CHAPTER VII:

CONCLUSION

Iran’s National Movement has at least one hundred years experience. Its first important and apparent manifestation was during combat against “Rejee” concession and banning tobacco, however, its social and subjective origins goes back to long history. At the time, social combination of the movement included merchants, landlords, religious leaders, religious society, new elite and other civil classes and its basic aim was to overthrow despotism and the Allies domination. The Constitutional Revolution (1906) was a result of national movement. Revolution went beyond ending to autocratic ruling of Shah and aimed on establishing democracy system. Of course, this was scientific and dominated procedure of revolution, because, there were forces in the revolution that did not belong to the national movement and following some changes they separated their way. At first, landowners and religious conservative leaders (Farmanfarma, Sepahsalar, Tonkaboni, Behbahani, Mokhberol Saltaneh Hedayat) were opposing the Shah’s despotism but were not so much desire to democracy and fight with the Allies domination. Later, dynamic forces but undiscovered were intelligentsia like Akhundof, Malkom Khan, Mirza Agha Khan Kermani…and their followers like Taghizadeh, Heidar Khan, Aref who were strongly opposed with foreign sovereignty especially Russians and hoped to transform Iranian society to an European society swiftly. Still, prevailing trend in the movement was disagreeing with foreign dominion, it was not modern-minded, it wanted economic and social changes and gradual attraction of European technique and ideologies in the Iranian
culture and history. Asad Abadi (Afghani), suore Esrafil, Naeini, Tabatabee, Ashrafol-din Hosseini, Kuchak Khan, Satar Khan, Khiabani, Modares, Dehkhoda and Mossadeq and many others were partial to this trend and were mastered on the movement through these slogans and determining revolution aims.

The Allies interferences as an enduring reality, the first World ar, Bolshevik Revolution, all released forces all over the country, economic backwardness, conservative system which was under dominion of landlords all helped to propagate and spread western ideologies of the Constitutional Revolution among non-traditional educated classes, official and military elite and religious figures and youth. These were main nationalist forces; these forces had much information about ancient Iran honors, magnificence; were going to transform the present Iranian culture (Arabic), and believed religion and Arabs were the only factors of Iran’s declining and wanted to substitute European pattern instead of existent Iran society. This pattern was taken from Caesarian Germany, which was an Aryan powerful and successful country; they were enmity with Britain and Russia. They were founders of nationalist theories in general and praising Aryan race in particular. Bolshevik Revolution gave second pattern to Iranians and minority of Iran’s nationalists followed this ideology. These two nationalist tendencies were effective in overthrowing the Constitutional system and establishing dictatorship of Reza Shah. Conservative religious leaders were discontented of those changes, because, they had been surrendered inevitably and remained in waiting manner. Democratic procedure of the Constitutional Revolution – national and populist movement – stood against the dictatorship procedure but defeated. Modares, Mossadeq, Mostowfi, Moshir, Motamen … were leaders and speakers of it at the time.

Reza Shah Dictatorship was swiftly changed to an autocratic and despotic ruling and kept away all landlords, religious leaders and merchants. Among
religious leaders, only some compromised with new system of Reza Khan, left clerical society, and went on other jobs. Reza Shah, also, banished Bolshevik nationalists, because they were forming socialist and communists parties and small groups and for dictatorship nature of regime. The Reza Shah’s Regime had not good relations with Stalinist Russia.

Reza Shah’s resignation in 1941 created quite new political atmosphere. New Shah (Mohammad Reza) was symbol and manifestation of Pahlavi nationalism. This was seen especially in Army, but permanence of regime was due to landlords, conservative politicians and (later) British state. The Tudeh party was at first representative of communist coalition and public forces. Soon, it changed to a puppet and agent of the Soviet’s foreign policy and following Azerbaijan incident, lost its public basis. In the fourteenth Majles, Mossadeq as speaker and main figure of the national movement appeared in Iran’s political scene. He was opposing to the Soviet and Britain influence in Iran and had un-compromise enmity with dictatorship and corruption. Most of people wanted to achieve the national movement goals through the Tudeh party, but because this party was not ready for this goal, the National Movement grew rapidly and independent of the Tudeh party and flourished. It was exactly the time that the Supplementary Agreement of Gess-Golshaian was day case in Iran. During this period, two un-separable aims of “independence and Democracy” had been constituting basis of Iran’s National Movement. Shah and his conservative circle wanted dictatorship and subjugation of the West. The Tudeh Party wanted their own kind of dictatorship and subjugation of the Soviet Russia was part of their work. The National Movement wanted independence, non-alignment and establishing democratic system, which had solid and firm roots in culture and society including the Constitutional Revolution traditions. No this is inevitable but may be it is surprising that two other forces by collaboration and unanimity of their foreign allies overcome the movement and overthrow it.
Mossadeq’s political attitude and performance was quite conforming to fundamental principles. He opposed with 1919 Accord of Vosughol-Doleh – Britain and the North Oil concession investment to the Soviet. He nationalized Iran’s oil in order to guarantee “Freedom and Iran’s independence”. He objected to Reza Shah’s dictatorship and struggled to Mohammad Reza Shah as he could in order not to establish dictatorship. He objected to any election fraud and encroaching on somebody’s right. He fought against financial concessions and official corruption. He defended democracy through enacting progressive laws during his short-term premiership (28 month) and tried to increase democracy scope and extent, so, he was protecting of accepting new thoughts and techniques but was considering romantic imitation as an adverse affair to Iranian identity. He wanted “freedom and independence”. Rule of law, democracy, modernity based on cultural realism and public content were his demand. His reaction was in spite of his mother’s saying, “value of individuals is based on difficulties which tolerate for people”.

He had been suffering of a nervous problem all over his life that did not recognize as a chronic problem. Nevertheless, he himself was aware of the disease. In position of Azerbaijan governor, after engaging with local influential and their plot for removing him, again concern came to him and bleeding of his mouth was so much that doctor recommended him not to be anxious and speak. In 1963, he wrote complaint to SAVAK that; “It is many years that I am suffering cold and I get sick with a small breeze. Anti-biotic is not efficient and till now none of my doctors could recognize my illness.” At last, he passed away for stomach bleeding and curing cancer with electricity.

In the fifth and sixth Majles manly resisted against increasing encroaching to people’s rights and freedom, he stepped aside politics and long exiling to
Ahmad Abad by regime 1927-1941 (more than 14 years), he stayed desire in Ahmad Abad. Even after ending his official exiling period in 1941, he stayed in Ahmad Abad and after selecting in absence of Tehran’s deputy again entered politics. In the fourteenth Majles, he played opponent role alone and struggled against election fraud of Qavam’s government for the fifteenth Majles and for not being able to attract enough public support, returned Ahmad Abad and in an open and public objection declared his decision over staying apart of politics for all time. Nevertheless, as a minority opposed with Supplementary Gess–Golshaian Agreement and asked him directly to come in and took the movement leadership, he came back with his previous political ardent.

In July 1952, he resigned peacefully when he saw Shah’s insists on determining the war Minister. Of course, he knew Shah would not allow Prime Minister be the War Minister or let him to determine a minister. Now, we know his main motivation of vacating from Prime Ministry. He was afraid of issuing the Hague verdict against Iran’s government. In that case, he decided to stay abroad all his life. Several times, he left Majles quite depressed and threatened he would never come back. One of these cases when he assimilated the fourteenth Majles to thieves place; but when his sympathizers gathered his house and accompanied him to Majles he returned to politics. Most of his lifetime appeared in public with official suit. His foreign opponents have exaggerated many times about him. Mossadeq had told Jalil Bozorgmehr, his defense lawyer, for escaping of taking part official ceremony he was purposely stayed in bed and had administered Prime Ministry affairs from there. Everybody knows Mossadeq was sensitive to official and non-personal contacts. He was quite polite, kind, humble and even humiliate. He never surrendered pressure and force. If Kashani and Baghaei asked him kindly, may be, he did. Nevertheless, they were like Mossadeq and for this reason problem created in their relation. His treatment with the second National Front leaders was not diplomatic. Their publicity was owed to Mossadeq. However,
they did not want to show his rational suggestions and demands little attention, while these suggestions were based on realism and in the interest of the Front and its duration. Mossadeq was not rabble-rouser and during all his political life, he had seldom speech in meetings or participated in demonstrations in order to provoking public. His speeches in Majles were open, explicit and repercussion of his personality. For these characteristics and disobedience before aggressive pressures, he had many enmities. Clearly, he was idealism in some of his public and private behavior, but he could understand political process well, and in spite of many of his colleagues, he was so much courage in making important decisions. He had no fear of power whether individually or publicly. His weakness and problems were somewhere else. Obviously, he did his best for settling the oil issue except rejecting the World Bank suggestion there was no mistake. However, today we know he was personally desired to accept that suggestion. Nonetheless, his explicitness damaged British proud. Mossadeq had made the ex-company and British ruling class enmity to himself long before his premiership. Inevitably and despite his natural desires, he had been ignoring the Front and National movement principles until achieving a solution. Nevertheless, if he could reach an understanding was better than collapsing and burden more losses. He could reach his most fundamental goals and cut off British influence roots in Iran. Mossadeq was aware this point and refers it during his trial and his memoirs.

Shah benefited many of this historic achievement of Mossadeq and Iran’s National Movement. Iran’s later problem had more root in dictatorship(and then despotic), corruption and political leadership than foreign powers interferences. The reason of continuing foreign interferences was just function of the country political system. If the National Movement did not suppress relentlessly, Iran could forge its new achieved independence and freedom for economic, political and social development, however, oil problem had not been solved completely. Later, the oil problem was settled and more reforms became possible and Shah and
his regime gained much and huge oil revenue before 1970s, but for his misconduct he forced to escape the country at last in 1979.

For all these reasons, Mossadeq should never accept premiership post. He did not want Premiership but it was just an accident. He like all aliens –Blum, Churchill, De goul – took Prime Ministry for abnormal conditions and circumstances. Hence, Mossadeq delivered a ruling for same condition and country, which was unprecedented in Iran’s present century. Even regarding to freedom, democracy, rule of law, independence his cabinet achievement considering to huge economic and political obstacles is affecting everybody. His cabinet ministers were responsible, competent individuals. Economic management was based on pragmatism; legal, official and social reforms were large. Sometimes there is criticism to Mossadeq that he could not change the national movement as an effective political force during his premiership. But it should be considered he did not individual and political features for such an organizing, he was not an executive organizers, he had charged others who had started the movement and if movement did not defeat as rapidly, they could attain more achievements. The biggest deficiency of his government was acting moderately with Shah’s violent of law hidden or apparently and conservatives and the Tudeh party. If he did not act such moderate, his movement destiny would not be that. At least, he should partite of the Third Force Party readiness in organizing “the national movement local committees” and “national movement guard”. Third force leaders tried disappointedly to convince Mossadeq of establishing these organizations in order to prevent illegal events, which were predictable. Mossadeq personality was more suitable with the movement leadership, while he was facing more with official problems. His achievements and failures put him in the rank of the most prominent men of this century. He was manifestation of his people ideals; people who demanded independence and national credit and recognizing as citizen inside.
In the years following World War II, Iran was a devastated country, barely recovering from famine and starvation and subsisting on meager American handouts. Ironically, Iran was also a wealthy country, with ample oil reserves that were fueling the engines of the British Empire. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), whose majority shareholder was the British government, controlled much of Iran’s oil. By 1950, the AIOC’s annual profits from Iranian oil amounted to 200 million pounds while Iran’s share of the revenues was a mere 16 million. Iran’s original demands were modest and focused on a more generous profit-sharing arrangement and better working conditions for Iranian laborers living in miserable conditions. At a time when the American oil firms were offering 50-50 profit-sharing deals to the governments of Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, Iran perceived that it could demand no less. The oil controversy inevitably provoked a political crisis inside Iran. The young Shah, eager to consolidate his rule and perennially in search of Western benefactors, was inclined to accept the British proposal. An array of conservative forces, ranging from large landlords to court politicians on the British payroll, similarly seemed amenable, giving AIOC’s executives the illusion of control. This was a grave misreading of the popular and parliamentary mood, as Iran was about to enter one of the most acute crises in its history.

The provocative and callous British conduct only managed to unite the differing strands of Iranian opposition into a remarkable coalition, the National Front. The National Front was essentially composed of liberal reformers, the intelligentsia, elements of the clerical class, socialist activists, and middle-class professionals. It is important to appreciate that the demands of the National Front soon transcended the oil issue as the party pressed for a more representative government with constitutional demarcation of power. The National Front government that emerged sought to improve public education and establish and accessible health system. Its proposed judicial reforms were designed to ensure equality before the law, while its efforts to broaden the prerogatives of the local
governments were intended to decentralize power. This was not just a movement to reclaim Iran’s resources, but a new progressive alliance seeking to revamp Iranian society and government. The politician who emerged at the heart of this movement was the prominent parliamentarian Muhammad Mossadeq. An ardent nationalist, Mossadeq was dubious of foreign control and came to articulate the concept of “negative equilibrium,” under which Iran would preserve its autonomy by playing off one empire against another. Mossadeq was a genuine patriot of seeking to emancipate his country from the clutches of the British Empire. The continued British obstinacy further antagonized Iranian nationalistic feelings, eroding the consensus behind the 50-50 profit-sharing arrangement. The minority position in the sixteenth parliament, led by Mossadeq, had been pressing for outright nationalization of the oil industry, and now it gained strength. On March 20, 1951, the Iranian parliament passed the nationalization bill, defying the monarch and propelling Mossadeq to the post of the prime minister.

In terms of dealing with Mossadeq’s challenge, the British contemplated a policy of what we would now call “regime change”. Britain imposed a stringent embargo on Iran’s oil, depriving Tehran of much of its revenues. The AIOC’s announcement that it would take legal action against anyone seeking to purchase Iran’s oil proved a sufficient deterrent to many international oil firms, who were already wary of Tehran’s nationalization act. In the meantime, the departure of British technicians essentially crippled the Iranian oil industry. It was hoped in Whitehall that by undermining Iran’s fragile economy and deprive views, parochial in defining their interests, and overly sensitive to the political ramifications of any deal. For Britain, Iran’s nationalization act remained an illegal expropriation of private property, while for Iran it was a legitimate reclamation of a natural resource long exploited by a greedy foreign company. As both sides became entrenched in their principles, the prospect of mutual agreement seemed far-fetched. The only difference was that the British could better afford
their intransigence than poverty-stricken country deprived of its indispensable source of subsistence. As Mossadeq increasingly stood isolated, in yet another miscalculation he invoked the communist threat as a means of extracting American concessions. In a dramatic note to the United States, Mossadeq implored, “If prompt and effective aid is not given this country now, any steps that might be taken tomorrow to compensate for negligence of today might well be too late.” The premier perceived that as Iran’s economy suffered and fears of Communist takeover gripped Washington, the United States would abandon Britain and rescue him from his predicament. Perversely, he now brandished the Communist threat as a means of compelling assistance from the United States. Mossadeq failed to appreciate that communist subversion would only lead the United States to embrace Britain, its intimate Cold War ally, and oppose Iran’s nationalistic intransigence.

By 1953, as the oil crisis entered its third year, a combination of events would lead the United States to contemplate Mossadeq’s overthrow. A new president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, came to power with a determination to wage a more aggressive Cold war, and his administration displayed a marked suspicion of Third World neutralism. Eisenhower and his hawkish secretary of state John Foster Dulles proved more sensitive to the British assertion that only a change in the Iranian regime could resolve the impasse. This claim seemed even more compelling as the economic situation deteriorated, which seemed to empower the Communist Tudeh Party that the prime minister was both brandishing as a threat and increasingly relying on as a coalition partner. In retrospect, Tudeh had little capacity to dislodge Mossadeq, since its radicalism remained unacceptable to many parts of Iranian society. But in America’s zero-sum Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union, Third World nationalist struggles were too often subsumed in the framework of the containment policy. Mossadeq became just one more victim
of the stark Cold War duality—that every government was either “with us or against us.”

The drama of CIA officers clandestinely plotting the coup against Mossadeq has been breathlessly told many times. The cast of characters is indeed bewildering Kermit Roosevelt, the scion of America’s foremost political family, paying street thugs to agitate against Mossadeq; American operatives shoring up an indecisive monarch to return to Tehran from his exile in Rome and reclaim his throne. Communist and clerical struggling under the same banner and participating in demonstrations financed by the United States and Britain. As Iran veered from crisis to crisis, the armed forces finally stepped in and ended Mossadeq’s brief but momentous tenure. The famed Operation Ajax would stand as one of the most effective of CIA’s covert enterprise, leading Washington to perceive that it could easily replicate its success elsewhere. Through toppling Mossadeq, America was seeking three critical strategic goals:

1. America kicked last stroke to the moribund and lean empire of Britain through manipulating this historic opportunity.

2. Conducting coup in Iran was a strong stroke to the Soviet Union especially after Stalin’s death (March 1953). This shows exerting of the cold war in the Middle East and direct strategy of communism containment on the East bloc.

3. America restated the Shah Mohammad Reza in Iran through adopting “containment strategy” against national independence and sovereignty and uprooted roots of nascent democracy in Iran by establishing an autocratic polity. After this, suppressing freedom and democracy cries, independence desire and national sovereignty in the third world countries became a prevail strategy for America. Based on Iran’s experience, the “Coup Doctrine” became the world policy foundation of Pax American after the World War II. Anti democratic nature of American imperialism from one
hand, being accustomed to topple independent and democratic states successfully throughout the world from the other hand steered America to resort experience of Iran’s Coup (1953) as its universal strategy. According to history testimony, we can indicate the American coups in Congo (1960), Brazil (1964), Bolivia (1964), Dominican Republic (1965), Indonesia (1965) and Chile (1973) as samples of this strategy. Therefore, the US government as mother of state sponsored terrorism is its biggest innovator of that in the world.

In a sense, the coup of 1953 made the Islamic Revolution of 1979 possible, even predictable. The Shah proceeded to create a rigid authoritarian state, relying on an extensive secret police apparatus to maintain order. The coup essentially destroyed the delicate internal balance of power, with the monarchy coexisting with assertive parliaments and prime ministers. The National Front that was the main engine of the modern middle class’s aspirations was effectively crushed when the monarchy proved relentlessly hostile to leftist and moderate political parties. As the secular opposition was repressed and its leaders and politicians imprisoned, the clerical establishment emerged as the main venue of opposition politics. The clerical community largely stayed out of the 1953 nationalization crisis, while at critical junctures it even assisted the restoration of the monarchy. However, by the 1960s more militant clerics such as Ayatollah Khomeini were coming to the forefront and mobilizing the impressive clerical network against the regime. Given the fact that the secular forces were largely decimated, the clerics with their privileged mosque sanctuaries managed to appropriate the leadership of the evolving anti-Shah opposition and finally. The crucial legacy of the 1953 coup is the creation of not just a deep-seated suspicion of foreign powers but of the United States in particular. The fact that subsequent to the coup America had become the main patron of an unaccountable and dictatorial monarchy reinforced its image of obstructing democratic change to protect its economic and strategic
interests. Still powerful historical narrative would erect a “wall of mistrust” between the Iranian populace and the United States.

Old forces of the National Fornt were surprised in the 1979 Revolution. Down falling of the second National Front and suppression of the Third National Front in 1960s caused to disappointment of many Front leaders and activists. Transformation of Shah’s regime from dictatorship to tyranny and despotic one mad impossible activity for movement and following democratic aims through compromising ways. Some changes led to propagate Marxist and Islamist ideologies in and out of country and using secret and forceful tactics were put in struggle with. Economic development strategy of regime caused a small minority become richer and depriving of people’s majority. Massive and uncontrolled migration of rural to cities caused largely gap between existent realities and Shah’s claims. At the time, even those who had a share of oil revenues were dissatisfied of regime, one for considering these shares as their rights and other for their anger of a regime that was forcing them to be a party member just for Shah’s order. Imposing officially American culture for the middle class was intolerable. The U.S. un-criticizing treat with Shah’s regime escalated worsening condition. Shah was American puppet in public mentality. Hence, people were considering America as direct responsible for ethic, cultural, social, political and economic instabilities.

Moreover, in the world changes were not in the interest of democratic aims. Romantic, millennium, and promised solutions had more attraction. Maoism, which had been refusing both America and the Soviet, was seeking for pure Marxism – Leninism and had a revolutionary face, attracted many inside and outside Iranians. Many of adherent youth and members of the Second National Front tended to Maoism. The U.S. mistakes in Vietnam increased its public disgrace and caused revolutionary Marxism and Partisan war to find adherents in
Iran. Unconditional support of America from Israel and armed struggle of
Palestinians accelerated this movement. Specially, regime had resented religious
community from June 1963 and reaction against anti traditional policies of regime
was boosting over the society.

Briefly, huge oil revenues did not use in productive activities. It was
believed that America was trying to destroy the country through Shah’s regime.
Bloody suppression of all criticizers and discontents prohibited any compromising
performance in changing way. At this time, revolutionary ideologies – Marxists
and Islamists – had been dominating ideologies. The movement began in 1977
and overthrew regime in 1979 was created by authors, lawyers, justice lawyers,
government staffs, old leaders of the National Movement like Sanjabi and
Bazargan. The National Front forces were divided among freedom movement and
other human rights group. Undoubtedly, if Shah was achieving an agreement with
these forces (especially before September 1978) circumstances were other kind.
Because, bazaar, government staffs and the oil company, the pioneer forces in
strikes and providing finance for those strikes, did not want to continue the
struggle till death for an independent country by leadership Sanjabi, or Bazargan.
Such a state could attract unanimity of religious leaders like Ayatollah
Shariatmadari and Ayatollah Taleghani who were after Ayatollah Khomeini
reputable. Even in November and December 1978 that Shah suggested Sedighi
Prime Ministry, if Shah agreed with Sedighi’s suggestion over leaving all
executive powers to cabinet, Iran’s later changes would be another way. Sedighi
did not join the National Front until after revolution. The leader of National Front
(Sanjabi) met Ayatollah Khomeini in Paris (1978) and in a declaration considered
him as unclaimed leader of Iran. Later, Sanjabi was criticized for his act, but
criticizers ignore the point that his act was for pressure of activists and the
National Front leaders and other revolutionary forces. Most of those who rebuke
Sanjabi welcomed the declaration at the time. The Interim Government of
Bazargan which came to power after revolution victory, had a short life and had been a disable and isolated government. From beginning, the Islamic Republic party and all Marxist-Leninist groups stood against it. Maybe, it can hardly claim the provisional government and been an honorable one. Nevertheless, Freedom Movement, the National Front and other groups and national individuals were the only organizations and society members who were opposing with romantic radicals and revolutionary justice. Bazargan government resigned in autumn 1979, for Ayatollah’s Khomeini’s support of taking American diplomats as hostage in Tehran. Of course, it had resigned in other cases too.

However, in the contemporary Iranian political imagination Mossadeq remains a promising democrat, subverted by a malicious America. Iranians continue to believe that their country may have forged a nationalist path, reclaimed its resources from foreign exploitation, and escaped the tentacles of a despotic monarchy had it not been for American manipulations. Mossadeq achievements and failures put him in the rank of the most prominent men of this century. Mossadeq, though plagued by serious illness for most of his life, never capitulated. Although he could have fled the country, escaped prosecution, and lived abroad, he chose to remain in his beloved homeland, whatever he spend over 30 years in exile. He was manifestation of his people ideals; people who demanded independence and national credit and recognizing as citizen inside. Nevertheless, still myth of Mossadeq is alive. Disappointment of imaginary Marxists and Islamists and constitutional Monarchy has absorbed old and new political activists towards principles and traditions of Iran’s National Front and Mossadeq’s path. It would be posed as the major alternative for Iran polity future.
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