

## A Sociological Study of Authoritarianism in the Pahlavi Era

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**Abstract:** *The present study addresses the Pahlavi era regarding the political system, and it is to investigate and analyze authoritarian governments. The study which is a historical-documentary one, also deals with the consequences of authoritarianism in the Pahlavi era and the impacts of historical-geographical conditions of Iran on the emergence and durability of authoritarianism. Authoritarianism is considered to be a type of system which is established by exerting force and violence, illegitimate rule of power and lawlessness. Investigation of the factors affecting the structure of authoritarianism in this study indicates that the Pahlavi rule as an authoritarian government, despite its positive aspects and consequences, has had negative economic, political, and social consequences for the Iranian society at that time and for the later generations. Neglecting a negative social phenomenon at the present may cause extensive changes over time so that fighting or eradicating them needs far more time and costs. According to the results of the study we may say that the same policies provided the context for the fall of the regime.*

**Keywords:** *authoritarianism, power, legitimacy, Pahlavi Era.*

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### Introduction

Hossein Bashiriyeh hints that governments have four pillars or four general faces: "... one is coercion and coercive face, the second one is ideological pillar and ideological face, the third one is the public face and provision of services or general functions, and the fourth one is the pillar of material benefits or the private face. It is essential for any government to have at least these pillars and functions. Any government who lost the ability to exert force and its suppression systems become weak would be an unstable government. Although domination and force are the most important elements of the political community, governments need to gain support and satisfaction of the people to legitimize their power" (Bashiriyeh, 2016). It is possible to form the core of a government with the coercion pillar and coercive face, without the presence of an ideological face and provision of public services, and by considering its maximum financial benefits, and also in the absence of social forces outside the realm of power form a dictatorship, or an autocratic, totalitarian or authoritarian government. In all of such political systems, the authority of the governments is in maximum degree and the role and presence of social forces is in minimum degree.

Pahlavi government was among the regimes that its coercion pillar and ideological face with exerting illegitimate power, according to the historians and scholars of human sciences, had a fundamental role in phenomena such as political, social and economic underdevelopments. Hence, studying, investigating and analyzing the past history can help us predict, plan, and manage to deal with the negative consequences of a political system and create a progressive and free society. Neglecting a negative social phenomenon at the present may cause extensive changes over time so that fighting or eradicating them needs far more time and costs. The word authority in its most general definition is a combination of power and legitimacy and it is a topic on which there has been so far no general and universal theoretical unity. However, in terms of meaning, it seems to be very close to some words such as power, dominance, influence, force, rights, dignity and others and it is even possible to misuse these words instead of

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authority. Applying authority, in comparison with authoritarianism, in a society can have positive consequences for the society. But authoritarianism in its simplest definition means ruling without the consent of people (which is the very coercion pillar or the coercive face of the government) that may include negative consequences a society would be caught up in it. There are some periods in Iran history based on suppression, killing, oppression and full elimination of rivals, without any ruling or management managing the society based on specific reasoning or logic.

This study answers this question raised based on theoretical model as whether Pahlavi government is an authoritarian government (compared with different theories as authoritarian and dictatorship theories) and by considering geographical and historical conditions, we evaluate whether historical-geographical conditions can be important in creating Authoritarianism. Finally, based on historical documents and sociology analysis, the most important outcomes of Authoritarianism can be referred.

### **Theoretical Framework**

"The governments are divided into democratic and authoritarian. In sociological study of Authoritarianism we should evaluate the features of this type of government. Due to a few studies regarding this term, we focus on the elements in democratic governments but we cannot observe them in authoritative governments. Based on the theoretical model of this study, a democratic government has authority, legality and legitimacy elements and in most of authoritative governments, we don't have some of them or all of them entirely. We are obliged to apply this type of theoretical model in various theories in politics, sociology and political sociology" (MotlaqandAhmadnezhad, 2016).

David Beetham Says: "Political authority is legitimate, we can say, to the extent that:

1. it is acquired and exercised according to established rules (legality);
2. the rules are justifiable according to socially accepted beliefs about (i) the rightful source of authority, and (ii) the proper ends and standards of government (normative justifiability);
3. Positions of authority are confirmed by express consent or affirmation of appropriate subordinates, and by recognition from other legitimate authorities (legitimation)" (Beetham, 2001).

Richard Lowenthal (1979) writes: The legitimacy of a durable political system in a new industrial society requires a definite legal system defining the executive method of decisions about policies and hiring people. Second, there should be a wide value agreement between mass of people and political elites (as including partial differences in value system inside elite group and the mass). Third, among the mass obedient upon government, it should be assured that executive methods of a definite system lead to the selection of elites and taking the decisions as considering the successful action consistent with common values (Lowenthal, 1979; Quoted in coser and Rosenberg, 2008).

By separating power and authority, Habermas defines power as the ability to attract obedience but authority means the right of execution of some rules and managing the affairs. Heywood (2010) in a wide meaning defines power as the ability to achieve good result but in politics, power is the ability of influencing the others behavior as not requested by them. Thus, power in politic fields defined as: Power, ability of using violence against others to achieve their obedience to achieve good result for the benefits of power authorities (Ibid). According to Habermas, authority in politics means the right of applying definite actions including the right of approving the rules and another law associated to the governance of country. Bashirie defines authority: "Authority has two aspects: One is appeared in governance and rule and another one in obedience of citizens of rules. Based on this view, a stable government needs stable authority. We cannot achieve obligatory decisions and rules without authority. Without authority, various social and political powers are the source of instability conflict in political life. In the new era with the crisis oftrans-social sources, the power legitimacy is challenged and the only way to produce authority is resorting to people governance (Bashirie, 2014).

Peter Goodrich writes about law," Law is the norms issued by legal hierarchy or approved as institutional. In this professional definition, the law rules with legal norms are constituents of national

law system and their legal authority is directly based on membership in this system and then content legal legitimacy or their actual determination can be considered (Outhwaite and Bottomore, 2013). Heywood (2010) considers authoritarianism imposing government on people without their satisfaction and distinguishes between authoritarianism and authority. He believes authoritarianism is government from the above and authority based on legitimacy is belief from bottom and from people. Authoritarianism is based on power, legitimacy and authority theories without law, legitimacy and authority components.

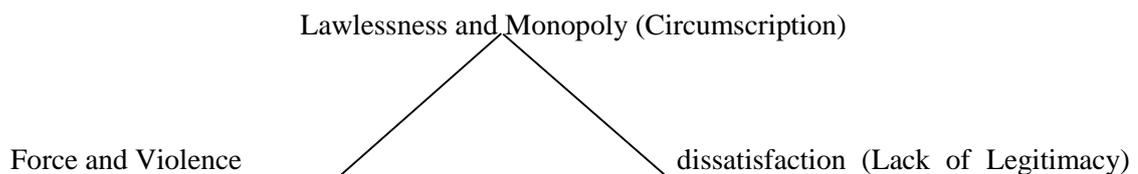
It should be said, authoritarianism is different from totalitarianism. Totalitarianism is extreme form of authoritarianism; it means that totalitarian regimes form violence aspect is much recognized than authoritarianism. Paul C. Sondrol considered some differences between authoritarianism and totalitarianism as ...” Based on this comparison, we can say authoritarian systems due to the lack of guiding ideology, the tolerance of multiplicity, lack of power to gather the total population to fulfill the national goals and power in definite part have much space for private life (Sondrol, 2009).

As it was said, the questions of the paper include:

1. Was Pahlavi government one of authoritarian regimes?
2. What are the outcomes of Pahlavi authoritarianism for Iran society?

### **The Theoretical Model of Authoritarian Regime**

"The consistency of this model doesn't guarantee the governance of an authoritarian government (despite democracy system with three sides of authority, legitimacy and law), and each of the components alone is the adequate and required condition for the survival of these governments. The three components are strong form of authoritarianism and it can be mentioned as totalitarian regimes. By violence, we can achieve power and governance of a country and by ignoring the public dissatisfaction and opposing groups, we can suppress any riot. The society dissatisfaction indicating illegitimate governance can be manifested as riot, strike or disorder in public order, not participation in elections, criticism of government in mass media. In this model, if there are some rules, due to the power of this class, monopoly and suppression of opposing people are only for show off and new rules are approved for the benefit of dominant class" (Motlaq and Ahmadnezhad, 2016).



*Figure (1): Model of Authoritarian Regime (Motlaq and Ahmadnezhad, 2016)*

### **Dissatisfaction (non-legitimacy) Violence Review of Literature**

In the Motlaq and Ahmad Nezhad's Article (2016), as "A Sociological Study of Authoritarianism in Qajar Era", they aimed to answer the question that Qajar government as a political system was anauthoritarian government? This study deals with the outcomes of Qajar Authoritarianism and the impact of effective historical-geographical conditions of Iran on emergence or continuance of Authoritarianism. Authoritarianism in this study is not a one-dimensional structure and it is composed of some elements as imposing violence, illegitimate governance and illegal issues. This study is document-historical design and allthe existing documents regarding study are study population. The present study is one of the applied studies inwhich the data are collected as note taking and the data are analyzed by qualitative method. The evaluation of factors in Authoritarianism of the study shows that Qajar era was Authoritarianism not totalitarian with negative economic, political and social outcomes for the society on that era and for future generation. Based on the results of study, we can say that these policies caused the collapse of this regime. This study showed that by review of history, without any

bias and prejudice of a specific movement, based on social sciences theories, we can identify the reasons of occurrence of phenomenon and avoid its repetition in future (experiencing).

Ivan Krastev (2011), the chief of managing board of freedom strategies in Sufie of Bulgarian and one of the members of human sciences institution in Vienna in the study “Paradoxes of the New Authoritarianism “published in 2011 in “democracy journal”(at first this paper was presented as Speech), investigated three main questions:

- 1) Why are authoritarian regimes surviving in the age of democratization?
- 2) Why did political science fail to anticipate the resilience of these regimes?
- 3) Why it is so difficult to resist contemporary authoritarianism?

He concentrated his observations on Russian experience.

M. H. Katouzian (2011) in the book “Iran, short-term society and three other papers” investigated historical problems of economic and political development of Iran. The origin of this study was its historical background. Thus, we can study social background of Iran on that period (according to the views of Dr. Katouzian to after and before constitutionalism revolution). In the two first papers, Katouzian investigated Iran history before constitutionalism and believed that legitimacy and succession, non-importance of property and life of people and the problems of development made these changes short in historical structure of Iran society and this also led into the lack of political and economic development in Iran.

Ali Rezagholi (2013) in the book “Sociology of Autocracy: A Sociological Interpretation of the story of Zahhak in shahnameh” based on Ferdowsi story, the story of Zahak and serpents had a sociological analysis of Iran society in the fourth and fifth centuries in Iran. Although the book refers to fourth and fifth century Rezagholi believes that the reasons of long era of dictatorship in Iran political and thought system are in the history of this country and to move to a free and equal society, we are obliged to have logical study, without judgment, without valuation, sociological study. Mohammad Nozari in the thesis (2008) as “bureaucratic- authoritarian regimes and social economic change” evaluated the positive and negative relation between authoritarianism of Reza Shah era and socio-economic changes by bureaucratic- authoritarian governments of Odanel and answered these questions whether Reza Khan government was an authoritarian bureaucratic government or not? Whether it had the features of a bureaucratic-authoritarian government. Theodor Vestal (1999) in the book “post-cold war of Africa” like other scientists in political era believes that in the 20th century, undeveloped African countries have achieved new form of government different from its tradition alone. Even Vestal believes that in 20th century, authoritarianism is different. Vestal considers authoritarianism a type of government in which power is centralized only on a few people and all the decisions are taken by the dominant party. According to him, authoritarian regimes have some features as this system can resist against the changes:

- 1) Control from above parties and improving military force to restore security of system and society;
- 2) The mastery on society via bureaucracy system;
- 3) Controlling the oppositions and local critics;
- 4) Creating entire loyalty via sociability of various groups (Vestal, 1999).

### **Research Method**

The present article, is a historical-document research for the purpose of investigating the past condition of Pahlavi government based on written, reports, researches (Articles & Theses) and journals by note taking and classify the items in definite titles. This study as an applied design attempted to raise basic questions regarding Pahlavi government and its outcomes and achieved important theories to plan a suitable government based on culture and economy of a geography and society to have positive and considerable outcomes for society.

Based on the historical nature of the present study and lack of quantitative variable, statistical methods for findings analysis is not possible and the criteria in qualitative analyses are wisdom, logics, thinking and reasoning.

### **Authoritarianism**

If according to Habermas we consider democracy as a type of “theory of authority”, authoritarianism is just the opposite of democracy. Authority is a positive and privileged attribute which indicates the over-limit ability of a government in applying rules and it may represent political legitimacy which has a specific and complicated relationship with power and governance. Regarding power, although authority can exist without power, it is an emphasis on the concept of “having the right” or “the right to apply rules”. On the contrary, authoritarianism has no meaning without power and the right to apply rules is known to be legitimate by itself not by the people. Habermas, who believes authoritarianism unlike authority has a negative connotation, points that authoritarianism, “does not deal with the rights of obedience or subordination, but it deals with the way and manner of claiming the right and applying it, especially with intense inner intent to interfere in managing the natives and citizens affairs”(Nozari, 2001). Anthony Giddens, on authoritarianism writes, “Unlike democracy that encourages active participation of citizens in political affairs, in authoritarian governments people's participation is strongly prohibited or restricted. In such societies the needs and interests of the government are more important than the needs and interests of ordinary citizens and there is no legal mechanism to oppose the government or dismiss the leader from power” (Giddens, 2008).

Kingdoms, dictatorial and oligarchic systems, personal, military, single-party, conservative, and fascists governments, and traditional and modern tyranny are considered as different types of authoritarian regimes. Gaining and transferring power through unlawful and non-democratic ways namely through violence, force, coercion, plunder, succession crisis, coup, war or even revolution, increased intervention of the ruling class in different political, economic, social, religious and educational levels, contradictory policies of the ruling class with the folklore, disregard for popular demands and protests, and exerting unlimited power by law are among the factors behind the creation of authoritarian governments. Ivan Krastev in the paper “Paradoxes of new authoritarianism” explained a good example of different authoritarian government types and based on his successes is the example of soft authoritarianism (Singapore model) or vegetarian authoritarianism. He believes that “Russia is an Interesting case because it highlights the key features of the new competitive authoritarianism. Russia’s regime is only moderately repressive. Putin’s authoritarianism is a “vegetarian” one. While political repression exists and human rights organizations state torture and hurting of journalists and other opposing parties of government, it is fair to say that most Russians today are freer than in any other period of their history. They can travel, they can freely surf the Web (Ivan Krastev, 2011).

### **Theoretical Reasons that Indicate the Pahlavi Regime was Authoritarian**

#### **1. Coming into power through the coup (along with foreign governments support)**

“In the early hours of the dawn of February 22, 1921( Esfand 3, 1299) colonel Reza Khan, the brigade commander of the Cossack force in Qazvin with three thousand people and eighteen machine guns took the control of the country” (Abrahamian, 2012). He later formed the Assembly of Founders and by dethronement of Ahmad Shah in 1304<sub>AHS</sub>/1925 introduced and crowned himself as the king of Iran. Mohammad Reza also applied force during his rule on Iran. However, unlike his father, he reigned on the basis of succession procedure and there was no coup or violence; but as he continued to rule he had to use force and violence to manage and advance his ambitions and aspirations. HashemPesaran believes that political stability is either achieved by increased participation of people or through suppression and force. During his reign, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi chose the second one as his father did and within a decade he turned Iran into royal dictatorship that relied on on the power of the army for suppression and oil revenues and became even more dependent on the United States of America.

In such a condition with an autocratic, single-party and suppressive government system, there are always currents for taking power or sharing power. If Reza Khan was an officer who could come into power on the condition of real lawlessness and by the military power through the coup, definitely there will be

such a possibility for others. The coup in 1953/1332<sub>AHS</sub>, the discovery of Tudeh Party's officers in the army in the mid 1950s and the coup plot of major general Gharani in 1958 during Mohammad Reza Pahlavi reign, are some convincing reasons for the claim. Thus, the king took the control of the army personally and supervised the promotion and control of the army's officer even more than before.

## **2. Taking necessary measures to stabilize personal power or resist changes**

The measures taken by Reza Khan to stabilize power and establish order and security in the country are exactly according to the theory of Theodore Vestal (1999) which considers some features for authoritarian regimes in order to resist changes in their governments. John Foran (2013) also believes that establishing order and security in the country was the result of the changes made by Reza Khan in the nature of the government. Here we address four main features:

**A. Superior control, strengthening and upgrading the police force to secure the system and society:** In order to increase the government's power, Reza Khan strengthened the army. To provide the budget, he strengthened the key institutions of the country's economy namely agriculture and oil production. He used the government's successes and the increased power of the central government to increase his own power and in 1923/1302<sub>AHS</sub> from the position of ministry of war promoted to be the prime minister. Increasing the number of military personnel and the army budget, purchasing expensive weapons equipment, establishing small ammunition industry in Tehran and other cities, and appointing senior military officers in the cabinet and in key positions of governmental organizations created a powerful and coherent army to suppress domestic social movements and the government oppositions in 1920/1300<sub>AHS</sub> and 1930/1310<sub>AHS</sub>. It is not irrelevant that most theoreticians and pundits use the term military tyranny to describe the features of Pahlavi regime as John Foran did. In addition to suppressing all domestic dissatisfactions, Mohammad Reza Shah's military power had made the international community and especially the USA worry about the emergence of a great regional power. Barry Rubin about the capabilities or the performance range of the army and the police force says, "The army in the West that is trained by most modern practices and has high professional ability to use warfare equipment and ammunitions is always kept away from the political scene. In third world countries, soldiers and military personnel receive similar trainings as Western societies, but along with allocating these large funds, they are directed towards political and financial issues of the society, and the belief that military force has a better ability to run the country is strengthened in them" (Rubin 2010).

**B. Influence and domination on society through bureaucracy** In Reza Khan's government, like the expanded army, bureaucracy was also reorganized and trained better than the Qajar era. Increasing the number of bureaucratic civilian personnel and employing educated middle class individuals – unlike the Qajar who appointed feudal Qajar princes and old governmental families- were considered as the fundamental changes of bureaucracy in that era. In this way, Reza Khan wanted to have more influence and dominance over the society by holding the very basic pillar of government. It should be mentioned that the staff's low income level, employing lower and middle classes of the civil society in bureaucratic systems, inefficiency and complicity of the state machine, unfamiliarity to the work and finally the full control of Reza Khan on the system led to corruption, chaos and bribery in the system.

**C. Control and suppression of domestic opponents and critics** "Progressive steps of Reza Khan in getting power had been subjected to some disagreements but they were harnessed in different ways" (Foran, 2013). The craftsmen uprising against Reza Khan's republic, the critique of journalists and editors individually from Reza Khan in their newspapers, and the opposition by some officials with his increasing tendencies towards autocracy and tyranny were all eliminated by threat, fierce, beating and killing. In the beginning of Reza Khan coming into power, the uprisings by the tribes, garrison soldiers, and slum-dwellers were quickly confronted with military power. From 1927/1306<sub>AHS</sub> to 1932/1311<sub>AHS</sub> there were some rebellions in Arab, Qashqai, Bakhtiari, Baluch, and other Iranians tribes; that all of them were eventually defeated or collaborated. The leaders of the rebellions were executed and the nomadic tribes were forced to settle to be under strict military supervision. The bloody suppression of peasants rebellions, giving vain promises to the clerics and putting them under pressure through intimidation, exile and suppression, extensive suppression of strikes by labor unions and students, the command to close the labor unions and arresting their

organizers, suppressing leftist opponents of the regime like socialist and communist parties and even Tudeh party as the first leftist party, were all among the successful steps of Reza Khan to eradicate the opposition. During the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah the repressive system consisted of armed forces and spy agencies that were the second institutional foundation of the power of the king after oil; so, by collecting a huge fund, and preventive and punitive measures, he was able to neutralize any dissatisfaction. Exerting censorship, controlling labor unions by the government, strict selection of government employees especially teachers, direct confrontation with the critics of the regime and political oppositions including liberal authorities, opposition clerics, leftist students and guerrilla organizations were among the duties of SAVAK (National Intelligence and Security Organization).

**D. Creating public loyalty through the socialization of different groups:**

After the coup and before coming into power, Reza Khan needed the aid of both domestic and foreign forces to advance his goals. For example, conservative party and clerics, educated democrats in the West and liberals, nationalist modernist and supporters of the rule of power, socialist and communist parties and labor union movements, all of them, before the reign of Reza Khan were somehow in contact with him. Merchants and landowners knew that their properties were protected against social movements of the leftist parties. Due to Reza Khan's demagoguery, the clerics behaves softly and even Ayatollah Modares, his main opposition became neutral by the reconciliation and compromise offer in 1924-1925/1303-1304<sub>AHS</sub>. Reza Khan's nationalism influenced a number of intellectuals including poets, authors, employees, authorities and business owners. At first, due to republicanism proposal in 1924/1303<sub>AHS</sub> and generally for non-religious and nationalist tendencies of Reza Khan, the left-wing parties of the parliament, especially labor unions and communists also supported him to some extent by ignoring his authoritarian and anti-progression views. However, after the reign of Reza Khan all of them were suppressed by his command. When Reza Khan came into power after the coup, he began to arouse people in order to stabilize the government and gain legitimacy; to some extent we may say that he could achieve the goal.

### **3. Lack of legitimacy**

Richard Lavinthal, just like Weber, emphasizes on the power of fierce and coercion and the material force of the current political systems. He suggests that the fierce force and legitimacy are definitely complementing each other. It means that by accepting political legitimacy, the government's power of fierce and coercion would be eliminated or weakened. This is the same as Marx's statement that says, the person believes that people obey him because he is the king. But in fact, he is the king as long as people obey him. Accordingly in his views, the highest level of legitimacy of a political system without applying fierce and coercion is achieved when the citizens do their duties voluntarily; but in case of all-round bullying of the government, minimum efficiency and doing the tasks by administrative organizations, there would be the lowest level of legitimacy, and autocratic tyrant leaders who are not bound to any order would lack political legitimacy.

Reza Khan's effort to establish and organize a highly centralized government had prompted internal and external opponents to arouse. In his last visit with the cabinet before his dismissal, he had announced that his secret to success was that he did not consult or talk about his plans and thoughts to anyone. But it should be mentioned that the Pahlavi regime and Reza Khan himself had some sort of legitimacy by a small part of the community. Strong defenders and supporters who believed in Pahlavi ideology included benefactors from political power, the rich, people who benefited from material wealth such as the right of land ownership and economic privileges, and also those who cooperated to escape the violence and punishment of the government. The royal family, the courtiers, a large part of the parliament (mostly landowners), the rich and aristocrats were also among the group. Another part of Reza Khan's legitimacy or support was achieved by his populism and the fact that he pretended to seeking to realize the interests of the masses. The masses were the ones who had been ignored by the previous governments. Perhaps if Reza Khan had the minimum social base or legitimacy inside the country, he could have remained in power. Using slogans such as independence, integrity, stability, honor and verbal rejection of influence and foreigners interference, insulting and humiliating foreigners, lies and absurd bragging might be smart and good ways to attract people's support, but they were unable to provide a minimum social base for Reza Khan's legitimacy, "The sudden fall of Reza Khan in

September 1941[Shahrivar 1320] was first due to the irresistible pressure of the global system on him and then was the result of contradictions caused by the autocratic style of his government”(Foran, 2013).

#### **4. Lack of codified and real law**

“Tyranny means egotism and autocracy and involves and implies a system in which the government- and in the final analysis the one who is at the head of the government- has no responsibility or commitment towards the nation, namely, a system in which the government is based on lawlessness. It means that the “rules” and regulations can be influential as long as the total tyrant or his agents find them in their favor. But any “law” and “regulation” can be broken at any moment and replaced by another one. That’s exactly why the terms of law and regulation in an authoritarian system are meaningless because the good and bad of the customs and law are just in the fact that they are not easy to change” (Katouzian, 2012).

From time to time, Mohammad Reza Shah violated the law or drafted the constitution according to his own interests to advance his goals. In order to control the parliament and the cabinet, he had to fill them with people of his own choice from the army forces, bureaucrats and court supporters. Only through changing the constitution he had more authority to increase the number of ministers, MPs and the term of their representation.

#### **5. The failure of the government to meet the needs and demands of the majority of people**

One can’t deny Reza Khan’s actions to advance Iranian society towards a successful country in line with Western standards. As Foran quoted from PioFilippiniRonconi, formation of the concept of government-nation or in other words creating a powerful and central government that had the whole country under its control, codifying new civil and criminal code, Establishing Melli Bank on the basis of national currency and national trade, designing a new education model, establishing universities and schools and ... were among the actions that presented Reza Khan as a powerful and popular leader for part of the society. But, in reality Reza Khan’s popularity was limited to a few large cities such as Tehran, some northern cities, and Tabriz. His actions mostly included the Iranian urban communities than tribal or rural communities. But Foran, this time quoted Millspaugh as saying, “[Reza Khan] in general exploited the whole country, crushed the peasants, nomads and workers and placed heavy tolls on landowners; while his activities were in favor of the new class of “capitalist”, merchants, monopoly holders, contractors, and political privileged classes. Inflation, heavy taxes, and his other actions led to a decline in living standards” (Foran, 2013).

Marginal population including servants, part-time workers, beggars, prostitutes and thieves were the most deprived urban class. At that time, despite the increased participation of women in the field of education and work, they were still discriminated. Although Reza Khan considered himself as the liberator of women, most of the Islamic laws were still approved in the civil law and religious minorities had similar conditions to marginal people. “... The standards of living for Iranian peasants were unsatisfactory. According to many observers the situation even got worse in the final years of the reign of Reza Khan... Caddy concludes that the peasants were often hungry...” (ibid.). Non-traditional working class in the 1930s/1310s associated with working long hours, low wages, women and children exploitation so that the situation made the British and American observers simulated the condition to slavery.

#### **6. Inconsistency in adopting methods that would be accordance with the culture and the demands of the people**

Implementation of land reform in 1960s/1340s forever abolished the agriculture system of sharing and dominance of the landowner in villages of Iran and it was replaced by agricultural capitalism that had very significant and mostly negative impacts on landowning, class structure of villages and agricultural performance, “As a result of the program the ownership of landowners was limited to a single village and the government would buy the rest of the owner’s property regarding the tax that they had already paid for it and then sold the land to the peasants who had the right of working on the land and had a “sharing” relationship with the owner” (Foran, 2013).

The program was implemented in three stages but it wasn't as successful in practice. The owners' objections on one hand, the peasants' movements on the other hand, and the disagreements between the court and the government caused the plan to face a number of major challenges. Although the Iranian land reform was more successful than other countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, generally we may say that it was a failure. The reason for its failure was that half of the rural households were not included in the Land Reform Act because they hadn't signed a sharing contract and had no right over the lands. Most of the peasants who became landowners, got small and inferior pieces of land and half of the lands were not divided and remained under the ownership of the great owners" (ibid.).

### **7. Disregard for the identity of the commonly formed cultural values of the people**

Calling the tribal people savage, rouge and illiterate, Reza Khan went to fight with them with all his might; first, by bringing them under his command and then by forcing them to settle, he decided to civilize them. In the years 1927-1932/1306-1311<sub>AHS</sub> the disobedience of Qashqai, Arab, and Lor tribes and the rest was suppressed. Instead of ruling the tribes by claiming legitimacy, the Pahlavi regime ruled them with the force of guns and intimidation. The suppression resulted in political awareness of many tribes and made them seek their identity in relation to the path of migration, culture, traditions, rituals and language. **Ethnic minorities made a real coalition against the process of Persian-making of the regime...** The chaffy success of the regime in such policies was revealed in September 1941 (Shahrivar 1320) and after Reza Khan's dismissal, many tribal and nomadic people who had been forced to settle, once again resumed their pastoralism" (ibid.).

As the education system became non-religious in 1930s/1310s, the clerics lost part of their income and power which was supplied in that way; and at least financially they experience bad situations. Legislating determinative laws for educational and religious institutions, calling seminary students for military service, imprisonment and persecution of seminary teachers and students, removal of compulsory religious instruction from schools, banning Qalandari and Dervishi, prevention of holding Ta'zieh and some religious rituals, strict control of the government over the endowments, and significant reduction of the clerics income all undermined the clerics. These are examples indicating that neglecting cultural and historical beliefs and values at that time resulted in weakening the clerics. But as soon as opportunities arose, the same group and other parts of Iranian society didn't support the government's objectives and moreover, they also weakened the government through different ways such as rebellions, strikes, fighting and even not supporting it against foreigners:

"Reviewing the contemporary history of Iran, we precisely encounter with the same neglect of the rulers to the context and beliefs of the people and the contradiction of their plans with the realities of the society that led to intensification of authoritarianism in managing the society. We may consider it as quasi-modernity or imperfect modernism with some sort of reactionary dimensions". (Abercrombie and Turner, (1988)

### **8. Colonialism**

In a colonized country such as India, with direct interference of a colonialist country, namely Britain, an autocratic or authoritarian system ruled the country that suppressed any opposition or rebellion against looting their countries by the colonized people. Other than a tyranny system, no colonialist can bring the people of a country under his control. But in a colonized country like Iran, the colonial countries ruled over the people with indirect interference namely by persuading the governors, giving concessions to them, intimidation, attacking, conspiracy and plots. In Iran, any disagreement with the colonization or plundering the country by the foreigners or protest against the kings were confronted with indirect or even direct military intervention because the interests of the rulers were to maintain power by any means. Reza Khan, with unilateral abolition of the system of capitulation by Iran in 1928/1307<sub>AHS</sub>, and cutting off many other foreigners rights such as land ownership, starting schools, marriage with Iranians, getting governmental positions in the administrative system and traveling freely, and also by controlling the foreign trade, reclaiming customs network and foreigners telegraph lines wanted to save Iran from dependence on the West. Despite all of these measures, Iran was still dependent on foreigners. Capitulation cancellation in exchange for granting concessions to foreigners in new laws

of Iran had very little efficiency. Economic crisis and reduced prices of exported goods in the global market made Iran face with serious problems. Despite restricting investment of foreigner, for England on oil and fisheries in the south and for Russia in the north, Iran became more dependent on the West. The trilateral struggle of Britain, the Soviet Union, and the Nazi Germany to influence in Iran was increasingly intensified. The extension of oil concession contract in 1932-1933/1311-1312<sub>AHS</sub> for another 28 years is the best sign of colonization and dependence of Iran to them.

### **9. Monopoly and the single-party government**

During his reign, Reza Khan was trying to prevent other groups from coming into power in different sections of the society. The aristocrats and landowners, tribal and nomadic people, local governments and even the army and parliament were all able to threaten his autocratic power. During his rule, he divided the country from four states to eleven provinces, but the new provinces also didn't have much freedom to act because the mayors and city officials who governed the provinces were appointed by the interior minister. In 1310s slight changes occurred in the composition of power among the landowner class. The changes included the loss of property of some old landowner families and tribal chiefs; instead, merchants, contractors, army officials, top government officials and Reza Khan himself owned a lot of land; such a transfer was not new in Iran. Moreover, even the parliament members were selected by intervention and selection of Reza Khan himself through election fraud so that they could help him achieve his goals in a better way. However, in his cabinet there were people such as Ali Akbar Davar the finance minister, Abdolhossein Teimourtash the minister of court, SardarAs'ad the chief of Bakhtiari tribe who was the minister of war, and FirouzMirza another finance minister from 1305 to 1316<sub>AHS</sub> who were all Reza Khan's senior advisors and later due to Reza Khan's fear from their empowerment and popularity were dismissed and subjected to imprisonment, suspicious death, and forced suicide. Except these people, in later years the ones who hold such positions didn't have any opinion or will by themselves; thus, they were fit to preserve Reza Khan's tyranny. In 1975/1354<sub>AHS</sub> by creating a single-party system, the superstructure of democracy and constitutionalism, and adherence to the constitution were also excluded; and Rastakhiz Party<sup>1</sup> was formed with the leadership of Amir Abbas Hoveida, and it was decided that all "loyal Iranians" would be enrolled in it. In the beginning, the first founders of the party claimed that it performed independently of the government; but later it was revealed to all that the party was actually controlled by its predecessor party leaders namely Iran Novin Party.

### **10. Nationalism**

In the Qajar era the lack of nationalist spirit in the society caused that any group or individual from different races, ethnicities and religions come into power and there was no restriction for them to plunder Iranian capitals and wealth. But in the Pahlavi era nationalism had an inverse function. Reza Khan's nationalism or Iranian Aryanism, which was granted to him and the Iranians as an honorary diploma by Germany was a convincing reason for him to suppress all the domestic oppositions; so that it was justified by excuses such as preserving national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the land of Iran. However, Reza Khan's nationalism, unlike the previous ones, was a non-religious nationalism that centered on the glory and splendor of the government and the king. "The only permitted type of nationalism during his reign, as Caddy says, was the official nationalism that emphasized on national homogeneity and consensus, being anti-clerical, modernity, and the power which referred to the pre-Islamic era. It should be mentioned that encouraged the Iranian embassy in Nazi Germany, Reza Khan in 1935/1313<sub>AHS</sub> announced in a command that the country's name in the west should be "Iran" instead of "Persia". The new name reminded the glory and splendor of the past and signified the origin of the Aryan race" (ibid). Reza Khan's nationalism was in contrast to several-hundred-year-old Kurdish nationalism. In addition to allegations of ethnic and racial differences, most of Kurdish people were also Sunni. Kurdish nationalist riots that after the First World War had become more specific and coherent, were weakened by Reza Khan in 1930/1310<sub>AHS</sub> through weakening the power of the tribes and Kurdish urban people who led these dissatisfactions and independence movements. During the Second World War a large part of the country including cities such as Mahabad were closer to the Soviet Union so that they were armed and by the Soviet Union's support in May 1943 (Ordibehesht 1322) attacked the central

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<sup>1</sup> The party is sometimes translated as Resurgence Party in English language.

government forces in Mahabad and forced them out of the city; then by declaring independence, they established the Republic of Mahabad. Reza Khan's nationalistic ideology that believed the glory of the country was in preserving territorial integrity and included all tribes of his homeland in the Aryan race, could not tolerate the fact that some parts of the country had their own specific identity and culture. In November 1946, the armed forces of the Soviet Union which until then acted like a defense shield for the Republic of Mahabad left the northern part of the country. One month later in December 1946, the king's army entered Mahabad. Ghazi Mohammad, the leader of the movement and the other members of the new Republic which did not last for a year, surrendered to him on May 31, 1947 and then they were executed. Kurdistan and Azerbaijan movements in 1946 indicate strong contradiction between Iranian nationalism and ethnic and racial nationalism of Iranian society. The issue brings to the mind the term "boiling pot" by Auguste Comte and "general digestibility" theory of Talcott Parsons in 1950s and 1960s within the plural society of the United States of America; it means that all the cultures should be digested in the totality of the society.

### **11. What consequences did the authoritarianism have for the Iranian society during the Pahlavi era?**

According to the common tradition in studying social sciences and humanities, in this paper, we will also consider the notion of authoritarianism with the concepts of development and underdevelopment. We may say that the concept of development is a term that covers all political, economic, social and cultural domains; in the sense that development or underdevelopment may have the economic connotation, political connotation, social connotation and cultural connotation simultaneously. It is not unreasonable that development is considered as the basis for further economic progress, because as Henry Bernstein says even in order to achieve economic development, we must transform underdevelopment situations (low productivity, stagnation, recession, poverty and etc.), "Economic growth is the necessary condition (but not the sufficient condition) for social progress because it provides basic needs such as nutrition, health and housing (which means overcoming absolute poverty) and then it is possible to provide other requirements for living a full life such as access to education for all, civil liberties, and political participation (overcoming relative poverty and deprivation)" (Bottomore & Outhwaite, 2013).

The monopoly of political power by the ruling party in the Pahlavi era, brought the monopoly of economic power to them. Economic independence of institutions, organizations and different groups can lead to separation of power. Therefore, to avoid such a case, the authoritarian government applied economic constraints to the society. Hence, providing jobs and investment became the responsibilities of the government that led to domination of the government over all the political, social and cultural affairs and equipped all the society forces towards the system objectives. Accumulation of economic power and financial resources by the government creates a structure that leads to personal, moral and, ultimately political corruption. Economic dependence on the government or in a more tangible expression "pensions" causes people to become submissive and dependent on the government. In such structures, thought principles, the society's interests, national benefits, rationality, foresight, providence, and assessing profits and losses of the community are never realized.

Low productivity, stagnation, recession, and poverty were all obvious throughout the Pahlavi era in Iranian society and most of these problems can be attributed to the type of government that was ruling at that time. By monopoly of power, the ruling party became the decision-maker in all political, economic and social areas and avoided entrusting economic and social sectors to experts and specialists. Political, social, and cultural areas were only utilized to preserve the Pahlavi system and the interests of the ruling party. The gap between the government and the people led to failure in meeting the people's demand and weakened the government. Lack of legitimacy of the ruling party imposed huge costs on the government to supply the forces for suppressing dissatisfactions. During the reign of Reza Khan, construction of the national railway from north to south of Iran, with a length of 850 miles that passed no city except Tehran, only wasted the costs and state resources and caused economic inflation in the country. Except easy access to the south and dispatching the military forces there to provide security, and improving the trade conditions with the Soviet Union in the north beside his own properties, the

railway plan had no other use. Increased defense costs and communication costs (mostly related to military expenses) were also created more inflation and more budget deficit. Despite the economic development and industrialization of the country in Reza Khan's era, there were still a lot of constraints. Failure in the land reform program and old production technology were among the problem. Only there was advancement in population growth and the peasants hardly ever made a living. Due to forced settlement of the nomads, a lot of people lost their lives that led to reduction of production by tribal and nomadic people. Transformative efforts of the government in urban areas did not improve the daily lives of most people. Living standards did not improve much regarding the income, nutrition, housing, health and education. Industrialization and the government intervention in foreign trade in order to construct the railway led to a long-term inflationary economy after 1933/1312<sub>AHS</sub>. The costs of inexpensive urban food imposed on rural people and the urban classes took the burden of heavy taxes of the capitalists. All the people and groups in the society did not benefit equally from industrialization. Industry only slightly entered a few cities, but it gave centralization to Tehran comparing to other provinces. But Iran was still lagged behind the Middle Eastern industrialized countries such as Egypt and Turkey.

During the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah, in urban areas, the wages were lower than the legal rights for 73 percent of workers; moreover, long working hours and intolerable conditions of all new, medium and multinational factories including - smoke and steam, dangerous chemical materials, industrial accidents, failure to comply with health and safety standards, lack of any kind of insurance, and unfavorable treatment conditions were among the major problems of the workers (Compare it with the Singapore model). The forceful removing of hijab (unveiling), forcing men to wear Pahlavi hats, mandatory settlement of the nomadic tribes, and starting assembly industry were among the measures that imposed on the people by force and coercion. The unveiling led to widespread protests by the people and clerics. Dressing in European style, especially with the Pahlavi hats that in Reza Khan's view was a symbol of entrance to the Modern Western World was opposed by the nomadic and tribal people and even the urban society. The assembly industry only made Iran more dependent on the West and inflation, domestic market depression, and trading balance deficit destroyed the country.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

We defined authoritarianism as ruling people without legitimacy or in other words it is considered as illegitimate power. Authoritarian regimes regarding their ruling styles bring positive and negative consequences for their society. The consequences range from political and economic to cultural and social areas. If we are to consider authoritarianism according to the reasons in the study, we should say that the consequences of establishing such a system will be negative for the society. But in practice, we deal with authoritarian regimes that in terms of value assessment have been able to be a positive agent for political, economic and social reforms in the society. For example, the Singapore Model that Giddens refers to as an example of "soft authoritarianism" is very different from the Iranian model. In that regime, despite the fact that the power is in the monopoly of the ruling party, the same party has created high standards of living and favorable social welfare for its citizens. Giddens suggests that the condition has essentially become possible through intervention of the government in all aspects of the society. In that country, the economy is booming; people are very satisfied with the government and social inequalities are much less than other authoritarian systems. The Singapore community benefits the security, civil order and high social acceptance. There is no unemployment in it and we can almost say that there is no problem such as poverty.

DaniiloZolo (1992) in an article titled, "Singapore model: the democracy of communication and globalization" states that, "Singapore is a country with high technological efficiency, extensive use of information and telecommunication systems, abundant wealth and permanent growth. Public services especially hospitals and schools are perfect, traffic is fluent and peaceful, the air pollution is in low level and there is no unemployment. Almost everyone owns a house and people have high levels of education. Besides, we should add or in fact remove one more thing and that is the absence of political views and public debates. Singapore is the "Sun City" in which prudential avoidance from politics is among the traditions of the society; a tradition that is not needed to be encouraged by the government. Therefore, political consensus is indisputable in all the perceptions of this term" (Zolo, 1992).

In this study, we addressed exerting illegitimate power by means of force and coercion and lack of rule of law that are the features of authoritarian regimes. Following that we cited recession, dissatisfaction, uprising, stroke, illnesses and etc. as the consequences of authoritarianism. Iranian authoritarianism of the Pahlavi era in a context of irrationality and incorrect management was imposed on the society in order that the interests of one person or a certain group would be maintained; and its consequences were introduced in the term “underdevelopment”.

Albeit, except the negative consequences of authoritarianism, what was of great importance in that era and caused the society to face many problems, was the efforts by Reza Khan or even Mohammad Reza shah in directing the benighted and traditional Iranian society towards a modern society without proper planning and management. It should be mentioned that transition from underdevelopment stage to development stage would not be without any problem. Authoritarian governments that have accepted the statesmanship methods, communication, new dressing styles, industrial assembly lines, membership in international communities, modern and equipped army, and business and commerce methods of the twentieth century, have mostly reformed and reinterpreted these concepts to make them more compatible with their own culture without paying attention to their cultural and historical backgrounds. Processes such as education development, migration to cities, enhancing the sense of nationalism, communication technology and modern economy, familiarity of the nation with fundamental and revolutionary changes and new ideas and especially their impact on intellectuals and military forces grew rapidly against traditional structures in authoritarian society in which tribal, nomadic and religious beliefs and ethnic links were still very common; thus, due to inevitable confrontation between the two streams, a wave of crisis and turbulence came into emergence.

For example, in Mohammad Reza Shah’s modernization “93 billion dollars were spent on the purchase of foreign commodities within 5 years. Ships in Iran's ports waited up to 250 days to evacuate their goods and the government had to pay about one billion dollar annually to compensate the delay... then the goods were evacuated and there weren’t enough trucks to deliver them. Iran’s roads were not suitable for driving trucks... to supply skilled staff for the economic system the king invited staff from foreign countries and paid them huge salaries. The situation resulted in some mental, social, and political problems for Iranian workers and they believed the discrimination was resulted by their dependence on foreigners and also irrational hastiness for the growth and development of the country” (Sari’ al-ghalam, 2013).

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