

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Title: Conflict Between Western and Traditional Iranian Educational Values. **Redacted for privacy**

Abstract approved

~~Dr. Carvel W. Wood~~

The purpose of this research was to examine the Iranian culture and society, and its relationship to some Western countries in order to understand the basis for the conflict between Western and Iranian educational values.

Specifically, the objectives of this study were to describe:

- (1) the historical development of Iranian society;
- (2) the major religions and philosophies which underlie Iranian traditional values;
- (3) some elements of the socio-economic structure of the society and its system of education;
- (4) some historical development in Iranian relationships (contact) with some Western countries;
- (5) the basis for the conflict between the Western and Iranian cultures; and
- (6) some suggestions for the improvement of education in Iranian society.

The study began with the search to trace the development of the Iranian society and its major religions and thoughts that shaped Iranian traditional values. It examined the socio-economic condition of Iran and its educational system, which do not promote the practice of Western educational ideas in Iran.

The study described the relationship between Iran and some Western countries and found that the conflicts between Iran and the West were cultural as a whole and political, economic, and educational in particular. It showed that the Western science and technology acted as the key to influence most of the educated people in Iran and the ruling class, inciting them to work as agents of the Western culture and to introduce Western values to Iran through educational channels.

The information revealed that the differences between Western and Iranian cultures resulted in different sets of values and consequently different expectations from the educational process. These differences were found to be the basis for the educational conflict between Iran and Western society. Finally, the study made some suggestions for the improvement of education in Iran.

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CONFLICT BETWEEN WESTERN AND TRADITIONAL

IRANIAN EDUCATIONAL VALUES

1. INTRODUCTION

Western or industrial countries are those which have the technology to convert raw materials into consumer goods. Developing or underdeveloped countries are those which use these products, although the raw materials used in the fabrication of these products often come from these consumer countries. However, in reality, such a relationship is not limited to consuming products. It also applies to using the West's literature, music, philosophy and thoughts and ultimately its way of "day to day" living. This means that, by accepting its sciences and technology, one would ultimately inherit its educational system and culture (1).

Science and technology, the strong agents of Western influence over developing countries, although beneficial to these countries, are also seen as a means of exploitation, and as a force used to distort and destroy the structural elements of their society, which means their traditions, cultural values, educational system and religion.

Shariati, an Iranian sociologist, said that when the machine emerged and developed in the west in the

hands of the capitalists and the rich, the machine had to produce more and more to be able to pay more for labor, and to put products on the market more cheaply than its competitors. Science and technology have contributed to the development of the machine and improved its efficiency. This development has changed the face of humanity today.

The machine progressively increased its production each year and created the need for continuous consumption. The West could not consume all of the products and new fields for consumption were needed. Production stepped over its national boundaries and pushed goods into foreign markets. The surplus goods had to go to Asia's and Africa's developing countries. Since the pattern of life in those countries did not require these products, it was necessary to make the people in those countries consumers of the European products. Their societies had to be changed so that they would need the European products.

This literally meant changing a nation: transforming a man, his clothing, his surroundings and his city. His morale and his way of thinking were the first things that had to be changed. This was accomplished by the "enlightened European intellectuals" by placing the temptation of "modernization" before the

non-European societies. A new culture called "modernization" was presented to the whole world. This meant that all of the people of the world should become uniformly alike, they should live alike and think alike. The structural elements of the personality and spirit of a man and his nation, which are religion, history, culture, ancestry, education and tradition, had to conform, wherever they were, to a single pattern which was provided by the Europeans. So the "non-Europeans" were modernized for the sake of consumption, according to Shariati (25).

Growing contact with Europe by Iranian officials and the upper class opened the road for this modernization and this produced a new threat and challenge to the traditions of the society and its educational institutions. The following statement by Nirumand, an Iranian professor of history of philosophy, addresses the issue:

The increasing Europeanization of the Iranian upper class was not limited to its demand for consumer goods of European origin. Westernization infected the consciousness of Iranian culture more than any other alien domination in the past... The Iranian of the 19th century, surprised and fascinated by advanced European technology and science, forgot their own values in the challenge of this confrontation, and came to regard his country's own traditions as backward, and made his own alienation from them the measure of his own culture... with the founding of the first university in Tehran in 1852, which was staffed mostly by European scholars, and the

establishment of foreign schools (French and English) which soon followed, this tendency of the Iranian upper class to Europeanization became institutionalized. Those who had learned in school to speak and think European, and to see their own history from a European standpoint as that of a backward country, were bound to regard as progress anything that would make their lives as nearly like a European's life as possible. This completed the vicious circle. The Westernization of consciousness, which Europe did its best to encourage, simultaneously promoted the demand for consumer goods of European origin. (19, p. 21)

The obvious and evident reality about Iran is that because of the direct and constant contact with the West since the 18th century, the country and the people underwent many changes. The process of modernization and westernization, which was stimulated by the West on the basis of political and economic interests, was also promoted by the authorities inside the country during the 20th century. This process increased the influence of the West over Iranians, and brought about changes in every aspect of their lives.

There were different reactions and responses to the new and unfamiliar forces of change and the process of modernization. Millward, an American scholar, noted that:

At one end of the spectrum there are those -- the so called Ghârbzâdegân -- who maintain that if Iran is going to take over any of the fundamental structures of Western society, it should go all the way and adopt its value system as well. At the other pole are the Sunnâtpârastân -- the more conservative and

reactionary elements of the society who say that whatever is foreign is bad and should be resisted implacably. Somewhere between these two extremes comes a typical moderate Iranian reaction which tends to accept the inevitability of the acquisition of new forms and structure, new techniques and system, but to this acceptance a significant rider is added: "We will borrow the external forms, but we will keep our own values, our own heritage and traditions and infuse the new external structure with our own unique character and identity." (16, p. 2)

Out of these reactions arise the following questions, and it is the task of this research to find some answer to these questions.

-Can Iranians today totally adopt the culture and the value system of the West, as some Iranians have suggested?

-Do the reactions of and resistance by some Iranians toward the West represent only the fear of losing their traditional values? Do they disapprove of new sciences and technology? Does their history of abuse by the Western powers cause the resistance?

-Can Iranians keep their traditional values, beliefs, pattern of life and behaviors while using the science and technology of the West at the same time?

-Can Iranian society, with its different socio-economic structure, use Western ideas, sciences and technology, especially in its most important institution: formal education? And do they want to?

The first question was answered by the 1978 revolution. The majority of Iranians are still deeply attached to Islamic culture and values. The purpose of this research is to search for some answers to the remaining questions.

Since the ideas and the new culture are introduced to people through educational institutions (formal education, radio, television, movies, theatres, books, magazines and journals), an assumption of this study is that the basis of the conflicts, and a way to overcome them, may be found in the study of educational structures. If education is an element of a culture and, as Rich suggested, if, in the long history of civilization, education has been an instrument for preserving the dominant cultural values of the society (22), then education must be studied and analyzed along with its direct relationship to the society as a whole.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to describe: (1) the historical development of Iranian society, (2) the major religions and some of the philosophies which underlie Iranian traditional values, (3) some elements of the socio-economic structure of the society and its system of education, (4) some historical developments in Iranian relationships (contact) with some Western

countries, (5) the basis for the conflict between the Western and Iranian cultures, and (6) to suggest some ideas for the improvement of education in Iranian society.

1.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Iran is one of the Third World, or developing, countries, and serves as a model for many of these countries.

Although Iran has much in common with other Third World countries, it differs in some characteristics, such as religion, traditions, language, culture, and ancient history. The misunderstanding of, misinterpretation of or quite simply the ignorance of these characteristics by authorities inside or outside the country have caused problems and produced conflicts.

Historical Sketch

During Iran's long history, it has periodically been invaded and dominated by Greek, Arab, Turkish, Mongol and other forces, but it has always maintained its national identity. Frye, an American historian, noted that:

The continuity of Persian culture is remarkable; the Persians have always been conscious

of and have kept alive their national traditions in the face of foreign invasion and conquest... there has always been a vague feeling of superiority and at the same time hospitality toward foreigners. In the past Iran was a center of civilization and culture from which influences radiated to the nomads of the northern steppes, to India, and toward the Mediterranean in the West. In recent times, perhaps the Persians have developed a kind of insularity on their mountainous plateau, but the empire of the lion and the sun, was one of the centers of civilization in world history, and this should not be forgotten. (9, p. 48)

Iran has a long history of contact with the West. It begins with the appearance of Persians on the eastern coast of the Aegean Sea and in the neighborhood of the Hellenic world by 546 B.C. (3).

During the Parthian and Sassanian periods (250 B.C. - 652 A.D.), there was a mutual exchange of ideas between Iran and the west. After the Moslems conquered Iran in the 7th century, Iran lost its direct contact with the West for some time (27). By the 16th century, during the Safavid dynasty, the contact was renewed. In this period, ambassadors from Europe arrived at the court in Isfahan, the capital city (9). Shah Abbas Safavid actively encouraged the Western countries to establish firms in Isfahan and there was a general arrival of merchants, missionaries and diplomats (13). Frye stated that, in fighting against the Ottoman Turks, the common enemy of Europe and Persia, Europe sought the aid of the Persians, during the reign of the

Safavid dynasty, and Iran played a part in the defense of Europe against the Turks (9).

This long period of contact with the Western countries was a mutually beneficial relationship. The West and Iran both gained and learned from one another and the flow of ideas and benefits was two sided. The relationship between them was based on competition and partnership, but during the last three centuries it became more and more one sided in honor of Western countries, and on the basis of superiority-inferiority (1).

The West became dominant and influential, and it was during the Qajar dynasty in 1794 that the Western influence went beyond ambassadorial and court circles, and was felt in the life of the Iranian people. The relationship then followed on the lines of European political and commercial expansion (3). Some important treaties and concessions were signed by Iran in favor of Western countries, which gave special economic and commercial privileges and rights to Great Britain and Czarist Russia. Among these, the most important were the Gulistan Treaty, 1813; the Turkman Chai Treaty, 1828; and the tobacco concession in 1890 (27).

The people expressed their opposition to the Western expansion and exploitation, and to their own government's weakness, in the Tobacco movement in 1890,

and the Constitution Revolution in 1906. Even the authorities in Iran during the Qajar Dynasty realized that the treaties and concessions benefited only the foreigners and harmed the Iranian people. Wilber, an American scholar, stated that:

The shah soon realized the concessions granted to foreign powers brought little advantage to Iran, while Tehran was crowded with adventurous strangers who hoped to make their fortunes at the expense of the gullible Persians. (27, p. 68)

This relationship with the West continued during the Pahlavi dynasty from 1921 to 1978. During the period of Reza Shah's reign, from 1921-41, European influence increased, and the country underwent a phase of intense "modernization". The impact of the West did not diminish after Reza Shah's abdication, and ideological and intellectual aspects of the West flooded the country (3). During this period westernization affected all important institutions of the society, especially the educational institutions. Mass education for boys and girls was introduced to the country. These attempts in Western-type education were made without considering the Iranian cultural values and resulted in a certain abandoning of the traditional way of life. Banani, an Iranian scholar, states that:

The attempt must in itself be looked upon as the direct result of influences from the West. The attempt represents a drastic break with

Islamic traditions, and they have been responsible for profound changes in the social and cultural patterns of the country. (3, p. 87)

In the last three decades, Western influence and presence reached its height, and Western ideas, practices and culture were promoted by authorities in the country without taking into consideration the ideals or the social and cultural foundation of Iranian society, and its socio-economic structure. In the area of formal education, the imitation of Western practices, and the use of Western books and materials, was questioned by Behrangi, an Iranian teacher and author, in his book, Search in Educational Problems in Iran.

Regarding the use of Western textbooks in teacher training colleges and universities, Behrangi stated that:

It has been a while now that Western books of Education and Psychology have been translated and printed in Iran, which is a waste of money and effort. Ninety percent of these books are written by American educators, and they have written these books about and for use in their own environment and society -- a society in which students have good eating habits and the parents of these students are educated and informed. The teachers also do not deal with problems such as having the administration not paying for the cost of repairing a leak in the classroom ceiling, such as I have had in my classroom.

He adds:

My major and big concern as a teacher is whether my students that walk through the biting cold from another village have had a

piece of bread to eat for breakfast. What good does the book of an American educator do for me and my students? (4, p. 11)

The authorities ignored these problems and, instead of making changes to improve the situation according to the society's needs and values, they continued their Westernization, and imitation of the West.

According to Keddie, an American historian, changes which were imposed from above, by the ruling class, created major tension in all areas of Iranian society. These changes created a "two culture" situation. There existed in Iran, side by side, a westernized or modernized group and another, which continued to adhere to traditional culture. This benefited some groups, especially the Westernized, new middle class and upper classes, while it disfavored the traditional middle class and the majority of the lower class. According to Keddie, modernization usually creates two cultures and this is accomplished at the expense of the society's majority (5).

These changes were not in favor of the majority of the people, and were also seen as a threat to the cultural values of the society. Therefore it resulted in hostility and resistance toward the West and the westernization process.

These conflicts, the hostility and resistance toward the West, were seen by Western people and the

media mostly as a result of "rapid modernization". It was seen as people's rejection of modern science and technology, as proof of their backwardness. The problem was not seen as the impact of the Western cultural domination upon the Iranian society in general, and upon its educational institutions in particular. There has been little effort made to identify the basis for the conflicts and to introduce ways to the Iranian people to deal with the problem.

However, the growth of science and technology throughout the world is inevitable and cannot be denied; it also brings with it some social changes. What is most important to the people of the Third World in general, and Iran in particular, is finding a manner to encounter and deal with these phenomena, a way to preserve their own identity, despite the use of Western sciences, ideas and technology.

This research was initiated within the framework of this need to discover the basis for the conflicts between Western and Iranian cultures, in order to present some ideas which, through use of educational channels, can help to overcome the situation. It is believed by the writer that the educational conflicts cannot be studied as a single, isolated matter; they must be studied in their relationship to other existing elements which make up the structure of the society.

The elements of the society and their interrelation are discussed, in an attempt to obtain a sensible conclusion.

1.3 BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

This study is based on the assumptions that: (1) there exist great cultural conflicts between Western and Iranian society, (2) these conflicts spring essentially from the political and economic experiences that Iranian people have had in the last three centuries with the Western powers, (3) these conflicts became more important in the mid-20th century, since the Western influence on the Iranian life-style became more tangible and was seen as a threat to Iranian traditional values, which are mostly shaped by Islamic doctrine, (4) the conflict in the educational system was based on the socio-economic structure of Iranian society and its value system, (5) the educational system, its plans, methods and ideas which were copied from the West, were not based on the overall needs of the country, (6) the Iranian people can overcome these conflicts, and used Western technology and science, without losing their own identity and values., And finally, (7) in order to make changes in the Iranian educational system, the socio-economic structure of the society must be changed.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order to attain precision and clarity of meaning in this study, some terms are defined here.

Values

The term value was defined by Allport, a psychologist, as "A belief upon which a man acts by preference" (2). Wahrman and Denisaff, sociologists, defined values as, abstract ideas which are held as being good and desirable (8). Kluchhohn also defined value as a conception of desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action (24). The term was defined by Davis, an educator, as the abstraction of the beliefs shared by each unique social group regarding right or wrong, moral and immoral, good and bad, and usually consists of emotionally charged preferences or standards of worth (7).

In Webster's Dictionary the term is defined as "the social principles, goals, or standards held or accepted by an individual, class, society, etc." (10)

The most comprehensive definition was made by Rokeach. He defined value as

a single belief that transcendentally guides action and judgments across specific objects and situations and beyond immediate goals to ultimate end-states of existence. It is an enduring belief which is a determinant of attitude and behavior (23).

Rokeach is of an opinion that, once a value is internalized it becomes, consciously or unconsciously, a standard or criterion for guiding action, for developing and maintaining attitudes toward relevant objects and situations for justifying one's own and others' actions and attitudes, for morally judging oneself and others and for comparing oneself with others (23). According to Rokeach, values, like all beliefs, have cognitive, affective and behavioral components, and are determined by environmental arrangement or contingencies of reinforcement that are cultural, social and personal in origin, and these provide contingencies for reinforcing other mental states and behavior (24).

In this study the values referred to are those strong internalized beliefs that are determined by society and culture, which become principles and standards which guide one's action. Values are shaped by environmental factors and historical circumstances.

Tradition

The term tradition was defined by Pearson, an anthropologist, as: meaning, values, or behavioral patterns which have been commonly accepted and used in the past and which are passed on to newcomers as a part of the content of socialization (21).

It is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "a long-established custom or practice that has the effect of an unwritten law" (10), and by Davis as "cultural elements handed down from one generation to another" (7).

The American Heritage Dictionary defines it as:

1) a mode of thought or behavior followed by a people continuously from generation to generation; a cultural custom or usage; 2) a set of such customs and usages viewed as a coherent body of precedents influencing the present (17).

The last definition is one used in this study when referring to tradition. Accordingly traditional means pertaining to or in accord with tradition.

Culture

The term "culture" was defined by Stone as a man's entire social heritage. It means all the knowledge, beliefs, customs and skills that he acquires as a member of a society (26).

The idea of culture is relatively new and is only a century old. Before that time, most human social differences were arrogantly considered to be inferior to one's own way of living, and each society believed that its own culture was truer and better than all others. When the Europeans were confronted with more exotic societies, the idea of culture was derived as a

means to escape from unquestionable assumptions about the superiority of the European way of life. The term culture implied that another way of life was different rather than inferior, and should be studied on its own terms rather than by Western standards (20).

The concept of culture originally was defined by Sir Edward Tylor, the pioneer British anthropologist, in 1871, as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (21). Later on the social scientists narrowed down the idea of culture from Tylor's broad concept.

Otten, a sociologist, holds the opinion that culture refers to the symbolic core of a society and this symbolic core includes a cognitive element, and a normative element. The first is made up of what people know or assume to be reality and the second, which is closely related to the first, deals with the rules of behavior and the standards of right and wrong (20).

According to Collins, an anthropologist, the components which make a culture are: (1) Ideas -- thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and rules; (2) Activities -- what people do; and (3) Artifacts -- the man-made products of the ideas and activities. The culture also has certain qualities, he added. These are that: (1) it is learned, and not acquired by genetic hereditary

processes, (2) It is transmitted, mostly by human language, from generation to generation (3) It is social, that is, shared in common by the members of an organized group or society, (4) It is adaptive: cultural behaviors permit human beings to fit into and adjust to their environments, (5) cultural behavior is integrated -- the ideas, activities and artifacts in a society are not only shared, but are fitted together and form a consistent and integrated whole (6).

Taking all this into consideration, Collin gave a short definition that culture is the learned, transmitted, and integrated ideas, activities and artifacts that are adaptive and that depend upon human social interaction for their existence (6).

In addition to the qualities or characteristics mentioned by Collin, Murdock has two more. Culture is gratifying. It always, and necessarily, satisfies basic biological needs, and secondary needs derived therefrom. It is ideational, that to a considerable extent the group habits of which culture consists are conceptualized or verbalized as ideal norms or patterns of behavior (18).

The term culture, in this study, refers to a collection of intellectual, ideal, literary religious and emotional expressions in forms of symbols, signs,

traditions, customs and morals, which have accumulated in the course of history, in a unique form.

Education

The term education has been defined differently in reference to different disciplines. According to Maslow, a humanistic psychologist, education is a process which aids the individual to grow to fullest humanness, that is, to the greatest fulfillment and actualization of his highest potential. Education must be seen, at least partially, as an effort to produce the good human being, to foster the good life and the good society (15). Maslow believed that education is learning to grow and learning what to grow toward (14).

Hojati, an Iranian educator, is of the opinion that the term education cannot be defined as a single word. It has two components -- Tarbiyat (training) and Talim (education). Tarbiyat can be defined as a process which stimulates and actualizes different physical, psychological and intellectual talents, aptitudes, and faculties of the learner and nurtures these inner potentialities. In this process the effort of the learner is crucial and determinant to the development and actualization of these potentialities. Talim, on the other hand, is a limited concept, and can be defined as transformation of knowledge. While the only task of Talim is limited to equipping the mind with

some knowledge which promotes mental efficiency, Tarbiyat prepares the learner to act and to encounter life with efficient skills, in every aspect (12).

While most educators and psychologists define education on an individual basis and refer to individual growth, some educators and social scientists define education in its social and cultural context.

Pearson defines education as an institutionalized process by which certain aspects of the culture of the group are deliberately transmitted from generation to generation (21). Davis holds the opinion that education is that learning process in the enculturation of an individual to become a participating member of a given society, and it is continuous throughout one's life (7).

The term was also defined by Schneider and Stone, as the instruction of the young by the older generation, the passing on and improving of the cultural heritage and the preparation of youth for adult responsibilities (26). Halsey believes that education in all societies has a functioning of cultural transmission and the formation of social personalities (11).

In this study education is mostly used to refer to these cultural and sociological functions.

West

Al-e Ahmad stated that to an European or an American, the West means Europe and the United States, and the East means Russia, China and East European countries. But actually West and East have no political or geographical meaning, but refer to two economic concepts. The "West" means those countries in which the people have enough to eat, the "East" means the hungry countries. South Africa, which is located in Africa, is a Western country, and most Latin American countries are a part of the East, although they are located on the American continent (1). In this study, the word "West" refers to West European countries and the United States.

Third World/Developing Countries

According to Nirumand, the words "underdeveloped countries" or "developing countries" are often used to identify those countries which are not up to the standard of "civilization" of Western countries. He adds that the more common terminology, which is based on the economic and socio-political nature of these countries is the "Third World" countries. The Third World is often associated with: cheap labor, starvation, no knowledge of democracy, a high rate of illiteracy, and high rates of death and birth. In these countries,

except for the minority, the population lives in poverty. The nations that belong to the Third World are: all those of the Middle East (except Israel), all those of Africa (except South Africa), all the nations of Central and South America, India and China (19).

1.5 The Research Method

This study uses an historical descriptive approach. Using documents and books, it examines facts and issues concerning past and present Iranian culture, values and systems of education and their relationship to the West. It intends to discover the basis of cultural conflicts between the West and Iran. The study draws upon the related literature and research, written both by Iranians, with different ideologies, and by people from Western and other countries, who either visited the country, worked or researched there, or are specialists in Middle Eastern affairs.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF IRANIAN
RELIGIONS AND THOUGHTS WHICH UNDERLIE
IRANIAN VALUES

To understand any society at the present time, and to know its people's mentality, their state of mind and cultural values, one needs to know the historical trend of that society. People are the offspring of their history and their identity is a collection of characteristics and qualities which are taken from their history. Any present nation was formed from the many upward and downward swings of fate in time and from the many changes that took place, either by force or by an ultimate acceptance, over the years.

Knowing how the Iranian people lived throughout their long history of existence, and what kind of philosophies and religions were dominant in the past, helps one to understand their actions and reactions toward events and other people at the present time.

2.1 The Development of Iranian Society

The country which we call Iran today is a part of the Iranian Plateau which, in the past, in addition to the present Iran, was composed of Afghanistan,

Baluchistan, Caucasia, and a large part of Mesopotamia. It had an area of 2,600,000 square kilometers (22).

At the present time, Iran has an area of 1,648,000 square kilometers (636,000 square miles), and is the second largest country in the Middle East. It is equal in size to the total combined areas of England, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Holland and Denmark, or the total combined areas of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California (16).

The country is surrounded to the East by Pakistan and Afghanistan, to the West by Turkey and Iraq, to the North by the Soviet Union and the Caspian Sea, and to the South by the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman (Figure 1).

Iran, which means "Land of Aryans", has national roots going back over 2500 years, to when the Persian Empire, under Kings Cyrus, Darius and Xerxes, extended from the Nile to the Indus River (35).

Before the migration of the Aryans to the Iranian Plateau, the inhabitants were of various ethnic groups who had similar cultures. Among these inhabitants were the Elamites, who brought into existence a remarkable civilization around 4000 years B.C.

In the middle of the second Millenium B.C. various tribes of Indo-European origin crossed the Oxus River and the Caucasus Mountains and entered the Iranian

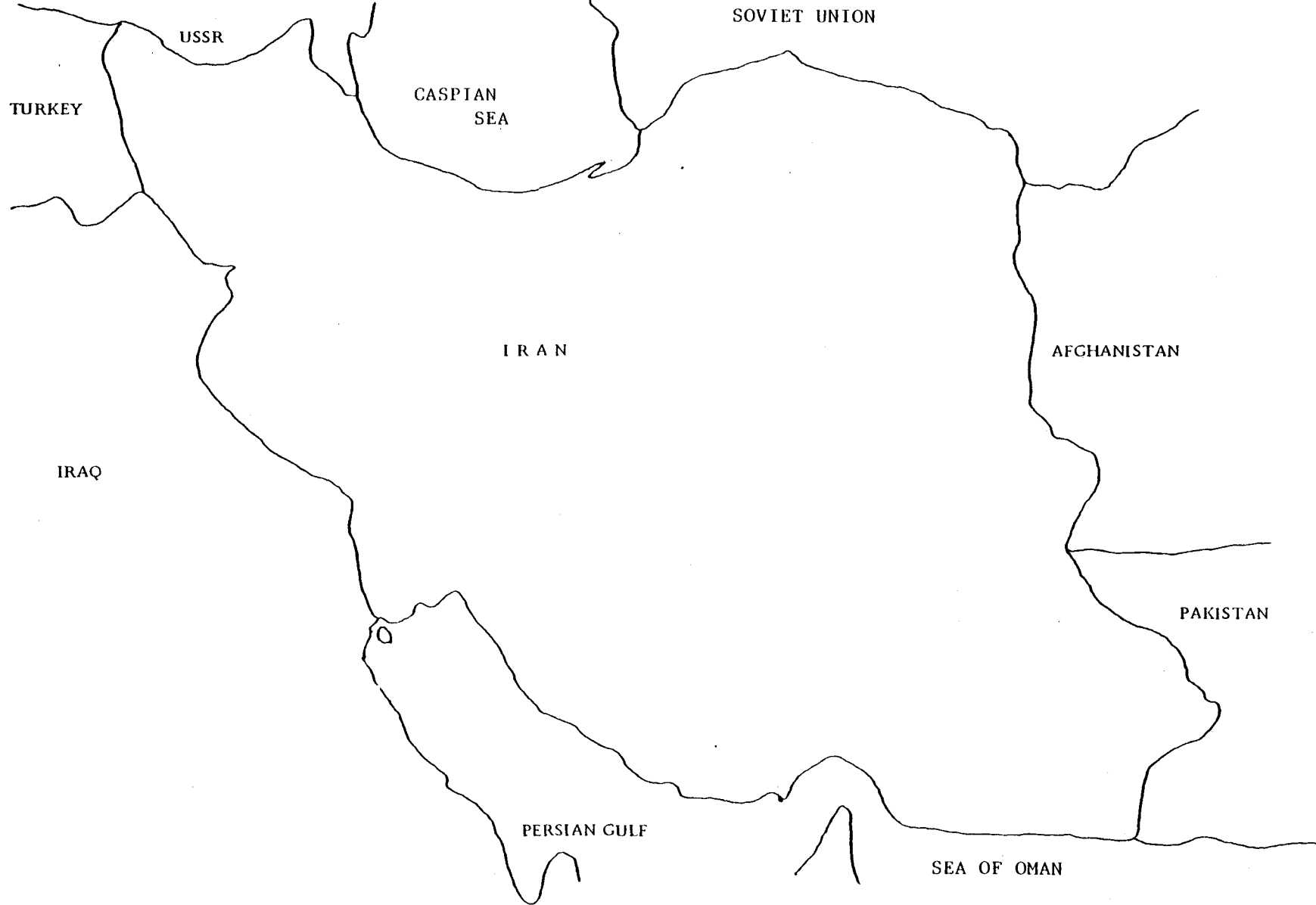


FIGURE 1. A Map of Iran

Plateau. As a whole, they were divided into two main groups. One was composed of several powerful branches known as Saka, who are the ancestors of the Indians. The second, and more civilized group, was the Arya, who are the ancestors of the Iranians who built the Aryan civilization. The migration of the Aryans did not take place later than the second Millenium B.C. (25).

When the Aryan people migrated to the upland plateau below the Caspian Sea, one of the tribes was Iranian. This tribe, called Parsa, settled in a region of the Plateau that they called Parsa and later Pars. People of other countries gave it the name of Persia. The language of the country was Persian, Farsi to the inhabitants, since it is the language of ancient Parsa. In 1935, the Iranian government changed the official name of the country to Iran (33).

Iran's geographical positions as a crossroad for trades and cultures between Europe and the Far East has had a direct bearing on her history. Although its location made the country a bridge for communication between West and East and promoted cultural interaction, it also made the country the scene of many invasions. For over 25 centuries, the country was subject to more than 35 invasions, which resulted each time in its downfall. Despite this, the people of Iran were able to maintain their national identity (2). These

invasions are the cause of the unique blend of peoples, cultures, language and religions in Iran today. In regard to this Arasteh, an Iranian scholar, states that:

The various groups inhabiting Iran today are in many cases the descendants of the invaders who came to conquer but who remained and became assimilated, in part or in whole. (1, p. 2)

The Iranians were able to keep their own culture and language alive and managed to assimilate the cultures of foreign invaders. However, it is believed that the invasion of Iran by Arabs in the 7th century, who introduced the religion of Islam into the country, was a turning point in Iranian history. It transformed the quality of social order, moral and spiritual structure and the foundation of the Iranian society (29, 33). Therefore, the history of Iran is divided into two parts -- before and after Islam.

The Characteristics of the Society Before Islam

During this period, which started around 700 B.C. and lasted approximately 1500 years, the rulership changed hands between Meds, Achaemenid, Alexander and Selucides, Parthian and Sassanian respectively. It was during this period that the old Mazdaic religion declined and that the new reformed Zoroastrian religion began to spread throughout Iran, to later become the official religion during the Sassanian period. During

this period, Iran established firm relationships with China and India in the East and with Greece, Rome, Byzantine, Syria and Egypt in the West. Consequently, religions, cultures and ideas were exchanged, trade routes were established, and special and interesting forms of cultural and intellectual life were expanded (29).

The Meds, who were one of the most important Aryan tribes, established the first kingdom by overthrowing the Assyrian empire in 605 B.C. The Medians had an absolute and despotic form of government, and all national affairs were under the control of the king. The father had absolute power in the family and polygamy was practiced (22).

During the reign of the Achaemenid -- 550 B.C. -- the society consisted of the various tribes that formed the Persians. The ruling class came from one of its clans. The descendants of the six chief families who contributed to establishing the throne formed the nobility of the land and occupied the highest civil, military, and naval positions and enjoyed exceptional privileges in the country. a large section of the male population embraced the profession of arms, and there was no large commercial or artisan class (9). The government was centralized, with a powerful king who was believed by the people to be a substitute for God.

A large section of the producers in the society were the free peasants and the peasants who belonged to the land. Forced labor, by slaves from other countries, was the norm in the economy. Nevertheless, the Achaemenid Empire was a melting pot for a variety of civilizations. During this period the domestic and foreign commerce and industries were expanded and the new inventions and discoveries were passed from hand to hand throughout the Empire. The system of taxation of agriculture, industries, ports and roads was organized. This led to an expansion of agriculture and gardening. Zoroastrianism became the predominant religion, and the king and the people became worshipers of Ahura Mazda (29).

The Empire of the Achaemenid was divided into twenty provinces, each with a mayor at the top with wide civil powers. The king ordered a number of highways to be built through the country. Agriculture was the key industry and was considered the natural occupation of a free man.

During this time, the social life of the people was directed by the religion, Zoroastrianism. A cultural characteristic of the society was the masculine religion, which emphasized the manly and heroic life. The people were cheerful and hospitable, and truth was a virtue that was highly valued among them. In family

life, the descent was carried by the male line. The father was the head of the family and large families with many children were blessed, although the best children to have were male. The women did not hold equality with men, and were not permitted to mix with males in open society. However, women in poor families enjoyed more freedom of movement than those from upper class families (9).

In 331 B.C., Greeks under Alexander of Macedonia invaded and conquered the Persian Empire. During the period of Alexander and his successors, the Hellenism civilization continued the Achaemenid's positive direction of economic and social development, and the relationship between the West and the East expanded. During this period, the West adopted many material and spiritual values of the Iranian culture, and the East acquired much scientific, philosophical and industrial knowledge from Greece. The mixing of civilizations resulted in the advancement of commerce, trade, agriculture, mining and road construction, and the exaltation of science and philosophy. It also created a mixing of religions and a mixing of races which was called Mixhellene in Greece (29). The Iranian society, during this period, changed its face and was richer materially, intellectually and spiritually. The Greek conquest gave rise to the first real cities in Iran,

and the development of cities became a means of Hellenizing new areas and of assimilating and colonizing them. It was also a good way for the king to strengthen his economic control and political authority. Each province paid taxes to the king, who owned the land granted to the cities as a concession (4).

In 129 B.C., the Parthian, the Aryan nomadic tribe, overcame the Greek dynasty and adopted older Persian ways of administration and customs with some changes. The federal government of the Parthian Empire was based on a feudal system in which the nobles and major landlords enjoyed much authority. The society was close to that of tribal democracy, and the power and authority of the king was limited. He was chosen by an Assembly (Mahastan Assembly). In this period, the military became stronger and religious practice was more relaxed. Although the Parthian accepted Zoroastrianism as their religion, nevertheless, the practice of other religions was also allowed. During this time, the priests were very powerful. Most of them were physicians, teachers and astronomers (22). Social classes were divided into three classes: noble families, minor feudal lords, and peasants. The noble families had their own feudal kingdoms including towns and villages, and furnished men for the central government. The king was chosen from these families only.

The minor feudal lords ruled smaller units of land under the allegiance of lords from the noble families (1). In this period the chief occupation was cattle-rearing, and in some parts of the country this was combined with farming. Market gardens, orchards and vineyards were also important (4). In Parthian times a strong ideological dialogue between the West and the East was begun.

The Sassanian Empire was started by 226 A.D. It established a strong central government and a powerful church. During this period, the society was divided into four professional and four social classes. The professionals consisted of the priests, warriors, administrators, and the common people (farmers and artisans). The social class consisted of the princes, heads or members of the great families, the grandees, and the nobles (4). Under the Sassanian, society became more fixed in classes or castes and mobility between classes was not easy. Traditionalism and aristocracy was also rigid. In Sassanid times economic splendour and growth were at their highest. The existing cities were expanded and new cities were built. Agriculture and trade were developed, and new roads were built and expanded. Domestic and foreign trade and the circulation of gold and copper coins were developed further. The intellectual and material culture, from architec-

ture, to dance, to the establishment of schools of medicine, philosophy, religion, logic and astronomy, was expanded (25). The Sassanian Empire, because of its caste system, the dictatorship of the king, the competition among the nobles, its rude supremacy and the rulership of the powerful priests and its unfinished wars with its Western and Eastern neighbors, time and time again faced crises and uprisings of its people. The conditions of the peasants and farmers were bad, as they were part slaves, part subjects of the nobles, the priests and the ruling class. The expenses of the luxurious life of the nobles were a weight on the shoulders of the craftsmen, peasants and farmers. All these conditions led to the fall of the powerful Empire of the Sassanian into the hands of the Arabs in the 7th century (16, 29).

The Characteristics of the Society After Islam

By 650 A.D. Iran fell under Arab domination. Once Islam was introduced into Iran it was easily accepted, since the religion was based on the concept that all men are equal and that the superiority of one over another is possible only as a result of his virtues. In reality this was not practiced. The line of Caliphs Omayyad considered non-Arabs as slaves or freed men and did not treat them as equal to Arabs. Although

Iranians had been converted to Islam, they were still forced to pay the caliphs the same tax as other nations who have chosen to adhere to their own faith. Due to this inconsistency, the Iranians made a clear distinction between the Arab domination and the religion that they had introduced (35).

Compared to the traditional archaism of Iran, the new religion, with its dislike of metaphysics and traditionalism, its insistence on moral values, and its social egalitarianism, had a modern and democratic outlook (4). It broke the caste system and a profound change in distribution of wealth, power and ownership followed. The nobles, priests and aristocrats were reduced in importance, the pastures and water were considered as belonging to all Muslims in common, and the existence of private property was recognized, approved and held as inviolable (17). Later on, under the Abbasid, the system was based on a limited feudal ownership. The state lands were reduced in size, but their extent remained considerable. The government received taxes from these lands in different ways -- either a proportion of the harvest or in coin according to the area of the territory (4).

The religion also affected the Iranian way of thinking, mores and mentality. It made them susceptible to accepting many ethical principles and new

features which were different from Iranian beliefs in the past (22). The Islamic spiritual supremacy made an obvious break between past and present. Most of the people adhered to the new religion. Under the Arab domination, the Pahlavic language and Persian script (the language and script of Iran) were abandoned and only the Arab language was used. The practice of the Zoroastrian religion went underground and Islam became the state religion (29).

The Arabs, who had a government based on tribal democracy where all were equal in terms of dress, behavior and lifestyle, were not prepared to govern as large an empire as Persia. They were forced to daopt many of the Sassanid institutions, the administrative structure and the tax system. Due to their nomadic background, they became increasingly dependent on Persians and the Iranians became more involved in central government. Under Arab domination, the medial sciences which were taught in Jundishapur University, were promoted, and the university was expanded. Arabs became the patrons of Persian scholars (16). During this time, the works of Iranian scholars and literary men who wrote in Arabic were introduced to the Muslim countries, and Iranian thinking played a great role in the development of Islamic philosophy (6). The Iranian philosophers also discovered Greek writers and,

conversely, Iranian philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and medicine spread to the West (7). At the beginning, the people accepted Arab rule easily, however, the increasing oppression and rude policy of Arab rulers during the Omayyad Caliphs, resulted in Iranian resistance. Book burnings, the massacring of well-known people, plundering, destruction of important buildings and holy places, torture, and the cruelty of Arab rulers, who despised Iranians despite their own primitive culture, gradually gave rise to Iranian resistance (29). Abu Muslim was among the first to revolt against the Arab rulers, the Omayyad, to bring about and end to their dynasty. Other resistance movements occurred during the next line of the Arab rulers, the Abbasid caliphs. These movements by various groups were led by Beh Afrid, Sindbad, Ashaq-Turk, Al-Moghaneh, Ostad-Sis, Hamzeh, Babak Khoramdin, Maziar, Afshin, and Rvandis (23). These armed revolts against Arabs were carried with strong spiritual resistance from the farthest parts of the country to Baghdad, the Caliph's capital. The loyal believers of Zoroastrianism, Manicheanism, Mazdakism, Zarvani, Zandagheh and Sheobi, who were proud of their homeland's past, and the believers of Fatalism, the Shi-ian, the Khavareg, the believers in science, philosophy, Gnosticism and Sufism, gradually began to resist Muslim fanatics and question their

books and traditions (29). The Arab rulers killed many of them each time, but the resistance continued.

Tabari, an Iranian historian, states that:

The Iranian resistance which started from the beginning of Arab domination, never stopped. It continued over time in different forms. Either, under the flag of religion (Khavarej, Ghrameteh, Ismaili, Shi'ism), under the flag of philosophy and Gnosticism, or under the intellectuals, the Iranian tradesmen and farmers always fight against their oppressors (29, p. 34).

The Arabic imitation of Sassanian aristocratic government, its cruelty, corruption and oppressive character, also gave rise to some political movements which resulted in the appearance of semi-independent Iranian dynasties. They put an end to the 205 years of absolute domination by the Arabs. These local dynasties, which lasted until the middle of the eleventh century, all made great efforts to revive Iranian language, traditions and manners. Some banned Arabic poetry from the court and made the Persian language the official language. All encouraged scholars, scientists, writers and poets. Many of the great men of the history of science and literature in Iran lived in this period -- Razi, Farabi, Aviceinna, and Biruni (25).

Other dynasties which ruled before the Mongol invasion in the 13th century had Turkish roots. During the time of these dynasties, trade and commerce was expanded, and Iran became an important factor in inter-

national trade, since it was located between India, China, and Europe. It helped to introduce and sell products from India and China to Mesopotamia, Arabia, Africa and Europe. Mining was also developed and agriculture flourished tremendously. This resulted in the appearance of many large beautiful, well populated cities throughout the country. Some cities, such as Balkh, Nishapure and Herat had a population of about one million at the time of the Mongol invasion. Architecture became important and the architects built mosques and buildings which were imitations of the Sassanid architecture, but combined Islamic design and plans. The manufacturing of textiles became an important industry, and silk-weaving and the making of gold and silver brocade increased. Carpet industries expanded and metalwork was produced everywhere. Typical Muslim religious schools and colleges (Madrassa) developed and powerful bodies of theologians who elected their own superiors could be found in the cities, where the center of social life was the Madrasa and the Mosque, the craftsmen's quarter with its workshops and the Bazaar for the small traders (4).

Social Class. Generally, after the Arab invasion, three social classes became distinctive in Iran. The first was made up of the Iranian nobles, aristocrats and lords. They were not respected by the Arabs, and

some attached themselves to respected Arab families, hoping to obtain benefits, or worked for the central government. The second class included the landowners, merchants and artisans who had a comfortable life, but had to pay taxes to the central government. The third class was comprised of peasants, who were deprived of all privileges and could not associate with the first class. The peasants were also chosen to fight enemies in the course of wars, without being paid. They received food only and a share of the war's booty. However, some of the kings, such as Yaqub Amr Safarid and Samanid treated this third class with justice and equality (22).

During the last of the Turkish dynasties, the Seljuk, another class, came into existence. They were a new bureaucracy of intellectuals and officials who worked for the government. Full development of a flourishing feudal system also occurred.

It was during this period that the first great universities in the Islamic and the civilized world were created in Baghdad, Nishapur, Balkh, Mosul, Herat and Marve by Nizamul-Mulk (4). Theology and mysticism flourished, and all forms of Persian literature evolved. This was also the age of the most poised and thoughtful poets.

The Mongol Conquest. The Mongol conquest at the beginning of the 13th century put a halt to all these accomplishments. It resulted in economic and cultural decline and destroyed much of Iran. The conquest by the nomadic Mongol tribes under the leadership of Chingiz Khan, was accompanied by extreme cruelty and systematic extermination of the civilian population in many of the large cities (8). The large and prosperous cities, some of which had a population of 100,000 to 1,000,000 people, were razed to the ground, fields and farms were destroyed and dams were broken. The Mongol catastrophe can be summarized as: they came, plundered, burned, killed, stole, and left (35).

The rulership of the Mongols was extremely cruel and rude. It resulted in a decline of the population, due to the massacre or abduction into slavery and captivity of the people. An increase in the number of nomads in the country resulted and led to a decline of the economy, especially in agriculture.

Under the first Khans of Mongol, the organization of the society was pastoral, nomadic feudalism with the Khan at its head. They supported the nomadic way of life and were antagonistic to a settled life, agriculture and towns. They exploited settled peasants and town-dwellers. These nomadic cattle-rearing people had no agricultural tradition and were always armed and

strong. They ruined grass, trampled crops in their migration and robbed unorganized and unarmed peasants. Later their policy changed toward the creation of a strong central authority, and the state political role was transferred from the nomad Mongol aristocracy to the Iranian civil bureaucracy. This resulted in some economic improvements at the time (8).

The Mongols did not bring any religion with them, and their efforts to direct Iranian civilization toward Christianity or the Chinese religion were not effective. Nevertheless, they carried the Islam and the Persian languages to China. With time, they were influenced by Iranian social and spiritual life and became Iranian themselves (29). Under the influence of Iranian ministers the Mongols developed better administration and became patrons of art and science.

During this period the Persian literature flourished and two great poet-philosophers, Rumi and Sadi existed (1). The Iranians also had close contact with Chinese, Arab and European peoples. This resulted in the exchange of various sciences, industries and handicrafts between Asian and European countries. Political relations expanded to the extent of exchanging ambassadors (22). Despite much construction by the later Mongols, the standard of living failed to reach the

levels achieved before the Mongol invasion. Agriculture never recovered either. Tabari states that only a few Mongol words entered the Persian language. He feels that, because of their rude domination at the beginning, and their corruption later on, the Mongols profoundly damaged Iranian civilization -- the civilization that, before their invasion, was so flourishing it could be called the Eastern Renaissance (29).

Tamurlane's Rule. By 1375, Timur or Tamurlane, a Turk from Central Asia, pushed into the country from the northeast. Tamurlane's rule was reactionary. It returned Iranian society to a feudal structure based on nomad pastoralism, as during the time of the Mongols. The community was divided into four basic groups: the aristocracy of the pastoral nomads, the sedentary provincial aristocracy that was not involved in government service, the senior members of the Muslim hierarchy, and the civil servants. As before, all the taxes were paid by the peasants, and they had to pay many different taxes to their feudal lord. Despite their harsh and reactionary rulership, the rulers patronized Iranian arts and in painting, architecture, calligraphy and book illumination, new schools developed. The invasion and domination of Iran by Mongols and Timurid, however, is believed by scholars to be the beginning of the downfall and decline of Iranian civilization.

In the later half of the 15th century, the Safavid dynasty came to power. They imposed on the Persians a moderate form of Shi'ism, known as the twelve-Imam, which became the official religion of Iran. The state was a theocracy and was held together by one religion and a single party (4). This mixing of religion and politics was made in order to resist the Ottoman Turks.

During this period, the conception of society was autocratic and arbitrary. The position of the ruler was reinforced by the theory of divine right. The absolutism in religion was extreme and affected all aspects of social and political life. The government became centralized and local rulers were eliminated. A military force from non-tribal elements was established and most of the lands came under the control of the state. There was also a great increase in lands held by members of the religious class and, in some parts of the country, the religious class formed an important element in the land owners class (17). There were also very extensive lands which belonged to Shi-ite religious institutions for pious purposes. During the rule of the Safavid the power of the tribes was reduced gradually and the position of the town bureaucracy was strengthened.

It was during the Safavid dynasty (Shah Abbas' reign) that the Sherley brothers came from England to

the Iranian court. They brought with them the secrets of English artillery and helped to build an artillery factory in Iran (22). A number of magnificent buildings, which have retained their artistic beauty to this day, were built and contacts with the West increased. Some concessions were granted to the British (1).

In order to improve trade, a uniform monetary system was established and the economy was strengthened. The main source of government revenue was the land tax and the pastoral nomads remained of fundamental importance in the economy. The most important of the local industries was weaving and fine and costly textiles were produced. The manufacturing of carpets reached a very high standard and these were exported mainly to Europe. The position of merchant was a highly respected one. Foreign trade was run by the Armenians, the Dutch, the French, the English and the Hindus (4). During the Safavid reign Persian nationalism revived and religious fanaticism began to develop.

After the fall of Safavid, at the beginning of the 18th century, the Afghans dominated Iran for a short time. After the Afghans, the Afshar dynasty was established by Nadir in 1735. He tried to impose a centralized government, introduced the Sunni sect of Islam as the state religion and reduced the power of the Shiite

religious authorities. Following Nadir's death, the Zand dynasty, under Karim Khan, was established. He dropped the title of Shah and made some social improvements (4).

By 1796 the Qajar dynasty was established. This period can be considered as the beginning of Modern Iran. During this period, the relationship with Europe started. First Iranian students were sent to Europe and then the Anglo-Russia rivalry of interests in Iran began. Efforts were made to westernize the country. Royal colleges were opened. The army was modernized. Private ownership of land increased and the large landlords became the most powerful group in the country. The feudal economy was transformed into a money economy and it prepared the way for the free trade system. It was during this time that some concessions were granted to the British, giving rise to strong public opposition. The government was centralized, but the system of government changed only from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy, resulting from the constitutional revolution in 1906 (4).

By 1925, the Pahlavi dynasty was established and the country underwent drastic social and economic changes. The free trade economy grew, the relationship with the Western countries expanded and a wave of nationalism started.

The Qajar and Pahlavi periods coincide with a time of many changes in trends of thoughts all over the world and in Iran, too. Since the important part of this study is about these periods, more details will be given in the next chapters.

In all, Iran was ruled by one dynasty after another for over 2500 years. A small segment of the upper class of society, composed of nobles, land owners and later on the clergy, and headed by a despot divine king, had absolute control over the people. They had all the wealth and all the privileges. The social structure and social relations were based on a strict hierarchy and high positions could only be inherited within the rich families. The majority of the people -- the peasants and farmers -- were deprived of all rights and privileges, and had a subservient position in the society.

Injustice, oppression and the plundering of the peasants and common people were practiced throughout history. This situation created a sense of helplessness among the common people and resulted in their resorting to the supernatural for help, or in their submission to fate. Fatalism, which was fostered by cultural traditions, became a strong value among the majority of Iranian people. In regard to this Arasteh, an Iranian scholar, comments that:

Fate is a frequent theme in Persian literature and daily conversation. Persians commonly use the expression En Shallah (if God wills) when speaking of a nature of a future event. Yet the importance that Persians attach to fate depends on the particular individual and the situation. To most of them fate implies that life is unpredictable and one must expect both good and bad... Those at the lower end of the social scale, the peasants and laborers, have far less opportunity to change their environment; religion and superstition offer them some hope (1, p. 42).

The barbaric invasion of Iran by many forces and the different hardship that people had to deal with as a result of these invasions also brought about a sense of instability and insecurity, resulting in a conservative attitude toward newcomers and their culture. Thus the people became more attached to their traditions and retained them throughout history.

2.2 Major Religions

Throughout Iran's long history and up to the present day, the lives of people have been directed by the religions which were dominant at the time. These religions and their ethics and morals were the base of the social life and behavior of the people. They affected all aspects of their lives. In some periods, the state was dominated by the religion, as in the time of the Sassanid (3rd century), the Safavid (15th century), and at the present time, since 1978. The major religions appearing in Iran were Zoroastrianism, Manicheanism, Mazdaik and Islam.

Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism, sometimes also called Mazdakism, is the most ancient religion of Iran. It was founded around 600 B.C. by Zoroaster, the prophet (7). The prophet's birthplace is unknown, although some believe that it was Azarbaijan, some Ray and some Balkh. However, it is known that Eastern Iran, Sistan and Afghanistan were the regions of his prophetic activity. Zoroaster, priest, or Magi, was 30 years old when he proclaimed himself as the prophet and invited people toward monotheism (22). The religion that he introduced was concerned with the social welfare of the community and had a progressive philosophy underneath. He attempted to direct the movement of society from nomadic pastoral life to a town dwelling and settled agricultural life. In order to unite the people, he introduced monotheism in place of polytheism and nature worshipping. He stressed individual responsibility toward the welfare of the community (11).

Ethical Dualism. The religion that Zoroaster introduced was based on a highly abstract theology concerning a dualistic concept of the universe. Zoroaster claimed that the universe is based upon the two forces: Good and Evil, or light and darkness. These two forces are constantly in struggle. The "goods" are directed by Ahura Mazda and the "evils" by

Ahriman. He proclaimed that Ahura Mazda was the paramount deity and the creator of man. The qualities of wisdom, goodness, purity and light were attributed by him to Ahura Mazda (20). The archangels, named for the virtues of righteousness, good mind, dominion, integrity, immortality and devotion were also on the side of Ahura Mazda, while falsehood, wrath, greed and impurity were on the side of Ahriman (27). The Ahriman was also responsible for such natural calamities as droughts, floods, earthquakes, disease and death (20).

According to Zoroaster, the struggle between the two forces, one for truth and righteousness, and the other falsehood and wickedness, had for battleground the inner world of man. In this constant mortal conflict, man has to choose to resist or yield to the temptations of Ahriman and make his moral choices between the spirits of good and evil. It was only by choosing the spirit then, which is righteousness, that man can secure his mortal life.

Zoroaster preached that if man flees to Ahura Mazda and seeks his protection, Ahura will strengthen him to fight against evil and guide him toward righteousness. To do good, and to resist and fight against evil is an ethical necessity, and man's first task is to fight temptation and conquer it (9). In this religion the constant ideal is good human conduct

based on the principle of "good thoughts, good words and good deeds." Zoroaster preached a practical morality which expected each individual to fight for truth against darkness and lies (32). He preached that every man must shoulder his own responsibility and never put it upon another. According to Zoroaster, the struggle between good and evil forces will continue until at last mankind will crush and defeat the evil. Evil and wickedness will vanish and the world will be morally perfect (9).

Zoroastrian View of Life. Zoroaster had an optimistic view of life and to him life was worth living. Long and happy life was a major theme of his prayers. The world is seen as full of imperfection, but it is man who, through his struggles, makes the world perfect. Every victory over physical forces, every single reform in social life and every step in the moral advancement of man, weakens these imperfections. Since the struggle between good and evil forces is the basic principle, to live, therefore, is to struggle. The heavenly and earthly life is a result of the ongoing warfare between good and evil. Life persists only because of the constant activity of these two opposing forces (9). This combative view of life led to a specific way of thinking and directed the behavior of the people toward specific virtues. In regard to this,

Dhalla states:

As the struggle is the basic principle of religion, man's whole attention is devoted to preparing himself for the warfare. In such a system of thought, courage, manliness, self-improvement, diligence, justice and truthfulness would naturally become primary virtues; whereas humility, forgiveness and mercy would receive secondary importance (9, p. 86).

Although the religion was based on the concept of dual forces, it was basically monotheistic, because of the belief in the superiority of the Ahura Mazda. The religion became biotheistic, under the Sassanid dynasty which gave an important position to Ahrimn (3). In the Zoroastrian religion, the fire was an attribute of Ahura Mazda and considered as holy, and the maintenance of the temple fires was a primary task of the priest (Magi). Water, fire, air and earth were the sacred elements and polluting these elements was prohibited (27). The religion highly valued agriculture and considered it as a holy work.

The teachings of Zoroaster, which he claimed to have received from Ahura Mazda by divine inspiration, were collected in the sacred book of Avesta, which has survived to our times in part only.

Zoroastrianism, which was the official religion of the Sassanid dynasty, was replaced by Islam during the 7th century. Most of the believers migrated to India and Bombay, centuries later is still the center of the

Zoroastrians who kept to the traditions of ancient Iran. Some Zoroastrians also remain in Iran today. Although Zoroastrianism was replaced by other religions, its elements formed the matrix of Iran's subsequent religious development and every Iranian religion displays certain motifs or characteristics associated with it. Frye states that the religion exerted a strong influence on other religions, including Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The concept of a dualism of good and evil seems to be the prime feature which influenced other religions (13). The Semitic idea of some kind of survival after death, which developed into a belief in immortality, also penetrated the Jewish doctrine and, through this filter, Zoroastrianism influenced Christian theology (35).

There are some Zoroastrian elements, customs and beliefs that are directly used and practiced in Iran today. One of its most famous and oldest festivals is still held: the popular and joyful Nauruz, the celebration of the New Year, 21st of March. The persistence of beliefs relating to fire also constitutes one of the salient features of Iranian folklore. For example, in the evening when a lamp or candle is lit, the light is often saluted with the word Sálám or with the reciting of the Cálávát prayer. Metaphorically, if a person is

deeply distressed it is said that his lamp is extinguished, and the phrase is used in the same way when somebody has died (18).

The Zoroastrian religion, during the Sassanid dynasty, was faced with two strong religions which were derived from its own doctrines. These two were Manicheism and Mazdakism.

Manicheism

Mani, the founder of Manicheism in the Third century A.D., was from a noble family of Babel. He proclaimed himself a prophet at the age of 24 (22). He attempted to reform Zoroastrianism and claimed to have been sent by God to fulfill promises which had been revealed previously. He introduced a universal religion which included all races and conditions of man. The religion was a mixture of Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Buddhism, and was derived from the cult of Iran and Babylonia (14). The religion was sharply dualistic and was based on the belief in two primeval and eternal principles -- light and darkness -- which are sometimes expressed as spirit and matter. It retained the principle of opposing forces of good and evil, of light and dark, and it taught that man must free his own soul by asceticism and denial of appetites of the flesh (32).

According to the religion, the spirit of man is light and his body darkness. The emancipation of the soul from the body is the whole center of the religion (14). In the fight between light and darkness, Mani believed that the darkness dominates the light and he saw man as the creator of the power of darkness. This pessimism led to the development of the Gnostic cult and the Indian Yogi (29).

Mani preached that man is born of God but, because of his ignorance, a layer of dust covers his true personality. Man has the ability to remove the dust and recover his authentic being (7). However, since man is ignorant, evil, and the creator of darkness, he needs a guide to help him find his true being and free himself from the evil and the corruption which belong to darkness. In order to free himself, man must reject worldly materials. Mani introduced himself as a divinely appointed guide to help the people overcome the darkness, since he believed that light would separate from darkness in the end and that eternal peace would result (22).

The religion basically consisted of a Gnostic doctrine which was deeply and inherently pessimistic. Manism was a way of protesting and expressing the privations and suffering of the masses under the Sassanid, and because of this it was able to convert many of

the people who labored in towns and villages. Bausani, an Italian historian, in regard to this, states that:

Mani, however, had come from the land of Babel to raise a resounding cry throughout the world... despite its absolute otherworldliness, which could easily have rapped any sense of protest, Manichaenism appears from a social point of view to have represented one of the first attempts to overcome the despotism of the early rulers of Iran (4, p. 54, 57).

Mani wrote several books, one of which -- the Arjang, with its delightful pictures and miniatures -- is famous in the East. Mani, who at first found honor with some Sassanian princes and the king Shapur, was soon faced with the opposition of the Zoroastrian priests, which resulted in his execution by the Sassanian King Bahram (27).

Manism spread as far as China and Rome, and had followers in Syria, Egypt, Africa, Spain, Italy, India and Southern Europe for many years. The religion survived, under the name of Zandegheh for three centuries after Islam's arrival in Iran (3).

Mazdakism

Mazdak, a priest from the city of Naishpur, proclaimed himself a prophet in the late 5th century (27). Although Mazdakism was derived from Manicheism, it was different, since the principle of good and evil was seen in a more materialistic manner. It insisted on the chance nature of liberation and illumination which

all people could obtain (4). While the religion retained the concept of the conflict between light and darkness, it saw the light as a base, which is aware and has voluntary and determined movement. Darkness was seen as blind, unaware and accidental, and its action and movement were involuntary. The existence of the material world which resulted from the mixture of light and darkness was a matter of chance and coincidence, according to Mazdak (29).

Mazdakism propounded an equalitarian view of society, which called for equality in the distribution of goods, and required that the possessions and property of the rich be given to the poor (14). Mazdak preached that all wealth and goods were given by Ahura Mazda to all people and that they must use it equally. Since some people took over most of these riches and goods by force, the injustice in the world started.

In order to end the evils, such as greed, hatred, discord and war, it was taught that their natural courses, the desire for women and wealth, must be neutralized. Although Mazdak believed that the light is superior and could dominate darkness, he taught that, until the moment of victory of the light, man must reject worldly pleasures, since salvation lies in avoiding these worldly pleasures. The religion promoted mortification and prohibited war, killing and

disputes (22). It has been written by some people that Mazdak preached that women should be held in common as should be wealth. Bausani states that this idea is exaggerated, but that the religion can be seen as a reflection of a desire to break the rigid social system through exogamy and mixed marriages (4).

Mazdakism was a revolutionary faith that had a social base. Its goal was to show the people the roots of injustice. It was a movement against the nobility, slavery and caste system of its time. In regard to this Ghirshman, a French historian, states:

In a society like that of the Sassanian Empire, in which the various classes were in water-tight compartments, where the plebian could never hope to raise himself above the station into which he was born, where the social system was based on the family, property, and rigid class distinctions, the programme put forward by Mazdak was revolutionary... Certain scholars explain it as a reaction of the slaves, of the peasants who had become semi-slaves, and of the formerly free population of town and country against feudalism and its "enslaving" system; as a class struggle which was a protest against the harms of the nobility in which so many women were incarcerated (14, p. 302).

Mazdakism was embraced by King Kobad and was proclaimed the national religion, but it was soon faced by the opposition of the aristocracy and the priests. This resulted in the execution of Mazdak and the massacring of his followers. However, the religion was practiced

under different names, even centuries after the Islamic conquest (22).

The concept of the struggle between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, light and darkness, was the central idea and thought in Zoroastrianism, Manism and Mazdakism, and it also penetrated the philosopher's thoughts after Islam became the major religion of Iran.

Islam

The religion of Islam, which means "submission to the will of God", was introduced by Muhammad the prophet, a citizen of Mecca in Western Arabia. In 610 A.D., Muhammad, at the age of forty, told his relatives that he had had some special experiences which he interpreted as visions sent by God, and that consequently he had the deep conviction that he had been chosen and commissioned as the Messenger of God (Allah). He claimed that he found these revelations in his heart, and that they were not the product of his conscious mind. The revelations were collected by scholars and introduced as a book, the Holy Quran (31). According to Islam, Muhammad was the last and greatest prophet, and the Quran is God's final message to man.

The Basic Principles. The fundamental base of the faith is that there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad

is his prophet, and there will be a general resurrection and a Last Day of Judgment of all mankind (27). According to believers of Islam God is the greatest and the most exalted of all entities. The main contents of the early messages Muhammad preached was that God is good and all-powerful, God will bring all men to himself on the Last Day for judgment, the world was created by God and is controlled by him, and man must be grateful to him and worship him only (31).

Islam teaches that only one force, the force of God, exists in nature. However, within man, Satan wages war against God and man is the battleground. The two deities are inside man and not in nature. Satan is seen as a contestant against man, not against God (26), and it is Satan who tries to persuade man to commit sinful actions (30).

Its View of Man. Man, according to Islam, is a two dimensional creature. God made him from clay and breathed his spirit into him; he is composed of two contradictory elements. At the same time, man has a free will and his free will enables him to decide either to go toward his mud nature or toward the spirit of God. This constant striving and struggle takes place in man's inner being, and he has to choose one of the sides as determinant for his destiny (26). Since man has a free will, he is a responsible being. He is

responsible toward God, society and himself. Therefore he is expected to avoid injustice and corruption, promote brotherhood and be concerned about the welfare of the community he is living in. He should also work toward his own transcendence (21). And since God created man with moral responsibility, there is therefore a necessity for a day of judgment with reward and punishment, according to man's conduct in the world (19).

General Ethical Principles and Moral Values. The general principles of Islam which govern the conduct of the believers are based on the belief that God, who created men and women, is aware of everything they do, and sees and hears all of their conduct. Therefore, the believers must be good and just and fear God. They should be moderate in conduct and command, and keep a limit in everything they do. Forgiveness, when someone is angry, is seen as avoiding a great sin. There are some restrictions and conditions in the case of retaliation, and it is good to be patient. No one is obligated or expected to go beyond his capacities, according to Islam, but believers should keep their oaths to God, and not break them (10).

For a just society, Islam teaches that good personal conduct is necessary. Dealing justly with people, especially orphans and the poor, is right.

Honesty, justice and charity toward the needy, orphans and the poor, are urged. There are also some conducts which are prohibited in Islam: talking behind someone's back, anger that allows people to do evil things, listening to music which arouses emotions, and free sex which destroys both love and marriage as a family bond (12). There are other conducts which are severely condemned: homicide, perjury, slander, adultery, theft, fraud and also gambling, drinking intoxicating beverages, eating pork and engaging in usury (27).

In a just society, women must be modest and dress in a proper fashion without being exhibitionist. Veiling is thus seen as a natural device of the female. Since women are different biologically and emotionally, they should leave matters of justice, government and war to men. Men must respect the honor of other men (12). The Quran delineates the ultimate masculine role as the head of the family, but asserts the moral and proprietary rights of women (27).

According to the Islamic scholars, since man is composed of clay and the breath of God, he has need of both elements and must fulfill the needs of both. He is encouraged to live and use God's riches and affluences, be active and struggle in life, and spend his wealth; but he must do this for God and for truth and have God in his mind at all times (5, 26). However,

Islam does not give priority to any kind of material affluences or hedonistic comforts as basic to happiness, since the only path to happiness comes from spiritual life, framed by moral standards (24). There are some obligations that the believers, the Muslim, must obey and perform in order to fulfill the spiritual life. These are: the five daily ritual prayers, the fast from sunrise to sunset during the month of Ramadan, the giving of required and voluntary alms and the pilgrimage to Mecca, once in a lifetime (33).

In governing the people, Islamic society goes by the law of the Quran and on the basis of God-given norms and patterns. These laws can be improved, but cannot be changed. Islam basically advocates an egalitarian society where all men, despite their race or language, should live in brotherhood. The religion advocates moral and social ethics and is concerned with the community rather than the individual (12).

Shi'a and Sunni. After the death of Muhammad, controversy appeared among his followers over the question of who should succeed the prophet. The Shiites believed that Ali, the prophet's cousin and son-in-law, was the true and legitimate heir of Muhammad and his descendants, down to the twelfth Imam, were leaders of the Islamic community (15). They believed that Muhammad publicly designated Ali as his successor. The

Sunnis insisted that the successor must be elected; therefore three caliphs ruled before Ali as a result of this belief.

For the Sunnis, the successors of the prophet are the political leaders. For the Shiites, the successors, Ali and his house, are not just political but also spiritual leaders. The spiritual leadership continues through the line of Ali in a series of twelve Imams, who are considered to have divine infallibility and are capable of working miracles. All of the Imams died by violence. The twelfth Imam, the Mehdi, disappeared and is believed to be in concealment, waiting to return at the end of the world. He will destroy evil and will establish the final triumph of good and justice (33). Since, for the Shiites, there must always be an Imam to lead the society, the Hidden Imam or Mehdi is the Imam of age and they see him as their savior (15).

While for the Sunnis the life of Muhammad is all-important, the Shiites are more concerned with the line of Ali and his descendants. In this regard, Hass states:

The cult of Ali, Hussein, and the other holy Imams is the core of the Shi'a religion. This cult is a worship of martyrs. For, like Ali and Hussein, the other Imams are reported to have met violent death, with the exception of the last, the hidden Imam. The suffering and martyrdom of saintly quasi-deified personali-

ties, gives to the Shi'a its color. There is an atmosphere of melancholy around it which is likely to arouse deep emotions and passions and may easily incite outbursts of fanaticism (15, p. 79, 80).

For the Shiites, in addition to the basic principles of Islam, belief in divine unity, prophecy and resurrection; there exist two other principles: belief in divine justice and belief in the Imams as the successors of the prophet. The last two principles are not accepted by the Sunnis. Belief in Holy War, which Muslims must engage in if Islamic lands are under attack, is only held by the Shiites (20). The concealment of faith or disavowal of certain religious practices, in order to escape a definite danger of death is also practice by the Shiite, due to the fact that for centuries the Sunnis ruled over them. The Shiite are also required to fulfill some religious duties such as: urging people to do good, dissuading people from evil, defending those who support the message of God and the Imams, and avoidance of or even fighting those who are the enemies of God and the Imams (15).

In the past, Shiism was an expression of partisan struggle and political resistance against the absolute rulers. Today in Iran, the Shi'a faith is the official religion and almost all of the people are Shiites.

Sufism. Sufism is a part of Islamic mysticism, which is concerned with self and self realization. The

aim of Sufism is that of inner purification, the purification of the soul in order to learn the truth (19). In their practice of purification of self, Sufis choose an object to identify with. Early Sufis, in the 8th century, tried to identify themselves with the saint personalities, while later Sufis sought self-realization by making God their object of identification. They came to believe that God himself was the manifestation of truth and their object of desire (1). To them love of God is the only real condition, and every other thing is illusion. The Sufi movement on the part of some Muslims is based on the idea that worldly pleasures keep man from being truly concerned about the salvation of his soul. They feel that materialism supports and perpetuates political tyranny. Therefore, they choose to have a simple life and practice asceticism (20). Sufis are not concerned with the precepts of orthodox Islam. They seek a direct and personal experience of God, through strict asceticism, prolonged thought or music or dancing which results in a state of trance. However, Sufis also believe that the Twelfth Imam is alive and exists within the hearts of men and is the inner guide of man in his journey to find himself (19). Sufis developed mystic poetry and music to aid achieving the selfless state and, poetry was the way that the mystic expressed his feeling and his

religion (13). Many great Iranian philosophers and poets belonged to this school and Persian poetry is deeply mystical. Since the Sufi orientation is toward the mystical truth of Islam, it attracts many Iranians, especially the educated ones who, while living in the real world, need spiritual realization as well without being religious in the traditional sense. There are also some important Sufi or mystical organizations in Iran today (20).

Islam, which was brought by Arabs to Iran in the seventh century, is the dominant religion in Iran today. Ninety-eight percent of the people are Muslim, and 93 percent of the Muslims are of the Shi'a faith (34). For the majority of Iranians, Islamic laws and moral values govern every aspect of their lives and the Islamic morals are the base for all of their thoughts and behaviors. In this respect, Frye comments:

Religion for the Persian means much more than theology; it is traditionally their society, their law and culture, as well as their system of ethics and behavior... the Quran, the holy word of God revealed to the prophet Muhammad, is more than an ethical guide and the road to salvation for a Muslim; it shows him how he should live and organize his state or society. More significant than personal ethics are the social ethics contained in it (13, p. 14).

2.3 Major Philosophies and Thoughts

In the domain of philosophy and thoughts in the past, Iranians have been affected by other cultures and have also affected others themselves. It is believed by scholars that in the past Iran was one of the centers of philosophical thought. Among Iranians themselves, while the thought and behavior of the common or uneducated people was greatly directed by religion, the intellectuals and educated people were affected by the philosophical thought. Although in Iranian history there are many philosophers and great thinkers, there are some who stand out, whose ideas and thinking affected Iranian thoughts more than others. Iranian literature is full of their works. For the purpose of this study, their basic ideas are examined here.

Al-Farabi

Farabi, who lived during the 10th century, belonged to the school of peripatetic; the philosophy of Aristotle. he believed that, in order to perceive reality, intellectual reasoning was necessary. The rules of conduct are taught by reason and it is reason which decides if a thing is good or evil. He taught that for anything to exist there must be a cause, and since the world was composite, it therefore had a beginning or was caused. The series of causes and

effects depend upon some necessary link and this link is the first being: God. The first being is uncaused and it is the cause of all that exists. He is eternal, perfect, simple, unchangeable and free of all accidents (10).

Farabi's important ideas about human life are sociological. He sees that social life is necessary for man and that he is not able to live without it. The social life facilitates man's work and makes his life richer. Society, to him, is like a human body, which has a boss -- the heart -- and the other organs -- which are the servants of others, having others serve them in turn. In human society these trends of matters and duties are voluntary (29). He describes two kinds of society: the scholarly society and the descending society.

The scholarly society is the one in which justice and real happiness are dominant. The ruler or the boss is wise and has the power to rule and to guide the people. This society is like a healthy human being. Farabi teaches that in order to have a healthy society, the ruler must be physically and spiritually strong, be intelligent and like science. He must be lustless and generous, have no desire for material matters and affairs, love justice, hate cruelty, and support the

truth (29). In order for a ruler to have these qualities, he must acquire all theoretical and practical sciences of his time. This will lead him to an active and energetic intellect and wisdom, and truth will inspire him as a result.

Farabi sees many descending societies. In some the goal is collecting wealth, in others it is oppression, some only seek pleasure, for some disorder is dominant, for others lies and corruption are dominant and for some the goal is fame. Farabi sets science as the base for selecting a ruler. He sees a good society as having a ruler who is capable of ruling by the formula of metaphysical philosophy. Farabi was among the first in Iran to discuss society's problems.

Ibn-Sina

Ibn-Sina, who is known as Avicenna in the West, was born in 980 A.D. He was a philosopher and a physician, who also belonged to the peripatetic school. His philosophy was based on logic and reasoning. He believed that through science and knowledge man can perceive the realities of the world and the truths. He taught that man is able to do this through reasoning. Ibn-Sina can be counted among the metaphysicians. He believed in fatalism, and that God created man and has knowledge of the whole. For him, man does not have control over his life, and it is God's will which

directs his life. What happens to him he cannot change. Therefore fate plays the important role in man's life and it is the will of the creator that directs events and puts order into nature's disciplines (29). In human life, one who wants to be perfect and be happy in this world and the next world should acquire many sciences and must also perfect his power of action in accord with the virtues, for which basic qualities are purity, wisdom, courage and righteousness (10).

Ibn-Sina believed that the universe has only one origin, God, and that the soul of man wishes to return to and be absorbed into its origin. This absorption is possible only when the soul becomes purified of the stain of the flesh and when it is aware of the inner meaning of all things. He sees that through the exercise of reason what is potential within the soul reaches actuality through the enlightening influence of the universal soul in accordance with the degree of receptivity within the soul and its state of preparedness, which is the result of virtues (10).

Ibn-Sina wrote many books and papers on various scientific subjects. The "Qanun", a book on medicine, was for many centuries used as a textbook in Europe (16). He influenced the best brains of the East and

the West for many generations after his death (8).

Al-Ghazali: 1058-1111

Al-Ghazali was a philosopher and theologian, who was also an eminent religious leader. He mixed the Muslim theology with mysticism and reformed the Muslim orthodox theology (8, 27). Although Ghazai was defending the religion of Islam, he finally became a follower of Sufi mysticism. "He gave up his university seat to practice the Sufi way of self-perfection" (1). He believed that the teaching of logic was necessary, but he always argued against the approach of rationalist philosophy and reasoning. He taught that we must look at different points of view with logical doubt, and in order to criticize a religion and its weakness, a complete knowledge of that religion and its theory must be achieved first. He believed that the world has only one origin -- God -- and that the material world is created by him. God is the inventor of the essence from non-existence.

When he became a Sufi, he saw that the only way to perceive the origin is through illumination and ascetism. He believed in the bodily resurrection, since he saw that the body has some main components which are immortal (29). He looked on everything with doubt and his way of approaching other views was with

criticism. His criticism of others was a way to prove the existence of the creator.

Ghazali is known as the best Muslim writer on ethical subjects. He wrote extensively on ascetic and mystic theology. The rules that he cited for man's spiritual self-discipline are summarized as follows:

1. Man's intention must be good and lasting without change.
2. Unity of purpose must be maintained in serving Allah (God) alone.
3. He must conform throughout to truth with self-discipline.
4. Against procrastinating there must be steadfast zeal and determination.
5. It is necessary to conform in life to established practice and to avoid innovations.
6. With a sense of dependence on Allah, humility should be cultivated toward men.
7. While salvation is by faith, yet this includes true fear and hope.
8. A life of devotion and prayer is to be recommended.
9. One must watch continuously over his own heart to banish from it everything but Allah.
10. He sought consecration to that knowledge wherein one could see Allah (10).

Omar Khayyam: 1123 A.D.

Khayyam, who is known as a poet in the West, was also a mathematician, an astronomer and a philosopher, a man of science, to Iranians (4). Khayyam was the most free thinking philosopher of Iran. His hedonistic philosophy was a way to resist against the dominant religion of his time. He deeply believed in the power of fate and determinism, and his views on life were pessimistic and full of doubts. He believed that in this world man is a captive of his fate and is powerless in the face of natural difficulties. His will is weak before life's ups and downs. Man's life is already written for him and his efforts to direct his life are worthless. There is a power above man, that directs his life (29). He did not believe that there exists a Heaven or a Hell and since man does not know what the future will bring, he must use his time in the best way and enjoy himself fully, he concluded. The basic and fundamental parts of his thoughts are: hedonism, determinism, doubtfulness and the philosophy of death. His hedonism was a reflection on religious fanaticism, which contemplates the world, the life and the body and preaches necrolatry and constant entreaty on the subject of death, and fear of the other world's punishment. Since the creator is not visible or apparent, and man's perception and knowledge cannot prove

his existence, why, he asked, must man be a servant of an order which is suspect and superstitious (29).

Khayyam doubted the religious truths, and preached that since nobody has come from the other world, and since nobody knows about the other world we must, therefore, enjoy this world. In his position on death, he argued against the social order and superstitious beliefs and against nature. His objection against the death and the destructibility of human nature was an important part of his philosophy. Although he believed that there was an origin and a base for this world, he felt that, if there is a wise creator, it would be improbable that he would cruelly devour life's ties. He questioned the reason for this life without meaning: why we come into this world and why we should suffer and then die. Since he doubted the existence of the other world and believed that there is only this world and that life is restricted to this world, therefore he preached enjoyment of life and hedonism.

Khayyam put his ideas into his famous poems, which were in the form of quatrains, in a book. The book was translated into English by Fitzgerald and became famous in the West also. Sykes, in his book A History of Persia, states that Omar Khayyam has touched the Anglo-Saxon's prosaic nature and helped to bridge the deep

gap which separates the dreaming East from the material West (28).

Moulavi: 1207-1273

Jalal-U-Din, Moulavi, who is known as Rumi in the West, is the greatest of all the Sufi poets. He served as a Sufi lecturer and poet at Qoniya, for forty years (10). Moulavi belonged to the Illumination School, which believes that, in order to know the Supreme Being and the truth, rational reasoning is not enough. One must resort to intuition and insight, which is possible through Gnosis. Gnosticism was, in fact, an intellectual banner of resistance against the dominant rulers and fanatical religions in Iran, and also an attempt to escape from the horrible reality of the times (8, 29).

Moulavi considered that the human soul is part of the universal soul, which is the prisoner of the body and is eager to free itself and return to its origin. He believed in an inner sense which is the tool of Illumination, and that through this man can perceive the inward truth. He preached that in the human soul there exists two sense: the worldly sense and the inner sense. Man comes to know the material world with the worldly sense, and perceives spiritual and heavenly matters with the inner sense; thus science and religion have two bases. One is thought and the other is inspiration. In order to strengthen the power of

inspiration and to brighten the soul, the worldly sense must be weakened by the demolition of the body, its contemplation and its mortification (29). This purifies the soul and results in unification with the universal soul; the central fact of mysticism.

Moulavi did not believe in logic or reason, since he considered that man would use logic in every situation and relate himself to those things which bring harmony to that specific situation. Therefore, he only concerns himself with one area and situation, ignoring his real self, thus being unable to achieve the truth. The only way to possess the truth and discover the real self is through intuition and insight, and by overcoming the domination of one's intellect (1). To Moulavi, intellect and logic, philosophy and wisdom and the overall sciences of his period created a curtain which kept man from perceiving the truth. He believed that what comes from within can help man to discover himself and become united in the Godhead. Moulavi defended the concept of choice and free will which is hidden in everyday life. However, in contradictory cases where two directions exist, truth would appear on the path of free selection and choice (29). He believed that God has absolute power, but this does not mean that man cannot make a choice of his own. Therefore, he accepts the power of God and his knowledge and

awareness of everything, but he also believes in man's free will. In his view, God is not above nature, but apart and inside nature. In his pantheism, he sees that the soul of the world is one, and preaches that religious ceremonies are unnecessary (29).

His view is deeply in contrast with the fanaticism and the severity of the official religions of his time and he attempted to reconcile religion with spiritual life. Moulavi's philosophy has two bases: mortification and asceticism -- which have Arabic and Indian roots -- and Greek and Iranian mysticism in which Gnostis has its base. The basic element of Moulavi's thought is the transformation of the world of existence. Man passes through different stages, from object to plant to animal to his present self, and he can rise to an even higher position. he must unveil his true essence in order to attain union with all (1). Death, to him, is not absolute non-existence, and is constructive. it allows man to go one step further toward the truth. The world is an eternal revival and the essence of the world which is God's substance is always revealing the world. He also believed that the world is the battleground of contradictory elements, and that the result of this fighting finally brings harmony (29).

Moulavi founded a whirling dance which is the center of all the rites of Moulavic dervishes. He expressed his ideas in his famous poems, which are in lyrical form. His principal work is the Masnavi-Imanavi, which is concerned with the inner meaning of all things and comes in six books totalling 27,000 lines. It was written over a period of more than ten years (8). He also wrote a Divan; a collection of odes. It is believed that it had great influence on the thoughts in Iran and Turkey, and his depth of thought and the beauty of his imagination are extraordinary (28). Bousani states that in 13th century Iran, poetry deeply involved with mysticism gave rise to some of the masterpieces of the literature of the world such as the Masnavi-Imanavi, the "spiritual poems" of Jalal-Din Rumi (4).

Sa'di: 1213-1291

Sa'di, the great free thinker and poet, was a follower of the practical or metaphoric philosophy. He was born in Shiraz and was known as a moralist. Although it is believed that he belonged to the Sufism religion, some scholars say that he did not, and that he only adopted some of their mystical forms in his poems to express his thoughts (28).

However, his famous book -- the "Buston" (Orchard) -- is influenced by Sufism and love and shows his tendency toward ascetism. The "Gulistan" (Rose Garden), his other book, is a practical and more down to earth book. He lived in monk-like seclusion, practiced meditation and devoted himself to poetry. Sadi was intensely human. One of his most sublime ideals was the brotherhood of man, and his Sufism served the common people by encouraging activity and a balanced life. In like manner he attacked intolerance, injustice, exploitation and hypocritical or extravagant piety. He always believed in freedom of thought and freedom of the pen (8). Sadi advocated a virtuous life and preached moderation. He was half-devout and half-worldly. His ideas are somewhat paradoxical and while he highly valued morality and the truth, in some instances, when necessary, he condoned a lie. He believed that "A lie which mingles good will is better than a truth which stirs up mischief" (13). In his poems he advised kings and preached generosity and goodness and he emphasized the fact that the world is transitory (8).

His two books, the Buston and the Gulistan, are mostly about his experiences of his long travels around the world and parts of his books, up until now, are included in the Iranian textbooks. Buston is a didactic epic and the Gulistan is written in both prose and

verse. Sadi was a master of lyric form poems. The Gulistan is in the form of an ethical treatise and approaches life realistically. Many of his writings directly relate to the daily associations of the ordinary people with each other (10).

Hafiz: 1348-1398

Hafiz, Iran's greatest and most popular poet, was born in Shiraz. He is counted among the Persian free thinkers. He became the spokesman of the Sufis in the 14th century (1). Although Hafiz belonged to the "Intuition Illumination" school and his thought has elements of the mystical and the Gnostic in it, he also advocated hedonism and held some logical and superstitious ideas. The basic principles of his philosophy are: agnosticism, hedonism, pantheism and fatalism (29). Hafiz, with some precaution, rejects the idea of the other world and the promises that religions give about it. He doubts religious laws, speaks ironically about these doubts and approaches the matter in a scoffing way. Although he believed in some general truths of unity of the world and genuineness of love, he sees nothing in this world to which man can attach. He considered that since science and the religious scientists are not able to answer the question of life, therefore, in order to stop thinking about the matter, he advocated drinking. Hafiz said that this would help

man to find the truth, since it brings ecstasy and makes possible a connection to the whole or universal soul. He praised wine, also, since it was a way to escape from detestable and fanatical material and the spiritual world around him (29). On pantheism, he thought that everywhere man could see the light of the creator. He was with everybody, everywhere. Nature was pregnant with his substance. Hafiz felt that man's soul was a captive in a cage -- the body -- and if one day the soul was free, it would go back to its origin, the highest position (29).

To him man was the place of the truth's manifestation and everywhere was the home of love. He believed that love was the only condition for true life, and without it life was a real death. In order to perceive the secret of existence, man must first be enlightened by the flame of love. Love was the cause for exaltation and led man to the world. Hafiz's love for the creator led him toward fatalism. He considered that God directed man's life. Man was like a flower; the gardener nurtured him and had no control over his life. He preached that man should not take offense over his uncontrollable fate and should not worry about it. Nothing could be done without God's will (29). The best was to rely on God. However, this fatalism did not preach the avoidance of worldly pleasure and did

not negate life. His poems were full of hope, promises and alleviations. He preached that anger and peace of God went together and that man should keep his hope. Hafiz was a true humanist and loved the beauty of nature and the world. In regard to this, Behnan stated that: "The Persian poets preached the values of humanism rising above religion and race and they sang the joys of love and wine as means of rising above oneself and forgetting vanities" (7).

Hafiz was the greatest of the lyrical poets and his chief work was his Divan or "collection of odes" (28).

Poetry plays an important part in Iranian literature and is a part of Iranian life. Wilber states that Iranians, by temperament, are natural poets (33). Hass also comments that the Persian poetry is full of mysticism and mysticism has penetrated deeply into the hearts and lives of the people. The work of the Sufi poets, he said, are "quoted with the obvious delight of sympathetic appreciation, by humble people and their books are to be found in the libraries of the educated" (15).

From the 15th century to the 19th century, although there existed some philosophers and thinkers, their work had little originality. From the 19th century on, new trends in thoughts appeared and the

Iranian philosophy became separated from religion and moved closer to politics. It was used as a weapon for social purposes. Concern was focused more on social injustice and worldly matters. One of the first thinkers in this new direction is Talbaf, whose thinking affected many Iranian writers and thinkers.

Talbaf: 1831-1910

Talbaf was born in the city of Tabriz and served as a philosopher and writer for many years. He looked at the world more realistically and believed in the material base for the world. He considered that everything that existed in the world was composed of small parts. The differences and varieties which existed in the world depended on the ways these parts were related. Qualitative varieties were dependent on the quantitative differences. These parts, which were related to each other, were also transforming all the time. For Talbaf, all beings were mobile and changing. Although he believed that there was an origin and a creator, he denied its interference in nature's affairs (29).

On social matters, he was purely humanistic. He preached against war and had a love for peace and justice. He was opposed to spending time and money on arms and to learning anything about it. He preached

that man should work and put effort into the construction and acceleration of civilization and to heighten his own and his family's well being. He believed that war was an unusual phenomenon in human life and would disappear eventually. When peace was established, human beings would live together as a family and the external differences would change to a spiritual union, he concluded (29). He was against colonization and against the penetration of the Western countries into Iran. He thought that those countries were only looking for their own benefits. He preached that Iranians should not blindly imitate whatever comes from the Western countries and taught that they should accept and learn science, technology and useful knowledges from other nations only for the sake and benefit of the people (29).

Talbaf's views on social problems and affairs deeply influenced the thoughts of the coming generation (29) and this trend of thought has carried since then in Iran and many Iranian poets and writers adopt his views with some changes.

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3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF IRANIAN SOCIETY AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

To understand the Iranian society and its economic and educational stands, some features of the society, its economy, and education must be known. It is important to know these aspects in order to understand the following discussion of Iran's conflict with the West and in order to make suggestions concerning future changes in the educational system. Many new ideas, methods and practices may be implemented if there is a base for them. Therefore the discussion concerning education -- in any society -- should be accompanied by a discussion of the society's social and economic structure.

In this chapter the Iranian social system, along with some aspects of its economy and the educational system, are described.

3.1 Social System

The three most important features of the Iranian society which will be discussed here are the ethnic groups, the class structure, and the family.

Ethnic Groups

The people of Iran are comprised of various ethnic groups who speak different languages and have their own

customs. The major ethnic groups are Persians, Turks, Kurds and Arabs. The Persians are those who speak Indo-Iranian languages and are generally settled rural or urban dwellers. They are the largest ethnic group -- 66 percent of the population (31) -- and speak Persian (Farsi). Since they comprise the majority of the population, it is believed that they contributed more to Iranian culture in terms of art, music and poetry than any other group (26). However, the other groups also contributed their share to the culture as a whole. Arasteh states that:

Iran history deals largely with the Farsi-speaking inhabitants, but it should not be forgotten that all the other groups in Iran when taken together comprise over one third of the total population. They also possess a rich cultural heritage, but too little of it has been recorded; nor has it greatly affected the mainstream of Persian culture (12, p. 4).

Those groups who are closely related to the Persians but speak different dialects are the Gilanis, the Mazandarani, the Lurs, the Bakhtiari, the Kurds and the Baluchi. Since the Gilani and the Mazandarani language is very close to Persian, they are not regarded as separate ethnic groups. However, the Lur, the Bakhtiari, the Baluchi and the Kurds are considered as separate groups. The Kurds are a large ethnic group and comprise 5 percent of the population. They belong to the Sunni sect of Islam (31).

The second major group in Iran is the Turkish-speaking one, which comprises 25 percent of the population. A large number of them speak Azarbaijani and live in the northern province of Azarbaijan. Two major tribes who also speak a Turkish dialect are the Qashgai and the Turkeman, who live a seminomadic life (22).

The other group is the Arabs who live predominantly along the Persian Gulf. Among this group some are settled and some have a nomadic way of life. They constitute 4 percent of the total population (31).

There are other minority groups in Iran which can be identified by their religion. There are about 270,000 Armenians who are Christian, 85,000 Jews, 32,000 Assyrians who are also Christian, and 36,000 Zoroastrians (22). Since the official language in Iran is Persian (Farsi), all educational instruction and government business is conducted in Farsi. Therefore, the ethnic groups and minorities must learn Farsi as their second language.

Class Structure

During the 20th century, the Iranian social system changed from a decentralized agrarian society to a centralized industrial technocracy. This shift changed the structure of classes and power in Iran.

In pre-modern Iranian society the dominant classes were those of the tribal leaders, the Ulama (religious

leaders), the landlords, the bureaucrats, the bazaar classes (merchants), and a few intellectuals. These classes had shared power with the government and they had considerable autonomy. There were also two other groups: people who were employed by the government and had no power and the peasants who were impoverished sharecroppers (18).

The class structure has changed since 1925, when the Reza Shah Pahlavi came into power. He established a central government and built a modern army. He sought to put the cohesive strength of a state with a highly centralized bureaucracy and an economy based largely on state capitalism (20). In order to build this centralized government, he forced several nomadic tribes to settle in one place and broke their power and their military potential. By introducing new law codes, secular courts and judges, and a secular system of public education, he reduced the power of the religious leaders who had control over law and education in Iran. The landlords also lost their autonomy, since most desirable lands were confiscated by the Shah and he became the largest single landlord in the country. While these groups lost their power, two new groups -- the bureaucrats and the army -- came into power and acted as instruments in the modernization of the government (18). The modernization program of Reza Shah

also resulted in the development of a new professional/bureaucratic middle class whose "essential qualification for admittance to the new professional/bureaucratic middle class was a western education or an education on western lines" (20).

Another consequence of Reza Shah's industrialization policy was the creation of an industrial working class. This group of people worked mainly in the Abadan oil refinery or in Tehran and other big cities (9). Although the coming of Reza Shah brought modernization and considerable reform with it, these advances were at an economic cost to the majority of the population. In this regard, Keddie -- an American historian -- comments that

Under Reza Shah the popular classes -- tribes-people, peasants, and workers experienced a general worsening of living standards. In the case of tribes-people this was mostly due to forced settlement on generally poor land. Villagers and workers were hit by taxes to finance new government expenditures and the armed forces. The indirect taxes on sugar and tea, two items of wide mass consumption, provided most of the financing for Reza Shah's transiranian railroad in the 1930's. Economic and social stratification also increased under Reza Shah, with more rich people created than ever before while the poor became poorer and both peasants and craftspeople were increasingly stratified into distinct class groups. This trend to increased stratification has continued under Muhammad Reza Shah, although in recent years oil income and investment have been so high that even the poorer classes have been brought in on some of its benefits (18, p. 317).

Starting in the 1940's, after the abdication of Reza Shah and during the reign of Muhammad Reza (the late Shah), up into 1978, profound changes appeared in Iranian society. Halliday summarized the changes as follows: due to the 1963 land reform and the expansion of government power at village level, the position of the tribes and of many landowners declined, and some of them became involved in the administrative and the economic systems. The two groups of former landowners and landless wage-earning laborers expanded. The religious leaders lost most of their lands and consequently their power. The bazaar classes also lost some of their power due to the expansion of the banks and the modern commercial sector. A massive non-agricultural wage-earning class developed due to the fact that many villagers moved to the towns since there were more possibilities for finding jobs. The state became the dominant force in the economy and a major employer. The dominant class was comprised of the armed forces, the civil service employees, the rich capitalist landowners and the financiers and the entrepreneurs who benefited from the rise in the price of oil. This dominant class that cooperated with the government in industry, commerce and agriculture was made up of the top 10 percent of the population and consumed 40 percent of the goods in the country. There were also

other classes between the ruling class and the urban/rural wage laborers -- the small farmers in the villages, the lower rank civil service employees and the white collar workers in the factories (13).

Specifically, the class structure in the urban area before the 1978 revolution included the upper, middle and the lower classes. While in the past wealth was the only base for power and facilitated becoming a member of the upper class, later on education also became important (32). The upper class of Iran was comprised of the king and his family and court, the large landowners, the high level government administrators, general officers of the military and security forces, highly respected professionals and the wealthy industrialists and representatives of commercial interests. In 1977, the upper class was estimated to comprise less than one percent of the total population. This group generally lived in Tehran (the capital city). During the 1960's and the 1970's the middle class rapidly expanded, and in 1971 nearly two-third of the urban population was ranked as middle class (22).

The middle class was divided into upper and lower middle class and traditional and modern groups. The members of the upper middle class were in the lower positions in the civil service in Tehran or in the top positions in military service, commerce and industry,

among professionals, religious leaders and landowners of local influence. The lower middle class was generally less educated and less well paid and was comprised of small retailers, craftsmen, low level government employees and some religious leaders (mulla). The modern group in this class included western educated people employed in government services, professional people, and the university people. The power position of this group came from talents or skills acquired from a modern formal education. The traditional group included bazaar merchants, religious teachers and wealthy guild members.

The lower class in Iran was distinguished by a high rate of illiteracy and engagement in manual labor. This group worked as the migrant and casual laborers, regular employees of factories and government services in low positions or holding low ranking jobs in the police force. (22)

In the villages the social organization was less stratified. Before the land reform in the early 1960's, in the villages, the landlord and his agent (kadkhoda) acted as leaders of the village. In the class below them were the small peasant landowners, the mullas (religious teachers) and the small merchants and craftsmen. In the lowest social group in the villages were the majority of landless peasants and workers.

The village was governed by the will of the landlord and he enforced his decisions through his agent, even against the peasant's will (22). After the land reform, the village organization became more stratified and the government took direct control of the villages. The social structure changed. Three types of landowners existed: large landowners who paid laborers to work for them, independent landowners who had other incomes besides farming, and small landowners who worked in the village in the farming season and went to nearby cities during the rest of the year (22).

The reign of the Pahlavis, 1925-1978, brought modernization and centralized capitalist development. The urban and rural organization became more stratified. There was a sharp contrast between the lifestyles of the upper and lower classes. While the upper class became westernized in housing, dress, education and basic beliefs, the lower class continued to adhere strongly to the traditional way of life (18).

Family

The basic social unit in Iran is traditionally the extended family, which still is the dominant form and is reinforced by Islamic beliefs. Family ties are strong in Iran and the extended family contributes to the close kinship ties. The family members support one another to ensure family prestige and status. The

reputation of the family is important and the individual is judged by his family's status. Therefore all members protect the family honor and reputation by their good conduct (22).

In 1970, the family in Iran continued to be the important unit of society, which provided its members with their identity, security and social orientation. Although there are those who attempt to preserve the traditional way of family life and those who pull toward modernization, tradition is still predominant in Iran and its forces remain strong for the majority of the people (2, 26). Traditional values regarding sexual behavior are predominant and modesty is encouraged. The institution of marriage is highly valued and unmarried people are held in low esteem (22).

The head of the family is the father, who has considerable authority over his wife and the children and makes all decisions. The family members are expected to obey and respect him and submit to his will. In return he has a duty to support and satisfy the social and material needs of the family.

The mother in the family does not openly contradict her husband and accepts his power over herself and the children. The mother is the focal point of love and succor for the children. She plays an intermediate's role between her husband and the children to

soften the relationship between them (2). The boys have more freedom than the girls and the mother imposes a stricter lifestyle on her daughter and trains her properly to be a good wife. "Virginity in women is still highly valuable and those women who disregard prevailing norms are usually severely punished" (13).

Religious law, without contradiction from civil law, defines a wife's relation to her husband as one of submission. Submission generally refers to the husband's right to expect his wife to perform her wifely duties. In particular it refers to her willingness to provide sexual gratification at the time her husband chooses (6). The ideal woman is quiet, well-mannered and industrious, and knows how to care for the home and children. The father is usually the legal custodian of his children and the daughter, by law, must receive her father's express permission in order to marry (22).

In Iranian society the male dominates the female and the older dominates the younger. The father and the sons are dominant and brothers have authority over their sisters, even if the sisters are older. After the father the elder son is responsible for supporting the family. The family life in villages centers around traditional practices and the closeness of the family is the means of security for the people living there (2, 26).

Due to contact with the Western society in recent decades, the position of the family and its values were strongly affected by new values. The members of the elite and other urban groups adopted the new values but the lower urban strata stayed in an ambivalent position between traditional and new values. Though the people in villages continued to hold to traditional values that were in accordance with the principles of Islam, they were also confronted with new ideas and values coming from the West (22).

Modernization, industrialization, urbanization and other aspects of Western culture affected the traditional pattern of life and values in Iran. Urbanization and migration of the people from the villages to the towns weakened family ties and reduced the authority of the elders over the young people in the family. Restrictions that were previously imposed by the family on the individual were reduced. Many people wished to choose their own marriage partners without family interference and to establish their households separately from their parents and families. There were some people who desired to improve the status of women and wished to give more freedom to women (22). Therefore the family life and its values associated with membership and participation in the kin group were affected by new values coming from the West.

3.2 Some Aspects of the Economy

In 1900, Iran was a primitive state and agriculture was the primary occupation of the people. The population was estimated to be 9.86 million. About 7.79 million lived in rural areas, including the 2.47 million nomads. The rest of the population lived in small towns. At that time there were almost no industrial activities and oil had not been discovered in commercial quantities (8).

From 1900 to the late 1970's, the country's features changed considerably. Human resources grew substantially, the geographic distribution of population altered radically, and the number of towns and villages increased. This was also the period of economic growth and establishment of industry. The considerable growth and change in Iran's economy has been noted by many observers. However, these changes were unevenly distributed geographically and in terms of groups of people. Not all urban areas shared equally in the growth and the rural areas had the smallest share (22). The uneven growth and changes in Iran resulted in a considerable contrast between the rural and urban areas.

Urban vs. Rural

In Iran, until the 1930's, the balance between rural and urban population remained stable. However, since that time the population in the urban sector increased and by 1976, it had risen to 47 percent. In 1976 out of the 33.6 million population, 15.7 million were living in urban areas and 17.8 in rural areas, in 65,000 villages (16). While the majority of the people lived in rural areas in Iran, their living conditions and income were not comparable to the urban dweller's. The contrast in lifestyle and standards of living between town and village was extreme and 90 percent of the houses in villages were of mud brick (12). The gap between rural and urban incomes was wide and the rate of illiteracy was high in the rural areas. Although the literary corps were assigned to fight illiteracy and they established 15,000 schools covering 25,000 villages by 1973, only 39 percent of the children in rural areas were enrolled in classes for primary education, while this figure was 90 percent in urban areas (12). In 1977 urban dwellers as a whole had higher incomes a better variety of goods educational opportunities and more social mobility than the rural dwellers. The rural places also had limited availability of foods and limited purchasing power, which led to inadequate diet. Medical care was also limited

in the rural areas. People relied on occasional mobile medical teams and were still extensively engaged in the use of traditional medicine that involved herbal medicine and mystic practices (22). Although some villages close to highways had some modern facilities, most of the rural communities, even those close to Tehran, remained as primitive as they had been many years ago. Arasteh, in 1964, described that:

the peasant family lives in a one story house constructed of mud-brick and so poorly built that it is constantly in need of repair... in Sistan, Baluchistan and some of the other remote areas on Iran peasants live in tents, reed huts or other makeshift housing (2, p. 1).

Although since then many changes have taken place in Iran and it is believed that the country has become "modernized", the living conditions of the rural dwellers and also their attitudes have not changed. In 1978, Graham, an American scholar who visited Iran, commented that:

A "typical" peasant community can easily be located close to Tehran... a cluster of low mud brick houses with no piped water, no sanitation and no electricity; the inhabitants are too conservative to accept the formation of a government-sponsored cooperative, too wary to think again of buying a tractor because when it broke down the mechanic had already upped stakes and left for a job in town, and this restores a doubting faith in old methods even when modern things are meant better (12, p. 29).

A report appeared in 1981 by an Iranian scholar, stating that in all the years that Iran has had electricity, only 4800 villages have electricity and in some clusters of villages, where as many as 150,000 people live, there exists not a single person capable of taking care of people's simplest medical problems (5). Poor conditions in many rural areas resulted in the migration of the people to nearby cities. This migration continued in 1977. Generally, Tehran and big cities benefited the most from industrial and economic development and from modernization.

The Distribution of Income

In 1976, the Iranian government stated that the gross national product has increased more than eight times, from \$6 billion in 1965 to \$51.3 billion in 1975. Consequently the GNP per capita increased from about \$240 in 1965 to about \$1,550 in 1975 (16). In 1978, the GNP per capita was estimated at \$2,400 (13). Although the per capita income in Iran was high by international standards, there was a wide discrepancy between the income of the upper urban households and the lower urban and rural households. On a per capita basis, the ratio of the incomes upper urban/lower urban was 6:1 and upper urban/rural was 11:1 (21). Since the 1960's, the inequality of income has increased, especially since 1974 when the oil income increased.

The income gap and inequality increased dramatically not only between the top and bottom strata, but also between the cities and the countryside. The trend shows that the rich were mostly subsidized by the oil, and the poor received much less (19). Due to regional imbalances in economic development, the per capita income in Tehran was 45 percent higher than in the large provincial cities and 70 percent higher than in small towns. Rural areas, especially in the West and the South, where half of the population lives, received the lowest average family income. In the early 1970's, the per capita income for rural inhabitants was estimated to be around two-fifths of the national average and one-fifth of that of urbanites. It was estimated also that one-third of the urban population was quite poor (22). Looney, an American scholar who worked in Iran as economic advisor, states that Iran had a surprisingly uneven distribution of income and extreme concentration of wealth in the hands of a minority of individuals. He considers that the contrast in every aspect of Iranian life is related "to a minority of wealthy individuals in relation to the vast majority of penniless proletarians and peasants." He comments that, "when people talk about economic development of Iran, it is usually referring to the prosperity of only a handful of urban centers" (21).

3.3 The Formal Educational System

A Brief History of Education in Iran

Throughout the history of Iran, education has emphasized the teaching of religion and ethics. For centuries, before the Arabs dominated Iran, the Zoroastrian social motto of "Good thought, good words and good deeds" were the important principles. After the Arab's conquest of Iran in the seventh century, education was dominated by the religion of Islam and came under the control of the Moslem clergy (24).

Until the mid-nineteenth century, formal education and school, in its institutional sense, did not exist in Iran. Education was carried on in the religious or Quranic schools, which were usually associated with a mosque. These schools were supported by private contributions and religious foundations. The subjects taught dealt with the Islamic code and doctrine and Islamic morality was the primary concern in these schools. It has been said that, even after education became secularized in Iran, the process of education was concerned primarily with the acquisition of morality (17).

The religious schools were the Maktab or elementary school, and the Madrasseh or secondary school. The Maktab was a one-room school with a member of the

clergy as a teacher, who was a graduate of the Madrasseh. This school taught students to read and write and some principles of religion. Learning was based on the rote manner and involved a long process of memorization. The students had to memorize some of the Islamic code, Iranian poetry, the Persian-Arabic dictionary in verse form, some Arabic grammar and a large portion of the Quran. There was no fixed fee and parents paid the teacher whatever they could afford. Occasionally, girls were admitted to special classes with women teachers. In the Maktab the teacher disciplined the children by physical punishment (3).

Children usually began the Maktab at the age of seven and they could continue as long as they wanted. Therefore, there were children of all ages in the Maktab. Although the Maktab in the cities and the villages were open to people from all classes, in rural areas and among the poor urban classes, poverty prevented the large majority of parents from sending their children to the Maktab (6).

The Madrasseh, or theological seminaries, were for the continuation of classical education. The Madrasseh provided rooms for the students and paid them a monthly salary. The classes, the teacher's room, the library and the student's room were all in the same building

(25). The students could select their teachers and their area of study. There were no grades and students had a tremendous respect and devotion for their teachers (11). The program that was offered in the Madrasseh covered most of the known fields of knowledge and included courses such as Islamic philosophy, literature, mathematics and science (3). Although the purpose of the Madrasseh was to train clergymen, toward the end of the nineteenth century, some students, after finishing the Madrasseh, did not pursue a clerical career. While, in the Madrasseh, learning by rote and ritual accuracy were important, the valued goals were to be understanding and scholarly. In contrast to the secular education which is concerned with citizenship, the labor force and scientific truth, the Madrasseh was concerned mainly with the relation between the individual and God or the social collectivity and God (11). Although secular education is dominant today in Iran, many Madrassehs still are operating. However, the number of Madrasseh students are less than those who are in Western type universities and by 1976 there were 11,000 students at all levels in the Madrassehs.

Even though the number of students in Madrasseh is less than other students in higher education, the Madrasseh still has some influence over Iranian society. In regard to this, Fischer, an American scholar,

comments that:

the power and influence of the Madrasa today does not depend either on size or on any institutional centrality in Iranian society. No longer does the Madrasa supply the teachers, notaries, judges, lawyers, scientists, or physicians of society; all these professionals are recruited now from the universities, domestic and foreign. The influence of the Madrasa depends upon Shi'ite Islam's still being part of the common sense of everyday life (11, p.38).

This non-classical type of education continued until the early 19th century. Due to the Iranian government's need for a bureaucratic administration and in order to train government personnel, the classical type of higher education was started in Iran (3).

In 1851 the first college, Darul-Funun, which was patterned after French schools, was opened in Tehran by the government. In 1858, a group of Iranian students were sent to Europe, mostly to France. Some French missions also opened European type schools in Iran. This close contact with the French led to the establishment of a French system of education in Iran, and in 1901, the French school system was recognized by the Iranian government as the model for public educational institutions.

The elementary education changed from its traditional form to a secular one in the late 19th century, in the 1890's. This change was brought about when some

Iranians who had traveled abroad were impressed by Western education and tried to set up modern schools. Several modern schools then opened in Iran and were financed by the individuals who opened the schools and by the parents of the students. The number of these new schools grew and expanded in Tehran and the provinces. Some schools were also opened for girls (3).

In 1898, the government made an attempt to establish an organized educational structure by founding the Council for National Schools. This led to the establishment of state elementary schools. After the Constitutional Revolution, in 1906, delegates of the first Majlis encouraged public education and free education. In 1910, the Ministry of Education (called the Ministry of Education, Wage, and Fine Arts) was established and, according to the 1911 act of education, all educational institutions and activities were under the supervision of this ministry. In 1911, compulsory education for every child at the age of seven was instituted by the constitutional law of education. This led to the expansion of public education, but until 1941, less than 20 percent of the seven year old children attended schools. Although in 1942 the compulsory education act was renewed, half of the children aged seven did not attend school until 1962 (4). It was also reported in the mid-1970's that 3 million primary school aged

children were still not enrolled in a school (22).

The secondary schools in Iran also started as private schools in 1898. The first high schools opened by the government were in 1918. The development of high schools was slow and by 1925 there were 56 public, private and missionary high schools in Iran. From 1925-1941, during the reign of Reza Shah, the educational system became highly centralized and a unified program of education was established. All government and private schools had to follow the same curriculum and any changes had to be passed by the Ministry of Education. Primary concern, in this period, was focused on higher education and the government annually sent students to Western universities abroad. Elementary education received the lowest priority (20). From 1941 to the late 1970's, schools at every level expanded. In 1976 the government reported that 8.5 million students were covered by the educational system in the country and that there were more than 300,000 teachers, administrative staff and educational corps members. In 1979-1980 the number of students in the educational system was reported to be 8,638,987 (14).

The Pattern of the Present Educational System

Until recently, the educational system, its organization and administration was patterned on the French system. The three major features of this system were centralization, unification and intellectuality. Recently there were some changes in the organizational structure and school programs.

Organization. From 1911 to 1968 all public educational institutions and activities were under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. This Ministry had provincial and local offices which were changed later to the Directorate General for provincial administration and branch offices for country and city administration. The Minister and his advisors, with the High Council of Education, were responsible for all decisions made concerning educational affairs.

From 1921 to 1942, educational organization was extremely centralized and schools in the country followed the same curriculum, used the same textbooks, had the same weekly schedule and academic calendar, which was set by the Ministry. Some of the famous schools which did not follow the Ministry's academic calendar were closed down and some denominational schools and colleges that wanted to observe certain religious holidays were dissolved (4). The examination schedule also

was centralized and the Office of Examination of the Ministry prepared yearly tests for the students in high school and trimonthly exams for the elementary students (3).

In 1968 the Ministry of Education was divided into three ministries -- the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The Ministry of Education is responsible for general education: preschool, elementary and secondary levels, adult and physical education, curriculum and textbook development, education of exceptional children and literacy promotion. The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts is in charge of public libraries, schools and colleges of music, cultural activities, museums and archaeological excavations and studies. The Ministry of Science and Higher Education is in charge of the college and university training, scientific research and all affairs concerning the institutions of Higher Education, including students applying for education abroad. In the mid-1970's, there was also a change in the administration structure within the Ministry of Education. The country was divided into four school regions and 180 school districts. Each district had some independence and could initiate some reforms. They became responsible for day to day administration. Four deputies among the

Minister's assistants became in charge of the four regions in the country.

Types of Schools

There are ten types of schools in Iran: kindergarten, elementary, guidance, secondary, technical and vocational, teacher training, special education, adult education, religious school and higher education (Figure 2).

Kindergarten. The first kindergarten was established in Iran in 1929, by an Iranian woman who had been educated in France. From then until the late 1960's, Kindergartens were privately owned and operated and accepted children aged three to six years old. Since the 1960's the government encouraged private kindergartens, by providing some financial help and by training kindergarten teachers. By 1975 there were over 175,000 children enrolled in kindergartens in Iran, mostly in the urban areas. At this time kindergarten came under the control of the Ministry of Education. In 1979-80, there were about 236,486 children enrolled in 3,696 kindergartens (27).

Elementary and Secondary Schools. The elementary and secondary schools underwent many changes. These changes started in 1972 and were completed in 1976.

Before the change, elementary education lasted 6 years in urban areas and 4 years in rural areas. The child entered school at the age of seven. The students went to school for six days a week, for 28 hours per week. At the end of the six years all students had to take a final provincial exam. Those who passed the exam received a certificate which allowed them to enter the secondary school.

In the secondary school the general academic education covered six years in two cycles of three years each. There was a uniform curriculum in the first cycle and all students had to follow it. At the end of the three years students had to take an examination and those who passed could enter the second cycle or enter the technical school. The second cycle generally had four specialized branches: the literature branch, the mathematics branch, the natural sciences branch and the home economics branch, which was added for women. At the end of the second cycle, students took a nationwide examination under the control of the Ministry of Education. Those who passed the exam received a certificate and could continue their education. The total class hours in the first and second cycle were 33 hours a week and the syllabus was presented by the Ministry of Education.

After the change and under the new system, elemen-

tary education lasts 5 years and at the end students must take an official exam which is administered by the local education office. When the students complete the 5 year elementary school, they enter a 3 year Guidance cycle. The purpose of this cycle, according to the Ministry of Education, was 1) to increase general knowledge for better living, 2) to develop moral and spiritual virtues, and 3) to discover the student's talents and abilities for academic or vocational/technical studies at the secondary level (10). During this period, the students learn about their interests and abilities and are prepared for the secondary cycle. At the end of this cycle, students take a national exam and those who pass may enter an academic or a vocational/technical branch of the secondary cycle. The second cycle consists of a 4 year academic branch and a 2 or 4 year vocational/technical branch.

The academic branch is covered by two stages: a 3 year plus a one year stage. The 3 year stage offers a unified curriculum for all students, and the one year stage offers specialization in the areas of literature and the arts, natural sciences, physics and mathematics and social science and economics. These special areas will prepare students for study at the higher levels.

In 1974, elementary education was "nationalized"

in Iran, and the government undertook the cost, both in public and private schools. The Guidance schools are also free and are expected to be compulsory. While there are some elementary and guidance schools which are operated as coeducational, there is no coeducational secondary school in Iran (27). In 1972, 95 percent of the urban elementary schools were single-sex institutions, while 68 percent of the rural schools were coeducational since isolation and small numbers of students would not allow segregated education (22).

Vocational/Technical Education. The vocational schools, called Amouseshga, are two year schools which prepare skilled workers in various areas such as auto-mechanics, carpentry, metalworking, building, masonry, smelting and other trades. Students must spend half of their time in practical work.

Technical schools, or Honarestan, are four year schools which train technicians in specialized fields. There are four types of technical schools: boys' industrial schools, girls' technical schools (nursing, dress-making, home economics and secretarial work), agricultural schools and business schools. In the 1979-80 school year, there were 755 vocational/technical schools in Iran with 264,826 students. One hundred twenty-five of these schools were in Tehran and had 68,153 students (27).

Adult Education. Adult education was begun in 1936 by the government and by 1940 there were about 150,000 adults in evening classes. The program was stopped at the beginning of World War II. In 1956 the evening classes for adults reopened and by 1970 there were about 861,657 elderly men and women in these classes. The adult literacy program in Iran started in the cities and was funded by the government and community members. Departments were also created in the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of War introduced literacy programs for the soldiers and the industrial workers (15). The latest report by the government shows that in 1979-80, there were 1151 schools and centers for adult literacy programs with 243,209 elderly women and men (27).

Special Schools. Special schools for the deaf and the blind children have existed in Iran for a long time. These schools were privately owned in the beginning and the government was not involved in this program. Recently the Ministry of Education became concerned with the exceptional children program and a special division was created in the Ministry to take care of this area. Under this division, centers, schools and classes were made for mentally retarded, psychologically disturbed and advanced children.

Special centers were also opened for training teachers and specialists in the area. The exceptional children in Iran are separated from "normal" students and each group is educated in its own separate environment (4). The latest report by the government shows that in 1979-80, there were 227 schools and centers for exceptional children with 9951 students. Out of 227 schools and centers, 101 are located in Tehran with 4906 students (27).

Religious Schools. The religious schools are usually private or are financed by endowments. These schools were directed by the religious institutions. However, in recent years (until the Revolution of 1978), the Moslem theological Madrasseh, religious education centers for adults and any other educational activities financed by endowments came under the control of the Public Endowment Organization (4). There were two theology faculties or colleges that exist, one in the University of Tehran and one in the Ferdousi University in Mashhad (14).

Teacher Training. Before introducing the Western high school curricula, the graduates of the Madrasseh taught secondary education in Iran. The new curricula, with its emphasis on the sciences, called for science teachers and the Madrasseh students were not prepared for that. Therefore the government recruited science

teachers among those who had graduated from Daral-Funon, and those who had studied science abroad. Later one, Daral-Funon offered a limited program for training high school teachers (3). In 1918 the Ministry of Education established the first teacher training college. The college was modeled after the French cole normale, and French educators were recruited as its supervisors. In 1934, the teacher training act called for the establishment of some 25 teachers' colleges and by 1940 there were approximately 36 of these colleges in Iran (6). The teacher training program underwent many changes and different regulations. However, in recent years, various teacher education programs were created in Iran to prepare teachers for different levels and schools.

There are several teacher training centers throughout the country which prepare teachers for urban elementary schools. These centers offer two year programs and students who have finished the secondary schools are eligible to enter the program.

There is also a school called the normal school which is a boarding school and trains teachers for rural areas. It offers a two year program and students who have finished the first cycle of secondary education can enter these schools.

There is a teacher training university in Tehran which has some provincial branches and other higher institutions which prepare teachers for secondary education. The training program for secondary teachers is generally a four-year program and the students receive a Bachelor's degree. The students who have completed their secondary education are eligible for this program. Due to the shortage of teachers in 1970, the Ministry of Education established centers with 2 year programs to train teachers for the first cycle of secondary education (22).

There are also vocational/technical teacher training colleges. Students who have graduated from Hona-restan or from general/academic secondary schools are eligible to enter these colleges. The program is for 4 years, with two 2 year stages. Those who finish the 2 year program may teach in vocational schools and those who finish the 4 years teach in technical schools. The College of Business trains teachers for secondary schools (10).

In recent years, some centers were established to train teachers for kindergartens, guidance education and exceptional children. In 1974-75, there were 37,779 students in higher education who were in teacher training programs at the secondary level (13). In the 1979-80 academic year, there were 209 teacher training

centers and 2 years teacher colleges in Iran with 34,726 students (27).

Higher Education. In 1976, there were 21 universities and 206 higher education institutions with 154,000 students in Iran. In 1979-80, there were 26 universities (14). Many of these universities and institutions are newly established.

The first and oldest university in Iran is the University of Tehran. It was established as an autonomous institution in 1934 by consolidating the existing colleges. It started with six faculties: medicine, agriculture, law, pharmacy, philosophy and religion, and architecture. By 1980 its faculties and units had increased to 21. Today it is the largest university in Iran and many of its institutions, laboratories and research centers are situated outside of the University and are scattered throughout Tehran. In the early 1970's the enrollment of the university was about one-third of the university total throughout the country and in the 1976-77 academic year, there were 18,000 students in the university (22).

The other oldest universities are: the University of Tabriz (1947), the University of Shiraz (1949), the University of Mashhad (1949), the University of Esfahan (1949), the Jundi-Shapour University (1955), the

National University (1960), the Technical University (1965) and the Teacher's Training University.

Other higher education institutions are more specialized and have less prestige than the universities. Some of these institutions are private and some are sponsored by various government agencies.

The program of study for undergraduates in higher education was formerly 3 years. Now it has been extended to 4 years. However, faculties of engineering and architecture extended their program to 5 years and medical schools have 7 year programs. Graduate studies are also offered in some areas. Almost all of the universities have a semester system and are organized into faculties as in the French system. However, the University of Shiraz (the late Pahlavi University), due to the establishment of a working relationship with Pennsylvania State University in 1962 has an American type organization and orientation. The National University at Tehran was also organized the same way (24). The language of instruction in all the universities and higher education institutions is Farsi, except at the Shiraz University and the Abadan Institute of Technology, which used English. In the National University some courses also instructed in English.

Major Educational Problems.

The Iranian educational system has changed considerably since the 19th century. The simple system of the Maktab and the Madrasseh changed to a modern and Western type education with major emphasis on science. The schools at every level were expanded and new ideas and practices were introduced to the system. However, the system is facing various problems that should be considered seriously. These problems are mostly due to the fact that the system developed without proper plans and without considering the society's needs and resources, including human resources. It is also the result of unproportionate social and economic development in different parts of the country.

One of the major problems of education in Iran is that the rate of illiteracy is high in the country. While the Compulsory Education law was recalled again in 1942, the reported statistics show that, in 1972, only 62 percent of the primary school age children were in schools and most of them were in the cities. In the mid-1970's, it was said that 3 million primary school age children were still not enrolled in schools (22). The total rate of illiteracy in the 1970's was estimated at between 60 to 70 percent (20), and 63 percent in 1979 (1). The illiteracy rate is higher among the older people and in the rural areas. In 1977, only 37

percent, approximately, of the adult population was capable of reading and writing and, while the majority of the people live in the rural areas (53 percent), the illiteracy rate is still very high there (16).

Although in 1963 the literacy corps was established to deal with the problem in rural areas and it did help a certain amount, it was not able to meet the demand. While the number of villages in Iran is estimated to be about 65,000, by 1976 the literacy corps had opened 15,000 schools covering only 25,000 villages (16). Rural illiteracy is higher among the females. The girls make up the minority in rural school enrollment and in 1972, the illiteracy among village women was reported to be almost total. In the urban areas, although the female enrollment in all kinds of schools is increasing, they still remain the minority. In 1976 only 28 percent of the students in higher education were women (22). In 1978-79, while the total number of students from kindergarten to 12 level were estimated to be 8.1 million, the number of girl students were reported to be 3.1 (27).

The lack of facilities and teacher shortage are other problems. Despite the rapid increase in student enrollment, the number of schools built is limited and there were not enough teachers, especially qualified ones.

In the mid-1970's, there was an urgent need for school buildings and it was said by the authorities that the lack of suitable buildings resulted in a slowing down of the normal expansion of primary education (22). The problem is not only the lack of schools, but that those schools built already are mostly equipped to minimum standards. Due to the school shortage, the elementary schools are generally operated on split-shift systems; one group of students go in the morning and the other group goes in the afternoon. Most of the schools are not actually built for school purposes, but are rented houses and are unsuitable buildings which lack the necessary equipment and facilities.

The study done concerning the welfare quality of Tehran's elementary schools shows that most of the schools are rented houses which are not suitable for the purpose of teaching. Even those which are suitable for the purpose are dirty and unsanitary. The rented schools usually have limited space and consequently the classrooms are crowded. These schools also have limited sanitary facilities. In addition, most of the schools under study did not have libraries and those that did have a library had only a limited number of books. There is also a lack of educational equipment to aid teaching (33). Lack of facilities, equipment

and libraries is more evident in the rural areas and there are few books or extra reading material. While there were some efforts by the government to provide educational facilities, so far these facilities are to be found only in the cities and most particularly in Tehran (15).

With the increasing school enrollment, the lack of teachers is becoming obvious. The shortage of teachers is seen more at the rural level than the urban. Most of the young teachers prefer to work in the cities to escape the rural environment. Therefore, finding teachers, qualified or not, to work in the rural areas is a particular problem. In the cities also there is a shortage of qualified teachers. While the teachers in secondary schools must have a bachelor's degree, due to the shortage of teachers some have studied only 2 years in college. In the mid-1970's, only a little over half the teachers at the secondary level were graduates of any kind of higher level program (22).

The unproportionate distribution among the secondary schools enrollment is another problem. While the majority of students enter the general academic schools, there is considerably lower enrollment in the vocational and technical schools. Vocational and technical schools were designed to meet the country's need for manpower; skilled workers, second-class technicians

in agriculture, industry, administration and commerce. However, the trend of education and available data shows that the goal is far from being reached. Most students still prefer to continue academic school rather than enroll in the vocational/technical school. In 1973 the enrollment in technical schools was only a little more than 6 percent of the total secondary level enrollment and for skilled personnel the industry had to rely on on-the-job training rather than on the school system (22). In order to change this situation, the elementary and secondary systems were changed from two 6 year cycles into a 5-3-4 year cycle, but there wasn't a large change in the percentages because Iranian students always had a tendency to attend academic secondary school in order to enter the university. The students have been more attracted to white-collar positions and earning university degrees (28). This was due to the fact that, having a university degree was more important and prestigious and the potential position and salary of a person was based on his degree and not on the quality of his performance (17). In considering the government plan in promoting vocational education, it is said that no systematic plan was made in introducing the new system of education in 1972. The practicality, cost and benefits of the program were not analyzed. There were no trained personnel and

specialists to operate the program and counselors had to be prepared for the guidance cycle. All the experts, specialists and educational materials had to be prepared in 5 years. Some thought that the program was a luxury for Iran which had great educational problems (28). The guidance cycle, which was introduced to divert students into technical and vocational specialties, accomplished little. Although the number of vocational/technical schools grew and they were placed after secondary levels, today most of the students are still in the academic branch.

The student's interest in the academic area and their willingness to enter the university causes a major problem. Since there are not enough universities in Iran and every year thousands of secondary school students graduate and want to enter a university, there is an entrance examination (Konkoor) each year to select students. The scope of the problem can be understood by the following statistics. In 1968, some 45,000 students competed for the 17,000 available places in all universities (11). In 1972, some 80,000 took the exam and just over 10,000 were accepted (30). The number of applicants for the exam rose to 300,000 in 1976, for only 30,000 available places in universities (11). One big reason that Iranian students go abroad for their education is the limited place in

Iranian Universities. In 1960, there were 30,000 Iranians studying abroad and by the mid-1970's the number was said to be 60,000. The majority were in the United States and most of the remainder were in West Germany and England (22).

University graduates usually worked in state bureaucratic agencies and because of this, industry and business suffered a lack of middle level management and technical personnel (11). Berengi, an Iranian educator, comments that the motivations behind the interest to enter the university were:

1. The government's criteria, which necessitates the higher level degrees for hiring the people in governmental offices.
2. Valuing the degree, rather than what a person learned from it.
3. False social values.
4. Unpreparedness of the secondary graduates for the practical work.
5. Extreme discrepancy between the salary of those who had a degree and those who did not (7).

However, the basic education in Iran is still a great problem. The majority of the population, who live mostly in the rural areas, are illiterate. Not all schools in the country have the same possibilities and facilities proportionate to their population. Most

of the possibilities exist in the capital city, Tehran, and other big cities. The other places, especially the rural areas, have the least. There are not enough schools or space in schools. Due to this shortage, most schools are working on split-shift systems. Even with the split-shift system, the classes are still crowded. The schools also lack libraries and teaching aid equipments. While many teacher training centers have been established in the country, the Iranian educational system still suffers from a teacher shortage, especially qualified ones. The educational program was not based on the society's need and educational branches were not meeting the country's demand in different areas. While the country needs skill and semi-skilled technicians, the majority of the students go into the 4 year bachelor's degree program.

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4. CONTACT WITH THE WEST

Direct contact between Iran and the Western countries started as commercial relations in the 16th century when the government of England sent the Sherley's brothers with 70 other people to Iran during the reign of Shah Abbas Safavi. This group and other European merchants, received permission to trade in the Persian Gulf and in 1628 a special representative of the British government came to Iran to expand the relationship. Some time after that, the borders were closed to Europeans, but in 1763 they reopened and the English were authorized to establish a commercial firm in Bushehr (16).

These commercial relations, and the occasional presence of European Ambassadors in Iran, marked the beginning of Western culture and civilization in Iran.

In 1798, when Egypt was invaded by Napoleon, England and Russia attempted to counter French influence in the Orient. This resulted in a further opening of the Near East to Western ideas and culture. Iran was among those affected and its traditional way of life and thought was challenged by the new ideas. Frye states that:

with the impact of the west, the traditional patterns of life and thought established by Islam were challenged by a secularism and an unbounded faith in the progress of man and

science. It seemed, and still seems, to many Persians that the Europeans were arrogant in asserting that the human mind had no bounds and that human reason was a source of truth rather than merely an instrument to prove to doubters the eternal truths of Allah. The conflict of rationalism with authoritarian prophecy is still potent among the intellegentsia in Iran today (19, p. 63).

The increased influence of the West in the 19th century followed European political and economic expansion. Political events and relations with the West, as Banani states, made a deep impression upon the Iranian people and have done much to form their opinion and attitude about the West (10). This being so, it is necessary to discuss these events and relations to help understand the Iranian resistance toward the West and what it introduces.

4.1 Russian and British Domination

From the early 19th century to the 20th century Iran was torn between the conflicting interests of Britain and Russia (39). This started primarily for political reasons. The original cause of British and Russian interest in Iran was due to India. Russia wished to have access to the Indian Ocean and therefore to India. The British wanted to keep Iran as a "buffer state" between India (its zone of influence) and Russia. So the two powers attempted to gain control

over Iranian politics and economy. In this they succeeded, and for a long time, any decision made by the Iranian government was directed by one or the other of these powers (7).

The rivalry between Britain and Russia took the form of economic penetration. As a result many treaties were concluded with these countries and some concessions gave rise to Iranian opposition toward the West and toward their own government. Wilber, an American scholar, comments about the nature of these economic activities.

Since the growing industrialization of the West demanded both access to raw materials and new markets for manufactured products, certain distant countries were marked for economic penetration. Within Iran this policy found one application in a struggle for concession (39, p. 67).

In 1863 the English government signed a contract with the Iranian government to build the telegraph system through Iran. This resulted in English domination. British agents, by the name of supervisors, were scattered all over Iran. In this manner they were able to collect the information that the English government wanted to have. The telegraph line in Iran, which finally reached India, is believed to have been built in the interest of the British government to enable it to receive news quickly from India (16).

The British were also granted capitulation for all their citizens and special commercial privileges. In 1889, they concluded a concession for the creation of the Imperial Bank of Persia (18).

The Russians also expanded their domination by instructing and commanding the Iranian army under the control of Russian officers and by opening the Discount Bank of Persia (a Russian institution) in 1891. One Russian subject gained an important concession concerning fishing rights in the Caspian Sea (39). Other concessions and agreements between the Iranian government and these two powers existed. Due to their importance, they will be discussed further on in more detail.

The discovery of oil in Iran at the beginning of the 20th century intensified the rivalry between Britain and Russia. This resulted in the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907. According to this agreement, Iran was divided into three zones. The southwest of the country became the British zone and the whole northern part became the Russian zone. Only the area between the two zones was controlled by the Iranian government (20).

The discovery of oil in 1908 in the Khuzestan province (the Iranian government's area) led to the formation of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in London.

The Abadan refinery was built by the British and the oil was flown to Europe. After the Russian Revolution in 1917, Russia lost interest in Iran. The British expanded their control over the country and imposed the "Anglo-Persian treaty" upon Iran. Under the terms of this treaty, the British government had control over the Iranian army, finance and trade. Only British experts and technicians were allowed to work in Iran, turning Iran into a British protectorate.

The treaty was so strongly opposed by the Iranian nationalists that it never was implemented fully by Britain (20). The British domination in Iran ended with the nationalization of the Iranian oil industry in 1951.

At the time of their greatest influence in Iran the British and the Russians concluded several treaties with the Iranian government which benefited their own countries only. They robbed Iranian natural resources and made the country weak and dependent. Some of the most important treaties, and the events relating to them which greatly marked the history of Iranian-Western relations, are discussed here.

4.2 Treaties with Russia

Gulistan Treaty

As early as 1723, Russian armies were involved in a war with Iran. They occupied parts of the Azarbayjan and Gilan in the north of Iran. In 1801, they also annexed Georgia (39). In order to end the hostilities between the two countries, the Gulistan Treaty was signed by Iran and Russia in 1813. Under the terms of the Gulistan Treaty, Iran gave to Russia all claims to Baku and much of eastern Trascausia, and Daghestan. They also confirmed Russian possession of Georgia. The treaty gave rise to Iranian opposition toward the Iranian and Russian governments. It severely wounded the national and religious pride of the people. The religious leaders proclaimed the Holy War, which was put down by the government of the Fath-Ali Shah (11).

Turkman Chai Treaty

In 1924, the second war between Iran and Russia broke out. To settle the hostilities the Turkman Chai Treaty was concluded in 1818. The treaty transformed the independent Iranian government into one increasingly dependent upon foreign powers. According to the treaty, two large and prosperous provinces of Iran (Erwin and Nakhchevan) were taken by the Russians. It

also gave Russia capitulation rights for its citizens and a monopoly on shipping rights on the Caspian Sea (7).

The Treaty was a disaster for Iran. It put the responsibility of heavy war reparations upon the Iranian government and took away from them all taxing power over Russian profits and properties in Iran. At the time it gave to Russia complete freedom to conduct commercial business in Iran and a reduction of tariff rates (7).

Due to these activities it was believed by the Iranians that the Anglo-Russian objective was to reduce Iran to the status of a colony (14).

The Iranian historian, Adamiyat, states that Russia was the sole enemy of Iran and the enemy of Iranian independence, freedom and progress. The Russians, he said, wanted Iran to be weak, backward and dependent so that they could succeed in their aggressive military policy and economic colonization (3).

4.3 Treaties and Concessions with Britain

Reuter Concession

In 1872, Baron Julius de Reuter, a British banker, secured a huge monopoly concession from Nasir al-Din Shah. According to Fashahi, an Iranian historian, the Reuter concession was given to the British government

in exchange for 200,000 English pounds and it meant the complete transfer of the Iranian soil to Britain for that amount of money. The concession included licenses and rights for establishing different companies to construct railroad and street car lines to exploit minerals and oil and to manage the customs service. It gave exemption from any tariff or tax for British agents. It also gave Britain control over the Iranian jungle nad rivers and the right to build dams and roads, to create a bank, and to run a telegraph company and post office. This meant that all sources of wealth, both in industry and in agriculture, fell into the hands of the Briths (16). Reuter himself, after the concession was concluded, remarked: "I bought Iran." (4)

The opposition to this concession from the people was so strong and bitter that it resulted in the cancellation of the concession (16).

The Tobacco Concession

Arasteh states that: "

The date 1890 marks the advent of a new social awareness in Iran -- one which strongly opposed the interference of foreign powers in Iran's affairs at home and abroad" (8, p. 135).

In 1890, a British concern was given a tobacco monopoly by Nasir al Din Shah. The concessionaire was actually only one person, but in London a company was

established with a capital of 650,000 pounds. This concession gave the British full control over the Iranian tobacco industry, both inside and outside the country. In exchange the Iranian government would receive 15,000 pounds yearly plus one fourth of the profits.

While the common people did not realize exactly how much of a loss this concession was moneywise to the country, they opposed it strongly since they saw that it would open the way for foreign influence and domination. In the beginning, the people thought that the foreigners would come just to do trade and business, but that they would finally occupy the country as they did in India. The British relation with India started out as a commercial one, but later on India was occupied as a British colony (23).

Therefore, the people rose against the concession and the religious leaders were frontrunners. Finally a notable religious leader, Mirza Hassan Shirazi, formally forbid the use of tobacco and proclaimed that using tobacco was unclean. The people responded wholeheartedly. All tobacco shops were closed and nobody used tobacco. The people's demand and their resistance made the government cancel the concession and pay £500,000 to the British as a penalty (23).

D'arcy and the Oil Concession

Iran's economic backbone and its biggest industry is oil. Forbis, the American scholar, comments:

Historically, oil in Iran was less an Iranian concern than a British concern, because it was a British corporation owned by the British government that produced oil in Iran for more than forty years after a British subject, financier William D'arcy, discovered it (18, p. 220-221).

D'arcy received an exploration concession in 1901 for a duration of sixty years, giving him exclusive rights to search for oil throughout the country and to export it. According to the contract, D'arcy agreed to establish one or more companies to carry out the project. The Iranian government was to receive a royalty of 16 percent of his annual profits plus 20,000 pounds in cash and 20,000 pounds worth of stock in the enterprise (27).

D'arcy started his work with the financial aid of the British Royal Navy, which needed oil badly. He exploited the oil company in 1908, in southwest Iran and in the same year the British government bought D'arcy's share in the company. D'arcy bribed the Bakhtiari tribal chieftains who terrorized the area and founded the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1909. Forbis states that:

Anglo-Persian was essentially a British military enterprise carried out in anticipation of

World War I... Winston Churchill, first lord of the admiralty, put not only British troops but also British government money into the quest for oil in Britain's quasi-colony Iran, and by 1913 Britain, too, was a major power in oil (18, p. 221).

In 1914, the British government bought 51 percent of Anglo-Persian. Iranian production, which grew to 6,000,000 barrels in 1918, fueled the Royal Navy in World War I and served the British warships in World War II. The profits of the Anglo-Persian company were determined by what the company charged the British Navy for oil. However, the profits were deliberately kept to a minimum and the Persians were not allowed to examine the company's books (18). The British government also had two members on the Board of Directors and they had the right of veto which enabled them to control all the decisions made in the company (27).

The Iranian profits were never calculated correctly or paid out in full. From 1916 to 1920, the profits were not even paid at all. While the output of oil rose steadily each year, the Iranian share of profits stayed as low as ever (27).

Between 1911 and 1951, the oil company paid out \$615 million in profits, mostly to the British government and \$700 million in corporation taxes to the British government, but only \$310 million in royalties to Iran (18). While the output was increasing each

year and the company had thousands of employees, the activities of the company did not have any positive effect upon Iran's economic situation. Even all the company's requirements (clothing, food, fruits and vegetables) came from abroad. The company also attempted to employ as few Iranian nationals as possible in both managerial and technical positions and lower positions as well. This was done to avoid Iranian influence in the company (18, 27).

In 1930, while thousands of Iranians were out of a job, the company employed 4,000 Indian workers at Abadan. This was a big loss to Iran and helped to keep the Iranian unemployment high. Maneuvers such as this were an attempt to prevent the growth of Iran's economic strength, which would have helped the country to become industrialized, and consequently have created an internal demand for petroleum and changed existing property relationships (27). In this regard, Nirumand states that:

To keep Iran from even thinking of establishing manufacturing industries based on oil within the country itself, the company had sold oil to Iran at prices that were so high that the latter even imported oil from Russia... Iranian oil was more expensive in Iran than in Britain, being sold at a profit of 500 percent (27, p. 33).

In 1931, the Iranian government became dissatisfied when the company published its yearly balance

sheet. They therefore demanded a revision of the existing contract. After a long period of conflict and an ultimatum from the British government, a new contract was signed in 1933. While the new contract put Iran in a better material position with more benefits, it was actually a big gain for Britain since the contract was extended in additional 32 years (27). In 1935 the company's name was changed to Anglo-Iranian oil company on Iran's request.

4.4 The Nationalization of the Oil Industry

After the end of World War II, nationalistic feelings in Iran were directed against the continuing ownership of the country's oil by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, which was actually owned by the British (22). In 1951, Mohammad Mossadegh, the Iranian prime minister, asked for nationalization of the oil industry on the grounds that the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company was a scandal and an injustice. Due to the movement for oil nationalization, the company shut down the Abadan refinery and offered Iran a fifty-fifty split of profits. Mossadegh rejected any compromise, insisting on full nationalization. His objective was to free Iranians from foreign control. Everyone in the country opposed to outside influences supported him on the issue (18).

The oil industry was nationalized in 1951, but since the two governments were unable to come to an agreement on the issue of the company, the British imposed worldwide boycott of Iranian oil (22). The company requested its sister oil companies to deny Iran tanker services and freeze Iranian oil out of the world's markets (18). Since all key functions of the industry were run by British personnel who left Iran during the oil nationalization and oil marketing was controlled by the international cartel of oil companies which stopped their services to Iran, the oil nationalization attempt resulted in an economic disaster. From 1951 to 1954 the Iranian oil industry was virtually closed down, resulting in a complete stop to the development plans of the country (21).

Despite all the problems and the pressures, Mossadegh was determined to end foreign domination. The majority of the people supported him even though they feared that they would lose the contest. Frey states that:

But for them the entire dispute was more emotional and political than economic, and many swore they would prefer to see Abadan destroyed rather than make a deal with the British... For the Persians, it was a question of freedom from British imperialism, political as well as economic, rather than a question simply of the nationalization of an industry (19, p. 98).

The anti-British movement grew during the oil crisis. Even in isolated villages that had never seen an Englishman the British were blamed for local ills and shortcomings (19).

Mossadegh's determination to stop foreign domination was a big threat to foreign interest. Therefore the British government, with the help of the United States government and a handful of Iranian military officers, collaborated to overthrow Mossadegh in 1953. With Mossadegh's downfall foreign domination continued unchallenged and exploitation by foreign interests persisted (27).

In 1954, the Iranian government signed a new oil agreement. While the oil industry was formally nationalized, effective control over price and output was given to the International Consortium which replaced the British Oil Company (22). The Anglo-Iranian Company became National Iranian Oil Company, but the presence of Britain and other Western countries remained in Iran in the form of a consortium in which Britain had a 40 percent share, the United States a 40 percent share and other Western countries the remaining 20 percent. The new oil contract satisfied all the wishes that Britain and the United States had been proclaiming since 1951 (27).

Anti-imperialist sentiment, which was strongly expressed in Mossadegh's movement, as Keddie states, never died out in Iran. "The 1954 oil agreement with an international consortium was correctly seen as maintaining foreign control and profits," she concludes (13).

During the oil nationalization, the religious leaders campaigned against the British, since anything which weakened the influence of the Western countries in Iran was welcome to them. They preached against both Soviet communism and Western materialism, both of which they said placed man above God† (19).

To the intellectuals who were educated in Western fashion, they said:

Learn the techniques of the West, but remember that Islam is still the one sure road to metaphysical truth. The pragmatic, materialist West can satisfy your body but only Islam can satisfy your soul (19, p. 105).

All the interference of Russia and Britain in Iranian affairs created strong nationalistic feelings and resentment, directed mostly toward the British. The people acquired the idea that the English were unscrupulous and subtle and blamed Britain for frustrating their national ambitions (10). The Iranian people disliked the English since their knowledge and contact with Englishmen was through British political agents.

These agents were often profiteers, imposters and liars, who only cared about their own political and material benefits. To attain their goals, they ignored all humanistic values and moral laws (2).

The Iranian historian Adamiyat comments that Britain wanted Iran to be weak and dependent. The same was true of Russia. Both countries wanted to gain control of Iran to secure their own interests. They tried to keep Iran from reaching any progress and even the British minister, Mr. Shill, said that the British had no moral obligation to help Iran overcome its economic shortcomings or to make any development plan (3).

4.5 Iranian-American Relations

The American relationship with Iran was started by private organizations and private citizens. The missionaries were the first people who came, in 1829, and constructed hospitals and schools in the north of Iran. These Americans were liked and respected by Iranians and they were welcomed throughout the country. They taught English and their own religious doctrines. They spread to the big cities to work and to try to convert Muslims to their religion (27).

The missionaries' helpfulness, their friendly relationships with the Iranian people, and the American press' support of the 1907 Iranian revolution made a profound impression on the Iranians and gave rise to their sympathy for America (27).

In 1911, the Iranian government hired an American financial advisor, W. Morgan Shuster, to help solve Iran's economic problems. Cottan states that Morgan Shuster was the greatest asset of American diplomacy in Iran. In 1922, a delegation of American financial experts, headed by Dr. Millspaugh, came to Iran at ^{the} ~~ten~~ request of the Iranian government. He left Iran in 1927 and returned to work in 1942 (14).

During World War II, the threat of an American oil shortage and expert information that Iran had 12 percent of the world's oil reserves awakened American interest in Iran. Until the second world war relations between the two countries were friendly. During the war and after, military considerations and the military aspect of the relationship dominated.

In 1949 the government of the United States started a program called the Point Four Program. It was to provide technical and financial aid, help for refugees and commercial and cultural relations for the underdeveloped countries. Iran received a subsidy of \$25 million. Several American advisors accompanied the

aid received. They were paid by the Iranian government and helped in a development plan (19). In 1965 a law concerning capitulation for the American advisors was passed. It granted immunity to all Americans in Iran. This meant that Iranian courts could not place any advisor on trial. The development aid that the United States granted the developing countries was seen by its people as a generous and humanistic act. However, it was seen differently by the people of receiving countries. The aid was believed to be a means of exploitation and expansion of the American influence over those countries on the basis of a welfare relationship, in favor of the United States. The policy of assisting these countries in their modernization efforts was, in fact, seen as a way to exploit their most important resources (27).

Bingham, an American writer, interpreted that -- since the welfare of the United States is dependent on the existence of free and friendly nations overseas and since it needs their trade and their raw materials for tanks, planes, cars, television sets, coffee, cigarettes, and for its comforts -- these countries must be given such aid (27).

The United States had manifested great interest in Iranian trade, banks and especially oil as well as military concerns. In addition to the agreement with

the International Consortium in 1954, by which the United States held a 40 percent interest in Iranian oil, other contracts had been concluded with foreign oil companies, most of which were American (27).

It has been said tht the American cooperation with the British in the 1953 coup was due to a desire to open the way for American compnies in Iran. Forbis comments that:

When President Eisenhower sent Kermit Roosevelt into Iran to help topple Mossadegh it was with the thought that if America pulled Anglo-Iranian out of the fire, Anglo-Iranian would have to let some American companies into Iran (18, p. 223).

As seen later, American involvement in Iran after 1953 became deeper than just the entrance of some companies into Iran. As the price oil rose and the oil boom continued, the United States developed a great economic intrest in Iran. In the mid-seventies, Iran was a major importer of American goods and the largest importer of American arms. In oil production the United States, along with Britain, was the dominant country. In investment outside of oil, American firms were also very strong. Between 1956 and 1974, 43 of the 183 foreign firms investing in Iran were American. They accounted for a third of all the capital invested. By the end of 1972, the assets which the United States had in Iran were valued at \$570 million (22).

The involvement became more intensive as the modernization of the country continued and Western technology was introduced to Iran. The industrialization brought thousands of American technicians and experts into Iran to work. Some were paid as much as \$12,000 a month. This was a major cause of tension between American supervisors and the Iranian technicians who worked under them for less money and fewer privileges (24).

American interest in Iran were so important that every possible effort was made by the American government to keep the country under its control. These efforts were successful until 1978 (22, 27). Concerning the importance of Iran to the United States, Albert wrote that:

Iran was the linchpin of U.S. control of the Persian Gulf and its hedge against a Middle Eastern oil cutoff, its center of operations for surveillance of the Southern part of the Soviet Union, a balance to Arab interests in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a third party supplier of oil to South Africa, the largest buyer of U.S. military goods and external subsidizer of U.S. military research and development, and a testing ground for U.S. military and para-military operations for use elsewhere around the globe (5, p. 8).

The two most important events in the Iranian-American relationship were the 1953, U.S. supported, coup and the American military involvement. These two aspects helped to determine the Iranian attitude toward

Cost

the American government and are the starting point for the Iranian negative attitude toward Americans. Due to the importance of these two events, they will be discussed in more detail here.

Military Mission and Military Involvement

During World War II, President Roosevelt created the Persian Gulf command and sent 30,000 American military men to Iran. Many American technical and other experts also came to Iran during that time to work in the areas of finance, public health, provincial administration farm support and irrigation (18).

In 1947 military considerations dominated all relations between the two countries and the United States gave Iran its initial financial aid in the form of a credit of \$25 million for the purchase of arms and munitions from the United States. A few months later, an additional \$10 million was given to Iran to buy more arms and munitions (27). In 1947 a military mission was sent to Iran under an agreement between the two countries to advise the army and an American colonel named Schwartzkopt was sent to reorganize the gendarmerie (19). Under this agreement, Iran could not discuss its military problems with other foreign countries without the mission's consent. In 1959, an Iranian-American military agreement was signed. Under this

agreement the United States was able to install intermediate range ballistic missiles close to the border of the Soviet Union. In 1965, the United States granted Iran a \$200 million credit, on the condition that the money be used to purchase American arms within 4 years (27).

* The military dependence of Iran on the United States, through the purchase of arms and ammunition, continued to grow over the years. Between 1970 and 1978, Iran ordered \$20 billion worth of arms, ammunition and other military equipment from the United States (22). This was about "double America's military sales to all countries of the world for the twenty-five years following World War II (24, p. 50).

Besides arms sales, the United States also granted Iran billions of dollars in military aid. Albert, an American scholar, states that:

Since the overthrow of the popularly elected government of Mossadeh, led by Kermit Roosevelt of the CIA in 1953, the U.S. government supplied Iran with \$1.2 billion worth of military aid and training (5, p. 2).

To maintain and operate the arms bought from the United States, Iran was forced to hire thousands of foreign technicians. By 1978, approximately 10,000 Americans were working on arms-related projects in Iran., They were expected to be 25,000 by 1980. Iranian police officials and the secret police were also

trained by the Americans in Iran and in the United States. During the 1970's, approximately 350 secret police agents were trained in interrogation methods and torture techniques in Virginia and Texas (5). The Iranian army and police force were totally dependent on American technicians and experts. All this is an indication of the depth of American military involvement in Iran.

In addition to this dependency, the cost of the defense personnel was very high. It cost Iran an average of \$9000 per month per person for American defense personnel in 1975. The defense-related personnel, says Graham, came to approximately 20,000 in 1975 (21).

With the sale of arms to Iran, American leaders hoped to make Iran the "guardian" of Western oil supplies in the Persian Gulf region. When the British military presence in the Persian Gulf was terminated in 1971, the question of protecting "Western interests" in the Persian Gulf area arose. Until then Britain was doing the job. The United States therefore moved to protect these interests indirectly through the government of Iran. An American-Iranian alliance emerged, and the first step was to strengthen the Iranian army with sophisticated military hardware (24). The sale of

arms was also seen by Klare, an American scholar, as an attempt

to wipe out America's trade imbalance; to underwrite the cost of U.S. weapons development; to assure the high employment in the aero-space industry, and to accelerate the "modernization" of Iranian society (24, p. 44).

X Strong resentment was provoked in Iran by the buying of foreign arms in large quantity when inflation was high in Iran and the country needed its money for other development programs. It was seen by many Iranians as foreign military domination and exploitation. The presence of affluent Westerners as technicians and experts also created much bitterness because the country's real income (oil income) was declining at that time (24).

American arms sales to the Iranian government, and American military involvement in Iran, gave rise to anti-American attitudes in Iran. Since the Iranian government used American arms to suppress its people in many events before the 1978 Revolution, the Americans were identified with their unpopular government by Iranians (24).

The United States government not only sold arms to Iran for political and economic purposes, but they also made several military bases in Iran (27). Military involvement between the two countries ended in 1978,

when the revolution took place, but the hostility and anti-American feelings that resulted from the involvement are still strong in Iran.

The Overthrowing of Mossadegh

In 1951, when oil was nationalized by Prime Minister Mossadegh and relations between Iran and Britain were at their worst, the United States played the role of an impartial mediator and a special American envoy was sent to Iran (27). The United States government seemed to be in favor of the Mossadegh government at the beginning of his reign. They wanted to avoid the military intervention of the British government and to negotiate with Mossadegh. But since the Iranian government insisted on the total removal of British interference, the United States did not continue to support the Iranian stand (14).

It has been said that the reason for this shift by the Americans was that the government of the United States supported Mossadegh and the nationalization of the oil industry in Iran until its initial objective was attained: the elimination of British influence in Iran. This would open the road for American participation in Iran's oil resources and bring Iran under the control of the United States (27). Some British oilmen also believed that the Americans would take advantage of the Mossadegh movement to break the British oil

monopoly in Iran (14). The Americans believed that, with Mossadegh's negative attitude toward the British, if pushed far enough, he would rather sign contract with them than with the British. But when they realized that Mossadegh would not make a deal with anyone, they rejoined the British stand (27).

The Americans joined the British in the Iranian oil boycott and throughout 1953 Iran continued without oil revenues (7). In 1953, Mossadegh requested urgent financial aid from the United States to prevent the country from economic collapse. President Eisenhower refused to give any aid (14, 7). The United States insisted that the settlement of the oil crisis with the British was the only solution for Iran (14).

The fact that America withheld aid and denied Iran a loan in 1953 created a climate open to subversion. Graham states that subversion was the game played by the CIA under the responsibility of Kermit Roosevelt. "Apart from blocking aid, the Americans acted as coordinator, financier and counter-propagandist" (21, p. 66).

With Mossadegh persisting in demanding total British withdrawal, diplomatic relations were broken with Britain, and the United States government realized that there would be no place for any deal or compromise with Mossadegh. Therefore, in the interest of the British

in particular and the industrial countries in general, the British and the United States governments decided to overthrow Mossadegh. In August 1953, Mossadegh was overthrown by a couyp in which the United States government played a decisive role (27, 13, 22).

"Today the visitor to Iran," says Cottam, a professor at the University of Pittsburgh, "finds that politically articulated Iranians from right to left believe the coup was Anglo-American sponsored." (14) The 1953 "coup d'etat" took place with the help of Kermit Roosevelt, grandson of Theodore Roosevelt and agent of the CIA, who came to Iran in 1953 to lead the operation (29). In his book, Counter Coup - The Struggle for the Control of Iran, Roosevelt admits to having participated in the operation and says that he went to Iran as a representative of the American President Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Churchill and as the representative of American and British interests (29).

The downfall of Mossadegh marks Iranian history. He was a popularly elected leader who was seen by the majority of the people as the one who could release the country from foreign domination. He attempted to reject the economic colonialism of the Western countries (18). With his fall, Iran again became dependent on

foreign countries and was exploited by foreign interests. While the United States government refused aid to Mossadegh immediately after his fall, they gave all possible support to his successor. In September 1953, an initial \$45 million was sent to Iran and \$15.5 million was sent a few months later. In 1954 they sent \$127.3 (27).

More aid (mostly military) was given by the United States to Iran in the following years and Iranian politics and economics were dominated by American policy. When the British left Iran, the United States took their place to protect their interests and those of other Western countries.

Modern Iranian history is closely tied to the history of Western technology and modern industry. Due to their need for oil and other raw materials and to their need to find a new market for their consumer goods, the Western countries tried to get control of Iranian politics and economy. For a long period, Iran was the scene of international rivalries and its people suffered because of these conditions. The traditions, interests and aspirations of the Iranian people were not taken into consideration.

The Western rivalries and their domination over the country not only affected the political and economic affairs of Iran, but also affected Iranian culture,

thoughts and educational institutions. The Western cultural impact is discussed in the following section.

4.6 The Western Cultural Impact

The Penetration of Western Ideas

The political and economic influences of the Western countries on Iran also had an impact on the cultural scene.

This cultural impact began in 1800 when the Crown Prince Abbas Mirza and his chancellor Ghaem Magham ordered the translation of several European books into Persian and sent some Iranian students to Europe to study. The translation of European philosophical and literary works made a significant impact on Iranian culture. Western social ideas were also brought to Iran by travelers and students. Iranian individuals who traveled to Europe or read European books tried to write about the European ideas and philosophy in an attempt to "enlighten" Iranian thoughts and opinions (16).

One of these individuals was Mirza Ali Khan Amin-al Doleh, who became the Iranian chancellor. He was influenced by English liberalism and the French school of individualism and its connected Rationalism. He saw all Iran's illness and troubles as being the result of the people's illiteracy and started to promote schools

and publications. He established a school with his own money and under the influence of the French rationalist ideology, he promoted science and educational services. Another Iranian, Haj Sayah, lived in Russia for many years. He travelled to Turkey and all of Europe and America. Under the influence of Russian progressive writers, he attempted to bring new ideas to Iran. He tried to promote changes and in 1879, he started writing in an attempt to awaken the people (16).

Mirza Fat Ali Akhondzadeh was another Iranian who travelled to Russia and was affected by English and French thinkers. His ideas in education were mostly influence by Rousseau and his book Emile. He suggested a reform of the Persian alphabet and way of writing in an attempt to simplify them so that the people could learn to read and write faster to permit them to read about the new ideas and become enlightened. Akhondzadeh was familiar with most of the European Realism literature. He believed that Western culture and education, modified to conform to the native environment, could be of benefit to the Iranian people (16).

One of the writers whose thoughts and books stimulated interest in education was Abdol Rahim Talbaf. His most famous work, the Book of Ahmad, was inspired by Rousseau's book Emile. He traveled abroad and was

deeply impressed by Western advances in education. he tried to introduce a European type of school system to the Iranian people.

His writing influenced many people. Among them, Mirza Hassan Rushdi-ye, attracted by his ideas, went to Beirut to learn about the new teaching methods. In 1884, on returning to the country, he established the first European type of school in Iran (8).

Talbaf was in favor of adapting European culture and civilization to Iran. He admired especially the educational ideas of Rousseau. he believed that science was necessary to the progress of humanity and he put the accent on science. He was also affected by European socialism. Talbaf was disapproved of by the clergy, the majority of whom accused him of heresy (16).

Jamal-al Din Asadabadi was also among those who attempted to introduce new ideas to Iran. He traveled to Europe and was influenced by European liberalism. He wrote about liberal progressive and patriotic ideas (10). While he was affected by Western ideas, he preached against Western imperialism and led a Pan-Islamic movement against the West (9).

The other person who brought Western ideas to Iran, recognized as one of the forerunners of westernization of Iran, is Mirza Malkom Khan. He lived abroad

for many years and was educated in France. He was influenced by the French school of Individualism, its connected Rationalism and English Liberalism. He introduced to Iran the ideas of individual freedom and constitutional government. He attempted to make some changes in Iranian script to make learning easier. Molkom indirectly preached that Islam was the barrier in the way of Moslim progress. he introduced Freemasonry to Iran, which is believed to be related to the colonization network (16).

In addition to the writings of these people and others, some newspapers also played a great role in bringing ideas from the West and in the Westernization of Iran. These newspapers came from abroad and were published by Iranians. They were: Qanun, published in London; Akhtar, in Istanbul; Hob al Matin, in Calcutta; and Soraya, in Cairo (9).

The ideas that were introduced to Iran by these newspapers and these people encouraged public education and schools, the learning of new science and technology, the establishment of constitutional government, the fight against ignorance, illiteracy and poverty, respect of individual rights and freedom, and the establishment of a powerful government to counter the foreigners (16).

These ideas resulted in the awakening of the people and they struggled to make changes in their country. The people's movement, in their attempt to bring about change, resulted in the Constitutional Revolution of 1907. While the ideas which produced this change came originally from the West, no credit has been given to those countries. Banani states that, while the idea of constitutional government was an imported Western idea, the nationalist movement supporting the idea was a reaction to Western power politics in Iran. The ideology of the constitution, based in Western ideas, was a response to Western aggression and a way to counter it (10, 8, 7).

It has been said by Adamiyat that the attraction of the Iranian and other Eastern nations toward Western culture and civilization does not mean that they believed Western ways of life and values were superior to their own. The real motive was that they wanted to mobilize themselves, using Western science and technologies, to repel Western aggression (3). An example is to be found in the first Iranian National Assembly. Its most distinctive feature was its anti-Western-colonialism sentiment, which wanted Russia and Britain out of Iran (1).

On the other hand, of those people who had been inspired by Western ideas and tried to westernize Iran,

most became anti-clerical and, directly or indirectly, attacked the clergymen. The freemasonry groups who believed in rationalism and separation of politics and social affairs from religion (26), spread propaganda against the religious people (10). The advocates of Western ideas supported secularism, and while the clergy played a crucial role in the Constitutional Revolution, their traditional way of thoughts was badly attacked by them after the movement (13).

But among the common people, those who were for the changes and reforms wanted the reforms and rules to conform with religious law. While they believed that the scientific schools were necessary and that new science and technology must be taught, they wanted them to be in accordance with Islamic law (4).

The Iranian social scientist, Naraghi, states that one of the phenomena that the Iranian westernized brought from Europe was Western liberalism. This liberalism was born of the French Revolution and was anti-religious in spirit. That liberalism, he said, would not work in Iran, since the religious element itself was asking for justice. He adds that the Iranian national culture is mixed with Islamic civilization and cannot be separated from it (26).

Those who for the first time introduced European ideas and culture to Iran, were later on attacked by some Iranian writers and thinkers. Shariati, an Iranian sociologist, states that Malkom Khan (among the first westernized) only succeeded in opening the way to the colonist culture, and that he tried to destroy the religious prejudice against Western ideas, so that the new civilization could enter the country. That meant Western domination through the cultural channel. Exporting the Western culture and philosophy to the East and Iran, Shariati says, is meaningless. The foundation of Iranian culture and the East in general is morality and the spirit of its material civilization and science is idealistic. While the Western culture is based on power, technology, and worship of money, he says (32).

Al-e Ahmad, an Iranian writer and educator shares the same ideas. He comments that:

Those first westernized among Iranian intellectuals only paved the way for the west-toxication, and due to this phenomena, alienated the Iranian nation from themselves. We are alienated in our clothes, home, food, literature, and the most dangerous in our education (6, p. 78).

The First Students Sent to Europe

Banani states that:

No single institution or group of people was more responsible for bringing Western influences into Iran than the students who had been educated in Europe and America (10, p. 101).

When Iran was defeated by the Russians in the war of 1828, the Crown Prince Abbas Mirza decided to send some Iranians to Europe to study military sciences. He sent 7 Iranian students, for the first time, to England between 1811 and 1815. Out of these students, one died and the others became a physician, a gunsmith, an engineer, a chemist, an artillery man, and a teacher-printer (9). These people returned to Iran and started teaching other Iranians. One of these students was Mirza Sahleh Shirazi, who brought back with him a printing press and published the first Iranian newspaper in 1838 (16).

In 1844, five more students were sent to study in Paris. In the coming years, more students were sent to Europe and by 1918 there were 500 students studying in all of Europe (8).

These students came back not only with the technical knowledge that they had learned, but also influenced by the life and culture of Europe. Most of these students were enamored of the English liberalism

and the people's individual freedom. They introduced these ideas to Iranians through their writings. Most of these intellectuals developed anti-clerical views. They thought that the only way to progress and improve was to follow the Western way of life (13).

On the other hand, the traditionalists campaigned against the people who studied in Europe and branded them as irreligious. Some condemned the new knowledge introduced by these people because they believed that it would confuse and falsify the thoughts of the young people, penetrate people's beliefs and faiths and dispute the logic of the religious orders (1). Some religious leaders also wrote that the advancement of Islam toward Western civilization must be stopped, and Islamic civilization must be practiced. Otherwise, they said, the foundation of Moslem life would be destroyed. The idea of liberalism introduced by these people was attacked by the traditionalists, since they believed that it would bring unrestrained behavior and would spread atheism (1). Even the first newspaper, which was published in 1876, was stopped by the clergy and some people working for the government, since it had a tendency toward the West and a desire for Westernization (10).

But not all clergy and religious people were against the Western ideas and against sending students

to Europe to study. While in Turkey, when the first students were sent to Europe, a clash came between the government and the religious leaders. In Iran, this was not the case (2). In Iran, even some religious writers insisted on the study of the Western science and technology and did not consider the Western-educated as irreligious (3).

The Missionaries and Foreign Schools

Many aspects of Western culture were introduced to Iran by the Western missionaries who came to Iran in the 19th century. These missionaries, whether they were teachers, doctors, nurses, or priests, acted as agents of change. They built several schools and hospitals throughout Iran.

The first school was opened by Americans in 1836, in Rezaiyeh. In 1939, the French Lazarites opened one in Tabriz. The British also opened one in Esfahan in 1870. In the coming years more English and American schools were opened (9). These missionaries tried to convert the people to Christianity and to introduce them to Western values. As Armajani, an Iranian historian and scholar, puts it:

It was the deepest desire of the missionaries to change Iran by converting the people to Christianity, but realizing the impossibility of that, a large number of them were happy to change the attitude of the young through education and the introduction of the best values of the West... The values that the missio-

naries taught were dignity of labor, the virtue of service, importance of the individual, equality of women, democracy and patriotism. All of this was included in what was called the "building of character" (9, p. 121).

The missionaries, in order to gain acceptance by the people, were always accompanied by a physician. This policy was used in Iran and in 1890, the doctors with American missionaries initiated a program to train young Iranian men in medical work. Some courses in nurses' training were also offered. This medical work was not considered charitable, but was primarily evangelistic. The hospitals were a means of carrying on evangelism. By means of holding morning and evening prayers in the wards, holding religious meetings and making available religious literature, the hospitals were used to spread the Gospel (8).

The missionaries were not able to attain their goal of spreading Christianity in Iran. Therefore, they often accepted offers from the Western governments to serve as political experts on Iran, or to act as advisors to companies which had large commercial interests in Iran (8). It has been said that, in fact, the missionaries' work at the beginning and by nature, was to be the vanguard of the policy of colonization and to protect Western interests (6).

While the missionary schools did not succeed in spreading Christianity, they were successful in westernizing some Iranians. The students from these schools, in later years, played important roles in Westernizing campaigns under the reign of the Reza Shah (10). The number of these foreign schools was estimated at fifty in 1929. Out of these fifty, 25 were American missionary schools (10).

From 1923 to 1940, the Iranian government gradually assumed control over all foreign schools. They were made to conform to the laws and restrictions made by the Ministry of Education. However, after World War II, the laws and regulations were relaxed for foreign schools and several American sponsored schools were allowed to work in Iran (8).

Amir Kabir and the First Iranian University

When the reign of Naser al-Din Shah started in 1848, his prime minister Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir started some fundamental reforms. Amir Kabir, who had traveled to Russia and Turkey and had read European books about the new sciences, was determined to introduce these new sciences and techniques into Iran. He could be called the first person to start the process of modernization and westernization of Iran (9).

Seeing different modern schools and academies in Russia and Turkey and reading about the science institutes of the Western countries, he was motivated to establish a Polytechnique Institute in Iran. The Institute was established in 1851 and was called Dar al-Fonun. It was the first institute of higher education in Iran. The subjects that were taught were military science, medicine and pharmacy, engineering, mathematics, mining, physics, history and geography, foreign languages and drafting. In Dar al-Fonun the new scientific principles were introduced and this opened a new door for modern sciences (2).

Amir Kabir hired instructors from Austria. He did not want teachers from Britain or Russia since he did not want the teachers to be involved in the politics of the country (2).

The Institute had a press of its own for publishing scientific and technical works. The students were aged from 14 to 16 and were chosen from the ranks of the aristocracy, landlords and top government officials. French was the medium of instruction since European professors comprised all the faculty except for a few Iranians who had been educated abroad (8).

The Institute lasted for 40 years (it was later changed to a high school) and 1,100 men graduated from it. Of these men, most went into government services

and some who were active and inspired by Western ideas published newspapers and joined various political movements (8).

The Institute was the first attempt to introduce modern education into the country, and its students were exposed to modern subjects which were taught by Europeans in a Western language. European works were translated and used as textbooks and the school established the first translation bureau in the country (37).

Besides establishing Dar al-Fonun, Amir Kabir sent some Iranian artisans to Russia to learn the new technical principles. He also published a newspaper called Waqa-ye Etefagiye in 1851. His goal was to educate the people, inform them about the affairs of the country and the world, and enlighten their thoughts. The foreign texts appearing in it came from newspapers of France, England, Russia, Egypt, Austria, Turkey and India (2).

While he wanted to inform Iranians about events in the world and introduce Western culture and civilization, he did not wish to be westernized himself and practiced Iranian rules and manners. The direction of Amir Kabir's thoughts and ideas were nationalistic. His goal in educating Iranians and introducing the new sciences was to lift the Iranian place and status in

the modern world, and to mobilize the Iranians to confront the Western countries. It was said by the plenipotentiary minister of Prussia that Amir Kabir did not like Westerners, but wanted to use their science and inventions for the benefit of the Iranian people (2).

The reform programs of Amir kabir aroused the opposition of many groups and individuals. The clergymen were among his enemies. As the result of this opposition, Amir Kabir was dismissed in 1851, and the next year he was executed on the Shah's order (9).

In the Direction of the West

The process of modernization and westernization of Iran continued after the reign of Amir Kabir.

Some private schools were opened by liberal merchants. They were modeled on the Western style schools established by the Western missionaries. From 1873 to 1901, 5 more specialized institutions and colleges were opened; 2 military colleges and schools of languages, agriculture and political sciences. At the turn of the century, interest in education developed further. A medical school and a teacher training college were opened and the Council for National Schools was established to initiate a modern, comprehensive network of schools. The council sponsored a number of modern primary schools (37).

Other than these educational reforms, no effort was made to improve other aspects of Iranian life. Therefore, popular unrest increased due to the fact that the Western impact which had occurred created serious dislocations within the social order and made possible further exploitation of the people by the upper class (37).

By the turn of the century the educated and the intellectuals of Iran were familiar with European ways and were sensitive to events taking place in the Western countries. After the 1907 Revolution, these educated people established hundreds of schools and published newspapers. All of them advocated change and progress on Western lines (10).

Most of these people were anti-clerical. Among them was a group of poets and authors known as the motejaddin (innovators). Their works were popular among the middle classes. The methods that they proposed were particularly Western and were utilized in combating the clergy (10).

The process of westernization intensified after 1921 when the Reza Shah came to power. Since he was in favor of the West and anything Western, he tried to westernize the country and to adopt the materialistic civilization of the West. All the changes that took place during his reign were motivated by Western-

inspired ideals and activities and attempted to circumscribe and undercut the religion of Islam. By introducing a gradual program of mass education on national and non-religious lines, he ended the clergy's control over the education of the people, and education became state-controlled. Although he did not attack Islam openly, "the new generation were taught to regard it as an alien faith imposed upon Iran by an inferior civilization ." (10)

In order to modernize the country, Reza Shah tried to fight Moslem tradition, which was seen by him as a barrier. He forced men to wear Western dress, raised the age of marriage, started co-educational schools, adopted European laws to replace the religious laws, encouraged the importation of Western music, architecture and films (18). In a movement against the Quranic laws, he also banned the wearing of veils for women, which led to the adoption of Western-style dress. The soldiers were ordered to remove, by force if necessary, the veils of women who wore them in the street (18). Shivers comments that: "In an Islamic society where Islamic law encourages women to dress modestly, this would amount to symbolic rape." (35, p. 61)

The women were also encouraged to work outside of the home. This was a tremendous change for the Iranian women who previously had had no public existence (19).

During this time the direction of the educational reform was focused on higher education, in order to train personnel for the ministries. A law was passed in 1928 which required 100 students to be sent abroad every year for a period of 5 years. Most of these students went to France. At the beginning of World War II this program was stopped, but the trend was firmly embedded. By 1960 there were more than 15,000 students in foreign countries (8).

The role of these students, when they returned, in spreading Western influence in Iran was great. They brought about changes not only in the fields of intellectual activity and scientific, technical, administrative, and professional enterprise, but also in the areas of cultural traditions, social relations and personal habits. These students adopted Western modes in everything from dress, to food, to manners and even frequently used European words (10).

In 1935, Reza Shah founded the University of Tehran, with a teaching staff which had largely been trained in Europe. There were also a considerable number of European professors who taught in the university.

In the 1930's, the chief officials working for the government were graduates of European -- and to some extent American -- universities. These elite stressed

secular interests, Western acculturation and academic achievement. While intellectually and socially oriented toward Western values, these people were emotionally tied to Iranian tradition (8).

During the reign of Reza Shah, an increasing number of influential Iranians became strong advocates of westernization. These people urged "a complete acceptance of the West and retainment of cultural and spiritual values of Iran in a purely national sense."

(10)

The more radical of them called for a large immigration of Europeans to Iran and argued that this immigration would bring about the spread of knowledge and a modern way of living and the introduction of Western civilization into the Iranian way of life. However, the majority of them suggested that the West's science, technology, law, sense of responsibility and initiative must be learned, but that Western customs should not be adopted blindly. The supporters and followers of Reza Shah perceived the power of the clergy as the strongest obstacle to progress (10). The religiously conservative people and the clergies, on the other hand, opposed Reza Shah's policy toward westernization and his determination to change Iran from an Oriental to a Western nation (19).

To the clergy, Western penetration meant a weakening of their power and of Islam. They realized that government centralization and the usurpation of their legal, social and educational functions would imply the loss of their power and that when Iranians began to learn Western ideas, they would question the traditional ones that they had grown up with. This, they felt, would result in a weakening of Islam (13).

The clergy quietly worked in the countryside to secure support for an Islamic revival. They were successful in securing the support of the people, since many of them felt that they had been pushed too far and too fast toward westernization and secularism. Some of the more conservative people formed groups which worked toward the regeneration of Islam and were willing to sacrifice their lives for God and the country (19).

The intellectuals and the educated, while attracted toward Western civilization, had doubts and suspicions about this civilization, which was so difficult to reconcile with their Iranian and Islamic traditions. This resulted in their frustration, which was reflected in their interest in books written by Kafka and Sartre, who were symbols of the West's uncertainty in the great world of science that had been created by themselves (19).

However, these intellectuals realized that they must reconcile the Western civilization with their own traditions in order to live in the modern world. Therefore, they attempted to retain their traditions while accepting the Western concepts as well. This struggle frequently split their loyalties and beliefs (19).

Among intellectuals there were those who began to speak out against the dangers of indiscriminate adoption of the materialism of the West. Ahmad Kasravi was the main spokesman of this viewpoint and in his writings he condemned the materialism of the West (10).

After the abdication of Reza Shah the adoption of Western culture continued under his son, the ex-Shah. The process of westernization reached its height during the years from 1963 to 1978, when the industrialization of the country brought thousands of Western experts into Iran and relations with the Western countries expanded.

Forbis comments that westernization came to Iran in the form of books, consumer products, movies, and fashions, but that mostly it came in technology and in the persons of thousands of foreigners living in Iran who had the task of applying the technology (18).

Those foreigners introduced Western behavior patterns such as public drinking, revealing clothing and

sexually explicit movies, all of which offended the conservative Moslem population in Iran (24).

During these 15 years, the changes made in the country were so great that the society was split between the seductive goal of materialistic modernization and the attempt to preserve the Iranian tradition of mysticism, poetry and devotion to a pure and moralistic Islam (18).

The changes that took place in the educational and cultural areas were many. Public education extended tremendously and several universities and colleges were established. The number of university students in Iran increased to 100 times as many, and thousands of students were sent to Western countries to study. Co-educational programs were expanded and many foreign schools were allowed to operate in Iran (15).

Books, newspapers, journals, fashions and films were imported in large amounts from Western countries. Western literature, music and architecture were adopted. The Western books were translated in large quantities and even most of the books used in higher education institutions were translations of Western books or were used in the original language. Western style drama was also encouraged (15).

The technocratic ideology became dominant in this period and science was important. This ideology, which was imported to Iran from the Western countries, does not take into consideration the national and cultural aspects of the country and ignores the beliefs and opinions of the people (26).

The intense program of westernization that was started in 1963 was in favor of those who were already privileged and "it also deeply alienated the people-at-large whose traditions, culture, and religious values were being attacked" (35).

Against this trend, there was strong resistance by the people and, as a sign of this resistance, people began to learn more about the Islamic culture and values and at the same time they attempted to reduce their dependence on the West and Western values (35).

While the intellectual leaders at the turn of the century and through the 1930's were fascinated with Western ideas and Western materialism, the intellectuals in the 1960's and 70's were not the same. Many of them were worried or angry about the overwhelming impact of westernization. They felt that the modernization of the country should not mean its westernization, since westernization is perceived as cultural change (18).

Some argued that the Islamic and Gnostic teaching of the Iranian past were sufficient to enable Iranians to run their country (26). Some also said that Islam, at this time, was the only traditional point of unity and support capable of establishing a strong emotional bond (28). The acceptance of foreign influence, the imitation of Western culture and the use of the languages and customs of the West by the ruling class was perceived as a danger to national identity (18).

Naraghi, an Iranian scholar, considers that the Iranian character is shaped into a collective psyche that cannot be westernized. He says that, while one of the leading reformers early in the century declared that Iranians must westernize themselves in body and soul, today among the new generation of poets, writers and artisans, hailing from the most diverse schools of thought, not one wishes to become Western in body and soul (18).

The reason for this, he said, is that westernization is too rational and objective to deal with the human condition and the greatest merit among Iranians is their humanity. He adds:

Why should culture like ours, in which man is considered in all his aspects, be deprived of all their substance by following a so-called rational course at the end of which lies the vast expanse of the non-rational and the impossibility of receiving an answer to our questions. Why would this wealth of feeling

and emotion which has reached us after centuries of tradition and mystical-poetic experience, and which is one of the outstanding features of the Iranian personality in history, have to be considered as something shameful and subjective that we must rid ourselves of? (18, p. 98)

Naraghi comments that Iran need science and technology in order to make the best possible use of its resources and enable people to accede to material well-being in conditions of dignity and equity. However, this material well-being is not the sole objective, as it is in the West. The principal concern is to interrogate other societies on their various experiences. He adds that the West, too, must gradually become accustomed to interrogating other cultures and other societies, instead of seeking to make them like itself (18).

In arguing against the westernization of Iran and its adoption of Western values, Shariati comments that Iranians must accept that their society is a religious society. While the Western insight is materialistic and its cultural structure is rational, material, profiteering and pragmatic, Eastern insight is emotional and its cultural structure is spiritual, moral and idealistic. The society's heart is alive because of the religion in the East, he said, and its body is warm because of its faith (32).

The people of Iran are scattered throughout the country, Shariati says. These people will not hear the talk of intellectuals. They will not listen to the radio. The only thing which moves them and brings them hope, which gathers them together and gives them strength, is their religion. This element of the culture must be kept alive, to enable the people to stand for themselves and to preserve their identity, he says (32).

The clergy was also against the modernization program, since they said that it brought with it such immoral offenses as co-education and pornography. It also introduced the drinking of alcohol, gambling and illegitimate sex. Most of the clergy agreed that science and technology were for the good of the country. They did not object to higher education for men and women, but they wanted the teaching of the two sexes to be separated (18).

They believed that the demand in Iran for working women was not the same as in the Western countries. Therefore encouraging women to work outside the home and giving them emancipation were seen by them as a way to make women consumers for Western products and nothing else (17).

The clergy criticized the government, saying that, while the government advocated the emancipation of

women, they did not allow the girls from traditional families to enter schools since they wore veils. They attacked the westernization program since they believed that the Western pattern of life was not applicable, and should not be applied, to Iran. They argued that in the West, family life was not respected anymore, sexual relationships were free and true love did not exist. Therefore, it was not wise to follow their way of life (17).

Rukni Musavi, a contemporary Iranian scholar, argues that the moral and ethical values in the West are weak and therefore introducing the Western way of life is a threat to the morality of Moslems. He says that in sexual conduct, the West stepped outside all moral bounds. Purity is no longer esteemed and has been discarded by the Western societies. All sanctions for controlling morals have been abandoned. Love affairs are unlimited and premarital cohabitation is the rule rather than the exception. Most married couples are unfaithful to each other, and the number of illegitimate births is increasing (30).

The consumption of alcoholic beverages is widespread in the Western countries and it leads to many cases of death, mental illness, criminal acts, and car accidents. Rukni adds that the Western permissiveness

has resulted in increasing cases of crime, rape, riot, and consumption of hard drugs. Family life and the marriage bond are weakening and the divorce rate is increasing in the West. As a result many children are deprived of their parents' love, live in broken families or end up in juvenile courts (30). He says that modern Western civilization's productivity, affluence, comfort and leisure cannot be denied, but it must be regrettably acknowledged that Western civilization's shortcomings and weaknesses are no fewer than its advantages. Despite the leisure and ease which knowledge and culture provide for society, human happiness has not increased, nor have social ills diminished. He blames scientism for these social problems and considers that science brings deadly insecurity, creates a breeding ground for crime and corruption, and bans calm of mind, spirit and faith. He feels that the materialistic spirit has infiltrated civilized people and that today there hardly exists one Westerner with any aim in life loftier than the scratching out of a livelihood (30). In regard to the negative impact of science, Rukni stated that:

Technology and industrialization have reached a zenith while moral and spiritual life have sunk to their nadir. While science climbs, thought declines, divisions proliferate, and the West, rejecting spiritual and moral values, has bowed its neck under the yoke of worship of the machine. Machine-worshippers

will never lay hands on joy or peace of happiness. Science imposes an order on life which provides affluence but not happiness, since happiness is outside its competence. Science does not distinguish benefit from harm, nor ugly from lovely, but only true from false. The order imposed on human living by science alone will set hell on fire and must be resisted at all cost. (30, p. 5)

Impact upon the Educational Institutions

Formal Education. As has already been discussed, the Iranian educational system became secularized, and adopted the Western system in 1921. Before that, education was in the hands of the clergy and learning took place in the Maktab and the Madressah. The new system was far different from the old one, not only in its organization and structure, but also in the form of content and subjects.

In the old system, there were no restrictions concerning the age at which one started school and no specific time for the day or month that school started and no limitation on the length of the period of study. Since most of the people in the country had a limited or low income and needed their children's help, this unstructured form of education was suitable for the majority. It was also suited to the country's different climates; each school could arrange its program and its vacations according to the climate (33).

In the Madrassah, which was a higher learning institution, the system worked comparably to free universities (17).

In the new system that was adopted from the West, these structures changed. An age limit was set for starting school and all schools followed a rigily set timetable, starting at the same time on the same day. The length of the period of study became fixed. In this system, the technical, scientific and organizational matters were important. The subjects that were taught in the past were in accordance with the time, the culture, the religion and the spirit of the society. While in later days the scientific subjects became the most important (33).

In the old system, the foundations of learning and education were based on morality and the basic book with which one began learning was the Quran, the Moslem holy book. Education was associated with religion (33).

With the introduction of secular education, the trend changed and the rational aspect of learning became important. This was seen by some Iranian scholars as one-sided education which ignored the spiritual part of learning. Sadat, an Iranian educator, states that education is expected to perform two functions: the first is to help in intellectual training and the

learning of science, and the second to purify the soul and aid in the moral attainment of a pure heart. He considers that the only way to reach this goal is through learning and education based on faith and virtue (31).

Sadat argues that the only goal of Western education is to learn a limited amount of information and to train the mind. This results in the training of many scholars and scientists who are rough, strict and non-spiritual. He suggested Islamic education for Iran and said that in the West, thought and emotion are on different sides while in the Islamic teaching these are on the same side and complete one another (31).

To him, training of thought and intellect should take place through moral and spiritual training. Otherwise, the rough knowledge and science that one learns can be used in inappropriate ways which could harm the person and the society he lives in. Moreover, he says, the goal of education, in the extreme, is to help people grow, to be close to God and to reach God. This can only happen when one purifies one's soul and heart, and this can only be acquired through Islamic teaching (31).

Shariati also shares the same ideas. He feels that Western education is based on rational and scientific thinking and that the spiritual part of learning

is not considered. He advocates Islamic education for Iran, which he believes is closer than any other form to the Iranian mind and is the only way to keep the Iranian identity alive. It is also the way to human exaltation and growth.

For him, while the scientific movement in Islam moves toward the truth and human exaltation, the Western rational science pushes the world toward a human crisis. Since the west has abandoned morality and spirituality for the sake of science, it now has people who are only "things" in the society and are easily abandoned, he said.

He comments that, in Islam, stress is placed on two principles, purification and education; and that purification is preferred over education (33). Shariati indicated some differences between Islamic education which, in his opinion, should be used in Iran and Western education that was practice in Iran. Some differences that he mentions are: the education in the West seeks power and has a tendency towrd technology, profit, teaching, and promotes the seeking of comfort and happiness. Its goal is to increase one's efficiency. The West's dominant spirit in education is pragmatism and realism and its tendency is toward civilizing people. The base for its thought is science

and, in the extreme, it would help to make a powerful person capable of dominating his environment.

On the other hand, he says that education in Islam seeks the truth and has a tendency toward ideology, values, training, and the promotion of beauty and accomplishment. Its goal is to increase human virtues. Islam's dominant spirit is radicalism and idealism and its tendency is toward culture. The base for its thought is metaphysics and, in the extreme, it would make a good person, capable of dominating himself (33).

Hadi Sharifi takes his argument further, saying that in the past, people in Iran were trained to acquire such virtues as patience, generosity, devotion, self-sacrifice, tolerance, purity, morality and the accomplishment of honors. But, with the influence of the Western ideas and thoughts in education, the condition is in disorder and the direction of training is based on attempting to achieve a comfortable material life. In order to have this kind of life it is necessary to consume as much as possible. Therefore, physical welfare replaces the morality and spirituality which used to give strength to the people to enable them to deal with the hardships in life (34).

Sharifi sees that, with this kind of training, the people won't have happiness and no society can progress without acquiring the virtues which were taught in Iran

before. He says that, in Iranian culture, man is not only a material being trying to satisfy his physical needs, but his spirituality is also important for it gives him peace of mind.

However, the educational system in Iran accepted Western values and paid little interest to moral and spiritual concerns and to the ethical virtues, he concluded (34).

Naraghi shares a similar viewpoint. He feels that stress in Western training is put on teaching people to acquire more material benefits from learning, while in the East and Iran, learning has always been valued for its aspects of morality and spirituality. In the East, the ethical attributes and the moral virtues have always dominated the scientific life, he says, but the acquiring of material benefits through the use of science is the goal in the West. He considers that, while the goal of education in Iran is to make a perfect human being, in the mechanical system of the West -- which does not have any feeling -- human beings are used and when they are old they are condemned to living a solitary, sad, and harshly sequestered life (26).

Naraghi comments that one must realize that the Western society spread the idea that the developing countries which wanted to use the new technologies and sciences and wanted to become modernized, must copy the

Western social structure, including its educational and economic life. The Western society believed that its culture was universal and that all other cultures were secondary. For them, in order to make any progress, all people must become westernized. Naraghi concludes that this is the result of two things: Westerners' goals of exploitation and their sense of pride and self-conceit (26).

Al-e Ahmad, an Iranian educator, says that the education which exists in Iran since the beginning of this century puts the accent on the quantity and not on the quality and that its goal is to train people as Westerners or, as he puts it, "westtoxicated".

He says that the school curriculum does not include Iranian traditions or anything concerning Iran's past culture. The school program does not connect the past to the present and there is no common relation between home and school.

While most people in the country are religious, he says, the school program advocates westernization. The schools only teach theories and nothing exists that the students can use in practice.

In the universities and the technical colleges, no invention or research work is done. What these schools really do is train students to repair the foreign imported products, but nothing more. In the colleges of

art and architecture, he said, all the works are imitations of the Western works. Foreign languages are becoming important in the universities to the extent that they are replacing the Iranian mother tongue (6).

Al-e Ahmad comments that the technical and scientific fields are becoming so important in higher education that they replace the literature and language fields. Moreover, the Iranian and Islamic literature, ethics, education and learning are losing ground and are becoming less and less important. He adds that this is the reason that, in recent years, the religious schools are being revised and the religious propaganda is rising. This is because the religious families want to keep their children from becoming westernized.

Since the West and its technology are pushing and attacking Iran and replacing whatever the Iranians had of themselves, Iranians are reacting. Even some university professors are teaching old style lessons and things from the Iranian past in order to stop the new wave (6).

One of the phenomena that the educational system received from the West was co-educational programs in the universities. This has always been attacked by the clergy. Most of the men students in the university were unhappy about the situation and they supported the clergy, as Fischer said. The reason is that these men

mostly come from traditional families where women wear veils and they do not like to sit close to women who wear Western dress in extreme (17).

The educational system until 1978 tended to foster Western values and patterns of living. This created a demand for Western goods and a growing desire awoke, especially in urban areas, to gain wealth and acquire material possessions (36).

Ownership of a home and a car and the ability to travel inside Iran or abroad, became important and highly valued. The thousands of students who went abroad to attend school also brought back with them Western values and tastes and shared these with their families and friends (36).

But all this resulted in producing alienated people who were torn between East-West values. Those who got through high school did not trust their parents or their teachers. Those who had experienced the social and sexual freedom of the West, were faced with the Islamic law that collided head on with what they experienced abroad (18).

The Iranian Western type education not only came under question considering the effect that it had on the Iranian culture and religious values, but also from the socio-economic standpoint. The issue has been raised by some Iranian teachers and educators.

Behrangi, a teacher and author, was among the first to see the problem. He argues that Western books that were used were of doubtful utility. He comments that, in his preparation in the "teacher training school", one of the books with which the students had to be familiar was an American book translated from English to Farsi. The author talked about an experiment which was utilized in a good educational environment, based on bringing out the healthy personality in each person. The two groups involved in the experiment had a good family environment and so on.

In the Iranian system, Behrangi stated, other than in a few good schools in the capital and the major cities, most schools did not have a good educational environment in which could be incorporated the results from the American author's experiments.

According to Behrangi, most of the Iranian schools are working in two shifts and it is sometimes impossible to provide enough space for all the students in the school. Even in the big cities the classes are crowded, up to 50 or 60 students in one classroom. In the villages, they have only one teacher for several grades in the same room. This teacher often accumulates the jobs of janitor and principal as well. How can this book and ones like it be helpful to the students in the teacher training school in Iran, when they

go out to teach in villages and small towns where most of the classroom windows are broken, the buildings are not solid, there is no paved road, no hospital, no doctor, not enough chalk, books or paper for the students, and the chalkboard is so old that almost no color is left? (12).

He adds that, in the same book it was also written that glasses and hearing aids should be provided for those with impaired sight or hearing, and that a concerned teacher should be aware if a student is overweight or undernourished, etc. These comments are completely ridiculous to most Iranian teachers, he says (12).

Since some of the Iranian books for the students of the public schools are also translations of Western books or copied from them, Behrangi also criticizes them.

He comments that, for Iranian students, textbooks that speak of such things as movie theatres, magazines, newspapers, greeting cards, mail boxes, buses and taxis, eating with a fork and spoon and knife, hot dogs, baseball, football, etc., are useless. For they speak of things unseen and unheard of, by many students in Iran.

The Western books are written for Western societies and environments. They cannot be used in the

Iranian schools, he says, since they do not relate to the life and environment of the Iranian students (12).

Films and the Mass Media. Films and television played a great role in introducing the Western lifestyle to Iran and in westernizing the country. They introduced modern values to Iranians. Naficy states that the contact with the West led to imitation and assimilation of its cultural products such as films and television. With this contact, the film industry developed and foreign interests, especially American, soon created a good consumer market in Iran that included the motion picture and later the television market (25).

The cinema became extremely popular in Iran and soon foreign films comprised the bulk of the movies that were shown in Iran. Half were American, followed by Italy, France, England and India (39).

The people spent a huge amount of time watching these films. What people saw and learned from these movies was far removed from their real lives and they only learned about Western values (6).

Besides the foreign films that presented the new lifestyle from the Western countries, the local films also changed their themes. Before the Western influence, most Iranian films had a traditional theme,

but as time passed and Western influence in Iran increased, the traditional form in local films was transformed and new themes, such as free choice of one's marriage partner, and premarital sexual relationships, evolved. More local films were produced about dancing and singing in nightclubs, leaving one's family and getting involved in gambling, drinking, and even crime. Films with themes involving female seduction, sex, and violence were produced more and more (25).

By 1978, the majority of the "sexploitation" films shown in Tehran cinemas came from Italy and the United States and out of 120 cinemas in Tehran, 67 were showing "sexy" films. Most of the films that came to Iran from the West often carried the motifs of sex and violence and the modern way of life (25).

There was much criticism concerning these films, and opposition toward those films of a pornographic character, or those that glorified violence started. In order to express this opposition, an angry mob once destroyed a movie theater in the city of Qom (15).

Naficy comments that the role that cinemas played in cultural dissolution was the reason that, at the time of the 1978 Revolution, cinemas were chosen as one of the principal targets of destruction by the people (25).

Television was introduced to Iran by an Iranian, but was patterned after the American commercial system. The television program contained few locally produced shows, but was heavily loaded with MGM features and NBC series (25).

In 1974, 40 percent of the television program came from foreign countries, mostly the United States. Even the locally produced television serials were, in fact, imitations of Western products and had Western-style characters showing Western values, while the majority of the television audience held to traditional values (25).

Radio and printed materials also have done much to promote Western values and attitudes. Radio had greater impact, mostly because its messages are more accessible and can be more easily understood by most people, even in the rural areas (36).

Foreign printed materials such as newspapers, magazines and books used to be sold in large quantity. The Iranian newspapers and magazines were also full of Western news and the events happening in the Western countries. Most of the weekly magazines got their material from foreign periodicals and included stories, novels, glamour and sex articles and confidential material concerning the lives of local and foreign movie stars (39).

The problem with the films and the mass media was that they not only showed or talked about Western lifestyle and values, but they also introduced Western influenced advertisements.

In all these advertisements, money was the most important thing that one had to consider. Tonekaboni, an Iranian writer, states that the only theme of these advertisements was the value of money and the reliance on money as the essential element of life. The money, of course, was to be earned to spend on buying goods of all kinds, he says (38).

This kind of propaganda was a way to push the people to become more and more consumers of products that came from the Western countries. It stressed only the physical needs and thought that the goal of life is to satisfy the material needs without considering any need for morality. It also taught the people that they can have knowledge, status, prestige, honor, and even love, only if they have money (38).

Moreover, in any advertisement, without relevance, women were used to introduce the products, dressed in a "sexy" manner. It relied heavily on sexual instinct, to the extent that it ignored the ethics, traditions and common laws of the society. These advertisements, that were contrary to all common values and norms of

the society, started to weaken the people's moral values and ethics, Tonekaboni concludes (38).

Naficy, an Iranian expert on film and mass media, states that the rapid erosion of traditional Iranian values and the absence of a progressive alternative, provoked a response from the Iranian masses, who resisted the policy of the state in promoting westernization and brought about its ultimate collapse in 1978 (25).

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5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Differences between cultures exist and these differences can cause conflict, as the information in this study shows. This information indicates that the sources of the conflicts between the West and Iran were cultural as a whole, and political, economical and educational in particular. (Table 1).

In Iran, throughout its history, the life of the people was directed by the religion. The major Iranian religions taught people to direct their lives along moral and spiritual lines, to seek the truth and to try to get close to God through learning.

Since all religions preached that there is another world and that people would be rewarded or punished in the other world according to their closeness to God, the material life in this world became less important. Therefore, until now, people concentrated on leading a moral and spiritual life.

Most Iranian philosophers were also the advocates of metaphysics. They believed in fatalism and held the view that people return to God and that the people's souls were trying to return to their origin. The view comes from the mystic part of Islam and advocates that the material life is not important and that the spirituality must be transcended to help people to free

their souls. The common source that nourished the thoughts of the philosophers and thinkers was mysticism in its various forms. Poetry also played an important part in the life of the people, and is the symbol of the Iranian language. Therefore, the Iranian culture is a mixture of the philosophical, religious and poetic elements.

Realizing these factors, Iranian society can be considered as an emotional, spiritual society in which the moral and ethical values are important. The material life is secondary and the goal in life is to search for spiritual enrichment.

The Iranian culture, with its emotional, spiritual and ideal structure came into contact with the Western culture starting in the 19th century. By the mid-20th century the contact became so close and constant that all Western cultural values were introduced to Iran.

The Western culture with its rational, materialistic and pragmatic structure was in part rejected by the majority of Iranians, who held traditional values based on Islamic values and the philosophies of the past. While certain Iranians, especially the intellectuals and those who were educated, advocated the use of Western science and technology, they did not want to adopt the Western lifestyle and social values. The Iranian people, who value spiritual life and place

family and society above the individual, were not favorably inclined to the Western culture, which is materialistic and values individualism, self-satisfaction and personal benefit above all.

However, Western science and technology invariably acted as the key to influence most of the Iranian educated people and the ruling class, inciting them to work as agents of the Western culture, and to introduce the Western values to Iran.

The cultural contact of Iranians and the West were a consequence of the political and economic domination of some Western countries over Iran. This started in the last part of the 18th century.

As the information indicates, relations between the Western countries and Iran began on a mutual base and there was no hostility toward the West. But as time passed and the Western countries tried to influence the politics and economic life of the country and dominate it, people started to react toward the move and resisted the influence. To the Iranians who had been attacked several times by outsiders and whose country had been invaded many times throughout its history, this was another invasion.

Due to their experiences in the past, their reaction toward the West seems logical and natural. They

must have felt that they could be attacked and plundered again, and therefore they distrusted the newcomers, resisted them, and became more attached to their traditions and families as a means of security.

Moreover, as the relationship expanded, the Iranians realized that the Western countries, as they had expected, gradually tried to occupy the country, take away its natural resources and get control over the people's lives. The domination and the country's abuse by the Western powers made the people resist in any way they could to eliminate this domination. While they sometimes succeeded, most of the time, they were defeated by the Western powers.

Iranians who were proud of their past and their great civilization, which contributed to many fields in the past, were humiliated by Western defeats and domination. These humiliations and defeats, the feeling of inferiority toward the West, and the ignorance of their culture by the Western countries, are sources of Iranian hostility toward the West and what it introduces.

Marvin Zonis, an American specialist on the Middle East, comments:

The powerful desire to eliminate the long standing sense of humiliation and the need for ideological support of Islam will lead, for the next decade, to further exacerbating, aggravating, and difficult interactions between the West and the Muslim world (6, p. 12).

The conflict intensified when the cultural aspect of the West was introduced to Iran. Most of the people felt that this would destroy their moral standards and values and would result in diminishing their way of life and their identity. Besides which, introducing Western lifestyles was seen as a way to exploit the people, prepare them to consume Western products, and weaken all the social, educational and ethical foundations of the society.

By introducing the Western educational system and ideas, Western cultural influence increased through educational channels. Formal education, films, television, radio, printed matter and books helped largely to introduce the Western way of life and values to Iran.

Although at the beginning of the century and as late as the 1940's, the Iranian educated and intellectuals advocated the Western way of life and anti-clergy sentiment, the trend changed in later years and especially in the 1960's and 70's.

While the small portion of the population and the ruling class promoted westernization, most people stayed with the traditional way of life. The intellectuals also showed their concern by starting a new trend, pushing for films and literature related to the Iranian life.

The introduction of the Western-style education, as the information indicates, was seen by the people as proof that the West did not want to help the Iranians, but wanted to produce people who would only seek material benefits, and as the way to get control over the people, replace their culture.

The fear of the people that Western cultural domination would result in the loss of what they had, is actually a true assumption, since through cultural domination people lose their own values and their control over their lives. This was described by Freire, a Brazilian educator who stated that cultural invasion is always an act of violence against the persons of the invaded culture, who are losing their originality or face the threat of losing it. All domination involved invasion, with the invader assuming the role of a friend, which in fact forms an economic and cultural domination. The invaders always try to convince the invaded that they are inferior, and if the invaded consider themselves inferior, they recognize the superiority of the invaders. The values of the invader thereby become the pattern for the invaded and they become alienated from the spirit of their own culture, and from themselves and want to be like the invaders, to walk like them, dress like them and talk like them (1). He comments that:

If we consider society as a being, it is that only a society which is a "being for itself" can develop. Societies which are dual, reflex, invaded, and dependent on the metropolitan society cannot develop because they are alienated; Their political, economic and cultural decision making power is located outside themselves, in the invader society (1, p. 160).

While the introduction of Western lifestyle and values was resisted by most people, learning and acquiring Western science and technology was accepted by the people and was advocated by the educated. This was expressed by Amir Kabir, the first person to be responsible for the modernization of Iran, by the intellectuals of the constitutional Revolution and mostly by the intellectuals and educated of the 1960's and 1970's. All advocated that the Western science and technology be learned by Iranians, and most added that the Western values and lifestyle should be avoided. However, with the use of Western technology and science in Iran, all of their agents, factors and experts also came, bringing with them problems that deal with human beings and culture.

When, from 1960 to 1978, the industrialization and westernization of Iran was intensified by the Iranian government with the help of Western governments, the people opposed the westernization policy and showed their opposition by learning about Islamic values and reviving Islam.

The westernization policy, which was forcefully enforced by the ruling class, resulted in some changes which were not in favor of the majority and did not take into consideration the people's need and will. Therefore the policy eventually failed and resulted in the government's collapse in 1978. The westernization policy only affected the life of upper and middle class, who practiced Western lifestyle and held Western values. The industrialization, which was also a Western phenomena, resulted in the mobility of the people and separated the people from the family. This situation brought disorder and tension in the family, since for the Iranian people, family and relatives are a refuge and a source of security.

In the area of education, the information shows that there is a difference of expectations from the educational process concerning the Western type education that was practiced in Iran and the type of education which is in accord with the Iranian culture. As the information indicates, Western type education is based on science, rationality, and intellectual training which trains the mind and the intellect and promotes the acquisition of knowledge and science, and teaches people to acquire more material benefits from learning. On the other hand, the Iranian culture values education that is based on virtues, morality and

spiritual training which purifies the heart and trains emotions and thought, and the spiritual and moral aspects of learning are important. These differences were a source of conflict in the application of Western education in Iran (Table II).

Co-education as a Western phenomenon was also in contradiction to the cultural and educational values. In the society that teaches that sex is a private matter, that girls are to avoid any relationship with the opposite sex, and that sex before marriage is unacceptable, the co-educational program in schools was a major concern.

As is seen, the conflict between the Western and Iranian educational systems did not concern the method and techniques that the Iranian educational system adopted from the West, but the content and new values provoked arguments among Iranians and the application of the educational system in Iran was questioned.

The educating of the people through other channels than schools also developed problems. Films, mass media and the press, which were seen as a way to spread knowledge to the people, created conflict when dominated by the Western values. The permissiveness of Western culture in family life and relations in sexual conduct, clothing, gambling, drinking, etc. that was introduced by these educational channels was not in

accord with the Iranian culture that condemned all these practices. These were seen by the people as a threat to the traditional lifestyle and a diminishing of the ethical standards and they created tension, as the literature suggests.

The applicability of Western teaching material also created problems. It showed that in a country such as Iran, the majority of the people have low incomes, and live in rural areas, and the people are still involved in fulfilling their basic needs. Copying the Western educational system, which is developed to the standards of the middle class (which is the majority in Western countries) and adopting their education, which follows the humanistic school of thought stressing the growth of the individual to his full potential, will cause problems and can't work in Iran.

As the information shows, the rate of illiteracy is high in Iran, especially in the rural areas where most people live. There is also a lack of educational facilities, aid, teachers and schools that makes even acquiring a basic education difficult for the people. Those schools that are operating have crowded classes, some with as many as 80 students in one class. As a result, the teacher cannot work efficiently and is not able to know the students well enough to help them

reach their capabilities.

Can the Western educational system, ideas and methods, which are based on middle class standards and evolved from different needs, philosophies and economic situations, apply in Iran under the situation discussed above? The answer is no.

One example which shows the impossibility of the mere imitation of the Western educational system is the introduction of educational television in Iran. When educational television started working in Iran, the goal was to cover 75 percent of the country by 1976. This goal was set without considering the fact that, out of 65,000 villages in Iran, where the majority of the people live, only 4,700 villages had electricity.

Besides which, in Iran, only schools in Tehran and the big cities have adequate facilities, while in the Western system most schools, whether in big or small cities, have more or less the same facilities. Due to these realities of the Iranian society, the following discussion and recommendations are made.

Every culture has some elements in common with other cultures and cultures can make contributions to one another and benefit from one another. In the world today, countries and cultures are becoming more inter-dependent and one action by a nation can affect people in other cultures. What is important is that cultures

should contribute to one another but not try to dominate the other cultures.

The essential core of a culture consists of traditional ideas and their attached values. Introducing any new ideas and promoting any change in a society must take into consideration the traditional values. Making any change does not necessarily mean the destruction of the traditional values.

Each culture has its own personality and develops throughout its history. The people of any culture are attached to values and lifestyles which may be changed on the surface in a long process, but of which the core elements of the values would remain. The cultural content that is shaped through history gives the people their identity. The people have to keep this historical-cultural personality to be able to preserve their identity. They can also add new ideas to the existing cultural content.

While a change may be introduced to a society, it must be derived from within the society by the people and when there is a need for it. It also needs time for processing. The change cannot be copied from other societies or other cultures without taking into consideration the will and the need of the people, as was the case in Iran. Margaret Mead, the American anthropologist, comments that:

Experience has taught us that change can best be introduced not through centralized planning, but after a study of local needs... All changes should be introduced with the fullest possible consent and participation of those whose daily lives will be affected by change (4, p. 258, 259).

In Iran, as in any other society, the educational program, and teaching by any means, should be in accord with the needs of the people and come out of their own values, based on their own philosophy. In Iran, where 98 percent of the people are Moslem and all the social and ethical mores are derived from the religion through its history up to now, any decision concerning the social and educational system must consider this fact.

Hilda Taba, an American educator, comments that for an integrated program of education, a consistent philosophy of education is essential. This philosophy, which is related to the values, attitude, interest and ideas of the society, is a vital guideline for programming the education. The core values of the society are the rights of all people and they should be self-evident in the educational program, according to Taba.

(5)

The people of any society, no matter how illiterate and ignorant, realize what their problems, difficulties and needs are, and they are able to find some solutions to the problem according to the mores and structure of their society. Therefore, people must be

allowed to develop an educational program that is built on the basis of the values of their own society, not on values from other societies.

The government of any society should not be authoritarian, dominating the people and not allowing them to participate in making changes that affect them directly and mostly in their everyday life.

In Iran, the educator must be involved in the politics of the country, enabling him to make suggestions for new changes that are beneficial to the people.

In Iran, in order to make education beneficial to the people, injustice, poverty and discrimination must be eliminated first. The wealth and the capital of the country must be divided proportionately, so that everyone may have a decent life and have access to the educational opportunities available. This means that, to make any educational plan or advancement, the economic system must be changed and economic imbalance in the country should be overcome. Any educational planning and ideas that are meant to help the individual to learn and to develop his potential will not work if the individual is still struggling for his basic needs. According to Maslow, the American humanistic psychologist, human needs exist in a hierarchical order: physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, self-

esteem, and self-actualization, knowing and understanding and aesthetic needs. According to him each of the lower needs must be satisfied in order to develop a desire for higher needs (3). Therefore, if physiological needs are not met, the individual may not develop a desire to learn.

In Iran, as may be realized the majority of the people are struggling to satisfy their basic needs and are at the bottom of the hierarchy that Maslow proposed. The only way to change this trend, which can help people to work toward their total development, is to change the economic system. Changes in the educational area cannot take place without changes in the economic system. An example is the case of the report of an Italian scholar, Dr. Lorezentto, on the Cuban adult literacy program. In 1965, UNESCO developed a plan and undertook an educational project in 18 Third World countries expending \$32 million. The plan was almost a total failure. The only literacy program taking place at the same time which was successful was the Cubans', funded by the country itself. David Harman from Cambridge comments that, since the literacy program in Cuba was parallel with the socio-economic transformation, the program was successful, while in the other countries no changes were made in the socio-economic area (2).

Change in the economic system is the first and the most important step in the full development of basic education in Iran. What is to be considered most is basic education for all.

When the people acquire basic education, their importance and position in the society must be considered. These people must be taught that they are important and their thoughts and opinions are valid and can help the country. The people must be taught about other people and other cultures and realize that the people from different societies can benefit from one another and can exchange their ideas and their thoughts without merely imitating and copying the other.

In order to overcome the feeling of inferiority toward the West, the people in Iran must fully take into consideration the West's strength and its shortcomings.

If the people could learn about the Western cultures and realize that the West, with all its material advancement, also has its own weaknesses and problems, the feeling of inferiority toward the West will be eliminated. The people must also be taught about their own culture and they must realize the advantages that their culture has in many areas. What should be considered by the educator in Iran is that no one should set a task for the people, but they should be helped to

learn, to think, to reason and to understand. This will help them to find the way to solve their problem. Those educators who were trained in the Western countries must realize that their field is not like basic sciences which can be applied in the same way in any culture. The human and educational sciences cannot be copied exactly from other cultures. They must be modified and then be used only if they are beneficial, accord to the culture, and are accepted by the people.

When the basic needs of the people have been satisfied, basic education has been acquired by the people, and the feeling of inferiority has diminished among the people, they will be ready for the higher level of learning. At this time, new ideas and methods in any area, including education, can be introduced and applied while taking into consideration the social, moral and educational values. The people, at this stage, would not face the loss of their identity and while they appreciate their own culture, they can also benefit from other cultures.

In the case of the Western countries, the government should realize that if they want to help the people of the other nation, they should not enter only by the channels of the government in those nations but try to see the people's need and will. The policy makers should realize that, as long as their goal is to

exploit the other societies and, as long as the base for their relationship with other nations is on the notion of superiority-inferiority, cultural conflict and resistance will occur. The case of Iran is true for other developing nations. If the Western world wants to establish friendly relations with these nations, it must consider the benefit of both sides and have respect for these nations and their independence. Otherwise, hostility will arise and the problems will become deeper, as is now the case of Iran.

Table I.

SOURCES OF CULTURAL CONFLICTS

Politics — Iranian Past Relations with the Western Powers — Distrust and Resistance

Economic — Low Income Majority in Iran — Impracticality of the West's Educational Methods and Ideas

Religion — Different Values — Different Educational Expectations

Table II.

CULTURAL CONFLICTS

Cultural Structure

<u>West</u>		<u>Iran</u>
Rational Material Pragmatic		Emotional Spiritual Ideal
Western Society		Iranian Society
<hr/>		
Material Life	vs.	Moral Life
Individualism	vs.	Family and Society Above Individual
Personal Benefits Self-Satisfaction		Society's Mores and Self-Sacrifices
Educational Values		Educational Values
<hr/>		
-Education Based on Science		-Education Based on Virtues and Morality
-Stress on Intellectual Training		-Stress on the Moral Training
-The Goal Is to Obtain Advanced Knowledge and Acquire Material Benefit from Learning		-The Goal is to Reach the Truth and Purify the Soul and the Heart

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