

## **Genealogy of Iranian Foreign Policy: Identity, Culture and History\***

**AHMAD SADEGHI†**

**Abstract:** Foreign Policy Analysis as a research program in international relations is not characteristically a priori. It stems from a triad of statesmen's cognitive system, decision-making process and implementation environment which all require understanding of diversified cognitive systems and perceptions. The present article examines the role of identity, culture and history in Iranian foreign policy from a genealogical and discourse analysis approach. It tries to find the underlying elements for transformation of Iran-US collaboration to a confrontation and tensional relationship.

### **Introduction**

Foreign Policy concepts are not characteristically a priori but dependant variables. Understanding foreign policy of different countries, their decision-making processes and implementation environment depends on diversified ideational, cultural and historical

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† Ahmad Sadeghi is Director of Center for American Studies in IPIS and Editor of the *Iranian Journal of International Affairs* (IJIA).

origins of cognitive systems and perceptions as important and defining factors of foreign policy behavior.

In its genealogical approach, the present article examines the role of identity, culture, and historical factors as origins of Iranian foreign policy in post-revolution era, especially towards the United States. It tries to contemplate on the radical change in Iran-US interactions from collaboration to confrontation.

A review on researches and studies on Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy and Iran-US relations indicates of the following categories in those works:

1) The tendentious orientation that has been looking into idealistic and aspirational aspects of Iranian foreign policy and finding the best analytical methods to defend its political behavior (Mohammadi, 1987);<sup>(1)</sup>

2) Pragmatic approach whose proponents also having political motivations, try to present formulations for adjusting the Iranian foreign policy to the mainstream paradigms of international relations and realism in particular (Ramazani, 2001);<sup>(2)</sup>

3) The advocates of critical method whose works call for revision in current patterns of defining the national interest, aims and objectives of Iranian foreign policy in terms of geopolitical and strategic viewpoints (Sariolghalam, 2000);<sup>(3)</sup>

4) On Iran-US relations also there exist historical or chronologic works (Alexander & Nanes, 1999)<sup>(4)</sup> either from a one-sided US' point of view (Sullivan, 1982)<sup>(5)</sup> or emphasizing on ideological aspects of Iranian foreign policy towards the United States (Assadolahi, 1994).<sup>(6)</sup>

Although the mentioned categorized works have been beneficial to the field of Iranian foreign policy studies, this article strives to make an essential socio-political pondering based upon genealogy (Nietzsche, 1972: 55)<sup>(7)</sup> of dominant discourse of foreign policy of Islamic Republic of Iran (mainly towards US) based upon identity, culture and history. It tries to realize how the underlying grounds in Iran-US relations fundamentally transformed despite the constant milieu of the cold war era.

Both the ideological and non-ideological elements as well as a concoction of culture, religion, nationalism, geopolitics and economic factors are involved in the origins of Iranian foreign policy discourses and configuration of Iranian national interest. The “Islamic” characteristic beyond a mere domestic social variable, bears a value-laden and norm defining function in Iran’s foreign policy. Thus, Islamic culture, religious jurisprudence rules and principles, Islamic law and ethics and ‘exporting the revolution’ are among the constructs of the “dominant (ideological-tradition) discourse” of Iranian foreign policy.

The constructivism (Kubalkova, 2001: 1-3, 31 & 33-34)<sup>(8)</sup>-as a research method in social science which remains in ontological level of analysis and does not claim to present a theory in international relations or foreign policy- is a proper conceptual framework for such an approach (Smith, 2001).<sup>(9)</sup>In foreign policy studies, the rule-oriented branch of constructivism contemplates the role of values, norms, linguistics and historical facts in shaping the rule of the games and foreign policy behavior. Therefore it could be an appropriate approach to explain the continuity and change in foreign policy of Islamic Republic of Iran, particularly towards the United States.

### **I-Constructivism and its Contributions to International Relations**

The constructivism and its origins in scientific methods and its emergence in International Relations could best be understood in the context of critical debates on ‘modernity’ and challenges facing the ‘positivism’ (Baylis & Smith,2001:168).<sup>(10)</sup> In those critiques, modernity was considered to be a meta-narrative or a project in which the main actor was the individual human being, a *rational ego* who could dominate the nature based on Cartesian logic, and determine or navigate his own fate and expand his power and ambitions through science and technology. The decline of this progressive humanistic approach was mostly due to the outspread diseases, ecological catastrophe, famine and too many other complexities of industrialization as well as looming threat of a nuclear confrontation in cold war era. Thus, in criticizing the modernity, while its totality

was under attack by proponents of post-modernism and post-structuralism, some other critical theory approaches (e.g. Frankfurt school of thought) have believed that modernity should not be questioned in its entirety, since it is in its halfway and still is an open-ended project which has not come to its end. To them the problem is not with 'reason' but the way of 'reasoning' conducted within the modernity that could be dealt with by dissociation of the modernity and industrial community. Thus, constructivists in international relations (mostly proponents of Frankfurt school of thought) retained the epistemological framework of modernity and employed reflexive methodologies as well as cultural-historical studies and hermeneutics to formulate the social actions. Another important point in constructivist way of thinking refers to their views on 'identity' as socially-constructed and causally precedent over the 'national interest' (Guzzini, 2000: 152-4).<sup>(11)</sup>

Although constructivism emerged in international relations and foreign policy studies mainly in 1980s, it was a relatively well-established framework in social sciences since 1960s when it was spoken of 'social constructivism' by two social scientists, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman. They argued that "realities are constructed rather than being explored". They considered the dialectic relationship between material nature and 'socially constructed world' as the source of realities and making of the 'self' by human being (Berger & Luckman, 1966:27).<sup>(12)</sup>

Nicholas G. Onuf was the first among others who put the term 'constructivism' into practical literature of international relations as he propounded the "social world of our making". Henceforth, constructivism - as a marginal conceptual framework which was barely known two decades ago- emerged as a rival discourse to the 'mainstream' theories of international relations and has evolved hitherto. Realism as the mainstream principal paradigm of international relations ruled out other conceptual frameworks as normative, idealistic or value-laden. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and end of the second cold war in late 1980s exacerbated the downfall of realism from its ivory tower of domination over international relations paradigms, since the realists predicted a stable

and long-lasting bipolar system as the main sustaining model for world politics. Although the attentions directed to constructivism since mid-1980s rendered to its recognition by two tiers of the mainstream theories of international relations-i.e. neo-realism and neo-liberalism- and it has got further significance so far, there are still grudge against constructivism (Onuf, 1989:10-28).<sup>(13)</sup>

Thus within international relations debates, the genealogy of constructivism brings it back to what is called the "third debate" in 1980s in which realism, liberalism and structuralism initiated and intra-paradigmatic debate in which the realism (relying upon common sense, rational choice and objectivity as its foundational theoretical axioms) prevailed (Zehfuss, 2002:1-2).<sup>(14)</sup> In mid-1980s and thereafter, critical theory pundits and post-modernists like Robert Cox (1981), Richard Ashley (1986), Rob walker (1993) and others mainly in North America debuted the deconstruction of main stream's principal assumptions on international relations as a world formed by nation-states and bounded by structural constraints (Baylis & Smith, 1991:166-168 & 183-184).<sup>(15)</sup> Some other thinkers from Europe and Australia, adherents to post-colonial tradition also joined to this movement. In late 1980s, as ending of the second cold war was looming, Alexander Wendt (1987) raised the case of agency-structure as a level of analysis in scientific method of thinking in international relations (Wendt, 1987: 335-370) <sup>(16)</sup> and Jean Gerard Ruggie (1989) set forth the debility of traditional theories of IR to face new emerging challenges and historical change of world politics. As mentioned earlier, Onuf (1989) invented the (rule-oriented) 'constructivism' (a branch ascribed to the Miami International Relations Group). The main stream scholars have still been characterizing constructivism as idealistic-utopian and incapable of having a research program or conducting a credible empirical research (Katzenstein, 1996: 2, 5, 22 & 30).<sup>(17)</sup>

Nevertheless, it is not still clear enough if 'constructivism' has to be called an "Approach", "Ontology", "Theory", "Paradigm" or a "Method" of analysis. What conceptually is certain about constructivism is that it does not claim a 'theory' status in IR. Nonetheless, it could be categorized as philosophical viewpoint or

meta-theory, an empirical research method, or even an approach applicable in different levels of analysis (Zehfuss, 2002:3-2 & 8-9). Being 'eclectic' in methodology and research procedures and open-handed in its ontology, constructivism could benefit from diversified methods and choose the goods among the different political science disciplines and IR paradigms. These constructing materials are evidently social in nature and are outcome of a continuous concoction, as Onuf indicates: "world-making is bricolage" (Onuf, 1989:1). Hence, the different branches of constructivism are diversified in their dispositions and based on their stipulations, they invoke the works and thoughts of prominent philosophers like Nietzsche, Dorkheim, Weber, Foucault, Derrida, Bhaskar and Wittgenstein (Ruggie, 1989: 35-36).<sup>(18)</sup> It could be concluded that constructivism has been different things for different people (Onuf, 1989:1, 22, 27 & 36).

## **II-Principal Propositions of Constructivism**

### **a. Language, Speech and Signs in Constructivism**

Language and lingual capability is a human exclusive property and chiefly based on his locution, the language and 'speech act', and their rule-making character in social sciences have pivotal role in constructivism and its research programs (Meskoub, 2002). Having such a presumption in mind, the world affairs and occurrences are taken place and determined within the framework of language and speech acts since a world without speech and words is impossible to exist. Strategies, resource appropriation and giving orders, all get feasible via words and speech acts. Consequently, language and locutionary ability as the means for representation of mind and thought (as the pre-requisite of speech act-either verbal or written) as well as image-formation or changing the worldviews are the parameters that constructivism cares much for (Pettman, 2001:250-251). In fact, constructivists believe that human and his social world are constructed of signs which are involved in making of the world as lingual signifiers, symbols and words. Based on Wittgenstein linguistic theories, constructivism presents its epistemology and conceptual framework out of a linkage between social theory and law

(Malayeri, 2004: 268). Prior to constructivism, the language and its function was perceived in other theories and paradigms of IR as a sole representation of reality and demonstration of activities and characteristics of the 'outer world'. But from a constructivist point of view, the differences among languages are not solely phonetic or alphabetic in nature, they're rather matters of diverse worldviews and insights. Thus, the language is an independent symbolic and creative organization. It not only indicates of outer-world experiences but also represents unconscious and implicit expectations –formed in human beings due to the language per se- and bring them into the domain of experiments. In fact, language determines the borders and limitations of experiment and place it in a specific framework (Henle, 1985:1-2).<sup>(19)</sup> Unlike behavioral approaches which assume identical stimuli and responses in diverse cultural and social milieu, constructivists reject the perception of an individualism upon which a maximal and economic utilitarian rational ego can define his choice irrespective of norms and social rules. Instead, the human individual is a social being who employs language in order to demonstrate the signs. The result would be a uniformity of epistemology among individuals whose logics, reasoning and all other inter-subjective manners are based on language and lingual abilities (Boekle et al.1999: 1-4).<sup>(20)</sup> All the points maintain a normativity through which constructivism contemplates the knowledge and (scientific) understanding and cognition as an inherent value-laden practice. The rule-oriented branch of this conceptual framework while considering the knowledge as a linguistic action in its foundation, specifically emphasizes on language and lingual mechanisms as means for science (Searle,1995: 127-147).<sup>(21)</sup>

#### **b. Inseparability of Subjectivity and Objectivity in Constructivism**

The positivist epistemology of behavioral paradigms (specifically on theory of science) has been based on the assumption of the 'world as an independent, objective and concrete entity which exists independent of agency'. To them, the agent's cognition and objectivity would also be established upon the understanding of

reality<sup>22</sup>. Thus, there has been widespread belief that reality consists of things or objects which exist irrespective of their observers and the language is solely a neutral medium for reflection of things or learning of entities. Therefore it is assumed that 'objective' knowledge is explored and understood and (as constructivists claim) it could not be invented or constructed. Whatever is discovered in realm of reality is likewise the 'right' or the 'truth' as well, and the objectivity is *summon bonum* of scientific method and the scientists are via media between science and reality. From epistemological viewpoint, realism (inspired by the Cartesian dualism and post- renaissance evolution in biblical science and Christianity after 1543 A.D) maintains on distinction of 'subject' and a pre-given 'object' which exists irrespective of interpretation of representation, and this is the fact on the world (as an existent reality). Therefore these realities are infinite and beyond definition free of limits, constraints and borders. Despite the facts on realists' views, constructivism further emphasizes on their linkage and rejects such a distinction between object and subject and believes that 'subjectivity' infers to an abstract principle that always relates to other subjects and the individual's mind. The mind is not 'a priori' but a 'construct' within the social world of our making. In other words, social objects never are pre-given but are outcomes of representation in a 'symbolic system' and are being comprehended in social contexts. Therefore, the object in essence and the object via representation are not apart of each other. Nevertheless, the constructivists eschew "solipsism"<sup>23</sup> and emphasize that they neither deny the reality nor consider the world as an outcome of human's imagination. What they underscore as their belief is that objectivity does exist but scholars in scientific fields like biology, psychology, anthropology or physics are not inventing the realities or explain them in their formulation, but they resort to 'objectivity' in order to further authenticate their reasoning and scientific arguments (Krausz, 2000: 35-39). <sup>(24)</sup> The conceptual part of this article may conclude the following propositions on constructivism:

1. Constructivism is not a theory;

2. Epistemologically speaking, constructivism is about the “social construction of knowledge” and ontologically is on “construction of social reality”; and

3. Constructivism is impartial towards the substance of mainstream theories and paradigms of IR (Kubalkova, Onuf & Kowert, 1998: 4 & 19-20).<sup>(25)</sup>

### **III-Identity and Culture in Islamic Dominant Discourse (Ideological-Traditional) of Iranian Foreign Policy**

Underlying basis and intellectual mainstay of any political power system or social order is a constellation of locution, reasoning, concepts and words that justifies or legitimizes a specific authority. Therefore in a power shift, the newly dominant discourse while replacing the former political system and policies, it would not completely detach from preceding and old-time concepts and ideas and retains parts of those elements and values. This is the fact about the existence of continuous cultural grounds in the dominant and rival discourses of Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy. The outstanding grounds are derived from elements of ancient Persian cultural heritage and Iranian history, as well as Iranian specific form of individualism and Shiite anti-tyrannical practice and its resistance against authoritarianism. Thus, the historical, religious and psychological aspects of Iranian political culture are important points to be considered in this regard.

Also significant to notice, is the fact that no country in the world other than Iran actually has been able to put a theocracy in place of a monarchy and transform the psyche of Islamic movement into a practical reality. The Islamic Republic of Iran -as the output of a revolutionary movement that overthrew a secular and Western-oriented royal government- has been a unique experience in its type. Some observers have believed that the social unrest and revolution in Iran was the natural outcome of incompetency of former regime and its social and political structures to fulfill aspirations of Iranian people. In other words, the Pahlavi regime was not able of correlating the agency and structure in Iranian society.

From another aspect, not only the Iranian revolution did not withhold the adherence to the geopolitical realities it was rather a quest for changing the geopolitical map of the Middle East region. This reality caused new waves of Islamic revivalism and entailed concerns among Western countries, regional states and even the former Soviet Union. At the same time, some specific characteristics of Iranian post-revolutionary socio-political environment was stemming from the fact that this newly established Islamic system was trying to form a "representative government" within the context of "Islamic institution" and to promote its dominant discourse not only within domestic political context but also in external political environment. This was also reflected in Iranian foreign policy discourses (in particular) towards the United States. Although both (the dominant and rival discourses) were the offshoots of Islamic revolution's meta-narrative and derived from religious commandments, the dominant discourse of Iranian politics was ideological-traditional in its attitudes and the rival discourses were conventional-practical in nature.

Such an endeavor to define and set up a role model society, being responsive simultaneously to both social routine needs and wants of its people and regard the cultural and Islamic heritage as well, has seemed paradoxical to some observers and scholars. Therefore in understanding and theorizing the political system of Islamic republic of Iran and its political discourses, some have got entrapped in simplistic and superficial approaches. Instead of regarding the contextual relativity and socio-identity grounds in defining the rationality, they play down the post-revolution era as a socio-historical slack in Iran which to their belief, was retrograde of Iranian society and solely stemmed from radicalism and fundamentalism.

Antagonistic origins of Islamic revolution discourse against Pahlavi regime genealogically stemmed from regime's traits like secularism, pseudo-modernism, Westernization and to some extent, extreme and chauvinist Iranian nationalism. It is also believed that domination of Pahlavi regime's discourse in pre-revolution era was not derived from its legitimacy or popular acceptance, but the external support (in particular form the U.S.) and absence of a viable

alternative or active rival discourse in Iranian political environment. Therefore it was trying to define its properties within the discourse of the West. In contrast, reaffirmation the Islamic doctrines and return to the Islamic precedents was the point of departure for Islamic revolution's discourse and its emancipatory movement from Pahlavi's discursive characteristics. Therefore, its power was defined in terms of a religious-theosophical epistemology. From a cultural-identity viewpoint, the Shiite Islam was the disciplinary image of this meta-discourse. Thus, Islamic belief was a 'master signifier' in socio-political aspect and the final vernacular for self-defining or redefinition and express of its aspiration. In the same vein, by warding off the Western discursive context and political philosophy, it redefined its "self" and "other" and put the "West" in place of the "Arab" as its "external other". Meanwhile the Islamic dominant discourse was a quest for getting the modernity out of the Western-oriented casting. Thus it adopted an overall selective approach towards Western discourse mainly because it viewed the Pahlavi regime and its modernizing attitudes as its 'other'. The regime (beyond its elite) was considered to be an output of external interventions and the great powers' interests and the U.S in particular.

Another factor genealogically important about the Islamic dominant discourse was its shift to the Islamic Ummah as the level of analysis in world politics while abjecting of the Westphalian nation-state and its boundaries as the basis of modern international system. Thus, the newly established revolutionary and Islamic discourse while challenging the international order arising from such a system, tried to extend its values (with universal, truth-based and sacred characteristics) beyond the geographical and political borders and mobilize global resistance centers against the U.S. hegemony. Therefore, the Islamic revolutionary discourse replaced the "political ethics" with an "ethical politics" in its epistemology and instead of traditional Westernized terms in modern politics, it focused on 'truth', 'justice', 'good' and 'evil' and concepts likewise.

The cold-war exigencies should have supposedly implied a coalition of interests between Iran and the West. This was not the case with the Islamic ideological-traditional discourse mainly because it

did adversely and in furtherance of its deconstructive interactions with Western bloc, it confronted the Western liberalism (and U.S as its very manifestation) (Tajik, 2004: 34, 38-44, 53-54, 62-63 & 65-68).<sup>(26)</sup>

#### **a. Universalism, Myths and Divine-Religious Precedence in Iranian Politics**

Throughout the thousands years of written and ancient history of Iranian polity, the continuity is a main character of Iranian culture. The meta-physical aspects of human being and religious cognition and belief have had pivotal role in any social order and political behavior in Iran. Therefore Iranian identity and national conscience have been in close link with religiosity. Such a parameter has been manifested as "endurance and stability" of Iran and its traditions in face of disastrous transgressions against Iranian plateau during the history. The principle of divine grace and prevalence of the God's will over all aspects of human life has been a withstanding component of Iranian national culture (Naghib-Zadeh,2002:93-95 & 224).<sup>(27)</sup> This specificity is best demonstrated in concurrence of religion and state in Iranian political culture and from the very ancient history the political legitimacy has had a divine origin. The King would have supposedly had the 'Charisma' (divinely conferred gift and power) and merit of being a claimant to the God's representation on the earth. The old inscriptions and other monuments of the ancient Iranian dynasties, e.g. Behistun inscription regarding the Achaemenid Persian Empire, reconfirm their belief in their divine socio-political power. It shows Darius' I (Darius the Great also known as *Darayarahush*) successful ascension to the throne and described Darius' legitimacy to be the King, as a fervent worshiper of Almighty Ahura Mazda (the God), and a great reformer and organizer whose power was linked to everlasting power of the Ahura Mazda. Such an attribution also worked as a warning to the subjects that their revolt would implicate an unbearable rebellion against the Lord. Indeed the linkage between religion and statesmanship was a main reason parting the Iranians from the aggressors to Iranian territories led by Alexander III of Macedon (in 333 BC.) and the same character withheld them from

transmutation into the culture of invaders. In comparison to the Achaemenid, the Sassanid dynasty were more ideological and religious inspired by Zoroastrianism, and at least two Kings of this family (Ardashir I and Shapur I) claimed to have Charisma. It was the same dynasty who introduced the Zoroastrianism as the formal religion of the Persian Empire while the other beliefs like the Magi<sup>28</sup> still were tolerated (Meskoub, 2003: 236).<sup>(29)</sup>

The association of religion and the 'state' continued during the Islamic era and several scholars have believed that such an association in Islamic history is derived from Iranian political system, while the Muslims consider it a derivative of Islamic instructions. It was placed as a principle of Shiite political tenets. Therefore, the Safavid dynasty's resort to the religious decrees to legitimize their political reign was not an alteration but a long-standing tradition. Thus, the Sassanid and Safavid dynasties are being viewed similar both in terms of revival of the past Iranian greatness and institution of a formal religion (the Zoroastrian and the Shiite religions) in the country. The Ismail I, the founder of the Safavid dynasty like the Ardashir I claimed of having the Charismatic power (Ramazani, 2004: 549-559).<sup>(30)</sup>

The role and contribution of Shiite religious leaders in Iranian politics more developed in Safavid era and concurrent with Iran-Ottoman wars in which the state needed their mobilization capacity and moral support. The same was the trend in 19<sup>th</sup> century in Qajar era while the religious leaders in 1825 persuaded then Iranian Qajar King, Fath-Ali Shah that should he launch a defensive war against Imperial Russian aggressions to recapture the occupied Iranian territories, they would mobilize Muslim people to the same cause as Jihad (sacred war) against non-believers. Sometimes due to their own reputation as religious leaders and the weakness and incompetency of central governments in Iran, the Shiite Muslim leaders even initiated direct correspondence with other heads of states. The loyalties and concessions given to foreign individuals and companies in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Qajaris also were good reasons for Iranian Muslim leaders' warnings and their discontent on foreign encroachments (Naghieb-Zadeh, 2003).<sup>(31)</sup>

In Islamic revolution the divine-rule and integration of 'the religious' and 'the political' was more prominent than any other elements as long time before Seyyed Hassan Modarres, the famous cleric and notable supporter of Iranian Constitutional Revolution underlined the same concept in his maxim of "Islam is both religion and state". The significance of Islamism and its relevant discourse in politics was also underscored by the late founder of Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeini, in his writings in 1920s maintaining that "nothing in Iran short of the sublime Islamic faith is entitled to celebration"(Khomeini, 1986: 19, 125, 63 & 204). The present spiritual leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei once mentioned that "Iranian revolution was the first in history to begin under the name of God"(Naghib-Zadeh, 2002: 73-75).<sup>(32)</sup>

#### **b. Dualism and Perpetual Fight between 'Good and Evil' in Iranian Foreign Policy**

Myths are those general and transcendent collective perceptions which are timeless and surrealistic and are employed for interpretation of nature, existence and mysticism. In other words, the myths have a constitutive role in linking together the unconscious and conscious segments of a society and like primeval rites they are the essential elements of social cohesion. Therefore, they are cornerstone of cultural continuity and identity of a society. Also in mythical domain, there is not a precise demarcation between 'real' and 'imaginary', 'physical and metaphysics', 'worldly and heavenly', 'celestial or secular'.

Dualism in form of a continuous struggle between 'good and evil' is one of long lasting and ancient myths in Iranian culture upon which the religious doctrines are affected to a large extent. Islamic annunciation to align forces of good and reinstatement of justice is worthwhile mentioning in the same context.

From a genealogical viewpoint, confrontation of 'good' and 'evil' in the dominant ideological-traditional discourse of Iranian foreign policy stems from dualism both in terms of ancient cultural and religious Islamic maxim of "promoting the meritorious and

proscribing the vicious". Demonizing the enemies of Islamic revolution and at the top of them the US government -called as 'Great Satan'- and the hostile international system are all manifestations of the same symbolism in fight between good vs. evil. The late Imam Khomeini had used 307 times the word 'Satan' with regards to internal and foreign enemies of Islamic revolution in his entire statements and written works, collected under the title of "Sahif-e-Nour". He underscored this concept as describing the Islamic revolution as "...It was an Islamic and illuminating power that overwhelmed the devil forces" (Naghieb-Zadeh: 2002, 73-75).<sup>(33)</sup>

In post-revolutionary Iran, when the revolution was established inside the country, more attention was drawn to outside world and to the foreign policy. Therefore, the dual confrontation of 'good vs. evil' and the 'illumination vs. darkness' were dragged from a mythical-religious context to a socio-political confrontation of 'world arrogance vs. powerlessness'. Beyond this dualistic symbolism of the belligerent attitudes, the US was mainly blamed for the Pahlavi regime's corruptions and mischief, since it was the staunch ally of the United States in the region. The Islamism and quest for Islamic unity among Muslim nations in political, economic and cultural aspects - underlined in articles 9 and 11 of Iranian constitution- have clear implications for foreign policy since they bind Iranian government to make efforts in order to fulfill the task of alliance and unification of countries in Islamic world. The justice-seeking aspects of Iranian foreign policy - stipulated in article 154 of constitution- are also derived from Irano-Islamic culture and especially the Iranian maxims and their Islamic Shiite beliefs in support of the oppressed. Iranian foreign policy positions towards freedom seeking nations and especially the Palestinians are the offshoots of the same general attitudes.

The other esoteric element stemming from the Shiite rites is the 'Expectance' for the "Emersion" of the hidden twelfth Shiites' Imam. In terms of consequences on the political culture in Iran, first of all, a foreign policy arisen from such an element is charismatic and relatively free from the established structure and instrumental rationality in decision making process. Secondly and in social context,

it has strengthened the capacity of endurance among Muslims facing the hardship of oppression and aggression, and inspired them to maintain their identity and avoid of submission to the status quo. Thirdly, it abhors them of being indifferent and nonchalant especially towards the Muslim situations in the world as Imam Khomeini, the late leader of Islamic revolution emphasized the same fact as: "It should not be assumed that Islam is likewise to some perverted directives of nominal religions and it rules based on individual relationship between the people and the God, or the 'mosque' is the same as 'church' (Khomeini, 1999: 5, 86-87 & 125-131).<sup>(34)</sup> Perhaps the quest for expansion of Islamic revolution and alliance between the Muslims and Shiites in particular to fight against the tyranny and inequality could also be considered as a consequence of the same cultural element of 'expectance'.

#### **IV-Islamic Revolution and Quest for Establishment of an 'Islamic World Order'**

The principles of an 'Islamic World Order' rules out the current international order originated from the European style Westphalian nation-state international system. It is rather based on an ideal image of Islamic unification and human solidarity under the common ideational foundations. Therefore, these two bases of international order are at odds in following terms and conditions:

First, regarding the criteria for loyalty and allegiance, Islam prioritizes the faith and believes in God over the nationality and other traditional demarcations of international system. Therefore, the nationalistic divergence and its outcome as the national states are not righteous per se as if they are prevalent form of political organization in current international community. Thus, it shifts the source of loyalty from national state to a 'community of believers" or Islamic Ummah;

The second aspect of conflicts concerns the source of legitimacy for setting the binding rules and laws for organization of human communities. It means that faith in monotheism and acknowledgment to the exclusive and absolute rule of God over the

human beings and the world affairs should be the sole legitimate source of legality and rule and law setting in the world. That's the reason why the national sovereignty and national interest based on humanism and other secular source that are exclusively ponder on human wisdom without any allegiance to heavenly power of God, are not acceptable and binding sources of organization in human societies and their interactions. Nevertheless, the dominant discourse of Iranian foreign policy- under the terms of 'exigency' or 'expedience'- has tolerated the existing Westphalian world order, not as a legitimate truth, but a fact of life or a *modus vivendi* that defines the scope and framework of actions for the countries.

The third parameter involved here is a call (based on the 11<sup>th</sup> article of Islamic republic of Iran's constitution) for putting aside all forms of ethnic, cultural, geographical or sectarian dissensions and to converge based on Islamic unity among the Muslim countries and form a third power in the world. This is mainly because the national border is considered to be a superficial phenomenon encircled the Muslim countries as national entities.

The fourth is dealing directly with the role and status of Islamic republic of Iran in the Muslim world and its contribution to (re)empowerment of Islamic nations under a united 'Ummah'. The dominant discourse have been inclined to serve Islam via Iran and its capabilities and resources by which it would have pursued the justice-seeking approach and take the leadership of all oppressed people and the third world in particular (Keddie,1983: 166-188).<sup>(35)</sup>

To transcend the Islamic revolution over the Iranian borders and designating it as an aspiration and a pattern for Islamic movements around the world is also stemmed from the justice seeking and anti-tyrannical beliefs of Shiite faith. In the same respect, defending the Muslim rights in the world is itself a symbol of Iran's endeavor to establish the Islamic international relations based on a "New Islamic Order". It tries to upgrade the criteria for defining Iran's national interest from national demarcation to the entire Islamic world vs. non-Islamic international entities. The Iranian non-alignment policy-manifested in "neither East nor West"- and refraining from alliance with world great powers (signified in article 152 of Iranian

constitution, prohibiting any strategic cooperation and coordination with world powers) brings up the reality of historical and deep-rooted suspicions towards imperial powers. It is also based on the assumption that these powers in their relations are not looking for just, equal and mutually respectful interactions (Behnam, 1986:52).

While the terms 'the downtrodden' vs. 'the world arrogance' are signifiers of a 'same' and 'other' denomination in Iranian foreign policy, they invite to formation of a global 'indomitable' front - comprising the entire 'community of believers' - to resist the 'domineering' powers. By the same token, the dichotomy of 'good' and 'evil' or 'devout' vs. 'infidels' finds a global feature. Referring to the same conceptualization, the frequency of using the terms and concepts in statements and written works of the late leader of Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeini is worthwhile mentioning. He reiterated the term 'downtrodden' 133 times, while the score for 'the arrogance, i.e. domineering powers' was 969 times, and 'the colonialism' 577 times (Naghieb-Zadeh, 2002:224 & 252-253).<sup>(36)</sup>

All in all, they are indications of universality of Islamic revolution and its objectives toward globalizing the principle of "promoting the meritorious and proscribing the vicious" as well, assuming that defense of the 'downtrodden' and fighting the injustice is an everlasting quest. While it was the norm in Pahlavi regime to be indifferent towards international developments like the Vietnam War, Arab-Israeli issue and likewise, within the mentioned framework the dominant Islamic discourse of Iranian foreign policy rules out any apathy towards the fate of other members of human community should it be under any pretext like impartiality or so forth.

Fighting against 'injustice', 'mammonism', arrogance and its ramifications like extravagance and consequently an austere quality of life and following the early Muslims of the Prophet Mohammad's era, have been among the bold aspects of the Islamic revolution doctrines. Therefore another cultural element -further reinforced by religious quotations and exegeses- influencing the dominant Islamic discourse of Iranian foreign policy, is 'deprecation of temporal and earthly life', and shunning the 'mammonism' as a source of tyranny and injustice. As Hamid Enayat, the Iranian contemporary political philosopher

maintains about post-revolutionary Iran, "as an evolution in Iranian culture and change in social values, the role of wealth and income as criteria for social merit and personal dignity, was significantly depreciated" (Enayat, 1998: 45).<sup>(37)</sup>

#### **V- Anti-Western, Anti-modern and Anti-nationalistic Features of Dominant Discourse**

Since the Safavid era when the new Western and modern thoughts gradually marched into social and political culture of Iran, the debates on how to interact or confront the West are still ongoing. Next to the advent of Islam in Iran, the interaction of Iran and Western civilization is most significant cultural phenomenon in Iranian history. In other words, no socio-cultural or political clashes equal to conflict between the 'tradition' and 'modernism' in Iran. Nonetheless, the Iranian current historical developments lack clear precedents of Iran-West mutual and fruitful interaction. To the contrary, the existing evidences mainly depict either a pattern of contrast and confrontation or dependency in Iranian approach toward international system. These frictions still continue to exist and have mainly cultural character.

The post-revolutionary Iranian ideological traditionalism was the rival discourse to the Pahlavi era modernism. It was indeed the consequence of disturbances caused by transforming and turbulent westernizing trends and their effects on declining traditional society in Iran. In reaction to such destabilizing and threatening effects, the rival (ideological-traditional) discourse defined the modern world and democratic way of life as its 'other' and foe and brought all manifestations of Western modernization and the nationalism *inter alia*, under attack. In terms of identity, stabilization and further expansion of Islamic identity and adversely, downgrading the nationalistic identity-the way perceived in Pahlavi modernism- was the main objective of this discourse. Thus, a conspicuous domestic aspect of Islamic revolution's opposition to the West was the encounter of secular-modernization vs. religious traditionalism. That's the reason some analysts consider the Islamic revolution as a set back

to the hasty westernization whose discourse was dominant in Pahlavi regime (Hamraz, 1997: 50-51).<sup>(38)</sup>

The dominant discourse (ideological-traditional) of Islamic revolution while assuming the secular governance as usurper and illegitimate, derives its legitimacy via Shiite hierarchical arrangements and under the leadership of an Islamic jurist (velayat-e-faqih) during the absence of the twelfth Imam. Since the dominant discourse was finding the Islamic and Western values incompatible, it repudiated the Western secular mode of governance, its institutions, and methods of political organization. By the same token, it further demonstrated the rupture of connections with the West when it ruled out the merit of Westernized educated and trained functionaries in Iran and Islamic countries and called for their dismissal from leadership and management of politics and government.

From an external point of view, stipulation on incompetence of disqualified Westernized surrogate governments for governing the Islamic societies and the emphasis on necessity for discharging them, calling the Muslims to fulfill their obligation to overthrow the tyrants and unjust political establishments in Islamic countries and replace them with Islamic system and institutions all were stemmed from the same attitude and revolutionary mission of dominant discourse. It has been reflected in Iranian foreign policy and was pursued in an international scope (Hegland, 1983: 166-188).<sup>(39)</sup>

Therefore, the ideological traditionalist discourse in Iran settled in to revive the Islamic and Shiite norms and expand a comprehensive 'Islamic identity' in social and cultural spheres against the Western-inclined secular and nationalistic systems. In other word, in cultural term it was an uprising against (Western) modernist tradition. At the same time, the domestic ramification of dominant discourse was principally aversion to the American meddling in Iran's internal affairs and its significant role in bolstering the Pahlavi regime as its puppet in the country and plundering Iranian national wealth and resources.

In foreign policy aspects, the regime's signing of long term energy contract with Western oil company consortium in 1952, its adherence to Baghdad Pact in 1955 and later on to the CENTO and

informal cooperation with NATO, establishment of strategic relations with the West and Israel and active participation in US containment policy against the Soviet bloc were giving a Westernized and pro status quo image to the Shah's regime. Even then Iranian government's preeminent role as the gendarme of Persian Gulf and its contingent measures against radical Arab countries and groups all were seen as officiousness of an American proxy regime and breach of Iranian independence accordingly, as the Shah was tagged as 'American protégé'. This has been one of deep-rooted sources of alienation of Iranian people of the Shah's regime.

Therefore, at least some of antagonistic postures of Iranian dominant discourse against the US were derived from the American mistaken policies towards Iran both in the past and even in post-revolution era. The US maintained economic, political, and military support for Pahlavi regime almost until its last days offended the Iranians' esteem and independence. The US more powerful drive - comparing with other liberal countries- to introduce the Western norms and values as the dominant patterns of international system also has further strengthened the cause of dominant discourse in its opposition to US (Ramazani, 2001:58-59, 74-76). The same point was implicated by George W. Bush in his statement in US congress as: "The US is the sole nation in the world that enjoys both ethical values and means to deliver and support the existing world order". In its antagonism towards the US (and the West) and quest to fulfill the aspiration of Islamic unified nation (Ummah) and emancipate it from the material and mental barriers of Western civilization, the dominant discourse sought to define its objectives in Islamic terms, literature and culture and replace the existing 'isms' and democracy with Islamic terminologies (Tajik, 2004:37).

#### **VI- Long-term Strategies of Dominant Discourse for Self-preservation**

The vital maxim of self-preservation in Islamic Republic of Iran per se has had an organic linkage with two other strategic objectives of "exporting revolution" and "supporting the liberation

movements" which both have had distinctive foreign policy implications. To the dominant discourse of Iranian foreign policy, exporting the revolution has been both a moral obligation and as a strategy (to defuse the plots schemed by enemies to overthrow the revolution). Its significance has been underscored in paragraph 3 of the article 16 of Iranian constitution that assigns as a task for Iranian government to "...regulate Iranian foreign policy based on Islamic criteria, fraternal commitment to all Muslims and stintless support of the world downtrodden people". Support for the liberation movements is a long standing moral-political tradition of Iranians throughout the history. There are historical evidences from the very ancient times and during 'Cyrus the Great' who released the enslaved Jews from the yoke of Babylonians. He allowed the Hebrew exiles to resettle and rebuild Jerusalem, earning him an honored place in Judaism. The reflection of such an attitude in Iran's foreign relations presented a 'popular tendency' in dominant discourse of Iranian foreign policy to invest on grass-root forces and bring about the desirable changes (Naghieb-Zahdeh, 2002: 219-220, 230-231).

Methods for 'exporting the revolution' in idealist camp of dominant discourse (ideological-traditionalist) of Iranian foreign policy also was divided in "exemplarism" and "vindicationism" tendencies (Downes, 2002:27-28).<sup>(40)</sup> The first school of thought, inspired by the universality of Islamic values, included those who had a quite soft-power viewpoint on the expansion of revolution upon 'captivation of hearts and minds' of other nations by 'emancipatory message' and power of Islam. Therefore they were emphasizing on the natural attraction and inherent effects on Muslim world. To the same effect, Ayatollah Khamenie, the current supreme leader of Iran once stated that: "...exporting the revolution is indeed a divinely responsibility on promotion of revolutionary values and informing other nations on mischief of global tyrants and oppressors".

While the first group believed in imperceptible and gradual nature of the concept (export the Islamic revolution). the second tendency, driven by trans-national and universal character of revolutions in general, proposed it as an active and programmed plan for deconstruction the international system and its overwhelming

order. To them, although Islam was both as faith and ideology of the revolution, the 'export of Islamic revolution' irrespective of its Islamic orientation should have been considered as a principle of self-preserving like all other trans-national revolutions.

The articles 11, paragraph 3 of article 16 and article 152 of Iranian constitution- while stressing on avoidance of any intervention in internal affairs of other nations- deal with the same concept. Meanwhile, Imam Khomeini, as the founder of Islamic revolution was among those who underscored that "for exporting its revolution and ideology, Iran should never resort to saber-rattling mainly because promotion of an idea is not matter of forceful action but under the pattern of Islamic ethics, it has to serve as an example for other observers". Proscription of resort to force and call for demonstrating Islamic morality as a code of conduct by Imam Khomeini, has rendered the proponents of exemplarism in the rival pragmatic discourses of Iranian foreign policy to characterize the invitation for construction of an 'Islamic world order' as a wishful idealism. Although they blame the idealists on ignoring this fact in their approach, they themselves often connive the soft power sources and effects of Islamic revolution and its message in the world (Naghieb-Zahdeh, 2002:140-141, 214-215).<sup>(41)</sup>

## **VII- The Geo-historical Elements in Dominant Discourse**

Any query on geo-historical elements of Iranian foreign policy is based on equilibrium of two different perceptions of Iranian foreign policy. The first assumes it entirely originated from Iranian domestic politics, while the latter finds it stemming from Iranian geopolitical position. Therefore, the interaction of socio-cultural and geo-political aspects of Iran is the appropriate way to approach this issue more properly and in the same vein, Kenneth Pollack, American scholar and former CIA analyst on Iran, has underscored three parameters about the seven millennia of Iranian history before the twentieth century. That would be needed to understand what he calls the labyrinth of Iran-US relations:

The first is the fact that the land that is today Iran is the heir to a long line of remarkable predecessors. In its day, the Persian Empire was a superpower like nothing the world had ever seen—with a monotheistic religion, a vast army, a rich civilization, a new and remarkably efficient method of administration, and territory stretching from Egypt to Central Asia (it had a population of 50 million in 522 B.C.) This has been a source of enormous pride to all Iranians and has given them a widely remarked sense of superiority over all of their neighbors;

The second important aspect of Iran history that still defines the Iranian state and has had a tremendous impact on Iran-US relations is that Iran has been the only Shiite Muslim state in the world. There are important aspects of Shiism that have helped shape Iranian political culture in ways that are quite different from that of other Muslim nations. What's more it has heightened both Iran's sense of uniqueness and its sense of isolation. For Iranians, Shiism is a key element of their culture, and for many Arabs and other non-Iranians, the term "Shiite" and "Persian" were long considered synonymous;

Last, for roughly a century and a half beginning in the early 1800s, a weak Iranian state became prey to powerful external actors, principally the European great powers. Iranians were accustomed to looking down on Europeans as barbarian adherents to a superseded religion and a primitive civilization. Now suddenly, they were trouncing the Shah's armies, carving up their lands, making and unmaking governments, monopolizing their markets, and treating their land as battlefield with no regard for the needs and desires of the Iranians themselves. It was humiliating, frustrating, frightening for Iranians to be so vulnerable and so constantly manipulated by these foreign powers, and as Pollack claims, it reinforced a powerful sense of xenophobia coupled with an inferiority complex among Iranians to complement their superiority complex. He believes that it is a maddeningly complicated state and society, and even a cursory understanding of its motives today requires knowing a fair bit about the forces that have shaped the nation over time (Pollack, 2004: 1-4).<sup>(42)</sup>

Thus far, xenophobia and feeling insecure toward foreigners are conspicuous both in political actions and behavior which

sometime have been assumed vital for preservation of Islamic Republic of Iran. In Iranian constitution in addition to the article 153, paragraph 8 of article 43 on country's economic precepts also emphasizes on "prevention of foreign domination over Iran's economy" and the paragraph 9 also assigns the government to "acquire self-reliance in sciences, skills, industry, agriculture and military spheres". Due to its vital role in political and economic independence as well as territorial integrity of country, and imposed sanctions on Iran in this regard, military independence has always been under special attention. Not only the article 153 of the constitution prevents any foreign rule over the Army, the article 146 also "prohibits the establishment of any foreign military base on Iranian territory, even with peaceful purposes". Article 152 prescribes an "Iranian foreign policy based on negation of domineering or submission to domination, preservation of Iran's complete independence and integrity, defending the rights of all Muslims and non-alignment policy vs. domineering powers and amicable relations with friendly nations".

Emphatic stress on the term 'domination' in these legal documents, attests the historical roots of extraneous influence and their intervention in Iranian internal affairs. The anti-domination and independence seeking depicted in 'neither East nor West' principle of Iranian foreign policy indeed were signs of revolutionary attitude, national pride and sensitivity toward Iranian independence. The advent of Islamic revolution in Iran in an era of bipolar international system further magnified the significance of this approach, since Islamic Republic of Iran could manage to fulfill a virtual 'mission impossible' of keeping its distance from both super-powers and their blocs (Naghieb-Zadeh, 2002:247-249).<sup>(43)</sup>

The geo-political conditions and historical experiences have further intensified the national pride and self-determination tendencies in Iran. Its geographical position has placed it in a crossroad of ethnic and tribal movements and therefore exposed to a turbulent history of different clashes and encroachments, especially from its Western borders. Although, Iran has been relatively successful in protecting its cultural boundaries and properties, the

cycle of both centrality and centrifugal forces had plagued the country. The outcome of such circumstances has been a defensive mechanism in its security perception derived from a constant sense of fear, insecurity, and distrust. Therefore in cultural sphere and society of Iran there has been a dialectical relationship between patriotism and pessimism, or pragmatism and ecumenicalism (Tehrani, 2004: 185-187).

A strong sense of pride and self-esteem is among elements of Iranian political culture with both positive and negative consequences and sometime exceeded the normal extent that has turned to ultra-nationalism and hostility and humiliating foreigners especially those who have invaded Iran in the past. Iran in contemporary world has also been under imperialist pressures. Mixture of foreign encroachment and the meddling in its domestic affairs have intensified Iranian aspiration and its national cause for independence, economic development, Islamic democracy and social justice and appeared in forms of autonomic and nationalistic as well as xenophobic inclinations. Thus, their sensitivity towards Iran's independence has been a factor for their aversion of Pahlavi regime (Naghieb-Zadeh, 2002:229-230). The revolutionaries' objections to domestic and foreign policies of Pahlavi regime in its devotion to US interest had an organic linkage with those parameters and its manifestation in Iranian current history, like the Anglo-US coup d'état of 1953 against the national government of Mosaddegh, as well as suppression of Islamic movement of 1964.

Based on the same socio-historical ground, the rise of dominant (traditional-ideological) discourse in Iranian foreign policy was explained by some experts as 'Islamic revolutionary ideology' colored by 'Iranian nationalism' (Downes, 2002:1). The historical developments, foreign invasions, military occupation, and betrayal by great powers over time, could explain Iran's political and economic estrangement from the West and consider them betrayers. They (the West) had refrained from implementation of their contractual commitments and abandoned the economic projects upon which were paid by Iran before the revolution. Therefore, finding itself in an unfriendly international and regional entourage, Iran in post-

revolution era from one hand adopted the self-reliance and non-alignment policies while challenging the new-colonialist attitude of Western powers. Within the same context, there has even existed beliefs on US-Zionist plots to eradicate Islam from the face of the earth and such an assumption that their Crusade against Islam still is continuing (Mokhtari, 2005: 209-229).<sup>(44)</sup>

When it comes to Iran-US tensional relations in post-revolution era, the mentioned socio-historical background is still prominent. In the same vein, there are quite a few analysts who maintain that US embassy crisis of 1979 which overshadowed the entire relations of the two countries ever since, has been associated to an apprehensive and deliberative contingency approach toward the US perceived threat.

The final leg of Shah's trip (after Egypt and Mexico) winded up to US at the invitation of Jimmy Carter-even due to his illness and critical conditions and need for hospitalization-was perceived by the revolutionaries in Iran as US conspiracy to roll back the Islamic revolution via a regime change scheme and bring back the ousted Shah to power exactly as it did in 1953 coup. Thus, hostage taking was considered as an antidote to its repetition. As Iran's foreign policy scholar, R.K. Ramazani explains, all tendencies in meta-discourse of Islamic revolution, moderate, radical, realist, idealist, nationalist or Islamist shared concerns over US objectives and activities toward Iran. There were evidences that justified such skepticism of dominant discourse about US intentions. As Harold Sanders, then US Assistant Secretary of State for Near East affairs acknowledged that US government reluctantly acceded to new conditions for the sake of its own interests due to Iran's vital position in cold war era mainly because all other options to keep the Shah on power were exhausted. Indeed, in comparison to 1953 coup, in 1978 US was facing an indomitable revolution and temporarily accepted the *modus vivendi* and came to terms with anyone in Iran who was not a Soviet ally. Its recognition of the transitional administration in Iran was considered as contingent plan to bring back the stability and avoid of provoking the revolutionaries.

At the same time, US made several movements and deployment of forces and intensified its military presence in the region. A delegation of US Senate foreign relations committee and later on Harold Brown, then US Secretary of Defense visited the Middle East and Persian Gulf region in 1979. They were looking to sign military agreements with regional countries and establish bases in Oman, Somalia, Egypt and Kenya. These measures all were fomenting the Iranian new Islamic system and the 'Shiite religious leader who had already experienced the 'Iranian Constitutional Revolution' (in 1900s) and 1953 coup, got concerned for the fate of Islamic revolution and were fearful of a probable conspiracy to bring back a pro-Western government in Iran (Ramazani, 1990:125-126).

On the hostage crisis, Ken Pollack tries to link the incident with endeavors of the militant students to make the American media and people to pay attention to them and their revolution. They wanted to psychologically influence the US socio-political milieu and present the message of Islamic revolution that ousted the Shah as a US puppet in Iran, and finally blame the US for all mischief of Pahlavi's era. They finally got the attention of the American people as the sudden drop in Iranian oil production as a result of the revolution caused another spike in oil prices, a recession in the United States, and painfully long lines for gasoline, while many Americans were angry and frustrated about the gas lines and the economy.

As Pollack claims "the hostages served two interrelated purposes for the Iranians. First, as long as the holding of the hostages was seen to be causing pain to Americans, it provided psychological gratification to Iranians. Second, as long as the crisis provided that psychological gratification, supporting additional confrontation (and humiliation) of the Americans was a winning political position in Tehran. By the fall of 1980, Imam Khomeini's decision of taking hold on to the hostages for a while longer was aimed to try to unseat Jimmy Carter as president and revenge for the 1953 coup. Because releasing the hostages prior to the November election could swing the vote Carter's way and that holding on to them would probably ensure Carter's defeat. By choosing to hold them until the day Carter was out of office as a way of demonstrating that they could topple an

American leader just as America had toppled Mosadegh. This would constitute the same kind of blatant Iranian interference in American internal affairs that Iranians have constantly (and at times correctly) complained about by the United States" (Pollack, 2004:159-160, 171-172, 174 & 179-180).

While assuming that the 1953 coup and the 1979-1981 hostage crisis were the defining moments for the two sides in Iran-US relationship, Pollack claims that Iranian revolutionaries did not know US had dispatched General Huysler to Iran for the express purpose of instigating a coup d'état against the Islamic revolution. Therefore and in actuality, they had no proof of America's 'hostile action' toward their revolution at the time but this central element of their paranoid fantasies ultimately turned out to be very real. Quite adversely to Pollack's inference, the hostage taking was indication of both revolutionaries' concerns of US machinations and their notion of its actual powerlessness for effective reaction (stemming from cold war situations in international system) which practically winded up to its failed military operation<sup>45</sup> and further economic and political pressures against Iran. By the same token, Imam Khomeini in his address of November 6, 1979 pointed out the US weaknesses to fulfill any military operations against Iran and ....his famous passage of "US can do no mischief" (Khomeini, 1986: Vol.X:223,515).

Although opposing the West and its prevailed international order was a prominent element of the Iranian foreign policy dominant discourse, the hostage taking incident turned to an explicit and ongoing confrontation between Iran and the US. The proponents of dominant discourse mention the following accomplishments for Iran in this regard:

- Recognition of Iran as an independent and influential power in West Asia and the Middle East;
- The US vulnerability in confronting the Islamic revolution and other movements in the region;
- The high cost of liberation movements for the US in the region and in international system and public opinion;

- Bring the US government (as a superpower) down to a stage to ask for compromise and even giving concessions to Iran and its allies;

As a conclusion, the ideological aspects and universality of dominant discourse of Iranian foreign policy overweighed the other national or nation-state inclinations of rival discourses of Islamic revolution. Some analysts also maintain that measures toward 'export of revolution' or the concept of 'Islamic new order' presented by the dominant discourse was not solely in terms of ideational, promotional or expansionist basis but also from a security perspective. Within this framework, like all other states which would like to have a neighborhood -as much as possible-consisting of like-minded and congruent players, Iran in post-revolution era has been questing for a "Congenial Security Environment" (Hunter, 1989:107-108).<sup>(46)</sup>

Inquiring the different aspects of Iran's approach in this direction as well as genealogical origins of Iranian foreign policy rival discourses (pragmatic economic and cultural) as branches of Islamic revolution met-discourse may be the research subject of another article.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For further readings on the same category see: (Mansouri, 1984); (Izadi, 1992) ; (Velayati et al.1985); (Larijani 1990).

<sup>2</sup> Also see: (Eta'at,1997); (Ehtemshami,1999);.

<sup>3</sup> For further reading see: (Naghieb-Zadeh, 2002); (Seifzadeh, 2003); (Tajik, 2000).

<sup>4</sup> Also see: (Yesleson,1989);.

<sup>5</sup> See also: (Gasirowski,1992);.

<sup>6</sup> See also: (Students Followings the Line of Imam (Khomeini, n.d).

<sup>7</sup> On genealogy also see; (Mansfield, 2001: 5-6); and (Tajik, 2000: 53-54, 293-294).

<sup>8</sup> The rule-oriented constructivism is mainly ascribed to the works of Nicholas G. Onuf and Fredrick Kratochwil who have been associated with the Miami International Relations Group. See: (Kubalkova, 2001: 1-3, 31 & 33- 34).

<sup>9</sup> Also see: (Beardsworth,1996: 191) and (Sjolander & Cox, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Also see: (Kissinger, 1969:12); (Morgenthau, 1948:189).

<sup>11</sup> On modernity and constructivism see also: (Habermas, 1996: 1-2 & 43).

<sup>12</sup> About constructivism on social studies also see: (Pettman,2000:11); (Segal,2001:13).

<sup>13</sup> Also see: (Hackings,1999:6).

<sup>14</sup> See also: (Pettman, 2001: 250-251, 256-258 & 260-262); (Kubalkova, 2001:1-6 & 10); (Guzzini: 2000:147-148).

<sup>15</sup> For further reading see: (Cox, 1981: 126-155).

<sup>16</sup> See also: (Snyder, 2004: 52-62).

<sup>17</sup> Also see: (Checkel,1998:324-348); (Adler,1992: 101-145);.

<sup>18</sup>Also see: (Marcel, 2001: 1-8); (Finnemore, 1996: 130) and (Katzenstein. et al., 1998: 645-685).

<sup>19</sup> On language and its constructive capacity also see: (Spair,1931: 74:578).

<sup>20</sup> Also see: (Weber, 1968: 24f) ; (Taylor, 1985: 55) and (Kubalkova, 2001:27-31).

<sup>21</sup> On language and lingual mechanisms as means for science see also: (Bourdieu,1980: 87); (Kuhn,1970: 22); (Kowert, 1998: 279-280) ; (Giddens 1984: 249-250); & (Levi-Strauss, 1966: 16-22).

<sup>22</sup> Reality is derived of the Latin word of *res* meaning thing or object.

<sup>23</sup> Solipsism is an epistemological or metaphysical position attributed to David Hume ( 26 April 1711 – 25 August 1776), the Scottish philosopher, economist and historian who believed that knowledge of anything outside the mind is unjustified. The external world and other minds cannot be known and might not exist. In the history of philosophy, solipsism has served as a skeptical hypothesis.

<sup>24</sup> On the impossibility of a universal explanation on social issues (as realism contemplates) and also on subjectivity and objectivity see: (Plonck,1932: 82); (Ryle, 1949: 11-12); (Capra,1982: 53, 60 & 71); (Matson, 1964: 27); (Watzlawick, 1984:145); (Hollis. & Smith, 1991: 6-7) & (Mahoney, 1976: 3).

<sup>25</sup> On conceptual specificities of constructivism also see: (Kratochwil, 1996: 206-210); (Kratochwil, 2001: 13-15 & 21); (Jepperson, et al 1996: 54); (Risse-Kappen, 1995: 502); (Carr, 1964: Ch.1).

<sup>26</sup> Also see: (Behnam, 1986: 13); (Downes, 2002: 16-18 & 133); (Ehteshami, 1995), & (Naghiz-Zadeh, 2002:238-239).

<sup>27</sup> On reemergence of religiosity into the world politics especially by the end of the cold war see: (Petito, & Hatzopoulos, 2003) .

<sup>28</sup> The Magi (singular Magus, from Latin, via Greek μάγος ; Old English: Mage; from Persian maguš and Kurdish mîgî) were a tribe from ancient Media, who – prior to the establishment the Achaemenid Empire in 550 BC – were responsible for religious and funerary practices of the ancient Iranian peoples. Later they accepted the Zoroastrian religion and developed it into Zurvanism, which would become the predominant form of Zoroastrianism during the Sassanid era (AD 226–650). No traces of Zurvanism exist beyond the 10th century. In English, the term may refer to a shaman, sorcerer or wizard; it is the origin of the words magic and magician. (Herodotus History, volume I, section 101.)

<sup>29</sup> Also see: (Pourdad, 1968: 178); (Safizadeh, 1999); (Hoveyda, 2003: 32-33); (Naghiz-Zadeh, 2002:93-95 & 224); (Behnam, 1986:49-50).

<sup>30</sup> Even Mohammad Reza Pahlavi presumed himself of having the divinely conferred gift. In his book (1976) under the title of: "Towards the Great Civilization", he wrote that religious instructions lay the essential elements of spiritual life in any society and short of such a reliance, even affluent and wealthy societies will be aimless and wandering and unable to find their way out. See: (Hoveyda, 2003:31).

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<sup>31</sup> As an instant the telegram of two prominent Shiite Islamic leaders in Nadjaf, Iraq to then Russian emperor, in 19<sup>th</sup> century as a matter of their direct involvement in international politics is worthwhile mentioning. In their correspondence, Ayatollah Abdollah Mazandarani and Mahammad Kazem Khorasani were complaining of Russian forces misconduct toward Iranians in Iranian occupied territories and warn Russian official on consequences of such mismanagements. See: (Naghieb-Zadeh,2003) & also see: (Lambton, 1981: 45).

<sup>32</sup> On Islamic feature of Iranian politics see also: (Hashemi Rafsanjani, 1997: 112); (Farzinnia, 1995: 109).

<sup>33</sup> On the myths about dualism and their effects on Iranian contemporary history also see: (Bahar, 1997: 339-402 & 405); (Bahar, 1999: 55 &100) and (Meskoub, 2002: 385-416); (Boyce, 1991) ; (Amouzegar, Tafazzoli,1991: 37-38); (Zoner, 1996: 104).

<sup>34</sup> See also: (Farsoun, & Mashayekhi,1992: 82-115); (Downes, 2002:158) & (Behnam, 1986:57-61 & 143-144).

<sup>35</sup> The proponents of rival discourse of Iranian religious-nationalist foreign policy have adversely believed that the main task and mission here is to serve Iranian nation via Islamic views and directives. On the conceptual foundation of Iranian foreign policy discourses see: (Bazargan, 1983: 111).

<sup>36</sup> See also: (Khomeini, 1986, Vol.VI:125, Vol.XI:259, Vol.XIV:63).

<sup>37</sup> Also see: (Farzinnia, 1995:109).

<sup>38</sup> See also: (Ramazani, 2001:74-76).

<sup>39</sup> Imam Khomeini, (the late spiritual leader of Iran) years before the victory of Islamic revolution in Iran, addressing the issue of unity among Islamic countries from a historical viewpoint, blames the West and colonial powers for disintegration of Islamic world and Ottoman Empire, in particular, and forming 10 to 15 micro-states under their own trusteeship. He concludes that reunification of Islamic Ummah and release of the Islamic kith is a must and for such a purpose there need to be Islamic governments in place of existing unjust regimes in Islamic countries. See: (Khomeini, 1999:26-29,181,200 & 204) & (Behnam, 1996: 14).

<sup>40</sup> On conceptualization of export of revolution see: (Monten, 2005: 122-156).

<sup>41</sup> Also see: (Hunter, 1989:108);(Sadeghi,1994); (Cottam,1997: 41-42); (Hegland, 1983:166-188).

<sup>42</sup> Also see: (Ramazani, 1990: 48-49).

<sup>43</sup> See also: (Sariolghalam, 2003:67).

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<sup>44</sup> Also see: (Khomeini, 1999: 3-4,11-12); (Naghieb-Zadeh, 2002:228). (Hoveyda, 2003:7-8, 29 & 35-36); (Tehrani, 2004:165-188); (Behnam, 1986:17-20); (Ramazani,1990:48-49).

<sup>45</sup> Operation Eagle Claw, was a United States military operation in Tabass desert to rescue the 53 hostages from the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, Iran on April 24, 1980. The failure of the operation led to the death of eight US servicemen.

<sup>46</sup> See Also: (Stempel, 1981:, 225-226); (Cordesman, 1987: 4, 6-10, 16, 61-84 & 138-140).