CHAPTER 4

POLITICAL PARTIES OF IRAN BETWEEN 1942 AND 1954
Introduction

This chapter sheds light on the most important parties which existed in between 1942-1954 in Iran. After 1941 a large number of parties appeared in Iran, most of them had little impact on the political scene therefore they quickly disappeared from view; others had a deeper influence both ideologically and organizationally and have contributed to 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.

These few ideologically based parties had a more lasting effect on the political scene, 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 on the left; and National Will Party, Democratic Party of Iran and Adalat (Justice) party which comprised Conservatives, and pro-British notables were on the right. There were also some Nationalist parties like Pan Iranist, National Front Party and Sumka party. Besides these there were some religious parties such as Society of the Devotees of Islam (Jam’iyat-e Fada’iyan-e Islam) and Warriors of Islam Party.

4.1. Development of Political Parties in Iran

In Iran, the rise of political parties is very recent. 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 it was based on parliament members’ supporting or opposing the regime measures. Some of the members of the minority tried to build reputations by trying to use political terms like liberalism, constitutionalism, nationalism, and self-sacrifice. However, in view of most people, these groups existed only during the parliament sessions and had
practically had no impact outside. But from 1928, there was no longer any person in the Iranian parliament who could be specifically identified with the democrats or with the minority.

"The Democratic Party and the Moderate Party were significant. A majority of the Moderates tended to appeal to the Qajar nobles, landlords, big merchants, constitutionalist ulama, secular but non-radical constitutionalists, as well as shopkeepers, trade guilds and such others. The Democrats primarily sought to cultivate the intelligentsia, while attempting to widen their appeal. No doubt the individuals who led these parliamentary groups played a crucial role in determining their direction, but modern ideas also had a considerable impact. Indeed, the significance of these groups, in particular the Democrats, was more tangible in the realm of ideology than organization. Inspired by socialist ideas, Democrats had a radical and secular agenda, whether fully or partially articulated. It included political and civic equality of citizens, freedom of expression and organization, the distribution of state land among the peasantry, regulation and improvement of peasant-landlord relations, and compulsory primary education. They opposed privileged classes, including the ulama, as well as the imperial powers, particularly the Russians, whom they blamed for hampering socio-economic reform in Iran. They professed commitment to parliamentarianism and gradual change. Ideologically less assertive, the Moderates also advocated reform but displayed greater responsiveness to traditional sensibilities" (Azimi, 1997: 54).

These early political parties in Iran, if they can be called so, were self-determining, as they recruited leadership from the oligarchy who were mostly literate and had a broader ideology. However, they were not usually overbearing.
In 1941, a lot of political parties appeared with nationalistic names, they tried to publish their own newspapers and send representation to the parliament from Tehran and some other big cities.

In this regard Cottam says party activity came to a standstill during the 1920's and 1930's under the authoritarian rule of Reza Shah Pahlavi; but development in terms of a growth in political awareness proceeded rapidly. Therefore, when Reza Shah abdicated in 1941 and free party activity was again possible, a much larger public existed which had potential receptivity for the appeal of political party leaders. For would-be party leaders this development offered new opportunities and new types of political parties were certain to appear (Cottam, 1968: 85).

Unfortunately, most of these political parties had little lasting effects on the political scene in Iran and they quickly disappeared from view. The fewer parties which had long lasting effect on the political scene in terms of ideology and political administration can be subdivided into four groups according to political persuasion:

Left Parties:
1- Tudeh party
2- Democratic Party of Azerbaijan

On the right, three types of parties emerged that comprised Conservatives and pro-British nobles:
1- National Will Party
2- Democrat Party of Iran
3- Justice (Adalat) Party

There were also nationalist parties which included the:
1- Pan Iran
2- Sumka
3- National front Party

Finally, there were the religious groups such as:

1- Fida'iyan-i-Islam

2- Warriors of Islam Party

4.2. Left - Wing Parties

Marxist ideology came to Iran with the expansion of industrialization and development of commercial mode of production in the late 19th and early 20th century. The social and political background of the time can be summarized as the stage of change of Iranian society from feudalism to capitalism.

At this time anti-authoritarian actions expanded considerably in the Iranian society, and a lot of people took part in the revolutionary struggle. For this reason underground political groups were created in the most important cities of Iran to organize and lead the Iranian people especially in Tabriz, Tehran and Esfahan. But among these groups and parties, the Tudeh Party of Iran and Democratic Party of Azerbaijan were very important.

Tudeh (masses) party of Iran

In 1941, and with the new conditions prevailing a lot of political prisoners were released. Among them was Dr. Arani's communist group which was known as the Group of Fifty-Three. The foundation of the Tudeh Party of Iran was created by this communist group.

"Although a labor movement had existed in Iran as early as 1916, the real founder of the party was Dr. Arani, who absorbed his political views with his medical studies in Berlin immediately after World War I. On his return to Iran in the early 1930's, he gathered around him a group of young students and professional men whose
common ground was a hatred of dictatorship and sympathy with Marxist ideas" (Lenczowski, 1947: 35).

The Tudeh Party of Iran intended to mobilize broad sections of the working masses. The motive behind the move was to struggle for the working class and to accomplish it they used all means of open activity. The party put forward deliberate slogans reflecting the demands of the people and tried to bring together all forces in Iranian society in a united front for the common interest of all. At this time when authoritarianism was a grave threat to Iran, it was the newly-created Tudeh party which put forward the slogan of common struggle against the dictatorship.

The website of the Tudeh Party of Iran notifies that the provisional committee ratified the following programme in eight articles outlining the party's political principles:

1. To safeguard the independence and sovereignty of Iran;
2. To form a democratic regime guaranteeing individual and social rights such as freedom of speech, opinion and association;
3. To struggle against all forms of dictatorship;
4. To carry out urgently needed land reform and improve the life of peasantry and other toiling masses;
5. To reform the education system to provide compulsory and free education for all. To make provision for a free national health service;
6. To reform the tax system in the interest of the masses;
7. To carry out reforms in the fields of economy and commerce, to expand industry and mining, to improve transport facilities through construction and maintenance of road and railway networks;
8. To confiscate the property of the ex-Shah in the interests of the people.
Many other parties were formed in the aftermath of Reza Shah’s downfall, but they either soon disappeared or remained isolated political groups. It was only the Tudeh Party of Iran which functioned as a party, grew rapidly and turned into a significant and influential political force.

This progress of the Tudeh Party was a result of its understanding of the conditions of Iranian society at that time. The history of the Tudeh party of Iran is full of remarkable political and organizational experiences. Members of this party were united in opposing dictatorship, but the party itself was opposed by all other parties. Like all well organized political parties the Tudeh Party of Iran tried its level best in resisting dictatorship and imperialism, but at the same time while accomplishing its mission the party also made some mistakes.

Cottam, (1968: 89-90) in describing this party, says that the fact that this party openly proclaimed its adherence to communism and its association with the Soviet Union was less of an obstacle to recruitment than might be imagined. Though most of the new intellectuals, including many members of the Tudeh, were intensely nationalistic, foreign intervention in Iran had been so common that an association with any particular foreign power could be thought of as not unpatriotic as long as the welfare of the Iranian people was foremost in mind; and many Iranian nationalists saw far less reason to favor the British than on the Soviets. The Tudeh Party can be classified as personality independent; leadership recruited mainly from the new intellectuals; rank and file recruited also largely from the new intellectuals although a major but at this time, generally an unsuccessful effort was made to attract members from other elements of society; narrowly and rigidly ideological; and authoritarian.

During those years this party accomplished many activities, for example, in 1942 it tried to publish its own newspaper, Siasat (Politics). In the first months of its
activity the Party determined to work primarily for the working class in Iran. Since the party worked for the protection of workers' rights from its birth, therefore, it was successful from the very beginning. In addition, in a short time, Party Cells were created in many industrial centres, cities and provinces. Some organizations were formed in Azerbaijain, Isfahan, Gilan, Mazandaran and Khorassan. However the most important Party organization was in Tehran. The Tudeh Party of Iran, in 1944, fought elections and consequently eight of its members were selected, thereby creating a small party faction in the Parliament.

**Democratic party of Azerbaijan**

The Azerbaijan Society was formed to fight against discrimination, particularly related to Turkish Language used by the people of Azerbaijan province. But the Society was a weak one. Noticing the failure, the regional working group of Azerbaijan became upset with new organizational and political skills brought on by the Tudeh Party, which claimed to be people friendly. Regardless of opposition against the Society, particularly by the Tudeh Party, its reputation and popularity grew culminating in the formation of the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan under Pishavari's leadership. On the other hand, refusal of Pishavari's credentials by the Iranian parliament forced him to try to find non-parliamentary procedures.

"Democratic movement of Iranian Azerbaijan appeared because of socio-political and economic backwardness of this area, like lack of land reforms, education and health care. Although this movement could not reach its ultimate aim of correcting these issues due to its short tenure of one year in power, (1945-46) yet it revived and gave a new soul to the Azeri language that led to its acceptance among the native people. Despite the viewpoints of some of the researchers that the movement culminated with the backing of the erstwhile Soviet Union, it must be said that this was
purely based on the desire of local people. The Soviet Union initially supported the movement but because of the pressure from the central government of Iran and the Western powers (Britain and United States); it deceived the movement the time it was on the verge of success” (Khandagh, 2009: 106).

The strategy approved by Pishavari tried to reduce class differences besides trying to compel Tehran to work for the betterment of the province. On the other hand, recruitments to the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan faced a lot of problems because political dishonesty of earlier political parties had created an atmosphere of suspicion among people. These problems worsened because of the forceful repression and fear-provoking propaganda used by the central government. To counter this domination Pishavari published a twelve- point declaration in 1945, which gave details of their demands and distributed them among the people for their signatures.

The declaration held that Azerbaijan's people wanted democracy and rights like those in developed countries of that time, not just for their own region but for the whole country. They obliged themselves to obey law and revere the central government, but unfortunately the central government’s attitude towards them was very repressive. Considering the manifesto of the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan, all Azerbaijanis thought that the party could fulfill their desires like other successful political parties did erstwhile.

Maghsoudi (2003: 285), in his book gave a Twelve- point declaration which were also the demands of Democratic Party of Azerbaijan:

1- While the Democratic Party respects integrity and independence of Iran, it also seeks autonomy for Azerbaijan.

2- A provincial body would deal with cultural, economic and medical affairs.
3- Turkish will be taught in all primary schools; and national university of Azerbaijan will be established.

4- It would deal with industrial development in Azerbaijan, with the aim to reduce unemployment.

5- It would take step to increase trade.

6- Unite towards modernization of Azerbaijan.

7- Seeks lifting heavy taxes on peasants and distribution of lands amongst the landless peasants, and availability of modern equipment to them.

8- Unemployment alleviation by building factories, increasing trade, and constructing railway networks and roads.

9- Conducting free and fair elections in the province.

10- It will fight against corruption amongst civil servants.

11- Spend half of the taxes raised by the central government for internal developments of Azerbaijan, and try to reduce the amount of indirect taxes.

12- It will establish friendly relations with all democratic countries.

In 1946, the central government of Iran signed an oil agreement with the Soviet Union with the condition that Soviet forces would leave Iran. Of course at that time pressure of other super powers like United States and Britain was very effective. Since the Soviet Union was the only supporter of Azerbaijan Democratic Party, the party no was left on its own and couldn’t find any other support. For this reason Qavam (a politician who served as Prime Minister of Iran five times during Pahlavi dynasty) took three Tudeh members into his cabinet. In 1946, when the Iranian central government was preparing for new parliament elections, Qavam sent the Iranian central army into Azerbaijan. With no more Soviet support for the Democratic Party of Iran, the

4.3. Right – Wing Parties

All of the right wing parties had, as their agenda against the development of the Tudeh party of Iran. At the time when allied forces in Iran were against the Communist- linked Tudeh party they tried to produce a conservative ideology which was shared almost by all the right wing parties. Another factor that affected this increasing conservative tendency was that most of these political parties had close links with the Iranian Court, which in turn was enthusiastically pro-British. At that time, the Tudeh party of Iran was seen as Soviet supporter, and therefore, left wing and right wing had not only internal conflicts but also were rivals in international political issues.

In this regard Cottam says, “party typology classifies the differences between right- and left-wing parties based on some criteria: the left was personality independent, the right personality dependent; leadership recruited from the new intellectuals fairly closely and also among the rank and file membership; the left was narrowly and rigidly ideological, whereas the right, still narrow, yet did not have broader ideological appeal when compared with the Tudeh party authoritarian and non-authoritarian (Cottam, 1968: 84).

Within this general typology, we shall differentiate between the conservative and pro-British type, and the others with extreme nationalist tendencies.

National will party

The political activity of this party began with the foundation of the Vatan Party which was re-organized in mid-1944. The National Will Party was the largest and most active among the conservative parties. It had branches all over Iran including the Northern provinces, where Vatan formerly had much influence.
"In politically sophisticated circles the National Will Party was perceived to be at least as close to the British as the Tudeh Party was to the Soviets. The party's leader, Sayyid Zia al-Din Tabatabai, had become premier in 1921 after a coup d'état perceived to have been supported by the British. When he fell from power he went into exile in the British mandate of Palestine, and was believed to have been brought back to Iran during the British and Soviet wartime occupation as part of a British effort to counter the Soviet challenge, implicit in the Tudeh Party. That, a man with such a reputation could seriously hope to gain popular support, is testimony to the astonishing Iranian acceptance of foreign interference as a fact of life that must be lived with" (Cottam, 1968: 86-87).

The president of its central committee was Riza Quli Hidayet. Sayyed Ziya was a Secretary along with Sadiq Sarmadi, the editor of Nida-ye Iran, Pasargad, and Khorshid-i Iran. In comparison to the left-wing Tudeh Party, right wing parties had a strong support from the West, the Iranian Court and its own organizations. Given all this, the National Will Party still could not last longer than two years and was dissolved by Qavam in 1945. Sayyid Ziya was imprisoned and shortly released after the Parliament elections but he was unable to revive the party.

According to Khandagh, one of the major reasons for the party's dissolution was Sayyed Ziya's inability to establish himself as the champion of nationalism; he was regarded by many as an arch-traitor and an instrument of British imperialism. In 1920-21, as editor of Raad the British ambassador in Tehran described Sayyid Ziya as a notorious anglophile. Iranians also saw Sayyed Ziya as instrumental in bringing Reza Khan to power in the 1921 coup. On his return to Iran from Palestine, he was therefore immediately suspected of working again with his old ally, a suspicion that was in fact well-founded. The American ambassador reported to Washington that Sayyid Ziya was
encouraged by the British, who also persuaded the Shah not to oppose him or his political activity. Furthermore Sayyid Ziya failed to make his party the sole defence against Communism, for he had rivals - Adalat, Qavam's Hizb-i Dimukrat-i Iran and the court, with its military supporters. Sayyid Ziya also compromised the party to an extent, by pledging different things to different classes, particularly land distribution between landowners and peasants’, promises he was unable to fulfil for a long time.

The right-wing parties did not have wide appeal to the Iranian public who had recently been released from the oppression of Reza Sha’s rule. Mossadeq pointed out in March 1944, the 14th Majlis: the present regime in Iran is not really one of freedom for the simple reason that it takes a long time for a nation to recover morally from the effects of a prolonged period of dictatorship. It is for the deputies to help and lead the people. Sayyid Ziya can only work when he can close the Majlis and silence the press (Khandagh, 2007: 30).

There can be many reasons behind the limited success of the National Will Party taking in account its appeal and structure. Its strong pro-British leaning, though established to counter the Soviet influence, was a stumbling block for its wider acceptance.

Cottam (2007: 87-88) has observed "while the National Will Party and the Democrat Party of Iran resembled each other closely in typology, there was a substantial difference in degree of perceived attachment, with regard to the relations with the British. Thus, Qavam was believed to be close to the British as the most aristocratic politicians were Sayyid Ziya, however, was believed to be at least as close to the British as the Soviet were to the Tudeh. Among the new intellectual class which now formed the most politically aware group within the country and was therefore a major source for appeal to recruitment, several different view-points existed. The
National Will Party inevitably limited its appeal to this group by adopting an extreme pro-British stance. While others again felt that Iran's dignity could only be restored through the restoration of lost territories; a majority of the new intellectuals rejected any close association with and foreign power (although accepting Iran's boundaries as essentially unalterable)."

It was obvious, at that time (1941-46) that the party had a great appeal for the common masses, but within a few years it lost its glory, as it failed in general organization and political awareness. The National Will Party, in this respect, can be compared with the European Fascist movement of the 1930s, which met the same fate. The reason for the fall was that it juxtaposed backward looking ideology with a modern outlook; and being a nationalist and socialist sympathizer, it was at the same time militantly-anti communist. It admired traditional values while at the same time showed a kind of dissatisfaction if its credentials were questioned. Moreover, the party did not hesitate to use aggression against its chief opponents.

This resemblance to fascism was noted by the American technical advisor Millspaugh, who was indebted to Sayyed Ziya for supporting him in the Parliament, without considering that the National Will Party lead towards fascism (Millspaugh, 1946: 78).

The National Will Party ultimately disintegrated because of two reasons, first Sayyid Ziya's personality, and second due to lack of ground support.

**Democrat party of Iran**

The Democrat party of Iran was formed by Ahmad Qavam in 1946, when he was Prime Minister. Ahmad Qavam, was believed to be close to the British as were most noble politicians; but there was a considerable difference in degree of perceived attachment.
This party counter-balanced Tudeh influence within the Parliament, especially when Qavam felt his position threatened by the presence of seven Tudeh cabinet members. For this reason he announced over the state radio in 1946 about the formation of the Democrat Party of Iran to challenge the election against the Tudeh party.

This action further emphasized the divisions existing between the Shah and the left at that time, Qavam tried to challenge both of them. Using ex-Tudeh agitators such as Ali Umid to help systematize the Democrat party of Iran, Qavam created a strong coalition of landowners and higher officials which represented the old aristocracy, who sought revenge against Reza Shah. They wanted to oust him from power and the newer middle-class that he had created.

There was one, however, serious obstacle to the program; the party called for equal franchise; which was opposed by the popular Ayatullah Kashani. The party tried in vain to find an equally impressive religious leader to advocate its own point of view but it lost considerable support over this issue.

The other problem was that the party’s support from the bazaar union was waning, because it was represented by three nobles- Husayn Mirzada, Dr. Baqa'i, a Europe educated lawyer and Husayn Makki, a historian, all of who had good relationship with Kashani. Moreover, the party’s link with the bazaar union was destroyed when the party was secularized following the throwing out of Hairizada from the Central Committee.

According to Khandagh, the initial development of the Democrat party until its coalition with the Tudeh (together with the Firqa-yi Dimukrat-i Azerbayjan, Hizb-i Iran, Irani-i Ma and Hizb-i Susyalist) in August 1946, could have followed one among several options: It could have consolidated its position among the aristocracy by adding
new aristocrats; made further inroads among the intellectual and middle classes; or could have assumed the role which the Tudeh had fulfilled among the urban working class. In fact, the Democrat party of Iran ventured into all three areas as part of its ploy of setting different classes against one another. The party appealed to the middle-classes in various ways: a great deal of work was done amongst youth, building secondary schools etc.; a women's organization flourished since many Iranian women were dissatisfied with their position. Support also came from professional classes including engineering, industrial management and technocratic classes who were unhappy with the high handedness of the Tudeh Party. The working class represented a very dangerous area of appeal, since Qavam was trying to keep peace with the Tudeh Party. In order to convince them of his support he dared not encroach upon their main field of activity the working classes. The solution to this dilemma was the coalition of the Democrat party of Iran and Tudeh Party and its controlling council of United Trade Unions. It was a very fragile alliance for the hard-liner who opposed the Court and clashed with those who urged to compromise with the Shah. There was a split between those who favored British interests and those, including, Qavam himself, who favored the US, within the Democrat party of Iran (Khandagh, 2007: 32).

Following the collapse of this coalition, labor policy changed dramatically. The previously inactive Minister of Labor and Information, Muzaffar Firuz set up a worker's organization for non-Communist wage earners which stripped the Tudeh of its major asset, the working class. The Democrat party of Iran then implemented Qavam's labor law of 1946 by negotiating higher wages from the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, and by creating a syndicate of Iranian workers run by leading anti-Communists. This represented the Democrat party's most important strategic success. Qavam's concern for the leftist security was a cause of concern to conservative Iranian pro-Western opinion,
which believed that by controlling the parliament, Qaran would sacrifice Iran's resources.

"This party was more of an association of old -guard aristocratic politicians and anti-British and non- Tudeh radical intellectuals, who at times had diverse political opinions and leanings. It is also worth noting that Mohammad – Reza Shah distrusted this party and was often suspicious that its more senior and influential members would, independent of him, enter negotiations with the representatives of one of the superpowers" (1998, Gheissari : 64).

Following Qavam's fall from power in 1948, the Political Party of Iran, too, soon disintegrated.

The failure of the Democrat party of Iran highlights its three major problems. The working masses were politically unaware and, it was therefore, a very difficult and painstakingly slow task to mobilize them. Secondly, the only way to gain support of the new intellectuals was to develop a very innovative ideology. Finally the harsh measures used against the Tudeh caused demoralization amongst the party's membership. It became clear that violent means had done much damage to the party.

The Democrat Party of Iran was basically a selective party and not a people's party whose rapid development was due to army and police support. Consequently, with Qavam's resignation as Prime Minister his party also vanished. Its members realized that Democrat party of Iran was similar in structure and goals to the Sayyid Ziya's National Will Party, which had the same problem.

Justice party

This political party was founded by Ali Dashti in December, 1941. After Allied invasion in August 1941, Dashti initially appeared to support the reformist program of Reza Shah, but this support gradually dissipated following Reza Shah's abdication.
Dashti was, in fact, a bitter and vociferous critic of the monarchy because of its weak control over the territory. He subsequently, assumed a more prominent role, including formalizing his network of friends into the Justice Party. Other party leaders were Jamal Emami and Ebrahim Kaja-Nuri, a Belgian-educated journalist, lawyer, politician, essayist, and self-proclaimed psychologist. The latter served as director of the government press and propaganda bureau but resigned from his position on 16 November 1947, because of disagreement with the Prime Minister, Ahmad Qawam.

Other leading personalities in the party were Faraj-Allah Bahrami, former chief secretary to Reza Shah, governor-general of Isfahan and Fars, and the 1940s minister of interior; Jamshid Alam, an influential physician and politician; and Abu'l-Qasem Amini, a Majlis deputy and governor-general of Isfahan, who later joined Qawam's short-lived Democrat Party and who, in early April 1953, became acting court minister.

"The Justice Party was an association somewhat resembling a private club, with little organizational cohesion or collective sense of identity. Its vague ideological character consisted of center-right nationalism broadly aimed at promoting the interests or enlisting the support of the privileged and middle classes, and at attracting "deputies and other nobles" (Elwell- Sutton, 1949: 49). Like the majority of groups that emerged after the abdication of Reza Shah, the Justice Party, with about 400 members, was essentially a vehicle for serving the political objectives and ambitions of Dashti, his friends and supporters. The party program consisted mainly of general advocacy of reforms in the administration and legal and educational systems, but it also encompassed more specific objectives, like reduction of the military budget and employment of American military advisers" (Abrahamian, 1982: 192).

The Justice Party initially enjoyed the support of the newspaper Mehr-e Iran, managed by Majid Mowaqqar. In January, 1944 the party began to publish its own
newspaper, Bahram, which had been licensed in the name of Abd-al-Rahman Faramarzi, editor of Keyhan. A few months later Bahram was replaced by Neda-ye edalat, licensed in the name of Kaja-Nuri, which began publication in May-June, 1944.

"This party did not pursue a well-defined policy with respect to any government. In July 1942, it began to disagree with the government of Ali Sohayli, who had promised but failed to appoint Bahrami as minister of interior. Soon after this, the party did not hesitate in joining the opponent to Prime Minister Qawam, but it backed the bitterly contested government of Mohsen Sadr, which lasted from June to October, 1945. A clear demonstration of Adalat's limited success in the 14th Majlis can be seen with the fact that despite the help of Prime Minister Suheyli and the Minister of Interior, the party could manage 11 seats. The impact of the party was, in any case, limited within the Majlis. Thus, its seats were linked to the structure of the parliamentary bureaucracy, its working support came from union members in the factories and its white-collar elements were drawn from the ranks of senior civil servants" (Abrahamian, 1969: 120).

Just before the end of World War II the Justice Party assumed a clearer anticomunist character and more openly identified with Western interests. For this reason, a few leading pro-western politicians including Dashti and Emami tried to bring about the evacuation of Soviet Union forces from Iranian soil and to put an end to the Soviet supported "autonomous government" in Azerbaijan and the "republic" in Kurdistan. The leading members of the party, particularly Dashti, Emami, and Kaja-Nuri, were experienced political agents and benefited from wide systems of contacts; they continued to work together informally and to play important roles in Iranian politics, as well as direct or indirect collaboration with pro-British efforts to bring down the government of Mohammad Mossadegh. They were, however, arrested by the
government of Iran and then released six months later after the formation of this party. The party, however, faded away.

4.4. Nationalist Parties

Nationalism may be best defined as "the attitude of a population which results in the members giving their supreme loyalty to a given nation" (Smith 1971: 3). Evidently, no historical cause can be analyzed without taking into consideration the circumstances that make it possible.

In Iran, nationalism has to be understood in the context of increased foreign influence in the country’s internal affairs. Yet, nationalism in Iran cannot be taken as being exclusively anti-Western or anti-Imperialist, but it has to be looked in terms of the inner dynamics of Iranian culture because conflicts of class interests and the oppressive rule of autocrats significantly contributed to the rise of revolutionary movements (Salehi, 1988: 79).

Discussions concerning Iranian nationalism during the 19th century fall within the framework of national sovereignty which has been previously outlined. Some parties in Iran during that period attempted to create an Iranian “national” identity. In Iran, concepts of nationalism had been introduced during the Constitutional Revolution.

In this case, Katouzian says, in Iran, the word mellat, and later melli, was used—and continues to be used—to describe “the people” who constitute the Iranian nation. The National Assembly during the Constitutional revolution was conceived of as a majles-e shura-yi melli; or an assembly of national consultation. But mellat also retained its traditional (religious) meaning. For instance, the mellat-e Islam would refer to the community of Moslems (Katouzian, 1999: 258).
However, nationalism cannot present an acceptable explanation for historical and political developments, for the basic reason that people are encouraged by many other considerations, and their adherences are not entirely directed to the nation-state.

**Pan Iran party**

After the collapse of the Qajar dynasty, because of its corruption, and emergence of Reza Shah Pahlavi in 1925, who started presenting secular reforms for preventing the power of the clergy, Iranian nationalists had hoped that this new period would witness the establishment of democratic reforms. Although, such reforms did not take place, yet this led to the gradual rise of Pan-Iran group which included nationalist writers, teachers, students, and activists, supported by other pro-democracy groups.

In the 1940s, after the Allied’s invasion of Iran, the Pan-Iranist idea got reputation as a consequence of the extensive feeling of lack of confidence among Iranians. At that time there were armed forces from many countries present in the country, particularly in the capital, Tehran. The presence of these powerful countries in Iran in 1941, resulted in a series of student activities. One of these new nationalist groups was a secretive guerrilla group who called themselves the Revenge group. Consequently, the Pan Iranist Party was created later on, by collaboration of this Revenge group and a few other students' groups in the 1940s in the University of Tehran. This political party was the first association to formally accept the extreme Nationalist idea.

According to Cottam (1968: 90-91), "Pan Iran was more narrowly targeted. It directed its appeal to lower middle class youth, particularly high school students. At this stage of Iran's political development, this was a highly significant target group, and a number of parties or would-be parties competed for pre-eminence in the high schools.
Since young students were volatile and easily mobilized, they acted as a political force particularly in a chaotic situation. All of the groups targeting them used essentially the same ideological appeal, an intense nationalism which called not only for the ouster of the imperial West but also for the return of lost Iranian territories now located within the boundaries of each of Iran's neighbors including the Soviet Union. The appeal was statist, but anti-capitalist, anticommunist, and often anti-Semitic. The leader of the most successful of these groups was Dariush Forouhar, and the leaders were recruited from young men of the lower middle class and the fringes of the new intellectuals. The party called for free party competition but the sincerity of its call for tolerance was questionable.

Finally, the leaders of Pan Iranist Party, Mohsen Pezeshkpour and Dariush Forouhar, in 1951, had a difference of opinion as to how the party should operate, and this resulted in a division. The two groups, to a great extent, differed in their organizational structure and practice. The Pezeshkpour group, which kept the party name, believed in working inside the system of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The Forouhar group, which accepted a new name, Nation of Iran Party, believed in working against the regime.

**Sumka**

Sumka was an Iranian neo-Nazi group formed by Davud Monshizadeh in 1952. He was a professor at Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich, who served with the SS and had been injured while fighting in Berlin. Before the foundation of this party, this name had been used unofficially to refer to those in Iran who supported and helped Adolf Hitler during the Second World War.

Irrespective of the recruitment of some people based in Iranian universities, Sumka party did not last long. It was been believed that Mohammad Reza Pahlavi
himself supported the party financially for some time. Funding was also provided indirectly by the United States government during their operation in the area.

"The group briefly attracted the support of young nationalists in Iran, with Daryoush Homayoun, who would later rise to prominence, an early member. Monshizadeh was known as something of a Hitler worshipper and was fond of many of the ways of the Nazi Party, such as their militarism and salute, as well as attempting to approximate Hitler's physical appearance" (Fardust and Dareini, 1999: 62).

For this reason, the party adopted the swastika and black shirt as part of their uniforms. Along with this, the party was known for its allegiance to the monarchy and were Pro-Shah.

In this regard, Gasiorowski says that they were firmly opposed to the rule of Mohammed Mossadegh during their brief period of influence, and the group worked alongside Fazlollah Zahedi in opposition to Mossadegh. Indeed, in 1953 they were part of a large crowd of Zahedi supporters who marched to the palace of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi demanding the ousting of Mossadegh (Gasiorowski, 1987: 270).

The party finally disappeared, even though a lot of their membership was taken by the 'Arya' group which had some pro-Nazi tendencies.

National front party of Iran

In the final period of relative freedom, 1950-1953, the National Front Party of Iran was formed around the leadership of Dr. Mohammad Mossadeq. National Front can be generally considered as a nationalist party, because its policy mainly was against the interference of the Soviet Union and the West. In addition, the Pan-Iran Party was also a member of the National Front and had extreme nationalist ideas. Mohammad Mosaddeq, leader of the National Front, was supported by the nationalist groups so as to create the nation of Iran. At the same time Mosaddeq was personally a social
democrat. On the other hand, most secular nationalist leaders in Iran, and Iranian intellectuals who were liberal, and had been educated in France in the late 1940s, also helped in the formation of this party. This political party held supremacy in the Parliament of Iran for a few years till the coup of 1953.

"Soon after its founding, the National Front opposed the existing Western domination and control of Iran's natural resources, and related revenues, which began with colonialist concessions given during the Qajar Dynasty. By the mid-1940s, Iran's oil assets were owned by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, whose predecessor company bought the concession from William Knox D'Arcy" (Kinzer, 2003: 33).

D'Arcy had negotiated the concession in 1941, with Mozzafar al-Din Shah Qajar, the Shah of Persia, who granted a 60-year petroleum search concession for in a transaction in which no money changed hands (Elwell-Sutton, 1955: 15).

The aim of the National Front was nationalization of Iran's oil resources and to neutralize British control on Iran's internal affairs by establishing direct relations with the US. This party became the governing coalition when Mossadegh was elected Prime Minister. Mossadegh's minister of foreign affairs Hossein Fatemi made it obligatory that the Nationalization of Iran's oil was passed by the Parliament in March, 1953 and ratified by the Senate. Iran's Shah unwillingly signed the act and this led to British counter-moves which didn't accept nationalization of Iranian oil.

But Cottam said, the 1950-1953 period was one in which there was a rapid extension into political awareness and an even more rapid expansion of the percentage of political participants. Dr. Mossadeq and the National Front thus, can be seen as primary agents of political socialization, and the norms that those moving into the political stream accepted included liberal democratic norms. It is no accident that the man who gave leadership to the National Front and who became Iran's first really
popular leader should have espoused liberal democracy. In 1951, a potentially popular national leader needed the support, first of all, of the new intellectuals, and it is doubtful that an authoritarian leader could at that time have attracted broad support from this group. Obviously, a great many years would be required to inculcate an acceptance of the liberal-democratic governmental process in a people which had long acquiesced in authoritarianism. But in this three-year period a great many uncomprehending people accepted the liberal-democratic process simply because it was part of the political normative system of a leader and as political elite, they believed in. It is one of the ironies of this age that interventions from the liberal-democratic West cut short this experiment. The National Front can be classified as personality dependent; leadership recruited from the oligarchy, the new intellectuals and the middle-class; rank and file recruited from the entire spectrum of politically aware; ideologically broad; and non-authoritarian (until the summer of 1953, when confronted with a serious challenge from the right, it turned sharply in the authoritarian direction) (Cottam, 1968: 83-84).

In August, 1953 Shah appointed Zahedi as Prime Minister to replace Mosaddeq. He refused to step down and arrested the Shah's emissary. Mosaddeq was therefore, sentenced to three years' imprisonment for trying to overthrow the monarchy, but he was subsequently allowed to remain under house arrest in his village, Ahmad Abad, outside Tehran until his death in 1967. His minister of foreign affairs, Hosein Fatemi, was sentenced to death and executed.

4.5. Religious Groups

During the period of Qajar dynasty the clergy actively participated in the political, social and cultural issues in Iran. According to Hamid Algar, they were involved in the fight against the government. This action was not openly practiced by
the "ulama" of the Safavid period. The "ulama" who already proclaimed themselves as regents of the Imams could not recognize monarchy, which was considered illegal. The conflict between the religious and secular power continued for the whole of nineteenth century (Algar, 1973: 252).

Alban Bill also comments about this: the "ulama" power became stronger with the coming into existence of the Qajar rule. A large number of "ulama" who stayed in Najaf and Karbala came back to Iran and displayed their influence (Alban Bill, 1972: 23).

The clergy, at that time, had their own power to mobilize the Iranian population for their own purpose. They certainly had this power to compel the Iranian government to consider their advices. They aimed at ending of the misgovernment and sought a return to the Sharia.

According to Keddie, the power of the clergy became strong because of the following factors: 1) Twelve Shi'i theory, which considered all temporal rulers illegitimate and came increasingly to assert that legitimate guidance, pending the return of the "hidden" twelfth Imam is to be found in the Shi'i religious leaders. 2) The independent and untouchable position of Ottoman Iraq, beyond the reach of the Iranian government. 3) The great veneration for the clergy leaders by most Iranians, along with very close ties between the guilds and the clergy. 4) Identification of the clergy with the popular anti-foreign cause ever since the first war against Russia in the nineteenth century (Keddie, 1971: 5).

The reign of Reza Shah (1925 to 1941) was the worst stage for Iranian clergy from all points of view because soon after becoming the king, Reza Shah started strengthening his position and started modernization and westernizing of Iran.
"In 1941 Reza Shah was forced to abdicate and his son Mohammad Reza Shah ascended the throne. This led to considerable relaxation of political activity as well as freedom of expression. The clergy also became active now. Their anger was not only due to the bad treatment that had been meted out by the Shah, it was also because they were against the latter's policy of modernization of Iran and introduction of a number of reforms. They were particularly annoyed by his policy towards religious institutions, education and religious endowments" (Haq, 1991: 25).

During these years the conflict between the Westernized groups, traditionalists and reformists increased, also, a strong Marxist group entered into this conflict. Due to the failure of the Westernized elite in the first half of the twentieth century, there was a new tendency in the Iranian society towards Islamic reformism. For this reason religious intellectuals tried to establish various Islamic Parties and groups.

**Society of the devotees of Islam** (the Feada'iyan- Islam)

The Society of the Devotees of Islam, a Shiite militant group, was established in 1945. While this party had vast political impact during the years of nationalization of oil in Iran, it never got popular support, and till the end remained a small group. It had the intellectual expression to attract the younger generation of Iranian society.

The establishment of Society of Devotees of Islam was the first organized effort to move away from the long-established quietism of clergy in Iran. This party opened the way for the next generation of radical Iranian clergy, who a few years later, succeeded in putting an end to the Shah's government and creating an Islamic government. The heritage of Society of Devotees of Islam can obviously be seen in today's Iran; there is a great similarity between their views and those of the present government in Iran. It is necessary, here, to say that, that many younger members of
Society of Devotees of Islam later joined a Coalition of Islamic groups, and this had a
great effect on the victory of Islamic Revolution in Iran.

The activities of the Society of the Devotees of Islam party's considerably ended, following the execution of its founder and leader, Seyyed Mojtaba Navvab-e Safavi in 1955.

"Seyyed Mojtaba Navvab Safavi was born in Tehran in 1924, about the same
time that Reza Khan was establishing the reign of the Pahlavi monarchy. Navvab Safavi's father, Seyyed Javad Mir-Lohi, was a cleric who, according to Navvab Safavi's biographer, put the clerical robe a side under Reza Shah's anticlerical campaign and practiced law, defending the oppressed. Seyyed Mojtaba, went to Hakim Nezzami public elementary school and then to the German Technical High School, both in Tehran.

In 1942, when Iran was occupied by the Allied forces and Reza shah abdicated power, Navvab Safavi completed high school. He founded a job as a metalworker on oil company and went to Abadan in 1943. In Abadan he became involved in a worker's protest against a British manager and fled to Najaf- the centre of Shi’ite religious education- in Iraq in order to avoid arrest"(Jahanbegloo, 2004 : 72).

The foundation of Society of the Devotees of Islam was declared in 1945 in a declaration entitled ‘Religion and Revenge’, written by Navvab. In the declaration, he said that Islam was under attack, and promised to ‘avenge’ such attacks.

The Society of the Devotees of Islam’s firstly started its activities against Ahmad Kassravi, whom they considered as a tool of the super powers, and thought that he was trying to found another Bahai-style religion (a religion founded by Baha Ullah in 19th century in Iran). Imami and his friends from the Society of the Devotees of
Islam assassinated Ahmad Kassravi in 1946, when he was in court on the charge of challenging Islam.

"The Fada'iyan-e Islam was the first Shiite Islamist organization to employ terrorism as a primary method of political activism. Navvab-Safavi first came to public attention in 1945 for his outspoken public lectures in Abadan castigating the "evil" anti-clericalism promoted in Ahmad Kasravi's writings. A year later, Navvab-Safavi and two of his followers (with the blessings of Shiite religious leaders) assassinated Kasravi and the writer's secretary. The assassination of Kasravi was hailed by some Shiite clergy as a righteous act" (Kazemi, 1980: 161).

In consideration of the political role of the Society of the Devotees of Islam, it is important to say that the Society did not act as a well-organized political force, especially in its early activities, but instead, represented a religio-political orientation with which many individuals sympathized. Naturally, those who saw themselves as the leaders of the movement were inclined to claim credit for political actions which were more the results of individual initiatives of the sympathizers than their own order.

According to Taghavi, in early 1949, Fada'iyan helped Kashani to establish his Majma'-e Mosalmanan-e Mojahid [the Association of Mojahid Muslims]. However, an attempt on the Shah's life by an alleged member of the communist Tudeh Party led to a short-lived era of suppression of political parties and freedoms. Kashani was once again imprisoned. Fada'iyan protested against Kashani's imprisonment, and also against a proposal for amending the Constitution which aimed to remove a provision according to which Islam was the only official religion of Iran, to give more power to Shah. Later in 1949, and particularly when the Supplementary Bill for Exploiting Petroleum, which was believed to strengthen British domination over the Iranian petroleum industry, was put up before the Parliament, opposition groups became more active in Iran. In a
parliamentary election marred by irregularity and fraud, government candidates won. Among the activities of the opposition, the most important single action that led to the annulment of the Tehran election was the assassination of Hajir, the then Minister of the Court and the former Prime Minister, by Fada’iyan-e Islam. The assassin, Hossein Imami, was executed five days later. In the revised election, Fada’iyan supported candidates endorsed by Jebhe-i Melli, or the National Front, and Ayatollah Kashani. Nonetheless, they were unhappy that some of the candidates were not ‘100 per cent Islamic and did not seek to establish an Islamic government’. Interestingly, Kashani reminded Fada’iyan that the candidates’ focus should not be on performing night prayers, but on nationalizing the petroleum industry dominated by the British. This problem shows the nature of the differences between Fada’iyan and Kashani, which developed in the later stages. Whereas Fada’iyan’s members were religious devotees and did not care about the complexities of politics, Kashani, although a religious leader, was a shrewd politician (Taghavi, 2005: 117).

In 1950, Shah’s regime tried to approve the above mentioned Supplementary Bill, which was opposed by the National Front Party and public opinion in Iran; this confrontation led to a political crisis in country. The Shah, in order to overcome this political crisis, appointed the army’s Chief of Staff, General ‘Ali Razm-Ara, as Prime Minister. In March 1951, Khalil Tahmasebi, a member of the Society of the Devotees of Islam member, killed Razm-Ara. After this assassination, fear among the pro-government Members of Parliament, along with the public support, supported by Iranian Parliament, Shah appointed the nationalist Mohammad Mossaddeq as the Prime Minister. It is a must to say here, that the assassination of Razm-Ara was supported by Kashani, and also approved by the National Front Party of Iran.
Yazdi says that the Fada'iyan's behaviour towards the nationalist forces, represented by Dr Mossadeq and the National Front, and towards other religio-political forces, represented by Ayatullah Kashani reveals important aspects of the nature of their religious and political convictions. Majid Yazdi in this regard says: Many factors seem to have been responsible for the Fada'iyan's behavior. First, their reaction to Dr Mossadeq's government was partly the reflection of political naivety and lack of sophistication on the part of the Fada'iyan who perhaps viewed the passage of the oil nationalization bill and the formation of Dr Mossadeq's government as the end of the national struggle against British imperialism. Secondly, they considered their own role in this anti-foreign struggle to be more valuable and important than that of any other group, secular as well as religious. The Fada'iyan's assassination of Hazhir, the Court Minister, forced the government to stop interfering in the Sixteenth Majlis elections, resulting in the election of Kashani and the National front members (including Mossadeq) to the parliament. The assassination of Razmara was also crucial in the passage of the oil nationalization bill. Finally, and perhaps most important, by the Fada'iyan's insistence on the implementation of Islamic laws reflected their deep religious convictions which served as a strongest motive for political action (Yazdi, 1990: 298-299).

Finally, the Society of the Devotees of Islam saw themselves as the most religiously and politically experienced group, that had made the greatest sacrifices. They thought that they were betrayed by the nationalist and other religious forces who had opposed them both. Their reconciliation with Kashani towards the end was the result of the latter's confrontation with Mossadeq, who as a nationalist leader, was not in a position to compete with Kashani for the Society of the Devotees of Islam's sympathy and support.
**Warriors of Islam party** (the Mojahidane- Islam)

The Warriors of Islam party was a remarkable religious party. The Warriors of Islam was apparently led by the Shams Qanatabadi, but it was dependent on the leadership of the most successful of the politician-priests, Abol- Qassem Kashani. Actually, this party recruited its leaders from three groups of Iranian people: Shiah religious leaders, guild leaders, and street leaders. On the other hand, rank and file support was attracted from the deeply religious lower middle class.

Cotatam says: Since the great bulk of the aware, but as yet, non participating public could be classified as lower-middle class, and since the Warriors of Islam was the most successful of the parties in reaching this group, especially in the provincial centers, Kashani could reasonably believe that his political potential was next only to that of Mossadeq. However, he was dependent for success on a loose alliance with some independent political religious leaders in Tehran and in the provincial centers, and the tenuousness of this alliance was to be demonstrated in 1953 (Cottam, 1968: 90).

It is must to mention that Kashani's ideological appeal was extensive and at the same time weak. Unfortunately, at that time no real attempt was made to bring together the inherent contradictions together, which could have been solved by bringing Islam and Nationalism together. Kashani's economic and social attitudes were very conservative and his close supporters were unaware of that. They were just attracted to grand slogans of Iran and Islam.
References


