Chapter 6

Summary and Conclusion

In this concluding chapter a summary of the study is presented. We also enlist the main findings of our research and revisit the initial hypotheses to test them against these findings. An attempt has been made to contextualize the contemporary politics of Islamic Republic of Iran from the perspective of power struggle under the light of these findings. Accordingly this chapter is divided into four sections. These sections are titled “Summary of the Study”, “Major Findings”, “Testifying the Hypotheses” and “Implications of the Study” respectively.

This research has been an attempt to study the power struggle between the reformists and the conservatives in the Islamic Republic of Iran. A case study of president Khatami era (1997-2005) has been undertaken to highlight the nature of this struggle. The whole research has been designed under the backdrop of a theoretical framework. Before going further, we give here a brief account of our theoretical framework that was developed for this study.

The theory of thermidor has been applied to place the contemporary politics of Islamic Republic into the proper context of its Islamic revolution of 1978-79. This has been so necessitated since even after the three decades of the revolution, Iran is often witnessed to revert back to its revolutionary past in all its social and political aspects.

Thermidor is understood as a particular phase of a revolution when the conditions of the society and politics resemble that of a pre-revolutionary state. During this period the social contradictions become irreconcilable and consequently, the regime finds it increasingly difficult to hold control over power. One essential feature of thermidor is that it takes place in such a revolutionary state where the existence of a charismatic leader is found. The political defection does not take place during the regime of the charismatic leader. However, soon after his removal or death, the defections and disagreements become explicit. Consequently, the revolutionary politics is replaced by the politics as usual with all its conflicts and compromises.
The Islamic Republic of Iran entered into the period of thermidor after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989. This phase of Islamic Republic witnessed all the features that characterise a thermidor. Ayatollah Khomeini was the charismatic figure in the revolutionary Iran. The conflicts between various coalitional factions that were dormant during the time of Khomeini became increasingly evident after his death. This resulted in a stiff power struggle between various factions. Such factions were later segregated into two broad camps respectively known as the reformists and the conservatives. During the time of Khatami's two tenures of presidencies, the maximum intensity of this power struggle was witnessed.

While the theory of thermidor positions the contemporary politics of Iran in the context of its revolutionary history, the concept of 'circulation of elites' as developed by Vilfredo Pareto has been used to understand the exact nature of this power struggle. Iran is governed by a group of clerical elites led by the Velayet-e-Faqih (the Supreme Leader). Among the ruling elites, those people who are loyal to the Supreme Leader are the real recipients of power. Following Pareto's line of argument, they may be termed as the 'governing elites'. Those clerical elites who do not enjoy close proximity to the Supreme Leader are the 'non-governing' elites. These 'non-governing' elites consistently strive to capture power, but the 'governing elites' equally try hard to retain their hold over power.

In this power struggle the rhetoric plays a very important role. In the post-revolutionary Iran, particularly during Khatami era, the discourse of political and social reform came to the centre-stage. Khatami and his reformist allies wanted to make Iranian political system more democratic and tolerant. The conservatives, however, resisted such changes. Consequently, the power struggle between the governing and non-governing elites appeared as the power struggle between the conservatives and the reformists.

The Constitution of Iran is so drafted that the most important institutions such as the Supreme Leader and the Guardians Council involve little public participation. Even in case of popularly elected institutions such as the president and the Majlis (Parliament), such participation is trifled due to the vague provisions of the constitution. This effectively renders the 'masses' completely out of the power struggle. This is how the
Theoretical framework has been constructed upon which the entire thesis has been developed.

The research was initiated with certain questions in mind and accordingly the objects of the study were formulated. We restate these research problems here in order to summarise the whole thesis in accordance with these questions. Following were the main objectives of the study: (1) To position the contemporary politics of Iran in the context of Islamic Revolution using the concept of Thermidor and to identify the thermidoreans; (2) To identify the reformists and conservatives in Iran and study the power struggle between them using the Elite theory of Power as developed by Pareto; (3) To study the politics of reforms and its relationship with the power struggle between reformists and conservatives during Khatami era; (4) To study the role of the civil society in the ensuing power struggle during Khatami period; (5) To analyze some prominent parliamentary bills and politics of power struggle surrounding these bills.

Historical and Analytical methodologies were applied during this research. A historical study of the political system of Iran was undertaken since the 1979 Islamic Revolution for which mainly secondary sources were referred to. An analytical study of the political transformation was undertaken since the Islamic Revolution. A thorough analysis of the thermidor in the Islamic Republic of Iran was undertaken and hence the competing power centres were identified.

This research has treated the whole issue of political and social reform in Iran during Khatami period as a perspective of the power struggle between the reformists and the conservatives.

The focus of the study has been the reform during Khatami period, but a brief historical account has also been undertaken in order to place the core issue in the proper context. Various primary data including the bills presented in or passed by the Majlis were used as the primary reference material. Having laid the background we now present the summary of this study.
I. Summary of the Study

The Islamic revolution was collaborated by diverse groups including secular leftists, liberals and the religious forces. Immediately after the revolution Khomeini was under immense pressure to implement the Islamic rule in its entirety. However, due to his pragmatism, Khomeini did not find it wise to immediately part ways from the liberals. Therefore the new constitution reflected the wishes of both the groups. Iran was made both Islamic and a republic. This has made the Islamic Republic a unique political system.

This contradiction of the Iranian political system has been a major reason for most of the factional strife in its post revolutionary era. Although the elected representatives do not have as much power in the unique Iranian political system as the unelected officials, still, these elected bodies have important roles to play in the Iranian politics. Their importance lies in the fact that the results of the elections are important in gauging the mood of the populace and hence giving the regime much-needed political inputs to make course corrections in order to maintain the legitimacy and perpetuate the stronghold over the power.

The post-revolutionary politics of Iran makes it amply evident that three distinct phases can be identified from the perspective of power struggle. The first phase was the Khomeini era. Since Ayatollah Khomeini was a charismatic figure and a widely accepted leader of the revolution, there was not much scope of any political dissidence during his time as far as his personal capabilities were concerned. However, his political expediency was seen by the hard-liners as a drift away from the Islamic and revolutionary principles. Consequently, a fissure appeared within the clerical order. Initially, this fissure was not very much evident; however, it was a reality. These two emerging factions may be identified as the radicals and the conservatives.

It is notable that the terms 'radical' and 'conservative' are used here purely in a relative sense. The radicals were those who held a radical view of Islamic principles and wished its blanket imposition on the Islamic Republic. The conservatives, on the other hand
favoured a slightly relaxed approach to the imposition of such rules than these radicals. However, in comparison to the centrists or the reformists of a later stage, these conservatives were more supportive of Islamic rules and principles. These two factions – radicals and conservatives – were then antagonistic to each other. These two can be identified as the political elites of Iran. There was a continuous struggle between these two elites throughout the Khomeini period.

The second phase of post-revolutionary Iran was the period of early 1990s. This was a period when Khomeini’s death had created a power vacuum. The radicals were largely marginalized in due course and the period of thermidor had evidently begun. Among the ruling elites of Islamic Republic, another faction had become evident which favoured some relaxation to the Islamic principles based on the liberal ideas. This faction, however, did not wish to go far away from Khomeini’s legacy and may be termed as the centrists (again, in a relative sense). Due to its pragmatic approach, this faction was also called a pragmatic faction. This faction was headed by Rafsanjani.

Throughout this period of early 1990s there was a power struggle between the centrists and the conservatives. Though both these factions consisted of clerics, the conservatives were holding power in a manner Pareto would have defined the governing elites to distinguish them from the non-governing elites – the centrists. Here, it is imperative to note the position of the president in the power structure of the Iranian political system. The president has such little power vis-à-vis other non-elected constitutional bodies, that he can very well be considered outside the realm of the governing elites. Thus, there was the struggle for power among the governing and the non-governing elites – the centrists and the conservatives – in this period.

The third phase of Iranian power politics started in the later part of 1990s when the centrists were either consumed in the governing elites or were marginalized. This period, however, saw the maximum polarization of Iranian power politics. The political conditions of this period gave prominence to a new potentially opposing faction – the reformists. The distinguishing feature of this period was the exceptional demand for social and political reforms that had taken the shape of a popular movement.
Muhammad Khatami became the embodiment of this movement and tried to capitalize this wave of reform in order to vest power from the conservatives. There was thus a stiff struggle for power between these two ruling elites of Iran – the reformists and the conservatives. As the thermidor period suggested and Pareto would have agreed, the reformists were optimist to capture power expecting the 'circulation of elites' in the given conditions of the Iranian politics of that time.

The primary reason of the ascendancy of Muhammad Khatami was that by that time people of Iran had become extremely dissatisfied with the clerical regime and Khatami’s approach convinced them that he would take care of the ailing system. This dissatisfaction was the result of the enforcement of successively increasing repressive measures by the conservative regime. Two decades after the Islamic revolution, the majority of the Iranian people showed their despair and frustration with its outcome. People were crying for some liberty from such extreme restrictions on their lives. The revolution had failed to fulfil its promise of a state.

Hence these people, dissatisfied by the regime and looking for moderation in the Islamic Republic, rallied behind Muhammad Khatami who represented their views. Khatami earnestly believed that the moderation based on the Islamic principles was indeed possible. On the other hand, the Speaker of the parliament, Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri, whom Khatami had defeated, represented the voice of the Islamist coalition during this election. Thus the election of the president in 1997 was a contest of two opposing voices and the demand of the period chose the voice of moderation. This competition was, however, not taking outside the Islamic fold. The contest between the two differing voices was taking place within the context of an Islamic pluralism which had evolved over the years of the Islamic revolution.

The people of Iran had responded positively to the Khatami’s call for individual freedom and general tolerance during his presidential campaign in 1997. Khatami turned to the prevalent national sentiment and claimed that Islam was compatible to democracy. The landslide victory of reformist Muhammad Khatami in this election caught the
conservatives off guard and provided the reformists some chance to carry out their reforms.

The reformists' highest priority was to promote democracy, since free elections would give them control over parliament and thus hamper the conservatives' efforts to block their other planned reforms. They therefore began to pursue political reform by attempting to liberalize the press and loosen the restrictions on political activities. Later they also sought to challenge the conservatives' control over state institutions. The political reform had become an effective means in the hands of the reformists to vest power from the conservatives. However, the reformists soon realized that the achievement of this objective was not an easy task.

Although President Khatami had the people's mandate, he was not in a position to bring about substantial changes. This was so because he had little power and authority as the president. The head of the judiciary was his bitter opponent. The state television and radio were controlled by the Supreme Leader. Even the authority of the police force was not provided to Khatami's Interior Ministry. Further, the Parliament was also dominated by his anti-reformist opponents. These constraints compelled Khatami to take a cautious approach.

Khatami charted on his course of reforms by depending on the press and made it his arm for spreading his campaign for the development of democracy. Due to the absence of any recognized political parties in Iran, the press performed the vital political function of interest articulation. The different factions ran their own representative news papers. However, there were many restrictions even on the press which made Khatami's task more difficult. Still, Khatami depended on the liberal section of the press for propagating the views of the reformers and also sought to liberalize the press.

However, the conservatives soon retaliated heavily and started shutting down such news papers one by one. The conservative members of the ruling clergy also started a campaign to discredit officials who were found to be loyal to Khatami. Khatami's Interior Minister Abdollah Nuri was impeached. Subsequently, another supporter of Khatami,
Tehran Mayor Gholam Hossein Karbaschi was arrested. Khatami, however, showed a bold face and continued to fight with the conservatives.

However, in the two years of his presidency, Khatami was seen as faltering under pressure. He had never found it expedient to pose a real challenge to the rule of the conservatives and defended himself only with his principles of tolerance and the rule of law. Even when the reformists won in the Iran’s first local council polls, the conservatives continued their attacks. These attacks, however, were mostly targeted against the reformist segment of the press. Such conservative retaliation even caused severe rioting, showing that the people still supported Khatami and his reforms despite his setbacks.

When the reformists won another landslide victory in the February 2000 parliamentary elections, the conservatives reacted bitterly. They arrested the reformist leaders and closed down almost all remaining reformist newspapers. The conservatives had become increasingly restless due to their repeated electoral defeats and they did not want to take the slightest chance lest the power slipped away from their hands. This made almost impossible for any reform measures to take place. Therefore, when the time of June 2001 presidential election approached, Khatami showed his reluctance to contest. He was himself disillusioned due to his repeated failures in overpowering the conservatives.

However, later he changed his mind, compromising with whatever achievements he had made during his first term. When he ultimately contested for his second term, he surprised every one by getting another landslide victory. This event indicated again that the reformists were still popular, despite the growing unease in the Iranian people. However, the conservatives continued to attack the reformists and blocked the reform initiatives even during Khatami’s second term.

By now, the reformists had realized that the reform of the Iranian society and politics was not possible unless some institutional changes were effected. Therefore in the latter half of 2002, they planned to curb the power of the conservatives by introducing two important legislative measures. The two proposed legislations were collectively known as 227
the ‘twin bills’. The first bill was directed towards curbing the power of the Guardians Council and the second was directed towards increasing the power of the President.

Khatami had forcefully argued that the proposed legislations were the minimum requirements for running the country’s affairs. However, the conservatives accused him of trying to assume dictatorial powers. Consequently, the Guardians Council rejected both bills citing many constitutional violations. In their public statements, Khatami and his reformist officials had shown that they were sincerely expecting the passage of these bills. However, Guardians Council enjoyed the constitutional power of the interpretation of the laws and it was highly unlikely from the very beginning that it would approve any bill directed towards curtailing its own powers. This event surfaced the severe restrictions that were faced by the reformists in changing the system by working through the system itself.

In the February 2003 Municipal council elections, the dramatically low voter turnout showed that the support for the reformists was now sharply undermined. As the June 2005 presidential election approached, the supporters of the reformists were evidently disillusioned. Further, the reformists didn’t have a strong candidate for the election. Consequently, a little known hard-liner, the Tehran Mayor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad won on the basis of his populist campaign and humble personality. This effectively ended the moderate era of the Iranian politics and shattered the dreams of the reformists of vesting power from the conservatives.

The defeat of the reformists showed that the actual ‘circulation of elites’ did not take place. But then, vesting power from the governing elite by the non-governing elite, during a thermidor, is a long and arduous process. The eventual conservative triumph reflects the disillusionment of the people from the reformists and not a reverting back to the conservatives. Eventually, the reformists failed in their power struggle, but the process of reform was indeed given a start.

Despite his failures in actually bringing out any substantial political reforms, Khatami was considerably successful in his endeavours from many respects. His most
commendable achievement has been in the foreign policy field. Khatami popularized a new language of dialogue among civilizations which won him support of the outside world. Khatami’s efforts on economic front changed the face of the things to a considerable extent. Khatami’s other major success was the end to the underground murder of opposition members by the powerful intelligence ministry network. Still, the most important achievement of Khatami has been that the people of Iran could now openly debate the role of the Vilayat-e-Faqih that used to be considered as taboo earlier.

II. Major Findings

There have been many attempts by the scholars to identify the political elites of Iran and categorize them into various factions. Most of the scholars agree that due to the non-transparent political system of Iran, a little information is revealed. This creates difficulty in categorizing individuals into a particular faction. Only method left is to observe an individual’s reactions on issues and accordingly categorize him in a particular faction.

From the perspective of power struggle, post-revolution warring elites can be categorized as following: the power struggle during 1980s was between the radicals and the conservatives; during the first half of 1990s, it was between the centrists and the conservatives; and during the second half of 1990s, it was between the reformists and the conservatives.

Due to the absence of recognized political parties in the Islamic Republic, the press performs the important political function of interest articulation. Instead of political parties we find different factions and their representative newspapers. Despite the restrictions on the press it has largely played a vital role in promoting differing views of the people of Iran.

The conservatives as a whole were not absolutely power hungry. Honest conviction towards the Islamic faith could be found in some individuals of this faction. Consequently, such individuals were directly pitted against those who found it expedient
to diverge from Islamic thoughts and practices. This has been found to be one of the factors responsible for the disunity among the conservatives.

The reformists primarily used the policy of reform as a political opportunity to capture power from the conservatives. However, it did not remain just rhetoric since actual reform of Iranian politics and society would have perpetuated the reformists into power. Consequently, their effort to bring out reform was serious. However, the opposition naturally was strong. Eventually the reformists failed in their power struggle, but the process of reform was indeed given a start.

It has been amply evident that the Iranian people were vying for social and political reforms. This can be supported by two broad arguments. First, most of the Iranian people were frustrated with the poor performing and increasingly repressive conservative regime. Second, during the reform wave of Khatami period, Iran was demographically placed in such a manner that favoured reform movement. During this time, majority of the Iranian population was in the age group of 25 year old. This segment of the population had less emotional attachment with the Islamic revolution and they disapproved the restrictions of revolutionary Iran. Therefore, the eventual conservative triumph reflected the disillusionment from reformists and not a reverting back to the conservatives.

It was found that the Iranian polity is not absolutely authoritarian. Some scope of real politics is discernible. Although non-elected institutions and people have more power than the elected representatives, the elections play important role in giving the much needed political input to the ruling clergy. Furthermore, the power of the president is very little in comparison to the other constitutional institutions, specially the Supreme Leader. However, the legitimacy of Velayat-e-Faqih has been largely eroded after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini. Finally, it was observed that the 'approbatory supervision' clause in the constitution related to the Guardians Council has been a major obstacle towards any reform in Iran.
III. Testifying the Hypotheses

We reproduce our initial hypotheses in order to test them against the findings of this research. Following were the hypotheses of the study: (1) The need of political reform started building up soon after the Islamic Revolution and gathered momentum after the death of Khomeini; (2) Political reform in Iran was used as a tool by the Reformists in their power struggle with the Conservatives; (3) At the institutional level, the power struggle was between the reformist president and the conservative Guardians Council; (4) The Conservative Guardians Council was the primary opposing force towards the reform measures introduced by Khatami. In the following paragraphs we attempt to testify these hypotheses one by one.

Test of First Hypothesis

When the authoritarian Pahlavi regime was overthrown in February 1979 by the Iranian revolution, people had a lot of expectations from the new regime. However, the new government came from a conservative Islamic movement led by Ayatollah Khomeini whose followers implemented a conservative political agenda. Consequently, political developments in Iran were largely governed by an ideological system of doctrinal nature. This ideological system helped a bureaucratic pro-Islamic trend which maintained control over the lives of the people of Iran.

This way the post revolutionary Iran became the site of a competition between the material demands and religious convictions. At one end, people were aspiring for freedom from restrictions, while at the other end the regime was enforcing extremely repressive measures. Initially, the theological regime could successfully suppress the popular aspirations, but as the situation deteriorated, it became difficult to contain them. The demand for economic improvement and social freedom became increasingly more evident.

Ayatollah Khomeini commanded a charismatic personality and he was largely accepted as the leader of the revolution. Therefore the dissenting voices could not find explicit expression during his life time. However, his death created a power vacuum and differing
interests started raising their voices. It became difficult for the clerical regime to contain and suppress the voices of liberty and freedom and gradually it took an increasingly intense shape. This shows that the need of political reform started building up soon after the Islamic Revolution and gathered momentum after the death of Khomeini. This proves our first hypothesis.

Test of Second Hypothesis
The implementation of the stringent Islamic laws and continuous repressions had their natural repercussions. Two decades after the Islamic revolution in Iran, the majority of the Iranian people were frustrated with its outcome. The revolution had failed to fulfil its promise of a state. Muhammad Khatami was seen by the people as a reformist who believed in the possibility of the social and political reform along Islamic lines. Therefore the discontented people responded positively when Khatami contested for the election of the president in 1997. Khatami's landslide victory in this election showed that the people were extremely eager to see the reforms in Iran. The people's verdict was not as much in Khatami's favour as it was against the clerical regime.

The surprising victory of the reformist Khatami caught the conservatives off guard. This gave the reformists a chance to carry out their programme of reforms. The reformists' highest priority was to promote democracy. It was so because the free elections would give them control over parliament. This way they would face fewer obstacles in carrying out their other reform programmes. They also began to pursue liberalizing the press and loosening restrictions on political activity. Later they also sought to challenge the conservative institutions. The reformists seriously tried to bring out reforms since this would have perpetuated them in power. Hence we see that the political reform in Iran was used as a tool by the reformists in their power struggle with the conservatives. This proves our second hypothesis.

Test of Third Hypothesis
The reformists were encountering difficulties in every effort of their reforms. They were forcefully opposed by their conservative rivals who were holding such institutions which were more powerful than the popularly elected institutions. The reformists sought to
change this status quo and decided to fight back by passing such legislations which would curb the power of conservative institutions and enhance the power of the reformists. Therefore, in the latter half of 2002, they introduced to the Majlis two pieces of legislations collectively known as the ‘twin bills’. One of these bills was directed towards curbing the power of the Guardians Council. The other sought to enhance the power of the President.

However, the conservatives accused Khatami of trying to assume dictatorial powers. The Guardians Council had the constitutional power of interpretation of the laws. Using this power, the Guardians Council rejected the first bill citing 39 violations of the constitution and seven of Islamic law. Again, the Guardians Council rejected the second bill citing the violations of 15 articles of the constitution. This way both the bills were summarily rejected by the Guardians Council.

Khatami had claimed that these bills were the minimum qualifications for running the state. His reformist officials also showed their expectations that these bills would be passed. However, it was extremely unlikely, since the Guardians Council would have never passed any bill that would curtail its own power or any other similar institution of the Islamic Republic. This proves our third hypothesis, which states that at the institutional level, the power struggle was between the reformist president and the conservative Guardians Council.

Test of Fourth Hypothesis
The provisions of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran make it a republic of contradictions. This is primarily because the constitution endeavoured to make the state both Islamic and republic. Thus popularly elected institutions such as President and Majlis were created to make it a republic. At the same time unelected institutions were created to ensure that they kept tight control over the representative institutions. This is how the institutions such as Velayat-e-Faqih and the Guardians Council enjoyed more power than their popularly elected counterparts.
The post of the Supreme Leader has been the most powerful in the Iranian political system. However, the first Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, used this position mostly to play the role of the final arbiter. With some exceptions, this tradition has been largely maintained by his successor Ayatollah Khamenei. The second most powerful institution of the Iranian political system is the Guardians Council. This body was constituted in such a manner that it became dominated by the clerical voices and largely served their interests. It enjoys the power of constitutional interpretation of the laws. This power has been successively enhanced by the Guardians Council and its role has been highly debated.

The Expediency Council was created to mediate between the Majlis and the Guardians Council. However, this constitutional body (Expediency Council) further strengthened the Guardians Council. Since it is dominated by the conservatives, the Guardians Council has traditionally blocked all reform oriented legislations. When Khatami was trying to reform the Iranian politics, he was repeatedly facing resistance from his conservative rivals. His ‘twin bills’ were his last hopes towards any substantial reforms. However, these bills were summarily rejected by the Guardians Council. This way, the Guardians Council played an extremely obstructionist role towards Khatami’s attempts at reforming the Iranian political system. This is how our fourth hypothesis is proved which states that the conservative Guardians Council was the primary opposing force towards the reform measures introduced by Khatami.

IV. Implications of the Study

This research has been an endeavour to study the nature of the contemporary domestic politics of Islamic Republic of Iran. An effort has been made to find out the behaviour of the ruling elites and the aspirations of the masses. The research has brought to light the facts that help us in appreciating the intricacies of society and politics of Iran in a more informed manner.
It was found in course of this research that the reformists had used the policy of reform as a political opportunity to capture power from the conservatives. However, this did not remain just rhetoric since actual reform would have perpetuated the reformists into power. Consequently, the effort of the reformists to change the system was serious. However, their conservative opponents proved too strong for them.

Another finding of the research is that although the theocratic institutions had the last say, they did not completely dominate the policies. Although the unelected institutions of Iran wielded real power, the elections too were relevant. The elections served the important function of providing political inputs to the regime. However, the disillusionment of the people showed their realization that their participation in the elections did little than legitimize the regime.

It has also been observed that despite its limitations, the Majlis served as an important platform for representing the different beliefs and interests. Further, among all the institutions, the Guardians Council was found to play the most obstructionist role towards any attempt at liberalizing the Iranian political system. This constitutional body proved to be the most uncompromising obstacle to any attempt at capturing power by the reformist camp headed by Khatami. Finally, the political stirrings of Khatami era indicate that the system is capable of change but this could take a long time.

The above facts show that there is clearly an attempt of the masses to liberalize the system. However, such attempts are stymied by the conservatives who are the real power-wielders. We know that the internal politics of a state has implications on its foreign policy. Iran has been internationally isolated for most of its revolutionary period. However, three decades after the Islamic revolution, the necessity of the current international dynamics increasingly favours the engagement of Iran for the larger interest of West Asian peace. Therefore, for an effective engagement it is essential to know the country, its people and above all its power politics. This study therefore contributes in this policy of engagement by providing informed insights of internal dynamics of the politics of Islamic Republic of Iran.