The impact of Ayatollah Khomeini' Religious Teachings on Iran's Political and Social Revolution an analytical Study

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Abstract:

This research paper will try to unravel the personality and character of Ayatollah Khomeini in the revolution of Iran. Also it will explore the contextual aspects and conflicts of the philosophy, perception and practice of his revolution. Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution influenced the Iranian social life and political sphere. In result of his revolution multiple organizations has been formed throughout the Muslim world which have influenced the Muslim and western world ethnically, economically and politically. Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution brought the scattered Iranians in unity. It tied them under one narrative of theology. All social groups of the society brought together as they became united during the constitutional revolution 1905-11. But after a few years Raza Shah Pehalvi denounced the parliament and introduced the white revolution. This revolution was based on liberalism and the adoption of western modern norms and progressive methods. Promoted capitalistic ideology, which imbalanced the clerics,

landowners and rural economies and promoted the western modernization norms by ignoring the voices of local people and preferred the westerns concerns over democracy in the country. Raza Shah Pehlvi could not foresee the darker side of western modernity and norms. This darker side culminated in secular the form of the emergence Ayatollah Khomeini who was the popular voice of anti-people. This personality introduced the Iranians with the concept of Vilayat e Faqih which became diminished during the Raza Shah Pehlvi's dynasty. His concept transformed into the Islamic revolution which have changed not only the Iranian society but also influenced the Muslim world by and large. Imam Khomeini's revolution made Iran a theologian state and state affairs supposed to be practiced and implemented in Islamic Shiite teachings and refuted all anti-Shia perspectives and laws.

Keywords: *Vilayat e Faqih, Marjaeyat, Tehreek e Nafaz e Fiqh e Jafria, Mujtahid, Javahir Ul Kalam, Majlis e Khobregan e Rahbari, Hezb e Wahdat*

Introduction

Ayatollah Khomeini was born in Khomeini, a small village in Tehran. His early education was completed from Fayzeh Madrasa in Qom. He got the Islamic teachings from a well-known Shite theologian Ayatollah Abdul Karim and later he was appointed as teacher in the same Madrasa. He was a prolific writer and wrote a mystic book in 1943 "Kashaf al Asrar" which means discovery of secrets. This book was about political system of Islam in which he also argued and defends the Shite rituals of mourning and concept Imamate. This book was the counter narrative against the pamphlet "Asrar e Hazarsala" which means secrets of thousand years.When other clergymen of Iran were getting antagonized against the inapt land reforms made by Raza Shah Pahlavi, Ayatollah Khomeini also stridently criticized

the Shah's rule. Khomeini put allegations that Shah is incapable in controlling the corruption, involved in contravening human rights, created economic inequalities among people, disrupting the Islamic laws and beliefs and corroborating the cordial relationships with Israel.[1]

Motivation of Islamic Revolution in Iran

Prior to the Islamic Revolution in Iran there was a designated parameter and yardstick for the ruler of the state to run the affairs of an Islamic government. The yardstick is that a ruler of an Islamic state should be a Mujtahid. Mujtahid means a person who is capable of having a firm grip on Quran and Sunnah and having deep understanding about legal interpretations. So the Islamic Revolution was based on the notion that a ruler should be a Mujtahid. There was a perplexity among people that to whom they follow, either they have to follow the supreme leader of Iran or they can accompany with other Marjaeyat (source to follow).

Vilayat Al Faqih (Guardianship of an Islamic Jurist)

The concept and dogma of "Vilayat e Faqih" holds a significant importance in Shia political system. According to this concept the ruler of an Islamic state should be credible jurist in the absence of actual Imam. "Vilayat e Faqih" is a central axis part of "Marjaeyat" in Shia ethnicity. Marja'i is not only considering a spiritual mentor but also he leads the people under the light and teachings of Godly laws. He is capable enough to solve the societal

[1] Skocpol, T. (1982). Rentier State and Shia Islam in the Iranian Revolution. In Skocpol. Springer. Cornell University Press. P. 228

and domestics issues of people. The concept of "Vilayat e Faqih" originates from Imamate which is the linchpin of Shia political realm. In comparison to Sunni jurists, the concept of "Caliphate " prevails. Absolute "Vilayat e Faqih" was first derived and articulated by Imam Jaffar Sadiq in His prolific book "Javahir Ul Kalam". During the era of Iranian constitutional revolution, Ayatollah Sheikh modified the dogma of "Vilayat e Faqih". But it was not accepted by the National Majlis of Iran and opposed stridently. Ayatollah Khomeini vividly described the prohibition of Monarchist form of government in Islam.[2]

Ayatollah Khomeini customized the concept of "Vilayat e Faqih" and introduced an executive structure to run the administration of Islamic republic of Iran. This system was based on "Majlis e Khobregan e Rahbari" which means "assembly of experts' leaderships. This grand assembly selects the supreme leader on the basis of the candidate's distinctive sanctity and proficiency in Islamic laws and its political system. The supreme leader is authorized to designate the high officials of military, credible judges and clerical members of the House of Guardianship. As a supreme commander of Iranian military, he is authorized to take preemptive and preventive measures to declare or prevent the war.[3]

Constitutional Approach of Khomeini

[2] Menashri, D. (2019). The Iranian Revolution and The Muslim World. In D. Menashri, The Iranian Revolution And The Muslim World. Routledge. P. 65-68

[3] Oldu, N. (2013). The Iranian Revolution and Shia Islam. In N. Oldu, The Iranian Revolution and Shia Islam: The Role of Islam, P. 37-48.

Ayatollah Khomeini adapted and shifted from quietism to constitutionalism caused by the apprehension of atheism eroding the existence of customary and established Ulma in the society. Ayatollah set up his ideology on the concept of "Vilayat e Faqih" on the basis of conventional and cogent logic. He explained that the government is a central axis of Islam to implement the sovereignty of ALLAH. This is why Prophet Muhammad Peace Be upon Him established a meritorious Islamic state. Furthermore, it is obvious that political system of Islam is the only trajectory which paves the path for the implementation of Islamic democratic values. Khomeini geared up the people of Iran against the belligerent acts of Zionist rule in Israel. While on contrary Raza Shah Pehalvi had cordial relations with Israel. Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution imbibed clericalism and republicanism. His belief was that jurists are not limited to interpret or implement the Islamic laws only. In Fact it is his ultimate task to gel the individual with sharia.[4]

Impact of Khomeini in Iran

The Khomeini revolution impacted the Iranian society altogether. All societal norms transformed into theological teachings. Women attire was replaced with Hijab, veil and abaya. Drinking, gambling and alcohol were banned. Oil refineries under the US, were nationalized. Even, the US oil refineries were banned and burnt. Forty two million educated youth were migrated to different parts of the world due to the strident theocratic regime of Khomeini. Media and press were restricted to the propagation of Khomeini's Shiite ideology. Foreign affairs policy was designed on the

[4] Ajami, F. (2016). The Vanished Imam. In Ajami, The Vanished Imam: Musa Al Sadr and The Shia of Lebanon. Cornell University Press. P.228

notion “that neither East nor West”. But made economic, political and security relationships with China, Russia and Korea. That is how Iran tilted towards the East.[5]

Khomeini’s Aim of Islamic Universalism

Ayatollah Khomeini related the social and political weakness of Iran and the whole Islamic world to western imperialism specifically with US economic imperialism. He emphasized that the emancipation of the Muslim world lies in the unity. By consolidating the socio-cultural and socio-economic values of Muslim world can them authoritative in the international realm. Because it is the only way out that Muslims in the world can revive and restore Islamic teachings, values and laws in a legitimate way.

Ayatollah Khomeini’s motive and objective is to support and boost up of oppressed Muslims to rule out the western imperialist powers from the whole Muslim world. Imam Khomeini's revolution was intended and inclined to unravel the darker side of modernity and coloniality. Specifically the US and Israel led imperialism is the biggest threat and enemy of Iran and the Muslim world. He believed that these western imperialistic powers disrupted the Iran and the, Muslim world culturally, economically and politically.[6]

Khomeini’s Revolution Impact on Contemporary world

The ideology and doctrine of Khomeini affect the modern world drastically. In the real world, there are numerous organizations and associations inspired

[5] Menashri, D. (2019). The Iranian Revolution and The Muslim World. In D. Menashri, The Iranian Revolution and The Muslim World. Routledge. P.78

[6] Ibid, P.79.

by him. During his span, some of these associations and organizations continued to grow even after his demise.

The Islamic Republican Party 1979

The followers and students of Imam Khomeini, including Ali Akbar Hashmi, Muhammad Javed, Abdul Karim Ardabili, Ali Khamenei and Bahishti, established the Islamic Republican Party in 1979. Many of them were proactive in gearing up the huge crowds during the Revolution for mass protests. The aim was to muster the Iranian society's conventional and nationalist powers. Above mentioned disciples were the most loyal clerical persons of Imam Khomeini. This party was founded to support the Iranian Revolution in the middle of 1979 and the theocracy was created in Iran by Ayatollah Khomeini. In 1979, the occupation of the US embassy in Tehran IRP played an important role. The IRP offices were targeted and destroyed with bombs in 1981, leading to the deaths of many of the party's founders. President of IRP Khamenei became the secretary general of IRP after the demise of Bahishti and other distinct members of the IRP, made the decision to dissolve the IRP. Khamenei wrote a letter to Imam Khomeini in 1987 in which he highlighted the institutional politics and opposition in IRP and made him convinced to disintegrate this party.[7]

Saudi Hezbollah

Hezbollah Saudi is operational in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain as a militant group. It was established in May 1987 in the eastern province of

[7] Calfiero, G. (n.d.). Iran and Gulf States 40 years after th 1979 revolution. In G. Calfiero. Middle East Institute of International Relations.

Saudi Arabia. The Pro Shirazi association in the Arabian Peninsula is a pro-Khomeini organization. It was banned by the Government of the Kingdom on 7 March 2014 in Saudi Arabia, and declared as a terrorist organization. Saudi Hezbollah clearly exhibits its responsibility and involvement in multifarious attacks in Saudi Arabia in the decade of 1980s including attacks on oil fields at Ras Tanura and Jubail. Also it was involved in multiple attacks and bombing in Riyadh in 1989. This organization was getting logistic support from Lebanese Hezbollah. According to some analysts it was unraveled that Saudi Hezbollah was also supported by Al-Qaeda, but Shiite support to Saudi Hezbollah was also alleged with Iranian revolution.[8]

Islamic Dawah Party of Iraq

Islamic Dawah Party of Iraq and Iraq's Supreme Council are the prominent Shiite supported factions in Iraq. These parties got majority in the provisional and federal elections of Iraq in 2005. Islamic Dawah Party was led by Haider Ali Abdi. He was elected a Prime Minister of Iraq in 2014. This party was not only fully funded and supported by the Imam Khomeini but still it is getting full abatement by Iran so far. This party was established in 1968 by the inspiration of Imam Khomeini and desired to have the same kind of charismatic personality in Iraq. Under Saddam Husain's regime it was banned but after the invasion of the US it became the dominant faction of Iraq. This party fully supported the narrative of Imam Khomeini and

[8]Blandford, N. (2017). Hezbollah's Evolution: From Lebanese Militia To REGIONAL pLAYER. In N. Blandford, *Hezbollah's Evolution*, Middle East Institue of International Relations, P. 22-45

started the struggle to implement the notions and revolution of Khomeini in Iraq. In the Iraq-Iran war the government of Iran fully funded to Islamic Dawah Party as an insurgent group against Saddam Hussain regime. Its headquarters was shifted to Tehran, capital city of Iran. In 1981 it attacked the embassy of Iraq in Beirut. Later this party made a coalition with the revolutionary Guards of Iran. And made a strong force of Shiite in Iraq against Saddam Hussain government.[9]

Hezb e Wahdat Party of Afghanistan

Ayatollah Khomeini was intended to implement the Islamic revolution not only in Iran in fact he wanted to disseminate his revolution in the whole Muslim world. As the Soviets entered Afghanistan, a number of Shiite Afghan supported by Iranian revolutionary government. It formed and developed Afghan Shiite faction as Hezb e Wahdat Party of Afghanistan in 1989.Iran has backed and funded the Hezb e Wahdat Party by and large. This party was credibly engaged in as a guerilla force in the central government of Afghanistan. It clearly showed the Khumeini's inclination and involvement to eradicate the anti-Islam powers from Afghanistan. It posed a gigantic turbulence and resistance against the Soviets.[10]

Tehreek e Jafaria of Pakistan.

[9]Aldroubi, M. (2018). Iraq's Dawa Party is in Decline. Retrieved from www.thenational.ae/world/mena/iraq-dawa-party-is-in-decline.

[10] Wahdat, H. e. (2019, March 13). Retrieved from Wikkipedia: www.wikkipedia.com

Tehreek e Jafaria Pakistan is a Shiite based religious organization in Pakistan. This organization is founded by the Muhammad Mufti Jafar Hussain. This organization is mutated in Tehreek e Nafaz e Fiqah e Jafria which was led by Syed Hamid Ali Shah Mosavi. It is divided into distinct factions. One is led and ruled by Allama Arif Hussain, one of the prominent and credible disciples of Imam Khomeini. He was highly influenced by the teachings of Imam Khomeini. Nowadays the TJP organization is banned in Pakistan. Second faction is led by the Allama Hamid Ali Mosavi, which is Tehreek e Nafaz e Fiqh e Jafria TNFJ. TJP was banned in Pakistan in 2002, and then it started to continue its activities by implementing its narrative in Pakistan. It started an aggressive campaign against anti -Shiite laws in Pakistan which was introduced by General Zia Ul Haq during the Martial Law. The core purpose of TJP is the propagation and protection of Shiite teachings and norms in Pakistan. This organization was banned twice by General Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan in 2002 and 2005 respectively due to its vivid involvement in terrorist and extremist activities in Pakistan. Tehreek e Jafaria was later merged in Tehreek e Islamia and its prime leaders were killed in 2008 in military operation against terrorism.

Houthi Group of Yemen

Iranian revolutionary supported Shiite Houthi group was organized in Yemen in 1992. This faction is established by the students who were influenced by the teachings of Imam Khomeini. One of the young inspired and motivated students from Khomeini’s revolution were Hussain Badar Ud Din Al Houthi led the aggressive and violent insurgency against the central government of Yemen. The members of this group call themselves Ansar Allah meaning Supporters of God. This organization emerged as a fully

armed and political religious movement in the northern part of Yemen in 1992. They belonged to the Zaidi sect, but the evidence of the presence of Sunni Muslims is also legitimate. UNO alleged that Tehran is supporting the Houthi group with financial and military assistance over the decade. This allegation became authentic by the claim of Al-Houthi disciples that they had close connection with Ali Khamenei, Supreme leader of Iran and Hassan Nasraullah, prime leader of Hezbollah. Animosity between Sunni Muslim countries and Iran especially the escalation between Saudi Arab and Houthi rebels after the attack of ballistic missile at King Khalid Airport in Riyadh. Saudi Arabia related this attack with an act of war and alleged that these were Iranian Missiles which were launched by Hezbollah. US president Donald Trump also reprimanded Iran in this regard.[11]

Conclusion

The mutation of Raza Shah's elite centered and urban western modern society of Iran into and pro poor and pro popular Islamist revolutionary and Islamic Republic of Iran of Ayatollah Khomeini resulting in the expansion of facilities from city to country side. It wiped out the division between rural and urban. Equal distribution of basic human needs between urban and rural and reduction of poverty from 25 percent in 1970 to 9 percent until 2014. But the actual question or argument is that Ayatollah Khomeini's revolution got success in pervading the core essence of Vilayat e Faqih notion in the Iran and rest of the Muslim world or not? In Spite of having

[11] Jackson, R. (2010). Background on the Tehreek Nifaz e Jafaria Pakistan and Tehreek e Jafaria Pakistan. In R. Jackson. Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.

some success or achievements, this revolution could not embrace the optimum distinctions. In Fact this revolution and its offshoots became an Oligarchy and violent form of government in Iran and other Muslim countries. Even after 40 years the socio-economic, political and ecological crisis in Iran is worsening nowadays. The current obfuscated social, economic and political system in Iran seems weak to break the shackles imposed by the western

super powers.