

Contemporary Problems of Iranian Modernization

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Abstract

As a theoretical approach, this study sought to consider general modernization in contemporary society within a sociological framework. As a result, in its contemporary period, modernization was studied in three different government systems. From the Qajarian period at the beginning of modernization to the recent Islamic republic government, there have been two opposing groups of agreement and disagreement on modernization. As a result of the fighting among agreement groups about modernization, the Constitutional Revolution eventually emerged. As a result of fighting different groups over modernization, we get the Islamic Revolution. These interpret the modernization currently going on in Iranian society. As an important result, according to Iranian social science researchers, modernization emerged in western societies and was related to them. Generally, Eastern societies, specifically Iranian society, have undergone one modernization; these societies, regarding this basic non-western society, could be modernized anywhere in the world.

Keywords: *Iran, Modernization, the Qajar government, Pahlavi government, Islamic Republic.*

Introduction

Modernity as one of social concepts was mostly investigated in the social and human sciences, for instance in sociological studies. It seems that there have been a variety of definitions and interpretations over concept of the modernity. This is why there is no certain and obvious definition in concept of the modernity. This situation of modernity is currently going on from different points of view. In contrast to traditional Christian religions, it appears that concept of the modernity as a social term has emerged among European thinkers and philosophers. Afterward, concept of the modernity

spreaded in non-Western societies through thinkers and intellectuals.¹ According to Iranian researchers, the modernity must prove itself, which necessitates an opposing viewpoint. Eventually, conception of the non-modernity was chosen as the opposite of conception versus the modernity conception. In other words, Western versus non-Western philosophy was discussed among philosophies in the social sciences. In this way Western culture and philosophy have been realized as pattern of modern societies. The remarkable point is that modernity can be used as a measurement tool to evaluate that which society and culture is modern or which one is not. In this context, as an example, as the result of Europeanism in modernity, a kind of mentality has been created in Europe to be developed. What happened in Europe is correct thing, and what came out of it is incorrect thing. Overall, being outside of Europe is not considered the modernity. As a result, what happened in Western culture was used to determine whether something was modern or not. According to some social researchers, this is considered the Europeanism of the modernity.² In European societies, particularly in Islamic societies, people, thinkers, writers, intellectual streams etc. that who supported Europeanism were evaluated as "Westerners." By opposite of the modernity group. Since the beginning of the process of modernization terms, there have been two opposing groups in the Islamic nations for instance Iranian society, Conservatives group includes religious people and clergymen, and the group is named western intellectuals, the Western intellectuals include non-religious people who have graduated from European universities. During the contemporary period, these opposing groups were enemies of each other in political and mental dimensions. The high point of dispute and conflict between those conservative and modernist groups was in the period of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution. Therefore, this study aims to study modernization in contemporary Iranian society as a case study. Overall, the contemporary history of Iran indicates that the Iranian nation has experienced three different kinds of government systems in its contemporary history. Every three-shaped government has experienced social and political changes during their respective time period. Therefore, this study aims to study how modernity deals with Iranian society in its contemporary period. As previously stated, Iran has had three different

¹ Giddens, A., Sutton, P. W, *Essential Concepts In Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity, 2014, P.27

² Mirsepassi, A, *Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernization, Negotiation Modernity in Iran*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2009. p-1.

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types of governments in its modern era, the first government is named as the Qajar dynasty, the second government is named Pahlavi, and today currently dominating government as named the Islamic Republic was found in 1979 by Emam Khomeini the leader of Iranian Islamic revolution. Iranian people encountered European society in the Qajar dynasty for the first time in its contemporary period. For the first time, Iranians were able to compare themselves to European society, and they discovered their underdevelopment in a variety of ways. Eventually, the Qajar dynasty was ended in 1925 by the Pahlavi government, which was founded by Reza Khan. In this terms, the Pahlavi emphasized modernization politics, and a nation-state was built in Iran for the first time. After 52 years, the Pahlavi monarchy was eventually overthrown by the Islamic Revolution led by Emam Khomeini in 1979. After this time, Iranian society entered the Islamic Republic system. Islamic Republic: By holding a referendum, most Iranians voted positively for the Islamic Republic to be their new government system after the Pahlavi regime. Afterward, the Islamic Republic was officially established in Iran. In this period, the main slogan is "returning to the original Islamic culture," which is emphasized by the Islamic Republic and its well-known leader, Emam Khomeini. Therefore, the modernization process has been investigated in Iran since the beginning.

The Conception of Modernity

This section of the current study focuses on the conception of the modernity as it has emerged so far within the sociological approach. Due to the present topic being sociological, the conception of modernity has been studied within sociological theories. Previous studies related to the conception of modernity indicate that there is no commonplace and certain definition of modernity among social researchers. Therefore, different definitions were presented by social researchers from their point of view regarding the modernity conception. Also, the modern conception was criticized by sociologists. It seems that modernity has emerged in the history of Europe. The period from the middle of the eighteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century in Europe was called the "*modernity period*." Some terms used to describe this time period include secularism, rationalism, individualism, industrialism, democracy, urbanism, and scientism. The modernity concept is used for everything related to the contemporary period. Discussing the conflict between modernity and

antiquity was a common topic in sixteenth-century Europe. Thinking modernization means renewing everything, such as transportation, housing, and social attitudes, becomes essential and is called "*progressive*." All traditional things like religion and religious rules were criticized by philosophy in the enlightenment period of Europe. Traditions lose importance in the face of rational thinking and scientific method³.

Giddens, who is one of the best-known scholars in sociology, studied the conception of modernity. He expressed modernity in his book, which was titled "*Consequences of Modernity*." According to this book, the modernity was mentioned as a form of society and organization that emerged in Europe in the seventeenth century. After that moment, which was felt in other parts of the world, Giddens uses the modern conception to explain the contemporary societies of the modern period. As a result, Giddens' modernity theory distinguishes two types of modernity. Those include early modernity and late modernity. According to Giddens, in different contexts such as social relations, economics, organization, and communication, societies take on a new form and mode compared to their previous form and mode. Overall, according to Giddens's approach, modern society has four main features: capitalism, industrialism, monitoring capacity, and military power. Therefore, modern societies are advanced over previous societies in economics, industry, technology, etc. In other words, previous societies have a new name, which is modernity⁴. Probably for this reason, Jorgen Habermas, a German sociologist, uses "*incomplete project*" for modernity⁵.

Zygmunt Bauman, one of the best-known sociologists, presented his theory on the modernity concept. Bauman indicates in his book "*Liquid Modernity*" that in today's societies, the diversity of backgrounds such as social, traditional, identity, etc. have entered a kind of liquid modernity. Everything is overflowing and moving so that there is nothing stable any longer. Hence, according to Bauman, there are two kinds of modernity. One of them is called "*solid modernity*," and being strict is the main feature of it; in other words, "*solid modernity*" is a lack of change in society. The other modernity is called "*liquid*," which means that in the new period of

³ Giddens, A, Sutton, P. W., Essential Concepts In Sociology, Cambridg, Polity, 2014, P. 27.

⁴ Loyal, S., The Sociology of Anthony Giddens, London: Pluto Press, 2003, P.115.

⁵ Habermas, J, Modernity: An Unfinished Project. In Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity: Critical Essays on the Philosophical Discourse of Modernity. Cambridge, Massachusetta, MIT Press, 1997, p.1.

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cultures, traditions are melting in the pot of modernity. According to this perspective, in today's society, there is nothing stable. For this reason, the modernity concept is liquid⁶. From the point of view of some thinkers, the modernity is a universal project; by employing the modernity, eventually improvement, progress, and development are achieved in economics, technology, etc. Overall, by employing a policy of modernization, society will be successful in all contexts, such as the economy and industry. For example, South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, as Asian nations, are calculated as successful nations in the correct use of modernization policy to achieve their development objectives. These methods of successful development were criticized by social thinkers. For example, this sample of modernization is evaluated as westernization⁷.

According to some thinkers, every society, by referring to its basic cultural structure, could build its own special modernity. In this context, Japanese is the best example. Also, China tried to build a modern model⁸.

Darius Shayghan Iranian philosophy in his book with title "*Asia versus Western*" writes that Muslim nations, particularly Middle Eastern nations, are familiar with each other's cultural features, social features, and identities, whereas after the advanced modernization process in the world, these people become unfamiliar and foreign to each other. As a result, these people shared cultural characteristics, but modernization separated social and cultural characteristics. According to Shayeghan, in this case, the main reason is that western modernization has become kiblah in the mentality and image of these nations⁹.

As mentioned, there has been no unanimity among sociologists over the conception of modernity, so everyone presented modernity from a window of their own.

Modernity Period In Iran

Iranian thinkers and intellectuals have held a variety of opposing views on modernity. Since the beginning of the crushing of modernity in Iranian society, there have been both agreements and disagreements among Iranian

⁶Bauman, Z, *Liquid Modernity*. Polity. Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000,p.1.

⁷Giddens, A, Sutton, P. W., *Essential Concepts In Sociology*, Cambridge, Polity, 2014, p.27.

⁸Giddens, A, Sutton, P. W., *Essential Concepts In Sociology*, Cambridge, Polity, 2014, p.30.

⁹Shayeghan, D, *Asia Dar Barabare Gharb*. Tehran, Entesharat Amir Kabir, 1999, p.173.

thinkers and political groups on certain issues. As Iran has a rich culture and a long history, its social history has experienced ups and downs in its culture, policy, social, and religious aspects. This is why it seems that Iran has a rich backgrounds in culture, literature, and philosophy. Iranian society was ruled by a king system until the contemporary period. Looking at the history of Iran shows that there was a social classification system in Iran. Throughout Iran's history, the king's class and the religious class were both important classes. The two major classes mentioned were sometimes enemies or adversaries. This kind of social class was one of the specific features of social structure in Iranian society until the contemporary period. Despite this social characteristic, modernization was observed in Iranian society. According to some thinkers, Iranian society did not need others' modernization; it constructed its own modernization, so this case continued from the Medieval to the Late Age¹⁰. As previously stated, when faced with modernization, the role of the kings class and religious class in front of modernization had both agreed with and disagreed with modernization groups. For the first time in Iranian history, this occurred during the Qajar period. In other words, as could obviously be expressed, there is a permanent dispute between modernity and tradition in Iran. As mentioned, when Iranian society faced modernization, Iran had its own specific features of culture, demography, and social backgrounds. The social backgrounds of Iran at that time was never comparable with the West. Western modernity was accepted only among some groups of Iranian society. Most of this group graduated from western society. Also, they were affected by western modernization. This group that followed western philosophy was called "Westernization" in Iran. From the point of view of those who disagreed with modernization, western modernization was not compatible with Iranian society because of its cultural backgrounds. As a result, according to some social thinkers, Iran has modernized, and Iranian modernity is referred to as a paradigm. This paradigm is opposed to western modernity. In Iranian modernity, there is an effort to revive tradition. In this kind of modernity, Iranian people have dynamic roles. In this case, according to some thinkers such as Nematollah Fazeli, Iranian modernity is redefined to confront western modernity. In other words, Iranian modernity is made for the world¹¹. Mirsepassi is another Iranian

¹⁰ Milani, A, *Tajaddod va Tajaddod Setizi Dar Iran*. Tehran, Akhtaran, Chap Haftom, 2003, p. 29.

¹¹ Fazeli, N, *Abadeh Siasi Farhangh dar Iran, Ensan Shenasi, Siasat va Jameh dar Gharneh Bistom* (Tarjomeh. Vahid Shokati Amghani), Sabzan, Tehran, 2017, p.1.

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researcher in modernity. He wrote a book related to modernity, titled "*Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernization*." Western philosophy, according to Mirsepassi, built modernization as Europeanism. From this perspective, modernization was experienced by European people, and other people do not consider it. No nation outside of Europe has contributed to the construction of modernization. This is why the western-eastern dichotomy emerged. In other words, modernization is the discovery of the West, and its roots come from western culture. Also, it is contrary to other cultures. According to Mirsepassi, ending Europeanism, modernization, and making efforts to make peace with non-Western cultures while embracing Western culture could be effective in the modernization of the world. Therefore, there is a diversity between non-Western modernization and Western modernization. This point was emphasized by Edvard Said and was called orientalist studies¹².

In this part of the study, modernization in Iran was considered by three different Iranian governments in its contemporary period. Those three governments include the Qajar, the Pahlavi, and most recently the Islamic Republic.

The Qajarian: Beginning Of The Modernization P(1974-1925)

Some studies on the modernity indicate that for the first time the modernization process lunched in the Qajar dynasty period in Iran. In this period, Iranians faced western society and western modern cultur for the first time¹³. This is why it needs a brief explanation of the Qajar dynasty. Who was the Qajar dynasty? The Qajar is descended from Oguz Turks. They built the main base of the Qizilbash army in the Safavid empire. The Qajar dynasty was powered by the Shah Abbas period. They aided the Safavid rulers. This is why it became powerful and effective under the Safavid empire. Maintaining the border was one of the important tasks of the Qajar dynasty at that moment. Akkoyunlu, a Turk tribe, established a government in the Azerbaijan region for a time before taking over the

¹² Mirsepassi, A, *Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernization*, Negotiation Modernity in Iran, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009, P.1.

¹³ Vahdat, F. (2000). "Royaroi Avvalieh Roshanfekraneh Iran Ba Moderniteh: Yek Roikard Doghaneh, Ghtehgho, pp.125–65.

Safavid government. After years, they had reached the same level of policy sophistication as the Qajar dynasty¹⁴.

Agha Mohammad, the Qajar dynasty's founder, officially established the Qajar dynasty in 1795 in Tehran. This regime lasted until 1920. At this time, it collapsed. Afterward, the Pahlavai regime¹⁵.

When the Iranian society of the period is examined, it is observed that two classes, the ruler and the ruled are dominant. While the shah and the princes were at the top of this social pyramid, the farmers and peasants constituted the class that was ruled as a vassal class. In other words, in general, rural and agricultural ranches made up the majority of Iranian society. It also had a kind of patriarchal system. However, businessmen and merchants formed the most powerful class in the city. There were 6.750,000 people living there in 1891. According to estimates, 2.250,000 of the population that existed at that time lived in cities and 4.500,000 in rural areas. Furthermore, it is estimated that 225,000 people rely on a single tribe. Meanwhile, it is thought that the agricultural class constitutes 70 percent of Iran's demographic structure. As of this period, this class constitutes the wealth-producing class of the country. Industrialization, urbanization, and Westernism first began to enter the lives of Iranians during the Qajar period. For the first time in its history, Iranian society began to interact with European civilization culturally and politically. When this first period of modernizing Iranian society is analyzed, Iran's social and economic structure is a complete tribal example. In addition, Iranian society was far from the real events in Europe. Although the Qajar society has a long history and a rich culture and civilization, it has a corrupt system. In addition, the people living in this society firmly believed in their traditions, sect, and national culture¹⁶.

Over time, the dissatisfaction of the people increased, the prices increased, the living welfare was low, and famine and the influence of foreigners in the administration of the country increased, so the clergy (mullahs) who were against this situation, accompanied by the people, rebelled. These

¹⁴ Shamim, A. A, Iran Aar Doreh Saltanateh Qajar, Tehran, Behzad, 2008, p.1.

¹⁵ Tahgigati, M, Neghahi Be Sakhtar Godrat Siasi Iran Dar Asre Qajar, 15 Khordad, 1999, pp.65–92.

¹⁶ Abrahamian, Y, Iran Beyin Doo Enghlab, Edited by Ahmad Fattahi, Ebrahi, Ghol Mohammadi. Tehran, Nashre Ney 2005, p.13.

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problems provided a space where the national assembly could be established, and the restriction of the power of the shah and the implementation of the law instead of the shah's decisions were realized as one of the most important wishes of the people. This event eventually led to a great "Constitutional Revolution" in the history of Iran. Due to the protests of the people and the Ayatollahs, Mozeffereddin Shah eventually signed the establishment of the "*House of Justice*." It was a temporary popular victory. The establishment of the parliament and the transformation of the absolute monarchy into a constitutional monarchy occurred as a result of the Ayatollah's pressure on the Shah after this event became widespread. Eventually, after Muzaffereddin Shah signed the Constitutional Edict in 1906, the national assembly convened in Tehran. Following the Constitutional Monarchy, two groups emerged. First, it was divided into "*Constitutional intellectuals*" and second, "*Conservative Ayatollahs*." A gap began to form between these two groups. Conservative Ayatollahs accepted the constitutional law if sharia was applied¹⁷. According to this type of ayatollah, the constitutional monarchy is like imported goods. It also has incompatibilities with Islamic culture. As a result, the constitutional intellectuals took a different stance and accepted the law's implementation and the work of parliament as in the West. In addition, this type of intellectual, influenced by waves of French political transgression, attempted to renew religion with Western liberal modern intellectuals. In this discourse, freedom, democracy, a civilized society, and the prevalence of modern institutions were cited as important slogans and goals. As a matter of fact, this conflict has gradually brought about the emergence of the intellectual movement in Iran, even to the present day. In addition, it continues by transforming into a cultural and political struggle between these two currents. But the dominant discourse at that time was a discourse other than religion. Non-religious perspectives are all emphasized as legalistic, with little difference¹⁸. In other words, the period 1814-1828 appears to be the starting point, when Iranians recognized the causes of their severe backwardness and the West's development. Almost as soon as Iran first touches the modern world, we can see a dual approach. In addition, on the one hand, there was a high tendency to adopt the

¹⁷ Abrahamian, Y, *Iran Beyin Doo Enghlab*, Edited by Ahmad Fattahi, Ebrahim, Ghol Mohammadi, Tehran, Nashre Ney, 2005, p.25.

¹⁸ Abrahamian, Y, *Iran Beyin Doo Enghlab*, Edited by Ahmad Fattahi, Ebrahim, Ghol Mohammadi, Tehran, Nashre Ney, 2005, p.28.

technology of the West, and on the other hand, there was passion and curiosity for the new civil society institutions and beliefs of the West¹⁹. First of all, in the first half of the nineteenth century (1803), during the 50-year period of the Fethali shah, the Qajar state faced various events, such as establishing relations with France and England for the first time and protracted wars with Russia. Thus, after the reign of Fethali Shah, Nasreddin Shah came to power. In this period, with the effect of Iran's relations with the northern people of Russia and the southern people of England, and the arrival of European representatives and ambassadors, the acceptance of the European lifestyle by the Iranian people was a prerequisite. Naseeruddin Shah himself had a lot to do with European civilization. For this reason, Nasereddin Shah fled first and visited Europe three times as the shah of Iran. The first was in 1873, the second in 1879, and the third in 1889. During this journey, he met with the states of Russia, the Ottoman Empire, Germany, Belgium, England, France, Sweden, Italy, and Austria²⁰. In addition, he gained new experiences every time he visited. In the true sense of the word, Iran's modernization process began slowly during this period. In addition, with the initiatives of Amir Kabir, the Grand First Minister of Nasiraddin Shah, many new practices were initiated under the name of the "*modernization process*." In Iran, the tension of modernity has taken on a complex dimension. For example, according to some people, modernity meant freedom for society and democracy. Modernity, on the other hand, was the love of rationalism and colonialism under the guise of modernity. Beginning of broadcasting in Tehran and other cities, the opening of the first university called Darolfunun, the establishment of the first radio station in Tehran and later in Tabriz, regular postal communication between Iran and Europe, the opening of the first museum in Tehran, street buildings, telephone and telegraph lines, etc. Those mentioned performances were part of the time's modernization policy²¹. Rather than the concrete objects of modernity, new political ideas and beliefs, such as those of the intellectuals, the Constitutional Revolution, the religious, the Westerners, etc., also came to fruition. However, after the first students sent to Europe returned, new

¹⁹ Vahdat, F, Royaroi Avvalieh Roshanfekraneh Iran Ba Moderniteh, Yek Roikard Doghaneh, Ghtehgho, 2000, 2000, pp.125-65.

²⁰ Milani, A, Tajaddod va Tajaddod Setizi Dar Iran. Tehran, Akhtaran, Chap Haftom, 2003, p.29.

²¹ Abrahamian, Y, Iran Beyin Doo Enghlab. Edited by Ahmad Fattahi, Ebrahim. Ghol Mohammadi, Tehran, Nashre Ney, 2005, p.25.

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ideas began to be published among the public. In addition, public opinion provided the basis for new changes and reforms in accordance with the social situation at that time. In this context, the issue of modernization is undoubtedly one of the most important issues in contemporary Iran. The difference between the constitutionalists and the legitimists has been the experience of modernization in the last hundred years, which has become an issue at home and abroad in the last decade and been the focus of more or less all intellectual and political movements²².

Pahlavi Period: Nation-State Building Terms (1925-1979)

The Qajar state eventually collapsed as a result of various political and social changes, as well as political interventions and pressures from foreign powers the Qajar state. The people living in Iran during the Qajar period emphasized their local traditions and social characteristics, and concepts such as nationalism or racism did not emerge that terms of Iran. Reza Khan then introduced a new system as nationalism policies to Iranian people for the first time. Reza Khan made efforts to change the original Iranian culture and social structure under modernization policy. This is why many Iranian local and original cultures and ethnicities were ignored by the modernization policy. For example, Persian was chosen as the official language, but other ethnic languages also had their own ethnic identities and features that were completely ignored across the country. Afterward, there will be only one culture and one language in the multinational or multicultural Iranian society²³.

Reza Pahlavi was born in 1878 into a poor family in the Mazandaran region in Iran. He entered the military after adolescence. Over time, he became a military general at the end of the Qajar government. Finally, Reza Pahlavi seized political power in Iran under the name of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1926. Afterward, the project to renew or modernize was started. As a result, after the modernization policy was implemented, there was a resurgence of contradiction or tension between modernization values and traditional and religious values. This social conflict continued until the end

²² Milani, A, *Tajaddod va Tajaddod Setizi Dar Iran*, Tehran, Akhtaran, Chap Haftom, 2003, p.29.

²³ Abrahamian, Y, *Iran Beyin Doo Enghlab*, Edited by Ahmad Fattahi, Ebrahim. Ghol Mohammadi, Tehran: Nashre Ney, 2005, p.45.

of the Pahlavi regime. From another point of view, the ideas from the Constitutional Period and the newly educated class in the West contributed to the modernization of the approach of the First Pahlavi because they were on the side of the ruling class. After that, Reza Pahlavi built a new and modern army. Because the construction of the new and modern army was thought to modernize other segments of society and the class The construction of the new army and military faculty contributed to the development of the middle class in society. Therefore, the military class had a great influence on the modernization process and the spreaded out of social changes. In other words, they believed that, along with the influences left by the Constitutional Monarchy movement and Western thinkers, they would unite with the ruling class, abolish traditional culture through what democracy would do, and then continue the society with modern culture, thus rebuilding Iran's past civilization. Thus, in that period, they point out that the only way to save and develop Iran is by removing Iranian society from religion and traditional culture. Therefore, Reza Pahlavi's plans concentrated on three main axes: nationalism, antiquity, and modernity²⁴.

Islamic Republic, New Discourse of Islamic Cultural and Identity

Indeed, due to the unsuccessful policies of the Pahlavi regime under the name of modernization, it has caused many political, cultural, and ethnic crises in Iranian society and dissatisfaction among the Iranian people. Thus, due to the political, social, cultural, and economic policies of the Pahlavi throughout the country, social objections against the system developed among the people over time. Ayatollah Imam Khomeini, having a religious and charismatic character, also realized the Islamic Revolution in 1979 with the patronage of society. Just one year after the revolution, in 1980, the people had to vote "Yes" or "No" for the realization of the Islamic Republic as a new system in Iran. A referendum was held for this, and 98 percent of the people voted 'Yes' to the establishment of the Islamic Republic as a new government system. Eventually, under the leadership of Emam Khomeini, the Islamic Republic came into effect as the new power and system throughout Iran. Thus, the Islamic revolution was victorious at first with the slogan "*Neither West, nor East, but the Islamic Republic*" and also with the rhetoric of "*unity and brotherhood*." Therefore, the first

²⁴ Abrahamian, Y, Iran Beyin Doo Enghlab. Edited by Ahmad Fattahi, Ebrahim. Ghol Mohammadi, Tehran, Nashre Ney, 2005, p.25.

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expectation of the people from the Revolution is the restoration of all human, social, cultural, and ethnic rights that were crushed during the Pahlavi period. Thus, when the new state came to power, it began to strive to ensure that the nation could provide all its laws under the umbrella of the "Islamic Republic." The "Islamic Republic of Iran" has positively met some of the ethnic demands. If we give an example of this, Turks, Kurds, and other ethnic groups obtained the right to publish magazines, books, and local newspapers in their language. In addition, television and radio channels were opened in the provinces where ethnic groups lived in their own language. (1998-2006) President Mohammed Hatami emphasized that the cultural rights of all ethnicities should be taken into account within the democratic framework; for example, Kurds started to publish Kurdish magazines, or some rights were given to universities from Kurdish regions, such as accepting more students²⁵.

Thus, the Pahlavis managed all the different ethnic groups in the country together and used only their policies, such as Persian and Persian identity, as a unifying factor in order to ensure the integrity and unity of the country. Differences are underlined as the most important element in maintaining peace and preserving the unity and integrity of the country²⁶. In this context, if we look at it from the other perspective, in recent years, the Islamic Republic has been trying to bring together the ethnic differences in the country as a new "Islamic and Iranian" national identity, bring the differences together under this identity roof, and provide national solidarity. For example, all ethnicities played a major role in the realization of the Islamic revolution, and after that, almost all ethnicities, especially Turks, lost a lot of martyrs in the Iran-Iraq war for 8 years. Therefore, discourses that can be effective throughout Iran today have emerged in Iran's social and cultural structure. If we discuss the discourses that have emerged in this context, we can see the discourses of the "*Iran-Iraq war discourse*," "*Islamic Revolution discourse*," "*Shiite discourse*," and "*Iranian discourse*," as well as the discourses that are mentioned from the sociological window depending on our subject and different ethnicities in Iran. Another study subject that can be investigated is the relationship

²⁵ Maghsodi, M., Darbandi, A, Barrasi Siyasathai Ghomi Jomhori Islami Iran Dar Gebal Kordha Dar Dolat Islahat, Pajoheshnameh Olumeh Siyasi, 2011,4: pp.155-78.

²⁶ Maghsodi, M., Darbandi, A, Barrasi Siyasathai Ghomi Jomhori Islami Iran Dar Gebal Kordha Dar Dolat Islahat, Pajoheshnameh Olumeh Siyasi,2011, 4: p.155-78.

between cultures. However, the realization of these new discourses during the Islamic Republic period strengthened national solidarity across Iran. In addition, those in power also gave legitimacy to the state. Therefore, while any political threats came from abroad, they further strengthened the solidarity between different cultures and ethnicities within the country. If we give an example in this context, tensions and political conflicts between the USA, Israel, and Iran, and Iran's nuclear program, which has been between Iran and the West since 2005, have also been adopted by the public under the "Iranian and Islamic" identity. Thus, it once again strengthened national solidarity in the face of internal and external threats. However, as we mentioned, in the new age, some new social movements emerged from factors such as globalization. Our example here is the ethnic nationalism movement, which, through factors such as resistance and self-preservation, has revived the ethnic identity demands and nationalism movement since the collapse of the Qajar state and especially because of the Persian nationalism of the Pahlavi regime. As an example of these requests, it has always been constantly on the agenda for Azerbaijanis, Arabs, and Kurds. However, the realization of the cultural and social rights of ethnic groups in the Islamic Republic has always been on the agenda of ethnic groups. In this regard, it is underlined in the constitution of the Islamic Republic that all the rights of ethnicities will be ensured. However, it has not reached the stage of serious implementation by the state. However, due to some remnants of Persian nationalism from the Pahlavi period, as well as taking into account the cultural, social, and ethnic identity demands and backbones of ethnicities, this has caused ethnic tensions again. These incidents were especially serious in the provinces of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. For an example here, "Turkism" or "Azerbaijan Nationalism" among Azerbaijanis began almost in the 2000s, after Azerbaijani students, who demanded their identity cards, held a big meeting in the "Babek Castle," and also after the newspaper Iran made an insult against the Turks in 2005, and that caused great rebellions and objections in the cities of Azerbaijan. After these events, the demand for Turkish identity and Turkism, or Azerbaijani nationalism, has become massive in Azerbaijan. In addition to this, we give another example: in the last 10 years, Tabriz's famous Tractor Football Team has been a football team representing and symbolizing Turks and Azerbaijani Turks in Iran. Thus, in the matches of this team, more than 100 thousand fans go to the stadium to watch the matches of this team closely and chant slogans belonging to Azerbaijan, such as "Long Live Azerbaijan" or "Long Live Azerbaijan." In other words, until the middle of the 20th century, there was no separation from the center or ethnicism depending on the subject in Iran.

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But after this date, acts of ethnicism have developed. In this context, as mentioned, events and depressions have developed in the country due to the emergence of the Pahlavi state and the wrong policies towards ethnicities²⁷. In the period of the Islamic Republic, which we have been in the country for in recent years, a new discourse has developed under the title "*Islamic Nationalism Discourse*." Indeed, if we look at the content of this discourse, Islamic culture, principles, and Iranian culture (Persian culture before Islam) are beautifully combined together in this discourse. Therefore, this process is also reflected in the cultural policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This cultural policy was endorsed by the Supreme Cultural Revolution Institution of Iran in 1992. In fact, the realization of such cultural policies appears as a fundamental return to the politics of nationalism²⁸.

Conclusion

In this research, the concept of modernity in the field of sociology was discussed. It was found that, until today, different views have been presented about the concept of modernity among social researchers. As a result of this research, it was discovered that modernity is a term and point of view that arose in the European lands as a result of the developments and social structures associated with a European country, particularly Western Europe. This concept was first formed against the old European traditions; therefore, everything that is related to the past and is against the characteristics of today's societies has been called a tradition. After a while, non-western culture was mentioned as "non-modern." With this process, it was further stated that this way of thinking represents the western philosophical view, and non-western societies are analyzed as non-modern and backward. This view was later criticized by other social researchers. After this, the way European modernity entered Iran's social structure and how Iran's society collided with the concept of modernity in Iran's contemporary society from a social, political, and cultural point of view

²⁷ Ahmedi, H, Ghomiat va Ghom Gharai Dar Iran, Afsaneh Ya Vaghehiat?, Siasi-Eghtsadi, 1998, pp. 60–70.

²⁸ Fazeli, N. Modern, Ya, Emrozi shodan farhangh Iran: Roikarde Ensan Shenakhti Ve Motaleat Farhanghi, Pajoheshkadeh Farhanghi ve Ejtmay, Tehran, 2008, p.1.

were investigated. As it became clear, from the very beginning, the entry of European modernity into Iranian society, brought different reactions among the rulers and intellectuals of political and non-political Iran. When the modernity of Europe opened up to Iranian society, it was related to the time of the Qajar rule in Iran; the social, economic, and cultural structure of Iranian society in this period was far from western modernity. Therefore, different interpretations of modernity have been made during this period. Some supporters of modernization and modernization in Iran were mostly Western intellectuals, while another group saw modernity as incompatible with Islam and Iranian culture. For this purpose, modernity can be divided into two kinds of categories, such as modernist and non-modernist. The opponents of Western modernity were mostly Islamist clerics. Therefore, the result of this discourse finally ended with the constitutional revolution during the Qajar rule. This was the first obvious result of modernity in Iran, as a result of which the power and authority of the king were reduced and instead the parliament and the law came to the fore in Iran. The constitutional revolution can be mentioned as the first modernist revolution during the time of the Qajar in Iranian society. After the collapse of the Qajar government, the Pahlavi government was founded by Reza Khan. This period can be referred to as the "peak of modernity" or "modernization" of the country. Reza Khan wanted to modernize Iran from the beginning, or, in other words, westernize it, by resorting to some modernizing policies, even copying from other modern countries. Thus, in this period, with the implementation of some measures such as the creation of a national army and emphasizing the Iranian national identity, a modern nation-state was formed in Iran during the contemporary period. although the Pahlavi regime had a hard time with its opponents. One of these opponents was the religious community. Gradually, as dissatisfaction grew and some incorrect policies were implemented, it culminated in the victory of Islamists and religious people. After Pahlavi's death in 1979, the government of the Islamic Republic was established under the leadership of Imam Khomeini. This period is characterized by the emphasis on Shiite Islamic culture. Therefore, it is generally in conflict with western modernity. One of the most well-known slogans from this era is "neither Eastern nor Western, only Islamic Republic." As mentioned, western modernity was first formed in Iranian society during the Qajar era, one of the main signs of which was the constitutional revolution. This period generally marked the beginning of modernity in the country. Following that, in the Pahlavi period, modernity with the implementation of the country's modernization policies by Reza Khan led to the peak period of modernity and, finally, the formation of the modern state and nation in

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Iran. Finally, the period of the Islamic Republic was completely opposed to Western modernity. Therefore, according to the stated content, it can be said that Iran's society has been in conflict with its social, economic, and historical contexts and characteristics since the birth of modernity in Iran. For this reason, tradition and modernity conflict side by side. As rivals, they continue on their way. Also, in general, as the main result of this research, it can be stated that western-type modernity in non-western societies like Iran has had socially pathological results in the society. Because the social natives of non-western lands have two choices, One, it should completely accept western modernity and continue its social life with it, which, of course, obedience has shown was not a temporary path, as was also stated in the case of Iran. It will build its own social life with the original, native culture related to its own social structure by creating its own modernity. Despite the fact that non-western societies are mostly in the middle of this path and are going back and forth between insider and outsider cultures, It appears that this problem has caused these societies to deteriorate.