Political parties appeared on the scene when actions of an erstwhile political system attained a point of complexity that needed the introduction of a new political setup. Usually, political parties emerge when different classes of society become aware of their own interests, and the people of a country want the right to take part in political issues. The nineteenth century was an important phase in Iranian history, wherein political, social and economic corruption were the most obvious problem that Iranians faced. Tremendous increases of such problems have been the reason for the occurrence of all revolutions and reforms in Iran.

With the allied occupation of Iran and the exile of Reza Shah, social chaos increased in the 1940s. Also, as a result of the Second World War, and because of the lack of a steady government, the country was led to anarchy. This problem offended Iranians more when they became aware of the degree and speed of development in the western countries. When Iranian intellectuals came into direct contact with western countries, they tried to regenerate the political structure of their own country to bring about political stability. After Reza Shah, especially between 1942 and 1954, there came a unique historical opportunity for Iranian elites to form a democratic political structure, whereas during the reign of Reza Shah, political parties and other active groups had been inactive. A lenient political condition, favorable to the emergence of different political parties and groups, was the allied occupation of Iran and the exile of Reza Shah in 1941. It was a time when suddenly a flood of new ideas gushed forth in Iran. After his fall, Iran witnessed a progressive shift from traditional social organization to modern forms.

This period witnessed a fast growth in new political parties, worker’s unions, guilds, voluntary societies and many other associations. Some of the active political
parties were well organized and able to attract an important section of city workers, modern minor bourgeoisie, and elite.

However, the nature of party and political groups in Iran was different from those in the west. In Iran, common to all the political groups was the ideology. This ideology was mainly Marxist, Nationalist and Islamist.

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter tries to conceptualize the idea of political party. The first section discusses the concept of political party. Usually, political parties are defined by their goals, activities, behavior and also by their functions in a society. A brief history of the concept of political party has also been discussed here. Traditionally, political parties appeared on the scene when the actions of an erstwhile political system attained a point of complexity that needed the introduction of a new political setup. The next section provides a brief introduction of the different types of political parties and systems, growth of political parties in Iran and their functions have been dealt with. This chapter also indicates that this study is guided by five objectives:

1) Introducing and identifying political parties which were socially active during 1942 to 1954 in Iran.

2) Recognizing political and social personalities who were active in organizing political domains. The study will also look into the durability and decline of newly formed political parties.

3) The cause of rise and flourishing of political parties and their social role in the above mentioned period of time.

4) Finding reasons of defeat of political parties and their relations with the masses.
5) Studying negative as well as positive response of society towards the formation of political parties.

In the concluding section, this chapter explains the methodology used in this research. The method applied in this study is the documentary method. Documentary research involves the use of texts and documents as source materials. Documentary research is one of the three major types of social researches and has been the most widely used of the three throughout the history of sociology and other social sciences. It has been the principal method—indeed, sometimes the only one—followed by leading sociologists.

This study is based on research from numerous books of different writers with diverse thoughts. Even though most historical events related to political parties were similar in Iran, but to reach a better conclusion and more precise evaluation, the years between 1942-1954 have been chosen for study, the reason being favorable conditions for existence of political parties. After twenty years of Reza Shah’s Suppression, these years were a unique historical opportunity to establish different political parties.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The first portion of this chapter deals with the theoretical perspective. It is not possible to review all theorists and writers who have studied the evolution and functions of political parties; therefore some important and selected viewpoints of significant theorists were taken up for study. In this regard this section has been divided into three parts. The first part of this section has a discussion of political parties from the perspective of structuralism. The second part of the section is concerned with political parties from the perspective of functionalism. The last part of this section analyses political parties on the basis of their economic structure. Then there is an explanation of the theoretical framework. This research discusses the
reach, utility, and inadequacies of the perspectives adopted in the study of political parties. While using the structuralist perspective, this study tries to prove that social, political, economic, and cultural structures during 1942-1954 were responsible for the instability of political parties in Iran. Political system in this period of time had a totalitarian or authoritarian structure in Iran.

The last part of this chapter attempts to give a brief account of literature being written on the failure of political parties in Iran. This study was designed with a view to examine reasons of failure of political parties in Iran between 1942-1954.

A comprehensive review of literature is essential for any good research endeavor as it provides background information to aid in the designing and analyzing research work. A large number of studies have examined the various dimensions of political parties in Iran. Previous studies on this issue could be a valuable source of guidance for testing as well as providing probable explanation. Thus these findings were of tremendous help. An attempt is made here to give a brief account of literature for reasons failure of political parties in Iran.

**Chapter 3: Socio-economic and Political Conditions Prevailing in Iran on the Eve of Pahlavi Dynasty**

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate the importance of twentieth century as a critical period in Iranian history. In this era, for the first time Iranians of different social classes joined to challenge the uncontested arbitrary rule of the Qajar dynasty. This sentiment caused the Constitutional Movement which is considered to be the beginning of Iranian modern history. In association with this movement, in 1921, with the help of British officers, a self-made military man named Reza Khan orchestrated a coup that demolished the powers of the ruling Qajar king, and founded the Pahlavi Dynasty. In addition this chapter explores in detail the social and political factors that
had an impact on Iranian society. These factors contributed to the domination of foreign states over Iranian affairs, which in return gave rise to anti-Western feelings, the chronic problem of despotism in Iran, and the social and economic backwardness of the country. During the reign of the Pahlavi dynasty, Iranians found themselves under the rule of a strong and powerful ruling authority; it was hard to find the emergence of any other voice from any part of the country. In spite of previous dictatorships, there was no way out from his modern despotism. Neither the people nor any organization remained untouched by Reza Shah's oppressive rule. With the abdication of Reza Shah in 1941, Iranian people once again became free. A few social and political activists tried to recognize the roots of dictatorship in Iranian society, with the purpose of stopping its reoccurrence.

In the end, this chapter illustrates the different views about political parties in Iran which includes opponent, proponent and clergy views towards political parties' formulation in Iran.

Chapter 4: Political Parties of Iran between 1942 and 1954

This chapter attempts to introduce those most important parties which existed during 1942-1954 in Iran. Soon after the second meeting of the parliament in 1908, the followers and supporters of the government, which were in majority, were named "moderates", and the non-supporting minority called themselves "democrats". Actually, these terms did not refer to political parties, but was based on parliament members’ supporting or opposing the regime measures.

After twenty years of Reza Shah’s suppression, in 1941 a large number of parties came up in Iran; most of them had little effect on the political scene therefore they quickly disappeared from view; others had a deeper influence, both ideologically and organizationally, and have contributed to the contemporary Iranian political style.
These parties were mostly based on some ideological background and differences. For some of them it was Islam, for some it was Nationalism and for others it was Marxism.

Parties which were ideologically based had a more lasting effect on the political arena, both in terms of ideology and political administration. They can be divided into four groups. According to political leanings, Tudeh party and Democratic Party of Azerbaijan were of the left; and the National Will Party, Democratic Party of Iran and Justice (Adalat) Party which comprised Conservatives, and pro-British notables were of the right. There were also some Nationalist parties like Pan Iranist, National Front Party and Sumka party. Some religious parties also existed such as Society of the Devotees of Islam (Jam‘iyat-e Fada’iyan-e Islam) and Warriors of Islam Party.

**Chapter 5: Conclusion**

Considering the importance of developing political parties in Iranian history, this research attempts to provide necessary information and discussions, which in turn helps us to understand the reasons of their formation and activities.

For this purpose, an analysis of four political phases and their relations to the political awareness of Iranian population has been done. Then utilizing the existing documents and references, the role and aims of the ruling class, intellectuals, foreign powers, have been emphasized. Also socio economic conditions in the formation of political parties such as left-wing, right-wing, nationalist and religious parties have been studied.

Important point is that the nature of political parties in Iran was different from the western countries. In Iran the most important feature of all parties was the ideology.
Usually this ideology was Marxist, Nationalist or Islamic. And occasionally, in special times, political awareness gives birth to political parties.

Given the importance of political parties in helping political structure to sustain and maintain a democratic growth, the findings of this study reveal the factors responsible for the failure of political parties in Iran. Some of these are as following:

- Political parties in the west were born and created by its history, while political parties in Asia as well as Iran are of much more recent origin and, have not benefitted from decades of parliamentary experience. However, in Iran political, economic and socio-cultural context were fundamentally different from western societies.

- Another problem of political parties in Iran at that time was eastern autocracy and absolute rule of the sovereign. There was a constant tension between the central government and other political parties. When the central government was weak, political parties had less chance for development, and when it got stronger, it suppressed the political parties. Therefore, parties in such situation could not play effectual roles in a society.

- Like most third world countries, in Iran also, the authority did not distribute power within other political parties and groups. On the other hand the government tried to weaken parties, especially those which opposed them.

- Another reason for failure political parties in Iran was that most parties had close association with foreign power doctrinaires. From left wing the Tudeh Party openly proclaimed its adherence to communism and along with the Democrat Party of Azerbaijan was supported by Soviet Union. On the other hand, from right wing, parties such as the National Will party, with liberal democrat ideas, was perceived to be somewhat close to the British.
During that time in Iran there was no friendly relationship between political parties, and most of them were competing with each other. For example, all of the right wing parties had their base in response to the growth of the Tudeh party. The Tudeh party was seen as Soviet sponsored, and thus left-wing and right-wing had not only internal clashes but also rivaled in the context of international politics.

Most of those parties had no roots among the people and they were dependent on individuals. On the other hand, the aim of appearance of a lot of political parties was to support a few politicians, and their political activities were good excuse for continuation of these political parties. Most of such political parties were mainly dependent upon their founders and it was obvious after the death or resignation of these patrons, that each political parties would gradually disappear from the political scenario. For example, Democrat Party of Iran was basically a selective party, not rooted among a majority of people, whose speedy development was due to support from Qavam Ulsaltana. Consequently with Qavam's resignation as Prime Minister, his party disappeared too. Its members realized that Democrat Party of Iran was similar in structure and goals to Sayyid Ziya's National Will Party.

This study highlights the importance of emerging political parties in Iranian history; and has collected necessary information and discussions which help us to understand the reasons of their formation and activities in order to fill the vacuum, that existed in this domain. This study has made an effort to include everything relevant to the research area though there is still a lot of an area to be covered. New studies can bring out more results and thus this study should not be treated as a final arbiter on the topic. Although this research was carefully prepared, I am still aware of
some of the limitations and shortcomings. The study was both specially and temporally bound to only Iran, and that too a specific period of time of Iranian political history. The present research is sociological as much as it is related to the politics of the country. Many new facts and details related to the intentions of the past rulers and politicians may get revealed with the passage of time; therefore the reasons of some events that occurred in the concerned time period of the research may come out of the bosom of the history. There is a lot of scope to conduct research related to this field. Future researchers can conduct more detailed analysis of political parties in Iranian society.