IRAN

From Religious Dispute to Revolution

Michael M. J. Fischer

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To the warm, courageous, and complex people of Iran, and to my parents and our intellectual and religious traditions

Ruhbaniyat and *dunya-tarik* (monasticism and world rejection) are evil because they are a separation from society and lead the individual to mental illness. It is a negative reaction to defeat; the positive reaction would be to analyze the causes of failure and correct them. Separation from the world in the name of piety also opens society to domination by colonialists. Sufism is thus bad.

Sabr (patience) does not mean resignation but persistence in the face of odds.

Taqiya (dissimulation) is acceptable under three conditions: (a) You should not throw yourself to martyrdom by your own hand when among hostile people; rather save yourself to fight another day. (b) You should not waste your breath with those who are intellectually incapable or whose minds are closed. (c) In the interest of common goals, you should forget differences with other branches of Islam, though you may argue the differences in a friendly way.

The argument is always couched in the framework of sanad (citing of Qur'anic, hadith, and later authorities) and tafsir (alternative exegeses). After the discussion on monasticism, I approached Makarem privately with three queries:

1. Given the importance of Sufi orders in Islamic political history, I was surprised that he castigated them as world rejectors.
2. Was the comparison with Christian monks, which he had drawn as the case type of monasticism, really apt to his purpose? It is true that monks are supposed to be celibate, but otherwise many orders are meant to serve in the world not leave it. They have set up hospitals, schools, and so on.
3. If one wished to speak of world rejection, should one not rather refer to Hinduism or Buddhism? But even in Hinduism one is supposed first to become a householder and raise a family.

His response was to devalue my historicism and to insist on the meaning for Islam. In early Christianity, he said, monasticism meant being a hermit off by oneself; the Dominicans and Jesuits are relatively recent. Yes, *tariqats* (Sufi orders) have been important in Islamic history as a kind of political party, but that does not make them correct. Sufism is an accretion from Hinduism and has nothing to do with real Islam.

I tried a second tack: Leaving history aside, there is a philosophical issue having to do with differences in interpretation as one becomes more knowledgeable and having to do with the esoteric/exoteric (*batini/zahiri*) distinction. Yes, he acknowledged, the great mystical poet Rumi spoke of the seed and the skin, (*maghz va-pust*), the skin for the animals, the seed or brain for us; but that is nonsense. There is no *batini/zahiri*, no esoteric/exoteric, distinction in Islam.

I persisted: In the West there is much interest in the analysis of symbolic language; religion is symbolic and always requires exegesis whether the core text be the Bible or the Qur'an. He replied: Of course, but there is a danger in treating things as symbolic. That is precisely what the Sufis do. Do you mean that every man can build meanings for himself? he asked. We have a hadith that begins, "You should eat red meat and [golden-] red wheat, for they are healthy." Sufis interpret the two red things as the two lips, and so interpret the hadith as an injunction that you should observe silence. My last thrust before changing the subject was the comment that tasawwuf (Sufi doctrine, mysticism) is taught in the al-Azhar curriculum in Cairo. He replied: In classes on beliefs and doctrines we have a section on tasawwuf as we do on Christianity, on Bahaism, and so on. We debate tasawwuf; it is in the curriculum; but that does not mean we accept it.

The issue of the limits of acceptable freedom in interpretation is an extremely important one. The degree of limitation is perhaps nowhere clearer than in a new genre of book issued now by any major mujtahid who lays some claim to being a marja'-i taqlid. Called *Risalat tawdih al-masa'il* (Explanatory text on problems [of Religion]), the books are supposed to be compendiums of legal opinions on problems of ritual and religious duty. The first such book was issued by Ayatullah Borujerdi; it was compiled by Ali-Asghar Kalbazchi (now a high-school principal in Tehran) as a kind of abstraction from and commentary on S. Kazem Yazdi's *'Urwat al-wuthqa*. What is new about this genre is that the books itemize rules and opinions succinctly, with no justifying arguments; each is a short guide on how to act as a Muslim. What is striking and revealing is that there is very little variation between the *Risala* of different mujtahids, for the opinions are not the free opinions of different men: they are the disciplined elucidation of the intent of the Qur'an. That is the meaning of ijtihad (exercise of interpretive reason), of being a mujtahid. One almost feels that a mujtahid could hold two opinions, one his own and one the result of his technical skill in a disciplined form of deduction. Of course, for any believing Muslim the latter must take precedence; it would be the difference between whim and reason. There is, however, also another rationale: for new opinions with political impact, like the outlawing of tobacco in 1891 or the making of Pepsi Cola religiously undesirable (*makruh*) in the 1950s,[7] mujtahids attempt as far as possible to maintain a united front so as not to dissipate religious authority.

To any Westerner conversant with post-Hegelian theology, the most striking thing about Shi'ite theological debate surely must be the refusal to deal with theological discourse as itself a social and linguistic phenomenon in a wider sense than the rhetoric and hermeneutics internal to Islamic belief. So many things that are still dealt with in the Muslim

to study with Qummi he had carried his aged mother on his back from Mashad to Najaf that she might make that pilgrimage. Nor was his image damaged by briefly broadcasting for Nasser from Cairo against the shah. In 1975, he had made his peace with the shah and was again in Iran and allowed to preach, as long as he stayed away from political topics.

There are two main terms for the preaching role. *Wa'iz* is the more respectable and means really a lecturer. Professors who are well-known lecturers on the religious circuit—like Javad Managhebi—are *wa'izin*. The other term *rawda-khwan* or *akhund*, refers literally to the reading of the dirges about the tragedy of Karbala. *Akhund* has come also to be the common term for a cleric; it is not particularly respectful, but it serves as the colloquial term rather than, say, *mulla*. *Ruhani* is the respectful term for those who wear religious garb. Terms for what is delivered follow a parallel semantic structure: a wa'iz delivers a speech (*sukhanrani*), a rawda-khwan "reads a rawda," an akhund may do either. A khutba (sermon) is not a didactic event in Iran; khutbas are given by the *imam-jum'a* after Friday noon prayer, but they are not important events. (This would change after Ramadan 1979).

The didactic event in Shi'ite Iran is the rawda. This begins with an aya (verse) of the Qur'an; at each mention of the Prophet's name, and at other signals, blessings (*salawat*) are chanted by the audience; a speech or sermon forms the body of the performance; and the closing is always a turning (*guriz*) to the events of Karbala (the rawda proper), during which the audience engages in the pietistic exercise of weeping. One wishes to weep for the martyr of Karbala so that on Judgment Day he will intercede and one's sins will be weighed more lightly and with compassion. The capacity to weep with true repentance, humility, and regard for Husayn is called *hal-i khosh* (the good state). One who makes a pilgrimage to an important shrine but is unable to weep in this fashion will sadly comment, "I stayed ten days, but I could not find the good state (*hich hal-i khosh payda nakardam*)."

Of interest is the fact that with a few exceptions—Khomeyni in particular—the maraji-i taqlid do not go onto the minbar to preach, though they support preaching to commemorate the death of, say, Ayatullah Borujerdi or during the months of Ramadan and Muharram. Instead, there is a whole other set of prominent names associated with this activity: Bahlul, Shaykh Mohammad-Taghi Falsafi, Dr. Javad Managhebi, Rashed, Sayyid Abdol-Karim Hasheminezhad, Dr. Ali Shariati, Engineer Mehdi Bazargan, Shaykh Ahmad Kafi, Abdol-Reza Hejazi, Fakhroddin Hejazi, Mohammad Khasali, and so on. The youth know these names and their stylistic idiosyncrasies the same way they know movie actors. It is in this role that the passion of Shi'ism is most clearly focused. Consequently, the Pahlavi government took great care to

monitor such speeches. An occupational hazard of being a minbari was the possibility of being silenced or jailed from time to time. In early 1975 Falsafi was not being allowed to speak, S. Abdul Reza Hejazi was in prison, Khasali was banished to Baluchistan, Shariati was in prison, Bazargan and Hasheminezhad were not being allowed to speak. But Bahlul, after his forty-year exile, was back and speaking. Shariati was released from jail later that year, so seriously ill that he died within two years. Another akhund—Ghaffari—allegedly died in jail under gruesome conditions.

Despite this occupational hazard—though if one remained totally bland, talking only of general ethics as Rashed did, there was no hazard—the role had its elements of glamour for the madrasa students. This for most was to be a major element in their professional lives. Even as students, they supplement their incomes in an important way during Ramadan and Muharram by accepting speaking engagements. Villages often solicited rawda-khwans through the maraji'-i taqlid or provincial ayatullahs. Ayatullah Milani initiated a regular service to take students on circuit around the villages of Mashhad on Thursdays and Fridays to lead prayers and deliver rawdas (though for this program the students were not allowed to accept fees).

The dean of the wa'izin was perhaps Shaykh Mohammad-Taqi Falsafi. Regarded as a careful researcher of sources, his collected lectures served as a basic reference on issues of psychology and personal development from childhood to adulthood. Students also respected him for having been in the center of social issues of his day. During the disturbances over Bahaism in the mid-1950s, Falsafi was one of Ayatullah Borujerdi's main spokesmen in Tehran. The religious establishment at that point in Mohammad Reza Shah's reign was strong enough to intimidate the government, not only to allow Falsafi to regularly broadcast against Bahais on radio but to get the leading members of the government to publicly support the hysteria against the Bahai threat to Islam.[16] Falsafi happened also to be on the minbar at the death memorial for Ayatullah Fayd (the rebuilder of the Qum hawza) in 1951 when shots rang out and General Razmara, the prime minister, who only the day before had threatened the nationalists in the parliament if they did not support his compromises with the British over Persian oil, was assassinated by a member of the fanatic Fida'iyan-i Islam. Falsafi's freedom to speak on the minbar was finally taken away after a speech in Tehran, at a gathering in 1970 convened by Ayatullah Khonsari to protest the expulsion from Iraq of Persian nationals and to protest the attack on Najaf, which those expulsions represent. The speech, to which ambassadors of the various Muslim countries were invited, was taped for radio broadcast but was edited in several places before it went on the air. One of the deleted sections is alleged to have contained the taunt that when Muslims throw

group of ulama as consonant with Islam; this became article 2 of the constitution.

There was of course a fourth group: the ulama in the pay of the shah, who were used to block moves to limit royal power. For instance, Mirza Abu'l-Qasim, the imam-jum'a of Tehran and son-in-law of the shah, Muzaffaruddin, was used as an agent provocateur in a meeting of bazaar merchants and ulama, called to discuss the government mismanagement of a price-control campaign.[11] The imam-jum'a urged Sayyid Jamaluddin Isfahani (father of the founder of modern Persian prose stories, Sayyid Mohammad-Ali Jamalzadeh) to go on the minbar. Although distrustful of the imam-jum'a, Behbahani said to trust in God and go ahead. Jamaluddin began by recounting the events that had closed the bazaar and said that if the shah were a Muslim he would join the protest, if ——. Here he was interrupted by the imam-jum'a: "O irreligious sayyid, what disrespect do you show the shah? O *kafir*, O Babi, why do you malign the shah?" Jamaluddin replied, "You do not even know what my next words will be." But the imam-jum'a cried, "Get him; kill him." Troops entered, there was bloodshed, the participants fled. The ulama led an exodus from Tehran to take asylum in the shrine of Shah 'Abd al-'Azim. The government reacted with two punitive measures: shops in the bazaar which refused to open would be broken open; the administration of the religious madrasas in Tehran were to be taken away from anti-shah and given to pro-shah people. The negotiations with the ulama and merchants who took asylum eventually led to the granting of the constitution, though in no direct or honest fashion.

The point is that though there were persons in religious garb like the imam-jum'a of Tehran (and the Mutawalli-bashi in Qum, if one stretches a point to include him in the religious personnel) who opposed the constitutional movement, the fluidity of politics made others adopt various stances; yet the Islamic position was clearly formulated and has been maintained to the present.

To deal first with political fluidity: Shaykh Fazlollah Nuri, a relative of the shah by marriage, did not join in the first exodus to the shrine of Shah 'Abd al-'Azim, although his son did. When the prime minister had the antiroyalist Muwaqqar al-Saltana imprisoned and forcibly divorced from the shah's daughter, who was then given in marriage to the imam jum'a, Nuri performed both the divorce and the marriage, the latter on the very day the administration of the madrasas Marviyya and Ibn Babawayh were taken away from their previous mutawallis and given to the imam jum'a. When the Russians wanted to build a bank in a graveyard and S. Mohammad Tabatabai refused permission for the sale, saying the land was waqf, Nuri agreed to the sale, saying it was waqf for the dead and produced no profit: another piece of land could be bought to replace it. The opposition ulama—seeing the bank as a colonialist

foothold—marched on the bank and the Russians claimed damages from the shah. Nuri's reputation temporarily suffered. Yet Nuri, in the popular memory of religious people today, is remembered as the protector of the Islamic conception of state, selling out neither to a corrupt shah[12] nor to the Western imperialists. Again when the ulama debated whether or not to accept the proposed constitution, S. Kazem Yazdi sent a telegram from Najaf saying anything opposed to religion should be blocked; Akhund-e-Khorasani phrased the same sentiment in the opposite rhetoric: if a parliament is so formed as to help protect Islam, then it is a duty to support it (Kasravi 1330 Sh./1946:382). In popular memory, Khorasani is pro-constitution, Yazdi anti-constitution.

Nuri and Yazdi have become the heroes who foresaw that the constitution would be a meaningless trick allowing more, not less, European domination. Nuri's arguments have been repeated, down to the most recent Khomeyni work on the state, *Hukumat-i Islami* (1391/1971), and rawdas on *uli'l-amr* and *imamat* and *wilayat* (three differently derived theological terms for the leadership of the community). Essentially all three positions on the constitution can be seen as pragmatic versions of the Islamic position derived from the Qur'anic verse (Sura Nisa': 62): "O you who have faith, obey God, obey the Prophet of God, and obey the *uli'l-amr*" (literally, "issuer of orders"). Who is the *uli'l-amr*? The theory adopted by the Sunnis is that it is the sultan of the moment: that as long as a sultan rules according to Islamic law, Muslims should support him. This was also the theory adopted by the clerics aligned with the Pahlavi government (*akhund-i dawlati*) and by Nasr: that obedience to the shah was clearly indicated in the Qur'an. A few purists insist that *uli'l-amr* refers to the Qur'an; this would depoliticize the verse insofar as it would no longer point to any particular leader. Shi'ites, however, insist that *uli'l-amr* is clearly a term for the twelve Imams. Reason as well as the myriad references in the Qur'an and hadith to the role of the Imams and the necessity of following them indicate the necessity of a more secure successor to the Prophet than anyone as fallible as a king. Khomeyni (1363/1943: 132-153) gives a series of Qur'anic verses that, according to hadith recognized by Sunnis as well as Shi'ites, refer to the role of 'Ali and the Imams. The rhetoric used both by undistinguished rawdakhwans like S. Mahmud Khatami (rawda on the eve of Imam Husayn's birthday, 14 Ramadan / September 21, 1975) and by Khomeyni fails to do justice to the "sultan" interpretation of *uli'l-amr*, that support is demanded only so long as the sultan obeys Islam; they insist on talking about the absurdity of following kings who do evil (Khomeyni 1363/1943: 109-111; Khatami 1975). The stories of the mistakes in Islamic law made by the first three caliphs are cited in this context, and the evilness of Mu'awiya, Yazid, Mutawakkil 'Abbasi, and so on are referred to with curses. Man-made law must be imperfect, as is evident

fort was taking key theological and traditional terms, and giving them modern, ethical, and socially progressive interpretations. There was an intense rejection of referring to anything that had happened in the past as being representative or illustrative of Islam (except for the social justice of 'Ali and the universalism of Muhammad). A sectarian fervor accompanied the new discourse, making its partisans divide people into friends and opponents. It was, in sum, a call for a new discourse in the sense that Foucault has nicely formulated: "We must conceive discourse as a violence that we do to things, or, at all events, as a practice we impose upon them" (1972: 229).

With the revolution of 1979, this call for a new discourse suddenly achieved a credibility and coherence it could not achieve previously: that is, a compellingness derived from power. The revolutionaries furthermore claimed that the revolution itself was a purifying event for the participants. There are several senses in which this might be true. According to the old Soviet and Israeli theory, the praxis of revolution creates the new man. According to the Fanon theory, colonized peoples can throw off their mentality of inferiority only through a violent self-liberating act. But whatever truth either of those theories might contain, a third, and indubitable, truth is that political victory requires a spelling out in political and institutional terms of what previously could be left in vague philosophical and moral language.

What the new discourse of the Islamic republic will look like remains to be worked out. All that can be said at the beginning of the process is that Ayatullah Khomeyni, a conservative, midwifed what is, one hopes, the bourgeois revolution begun in 1905 and attempted again in 1952; and that Dr. Ali Shariati midwifed a new revolutionary discourse, which, like Moses, he was not allowed to live to experience.

The Social Drama: Political Liberation

Prologue

For a century, religiously phrased protest has been a regular feature of the relation between the Iranian state and its citizenry. The political articulateness of these protests has varied. Among the more articulate have been movements such as the Constitutional Revolution and the National Front activity of the 1940s in which Islamic protest was allied with secular reform movements that included members of the religious minorities. Among the less articulate protests have been riots against the minorities seen as symbols of foreign exploitation and attacks on Islam, such as the riots around the turn of the century and the 1955-56 riots against Bahais. The movement of 1977 to 1979 was one of the articulate examples, but one that, because of the political repression of the 1970s,

was fought entirely in the Islamic idiom. What produced the Islamic form of the revolution was not Islamic revivalism so much as repression of other modes of political discourse.

This assertion can perhaps be substantiated to some extent by reviewing in summary fashion the Islamic phrasing in protest movements over the past century.[4] At the turn of the century protests against financial indebtedness to the British and Russians and against economic concessions to foreigners often took the form of riots against religious minorities who were seen as clients and agents of the European powers.[5] Often staged during Ramadan (a month of rededication to Islam) and Muharram (a month of contemplating the vulnerability of Islam and the need to aid Husayn as the Kufans had not), these riots were frequently directed by the ulama as a way of demonstrating their power against the state. Such demonstrations were conceded to stem from frustration.

When their letters and telegrams to the shah itemizing their discontents—spread of Bahaism, increasing numbers of Europeans in the administration, contracting of foreign loans, flight of gold from Iran—got through and received some response, the ulama were capable of counseling patience. Thus, a message to the ulama and Muslims of Iran from four of the leading mujtahids of the day counseled that foreigners were to be protected, that suppression of liquor and of Bahaism were to be left to the government. But when their letters were ignored, they were quite capable of inciting riots, making threats—"We will remove the present dog [shah] and put another dog in his place," said Mujtahid Sharabiani in 1903[6]—and using fatwas of impurity and excommunication. In 1891-92 tobacco was declared unclean, forcing a cancelation of the tobacco concession to a British firm. In 1903 tariffs were declared unclean because they included a duty on wine and spirits instead of outlawing them, and a writ of excommunication was prepared against the prime minister. Committees of ulama condemned Bahais to death for heresy against Islam, and in the case of the great massacre of Bahais in Yazd in 1903, there was a public ritual of performing executions in the several major public spaces of the city. In the 1920s, Muslims recruited by the British to help suppress rebellion in Iraq were declared to be kuffars, to be unclean, and not to be accorded Muslim burial.

Under Reza Shah in the 1930s, the old Qajar economy was reorganized into a self-reliant and nationalistic system; thus the direct connection between foreign domination and local minorities was lost, and the form of protests no longer used the minorities as hostages. There was a determination not to contract foreign loans, mercantile capital was no longer allowed to freely go abroad, merchants were forced to invest in state monopolies, and taxes were experimented with to generate income for the state. Consequently both the problems of the country and the form

of popular protest were different from those in the preceding period. Taxes became increasingly regressive, and the printing press was increasingly resorted to.[7]

Part of Reza Shah's modernizing nationalism was a secularist attack on traditional dress and on the ulama, symbols of Islamic backwardness. In 1935-36 a campaign was launched to have people adopt European dress. These issues and problems—the tax burden, the tightening of the dictatorship, the dress code, and the attacks on Islam—elicited the protests culminating in the Mashhad riot of 1935. In this case the rawda was used at the direction of Ayatullah Qummi to provoke people to express protest and to provoke the government into an inappropriate and outrageous response. The police were seen as invading a religious meeting; the order to shoot inside the sacred shrine was seen as an extraordinary violation and exposure of an irreligious regime. The Karbala roles of the victimized Muslims and the tyrannical king were confirmed, and the people chanted, "Husayn, save us from this shah."

The legacy of these two sets of riots carry on into the present. The issue of the dress code has been reduced to a minor but symbolically potent theme in the struggle over the place of women in Iranian society. In 1977, women who attempted to register for class at the University of Tehran wearing a chador were refused; the issue of the right of hijab (modesty) became rekindled, with many women who otherwise would not wear chadors, turning up in them. The right to choose was at issue, so during 1978 the chador at universities became a symbol of protest against dictatorship in general. Women at the University of Isfahan were even reported to put the chador on to demonstrate at the University but to take it off when going out onto the streets to champion women's liberation.

More insidious is the legacy of attacking minorities, which carried on into the 1970s as a kind of daily petty terror. As late as 1970 in the town of Yazd public water fountains were reserved for Muslims only, barbers refused to serve non-Muslims, public baths had separate facilities for non-Muslims, glasses in which tea was served to non-Muslims had to be washed with special thoroughness, and many Muslims would refuse to accept tea from non-Muslims. Petty desecrations of graveyards and shrines of non-Muslims were also normal adolescent behavior. Such terrorism makes it hard for non-Muslims to be enthusiastic about political protest in Islamic idiom, however much the political protest may be justified. This is particularly the case when the *Risalas* (explanatory texts on problems of religion) of the Shi'ite mujtahids insist that the touch of a non-Muslim is najis (an impurity). Theologically, all this restriction means is that a Muslim must wash before praying. But at times of irritation and conflict, it is turned into a rule of social exclusion. Of all the minorities, Bahais are the most vulnerable, partly because they are still considered by Muslims to be heretical schismatics rather than followers

of a separate religion and partly because the idiom of Bahaism is so close to that of Islam that it denies the normal construction of significance that Muslims place on their idiom. It was this fact that allowed Bahaism in its earlier more aggressive form, Babism, to appeal to so many Muslims, spread so rapidly, and hence become such a perceived threat.

In 1955 and 1956 the inarticulate antiminority form of riot broke out against Bahais. The context was the economic difficulties in the aftermath of the collapse of the Mosaddegh government, the roundup of Mosaddegh supporters, especially on the left, and the effort to buy off right-wing Islamic opposition represented by Ayatullah Kashani and the Fida'iyyan-e Islam, a political assassination group. The preacher Shaykh Mohammad Taghi Falsafi was allowed to use the radio during Ramadan to whip up hysteria about a Bahai threat to take over the country. The military governor of Tehran, Teimur Bakhtiar, participated with Falsafi in destroying the tilework on the Bahai temple in Tehran; and Prime Minister Alam told parliament that Bahai activities would be outlawed in Iran. Mrs. Teimurtash told the United Nations on behalf of the Iranian delegation that there were no Bahais in Iran. Ayatullah Borujerdi gave his blessings, meanwhile, to Falsafi's activities. Eventually, when the government reestablished control, it protected rights of all citizens equally while maintaining the fiction that Bahais did not exist.[8] A Muslim organization shadowed people to Bahai meetings and kept lists of suspected Bahais; whether or not religious leaders such as Ayatullah Mahallati approved of such activities, they knew about them and did nothing to discourage them. It is therefore not surprising that a number of anti-Bahai incidents occurred in 1978 and 1979.

Once Mohammad Reza Shah secured his rule in the 1950s the form of protest remained relatively stable, consisting of university student demonstrations, occasional strikes, and preachers using the rawda form. The 1963 demonstrations against the imposition of the White Revolution during the suspension of parliament came after three years of economic depression with high levels of unemployment and low levels of investment, and after election rigging had become so blatant that even the shah had to acknowledge it and annul the elections of 1960. In 1961 students and the National Front demanded annulment of the 1961 elections on the same grounds as in 1960, teachers struck for higher pay, Ayatullahs Behbahani and Borujerdi opposed land reform, and a National Front demonstration to commemorate Mosaddegh's accession to power in 1952 was met with tanks and troops. In 1962 there were student demonstrations and the army invaded the University of Tehran, causing the chancellor, Dr. Ahmad Farhad, to issue a celebrated letter of resignation citing the unheard of "cruelty, sadism, atrocity, and vandalism" visited by the troops upon the students. A roundup of opposition figures followed. In November 1962 the ulama launched a concerted set of protests against the Local Council Election Bill because of its enfranchisement of

and a restaurant were attacked, and SAVAK headquarters was attacked. In Dezful a soldier shot his officer; in Tehran three Imperial Guardsmen killed twelve officers and injured fifty men at their Lavizan base.

For three days after 'Ashura, the army tried to organize pro-shah demonstrations in various cities, sometimes using violent intimidation to get people to join these demonstrations. In Isfahan, troops first swept through the city on December 12, firing into the air, and then brought in truckloads of villagers to demonstrate for the shah. The soldiers tore down pro-Khomeyni posters, put up banners of the national colors (green, white, and red), and painted over anti-shah graffiti. They stopped motorists, forcing them to place pictures of the shah on their windshields and shout "Javid shah" (long live the shah). A man and his wife were shot for refusing. They smashed the windshields of motorists displaying pictures of Khomeyni or with their lights on (a pro-Khomeyni sign). In Najafabad troops attacked a hospital and set fire to a mosque. In Isfahan troops gunned down a line of people waiting to give blood at Soraya Hospital. At least forty were killed in the two towns.

In Shiraz, Bahai houses in the neighborhood of Sa'di's tomb were attacked. Accounts of the attack on Bahais are confused, Muslims claiming that Bahais were involved in the army-organized pro-shah violence against the revolutionaries, Bahais hotly denying the charge. One account suggests that the house of a certain arrogant Bahai officer was attacked by Muslims who wished to get even, that he opened fire, and that they returned fire, after which they went on a rampage. Other accounts say Bahais who had been repeatedly threatened had been stockpiling weapons for self-defense; when the attack came, they went up on their roofs to return the fire, but by so doing tragically identified their houses. Forty Bahais and Muslims are said to have been killed and hundreds of houses and shops attacked in three nights of violence.

In Mashhad, club-wielding civilians and troops invaded three hospitals where doctors and nurses had expressed prorevolutionary feelings. Khomeyni in Paris commented on the violence in some fifty-five cities, saying that the shah was mentally disturbed and could be expected to commit more atrocities before he was removed. A rumor circulated that the shah had vowed to turn Iran to ashes before he would leave the throne. Former prime minister Amini called for the shah's abdication or at least his leaving the country under a regency council. Sanjabi met with the shah. A general strike was called for Monday, December 18. Meanwhile General Azhari banned street demonstrations, threatened to dismiss civil service employees who did not return to work, and ordered the arrest of oil strike leaders. On Monday, ten thousand people gathered in the Behesht-e Zahra cemetery to mourn those who had died.

The efforts of the government to get the oil strikers back to work or to provide some hope of transition to a civilian government gradually broke down. Clashes between the army and civilians turned increasingly brutal. In the oil fields, strike leaders were arrested and other strikers dismissed on December 17. Oil production temporarily increased. But on December 23, the Mujahidin guerrillas assassinated the American acting director of the oil industry's management firm and an Iranian production superintendent.[16] Notes were sent to workers telling them to resign or face death. These actions had the desired effect of stiffening the strike. Within three days, three thousand workers had resigned and many more had walked off the job. Minor terrorist acts against foreign military and technical advisors increased in the form of fire-bombing of cars and homes, notes warning them to leave the country, and attacks on the United States Embassy.

On December 21, Gholam-Hoseyn Sadeghi, a member of the National Front, was asked to form a civilian government. Cynics saw this as a maneuver to avoid dealing with the leadership of the National Front and therefore doomed to fail. It did fail, whether for that reason or because, according to other accounts, Khomeyni's message of support was sabotaged.[17]

On December 29, a similar gambit would be tried with Dr. Shapur Bakhtiar, another member of the National Front. This effort eventually would succeed. Bakhtiar was to become the great unloved hero who provided the means to get the shah out of the country without provoking a military coup; the middle class failed to rally to him because they could not afford to break with the Khomeyni-led momentum, but also because Bakhtiar was perceived to be using the threat of a coup long after he should have declared a referendum to abolish the monarchy.

In the meantime, violence in the streets turned brutal, first in Mashhad, then Tehran, and then Qazvin. Part of the context was the takeover of more and more institutions by workers, leaving the army increasingly isolated as a defender of the government. Part of the context was the buildup to a Day of Mourning called by Khomeyni for December 30, the anniversary, according to the Islamic calendar, of the killings in Qum.

In Mashhad, doctors had taken over the Sixth of Bahman Hospital, named after the anniversary of the shah's White Revolution, and renamed it Seventeenth of Shahrivar Hospital, after the date of the Black Friday massacre in Jaleh Square. The ministry of justice and the provincial administration were taken over. Three sets of incidents in the last week of December illustrate the way young men were willing to be martyred as vanguards when backed by crowds, the way physicians turned against the army and the reaction this elicited, the way Islam was potent politically rather than ritually, and the way a frustrated army itself rampaged.

On December 23, a few soldiers tore up pictures of Khomeyni being

Israeli development aid in the Qazvin plain, the poultry industry, and elsewhere was never mentioned. Five to ten thousand of the eighty thousand Iranian Jews left the country during the turmoil, many hoping to return. Of the majority who stayed, a few were active in the movement. The November 5 riot in Tehran which swept down Shah Reza and Ferdowsi streets, destroying Armenian liquor stores, passed by the solid row of Jewish carpet shops, leaving them untouched.

Jews worried again when Ayatullah Khomeyni and Ayatullah Taleghani both repeated the absurd demagoguery that Iranian soldiers would not shoot their Muslim brothers and that it had been Israeli soldiers who had fired on the crowd at Jaleh Square. A Jewish delegation went to Qum to present a contribution to the movement to Ayatullah Shariatmadari. Another delegation was received in Paris by Ayatullah Khomeyni. Both ayatullahs said Jews would be protected. During the bloody riots a Jewish hospital in Tehran became a center of blood donations and transfusions for the wounded. When Khomeyni returned to Iran, a Jewish delegation was present to welcome him. After the Bazargan government was installed, four Jewish leaders in Tehran held a news conference in which they announced solidarity with the revolution, that they expected but would overlook minor incidents of discrimination, that they were cutting all ties to international Jewish organizations, and that they felt themselves to be first and foremost Iranians. This same group, eventually calling itself the Society of Intellectual Jews, held a memorial service after the assassination of Professor—and since the revolution, Ayatullah—Morteza Motahhari, a leader of the Revolutionary Committee, and expressed again solidarity with the revolution.

Nonetheless, on May 9, 1979, in an extraordinary warning to the Jewish community, the prominant businessman and Jewish community leader Habib Elghanian, was executed by a revolutionary court. The crime was "contact with Israel and Zionism." One of the rumors floated among New York's Iranian students was that he had been killed in revenge for Motahhari's assassination, because only an Israeli agent could have killed such a central figure in the revolution—this despite the fact that Motahhari's death was claimed by the Foghan guerrilla group, and despite the fact that a Jewish delegation which had visited Khomeyni after Motaheri's assassination had been promised again that Jews were protected. Two months later a Jewish businessman was killed in Isfahan by an anonymous assassin allegedly in retaliation for Israeli raids on Lebanon.

Christians too were promised protection by Khomeyni. At the time of the November 5 riot, the Armenian bishop issued a statement that the destruction of Armenian liquor stores was anti-liquor, not anti-Armenian. During 'Ashura a Christian contingent marched chanting:

Din-i ma masihi'st	Our religion is Christianity,
Rahbar-i ma Khumeyni'st	Our leader is Khomeyni.

At Khomeyni's request, electricity blackouts were suspended at Christmas and New Year's so that Christians could celebrate. For the Armenian Christmas in January, the Armenian archbishop announced that public festivities would be suspended in solidarity with the revolution. A priest in Shiraz was slain early in the revolution, and in October 1979 there was an attempt on the life of Anglican Bishop Hasan Dehghani-Tafti (a convert many years ago from Islam). Shaykhi leader, Abdul Reza Ibrahimi, was assassinated in Kirman in December 1979. Shaykhis are a sect within Twelver Shi'ite Islam which has common nineteenth-century roots with Babism and Bahaism.

Ismailis (members of a non-Twelver but Shi'ite branch of Islam), like Jews, were anxious: the leadership in Mashhad involved itself in the movement, but Ismaili villagers, like many Muslim villagers, remained faithful to a king who had protected them against the excesses of the mullas or remained simply bewildered by the events. Zoroastrians also were frightened and anxious. Shortly after the installation of the Bazargan government, some guerrillas walked into the main Tehran fire temple, removed the portrait of the Prophet Zoroaster, and replaced it with one of Khomeyni. That, commented an old Zoroastrian woman, was going too far. Sunni minorities also expressed doubts, and in their case the issue was also compounded by ethnic and linguistic issues.

Despite much speculation during 1978 about the potential for the ethnic minorities to attempt to break away from the central government, ethnic divisions did not become an actual political issue until the spring of 1979, when the Kurds, the Turkomans, the Arabs of Khuzistan, and the Baluch began to assert their linguistic differences and make administrative demands. And once again the religious boundary proved critical. Kurdish Sunnis armed themselves during the course of the revolution and, while supporting its goals, demanded autonomous status within an Iranian federation. They worried that Khomeyni always spoke of Iran as a Shi'ite state, never acknowledging that there were Sunnis as well; and they spoke bitterly of past humiliations when they had gone to Tehran or to other Shi'ite parts of Iran and were caught, for instance, performing the namaz differently. But there was more to their demands than this. The Pahlavis, in the interest of national integration, had discouraged the use of Turkish, Arabic, and Baluchi in the schools and as a medium of literary production. For similar reasons, the Pahlavis had also systematically throughout Iran appointed governors, heads of bureaucratic offices, and military personnel to serve in areas where they had no local ties. In spring 1979, first the Kurds, then the Turkomans, Arabs, and Baluch, demanded a reversal of these policies. They wanted

conflict between her and 'Ali over the amount of money from community funds to which she was entitled as a wife of a Prophet.

28. See Elie Wiesel (1976: 139-169) for an account of Joseph as a *tzaddik* (pious man). The theme of sacrifice is linked to the Abraham-Isaac story (the *akada*).

29. The Shi'a credo consists of five basic principles (*usul-i din*) and ten duties (*foru' al-din*). Of the five principles, three are common to all Muslims: tawhid or unity of God, *nubuwwa* or prophethood, and *ma'ad* or resurrection. The other two are special to the Shi'ite school (*madhhab*): imamat and *'adl* (the belief that God is just). The ten duties are: namaz, sawm (fast), khums, zakat, hajj, jihad, *amr bi ma'ruf* (encouraging good), *nahy az munkar* (dissuading people from evil), *tavalla* (loving the Imams and their followers), and *tabarra* (hating the enemies of the Imams). By the mid-seventies the government texts in *Ta'limat-i Dini* had dropped the last two.

6. The Revolutionary Movement of 1977-1979

1. First Egypt, then Morocco, gave refuge to the shah.

2. Bakhtiar displayed a portrait of Mossaddeqh at his first press conference; he had been a deputy minister of labor under Mossaddeqh. Bazargan had been a deputy minister of state for education, and managing director of the National Iranian Oil Company under Mossaddeqh. Karim Sanjabi, the leader of the National Front coalition in 1978, became Bazargan's foreign minister. Dariush Farohar, the deputy leader of the National Front in 1978, became Bazargan's minister of labor.

3. The notion of social drama has been elaborated at great length in the various works of anthropologist Victor Turner.

4. A more detailed review of these riots with a fuller analysis of their dynamics may be found in Fischer (1973: 407-456).

5. Jews suffered most in Shiraz, Tehran, and western Iran. Armenian villages were ransacked in Kurdistan. Occasionally even Europeans were threatened: missionaries in Isfahan, Belgian customs officials in Tabriz, merchants in Tehran. Of all, Bahais were the most vulnerable, being accused of heresy, a capital crime in Islam. Relations between the minorities and European powers were diplomatic protection and economic clientship. Many Ismailis and Zoroastrians were British citizens. Jewish philanthropic organizations were English- or French-based. Russians attempted to utilize and missionize the Armenians; the English Church Missionary Society and the American Presbyterian Mission made the same attempt on other Iranians. The British preferred to use Zoroastrians and Armenians as trade partners and as employees on the Indo-European Telegraph. In western Iran much trade was handled by Baghdadi Jews; in northern Iran Armenians were well placed; Zoroastrians were drawn to the Shiraz and Bandar Abbas routes. Reality, of course, was much more complicated than these connections suggest, but at times of frustration these connections became symbolically magnified in the minds of Muslims.

6. British Public Records Office, file FO 416/14, 1903: 176.

7. In 1928 a surtax was placed on tea and sugar; in the mid-thirties a road tax on motor vehicles was replaced with a tax on petrol and kerosene, and a tax on agricultural produce replaced the difficult-to-collect land taxes. Note circulation increased more than threefold between 1933 and 1937.

8. This required a number of dodges under the laws regarding marriage licenses, death certificates, job applications, and so on, none of which could be obtained by Bahais since they did not exist. On the other hand, it was charged by anti-Bahai Muslims that the legal fiction allowed Bahais to rise to ministerial posts from which recognized minorities were excluded. In other words, the commitment as well as elsewhere.

9. There were two guerrilla groups: Cherikha-yi Fida'i-yi Khalq (marxist); Mujahidin-i Islami or Mujahidin-i Khalq (Islamic). The latter took their name from the militias of the Constitutional Revolution, who called themselves *mujahidin* (holy warriors) and from the armed bands of Muhammad who robbed caravans to support the fledgling Islamic movement. For a review of the guerrillas operating in the 1960s and 1970s, see Halliday (1978).

10. Details of events during 1977-1979 are taken primarily from the reportage of *Christian Science Monitor* correspondants Tony Alloway and Geoffrey Godsell, *Washington Post* correspondents William Branigin and Jonathan Randall, *New York Times* correspondents Youssef Ibrahim, Eric Pace, and Nicholas Gage, *Manchester Guardian* correspondant Liz Thurgood, *Observer* correspondant Parrick Seale and various others who filed less frequent accounts. Information and corrections were also obtained from anthropologists in Iran at the time: Rafiq Keshavjee, Eric and Mary Hooglund, William Beeman, and Anne Betteridge.

11. On the economic and social conditions of the 1970s, see Abrahamian (1978), Graham (1978), Fischer (1977a), and McLachlan (1977).

12. See Goodell (1977), Fischer (1976), and Halliday (1978: ch. 5).

13. Abrahamian (1979) makes the interesting suggestion that this initiative was at the urging of two very different groups: former Tudeh members who were coopted by Asadullah Alam into the ministry of court (Mohammad Baheri, for example, who was to become minister of justice in 1978 in the Sharif-Emami cabinet); and political scientists who took to heart Samuel Huntington's writings on the utility of single parties for social mobilization. The language of the first Rastakhiz manifestos spoke of resolving the conflicts and contradictions of society through the party; Abrahamian detects debased Leninist rhetoric as the handiwork of the first group. The latter group, he suggests, forgot that to make a single-party system work, you need a sizable social base supporting the party.

14. Somewhat like the Egyptian program in 1956 of nationalizing industry by buying up former foreign-held shares, which private nationals do not buy through a state Economic Corporation.

15. Casualty figures vary enormously: low estimates are government figures, high ones are opposition figures.

16. The acting director was Texaco executive Paul Grimm, who ironically had protected strikers by refusing to supply their names to martial law authorities. He had taken over when managing director George Link went on leave after his car had been fire-bombed, November 14, in a foreshadowing of this guerrilla action. The Iranian slain was Malek Borujerdi.

17. According to this account, Khomeyni gave preliminary approval to the proposal and Sadeghi arranged a cabinet; but Khomeyni's letter of support was not allowed to leave Paris by Ebrahim Yazdi and other uncompromising aides. According to the other account, Sadeghi had no support because of a feud with