar; Iranian Prime Minister Ordered to Resign" *The New York Times* Feb 12, 1979.

<sup>135</sup> "Islamic State a Vague Idea," *The Milwaukee Journal* Feb 2 1979.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

The new political system under the Islamic Government included the use of a new Iranian constitution, new institutional structures, new political and religious figures, and also a new military force. The new constitution, adopted by popular referendum on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1979, was substantially different from the 1906 constitution. Among many of the differences was the adoption of *shar'ia* as the rule of law, and a Supreme Leader as the Islamic ruler in Iran. Even though the army forces had announced their neutrality, Khomeini was concerned about their loyalty and on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 1979, he formed the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), later classified as the “storm troops of the Iranian revolution,” with the aim of protecting the regime in case of potential uprisings.<sup>137</sup>

Having ousted the Shah and his beleaguered regime from power and established an Islamic government, the Nahzat had achieved its two main objectives. Khomeini remained as the leader of the movement, from instigating the people of Iran to refuse allegiance to the Shah to the key figure of the new Islamic government that he created. The political regime that Khomeini had set out to create, contrary to the objectives of the nationalist and socialist groups, was a traditionalist movement led by the religious clerics. The post-revolutionary struggle between factions in the revolutionary coalition faced heavy repression by Khomeini. Khomeini eventually removed all non-traditionalist members, who took part in removing the Shah, and then pursued to implement an Islamic Government according to his and has continued to exist till today.

---

<sup>137</sup> Con Coughlin, *Khomeini's Ghost: The Iranian Revolution and the Rise of Militant Islam* (Michigan: Ecco, 2009).

## Movement Sustainability

The revolutionary movement was extremely sustainable in terms of the broad network of participants, which Khomeini was able to unify under the objective to remove the Shah from power. Khomeini's charismatic leadership was undeniably appealing to the masses, especially his use of "Islam" as the theme of the revolutionary movement. For a predominately Shi'ite country, Iran's return to an Islamic identity, as Khomeini said, brought "unity of all the people in this country."<sup>138</sup>

The broad constituencies of the Nahzat created a "rainbow coalition," that provided the movement with cohesiveness and sustainability.<sup>139</sup> Amuzegar calls the movement as a "rainbow coalition," because it consisted of people from different age groups and ideological backgrounds:

The "rainbow" coalition that led to the shah's defeat included avowed Marxist-atheists, liberal agnostics, nonpracticing Moslems, progressive Islamic elements among intellectuals and students, social democrat followers of former Prime Minister Mossadeq, Islamic-Marxist reformers, the established Shi'ite hierarchy (with different objective and involvement), and, finally, Islamic fundamentalists and hard-line disciples of Ayatollah Khomeini. Participants in street marches and demonstrations included déclassé aristocrats, old-time politicians, disgruntled job-seekers, small businessmen, new industrialists, urban workers, and idle hangers-on.<sup>140</sup>

Khomeini's ability to unify a diverse group of movement participants was a major determinant in achieving their objective of removing the Shah. The politics within each social group were more convoluted, and unanimous support for Khomeini was not entirely present. Divisions in objectives and course of action

---

<sup>138</sup> Charles Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran* (USA: President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2004).p. 142

<sup>139</sup> Amuzegar, *The Dynamics of the Iranian Revolution: The Pahlavis' Triumph and Tragedy*.p 14.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.14.

within the various social groups were there, but these differences were abated by Khomeini's use of abstract language in his writings and speeches. Khomeini's intentions, as Bakhtiar explained, were not fully explicit to the public, which allowed groups to remain focused on the ultimate objective of removing the Shah.<sup>141</sup>

Khomeini was careful to broaden his support base by referencing broad goals, such as achieving "freedom and independence," adopting a language that was tailored to the general audience.<sup>142</sup> Since Khomeini remained very vague in his intentions, actors viewed the movement as a mechanism to achieve their personal goals, unaware of the future after the revolution. Khomeini's capability of "playing to his audiences and mingling his message with others" was an extremely valuable skill and enabled him to "cast a wide net and fashion a broad tent as a fiery populist revolutionary leader."<sup>143</sup>

In explaining how each social and ideological group was able to become a participant in the movement, Ashraf and Banuazizi decomposed the movement progress into five stages: From June to December in 1977, students and intellectuals led the protests in a nonviolent manner.<sup>144</sup> From January to July 1978, the *ulema* and *bazaar* merchants took a more active role in the movement. In August and September 1978, the urban middle and marginal classes joined with the mobilized masses. From September to December 1978, the blue and white collared workers joined the later stage of the movement. Finally, in the several months leading up to February 1979, the students, *ulema* and *bazaar*, middle class and the blue and white collared workers

---

<sup>141</sup> Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*.p 150.

<sup>142</sup> Khomeini, *Islamic Government*.p 246.

<sup>143</sup> Eric Selbin, "What Was Revolutionary About the Iranian Revolution? The Power of Possibility," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 29, no. 1 (2009).p 33.

<sup>144</sup> Ahmad Ashraf and Ali Banuazizi, "The State, Classes and Modes of Mobilization in the Iranian Revolution," *The State, Culture, and Society* 1, no. 3 (Spring 1985).

were mobilized to overthrow the Shah.<sup>145</sup> Ten percent or more of the Iranian population participated in the demonstrations against the Shah, identifying the Iranian revolutionary movement as one of the most popular upheavals in world history.<sup>146</sup>

In trying to explain this phenomenon, Misagh Parsa, a sociology professor at Dartmouth, said that people of different ideological beliefs “supported Ayatollah Khomeini not because of ideological reasons, but rather out of political considerations and that while they shared Khomeini’s anti-dictatorial and anti-imperialist orientation, their slogans echoed those from when they rallied in the nationalist movement during the 1950s and 1960s.”<sup>147</sup> In this way, people who were resentful of the Shah and his policies saw Khomeini’s movement as an opportunity to resist authority and control.

The degree of sustainability also depended on the number of movement participants, and as for the Nahzat, the movement consisted of a large number of actors, which was crucial in explaining the success of the movement. An anonymous former conscript from Tehran recalled, “I saw in the streets the crowds getting bigger and bigger...I saw my friend in the street shouting, ‘Death to the shah,’ and my fear left me.”<sup>148</sup> As the number of participants continued to increase, a growing sign that the movement was gaining momentum, the prospects of the movement’s success was greater. As an anonymous student from the seminary in Tabriz said, “It’s cowardly

---

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*.p viii.

<sup>147</sup> Misagh Parsa, *States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran, Nicaragua and the Philippines* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).p 202.

<sup>148</sup> Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*.p 125.

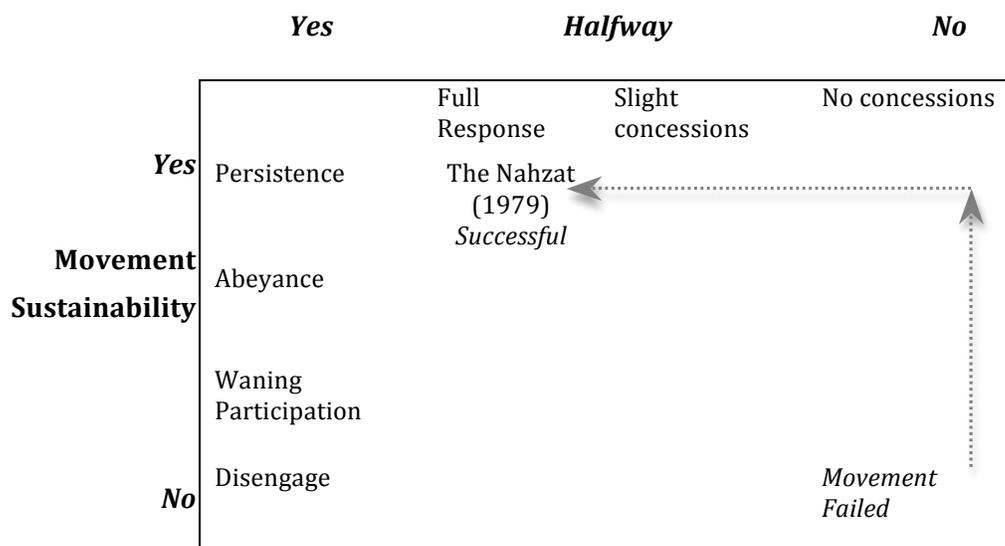
for me to stay at home while they are shouting slogans.”<sup>149</sup> For individuals who were more risk-adverse, they had a greater tendency to avoid instability. But in this situation, particularly due to the growing volume of participants, it was a reassurance for people that the movement had a high chance of succeeding.

### Movement Success or Failure?

The Nahzat was able to achieve their set objectives – the removal of the Shah and the creation of an Islamic republic – while also able to sustain the movement throughout. Based on my typology, a movement is successful if it can “persistent” towards achieving a “full response” of its objectives. For this case, the Nahzat was able to demonstrate both qualities to the fullest achieve its objectives and sustained the movement; therefore, it was a successful movement.

The following illustration was taken from chapter 1 and will clearly present why the Nahzat was a successful movement:

**Figure 2.1 - Evaluating the success of the Nahzat (1979)**  
Achieving Objectives



<sup>149</sup> Ibid.p 141.

In the existing literature on social movements, the direction on the development of social movements has not been reviewed extensively. The lack of analysis on this matter may relate to the inadequate literature on what constitutes a successful movement. As discussed in chapter 1, several social movement scholars such as Gamson, Burnstein, Giugni and others, came close to defining movement “success,” but in the end, they did not provide an adequate answer to what defines a successful movement.

By creating a framework for assessing movement success, the framework acts as a roadmap for analyzing the directionality of each movement. Assuming that every movement aims toward achieving success (the top left corner), then every movement will utilize possible channels to achieve both movement sustainability and its objectives. The Nahzat was able to achieve both. Analyzing the Nahzat based on my typology, the Nahzat’s path to success could be defined as a two-step process: reached “persistence” on movement sustainability, and then the movement achieved “full response” for its objectives. The directionality of the movement is illustrated in the Figure 2.1, by the gray arrows.

Prior to the movement’s success, the Nahzat began as a movement with no concessions and with a low level of sustainability (bottom right hand corner). The Nahzat started with only a small group of clerics as movement base.<sup>150</sup> As the movement progressed, the Nahzat managed to attract religious students from other areas, providing the impetus for the movement to continue. Capturing participants from almost every social group, the Nahzat became the movement with the most

---

<sup>150</sup> Misagh Parsa, *Social Origins of the Iranian Revolution* (Rugers, 1989).p 205.

diverse participants scattered around the country. This was reflected on Figure 1.2 as an arrow pointing towards the high sustainability-no concession stage. When the movement has progressed to this stage, it has successfully achieved the first assessment criteria.

After reaching the highest level of sustainability, the movement was highly “persistent” and was seen as an extreme threat by the monarchy. At this stage, the Nahzat experienced a “tipping point” as it began to gain an increasing amount of concessions from the key power-holder, the Shah. Prior to this stage, the Nahzat barely received any form of concessions, and was only met with greater repression and imprisonment from the Shah’s military forces. Due to the rapid development of events during the latter part of the movement, the precise sequence of movement concessions is difficult to evaluate. Overall, the majority of concessions happened after the “tipping point.” The illustration of this stage on Figure 2.1 is the horizontal arrow pointing towards the left.

The general progression of the movement is illustrated by the “L” shape path in Figure 2.1, directing towards the stage of a successful movement – a movement with “persistence” and obtained “full response” for movement objectives. The movement’s progression was not entirely straight – there were occasions when it increased sustainability and gained slight concessions – but it was only during the latter phase of the movement that the Nahzat was able to attain a large degree of concessions, thus creating progression that was “L” shaped.

Even though movement objectives defined from the outset were finally achieved for the Nahzat, it can be argued that the general public was overall

unsatisfied by the movement's success. The movement's secondary objective-- the creation of an Islamic Government--was generally agreed, but the specifics of the Islamic Government were not widely addressed, thus the majority of Iranians had different perceptions on what is an Islamic Government. Therefore, the Islamic Government that was achieved was grounded on a "clerical" perception of an Islamic Government. The Islamic Government that was initially created was not the broad-based objective that supporters or movement actors had hoped or expected, but one that catered to the highly political clerics who persisted in confronting the regime and were followers of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Therefore, the success of the Nahzat was not a success for the majority of the Iranians, but success for a faction of clerics who supported Khomeini.

The Nahzat was a case of a successful social movement in Iran. In the following sections, I will address the reasons why the Nahzat was able to succeed as a social movement by using social movement theories.

### **Explaining Movement Success**

In order to interpret how the Nahzat was able to both sustain and achieve its goals in overthrowing the monarchy and establishing an Islamic government, I will employ three social movement theories – resource mobilization theory, political opportunity structure, and new social movement theory. For this particular revolutionary movement, a single social movement framework is inadequate in explaining the movement's success. It was a combination of factors present in all three of the movement theories that allowed the Nahzat to become a successful movement.

## Political Opportunity Structure

In analyzing the Nahzat under the political opportunity structure, the movement was predicted to succeed because it took advantage of the “window” of opportunity, staging collective action at an appropriate time. Theda Skocpol, an eminent political opportunity structure theorist, concluded that revolutions could succeed if structural conditions prove to be favorable to collective action.<sup>151</sup> The political opportunity structure theory posits that collective action can transform a movement into a successful movement if conditions are favorable.<sup>152</sup> A favorable condition for political action is possible when the existing regime is weakened, creating a political opportunity for public engagement.<sup>153</sup> For Iran, the conditions prior to the revolution were conducive for political action for many reasons.

### *The “Gap Theory”*

First, Shah Pahlavi implemented a series of economic reform projects forcing Iran to modernize in the early 1960s, which eventually created ideological and cultural shifts in the traditional social structures of Iran. The White Revolution, a reform program that started in the year 1963, aimed to restructure social relations and income inequalities, and set Iran on a path towards economic advancement. Some of the Shah’s initiatives included land reform, enfranchising women, and providing greater civil rights for all citizens, with the hopes of gaining and sustaining control over all classes of the society, especially the middle class since they had been

---

<sup>151</sup> Theda Skocpol, "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution," *Theory and Society* 11, no. 3 (May 1982).

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

increasingly dominating the economic scene in the 1950s.<sup>154</sup> Contrary to the Shah's intentions, the result of the reforms either angered or had no effect on the majority of the social groups.<sup>155</sup> The social destruction of the traditional order disconnected many Iranians from their past. As Sai'id Amir Arjomand explains, the "social dislocation and normative disturbance" was the cause for Iranian's disconnection with their traditional past.<sup>156</sup>

The government's adverse development policies caused widespread hostility against the Shah, a sentiment that was prevalent in most social groups and was a major determinant for many people's decision to mobilize. For the *bazaaris*, many of the reforms, such as the removal of guild taxes<sup>157</sup>, weakening the economic strength of the bazaars as well as forcing many bazaars to face bankruptcy.<sup>158</sup> Vali Nasr, an Iranian-American professor at Tufts University, argued that the reform program was a "risky venture" because of its detrimental effects on the elites and the clergy, when in fact they used to be supporters of the monarchy.<sup>159</sup> As a result, previous supporters of the Shah, including the elites, clergy, and the liberal, united against the Shah.

Iran's rapid economic development was not matched by any political development created a large gap between the government and its people, a major reason for the rise in civil unrest. Ervand Abrahamian highlighted the disequilibrium between economic and political development in Iran, and referenced Samuel

---

<sup>154</sup> Vali Nasr, "Iran," in *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order*, ed. Mark Irving Lichbach, Jeffrey Kopstein (2005).p 405

<sup>155</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, "Structural Causes of the Iranian Revolution," *MERIP Reports* 87(May 1980).

<sup>156</sup> Arjomand, *After Khomeini: Iran under His Successors*.

<sup>157</sup> Guild Taxes: stripped the guild elders' power in determining how much guild members paid for taxes

<sup>158</sup> Parsa, *States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran, Nicaragua and the Philippines*.p 300.

<sup>159</sup> Nasr, "Iran."p 405.

Huntington's "gap theory," where the regime failed to make political improvements as the economy developed.<sup>160</sup> The gap between the regime and its people had widened, and as Abrahamian described, it had "cut down the few bridges that had in the past connected traditional social forces, especially the bazaars, with the political establishment."<sup>161</sup> While people became more wealthy and educated, the regime continued to forbid voices of dissent and arrested protestors who were critical of the monarchic regime, escalating peoples' anger of the government.

### *Foreign Support or Damage?*

Second, Iran's foreign relations with the United States began to shift in 1976 with the election of Jimmy Carter to the presidency, who constructed his political agenda based on human rights issues. Iran's poor human rights history became a subject of concern and for that reason, Carter threatened to suspend American economic and military support.<sup>162</sup> Suspending American support did not happen, but the relationship between the two countries drastically deteriorated. Throughout Carter's presidency, the relationship between Iran and the U.S. was filled with doubts, and Iranian leadership remained uncertain about "true U.S. intentions."<sup>163</sup> Uncertainty and mistrust did not disappear, even when Carter telephoned to the

---

<sup>160</sup> Abrahamian, "Structural Causes of the Iranian Revolution."p 163.

<sup>161</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran between the Two Revolutions* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982).p 163

<sup>162</sup> Charles Kurzman, "Structural Opportunity and Perceived Opportunity in Social-Movement Theory: The Iranian Revolution of 1979," *American Sociological Review* 61(Feb 1996).

<sup>163</sup> Robert Novak Rowland Evans, "U.S. Extends Unconditional Support to Shah," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, Nov 8th 1978.

Shah and signaled his “unconditional support.” America’s fluctuating orientation towards the Shah had a major effect on the monarchy.<sup>164</sup>

The United States provided little assistance to Iran, which was partially caused by the personal conflicts among the close aids of President Carter.<sup>165</sup> The National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski and the Secretary of State Cyrus Vance were not on good terms, and it is possible that their lack of consensus led to varying opinions on how to approach Iran. Alexander Moens, a political science professor at Simon Fraser University, believed the conflict between the two individuals led Carter to receive “lopsided advice on the one hand and procedural manipulation by an isolated security adviser on the other hand,” creating severe discrepancy in information and a time lapse in providing appropriate guidance to the Shah.<sup>166</sup> In summary, the relationship between Iran and the West was defined by confusion and distrust, which was advantageous to the opposition movement.

### *Centralization of the Monarchy*

Third, the power within the monarchy was overly centralized around the Shah, with the Shah being the main decisional body, and was especially a sign of great instability if the Shah was removed due to certain circumstances.<sup>167</sup> Charles Kurzman amplifies this point by referencing Khosrow Fatemi: “Since the *raison d’être* of this organizational structure was mostly to protect the shah and his throne from

---

<sup>164</sup> Charles Kurzman, "The Iranian Revolution " in *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*, ed. James M. Jasper Jeff Goodwin (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2009).

<sup>165</sup> Alexander Moens, "President Carter's Advisers and the Fall of the Shah," *Political Science Quarterly* 106, no. 2 (Summer 1991).

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> Kurzman, "Structural Opportunity and Perceived Opportunity in Social-Movement Theory: The Iranian Revolution of 1979."p 159.

potential threats, such as military *coups d'état* and strong political rival.”<sup>168</sup> In hope of safeguarding his throne, the Shah was unwilling to disperse his power, holding onto his authority over every political aspect. Prior to the revolution in 1975, the Shah further diminished the parliamentary process to a one-party system, reinforcing his role as the sole authority.<sup>169</sup> The Shah disregarded the inefficiencies of his political system and was eager to centralize his monarchic power, thus setting the grounds for a weak regime.

### *The Youth Factor*

Fourth, the Iranian population prior to the revolution consisted of a substantial number of youth, thus indicating a “window” of political opportunity. Realizing the growing significance of the youth population, movement leaders in Iran tried to capitalize on this trend by targeting the youth in their movement. Empirically speaking, the large youth population in Iran suggests that youth should be a target of choice for the movement leaders since they were the majority in Iran. In 1971, the median age in Iran was 17.6 with a total population of 29 million.<sup>170</sup> By the year 1979, the total population in Iran has increased dramatically to 37 million, with the median age of an individual at 18.<sup>171</sup> The population statistics of Iran during this time period suggests that Iran had a fairly young population.<sup>172</sup> This reinforces the importance of youth as an actor in political and social movements in Iran.

---

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Moens, "President Carter's Advisers and the Fall of the Shah."

<sup>170</sup> UN Population Division, "Media Age," (Gapminder).

<sup>171</sup> ———, "Total Population," (Gapminder.org).

<sup>172</sup> Kaveh Basmenji, *Tehran Blues* (London: Saqi, 2005).p 133; Youth is defined as individuals from the age of 15 to 24.

The large migration shift of young villagers to the cities robbed the young Iranians the experience of being a youth. Due to the Shah's economic reforms and forced industrialization in the early 1960s, a large majority of youth and young adults from the village were sent to the cities for work.<sup>173</sup> The rapid flow of people from rural into urban areas made the "cities of Iran became large, chaotic villages."<sup>174</sup> The socio-psychological effects were great with the Iranian youth as one of the most vulnerable social groups. Feelings of disenchantment and social misery heightened after the migration of villagers to the cities. In general, the Iranian youth were disenchanted and lacked an eagerness to engage any affairs. However, the youth's social discomfort was an opportunity for a movement leader to ignite them. It was a possibility that could bring a large support base for their movement. As Mehran Kamrava, an Iranian studies professor, explained, the "aggregate psychological approach," whereby "stability or the instability of a political system is ultimately dependent on a state of mind, a mood, in a society."<sup>175</sup> Anthony Parson, the British ambassador to Iran during the 1960s, commented to the Pahlavi Shah on the youth situation in Iran: "I can tell you, your Majesty, that I have never seen anything nearly as bad as the atmosphere on every single university campus in your country...there was an atmosphere of sullenness, of alienation, of discontent..."<sup>176</sup> Inner despair of the youth was a pertinent issue, but many discomforted youth eventually found haven by joining social groups and student organizations.

---

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.p 134.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Mehran Kamrava, *Revolution in Iran: The Roots of Turmoil* (New York: Routledge, 1990).p 2.

<sup>176</sup> Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*.p 102.

In general, Iranians lacked the opportunity to experience being youthful because of the process of growing up in an Iranian society. Asef Bayat, a Sociology and Middle Eastern Studies professor, argued that the concept of youth in Iran has not been widely discussed because Iranians showed less signs of experiencing a “youthful” phase in life.<sup>177</sup> In the village, it was uncommon for people to experience “youthfulness” since “they moved rapidly from the vulnerability and dependence of childhood to adulthood, to the world of work, parenting and responsibility,” thus missing an opportunity to experience being young.<sup>178</sup> Bayat also noted the rapid transformation in the role of women from daughter to wife.<sup>179</sup> In this traditional cultural context, it was uncommon for woman to experience a “youthful” phase, and for this reason, Khomeini’s ideology was presented as the occasion for the youth to relinquish their lost identity.<sup>180</sup>

Theoretically speaking, the youth should be targeted by movement leaders because youths have a higher tendency to instigate political action. Sociologists such as William S. Aron emphasized how the youth has a greater willingness to initiate movements or other forms of political action, and therefore, youth’s engagement in civil society can be crucial in the development of a stable society.<sup>181</sup> For Iran, youth and student consciousness of socio-political issues was not widely present until revolutionary thinkers, such as Bazargan and Khomeini, began educating and spreading awareness on such matters. Bazargan organized monthly seminars around

---

<sup>177</sup> Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*.p 64.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.p 65.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.p 67.

<sup>181</sup> David Hansen Reed Larson, "The Development of Strategic Thinking: Learning to Impact Human Systems in a Youth Activism Program," *Human Development* 48(2005).p 327

major universities and institutions to promote his “religious modernist” ideology.<sup>182</sup> Khomeini began spreading his anti-Shah sentiment and revolutionary ideology at educational institutions and religious schools, aimed to captivate and mobilize his “youthful” audience. For both movement leaders, they recognized opportunities to captivate and mobilize the youth, but at the end, Khomeini was the one who proved capable of capturing the majority of youth in Iran.

The poor economic reforms, fluctuating relations with the West, concentration of the Shah’s power, and finally Iran’s “youthful” population were all causes for the weakening of the political regime and the creation of political opportunities for successful collective action. However, Kurzman identified differences between “structural opportunity” and “perceived opportunity,” a common confusion in analyzing social movements.<sup>183</sup> The former addressed events that allowed opportunities to open, whereas the latter addressed how individuals’ believe that there is an opportunity. The difference may seem subtle, but in fact, it has led to a major debate on how the Iranian revolution occurred. Kurzman argues that “perceived opportunity” is actor-orientated, whereas “structural opportunity” is situational-orientated. In a “perceived opportunity” perspective, the actor sees the opportunity and decides whether to take action. This emphasis on the actor’s point of view connects to the resource mobilization theory, whereby the theory attempts to analyze how actors are able to effectively acquire and mobilize resources, especially when they are able to perceive an opportunity.

---

<sup>182</sup> Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*.p 29

<sup>183</sup> Kurzman, "Structural Opportunity and Perceived Opportunity in Social-Movement Theory: The Iranian Revolution of 1979."

## Resource Mobilization Theory

Skocpol's reasoning for this particular Iranian revolutionary movement drifted away from other traditional "structuralists" because she believed that the Nahzat did not enter the political scene when the regime was weakened, but in fact, entered when the regime was still strong.<sup>184</sup> Based on Skocpol, it was the Nahzat that led to the weakening of the regime, and eventually the downfall of the whole monarchy. As Skocpol argued, "If there had been a revolution deliberately 'made' by a mass-based social movement," then it would be this particular revolutionary movement.<sup>185</sup> She believed that the case of the Iranian revolution refuted her understanding of movements, suggesting that movements may not always "just come," and can instead be "deliberately and coherently made."<sup>186</sup> Skocpol's line of argument brought forth another social movement theory that could explain the success of the Nahzat: the resource mobilization theory.

### *On Leadership: Khomeini as a "mobilizer"*

It was Khomeini's leadership that transformed the Nahzat in a powerful body that could effectively utilize all their resources, acquire additional resources, and continue to perpetuate the movement. For an individual to be recognized as a leader in a movement, as Joseph Gusfield, a sociology professor said, he or she must be able to function as a "mobilizer" in inspiring people to take action, and be an "articulator"

---

<sup>184</sup> Skocpol, "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution."p 3.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.p 4.

<sup>186</sup> Theda Skocpol Jeff Goodwin, "Explaining Revolutions in the Contemporary Third World," in *Social Revolutions in the Modern World*, ed. Theda Skocpol (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).p 485.

in connecting the movement to the society at large.<sup>187</sup> Khomeini was able to perform both functions incredibly well, and was without a doubt regarded as the leader of the revolutionary movement by all major social circles. Even though the Nahzat was small and disorganized with barely any resources compared to other political parties and organizations in the early 1960s, Khomeini's leadership managed to direct the Nahzat towards success.

Khomeini was a "mobilizer" by making grand appeals to people in every sector of Iranian society. First, Khomeini founded his relationship with the religious students when he was appointed as a teacher in the seminary in Qom. This also explains how Khomeini disseminated his religious and radical views, and later on, how he recruited and mobilized his loyal followers.<sup>188</sup> Secondly, the educated class wanted intellectual freedom, but had no concept of a revolutionary ideology until the emergence of Bazargan into the intellectual sphere. Bazargan was active in the urban areas and widely recognized and respected by the educated population. However, faced with a political ban on the LMI, Bazargan was forced to minimize his role in the political party. Seeing a potential in the Nahzat to advance the LMI's goals, he endorsed his support to Khomeini's movement as heard from one of Bazargan's speeches during the fall of 1978: "Under current conditions, we former organizers have lost the leadership of activism," and recognized that the movement was not within his control, but belonged to Khomeini.<sup>189</sup> Even though Bazargan may have predicted the imminent downfall of the LMI, it was Bazargan's decision to cooperate

---

<sup>187</sup> Debra C. Minkoff Elisabeth S. Clemens, "Beyond the Iron Law: Rethinking the Place of Organizations in Social Movement Research," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. Sarah Anne Soule David A. Snow, Hanspeter Kriesi (Malden: Blackwell Publisher, 2004).p 172

<sup>188</sup> Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*.p. 59

<sup>189</sup> Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*.143

with the Nahzat that brought the participation other liberals and educated to follow suit. Thirdly, many of the *bazaaris* were negatively affected by the government's high taxes and damaging economic policies, such as the "anti-profiteering" policy, which destroyed many *bazaaris*' businesses.<sup>190</sup> Lastly, workers were also frustrated by the Shah's economic reforms. Khomeini called against the Shah's land reforms and corruption from his extravagant oil revenues, denouncing the Shah's actions as completely "un-Islamic."<sup>191</sup>

### *On Leadership: Khomeini as an "articulator"*

Khomeini's leadership was crucial in convincing political and social factions to create coalitions, thus demonstrating his skills as an "articulator." He inspired people to mobilize, recognized political opportunities, took advantage of resources, and directed the movement towards success. Most historians commented on Khomeini's strategy of avoiding setting anything too specific that might rule out people's interests in mobilizing. He argued for social justice and freedom against the oppressors, a grand appeal that attracted people with any grievances against the regime.<sup>192</sup> Ebrahim Yazdi, a close advisor to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1975, and later Foreign Minister in the post-revolutionary provisional government, described the general public's reaction to Khomeini's rhetoric: "We were united on what we didn't want. Very rarely and seldom we discussed and came to a common understanding on what we wanted."<sup>193</sup> Nowhere in Khomeini's speeches did he offer a concrete

---

<sup>190</sup> Misagh Parsa, "Theories of Collective Action and Iranian Revolution," *Sociological Forum* 3, no. 1 (December 1988).p 63.

<sup>191</sup> Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*.

<sup>192</sup> Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*.p 123.

<sup>193</sup> Mike Shuster, "Former Diplomat, Student Recall Iran's Revolution," in *Morning Edition* (National Public Radio, 2009).

explanation of what he had specifically planned after the revolution. Yazdi commented on how the revolutionary generation did not “see past the short-term goal of removing the Shah.”<sup>194</sup> Khomeini strategically remained flexible and quiet in his discussion of an Islamic government to secure the unity of his movement. He also avoided publicly announcing or commenting on his preferences for any specific class, gender, or association. Khomeini’s persistence in maintaining neutral and vague on his intentions leading up to the fall of the monarchy drew support from many different social and political groups and proved his success in keeping the movement intact.

Khomeini’s leadership created an organized movement with a direction, but moreover, he was perceptive to direct the movement towards the student and youth population. The demographics of Iran showed the youthful population as a “political opportunity,” and Khomeini was able to perceive this opportunity and take advantage by forming extensive networks of collective action with the youth population. Students on university campus were eager to express their anger and frustrations, even when the regime strictly opposed such actions; universities were prime locations to disseminate information and coordinate mobilization. Khomeini recognized the large youth population in Iran and took advantage of such conditions by reaching out to students through educational institutions and religious schools. Khomeini was a teacher in several religious schools in Qom, and his first followers were his students. Therefore, Khomeini made a conscious effort to utilize the youthful population for the Nahzat.

---

<sup>194</sup> Katouzian, "The Iranian Revolution at 30: The Dialectic of State and Society."p 21.

## **New Social Movement Theory**

The new social movement theory includes a strong cultural and identity aspect in explaining movement success in mobilization. While the political opportunity structure explained how political opportunities were able to appear, the resource mobilization theory supports the political opportunity structure theory by explaining how actors were able to take advantage of the opportunity and mobilize resources to their advantage. However, in both theories, the analysis was based on discrete interests, individual sentiments, or strategic interest, and overlooked the power of emotions, ideology and identity in guiding peoples' action. For the Nahzat, the movement had an extremely strong revolutionary ideology that was crucial in maintaining actors' interest and participation.

### *Revolutionary Ideology*

The Nahzat adopted the LMI's revolutionary ideology that had a liberal and anti-Shah outlook, but adjusted the ideology to emphasize Iran's re-establishment of an Islamic identity. For the purpose of clarity, I will reassert the meaning of ideology as defined by Poulsen: "the set of beliefs that are used to justify or challenge a given social-political order and are used to interpret the political world."<sup>195</sup> The LMI's ideology that consisted of four main aspects—maintaining an Islamic tradition, respecting other's opinions, abide to Iranian Constitution, and support Mosaddeq—provided a structure that combined both religious and liberal perspectives and

---

<sup>195</sup> Stephen C. Poulson, *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2006).p 187.

addressed concerns of various political groups. Faith, in this sense, was transformed into an ideology for social and political concerns.<sup>196</sup>

The ideological difference between the LMI and the Nahzat was not substantial, since they both contained strong anti-Shah sentiments, but the Nahzat was instilled with stronger references to Islam. This gradually evolved into a movement based on “Islamic revivalism” with an effort to reestablish peoples’ Islamic identity in modern Iran. “Islamic revivalism” ideology utilized several aspects of LMI’s ideology, but with a focus on emphasizing religion and freedom without offering any details on how the values transformed into lasting institutions in Iran.

The Nahzat’s revolutionary ideology was exceptionally appealing to most segments of the society, since the concept of “Islamic revivalism” of the Nahzat highlighted religious aspects that subsided during the ruling of the Shah. As Poulson described, ending imperialism was generally agreed upon, but the identification on who were the imperial powers and how they should be dealt varied from movement to movement.<sup>197</sup> Both the LMI and the Nahzat identified the “imperial powers” as the Shah, but each movement offered a different approach to the solution. For Bazargan and the LMI, they became increasingly entrenched in educating the public and raising peoples’ awareness. This differentiated with the Nahzat’s approach that explicitly denounced the Shah for his non-Islamic values and practices and proposed the establishment of “Islamic Government.”

---

<sup>196</sup> Kaveh Basmenji, *Tehran Blues: Youth Culture in Iran* (London: Saqi Books, 2005).p 126.

<sup>197</sup> Poulson, *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks*.p 14.

Embedded in many of the beliefs, symbols and values used in the Nahzat were religious messages related to Islam. An article describes the revolutionary ideology in detail:

The dominant ideology of the Iranian revolution was Islam. However, the Islam of the Iranian revolution has fundamental differences with previous traditional [sonnati] interpretations. The sonnati version perceived the mission of all religions, including Islam, to coordinate the relationship between mankind and God, and secure the afterlife... The Imam of the revolution laid out [the concept of] *velayat-e faqih* in which he unified religion and politics, brought to the fore and emphasized the revolutionary mission of religion. The result of all these efforts was the emergence of a revolutionary Islam whose features are an Islam that was combative of injustice, freedom seeking, pro-*mostazaf*, justice and equality seeking, and used progressive *ijihad*.<sup>198</sup>

The revolutionary ideology was controversial, breaking away from the traditional religious views of Islam. The revolution was a combination of “religion” and “politics.” Prior to the revolution, Khomeini had promised to create an Islamic Government that embraced both values, but as the revolution progressed, a balance between “religion” and “politics” was proven to be extremely difficult to achieve. At the beginning, Khomeini addressed “religion” and “politics” together in order to maintain a delicate balance between the traditionalists and the liberals, and was never too outspoken on the specifics of the ideological and cultural orientations in order to attract and maintain a broad-based support movement. The Nahzat managed to cater their ideology to the various audiences, whilst also never too generalized to lose its distinctive character on “Islamic revivalism.” The divide between the religious groups and the liberals on the specifics of the new government only began to emerge

---

<sup>198</sup> Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002).p 115.

after the revolution. At the end, the liberals were forced to retreat from the newly established Islamic Government, shifting the balance completely towards “religion.”

The Nahzat also used an anti-West rhetoric to create a “collective identity” by comparing and contrasting the Iranians with the West. Stephen Kinzer, the director of an Iranian documentary, was present during the Iranian revolution and commented on the strong sense of a “collective consciousness” that the “outside world, particularly the Western world, has always tried to prevent Iran from developing.”<sup>199</sup> Poulson identified the technique used in separating Iran and the West as the “civilization clash frame.”<sup>200</sup> Under the movement frame, the Iranians were not only set as a completely independent identity, but also one that was opposed the “West.” Since the Shah had a strong Western orientation, the Iranians gradually saw the Shah as an “outsider,” rather than an Iranian.<sup>201</sup> Despite the inflow of Western goods and entertainment to Iran, anti-West literature by local Iranians, such as Jalal Al-e Ahmad, was gaining popularity.<sup>202</sup> Ahmad’s work, “Plagued by the West (Gharbzadegi),” was widely read across Iran, and influences of his work can be found through Khomeini’s revolutionary rhetoric.<sup>203</sup> Echoing the argument in the “civilization clash frame,” Ahmad cautioned against Western values percolating through Iran and that Iranians should be searching for their own identity in his works. Khomeini’s ideology combined both elements, the “civilization clash frame” and the

---

<sup>199</sup> Megan Gambino, "Stephen Kinzer On "Inside Iran's Fury"," *Smithsonian.com*, October 1st 2008.

<sup>200</sup> Poulson, *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks*.p 22.

<sup>201</sup> ———, *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks*.

<sup>202</sup> Abbas Milani, "Jalal Al-E Ahmad," ed. 1941 Eminent Persians: the men and women who made modern Iran (2008).831

<sup>203</sup> Poulson, *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks*.p 188.

---

reconstruction of a new “collective identity,” in order to set Iranians in defending their own culture and identity from Western influences.

Overall, the defining characteristic of the Nahzat’s revolutionary ideology was its strong focus on religion. Religion was often a salient feature of many social movements. As Alberto Melucci explained, “Many historical examples show that, as the group forms, it defines its identity in terms of the past, drawing on totalizing myth of rebirth which is often at least quasi-religious in content.”<sup>204</sup> Therefore, religion has often been a ‘unifying’ factor in creating a more cohesive movement.

## **Conclusion**

The Nahzat achieved all of its objectives defined at the outset, and maintained sustainability until the Shah’s military forces declared their neutrality, thereby demonstrating itself as a successful movement. The success of the Nahzat was due to several factors: actors, situations, and movement ideology. In terms of actors, Khomeini was a charismatic leader with the ability to appeal to his movement members and mobilize them to act against the Shah. In terms of situations, the worsening socioeconomic conditions provided an optimal environment for people to mobilize against the monarchy. And finally, the widely shared movement ideology was particularly strong in creating a new perspective in understanding Islam.

Khomeini, who was the leader of the Nahzat, had promised an Islamic Government that would reconcile all ideological differences among the secularists, leftists and the religious clerics. But upon the triumph of the Nahzat, an Islamic Republic was established by Khomeini based on his governing principles of a

---

<sup>204</sup> Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*.p 104.

theocratic government, known as the *velayat-e faqih* (the rule of the jurisconsult).<sup>205</sup> Under Khomeini's concept of an Islamic state, the government would receive its legitimacy from God by adopting Shar'ia law as the rule of law. Secular and leftist groups that had greatly contributed to the Islamic Revolution were immediately suppressed by Khomeini's newly formed military wing. In other words, the Islamic Revolution was stolen by the clerics who were led by Khomeini, and forced all previous non-religious affiliates to retreat. Therefore, the founding of the Islamic Republic was formed contrary to many secular and leftist Iranians' expectations and was a regime that was clearly unpopular.

Khomeini's version of an Islamic Government based on *velayat-e faqih* was full of paradoxes. Boroujerdi noted some serious paradoxes within the new constitution of 1979 for containing: both religious and secular elements; democratic and nondemocratic principles; populist and elitist perspectives.<sup>206</sup> Khomeini's authority and the Iran-Iraq war masked the paradoxes within the Islamic Republic until after 1989, when the death of Khomeini set forth a continuous post-revolutionary political struggle between contending ideological factions under the regime. This transition in Iranian history laid the foundations for the rise of a reform movement known as 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

---

<sup>205</sup> Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*.p 3.

<sup>206</sup> Mehrzad Boroujerdi, "The Paradoxes of Politics in Postrevolutionary Iran," in *Iran at the Crossroads*, ed. John L. Esposito and R. K. Ramazani (New York: palgrave, 2001).p 17.

## CHAPTER 3

## The Rise of Khatami: The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad Movement

*1997-2005*

In chapter 2, we can see the ways in which Khomeini's revolutionary movement, the Nahzat, was successful. The Nahzat attained its objectives in removing the Shah, and established a partially developed Islamic Government. In this chapter, I will present a second test case, Khatami's reform movement, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad. Khatami's 1997 presidential campaign publicized a reformist ideology with a grand appeal to students and intellectuals, which gradually became a loosely formed social movement. Applying the social movement framework established in chapter 1, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad did not fully achieve its objectives and was not sustainable. Neither a "successful" nor a "completely failed" movement, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was overall an "unsuccessful" movement with regard to the framework in chapter 1. In evaluating the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad outcome, I will try to analyze reasons for why the movement was "unsuccessful" by using the resource mobilization theory, political opportunity structure theory, and lastly, the new social movement theory.

After the revolution in 1979, there was a long period of protest inactivity due to the government's strict censorship laws. Any opposition group that criticized the Islamic government was either severely silenced by the revolutionary guards or

voluntarily withdrew from the public scene. Iran entered an eight-year long war with Iraq in 1980, and in April 1980, the government closed down all university campuses for two years for the reason that a cultural revolution was needed to purge all traces of Western academia considered as contaminants in the Islamic Republic. After the Iran-Iraq war in 1988 and the death of Khomeini in 1989, Sayid Ali Khamenei succeeded in the role of Khomeini as supreme leader. He continued implementing censorship of dissenting voices, whether they were political or non-political, and any protests or demonstrations that were not pre-approved by the government were met with repressive force. Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani filled the role as president of Iran in 1989 until the year 1997. Government crackdown on dissent did not stop in 1997, but Khatami's presidential election created an opportunity for Iranians to re-engage in political action.

Even though public political discussions were severely suppressed during Rafsanjani's presidency, people continued to discuss politics in private.<sup>207</sup> The discussions were often complaints of the political regime and the unfulfilled promises of Khomeini's revolutionary rhetoric, but since public political action was restrained, many of the dissidents had no means to act against the government. As a result, there were no cases of mass protest until the 1997 presidential election. Khatami's victory in the 1997 presidential election created a political opportunity for individuals to be politically active after a long period of silence. It was Khatami's election that led to the birth of the reformist movement, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad.

---

<sup>207</sup> "Annual Report for Iran," (Amnesty International USA, 1995).

## Identifying the Movement: 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad

The name of the movement, “2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad,” meaning May 23<sup>rd</sup>, refers to the date when Mohammad Khatami was elected President of Iran in the Iranian calendar. The movement stemmed from Khatami’s presidential campaign and continued as a social movement supporting Khatami’s presidency and his reformist agenda until the 2005, Khatami’s last year in office. During Khatami’s campaign, he presented a developed, open and tolerant vision of Iran to the young voters. He inspired the hopefuls with a positive outlook on improving the government through a gradual process. His portrayal of a new Iran captivated his voters and led to his landslide victory in the 1997 presidential election.

The reform movement, 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, was a broad based political movement that consisted of various political organizations and parties that had a reformist agenda. The broad coalition formed under the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad consisted of groups and organizations with a variety of people from different classes and social circles united upon creating change to the Iranian government.<sup>208</sup> Some of the groups included were: Islamic Iran Participation Front (IIPF), Executives of Construction Party (Kargozaran), Solidarity Party, Islamic Labor Party, Mardom Salari, Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution Organization (MIRO), and Militant Clerics Society (Ruhaniyun).<sup>209</sup> Protestors or individuals who supported reformists’ claims were also identified as members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad. Among the loose coalition of organizations was the student group, *Daftar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat* or the Office of

---

<sup>208</sup> Dayid Menashri, *Post-Revolutionary Politics in Iran: Religion, Society, and Power* (London: Frank Cass Publisherrs, 2001).

<sup>209</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, "Cia World Factbook," (Skyhorse Publishing, 2008).

Consolidation Unity (OCU), that directed a student based uprising against the government's closure of *the Salam* newspaper in July 1999.<sup>210</sup>

Many of the organizations that supported Khatami's reformist agenda were also members of the wider 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement and had identified Khatami as the leader of the reform movement. The members of the movement were drawn to Khatami's reformist agenda in bringing political change to Iran through a gradual process. Khatami's reformist agenda advocated in "strengthening the rule of law and procurement of individual rights for Iranian citizens."<sup>211</sup> It was Khatami's reform agenda and ideology that appealed to many separate social groups, such as the youth, students, the middle class and women, thus created a widely unified social movement. Although not explicitly announced, some of the main entities involved in the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement, such as the student group OCU, originally supported the conservatives, but after the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, they withdrew support for the government and identified themselves as reformists.<sup>212</sup>

The structure of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was a complete reversal from Khomeini's revolutionary movement. Unlike Khomeini's revolutionary movement, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad began as a loose pro-reform coalition of several groups and then began to re-identify the leaders and the core members of the reform movement.<sup>213</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad's strategy of mobilization was through a "bottom up" approach by reaching outwards to as many interested members as possible. It can be argued that a "bottom

---

<sup>210</sup> Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran*.

<sup>211</sup> Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002).p 246.

<sup>212</sup> Molavi, *The Soul of Iran: A Nation's Journey to Freedom*.p 98.

<sup>213</sup> Meir Litvak, "Iran: The Platforms," in *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, ed. Bruce Maddy-Weitzman (The Moshe Dayan Center, 2002).

up” approach is more capable of creating a larger constituency for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, and could therefore challenge the Islamic government to enact reform proposals. As for the movement’s strategy in creating institutional reforms, Khatami and other reformist members in the government would initiate negotiations and proposals for reform as the “negotiation from the top” approach. Since in 2000, members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad elected 185 reformist members into the parliament as a strategy to strengthen the “negotiation from the top” approach to assist Khatami and the reform movement.<sup>214</sup>

The turning point of the movement came on July 11<sup>th</sup> 1999, when the Office of Consolidation Unity (OCU) directed a student based uprising against the government’s closure of the *Salam* newspaper. The student uprising was the first large-scale demonstration since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. It started as a peaceful student demonstration at Tehran University on July 8<sup>th</sup> 1999 organized by the OCU. The students were protesting the judiciary’s new regulations of freedom of the press and expression, and the ban on *Salam*, a leading independent newspaper that called for political reforms. A day later, regime vigilantes associated with the *Ansar-e Hezbollah* organization and the police forces raided the student dormitories in Tehran University on July 9<sup>th</sup> 1999, beating and throwing students out the windows.<sup>215</sup> There was more than 300 people injured and at least one was found dead.<sup>216</sup> At least 15,000 Iranian students took to the streets in Tehran on July 12<sup>th</sup> 2009.<sup>217</sup> Immediately afterwards, thousands of students staged violent demonstrations demanding justice

---

<sup>214</sup> AP, "Iran Reform Leader Says He Won't End His Challenge," *World News Australia*, June 26 2009.

<sup>215</sup> "Six Days That Shook Iran," *BBC News*, July 11 2000.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>217</sup> Douglas Jehl, "Despite Police Dismissals, Iran Protest Is the Angriest Yet," *The New York Times*, July 12 1999.

and response from the conservatives, whom were suspicious for instigating the mid-night raids in the dormitory.<sup>218</sup>

The severe casualties from the student uprising placed the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad under a leadership crisis as Khatami was forced to announce his opinion on the student dormitory incident. Torn between the Islamic government and the student members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, Khatami remained partially silent in response to the incident. Khatami did not completely support the student protests since he was concerned over his relations with the right-wing hardliners, but was also hesitant to endorse the student's use of violence and radical stance against the government.<sup>219</sup> From this moment onwards, many students were deeply disappointed of Khatami and his lack of support for the students. Therefore, the July 1999 student protests marked the beginning to a factional split between the students and the reformists in the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad.

## **Movement Objectives**

Since the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was born out of Khatami's election campaign, the aims and objectives of this movement carried forward many of the promises specified in Khatami's campaign. Khatami made three promises to his voters during his campaign: the rule of law, institutionalization of freedom, and political development aimed at the sovereignty of the people, legalize political parties and discontinue

---

<sup>218</sup> Ali Akbar Mahdi, "The Student Movement in the Islamic Republic of Iran," *Journal of Iranian Research and Analysis* 15, no. 2 (November 1999).

<sup>219</sup> Charles Kurzman, "Student Protests and the Stability of Gridlock in Khatami's Iran," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* XXV, no. 1 (Fall 2001).

restrictions on the media and the press.<sup>220</sup> Many of the changes that Khatami had advocated reflected what the people wanted, but many of the goals seemed very difficult to achieve under a government that has been extremely resistant to reforms.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad supported Khatami's campaign objectives, but in addition, the movement emphasized the importance of modernizing Iran. Anoushiravan Ehteshami, an Iranian scholar, succinctly defined the goals of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad: "overhaul the Islamic Republic; modernize its structures; rationalize its bureaucracy; and put in place a more accountable and responsive system of government."<sup>221</sup> In other words, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad stressed the need to change and return the Iranian governmental structure to its normal conditions, and then focus on modernizing Iran to be in par with other foreign nations.<sup>222</sup> In one of Khatami's speeches to the West, he said, "[Iran] has suffered from weakness and backwardness," but assured listeners that there was a possibility for improvements. "If the passivity and backwardness of Muslim countries is painful, we can rid ourselves of its bitter taste by pointing out the sweet fact that, with alertness, resolve, and solidarity, we can change our destiny."<sup>223</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement, focused mostly on reforming, expanding and strengthening specific government structures.

There were many common goals between Khatami and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, but among all them, both Khatami and members of the movement strongly agreed on creating a government that must be held accountable to its citizens. An accountable

---

<sup>220</sup> Golnar Mehran, "Khatami, Political Reform and Education in Iran," *Comparative Education* 39, no. 3 (2003).

<sup>221</sup> Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives: The Politics of Tehran's Silent Revolution* (London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2007),.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, p 6

<sup>223</sup> "Iranian President Khatami's Oic Speech Stresses Need to Learn from West," *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, December 9 1997.

government is one that represents the general will of the people. As Khatami described, “We are not people’s guardians or owners of society; we just serve the people...and must be able to cater to their needs and answer their questions”<sup>224</sup> The government during Rafsanjani’s presidency did not perform its duties in protecting the people, tolerating opposition voices, or even providing a platform for people to voice their concerns. Since there were barely any channels for individuals to voice their discontent, Khatami insisted on increasing dialogue between the state and its citizens to improve the accountability of the state. People’s maintenance of their “political campaign” could make the state more accountable, but moreover, as Khatami said, “people should channel their demands through the institutions of civil society and force state officials to carry out their responsibilities”<sup>225</sup>

Several months after Khatami had assumed the role of president of Iran, views on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad’s movement objectives diverged considerably between Khatami and members of the reform movement. Both Khatami and members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad were keen to change Iran, but each constituent had “slightly different priorities.”<sup>226</sup> To some degree, a shift in opinion was inevitable since Khatami had set very broad and abstract movement objectives. All members of the movement agreed on changing Iran, but no member offered a solution on how to obtain the movement’s objectives. Moreover, Khatami’s unrealistic objectives for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad created an illusion of a weak government and had overestimated the power of the movement.

---

<sup>224</sup> Mehran, "Khatami, Political Reform and Education in Iran."p 319

<sup>225</sup> "Iran: Khatami Calls on People to Sustain Campaign for Accountable Government," *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, May 26 2001.

<sup>226</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives: The Politics of Tehran's Silent Revolution*.p 6.

The opinion on movement objectives diverged substantially after the student protests in July 1999. Khatami's refusal to align his objectives with the OCU deeply disappointed the students who were pivotal to Khatami's presidential victory. The OCU originally supported Khatami's promises from his election campaign, but after the banning of the *Salam* newspaper, the OCU's objectives no longer supported Khatami. The OCU's demands were the reopening of *Salam* and freedom of expression.<sup>227</sup> The OCU had been a loyal supporter of Khatami's reformist agenda, but since the closing of the *Salam* newspaper and the mid-night raids of the student dormitories in Tehran University, the students were outraged and became extremely critical of Khatami and all government authorities. Since the attacks were planned and the attackers were well armed, the incident was a dubious act from the government, and a student described that the attacks "could not have been made without high-level support."<sup>228</sup>

Even though the O.C.U. was an active affiliate of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement, the student movement's lack of unity and focus on their goals and objectives led to its inability to achieve any of the changes that it sought. The O.C.U. eventually lost control as the spokesperson for the student movement after these student uprisings, and no one was sure of what the students wanted exactly. From July 8<sup>th</sup> to July 13<sup>th</sup>, 1999, the students used various protest slogans, but they were not unified under one theme, instead addressing a wide array of issues. Some protest slogans said, "We Want No Despotic Polity, We Want No Mulla's Corrupt

---

<sup>227</sup> Hanny Megally Elahé S. Hicks, Human Rights Watch/Middle East, "Stifling Dissent: The Human Rights Consequences of Inter-Factional Struggle in Iran," *Human Rights Watch* 13, no. 3 (May 2001).

<sup>228</sup> Jehl, "Despite Police Dismissals, Iran Protest Is the Angriest Yet."

Authority,” directing towards the conservative clerics.<sup>229</sup> They also called against the supreme leader in several slogans, such as, “Khomeini! Shame on You; Leadership Is Not for You” and “Incompetent Leader of the Time, Is the True Cause of this Crime.”<sup>230</sup> The students were calling for various demands and did not anticipate how the government might react to their protest demands. At the end, none of the students’ demands were achieved.

The fact that movement leaders identified objectives at the outset of Khatami’s presidential campaign, the objectives proved too broad and too vague. The lack of precision and clarity of the objectives rendered it difficult for movement members to judge whether the objectives were achieved or not. Objectives, such as “overhaul the Islamic Republic” and “modernize its structures,” were appealing and attractive to the wider audience, but each goal was a grand objective and did not offer how or what specifically can be changed.<sup>231</sup> The objectives that were identified resonated with many of the social groups. In the following section, I will evaluate whether or not the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad had achieved its objectives.

## **Achievement of Objectives**

Khatami’s powers as the president was severely restricted by the conservatives in the government and by the Supreme Leader, who has ultimate authority over Iran’s security forces and the Guardian Council. Even though Khatami was the president, reform progress was still hampered by the veto powers of the conservatives in the Guardian Council, the judiciary body. The Guardian Council was an

---

<sup>229</sup> Cyrus Bina, "The Hot Summer of Defiance: The Student Protests for Freedom and Democracy in Iran," *Journal of Iranian Research and Analysis* 15, no. 2 (1999), p 53.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Mehran, "Khatami, Political Reform and Education in Iran."

appointed twelve-member body consisted of individuals mostly from the far right political group.<sup>232</sup> During Khatami's presidential campaign, Khatami made many grand promises that now seemed highly improbable in a factious government ruled by conservatives and a powerful supreme leader. In 1997, a young boy responded to an interviewer and said, "Khatami is not the boss and never will be. In this country the President does not decide. Maybe Khatami has certain ideas, but won't have real power."<sup>233</sup> It was evident that Khatami's glamorous victory was only short-lived, as many people were aware of the president's limitations in the government.

In 2000, Khatami and members of the movement were able to achieve some reform progress by having successfully obtained the majority of the seats in the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran (*Majlis-I Shura-yi Islami*, or Iranian Parliament). With a limited amount of power and resources available to the president, the reformists tried to join the government by competing for the parliamentary seats. During the 2000 Majles election, some people voted for Khatami believing that he just needed more power and assistance in the government to overcome the conservatives.<sup>234</sup> Other voters, such as this young driver who called the election as "choosing the better of two evils," became less passionate about reforming Iran.<sup>235</sup> On May 21 2000, 189 out of the 290 of the parliamentary seats were obtained by the reformists; claiming 65% of the parliament.<sup>236</sup> Khatami had hoped to make the government more politically balanced in order to push for effective change in the

---

<sup>232</sup> Jim Muir, "Analysis: What Now for Iran?," *BBC News*, February 23 2004.

<sup>233</sup> Stephen Kinzer, "Many Iranians Hope Mandate Brings Change," *The New York Times*, May 26 1997.

<sup>234</sup> "Khatami's Second Chance," *Middle East Economic Digest* (2001).

<sup>235</sup> Dokhi Fassihian, "Voting for Change," *The Iranian*, February 17 2000.

<sup>236</sup> "Iran - Political Parties," (Encyclopedia of the Nations).

government. Reformists and supporters of Khatami were impatient at Khatami's lack of reform achievements, but recognizing the president's lack of power combined with the rising frustrations against the conservative government, the voters supported the reformists' again. This event was a crucial turning point for the development of the reform movement since it created a mobilization structure for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad: a "bottom up" mobilization base of voters and allies inside the government to "negotiate from the top."

Achieving changes in the internal structures of the government became increasingly complex due to the factional politics within the government. Positive election results may not even turn into real changes because the Iranian government was too divided. Khatami made efforts to mend the divide between the two political factions by calling on them to stop undermining each other, and put aside personal interests in order to create improvements for the country.<sup>237</sup> However, a strong political divide remained, and perhaps even intensified after the conservatives' defeat in the presidential and parliamentary elections.

The conservatives deployed various strategies to obstruct the reform movement from progressing, and thereby mounted public frustrations against the reformists for slow progress. The conservatives forced the departure of several leading reformers and Khatami's close advisers, Nouri and Mohajerani, imprisoned some of Khatami's movement members, and imposed the closing of pro-Khatami newspapers.<sup>238</sup> From 1999 to 2004, the conservative clerics closed more than a hundred newspapers and

---

<sup>237</sup> "Khatami Tells Mps to Work Together, Not against Each Other," *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, September 15 1999.

<sup>238</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives: The Politics of Tehran's Silent Revolution*, p 20.

magazines, and several hundred of student activists and intellectuals detained in jail.<sup>239</sup> On top of the arrests and forced closures of media outlets, the Council of Guardian had the power to block any parliamentary bills. By 2005, the Guardian Council voted a hundred and eleven of the two hundred and ninety-seven bills that Khatami had endorsed.<sup>240</sup> These examples are only some of the conservatives' successful attempts at hindering the progress of the reform movement.

The conservatives control over the judiciary (Guardian of Council) was the most problematic issue for the reformists, because all proposed laws had to pass through the judiciary. In 2000, reformists aimed to restore freedom of the press by proposing a law on the deregulation of the press. Since Khatami had promised to achieve freedom of the press and media during his election campaign, the bill was extremely significant to him. At the end, the Supreme Leader rejected the bill explaining free press could be a "great danger to the national security and people's faith if the enemies of the Islamic revolution control or infiltrate the press."<sup>241</sup> In 2003, Khatami and a group of reformists tried to advance a bill that would limit the powers of the conservatives. It was an idealistic move, and as many of the reformers expected, the bill was met with great opposition. The exact details of the bill, as Ehteshami wrote, was to "[limit] the powers of the Right wing by stripping the Guardian Council of its right to vet candidates for public office and enable the president to challenge the judiciary," as well as "assess the position of the president as

---

<sup>239</sup> Laura Secor, "Fugitives," *The New Yorker*, November 21 2005.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Nazila Fathi, "Iran Leader Bars a Bill Restoring Freedom in Press," *New York Times*, August 7, 2000.

the number-two figure in the state after the Supreme Leader.”<sup>242</sup> The Supreme Leader rejected the first bill, and the conservatives rejected the second bill. Both bills have been rejected, and the failure to pass the bill proved the reformists’ inability to enact any fundamental changes to the institutional structures of the government.

With the reform movement’s limited power, they were only capable of making small changes to the daily lives of people. Many of the Iranian youth and members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad placed their hopes on Khatami by supporting him during his 1997 election, 2000 parliamentary elections, and again in the 2001 presidential elections. But such support never brought significant changes, which caused much frustration and anger amongst supporters of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad. Khatami recognized this and on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004, before the seventh parliamentary elections, he issued a 47-page message on the reform movement to provide an explanation for the reformists’ inability to achieve significant progress over the past few years.<sup>243</sup> The following is an excerpt of his comment on the movement’s achievements:

There have been changes of such an extent in social, cultural and political relations that it is impossible to return to the period of before the reforms... We do not pretend that our attempt to defend the rights of the people have succeeded in every domain, nor that the people have seen all their aspirations fulfilled, but I claim that the way to democracy and the realization of historic ideals will not end, that we will continue on the path of reforms without straying from religion.<sup>244</sup>

The reform movement was not able to achieve the goals that they had identified, but as Khatami explained, the movement did attain some degree of progress. As Saeed

---

<sup>242</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives: The Politics of Tehran's Silent Revolution*, p 14

<sup>243</sup> Siavosh Ghazi, "Khatami Says Reforms in Iran Inevitable In "Testament" Letter," *Agence France-Presse*, May 3 2004.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*

Laylaz, a reformist intellectual said in October 2004, “Ten years ago, if you were in opposition to the government, they killed you. Now they just make some legal trouble for you.”<sup>245</sup> Khatami and other reformists slightly improved the situation in Iran, but not to a very far extent. Laura Secor, a journalist from the *New Yorker* described Khatami and the reformists’ progress for having “advocated rapprochement with the West, allowed a semi-independent press to flourish and civic groups to proliferate, and whetted the public appetite for a more accountable government.”<sup>246</sup> The reformists may not have exactly achieved their original objectives, which were able to strengthen the civil society and its institutions, and increase accountability of political authorities, but the important role they played was to increase awareness of such issues. It was Khatami and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad’s efforts that effectively brought a more open debate about the legitimacy of political leadership and the creation of an Islamic civil society.

Khatami and reformists in the parliament may have achieved some degree of reform progress for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement, but as far as the reformist student organization (OCU) was concerned, Khatami and his colleagues failed to achieve the objectives they had set out to achieve. Recalling the student protests in July 1999, Khatami and his movement tried to achieve some of the objectives demanded by the students who participated in the demonstrations. The lack of a uniform objective from the student protestors made it difficult for Khatami to rally for changes for them, but one of the major messages throughout the July 1999 protests was on the freedom of expression and the liberalization of the media. Khatami and his movement were

---

<sup>245</sup> Secor, "Fugitives."

<sup>246</sup> Laura Secor, "Khatami's Climb," in *The New Yorker* (New York 2009).

capable of modernizing the media and relaxing censorship laws, but only for a short time before the Supreme Leader re-enforced the strict laws on the media. As for the loss of OCU as members of the movement, who were dedicated reform advocates and provided the “bottom-up” support for Khatami, the reformists from the “top” had lost a major supporter from the “bottom.” The effects of this change in support base caused minor repercussions for the reform movement in the short-term, but had strong influences on movement sustainability in the long term. This will be discussed in the section on sustainability.

## **Movement Sustainability**

This section will explain the reasons why the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad had difficulty maintaining movement sustainability, and had ceased by the end of 2005 when Khatami decided to leave office. First, the conservatives had been in control of the government since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. Any efforts to change the balance of power were proven to be extremely difficult and would be met with great obstacles. Second, the hardliners deployed methods of violence to threaten, harass or even assassinate reformists, whom they perceive as key reform figures. Third, president Khatami’s “silence” betrayal of his loyal student supporters was detrimental to the overall movement sustainability. And finally, voters had high expectations on Khatami and his reform movement, but the lack of significant achievements led many to disengage their participation in the movement.

The amount of power vested in the conservatives’ faction was so great that any attempt to change the power construct seemed almost impossible. The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad lacked support from the Guardian Council, and more importantly, support

from the Supreme Leader.<sup>247</sup> As difficult as it may seem, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement managed to survive for a total eight years. Within these eight years, the movement achieved a slight degree of progress by relaxing control on citizens. Nevertheless, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was defeated by the conservatives, and was forced to leave the political scene after Khatami had finished his presidency and the reformists' failure to gain a large number of parliamentary seats in 2004.<sup>248</sup>

The conservatives strategized their offense on the reform movement, and one of their strategies was the use of force and terror to disrupt the movement's sustainability.<sup>249</sup> The targets were mostly key reformist figures for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad. Some of these attacks included the assassinations of Majid Sharif, Majid Mokhtari, and Mohammad Ja'far Puyandeh, who were secular intellectuals with a strong desire to establish a new area for people of similar minds to interact.<sup>250</sup> Saeed Hajjarian, one of the leaders in creating the reform movement and a popular dissident writer, was severely attacked.<sup>251</sup> In response, Khatami called the terrorist attack on Saeed Hajjarian a "declaration of war on the nation," reflecting signs of anger rather than fear on the assassins.<sup>252</sup> Even though Khatami, through his defiant words on the use of terror, tried to indicate that reformers were not frightened, many reformists were less publicly active. Moreover, these assassinations proved the conservatives' deep desire to root out any possibilities that Khatami's reform movement might succeed,

---

<sup>247</sup> W. George, "Iran's Stability Requires Cooperation between President Khatami, Supreme Leader Khamenei," *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, September 1st 2000.

<sup>248</sup> Secor, "Khatami's Climb."

<sup>249</sup> Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*.p 257.

<sup>250</sup> ———, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*.p 264.

<sup>251</sup> Gwynne Dyer, "Hit Attempt Will Quicken Iranian Reform," *Journal Gazette*, March 19 2000.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

even if it required them to murder. As Behzad Nabavi said during an interview with the *Salam* newspaper:

The basic goal of the right from the start was to present Khatami as the antithesis of [Islamic] “values” and “stability” of the regime, to show that if political development and civil society were institutionalized, security and order would disappear in society. They also want to create more opposition against the discourse of the May Movement...The aim is to steer society to a point where people would say “despotism is a good thing and we do not want freedom.”<sup>253</sup>

By creating chaos and tension in the everyday lives of people, the conservatives highlighted two options for the people in Iran: a safe society with restricted freedom, or a chaotic society but with freedom. The conservatives’ strategy was to pose a dilemma between freedom and safety, sending a message to its people that freedom has to come with a cost.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad reform movement did manage to achieve sustainability in 2000, as seen by the reformists’ victory in the 2000 parliamentary elections. But their dominance in the parliament did not create any substantial changes, and therefore, discouraged many voters from continuing to support the reformists. The reformists had a lot of difficulty in trying to secure seats for the seventh parliamentary elections in 2004. For the conservatives who won a large share of the seats, the 2004 parliamentary elections were a success.<sup>254</sup> But for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement, it was a big defeat that soon led to Khatami’s electoral loss the following year.

---

<sup>253</sup> Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*.p 265.

<sup>254</sup> Fardin Alkhah, "The Politics of Satellite Television in Iran," in *Media, Culture and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State*, ed. Mehdi Semati (New York: Routledge, 2008).

Voters who supported Khatami and the reform movement at the outset had hoped for significant changes, but because very few reforms were passed by 2000, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad began to lose supports. The movement gradually ended with the reformists' defeat in the 2004 parliamentary elections and the reformist presidential candidate, Mustafa Moin's loss in the 2005 presidential election. Under Iran's presidential election procedures, if none of the four presidential candidates gain an absolute majority of the votes in the first round, then two candidates will be selected for a second round on the Friday of the following week. Moin's loss in the first round of the presidential election placed Rafsanjani against Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the mayor of Tehran, in the second round. Mirebrahimi, an Iranian newspaper reporter, described his feelings when he heard about Moin's loss: "We know that political reform had failed. After the election, we should sit and talk to our people. In a taxi or the supermarket, we should make people learn about their rights."<sup>255</sup> Mirebrahimi's response represented the majority of Iranian's opinion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad. Many young voters, including Mirebrahimi, had hoped for Moin and the reformists to win, but refused to participate and vote in a political system that they distrusted.<sup>256</sup>

The youth and the student population were the major supporters of Khatami and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, but were extremely disappointed by Khatami's "silence" to the July 1999 student protests, and soon after, the reform movement began to lose support from the youth and the students. After the mid-night dormitory raid attacks on June 12<sup>th</sup>, Khatami widely broadcasted his speech telling students to obey the law

---

<sup>255</sup> Secor, "Fugitives."

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

and order, and that violence should not occur, as it would work against efforts to reform.<sup>257</sup> His lack of support to the students and protestors made many of his supporters feel betrayed and disappointed.<sup>258</sup> The results were a gradual loss of student supporters, but other groups from the New Religious Thinking movement and the Women's Movement continued to support the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad.<sup>259</sup> Nevertheless, in late 1999, the OCU broke away from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad after Khatami's "silent" abandon of the protestors who had risked their lives for the movement.<sup>260</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad that was born from Khatami's presidential campaign in 1997 became a divided and weak movement by 2005. By the end of 2005, the general feeling of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was a feeling of "failed" movement. Through Reza Yousefian, a reformist MP's response on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, his comments reflected on the movement's sustainability: "If you interpret reform as a movement within the government, I think yes, this is the end. But if you regard it as a social phenomenon, then it is still very much alive."<sup>261</sup> According to Khatami's organizational structure of the reform movement, the reform movement "within" the government might have failed. However, the reform movement "outside" of the government had not failed. This is the reason why the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad is not a "successful" or a "failed" movement, but an "unsuccessful" movement. I will provide a more detailed analysis in the following section.

---

<sup>257</sup> Geneive Abdo, "Days of Rage in Tehran," *Middle East Policy Council* VII, no. 1 (October 1999).

<sup>258</sup> Secor, "Fugitives."

<sup>259</sup> Poulson, *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks*.p 298.

<sup>260</sup> Secor, "Fugitives."

<sup>261</sup> Muir, "Analysis: What Now for Iran?."

## **Movement Success or Failure?**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad reform movement did not succeed, but the movement also did not fail. According to the social movement framework developed in chapter 1, a movement is successful if it is “persistent” towards their goals and receives “full response” in achieving their objectives. For this reason, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was not a “successful” movement because it achieved neither of the two criteria. The revolutionary movement demonstrated both qualities, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement did not. However, this does not mean that the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was a failed movement.

A failed movement would receive “no concessions” from the power-holders, and moreover, movement members would “disengage” in large volumes. Even though the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad did not achieve all their objectives, they were still able to receive “slight concessions” from the dominant conservative party, relaxing laws on the media and other repressive measures.

In addition, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad never “disengaged” in terms of sustainability. For a movement to be identified as “disengaged,” a large number of movement members must have detached themselves from the movement. Furthermore, the movement must have almost completely lost momentum. The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad continued to maintain some degree of unity under a loose-based coalition structure. It was able to sustain unity at least until the 2000 parliamentary elections and obtained the majority of the parliamentary seats. Soon afterwards, the movement struggled to maintain unity and momentum, causing it to fall in terms of sustainability. Even though the reformists were no longer the majority in the 2004

parliament, there was still a portion of reformists present in the parliament and therefore, the reform movement did not completely “disengage.” Overall, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad had dropped from a level of “persistence” to “waning participation” for the sustainability criteria.

The difference in word choice might seem peculiar, but by referring to the social movement framework figure on evaluating movement success, it will illustrate the reasons why the movement should be called an “unsuccessful” movement, rather than a “completely failed” movement. The following is the illustration of my framework taken from chapter 1, and adopted for evaluating the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad:

**Figure 3.1 - Evaluating the performance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad Movement**

		Achieving Objectives		
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>Halfway</i>	<i>No</i>
<b>Movement Sustainability</b>	<i>Yes</i>	Full Response	Slight concessions	No concessions
		Persistence	The Nahzat (1979) <i>Successful</i>	
		Abeyance		
		Waning Participation		2 <sup>nd</sup> of Khordad (2005) <i>Unsuccessful</i>
	<i>No</i>	Disengage		<i>Movement Completely Failed</i>

According to this original framework for assessing the degree of success of social movements, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad reform movement in 2005 would be illustrated in the center of Figure 1.2. as an “unsuccessful” movement. Its sustainability would

be described as “waning participation,” and its achievements would be described as “slight concessions.”

In respect to Figure 3.1, the directionality of 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad’s development was diagonal. The directionality of a movement reflects the strength of the movement in respect to the two-assessment criterion. The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad started at the bottom right then progressed diagonally towards the top left, but never reached the level of sustainability and objective attainment as a “successful” movement. The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad direction of development was a balance between achieving objectives and movement sustainability. Unlike the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, the Nahzat’s directionality of development was completely different, focusing on achieving “persistence” on movement sustainability before achieving “full response” for achieving objectives. In other words, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad achieved sustainability while it also sought its objectives. But by 2005, the movement was suffering from “waning participation” and had only received “slight concessions” in the movement achievements criterion, and therefore, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement was “unsuccessful.”

### **Explaining the Unsuccessful Movement**

Despite receiving popular support from various social groups, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad still did not manage to succeed as a social movement. The reasons why the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was an “unsuccessful” movement could be explained using the three social movement theories: political opportunity structure, resource mobilization theory, and new social movement theory. For the political opportunity structure, the movement was born out of a political opportunity – the 1997 presidential elections. Though the movement’s inability to take advantage of the July 1999 student protests

was a detrimental mistake. The resource mobilization theory explains the type of resources that the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad has gained, and the resources that the movement required. Finally, the new social movement theory explains the rising attention on pragmatism and pro-West attitude among the youth and student population.

### **Political Opportunity Structure**

The political opportunity structure theory highlighted the factors that influenced the progression of the movement by assessing the vulnerability of the political system in relation to the social, cultural and economic conditions.

Throughout 1997 to 2005, the political system remained fairly invulnerable, except during several major political events that allowed individuals to congregate in large numbers: the 1997 presidential election and the forced closure of the *Salam* newspaper. The political system was particularly weakened during these two events, but the government was quick to recover by mobilizing its military to repress dissent.

The large youth population in Iran was also a political opportunity, but was comparatively a smaller opening of opportunity to the two political events. Indeed, the majority of the youth in Iran was literate and politically conscious, and could easily be mobilized if the actors had the means to provoke youth activism. The mobilization of the youth will depend on the ability of the leader. Even though the two political events and the demographics of Iran were both political opportunities for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement, Khatami and members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad were both incapable of taking full advantage of the political opportunities, causing the inevitable failure of the movement.

---

*Political Events: The 1997 Presidential Election & the July 1999 Student Protests*

As a social movement with a focus on reforming the Islamic Republic, the Second of Khordad appealed to the silenced majority who wanted change, but were afraid or saw no opportunity for them to voice their discontent. In this respect, the reform movement had always been present, but entrenched in the people of Iran and never managed to surface into the public arena until the 1997 presidential elections. The 1997 presidential elections brought everyone's attention to the meaning of an Islamic civil society, the need to modernize the government structures, and the establishment of accountable and responsible bureaucratic structures.

Khatami's presidential election in 1997 not only provided an opportunity for people to take action, it created a major shift in the political discourse of Iran. Khatami assisted the creation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement with the goal to achieve greater government accountability and an Islamic civil society with efficient government institutions. His description of an Iran with tolerance and moderation captured the hearts and minds of people from diverse backgrounds, with his strongest supporter coming from the female and youth population. However, the situation was reversed after the July 1999 student protests.

Khatami's quietism on the mid-night student dormitory attacks was a betrayal on the loyal student activists who support Khatami during his 1997 presidential election. According to the political opportunity theory, the July 1999 student protests was a prime political opportunity for Khatami and other reformists to advance their reform agenda and weaken the conservatives' power. The July 1999 threatened the

political system, and opened a political opportunity that could have allowed reformists from the “top” to negotiate for concessions. Rather, Khatami responded with minimal support to the students. Khatami’s “silence,” as many students referenced it, was one of the major reasons for disengaging in the reform movement.

The core movement leaders preferred to change the Islamic Republic by gaining access to the political system rather than creating change through demonstrations. For this reason, the reformists devoted most of their efforts in 1999 campaigning for the 2000 parliamentary election. When the July 1999 student protests occurred, Khatami and his close aids were in the midst of planning for the 2000 parliamentary elections. They had deep reservations for associating with the OCU and other student organizations that were becoming increasingly radical and violent. On July 11<sup>th</sup>, 1999, the student riots became more militant after the dormitory attack and were chanting slogans, such as: “Down with the dictator” and “Commander-in-Chief, resign.”<sup>262</sup> Some of the young protestors were demanding the abolishment of the Islamic regime and other radical changes, but by doing so, they were endangering the lives of other youth dissidents. While a portion of the students wanted a drastic change, the majority of the students did not call for another revolution or for any violence, but only asked for gradual reforms to improve the daily living in society.<sup>263</sup> Khatami, itemized them as a whole and remained rather passive in the process.

---

<sup>262</sup> Val Moghadam, "The Student Protests and the Social Movement for Reform in Iran: Sociological Reflections," *Journal of Iranian Research and Analysis* 15, no. 2 (1999).p 103.

<sup>263</sup> Peyam Emruz, " Iran 1999: Universities under Attack, a Witness Testimony," *ABF*, no. 32 (1999).

Khatami's inattention to the students of the July 1999 protest was a severe mistake. The Second of Khordad lost this window of political opportunity by failing to utilize the student's activism to their advantage. Moreover, Khatami's passive attitude during the July 1999 student protests breed resentment among the students and youth. By 2003, the reformists' inability to confront the conservatives mounted frustrations amongst the students and youth that led to OCU's breakaway from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad in 2003.<sup>264</sup> By 2004, Abdollah Momeni, leader of the OCU, described Khatami as a "mere window dressing for the regime."<sup>265</sup> During the same year, a student from the Tehran University spoke to the president describing "how they had craved to hear and how Khatami's silence had tortured them" during the student protests.<sup>266</sup> Khatami's selfish decision to disassociate with the students in July 1999 led to the collapse of the student and Khatami alliance in 2004.

The separation between the students and the reformists highlight the divergence in opinion and objectives. For the most part, Khatami and his close aids were loyalists to the Islamic regime and were not aiming to *abolish*, but to *improve* the government. On the other hand, a minority of the students was becoming radicalized.

### *Rising Youth Population*

Iran's population was extremely young. By 1996, the demographics of Iran showed an interesting pattern: two out of three were under the age of 30.<sup>267</sup> The young population in Iran was no longer concerned with the religious fundamentalism

---

<sup>264</sup> Farideh Farhi, "Political Reform in Iran: Dead or Alive?."

<sup>265</sup> Secor, "Fugitives."

<sup>266</sup> Basmenji, *Tehran Blues: Youth Culture in Iran*.p 40.

<sup>267</sup> Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*.p 100.

or ideological disputes as in the 1970s, but more concerned with socioeconomic issues.<sup>268</sup> After the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the regime's heavy suppression deprived the youth from being "young," until the rise of technology, urbanization, change of lifestyle that created new circumstances for the youth to find their way of being "young." Included in the youth's exploration of being "young" was to

The youth's public announcement of their opposition to the banning of the Salam newspaper verified that the government had lost ground over the younger generation. The youth was able to gain such an important and influential role during this period because of their sheer number and ability to unite during Khatami's presidential election campaign. According to the data from the United Nations Population Division, the youth (15-24) population constituted 24.7% of the total population, demonstrating their ability to be extremely influential in the political decision making process. The youth population in Iran was also a political opportunity for the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad and will be discussed in the following chapter. But in terms of mobilizing the students and youth, an example was the Office of Consolidation of Unity (OCU). OCU, active in more than 50 campuses around Iran, was the largest student organization and coordinated peaceful demonstrations against the press bill and the closure of the daily Salam.<sup>269</sup>

## **Resource Mobilization Theory**

According to the resource mobilization theory, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was unsuccessful because it lacked the necessary resources to enact institutional changes to the Islamic Republic. There were two types of necessary resources that the Second of

---

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.p 68.

<sup>269</sup> Farhi, "Political Reform in Iran: Dead or Alive?."

Khordad needed: resources “within” the government, and resources “outside” the government. The greatest “outside” resource that the Second of Khordad had was a large movement membership, especially amongst the youth population, but was gradually lost following Khatami’s response to the 1999 July student protests. The movement needed resources “within” the government, such as power over the judiciary, military and the support from the supreme leader, were extremely difficult to obtain through normal political channels. The victory during the 2000 parliamentary election was one occasion, and Khatami’s re-election as president was another. However, during the period when the reformists had the majority of the seats in the parliament and had a reformist president, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad still did not make any exceptional changes. The movement lacked resources from “within,” especially in the judiciary and military, thus obstructing the reform movement from success.

### *“Outside” Resources*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was able to acquire adequate resources “outside” of the government structure by emphasizing his reformist objectives in creating a responsible government, relaxing media censorship laws and modernizing institutional structures. The term “outside” resources, refer to resources that are not related to the government. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, the greatest resource “outside” of the government was the broad movement membership, including the mobilization of students and youth. Khatami was able to receive popular support and mobilize students and youth starting from his 1997 presidential election campaign.

During the 1997 presidential elections, Khatami was an attractive candidate because he had been dismissed as the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance in 1992 for being too “permissive,” a quality that many voters supported and advocated.<sup>270</sup> Khatami was exceptionally appealing to the youth, students, women, and intellectuals, who yearned for deep cutting changes to the repressive Islamic regime in Iran.

Khatami’s election carried a significant message to the youth population and reignited their spirit of political activism. Khatami was able to mobilize the students and the youth, one of the biggest assets of the Second of Khordad. During his campaign, some of his speeches were specifically addressed to the youth. In 1997 during Khatami’s election campaign, he said, “Youth, is not an enigma, but an advantage.”<sup>271</sup> Khatami’s reform suggestions especially appealed to the younger voters, who believed that their parents had made the wrong decision in supporting Ayatollah Khomeini, who had brought about the rise of the clergy. Khatami’s election was an occasion for the youth to express their frustrations, and an opportunity to change Iran by being the decision makers of a new generation.

Khatami’s landslide victory in the 1997 presidential election results revealed the ability of the Iranian youth to think and act independently regardless of the government’s efforts in spreading conservative views. The youth has remained fairly vocal and independent in expressing their opinions. The Guardian Council, consisted of twelve conservatives, had authority over the selection of presidential candidacy and

---

<sup>270</sup> Stephen Kinzer, "Voice for Change Makes Iran Vote a Real Race," *The New York Times*, May 23 1997.

<sup>271</sup> Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*.p 246.

disqualified 234 candidates for the 1997 presidential election.<sup>272</sup> While also provided extensive campaign support for the favored conservative presidential candidate, the majority of voters did not choose Ali Akbar Nategh-Nouri, the conservative candidate. The large volume of youth supporting Khatami rather than the government-backed candidate Nuri proved the government's failure to influence the younger people. As an anonymous Iranian said, "People want to show that this is a grown-up country now and that we can make our own decisions. Religion is not the only thing that determines how people vote."<sup>273</sup> Khatami's reformist rhetoric and commitment to change Iran captured a broad-based of supporters. Ali Rabii, the social advisor for Khatami and a former deputy intelligence minister, said: "no one other than Mr. Khatami has been successful at representing the Revolution in such a way as to attract young people to Islam, the Revolution, and the regime. All this has created unity, harmony and accord among the various social classes and groups."<sup>274</sup>

### *"Inside" Resources*

With Khatami's presidential victory in 1997 and again in 2001, and the reformists' access to the parliament, the reformists had gained two powerful "inside" resources of the government. But even with the two "inside" resources, the reformists were still incapable of enacting any significant changes to the government, causing many supporters to be extremely outraged. Hashem Aghajair, a jailed academic, criticized Khatami's incompetence and called it a "tragedy of Khatami." He said, "During the six years that have elapsed for the reformist government and the four years of the reformist parliament, because of a lack of will and courage great

---

<sup>272</sup> Farideh Tehrani, "The Truth Inside," *National Review Online*, October 15 2002.

<sup>273</sup> Kinzer, "Many Iranians Hope Mandate Brings Change."

<sup>274</sup> Basmenji, *Tehran Blues: Youth Culture in Iran*.p 276.

opportunities were missed.”<sup>275</sup> The students and the youth, who were responsible for reform mobilization from “below,” performed their duties. But Khatami and his reformist ministers did not succeed in creating reform negotiation from “above.” Near the end of Khatami’s second term, Kaveh Basmenji described him as appearing “more of a safety valve for public frustration than an agent of tangible change.”<sup>276</sup> Some blamed Khatami for being indecisive and unable to oppose the conservatives, while others blamed the innate power structure within the Islamic government.

If it was indeed a problem concerning the power structure of Iran, then perhaps it should be called the “tragedy of the hardliners.” Since the inauguration of the president Khatami in 1997, the far-right conservatives have tightened their grasp on the judiciary and military aspects of the government by refusing to condone any of the reforms proposed by the reformists. The conservatives have repeatedly rejected any bills that would diminish their own power, or allow the reformists to gain more power. The conservatives’ objective was to stop the reformists from progressing in order to break the relationship between the supporters from “below” and the reformists from “above”; a task that the conservatives have successfully achieved.

In the broadest sense, the reformists’ had gained “inside” resources by electing a reformist president in 1997 and taking 189 out of 250 seats of the parliament in 2000.<sup>277</sup> However, the movement never attained any other “inside” resources that they needed: the judiciary, the military or the supreme leader. Overall, reformists

---

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.p 274.

<sup>277</sup> "Iran - Political Parties."

never obtained the necessary “inside” resources and could be the major reason for the movement’s inability to implement any reforms.

## **New Social Movement Theory**

The 1979 revolutionary fervor no longer appealed to the youth and students in the 1990s, and had replaced the radical, anti-west, Islamic ideology with strong views for pragmatism, reforms and individual freedom. The use of a religiously fundamental ideology by conservatives was to unify actors with little common life experiences, but after the revolution, the religious ideology was no longer an effective strategy for maintaining unity. After the Iran-Iraq war in 1989, the deep social and cultural changes led many people to realize the contradictions in the Islamic Republic.<sup>278</sup> Individuals’ saw factors, such as life experiences, social and economic background more important than the religious ideology espoused during the Islamic Revolution.

The Iranians’ view of life has shifted from a focus on religious ideology to a search for a non-ideological, pragmatic and democratic lifestyle. Their reformist and pragmatic outlook on life could be traced back to Abdolkarim Soroush, a prominent Islamic philosopher who refuted the Islamic revolutionary ideology by Shari’ati, and instead, insisted on creating a plural and modern society.<sup>279</sup> Ideology, as Soroush argued, “is the instrument of enslavement of the mind,...the democratization of dissemination of knowledge, and its popular [as opposed to governmental] control...are among the most important causes and signs of democracy.”<sup>280</sup> Soroush’s

---

<sup>278</sup> Quoted in Arjomand, *After Khomeini: Iran under His Successors*.p 10.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.p 77.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.p 78.

views on ideology resonated with the majority of Iranian's in the late 1990s, and during Khatami's presidential election, Khatami's speeches echoed the arguments that Soroush had highlighted.<sup>281</sup> In general, the majority of the Iranians' perspectives on ideology have dramatically shifted by having to live in the regime that was created from Khomeini's revolutionary ideology and introduction of new perspectives from Islamic scholars, such as Soroush. As a result, the conservatives will find difficulty in trying to maintain solidarity through religion as an ideology.

## **Conclusion**

Even though the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad did not manage to succeed, the movement demonstrated how the interplay of actors, situations and movement identity did not create a successful movement. The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was an "unsuccessful" social movement, but through a close examination of the movement's development, it has showed that the actors, situations and movement identity were not favorable to the movement. As Mayer N. Zald and Roberta Ash said, "Without studies of unsuccessful movements there can be no assurance that the crucial conditions have been properly identified in the study of successful movements."<sup>282</sup> This study of an unsuccessful movement has evidently demonstrated the importance of these three factors. The political events did create a strong opening of political opportunity, but the conservatives had a strong hold of all resources, "outside" and "inside" resources. The conservatives also had the support from the Supreme Leader Khamanei, who has the overriding authority on all major decisions. Moreover, Khatami did not align his interests with the student protestors, and had not been continuing his defiance of

---

<sup>281</sup> Arjomand, 85

<sup>282</sup> Ash, "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change."

the conservatives. For the above reasons, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad did not manage to succeed.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad had gradually faded to the background of the political scene, but anger against the government continues. The youth may have become disillusioned by their social conditions, and is possible for the lack of protests until June 2009. In the following chapter, I will discuss on the current ongoing movement in Iran: the Green Movement.

## Youth and Social Change: The Green Movement

*2009 – Present*

In the preceding chapter, Khomeini's revolutionary movement (Nahzat) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement were assessed based on the two variables for measuring success – objective achievement and sustainability. The first test case on the Nahzat illustrated the success of a social movement, but the second test case, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, was an unsuccessful movement. This chapter will analyze the third test case of the Green movement, a social movement that still continues today. In this chapter, I will use the social movement framework presented in chapter 1 to predict the Green Movement's outcome.

The turmoil within the tenth presidential election in Iran began the dissent that formed the Green movement, a social movement unprecedented in size and scale since the founding of the Islamic Republic, and that remains in motion today. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the incumbent of the Abadgaran conservative party, was seeking a second term running against Mir-Hossein Mousavi, an independent candidate and a former prime minister in Iran. The majority of voters were suspicious that the presidential election was rigged, triggering massive and numerous civilian demonstrations. Eventually, the demonstrations led to the creation of the protest

---

movement referred as the “Green Movement”, with “green” referring to the color of Mousavi’s electoral campaign.

Even the fervor surrounding the presidential election of Khatami in 1997 does not match the size and intensity of the Green Movement, thereby marking the Green Movement as the greatest civilian uprising and threat to the current regime in Iran since its founding in 1979. For years Khomeini’s establishment of the Islamic Republic was unrivaled in power and had been able to repress all dissident voices. In order to predict whether the Green Movement has a chance to succeed, there must be a close analysis of the causes and development of the Green Movement. Iran has remained firmly under the control of the religious authority and the far-right hardliners, but this sudden oppositional eruption demonstrates the fragility of the regime in controlling the hearts and minds of the Iranians. Since June 12<sup>th</sup> 2009, the Green Movement continues to unravel in Iran, and moreover, the debate over the chances of its success has been a contentious subject and one of concern for social movement scholars.

At the time of producing this thesis, the post-election crisis remains unabated and appears far from reaching a resolution. It will be difficult to produce an accurate and full assessment of the situation since the movement is ongoing and the government has placed heavy restrictions on news coverage by foreign news agencies. Despite the lack of complete data and information, I will attempt to evaluate the success of the movement based on the resources currently available. Participants of the Green Movement have consciously sought to avoid the errors of past political and social movements, while adopting successful tactics to their campaign. I will then

highlight and evaluate the choices made by members and leaders of the Green movement, and these the effects of these choices on the development of the movement. Next, the Movement's objectives will be defined, followed by an evaluation on the Movement's achievement based on its predetermined objectives. The subsequent pages will focus on the Movement's ability to maintain sustainability, highlighting the role of various activities in perpetuating the movement. From these lines of inquiry, the movement's ability to achieve its objectives and its degree of sustainability – the two tools for assessment in my framework – I will provide a rough conclusion on whether the Green Movement has been a success up to the present point in time. Extrapolating from the current status of the Green Movement, I will attempt to predict the final outcome of the opposition movement using different social movement theories. Finally, I will conclude by assessing its implications for the Iranian government and society.

### **Identifying the Movement: The Green Movement**

The Green Movement is the largest opposition movement mounted by Iranians since the founding of the Islamic Republic in 1979. On June 13 2009, the announcement of Ahmadinejad's landslide presidential election victory ignited a large body of voters who accused the regime of vote rigging and election fraud. No previous movements had ever accused the regime of such things or publicly denounced the regime as illegitimate. Angered over a stolen election, millions of Iranians protested against the government, demanded institutional reforms and denounced the presidential election results. This protest marked the beginning of a new political movement.

The outbursts of protests and cries from the opposition gained immediate international focus, and raised questions as to whether this could possibly be the beginning of another Iranian revolution. The Islamic Revolution in 1979 started with demonstrations in January 1978 against the Shah, evolved into a massive protest by August 1978, and continued until February 11, 1979 when the monarchy collapsed and led to Khomeini's rise as Supreme Leader in Iran. Since the power of the masses has clearly proven its ability to make revolutionary changes, many news sources have been calling 2009 the beginning of another revolution.

As much as the Iranians are frustrated with their government for perceived election rigging, they are hesitant to overthrow the standing regime through revolution. A portion of the voters bore witness to the Islamic Revolution, and therefore, their personal experiences of violence encouraged them to seek gradual institutional reforms rather than immediate abolition of the regime. Many of the protestors recollected the large number of casualties from the 1979 Iranian Revolution and the 1999 student uprising, and therefore restrained the current protests from escalating in violent clashes.

Confronted with a sea of protestors and with demonstrations breaking out around the country, the Islamic government at first felt threatened by the opposition movement and compelled to perform a partial vote recount. This recount resulted in the first positive feedback from citizens since the beginning of the post-election unrest. Despite receiving the supreme leader's acceptance to a partial recount, the opposition movement demanded the annulment of the election result. The government flatly rejected the request. In response, protests persisted and soon escalated, and protestors

showed no signs of suspending demonstrations. The government responded with an “iron fist,” issuing orders for the revolutionary guards to physically put down the protests. It was the government’s use of force against the protestors that created an international sentiment against the Iranian government and cast doubt on the regime’s legitimacy. Khamenei and other hardliners’ choice to use force instead of engaging in negotiations or providing further concessions for the opposition movement was a huge political risk, but one that the regime was willing to take for the sake of securing their powerful presence in Iran’s politically divided system.

With only a loosely identified leader, a small volume of capital resources and an unstructured configuration of movement supporters, the current Green Movement has still managed to provoke widespread political unrest against a repressive regime that has declared their intention to eliminate all voices of dissent. The dubious presidential election created an opening of a political opportunity for angry voters and frustrated citizens to rebel against the government. And in this way, the Movement has revealed that public dissent is still possible under such harsh political conditions. Moussavi may have revised his political orientation to assume the leadership role in the Green Movement, but his leadership alone is not enough to direct the Green Movement towards success. Whether the movement will actually succeed will depend on factors such as actors, situations and identity. The potential for the movement to succeed is there, but the possibility for it to succeed can only be measured over time as the sociopolitical conditions continue to change in Iran.

### **Movement Objectives**

The movement’s objectives have radically changed as the movement has progressed over time. Prior to the announcement of the election results, movement

demands echoed some of the objectives emphasized by Mousavi during his presidential campaign. Mousavi's election campaign highlighted the need to change the poor economic situation in Iran and change the dishonest methods of making economic and political decisions.<sup>283</sup> His platform appealed to voters who opposed the government's poor economic policies, hostile attitude to the West and restrictions on women's rights.<sup>284</sup> As Moussavi said, "Money is being spent without oversight, determined by political priorities, not economics."<sup>285</sup> In regards to the economic decision making process, Mousavi further condemned the government, saying, "Decisions are being made by personalities according to vested interests, and in contravention of clear laws in many instances."<sup>286</sup> Overall, Mousavi's original intention was to change Iran in terms of its economy and foreign policy.

Provided with only two major presidential candidates in the election, many voters who were eager to remove Ahmadinejad chose Mousavi because he was the only alternate candidate. Captivated by Mousavi's anti-Ahmadinejad rhetoric, a segment of the voters supported Mousavi even though they were more concerned about non-political issues, such as job creation and security.<sup>287</sup> Another segment of Mousavi's supporters, categorized as the unemployed youth, chose Mousavi because his profile best suited their interests in recovering the economy and achieving greater sociopolitical freedoms. Until the election results were announced, the difference in interest between Mousavi and his voters was not an immediate issue. It was after the election results that the movement redirected towards a different set of objectives.

---

<sup>283</sup> Robert F. Worth, "As Iran Votes, Talk of a Sea Change," *The New York Times*, June 11 2009

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Teymoor Nabili, "Mousavi Revives Reformist Vote," *Al Jazeera*, June 13 2009.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

Although Mousavi did not represent the popular reformist liberal attitudes of his voters, he did receive a significant amount of support. Overall, the predominant attitude of his voters was to wrest the presidency and executive power from the conservative elites. Mousavi's presidential candidacy provided a possibility for some voters to pursue a more reformist agenda, and as for others it was an opportunity to remove Ahmadinejad.

Neither identified as a reformist nor a conservative hard-liner, Mousavi tried to remain politically neutral during his election campaign to maintain good relations with the conservatives and the religious authority. Hence, he carefully dismissed his voters' increasingly hostile attitude towards the conservatives. Mehrzad Boroujerdi said, if the protests successful removed Ahmadinejad and replaced him with Mousavi, then "the world could expect a President Mousavi who fits somewhere between the accommodating reformism of Khatami and the strident nationalism of Ahmadinejad."<sup>288</sup> Mousavi did not represent a reformist political view, but rather, identified himself as politically independent and welcomed support from any political group.<sup>289</sup> Mousavi's ambiguous political preference fit with his strategy to maintain good relationships with the two political factions - the reformists and the conservatives - but in the end, the highly suspicious election results and the escalated demonstrations forced Mousavi to take a side.

Mousavi and his voters previously differed on movement objectives, but after the announcement of the election results, both parties united in demanded the

---

<sup>288</sup> "Assessing Moussavi ", *The Economist* 2009.

<sup>289</sup> Farshid Motahari, "Moussavi: The Man Who Wants to Remove Ahmadinejad," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* May 11 2009.

annulment of the presidential election results and justice over a stolen election. Started as a loose group of Mousavi supporters with varying goals, the Green Movement erupted into a full-fledged social movement demanding claims from the government that were no longer economical, but political.<sup>290</sup> With a unified objective, voters staged demonstrations in major cities around the country to express their anger against the government. During the first few weeks of protest, Mousavi's main objective was the annulment of the election results and the permission to hold peaceful demonstrations amid the intense atmosphere. On June 15, Mohsen Makhmalbaf, on behalf of Mousavi, announced that the situation had become a "*coup d'etat*, and Mousavi has asked for the world's governments not to recognize a president created by a *coup*."<sup>291</sup> Supporters of Mousavi that once had differing goals were strongly united on removing the incumbent Ahmadinejad.

When the protests broke out in June 1999, previous discrepancies between Mousavi and his voters' objectives were not an issue since both parties consolidated their objectives towards removing Ahmadinejad. But by July 2009, unresolved discrepancies between Mousavi and his supporters, and the escalation of protests into violent confrontations became a major problem. The Green Movement seemed to have lost its direction, lacked a movement agenda and was divided among demonstrators calling for various demands from the government, including the complete abolishment of the religious authority. Even though it was not possible to measure how prevalent the sentiments were on eradicating the religious hierarchy, it

---

<sup>290</sup> Nasser Karimi & Anna Johnson, "Iran Rally: Mousavi Calls Demonstration to Mourn Dead Protesters," *Huffington Post* 2009.

<sup>291</sup> Julian Borger & Robert Tait, "The Financial Power of the Revolutionary Guards," *Guardian*, February 15 2010.

was evident that a growing majority of people demanded a complete change in the religious political structure. One student protestor said, "I don't want to save the Islamic Republic. I want a total change, something close to a revolution."<sup>292</sup>

However, some movement leaders, such as Mousavi and Karoubi, preferred to be hesitant in expressing such radical views. Worried that the Islamic government might identify them as "illegitimate" or enemies of the Islamic regime, Mousavi and Karoubi favored change that was less extreme. In general, supporters of the movement were trying to fight against the government, but the extent to which they wanted to create change – either gradually or completely – was not clear.

In December 2009 following the death of Ayatollah Montazari, who was a key figure for freedom and human rights in Iran, there were violent protests that caused more casualties than the protests in June 2009. Members of the Green Movement and Mousavi seemed to have formed slight consensus of their objectives. A larger group of individuals called for the complete overthrow of Iran's political system. Many protestors were killed during the winter demonstrations, including Mousavi's nephew. This event heavily influenced Mousavi's decision to become more outspoken and led to his most defiant speeches in January 2010. A few months prior, the Green Movement was only a loosely connected alliance that included politicians, clerics, individuals from the middle-class and the youth, but after the protests in December, the Green Movement changed course. Mousavi and his colleagues were able to fully identify movement objectives, a big step in re-uniting the loosely formed social movement.

---

<sup>292</sup> "Lack of Common Goals, Leadership Tests Iran Opposition," *Charleston Daily Mail*, November 16 2009.

The defining point for Mousavi's post-revolutionary political career came after the death of Ayatollah Montazari and the violent demonstrations in December 2009. Mousavi's decision to identify his political interests with the demonstrators would cause him to be viewed as a threat to the Islamic regime. On January 3, 2010, five key religious figures issued a manifesto that declared ten demands of the Iranian government, including five that were explicitly demanded by Mousavi, and objectives that were raised by some of the demonstrators.<sup>293</sup> Outlining the movement's goals, the manifesto was released in hope of reunifying the movement by clarifying the objectives of the Green Movement. The Manifesto's ten goals were listed as followed:

1. Resignation of Mr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad [as the president]...abolish the vetting process of candidates [by the Guardian Council]...2. Releasing all the political prisoners...3. Free means of mass communication...4. Recognizing the rights of all the lawful political groups, university student and women movements... 5. Independence of the universities [from political meddling and intervention]; ...abolishing the illegal Supreme Council for Cultural Revolution [that interferes in the affairs of the universities]...6. Putting on trial all those that have tortured and murdered [people]...7. Independence of the judiciary by electing [rather than appointing] its head ...8. Banning the military, police, and security forces from intervening in politics...9. Economic and political independence of the seminaries...10. Electing all the officials who must become responsive to criticisms...Not meeting these [legitimate] demands of the Green Movement...will also deepen the crisis with painful consequences, for which only the Supreme Leader will be responsible.<sup>294</sup>

By February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010, Moussavi's attitude had completely shifted from his pre-election attitude. He openly denounced the Islamic Republic for failing to achieve the goals of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, and declared that "roots of tyranny

---

<sup>293</sup> "Abdolkarim Soroush: The Goals of Iran's Green Movement," *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 6 2010

<sup>294</sup> "The Presidency: 1977-1981."

and dictatorship,” that were marked during the Shah’s era, continues to exist.<sup>295</sup> He re-iterated some of the demands listed in the Manifesto, announced that he would persevere against the government, even to the extent that it would cost his life. His speech was one of the most defiant messages he had given, a reaction to the death of his nephew and an attempt to provide momentum for the movement that had been losing ground. At this stage, Mousavi’s objectives resonated with some of the demands from the demonstrators. However, the timing of Mousavi’s decision to side with the protestors, instead of the government, was too late and had made a huge cost on the movement’s sustainability. The effects of this will be thoroughly discussed later.

It can be argued that the development of Mousavi and the movement’s objectives was not straightforward, but fluctuated according to the political situation at the time. At first, Mousavi’s campaign supporters may not have particularly agreed on Mousavi’s objectives during his election campaign, since some of his voters saw him as a vehicle to remove Ahmadinejad from power, while others found similarities in their interests. But as soon as the Presidential results were announced, the Mousavi and a majority of the protestors agreed on the demand for an annulment of the election results. Soon after, the protesters were faced with a severe political crackdown and the demonstrators only managed to return to the streets after the death of Ayatollah Montazeri in December 2009. Since then, the movement has been fairly quiet and there have been no major protests. This brief outline on the post-election protests illustrates the impact of political situations on movement

---

<sup>295</sup> "Iran's Mousavi Says He Will Continue Fight for Reform ", *BBC News*, February 2 2010.

objective formation. Street protests and demonstrations did not clearly express peoples' precise concerns, but captured widespread attention on their frustration against the government. The most detailed outline of objectives was the manifesto issued on January 5<sup>th</sup> 2010. For this reason, I will use the above afore-mentioned objectives and assess whether the movement has achieved any of its objectives so far.

### **Achievement of Objectives**

As of March 2010, the Green movement had only been able to achieve one concession from the government and none of the ten movement objectives that were listed under the Manifesto. Despite the Movement's inability to fully achieve any of the objectives outlined in the Manifesto, the Green Movement was able to make other achievements. The movement's major achievement was the creation of a public sentiment – that was no longer refrained from expressing - against a government described as “illegitimate.” The whole election incident and the large uproar of protests against the religious authority had destroyed trust in politicians affiliated with the government.

The movement was not able to annul Ahmadinejad from his presidential victory, but the Supreme leader accepted Mousavi's demand for the Guardian Council to investigate for cases of fraud in the election process. The achievement here is twofold: the Supreme leader's tolerance of Mousavi and his movement demands, and the creation of a widespread perception that the election was a fraud. Beyond gaining Khamenei's approval to investigate the election process, the Green Movement gained an advantage in the timing of Khamenei's decision. Three days immediately after announcing the election result, Khamenei quickly confirmed the

legitimacy of the election, publicly describing the legitimacy of the regime and the transparency of the election results, but soon thereafter, Khamenei accepted Mousavi's request to investigate whether the election was fraudulent. Khamenei's move, whether it was intentional or not, increased peoples' doubts about the government and solidified the popular opinion that the election was rigged. As Jeremy Kinsman said, "The crucial fact, is that millions believed they had been cheated of their votes" and that by conceding to Mousavi an investigation into the election process, Khamenei had reasserted this popular belief.<sup>296</sup>

The rise of illegitimacy of the system is a serious issue, but as a regime that has remained in power for the past three decades, even widespread public opinion on the illegitimacy of the government may not be an eminent threat to the regime. Mousavi's defiant speech on February 27 2010, highlighted the regime's handling of the election, and the post-election unrest had severely damaged their legitimacy. If the regime does not act to resolve these issues, Mousavi said, "[T]he fall in illegitimacy of the system would speed up."<sup>297</sup> However, the regime seems unconcerned about the prospect of Iran's losing legitimacy, because the regime is certainly capable of suppressing dissent and opposition. As demonstrated through the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement, the regime had forced people's concern over the legitimacy of the Iranian system to remain beneath the surface.

---

<sup>296</sup> Jeremy Kinsman, "Mulling the Mullahs: Prelude to the Next Iranian Revolution?," *Policy Options* (Sept 2009).

<sup>297</sup> Monavar Khalaj, "Moussavi Warns of Iran Losing 'Legitimacy'," *Financial Times*, February 27 2010.

## **Movement Sustainability**

Since the Green Movement is still ongoing, it will be assessed based on what the movement has accomplished so far. The Green Movement's objectives had been fluctuating since the first election protest began, and only by December 2009 did Mousavi and other reformists manage to roughly outline the objectives of the Green Movement in a manifesto. The long delay in determining objectives has taken a large toll on the Green Movement, seen by the loss of momentum and the lack of achievements. Moreover, if the power of the movement continues to weaken, the movement will no longer be a threat to the regime, and will unlikely attain its demands. Like the June 1999 student protests, the Green Movement provided an opportunity for individuals to express their dissent in public, but it is still uncertain as to how the protestors' concerted efforts against the regime will prove to be successful in achieving their objectives. Judging from Khamenei's uncompromising stance and unwillingness to fulfill the demands of the Green Movement, it may take a lot more than denounce the regime in order to achieve their objectives.

Born out of the election protests on June 13, the Green Movement gained momentum from the demonstrators who rebelled against the government for allegedly stealing the election. A few days following June 13, Khamenei issued a statement ordering the Guardian of Councils to investigate the elections. The concession did not suspend the protests, but instead caused the protests to become more violent, because the concession did not meet protestors' demands. As soon as the protests became more violent, Mousavi's support for the demonstrators seemed to quell. Mousavi's decision to minimize his role in leading the protestors caused the

movement to struggle in maintaining sustainability. Also, the government issued the use of force by the *Basiji*, a volunteer-based militia wing under the Revolutionary Guards, against the demonstrators on the following day. Mousavi's leadership (or lack thereof), the use of violence, and the achievement or non-achievement of objectives are all factors in determining the Green Movement's sustainability.

In terms of leadership, Mousavi is loosely identified as the leader of the Green movement. The Green Movement does not have a core group of planners or a solid support system that can provide resources and capital. Lacking a solid organizational structure, the movement may find great difficulty in trying to organize forces. The Green movement is currently a general collection of a number of groups, including prominent reformist, student and women's organizations, and exiled opposition groups located within and outside the country. Compared to previous movements, the Green Movement is much broader in scope as is one of the most inclusive movements in Iran. But the movement lacks a leader who is popularly accepted by members of the Green movement, as well as direct and unify movement constituents.

The Green movement has been struggling to maintain stability as the government declared a ban on the unofficial demonstrations and the employed its military forces against the protestors. In many instances, the use of force by the *Basiji* created a large number of casualties pushing protestors to respond back with force. The protests grew in scope and violence, but entering mid-July, the scale of the demonstrations seemed to die down due to an absence of Mousavi as a leader. Despite the Supreme Leader's tolerance of the military's use of force and violence against protestors, the Green movement was partially sustainable during the first few

months since its establishment, but is now a faded and unsustainable movement. Finally, sustainability of the movement gave room to the violent and controlling attitude of the Islamic Regime after Khatami's second term.

Even the figureheads of the Green Movement, such as Mousavi and Karroubi, had been arrested, strictly observed and attacked by the government's military wing. Karroubi's son announced that the government had placed Karroubi on house arrest.<sup>298</sup> In January 2010, Karroubi's car was shot, and could be interpreted as an attack to threaten Karroubi from publicly speaking against the government.<sup>299</sup> Mousavi is restrained from speaking outwardly against the government and has to be extremely careful in what he says, because the government strictly observes Mousavi's each and every action.<sup>300</sup> Even though there are no evidence, but the death of Mousavi's nephew was highly suspicious and was mostly probably led by the government. The government has been increasingly suspicious of all moves by the leaders of the movement, and has made any attempt to mobilize extremely difficult. Since the presidential elections, Mousavi barely made any public appearances and mainly reached out to his movement members through the Internet. He continues to publish messages on his website, Kaleme.org, as a way to maintain communication with movement supporters. However, if Mousavi demonstrates any misconduct, then with the results may be severe punishment from the government. The government may have avoided arresting Mousavi, wary of instigating any more street demonstrations in response.

---

<sup>298</sup> Andrew Sullivan, "Are Mousavi and Karroubi under Arrest?," *The Atlantic*, Dec 30 2009.

<sup>299</sup> Nazila Fathi, "Shots Fired at Mehdi Karroubi's Car in Iran, His Son Says," *The New York Times*, January 8th 2010.

<sup>300</sup> Tara Mahtafar, "Post-Ashura Iran: Dissidents Outside Consider Organizing with Those inside to Lead Opposition," *Payvand*, January 8th 2010.

Mousavi's personal experience of the government's repressive forces, the death of his nephew and moreover, the movement's loss of momentum were the major reasons for Mousavi's decision to change his political orientation. Mousavi aligned his goals closer to the goals of his movement supporters. Recalling from chapter 1, Roberta Ash identified three possible actions for movement leaders to sustain a movement and Mousavi's change in political orientation was one of the three methods that Ash had identified: goal transformation.<sup>301</sup> Despite Mousavi's efforts to sustain the movement, the imperfect timing of his decision has already had a detrimental effect on the movement. Mousavi's late arrival in directing movement dissent against the government and the Supreme leader caused members of the movement to question his commitment to the opposition. Partially marginalized by his delayed reaction to support his protestors, Mousavi tried to reemerge as a movement leader by deploying more efforts toward on movement coordination and management.

It was not until early December, after the death of Ayatollah Montazari, that many protestors returned to the streets releasing their frustrations of the government's refusal to host a proper gathering for mourning Montazari. From the start of the Green movement to its current situation now, the movement's trajectory has continuously changed and lacked sustainability. For the case in Iran today, the regime tightened their grip on eradicating dissident voices, performed executions in public and other various displays of torture and violence to silence oppositionists. In the end, the Islamic Republic recognizes that their dominance over the military force

---

<sup>301</sup> Ash, "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change."

empowers them to deploy the use of force during times of unrest. Iran's military force was the most effective resource in weakening the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad and it is possible that the military may repeat their strategy and cause the Green movement to collapse.

The movement has not been successful in maintaining sustainability, but at least the movement has not ceased to exist. In Iran, events are changing so quickly that it has become increasingly difficult to predict what might happen next. When Mousavi tried to recover his role as the leader, the government quickly ordered the house arrests of Karroubi, restricting him from participating in the movement. During this period when the crucial figures of the movement were unable to fully partake in the movement, student leaders from the 1999 student protests are returning to the forefront of the movement, trying to coordinate efforts to mobilize. The Iranian specialist from the U.S. Congressional Research Service, Kenneth Katzman said, "There appear to be a core of student leaders, recent graduates and people who were students in 1999" and that they have "agreed on nonviolence and are trying to reach out to their parent's generation" and supporters outside of Iran.<sup>302</sup> The return of the student leaders from 1999 demonstrates the possibility of an underground leadership. Through this strategy, the students would try to sustain a movement that is losing momentum, whilst offering a short-term solution to a leaderless movement when Mousavi and Karroubi are prevented from leading.

Echoing some of the movement organizational experiences from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, student leaders offered to replace Mousavi and take control of the losing movement. This could be a solution to the unsustainable Green movement with a

---

<sup>302</sup> Iason Athanasiadis & Barbara Slavin, "Iranian Opposition Grows beneath Surface," *The Washington Times*, January 1 2010.

loosely identified leader. Amir Abbas Fakhraivar, a former student leader who currently resides in the United States will be using social networking programs on the Internet to coordinate and lead the movement along with other student organizations from other countries.<sup>303</sup> He commented on his goal to create a “revolutionary council” consisting of 15 people located in and out of Iran as leaders of the Green Movement.<sup>304</sup> However, the establishment of a transnational “revolutionary council” to organize a movement, where the organizers may not be physically protesting, may prove to be difficult to convince people to mobilize. Djavad Salehi-Esfahani, a professor of Economics at Virginia Tech, described how he “can’t see him losing the leadership to others outside the country,” because Mousavi “has wide appeal and will probably have to fight elements inside the Green Movement who are pushing for overthrowing the Islamic Republic rather than reforming it.”<sup>305</sup>

One of the major factors that may allow the movement to gain stability is its degree of flexibility and adaptability. The movement has been quick to respond to the various repressive pressures from the government, applying protest strategies from the 1979 revolutionary movement, such as the calling of “Allah Akbar” on the rooftop at night, a show of dissent with a low risk at being caught.<sup>306</sup> More creatively, some individuals started to use graffiti to write protest slogans in various public spaces.<sup>307</sup>

---

<sup>303</sup> Ibid.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Martin Fletcher, "'Wailing of Wolves' in Iran as Cries of Allah Akbar Ring from Roofs," *Times Online*, June 25 2009.

<sup>307</sup> ———, "Iranian Protest Is Grassroots and Unstoppable, Say Activists," *Times Online*, December 30 2009.

---

Some slogans were written on paper money, where officials would have difficulty tracing the individual of such an act.<sup>308</sup>

The movement has been experiencing many difficulties in maintaining sustainability, but with the help of the Internet and other networking devices, coordinators have been able to keep followers updated in real time. With the government intensifying its crackdown on protestors, the virtual space will be an important tool in keeping the movement sustainable. Movement actors were also very creative in using other methods to express their opposition against the government. Protestors may find ways to voice their dissent through security loopholes, but threats of prosecution and capital punishment is still a major deterrent against people mobilizing.

### **Movement Success or Failure?**

As developed in chapter 1, in order to evaluate the success of social movements, I developed a framework based on two assessment criteria - objective achievement and sustainability. Based on the two assessment criteria, the Green movement is an “unsuccessful” movement thus far. In terms of the Green movement’s objective achievement, the movement has not performed well since the movement did not attain any of the objectives set in the manifesto, and only one concession that outside of the manifesto. For the “achieving objectives” criterion, the Green Movement is identified as under “slight concessions.” As for the movement’s degree of sustainability, the movement started with great momentum during the start of the post-election protests, but continues to wrestle with the government’s repressive

---

<sup>308</sup> Murphy, "Iran Deems "Green" Banknotes Invalid."

forces. Even though the movement is met with force and violence, the movement still managed to exist. Therefore, in terms of the movement's "sustainability," the Green movement is experiencing "waning participation."

The relationship between achieving objectives and sustainability was strongly evident in the Green Movement over the past few months. When the Green movement gained momentum, as seen by the immediate post-election unrest, the movement received some form of response from the government, such as the partial vote recount. Soon after, the movement began to backtrack as it gradually weakened in terms of sustainability and lose focus on its objectives. Protests stalled for a short period of time until the death of Ayatollah Montazeri, bringing protestors back onto the streets. The movement regained sustainability since participants were united with a common objective. As this shows, the two variables are highly correlated, with one feeding off of the other. To project this on my framework, I have illustrated it as the large arrow.

Compared to the Nahzat movement, the Green movement illustrates a direct relationship between the sustainability of the Green movement and the possibility of achieving its objectives. In Figure 1.4, the progression of the directionality of the Green movement was diagonal. As the Green movement became more sustainable, the chances of the movement achieving its objectives were higher. The Green movement progressed towards a successful movement, but only manages to reach the stage of a "marginally successful" movement.

**Figure 4.1 - Evaluating the performance of the Green Movement (2009-)**

		<b>Achieving Objectives</b>		
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>Halfway</i>	<i>No</i>
<b>Movement Sustainability</b>	<i>Yes</i>	Persistence	Full Response The Nahzat (1979) <i>Successful</i>	Slight concessions
		Abeyance		No concessions
		Waning Participation		Green Movement (2009-) <i>Marginally Successful</i>
	<i>No</i>	Disengage		2 <sup>nd</sup> of Khordad (1997) <i>Unsuccessful</i>

The Green movement has neither succeeded nor failed thus far, but this does not eliminate the possibility of either. In post-revolutionary Iran, the new Islamic Republic regime has completely restricted conditions to collective action, but since the Green Movement’s inception in June 2009, the movement has demonstrated its ability to become powerful, capable of gaining concessions from the hard-liners and challenging the legitimacy of the religious authority.

For the meantime, the elections results that were imposed by force will likely remain the same, and despite international condemnations of the Islamic regime for the use of violence, the government has shown no indication of suspending the use of

force on the demonstrators.<sup>309</sup> In such a situation, what is the likely future of the Green Movement? Even though the final result of the Green movement is unknown, it is possible for the Green Movement to become a “marginally successful” movement. Based on the analysis from the three social movement theories – resource mobilization, political opportunity structure and new social movement theory, I intend to justify how each theory explains the reasons for the Green Movement to become a “marginally successful” movement.

### **Explaining a Marginally Successful Movement: Political Opportunity Structure**

Other than the Green Movement, no other social movement was able to revive the latent activism of social groups that were immensely involved in both the revolutionary movement in 1979 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad movement in 1997. Moreover, the Green Movement had remarkably shattered the primacy of the religious ideology in governing Iran and the Supreme Leader’s reputation as a divine figure. Clearly, the Green Movement has the potential to become a successful movement, but facing a regime with the resources to control and power to threaten the Green Movement, it will be highly unlikely that the movement will achieve complete success.

Indeed, the Green Movement is not only fighting against the religious hard-liners, it is fighting against an Islamic regime that has remained in power for the past three decades. Despite the seemingly undefeatable Islamic regime, the social, economic and political conditions for Iran today indicate a possibility that the Green

---

<sup>309</sup> "Iran: Excessive Use of Force against Protestors Condemned," (2009), [http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news\\_details.asp?NewsID=18538](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=18538).

---

Movement will become a “marginally successful” movement in the near future. To begin addressing the reasons why the Green Movement will become a “marginally successful” movement, I will use the political opportunity structure theory to explain how the movement has managed to mobilize under the given conditions.

*“The Youth Bulge”: How Youth Became the Actors of Today*

First, the 2009 presidential election was a prime opportunity for the youth to voice their discontent as a result of demographic trends. Youth populations actively participated in the two previous movement case studies – the 1979 proved to be successful and the 1997 movement was unsuccessful – but with such varying results, how might the large cohort of youth activism in the Green Movement direct it towards another case of a successful movement? According to the political opportunity structure, the demographic trends in Iran indicate reasons why the current sociopolitical landscape is a unique opportunity for the youth to form the leaders of their own destiny.

Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran has experienced a dramatic demographic and social shift, setting the foundations for a prominent event of social change. Iran has become a country that is extremely young. In July 2009, the population reference bureau reported “one in three Iranians is between the ages of 15 and 29. Furthermore, 60 percent of the Iranian population is under 30, born around the 1979 Islamic revolution or after.”<sup>310</sup> The demographic facts indicate that a “youth-bulge” phenomenon is present in Iran. Even though many of the Iranian youth are experiencing challenges in employment, education, family life and more,

---

<sup>310</sup> Farzaneh Roudi, "Youth, Women's Rights, and Political Change in Iran," *Population Reference Bureau* (July 2009).

these challenges did not arise solely because of a “youth-bulge.” As Salehi-Isfahani, a Visiting Fellow at Brookings Institution explains, the main cause stems deeper into the “inefficient structure of incentives and rigidity in the country’s education system, labor markets, and marriage institutions.”<sup>311</sup> It was the government that issued educational reforms and demographic policies in the early 1980s, but it was also these reforms that formed the sociopolitical conditions in Iran today.

Iran’s current youth-bulge is a result of the government’s desire to have a large army, which led to a policy of encouraging pregnancy among families.<sup>312</sup> Ali Rashidi, an economist in Iran, explained that the root cause of the “youth bulge” was Iran’s birth policies in early 1980s, enacted in the hope of reaching an army of twenty million.<sup>313</sup> The rate of population jumped from 1.7 to 4.5. However, the immense expansion of the population was not followed by any policies to “absorb” the extra population.<sup>314</sup> Finally, by the late 1980s, the population was rising at a rapid rate and the government saw the shortcomings of having a large population. In response, the government aggressively enforced a “family planning” reform in 1989, which included widespread advertisement and free medical services for woman, especially contraceptives. The effects of the two reforms were enormous: From 1966 to 1976, population growth rate was at 2.7.<sup>315</sup> It reached 3.9 percent by the next decade, but eventually fell back to 2.5 by 1986.<sup>316</sup> As the statistics show, the program was incredibly successful, with the dramatic decline of the fertility rate. The Iranian

---

<sup>311</sup> Djavad Salehi-Isfahani & Daniel Egel, "Youth Exclusion in Iran: The State of Education, Employment and Family Formation," *Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper* 3(Sept 2007).

<sup>312</sup> Basmenji, *Tehran Blues: Youth Culture in Iran*.p 65.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.p 46.

<sup>315</sup> Mashayekhi, "The Revival of the Student Movement in Post-Revolutionary Iran."

<sup>316</sup> Mashayekhi, "The Revival of the Student Movement in Post-Revolutionary Iran."

Ministry of Health and Medical Education reported an average 6.6 births per woman in mid 1970s, but by 2006, the numbers had dropped to 2.0 births per woman.<sup>317</sup> The results were impressive, but the high birth rate immediately after the Islamic revolution nevertheless created a “youth-bulge” witnessed in the demographics of Iran today.

Could the Iranian government possibly have brought about its own demise? The demographic consequences from reforms in the early 1980s created a large cohort of youth unsatisfied with the current sociopolitical climate. The distressed youth is holding the government accountable for its socioeconomic problems and may not easily contain their frustrations, as seen by the large outbreak of anger on July 13 2009. But how can this “youth-bulge” transform into cases of organized political activism? Richard P. Cincotta, a consultant for the National Intelligence Council’s Long Range Analysis Unit, deconstructs the implications on a civil society from possessing patterns of a “youth-bulge” population.<sup>318</sup>

Cincotta provides a strong connection between the youth and its capability of affecting the stability of a regime. Youth bulges, as Cincotta said, allow the youth to congregate and form “distinctive identities and untempered ideologies, and find expression through experimentation and risk-taking.”<sup>319</sup> For Iran’s youthful population, the few weeks of spontaneous activism that transformed into a massive social movement shaped a new youth culture in Iran. As for whether this new youth culture can achieve a more liberal democratic society, Cincotta provides a different

---

<sup>317</sup> Roudi, "Youth, Women's Rights, and Political Change in Iran."

<sup>318</sup> Richard P. Cincotta, "Half a Chance: Youth Bulges and Transitions to Liberal Democracy," *ECSP Report*, no. 13 (2008-2009).

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.*

explanation: “countries with a large proportion of young adults in the working-age population (referred to as a “youth bulge”) are much less likely to attain a stable liberal democracy than countries with a more mature age structure.”<sup>320</sup> However, Cincotta’s negative perspective of youth activism as a likely threat to stability, a popular generalization among demographers, is more adequate to countries that already possess a liberal democratic structure. For the case of Iran, the youth’s rising capability of instigating political activities should be perceived as a political opportunity structure in removing instabilities in a non-democratic regime.

That is not to say that a large youthful population leads to civil violence, but a youth-bulge does create a large economic and social burden. For Iran, the economy has not been capable of providing jobs for the unemployed and the higher education system does not have enough positions for the educated. For the young adults, the worsening economic situation is prolonging their stay at home and dependence on parents, which can fuel feelings of unworthiness and anger. Forced to face these problems, the disenchanted youth and young adults saw the presidential election originally as a chance to enact change, but later on, a possibility to channel their frustrations. Michelle Gavin, a fellow at the Council on Foreign Affairs said, “If you have no other options and not much else going on, the opportunity cost of joining an armed movement may be low.”<sup>321</sup>

There are many plausible reasons why the youth choose to mobilize for this particular occasion. For the 2009 presidential election, statistics showed that “over 60

---

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Lionel Beehner, "The Effects of ‘Youth Bulge’ on Civil Conflicts," *Council on Foreign Relations: Backgrounders* (Apr 2007).

per cent of the 46.2 million eligible voters in Iran [were] under the age of 30.”<sup>322</sup>

Already, the election was an “election for the youth.” The fraudulent dealings of the event led many youth to criticize the “stealing” of an election that should be “theirs.” A student named Parviz said, “If we do not vote and contribute to the political course of the country, then others will decide for us.”<sup>323</sup> Thus, the 2009 presidential elections provided the Iranian youth an opportunity to vent their frustrations against the government, to demand appropriate rights, and to become independent in controlling their own destiny.

### *Economic and Social Grievances*

Besides the demographic “youth-bulge” in Iran that presents an opening of a political opportunity, Iran’s deteriorating economic situation also leads to more social frustrations. The government’s provision of social services, in the form of food and cash, gained widespread loyalty from the poor.<sup>324</sup> However, the country’s economic situation has worsened and the government may be forced to use other strategies to secure peoples’ loyalty. In June 2009, the World Bank issued a report listing a total of 28 social insurance and assistance programs for its citizens.<sup>325</sup> These programs cover a wide range of issues including: health and unemployment, people with disability, housing, food, old age and rehabilitation. Sustaining these programs will require government funding, but the Iranian economy has been struggling with little signs of improving. While the demographics of Iran continue to be a strain on the labor market, other economic indicators signal a rise in inflation, inefficient price controls

---

<sup>322</sup> "Young People Keen to Vote in Iran's Key Election," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, June 12 2009.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>324</sup> Peyman Jafari, "Rupture and Revolt in Iran," *International Socialism: A quarterly journal of socialist theory*, no. 124 (Sept 30 2009).

<sup>325</sup> Najat Yamouri, "Iran- Country Brief," *The World Bank* (June 2009).

and subsidies, and political instability that has affected foreign and domestic investment. Iran's poor economic performance will make it increasingly difficult for the government to use public transfers as a way of silencing public discontent and sustaining popular support.

### *Education System*

After the Cultural Revolution in 1980, the government had been slow to develop educational institutions, until higher education in Iran rapidly expanded during Rafsanjani's term as president. Students had to complete a national examination, including a section on students' ideological and moral beliefs, in order to be considered as candidates. In 1979, the gross enrollment rate was at 5%, grew to 10% in 1990 and finally jumped to 15% in 1995.<sup>326</sup> Iran's heavy youth population would require more institutions in order to absorb the vast number of high school graduates. During the early 1990s, two large universities were opened: IAU and Payam Noor University.<sup>327</sup> A public institution named, Applied Science University, was opened in 1991 to provide vocational training and continuing education opportunities.<sup>328</sup> The degree of expansion in educational services was phenomenal. Between the years 1979 to 1997, the average annual growth of the total student population was 9.7%.<sup>329</sup> Statistics have illustrated the increase in the number of students over the past years, but in an educational system that was purged of Western values in 1980 and required moral and religious examinations. Therefore, it is ironic to find students who would consider opposing the religious authority and the *Vali-e*

---

<sup>326</sup> Abbas Bazargan, *Iran*, ed. James J.F. Forest & Philip G. Altbach (Tehran: Springer, 2007).p 781

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

*Faqih*, when the government had believed they have removed traces of Western values and culture.

It is possible that the growth of the Internet has allowed the growing number of literate Iranians access to material that they would not otherwise have had. Moreover, the increased availability of education had played a significant role in the development of ideas and interests of youth in the current generation. In 2003, Iran was recorded to have a total literacy rate at 79.4%, a vast improvement in the people's intellectual ability.<sup>330</sup> As Robert Rucker said, "Educational problems are structural and ideological social problems."<sup>331</sup> The Islamic Republic may have tried to solve the "structural" problem by rapidly expanding institutions and student seats, but the "ideological" problem still remain. The 2009 protest demonstrated students' ability to question the religious authority, assess the countries' situation and take initiative to achieve what they wanted, a result that was partially made possible by the improvement of literacy in Iran.

Noticing the failure in controlling the minds and hearts of the youth, the Islamic Republic has vowed to initiate a "soft war," intended to propagate Islamic and conservative ideals to people through various channels. Mehrzad Boroujerdi, an Iranian professor at Syracuse University said, "By trying to gain more control of the media, to re-Islamize schools, they think they can make a comeback, but the enemy here is Iran's demographics. The Iranian population is overwhelmingly literate and young, and previous efforts to reinstall orthodoxy have only exacerbated cleavages

---

<sup>330</sup> "Literary Total Population by Country. Definition, Graph and Map," (NationMaster).

<sup>331</sup> Robert Rucker. *Trends in Post-Revolutionary Iranian Education*, 465.

between citizens and the state.”<sup>332</sup>

## **Resource Mobilization Theory**

The resource mobilization approach compares the type of resources available to the movement in respect to the resources that are needed. In the theory, aggregation of resources is assumed as a crucial factor in determining the degree of social movement activity. As McCarthy and Zald explained, “resources are necessary for engagement in social conflict, they must be aggregated for collective purposes.”<sup>333</sup> In order to aggregate resources, the movement must also have an organizational framework to find and obtain resources. In sum, the theory examines mobilization of existing resources and acquisition of new resources for the development of the movement.

The Green Movement continues to face restrictions in mobilizing and acquiring resources. Media assess and broadcasting channels are heavily restricted. Fortunately, the development of the Internet allowed the Green Movement to effectively communicate with its counterparts. The Internet has become a virtual platform for individuals to freely interact, and in the physical world, the government has unwittingly developed many cultural complexes and public parks that have served to be the new forms of social interaction for people in the public space.

### *Social Interaction in the Virtual Space: Internet and the development of Technology*

There are many reasons why this Green Movement is very new for Iran. Most important is the usage of the Internet and social media networking devices in

---

<sup>332</sup> Robert F. Worth, "Iran Expanding Effort to Stifle the Opposition " *The New York Times*, November 23 2009.

<sup>333</sup> Zald, *Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory*.p 152.

opening up a virtual space for political dissent and coordination of the movement. The Internet was introduced in 1996 and by 2009, “around a quarter of Iran’s 65 million people are believed to have Internet access.”<sup>334</sup> The Internet provides a medium of interaction that defies any form of strict supervision from the government. For this reason, many dissidents sought freedom through this virtual space. However, the regime soon understood the Internet’s capacity in damaging national security and was fast to devote an increasing amount of resources to developing stronger filtering systems. Andrew Lewman, the director of a technology company based in American said, “The Iranian Government is learning quickly how to control and contain these things.”<sup>335</sup>

The government has implemented filtering systems to restrict access to sensitive news and pornography, but the growing number of new anti-security programs has made it possible for Iranians to bypass government implemented filtering systems. The Tor Project Inc., a technology company based in Boston, offers a free program for Internet users to access blocked sites and hide their activities from government monitoring programs.<sup>336</sup> Still, the Iranian government has been trying to tackle these security loopholes and some of their strategies have been to limit Internet traffic, block popular networking and communicative websites or completely stop providing Internet services.

Mousavi had also been taking advantage of the Internet, creating a campaign website and various personal blogs to maintain communication with his followers.

---

<sup>334</sup> Rebecca Santana, "Iran Activists Work to Elude Internet Crackdown " *Santa Maria Times* July 25 2009.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

After the severe political crackdown on protestors, Mousavi stressed the growing importance of the Internet as a way to keep everyone informed of the realities on the ground. “Increasing the level of people’s awareness is not achieved only in street protests,” Moussavi said on his website, Kaleme.com.<sup>337</sup> “Boosting the level of public awareness is the main strategy of the green movement.”<sup>338</sup> Not only has the Internet been able to increase the Green Movement’s overall exposure, Internet broadcasting and media outlets have created a new system of releasing news in real time. Sites, such as, Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and Skype, has allowed Iranians to transmit information immediately with digitalized photographs and videoclips. As foreign journalists are forced out of the country, people have resorted to the use of web blogs and social networking sites. Twitter, a live-time update of members’ activities was the most popular medium used by the movement. It carries many advantages: free, fast, personal and public. More importantly, it is difficult for the government to censor and control.

The rapid development of Internet broadcasting, counter-censorship programs and other software creation provided a unique political opportunity structure for the Green Movement. The Green Movement has garnered a large volume of momentum thanks to the Internet. However, information on websites such as Twitter is not completely safe. A journalist wrote: “There are also signs that the its own advantage.”<sup>339</sup>

*Social Interactions in the physical space:*

---

<sup>337</sup> Thomas Erdbrink, "Iranian Opposition Leader Mousavi Speaks Out," *The Washington Post*, February 28 2010.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid.

<sup>339</sup> Lev Grossman, "Iran Protests: Twitter, the Medium of the Movement," *Time* June 2009.

The development of public construction projects has played a large role in creating new modes of social interaction and communication between people. It was Ghulam Husayn Karbaschi, the urban planner appointed by President Rafsanjani in 1990, to redesign Tehran's urban space.<sup>340</sup> Public parks, cultural complexes, museums were some of the works Karbaschi had made to recreate the image of Tehran as a cosmopolitan city.<sup>341</sup> But indirectly, it had increased ways for people to interact and diminished obstacles of gender segregation. Asef Bayat noted that, "The municipality's newly constructed 600 public parks brought men, women, boys, and girls together in public places."<sup>342</sup> Efforts on redesigning the public space greatly shaped the new youth culture in Iran. The new cultural complexes, public parks with the added greenery set up has created a new social scene for people to meet, gather and socialize.<sup>343</sup>

In fact, parks have also become a popular location for collective action to take place. After the June 2009 protests, the government has enforced strict suppressive measures against any large public gatherings, and marked parks as their must-watched locations.<sup>344</sup> Also, the transformation of the urban public setting could be argued as the government's attempt to recreate a new image of Iran for its citizens and for foreigners. In general, the government may have hoped to change the country's image, but as a result, it created a large impact on the methods for individuals to interact.

---

<sup>340</sup> Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*.p 53

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*p 57

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>344</sup> "The Iranian Regime Implements Suppressive Measures to Prevent Protests," *CNN*, April 3rd 2010.

---

### *Financial Power and the Control over Media*

Continuing the discussion on resource mobilization for the Green Movement, an important missing aspect is the resource mobilization powers of the government and how they are able to utilize their forces to stop the Green Movement from resource mobilization. One crucial factor is the government's financial power and ability to control over media and communications resources.

In the long term, the weakening economy of Iran may pose as a threat to the government in financing its social security programs, expanding the economy and so forth, but meanwhile, it is still financially capable of acquiring resources to defeat the Green Movement. Unlike the past, where the *bazaaris* and clerics provided the financial support to the regime, the situation has completely shifted. The government's military force, the revolutionary guard, owns a large share of the Iranian economy and is capable of providing financial support for the government. Ali Ansari, an Iranian scholar at St. Andrews University said, "The IRGC is really a corporation. It is a business conglomerate with guns. This is not a military junta. I see it as a collection of business and religious interests."<sup>345</sup> It has control of the regular domestic market, but also the black market, supplying drugs, alcohol and other banned imported goods. The revolutionary guard's financial power allowed it to employ other non-violent strategies in defeating the Green Movement.

The use of non-violent methods in tackling the Green Movement is a "soft war." A former CIA Iranian specialist, Mark Fowler, described the situation as the revolutionary guard "using their whole economic base, they are expanding control

---

<sup>345</sup> Tait, "The Financial Power of the Revolutionary Guards."

over areas of what they see as the ‘soft war,’ like the telecommunications field, to confront the threat they see.”<sup>346</sup> This includes the purchase of 51% shares in Iran’s telecommunications industry in September 2009, following the use of Twitter and other Internet services in organizing and coordinating the opposition movement.<sup>347</sup>

The Revolutionary Corps telecommunications deal has secured the government’s influence in the media industry and showed the deepened relation between business and politics in the contemporary Iran. The revolutionary guard owns a large share of the total Iranian economy, and foreign sources estimate its market share is from “a third to nearly two-thirds of Iran’s GDP – amounting to tens of billions of dollars.”<sup>348</sup> Officially a military force for the Islamic republic, it has grown into a conglomerate owning charitable organizations, oil and gas industries, import and export companies, telecommunication networks and commercial businesses. The revolutionary guards military power is well known, and with its underground operations in controlling the Iranian economy, it is difficult to imagine how the Green Movement can tackle such a resource-abundant enemy.

### *Basiji Forces and the Revolutionary Guard*

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps was formed after the revolution with the role of protecting the newly established regime in addition to the regular Military forces, the *Artesh* is responsible for protecting Iranian borders and internal order. The two military groups have many overlapping areas of influence, but the revolutionary guard is the dominant military force controlling most of the domestic military

---

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid.

operations. The revolutionary guard is smaller than the *Artesh*, but was estimated to employ a total of 125,000 troops as ground forces, navy and air forces.<sup>349</sup> Despite the revolutionary guard being smaller in size, many of the previous revolutionary guards have been appointed as ambassadors, ministers and other government positions. On August 20<sup>th</sup> 2009, 18 of the 21-minister cabinet that Ahmadinejad assigned gained parliamentary vote of confidence through Khamenei's intervention.<sup>350</sup> In addition, Ahmadinejad appointed 14 vice presidents and advisors by presidential decree, bringing the total of Ahmadinejad's officials up to 35.<sup>351</sup> Many of which were former colleagues or previous members of the Revolutionary Guards, a sign of "creeping militarization" in the government.<sup>352</sup>

The appointment of former members of the revolutionary guard, instead of clerics, shows the gradual change in the balance of power for Iran. The 2009 Presidential election showed Khamenei's strong support for Ahmadinejad, and could imply his closer relations with Ahmadinejad and the Revolutionary Guards than with the Islamic clerics. Therefore, the dynamics between the clerics and the Khamenei may possibly change, but for Ahmadinejad, support from the revolutionary guards is more important than support from the clerics. Not only has the revolutionary guard continued to support Ahmadinejad even if he demands the use of repressive and violence forces to eliminate dissident voices, but the army forces are more adequate at crisis management on foreign issues.<sup>353</sup>

---

<sup>349</sup> "Profile: Iran's Revolutionary Guards ", *BBC News*, October 18 2009.

<sup>350</sup> Jane Jiaa, "Assessing Ahmadinejad's Closed Circle," *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst* (Jan 2010).

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>352</sup> Danielle Pletka & Ali Alfoneh, "Iran's Hidden Revolution " *The New York Times*, June 16 2009.

<sup>353</sup> Jane Jiaa, "The Militarisation of Iran's Politics," *Islamic Affairs Analyst* (Aug 2008).

The Revolutionary guard's focus on attacking creators of internal disorder will become the most difficult barrier for the Green Movement to continue. The revolutionary guard controls a militia volunteer group known as the *Basij* Resistance Force. Currently, it employs roughly 90,000 men and women with the role of securing the Islamic Republic against domestic disorder.<sup>354</sup> For many of the post-election protests, the *Basiji* took the lead in repressing the protests the revolutionary guards took a subsidiary role in directing and issuing orders to the *Basiji*. As Wehrey wrote in January 2009, "much of the institution's rise to prominence over competing militias and paramilitaries in the post-revolutionary period was due to its effectiveness in suppressing internal dissent."<sup>355</sup> The revolutionary guard's presence within the government and around the country makes it an incredibly powerful asset for Ahmadinejad and also an impossible enemy for the Green Movement to rebel against. Even if the Green Movement reaches a scenario where the *Basiji* is incapable of defeating the movement, the Revolutionary guards has its own troops and the *Artesh* that the government can employ in the country's most extreme scenario.

### **New Social Movement Theory**

The Green Movement, unlike other movements, did not specifically create a movement identity. Due to peoples' frustrations on Iran's deteriorating economic, social and political conditions, there is a strong desire among the Iranians to redefine their identity. Since the majority of the people are the educated and literate youth with access to resources and news outside of Iran, many of them have developed a

---

<sup>354</sup> "Profile: Iran's Revolutionary Guards".

<sup>355</sup> Greg Bruno, "Iran's Revolutionary Guards," *Council on Foreign Relations: Backgrounders* (June 2009).

strong pragmatist point of view and an aspiration to Western culture.<sup>356</sup> In such a situation, the youth in modern Iran are searching to re-establish their identity, or as Bayat describes, hoping to rediscover their “youthfulness.”<sup>357</sup> In an increasingly repressive regime, the government has taken away many of the opportunities for the people to experience being “young.” For the majority of Iranians, rediscovering youth identity was not greatly emphasized, but could be found as the backdrop of the Green Movement. If the youth actively reclaim their youthful identities by challenging the authorities, thereby sustaining and propelling the Green Movement to continue progressing, the social movement has the possibility of becoming a marginally successful movement.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the three movement theories presented non-preferable situations, actors and movement identity for the Green Movement. In terms of situations, the events of June 2009 has instigated the biggest protests since the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and led to significant changes within and outside of Iran. Even though some of these changes include the shift from the deeply rooted revolutionary ideology to a modernist and pragmatic ideology, the Green Movement will continue to face challenges that are beyond their ability to solve. The greatest challenge is the insufficient resources needed “within” the government. The Revolutionary Guards in particular, has strong resources and political power to freely direct and control all military divisions to suppress dissident voices. Moreover, the movement is currently at a halt and movement leaders have not been able to reignite the Green Movement.

---

<sup>356</sup> Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*.p 68.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid*.p 64

The lack of resources is the biggest challenge to the movement and its leaders. But importantly, the majority of movement actors are the youth, and if the movement successfully mobilizes the youth, the movement will have the chance to become a “marginally successful” movement.

Youth, as many Iranian scholars have suggested, are becoming an important actor in the current Green Movement. However, few people have explained why and how is the youth a crucial player in this movement. In my opinion, youth is pivotal in the Green Movement because the size of their population is a political opportunity; youth networks and their high literacy indicate them as resource “mobilizers”; and their search for “youthfulness” is the movement identity. Unlike the other two test cases, all three social movement theories point heavily towards “youth” as the partial solution for the current movement.

If youth is the solution to the Green Movement, why am I projecting the movement as “marginally successful?” The point that I am proposing, is that the Green Movement has the necessary “pieces” to become a successful movement, but the movement must be able to put the “pieces” together in order to succeed. Youth in Iran has helped elect a pro-reform president in 1997 and reformist ministers to the parliament in 2000, but the increased violence on the crackdown has made youth become more disillusioned. As violence becomes a greater issue, many people do not see themselves risking their lives for change in Iran, but rather seeking for ways to leave. Even though the government may have the necessary “inside” resources, the youth, as the majority of the Iranian population, are capable of instigating and

creating change. For these reasons, a marginally successful movement is possible if the youth are mobilized for collective action.

## CONCLUSION

### An Alternative Approach to Evaluate Social Movement Success

In evaluating the histories of the three Iranian social movements since 1963, this thesis has attempted to provide the reasons for their successes and failures in creating political change in Iran. Throughout each of the three social movements, there was a unique interplay between actors, situations, and ideas that form and direct each social movement. The interactions between the three components produced social movements with varying results. This thesis used the resource mobilization theory to evaluate actors' ability to effectively manage and organize resources; the political opportunity theory to indicate the timing and the situational conditions that influence the movement; and finally, the new social movement theory to analyze the strength of the movement's identity in maintaining a united movement.

The following table (Figure 5.1) briefly summarizes my conclusions for the three test cases:

<b>Figure 5.1</b>	<i>The Nahzat</i>	<i>The 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad</i>	<i>The Green Movement</i>
Political Opportunity	Strong	Medium	Strong
Resource Mobilization	Strong	Weak	Medium
New Social Movement Theory	Strong	Weak	Weak
Objective Attainment	Full Response	Slight Concessions	Slight Concessions
Sustainability	Persistent	Waning Participation	Abeyance
Overall	Success	Unsuccessful	Marginally Successful

According to the three social movement theories, the Nahzat (1963-1979) has demonstrated to be “strong” in utilizing the political opportunities, mobilizing resources and forming a movement identity. Having achieved “full response” to its objectives and being “persistent” in movement sustainability, Khomeini’s movement was a case of a successful movement.

As for the second test case, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad, there were decent political opportunities for the movement members to take action, thus categorized as “medium” in Figure 5.1. However, the movement was weak in obtaining and organizing its resources, and weak in establishing a movement ideology. As a result, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad was an unsuccessful movement since it only managed to obtain “slight concessions” for objective attainment, and “waning participation” for movement sustainability.

Finally, the third test case was the ongoing Green Movement. I have predicted the Movement to become a marginally successful movement based on its current progress and the sociopolitical conditions in Iran. The Green Movement took notice of the demographic “youth bulge” and the 2009 presidential election was a large opening for political opportunity, but movement progress was severely hampered by the lack of a movement identity and insufficient resources. By April 2010, the Green Movement has only managed to gain a few concessions, and movement action is currently held in abeyance.

For all three test cases, the analysis on movement actors, situations and movement identity explained the reasons why the movement was able to achieve its objectives and maintain sustainability in order to be successful. The first two test cases have demonstrated that for a movement to be successful, all three factors -

actors, situations and movement identity - must be fully utilized or developed. Inability to manage the three influential factors will lead to an unsuccessful or completely failed movement. The test cases have espoused the significance of the three components, and how they have influenced the development of movements in Iran.

This thesis has proven that these three social movements in Iran have succeeded and failed for reasons of different roles of actors, situations and movement identities. Moreover, this thesis has also raised general questions about the overall meaning of social movements in Iran and their ability to bring about political change. The Iranian revolutionary movement, the Nahzat, has demonstrated the power of the people to overthrow the authoritarian regime and reinstalled a theocratic regime based on the *velayat-e fiqh* as the regime doctrine. However, Iran is one of the few theocratic regimes today while carrying some democratic aspects. It is precisely because of Iran's unique and paradoxical political setting that makes the study of social movements in this political regime challenging, and deeply rewarding.

Under Iran's current regime, movements, such as the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad and the Green Movement, have demonstrated the oppositionists' ability to organize dissent against the state. However, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Khordad did not succeed and neither is it likely that the Green Movement will fully gain its movement demands. Despite the rising number of opponents, the regime's ability to survive demonstrates the regime's stronghold on the three factors crucial to the success of a movement.

As for the movement typology that has been developed in this thesis, I posit the typology's ability to be adopted in evaluating the success of other social movements. The typology's ability to classify movements as either success or failure

was not only advantageous for evaluating the three test cases, but could be applied to other social movements. Typologies or frameworks on evaluating movement success have largely been missing, and moreover, few frameworks have been applicable for the study of social movements in a non-democratic and non-Western setting. It can be argued that Iran's unique mixture of democracy and theocracy could have created a movement framework appropriate to a broader range of political settings compared to Gamson's approach, whereby his movement success approach was only limited to movements in the United States.<sup>358</sup>

So far, the typology has provided some theoretical and methodological contributions to the study of social movements. The typology developed in this thesis presents a different approach to understand movement success by evaluating movement's objective attainment and sustainability. Even though attempts to define a movement as successful or failure in the existing social movement literature has largely been absent, efforts to identify movement success have been harshly criticized due to the problem of causality. Claiming a movement is successful, as many scholars argued, requires proof on how one event has led to another. Since the sequence of causality is almost unidentifiable, success remains largely untouched by social movement scholars.

For these reasons, any attempt to evaluate movement success overlooks concerns regarding the cause and effect of the movement. Regardless of these concerns, I have developed the typology in the beginning that any unintended results would also be factored into evaluating movement success. Moreover, "success" as a terminology is problematic, but to re-emphasize, I have defined success by two

---

<sup>358</sup> Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*.p 57

definitive criteria in evaluating movement success – achievement of movement objectives and movement sustainability. Since movement sustainability is difficult to quantify and justify, the sustainability criterion is still a major issue.

In the end, the comparative approach used in this thesis only reflects the power of social movements in Iran since 1963. This thesis has not demonstrated the application of the typology to other countries or in other time periods, and would be a highly valuable topic of research for social movement theorists. Therefore, I would like to conclude this thesis by suggesting future research on evaluating social movement successes and failures in unfamiliar political systems and cultural contexts.

---

## G L O S S A R Y

---

*Ayatollah*: “Sign of God” Title given to the leading mojtahed

*Basiji*: religious war veteran

*caliph*: successor of Muhammad as spiritual leader of Islam

*faqh*: Islamic jurisprudence

*ijtihad*: use of independent judgment and reasoning in interpreting the Qu’ran

*imam*: spiritual leader in Shi’ite Islam

*majlis*: the Iranian parliament

*majlis-e khobregan*: Assembly of experts

*Majlis-I Shura-yi Islami*: Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran or Iranian Parliament

*marja*: source of emulation

*marja’-e taqlid*: Islamic Jurist, source of emulation for Shi’ites

*madrassa*: school

*mojtahid*: religious scholar certified to perform *ijtihad*

*Qoran*: holy book of Islam

*shari’a*: rule of law in Islam

*ulama*: clergy or religious scholars

*valeyat-e fiqih*: doctrine of the Islamic Government or guardianship of the jurist

## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

- "1979: Exiled Ayatollah Khomeini Returns to Iran." *BBC*, February 1 1979.
- Abdo, Geneive. "Days of Rage in Tehran." *Middle East Policy Council* VII, no. 1 (October 1999).
- "Abdolkarim Soroush: The Goals of Iran's Green Movement." *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 6 2010
- Abel, Theodore. "The Pattern of a Successful Political Movement." *American Sociological Review* 2, no. 3 (1937): 347-52.
- Abrahamian, Ervand. *Iran between the Two Revolutions*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- . "Structural Causes of the Iranian Revolution." *MERIP Reports* 87 (May 1980): 21-26.
- Agency, Central Intelligence. "Cia World Factbook." 309-11: Skyhorse Publishing, 2008.
- Alfonch, Danielle Pletka & Ali. "Iran's Hidden Revolution " *The New York Times*, June 16 2009.
- Ali Gheissari, Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr. *Democracy in Iran: History and the Quest for Liberty*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Alkhah, Fardin. "The Politics of Satellite Television in Iran." In *Media, Culture and Society in Iran: Living with Globalization and the Islamic State*, edited by Mehdi Semati, 97. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Amenta, Edwin. *When Movements Matter: The Townsend Plan and the Rise of Social Security*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Amuzegar, Jahangir. *The Dynamics of the Iranian Revolution: The Pahlavis' Triumph and Tragedy*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1991.
- "Annual Report for Iran." Amnesty International USA, 1995.
- AP. "Iran Reform Leader Says He Won't End His Challenge." *World News Australia*, June 26 2009.
- Arjomand, Said Amir. *After Khomeini: Iran under His Successors*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2009.
- Ash, Mayer N. Zald and Roberta. "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change." *Social Forces* 44, no. 3 (1966): 327-41.
- "Assessing Moussavi ". *The Economist*, 2009.
- Atkinson, John W. "Motivational Determinants of Risk-Taking Behavior." *Psychological review* 64, no. 6 (1957): 359-72.
- Balkin, Jack M. "How Social Movements Change (or Fail to Change) the Constitution: The Case of the New Departure." *Suffolk University Law Review* XXXIX, no. 27 (2005): 28.
- Banuazizi, Ahmad Ashraf and Ali. "The State, Classes and Modes of Mobilization in the Iranian Revolution." *The State, Culture, and Society* 1, no. 3 (Spring 1985): 3-40.
- Basmenji, Kaveh. *Tehran Blues*. London: Saqi, 2005.
- . *Tehran Blues: Youth Culture in Iran*. London: Saqi Books, 2005.
- Bayat, Asef. *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.
- Bazargan, Abbas. *Iran*. Edited by James J.F. Forest & Philip G. Altbach. Tehran: Springer, 2007.
- Beehner, Lionel. "The Effects of 'Youth Bulge' on Civil Conflicts." *Council on Foreign Relations: Backgrounders* (Apr 2007).

- Beuchler, Steven M. "The Strange Career of Strain and Breakdown Theories of Collective Action." In *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, edited by Sarah Anne Soule David A. Snow, Hanspeter Kriesi. Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004.
- Bina, Cyrus. "The Hot Summer of Defiance: The Student Protests for Freedom and Democracy in Iran." *Journal of Iranian Research and Analysis* 15, no. 2 (1999).
- Boroujerdi, Mehrzad. "The Paradoxes of Politics in Postrevolutionary Iran." In *Iran at the Crossroads*, edited by John L. Esposito and R. K. Ramazani, 13-27. New York: Palgrave, 2001.
- Bruno, Greg. "Iran's Revolutionary Guards." *Council on Foreign Relations: Backgrounders* (June 2009).
- Burstein, Paul. "The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda." *Political Research Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (2003): 29-40.
- Caren, Michael Armato and Neal. "Mobilizing the Single Case Study: Doug McAdam's Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970." *Qualitative Sociology* 25, no. 1 (2002): 93.
- Chehabi, Houchang E. *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran*. London: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Corrigall-Brown, Catherine. "Staying in or Getting Out? Predicting Sustained Participation or Disengagement from Two Social Movements." In *American Sociological Association*. Montreal Convention Center, 2006.
- Coughlin, Con. *Khomeini's Ghost: The Iranian Revolution and the Rise of Militant Islam*. Michigan: Ecco, 2009.
- DeFronzo, James. *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*. Boulder: Westview Press, 2007.
- Division, UN Population. "Media Age." Gapminder.
- . "Total Population." Gapminder.org.
- Dyer, Gwynne. "Hit Attempt Will Quicken Iranian Reform." *Journal Gazette*, March 19 2000.
- Egel, Djavad Salehi-Isfahani & Daniel. "Youth Exclusion in Iran: The State of Education, Employment and Family Formation." *Middle East Youth Initiative Working Paper* 3 (Sept 2007).
- Ehteshami, Anoushiravan. *Iran and the Rise of Its Neoconservatives: The Politics of Tehran's Silent Revolution*. London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2007.
- Elahé S. Hicks, Hanny Megally, Human Rights Watch/Middle East. "Stifling Dissent: The Human Rights Consequences of Inter-Factional Struggle in Iran." *Human Rights Watch* 13, no. 3 (May 2001).
- Elisabeth S. Clemens, Debra C. Minkoff. "Beyond the Iron Law: Rethinking the Place of Organizations in Social Movement Research." In *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, edited by Sarah Anne Soule David A. Snow, Hanspeter Kriesi. Malden: Blackwell Publisher, 2004.
- Emruz, Peyam. "Iran 1999: Universities under Attack, a Witness Testimony." *ABF*, no. 32 (1999).
- Enrique Larana, Hank Johnston, Joseph R. Gusfield. "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements." In *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, edited by Hank Johnston Enrique Larana, Joseph R. Gusfield: Temple University, 1994.
- Erdbrink, Thomas. "Iranian Opposition Leader Mousavi Speaks Out." *The Washington Post*, February 28 2010.
- Farhi, Farideh. "Political Reform in Iran: Dead or Alive?."
- Fassihian, Dokhi. "Voting for Change." *The Iranian*, February 17 2000.
- Fathi, Nazila. "Iran Leader Bars a Bill Restoring Freedom in Press." *New York Times*, August 7, 2000, 1.
- . "Shots Fired at Mehdi Karroubi's Car in Iran, His Son Says." *The New York Times*, January 8th 2010.

- Fishbein, Martin. "An Investigation of Relationships between Beliefs About an Object and the Attitude toward That Object." *Human Relations* 16 (1963): 233-40.
- Fletcher, Martin. "Iranian Protest Is Grassroots and Unstoppable, Say Activists." *Times Online*, December 30 2009.
- . "'Wailing of Wolves' in Iran as Cries of Allah Akbar Ring from Roofs." *Times Online*, June 25 2009.
- Foran, John. *A Century of Revolution: Social Movements in Iran*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1994.
- Francisco, Ronald A. "Theories of Protest and the Revolutions of 1989." *American Journal of Political Science* 37, no. 3 (1993): 663.
- Gage, Nicholas. "Army Withdraws Its Support for Bakhtiar; Iranian Prime Minister Ordered to Resign." *The New York Times*, Feb 12, 1979, 1.
- Gambino, Megan. "Stephen Kinzer On 'Inside Iran's Fury'." *Smithsonian.com*, October 1st 2008.
- Gamson, William A. *The Strategy of Social Protest*. Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1975.
- George, W. "Iran's Stability Requires Cooperation between President Khatami, Supreme Leader Khamenei." *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, September 1st 2000.
- Ghazi, Siavosh. "Khatami Says Reforms in Iran Inevitable In 'Testament' Letter." *Agence France-Presse*, May 3 2004.
- Giugni, Marco. *Social Protest and Policy Change: Ecology, Anti-Nuclear, and Peace Movements in Comparative Perspective*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004.
- Giugni, Marco G. "Was It Worth the Effort? The Outcomes and Consequences of Movements." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 393.
- Grossman, Lev. "Iran Protests: Twitter, the Medium of the Movement." *Time*, June 2009.
- Icek Ajzen, Dolores Albarracin. "Predicting and Changing Behavior: A Reasoned Action Approach." In *Prediction and Change of Health Behavior: Applying the Reasoned Action Approach*, edited by Icek Ajzen Martin Fishbein, Robert C. Hornik, 3. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2007.
- "Iran - Political Parties." Encyclopedia of the Nations.
- "Iran: Excessive Use of Force against Protestors Condemned." (2009), [http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news\\_details.asp?NewsID=18538](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=18538).
- "Iran: Khatami Calls on People to Sustain Campaign for Accountable Government." *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, May 26 2001.
- "Iran's Mousavi Says He Will Continue Fight for Reform." *BBC News*, February 2 2010.
- "Iranian President Khatami's Oic Speech Stresses Need to Learn from West." *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, December 9 1997.
- "The Iranian Regime Implements Suppressive Measures to Prevent Protests." *CNN*, April 3rd 2010.
- "Islamic State a Vague Idea." *The Milwaukee Journal*, Feb 2 1979.
- Jafari, Peyman. "Rupture and Revolt in Iran." *International Socialism: A quarterly journal of socialist theory*, no. 124 (Sept 30 2009).
- Jahanbakhsh, Forough. *Islam, Democracy and Religious Modernism in Iran (1953-2000): From Bazargan to Soroush*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
- Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper. *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*. Second ed. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2009.
- Jeff Goodwin, Theda Skocpol. "Explaining Revolutions in the Contemporary Third World." In *Social Revolutions in the Modern World*, edited by Theda Skocpol, 259. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Jehl, Douglas. "Despite Police Dismissals, Iran Protest Is the Angriest Yet." *The New York Times*, July 12 1999.
- Jiaa, Jane. "Assessing Ahmadinejad's Closed Circle." *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst* (Jan 2010).

- . "The Militarisation of Iran's Politics." *Islamic Affairs Analyst* (Aug 2008).
- Johnson, Nasser Karimi & Anna. "Iran Rally: Mousavi Calls Demonstration to Mourn Dead Protesters." *Huffington Post*, 2009.
- Kamrava, Mehran. *Revolution in Iran: The Roots of Turmoil*. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Katouzian, Homa. "The Iranian Revolution at 30: The Dialectic of State and Society." *Middle East Critique* 19, no. 1 (March 2010): 35-53.
- Keddie, Nikki R. "Iranian Revolutions in Comparative Perspective." *The American Historical Review* 88, no. 3 (June 1983): 579-98.
- Kendall, Diana. *Sociology in Our Times: The Essentials*. Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2007.
- Khalaj, Monavar. "Moussavi Warns of Iran Losing 'Legitimacy'." *Financial Times*, February 27 2010.
- Khan, Abdul Mabud. *Encyclopaedia of the World Muslims*. 2002: Global Vision Publishing Ho, 2001.
- "Khatami Tells Mps to Work Together, Not against Each Other." *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, September 15 1999.
- "Khatami's Second Chance." *Middle East Economic Digest* (2001).
- Khomeini, Ruhollah. *Islamic Government*. Translated by George Carpozi. Michigan: Manor Books, 1979.
- Kinsman, Jeremy. "Mulling the Mullahs: Prelude to the Next Iranian Revolution?." *Policy Options* (Sept 2009).
- Kinzer, Stephen. "Many Iranians Hope Mandate Brings Change." *The New York Times*, May 26 1997.
- . "Voice for Change Makes Iran Vote a Real Race." *The New York Times*, May 23 1997.
- Klandermans, Bert. "Why Social Movements Come into Being and Why People Join Them." In *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology*, edited by Judith R. Blau, 268. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter. *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*. Vol. 5: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.
- Kurzman, Charles. "The Iranian Revolution " In *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*, edited by James M. Jasper Jeff Goodwin, 45. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2009.
- . "Structural Opportunity and Perceived Opportunity in Social-Movement Theory: The Iranian Revolution of 1979." *American Sociological Review* 61 (Feb 1996): 153-70.
- . "Student Protests and the Stability of Gridlock in Khatami's Iran." *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* XXV, no. 1 (Fall 2001): 38-47.
- . *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*. USA: President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2004.
- "Lack of Common Goals, Leadership Tests Iran Opposition." *Charleston Daily Mail*, November 16 2009, 9A.
- Ladjevardi, Habib. "Interview with Fatemeh Pakravan." In *Iranian Oral History Collection*, edited by Habib Ladjevardi. Paris: Harvard University, 7 March 1983.
- "Literary Total Population by Country. Definition, Graph and Map." NationMaster.
- Litvak, Meir. "Iran: The Platforms." In *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, edited by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, 209: The Moshe Dayan Center, 2002.
- Mahdi, Ali Akbar. "The Student Movement in the Islamic Republic of Iran." *Journal of Iranian Research and Analysis* 15, no. 2 (November 1999): 5-46.
- Mahtafar, Tara. "Post-Ashura Iran: Dissidents Outside Consider Organizing with Those inside to Lead Opposition." *Payvand*, January 8th 2010.

- Marashi, A. "Iran." In *World and Its Peoples: The Middle East, Western Asia, and Northern Africa*, edited by Marshall Cavendish, 496: Marshall Cavendish.
- Mark Irving Lichbach, Alan S. Zuckerman. *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Martin, Andrew W. "Resources for Success: Social Movements, Strategic Resource Allocation, and Union Organizing Outcomes." *Social Problems* 55, no. 4 (2008).
- Martin, Vanessa. *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2000.
- Mashayekhi, Mehrdad. "The Revival of the Student Movement in Post-Revolutionary Iran." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 15, no. 2 (Dec 2001): 283-313.
- Mayer N. Zald, Roberta Ash. "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change." *Social Forces* 44, no. 3 (1966): 327-41.
- Mazmanian, Thomas R. Rochon and Daniel A. "Social Movements and the Policy Process." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 528 (1993): 75-87.
- Mehran, Golnar. "Khatami, Political Reform and Education in Iran." *Comparative Education* 39, no. 3 (2003): 311-29.
- Melucci, Alberto. *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Menashri, Dayid. *Post-Revolutionary Politics in Iran: Religion, Society, and Power*. London: Frank Cass Publisherrs, 2001.
- Milani, Abbas. "Jalal Al-E Ahmad." edited by 1941 Eminent Persians: the men and women who made modern Iran, 2008.
- Milani, Mohsen M. *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*. Summertown: Westview Press Inc., 1988.
- Moens, Alexander. "President Carter's Advisers and the Fall of the Shah." *Political Science Quarterly* 106, no. 2 (Summer 1991).
- Moghadam, Val. "The Student Protests and the Social Movement for Reform in Iran: Sociological Reflections." *Journal of Iranian Research and Analysis* 15, no. 2 (1999).
- Moin, Baqer. *Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah, Volume 1999*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2000.
- Molavi, Afshin. *The Soul of Iran: A Nation's Journey to Freedom*: W. W. Norton, 2005.
- Moslem, Mehdi. *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002.
- . *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002.
- Motahari, Farshid. "Moussavi: The Man Who Wants to Remove Ahmadinejad." *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* May 11 2009.
- Muir, Jim. "Analysis: What Now for Iran?" *BBC News*, February 23 2004.
- Murphy, Trevor J. "Iran Deems "Green" Banknotes Invalid." In *Fortress Paper*, 2009.
- Nabili, Teymoor. "Mousavi Revives Reformist Vote." *Al Jazeera*, June 13 2009.
- Nash, Kate. "Introduction." In *Readings in Contemporary Political Sociology*, 126. Malden: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2000.
- Nasr, Vali. "Iran." In *Comparative Politics: Interests, Identities, and Institutions in a Changing Global Order*, edited by Mark Irving Lichbach Jeffrey Kopstein, 2005.
- Olson, Mancur. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. 2nd ed: Harvard University Press, 1971.
- P.Cincotta, Richard. "Half a Chance: Youth Bulges and Transitions to Liberal Democracy." *ECSP Report*, no. 13 (2008-2009).
- Parsa, Misagh. *Social Origins of the Iranian Revolution*: Rutgers, 1989.
- . *States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran, Nicaragua and the Philippines*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

- . "Theories of Collective Action and Iranian Revolution." *Sociological Forum* 3, no. 1 (December 1988).
- Poulson, Stephen C. *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks*. Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2006.
- . *Social Movements in Twentieth-Century Iran: Culture, Ideology, and Mobilizing Frameworks*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005.
- "The Presidency: 1977-1981." PBS Online.
- "Profile: Iran's Revolutionary Guards ". *BBC News*, October 18 2009.
- Rasler, Karen. "Concessions, Repression, and Political Protest in the Iranian Revolution." *American Sociological Review* 61, no. 1 (1996): 132-52.
- Reed Larson, David Hansen. "The Development of Strategic Thinking: Learning to Impact Human Systems in a Youth Activism Program." *Human Development* 48 (2005): 327-49.
- Roudi, Farzaneh. "Youth, Women's Rights, and Political Change in Iran." *Population Reference Bureau* (July 2009).
- Rowland Evans, Robert Novak. "U.S. Extends Unconditional Support to Shah." *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, Nov 8th 1978.
- Ruhollah Khomeini, Hamid Algar. *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*. Translated by Hamid Algar: Mizan Press, 1981.
- Santana, Rebecca. "Iran Activists Work to Elude Internet Crackdown " *Santa Maria Times* July 25 2009.
- Secor, Laura. "Fugitives." *The New Yorker*, November 21 2005.
- . "Khatami's Climb." In *The New Yorker*. New York, 2009.
- Selbin, Eric. "Revolution in the Real World: Bringing Agency Back In." In *Theorizing Revolutions*, edited by John Foran. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- . "What Was Revolutionary About the Iranian Revolution? The Power of Possibility." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 29, no. 1 (2009): 33-46.
- Shuster, Mike. "Former Diplomat, Student Recall Iran's Revolution." In *Morning Edition*: National Public Radio, 2009.
- "Six Days That Shook Iran." *BBC News*, July 11 2000.
- Skocpol, Theda. "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution." *Theory and Society* 11, no. 3 (May 1982).
- Slavin, Iason Athanasiadis & Barbara. "Iranian Opposition Grows beneath Surface." *The Washington Times*, January 1 2010.
- Sullivan, Andrew. "Are Mousavi and Karroubi under Arrest?" *The Atlantic*, Dec 30 2009.
- Tait, Julian Borger & Robert. "The Financial Power of the Revolutionary Guards." *Guardian*, February 15 2010.
- Tarrow, Charles Tilly and Sidney. *Contentious Politics* Paradigm, 2007.
- Tarrow, Sidney. "The People's Two Rhythms: Charles Tilly and the Study of Contentious Politics. A Review Article." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38, no. 3 (1996): 586-600.
- Tarrow, Sidney G. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Tehrani, Farideh. "The Truth Inside." *National Review Online*, October 15 2002.
- Tilly, Charles. *Regimes and Repertoires*. London: The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., 2006.
- . *Social Movements, 1768-2004*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.
- Wilson, John. *Introduction to Social Movements*: Basic Books, 1973.
- Worth, Robert F. "As Iran Votes, Talk of a Sea Change." *The New York Times*, June 11 2009
- . "Iran Expanding Effort to Stifle the Opposition " *The New York Times*, November 23 2009.
- Yamouri, Najat. "Iran- Country Brief." *The World Bank* (June 2009).
- Yossi Melman, Meri Javedanfar. *The Nuclear Sphinx of Tehran*. New York: Basic Books, 2007.

"Young People Keen to Vote in Iran's Key Election." *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, June 12 2009.  
Zald, John D. McCarthy & Mayer N. *Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory*.  
New Jersey: Transaction Publishers from Social Movements in an Organizational  
Society, 1987.