

# Iran's Foreign Policy between the Two Revolutions

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Does Iran, which is known in political science literature as a developing, oriental and ancient country, have specific, examinable and predictable models in a way that can be applied to foreign policy studies? In this study the author intends to analyze six models of Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions (from the constitutional to the Islamic); these patterns have been fluctuating dialectically between an idealism embedded in the Iranian grieving ontology and realism as it relates to the international environment. At the beginning, the nostalgic worldview of Iranians that is a reflection of their subjective collective constructs is analyzed. Then counter-scientism and anti-positivism in Iranian epistemology is studied. The outcome of these two is the absence of realism as the most significant paradigm of foreign policy. In order to prove the assumption, six models of Iranian foreign policy will be briefly assessed with the aim of demonstrating how the unconsciousness of Iranian ancient civilization and mystical and severely anti-science and anti-reality covers have given life to an anti-reality which has caused Iranian foreign policy patterns to be infused with unwarranted idealism. The dialectic between the two different atmospheres, however, has given way to creative models; and the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been efficient and taken the initiative in their design, implementation and assessment.

**Keywords:** Model, Foreign Policy, Nostalgia, Iran, Realism

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## **Introduction**

Politics organizes public affairs and covers power as one of the three fundamentals of human behavior – together with joy and wealth (Dall, 1392, 57). Humans and human communities demand power to the degree that they draw to the sideline conscious and rational behaviors. Centered on power, the political discipline is cannot be placed in the framework of the sciences and therefore political science is among the last human sciences formed through academic methods. Political science has two primary branches with both of them are tasked with the organization of public affairs in a way that minimizes war and violence and brings about peace and security. Domestic politics is the first category within political science which strives to provide rational frameworks for production and distribution of power within nation-states by studying state, parliament, division of power, democracy, bureaucracy, constitution, social contract, electoral systems, parties and etc. The second category is foreign policy which deals with the question of presence of scientific rules that lend themselves to examination by academic methods and therefore can be predicted, brought under control and managed (Dall, 1392, 261). Within the subjects studied in foreign policy fall international law, international organizations, international relations theories and also military strategy and tactics (see Momtahanaddolah, 1379). Nearly a century and a half has passed since political issues were divorced from the aristocratic arts and manners, and adopted democratic and academic features. Therefore, centered around power and the public affair, politics has been academically studied: firstly, trends of power

production, acquisition, distribution and accumulation, and secondly domestic and external efficiency and responsiveness of the state.

Political science, particularly, foreign policy started with the study of influential countries like the United States, England, France, Germany, China and Russia due to their position as the main and primary variables in international relations. Science is in need of variables to produce hypotheses and having an independent variable means the creation of a suspended space around events that makes experience and experiment possible. The powerful countries, due to their functioning economy, formidable military capabilities and active diplomacy in the international arena impact events in a way that serves their interests and objectives. The abundance of books and article written about the foreign policy of the powerful states is revealing of the fact that the countries that have constant and continued activism in the international system are capable of playing roles as independent variables within scientific research. By contrast, those nation-states which are far from the core countries in terms of military and economic power and are regarded as peripheral countries are, in most cases, dependent variables in international relations. For instance, although Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Turkey, South Africa, Australia, Canada and Italy are regarded as semi-peripheral; their foreign policy is in most cases dependent o the decisions in the international environment and they enjoy little independence. Whether the study of peripheral and semi-peripheral countries foreign policies is viable through the scientific methods is a concern for a large number of International Researchers. How would it be possible to consider exact and academic formulas and scientific premises for the foreign policy of a given country – in order for its behavior to become predictable – if all its actions and reactions are dependent to external variables and lacks the necessary will to materialize its own national interests? Dependence, volatility in behavior, political instability, uncertainty in foreign policy and weakness of military and economic capabilities are factors that drive research about fluctuations

of peripheral countries unstable and therefore makes assigning a scientific name for the collection of the related knowledge impossible. The resulting premises are similar to diaries; disperse historiographies and predominantly normative knowledge articulations which are divorced of operational foreign policy techniques. These qualitative and non-scientific studies can lead to a rhetorical and propaganda-like science which conducts none of the scientific tasks of observation, recognition, experiment, formulization, prediction or controlling of the environment; and is an inefficiently entertaining knowledge manifested in debates and sermons.

Iran is a country with a long civilization background which has had several models in its foreign policy during its contemporary history i.e. from the constitutional to Islamic revolutions. In the present study, six models of Iranian foreign policy are analyzed using the dialectic method along with the distance between the Iranian mindset and the realities of the international relations. Iran has been situated at the thought and practical crossroads and as a result Iranians have come to have a critical yet tolerant characteristic towards others (Zarrinkoub, 1378. 17-20) which is drawn from a long history. The result is structural differences in Iran's foreign policy approaches with other countries. The most important of these differences between Iran and the rest of the countries in the periphery of the international system is its autonomy and independence in action. This makes Iran a good example for scientific examination of the states at the periphery that have retained independence from the core and have reserved their autonomy and freedom for international maneuvers. This brings the question of Iran foreign policy models to the surface. Therefore, the questions of this article are: does Iran have specific foreign policy models? What are the relationships between these foreign policy models and the political culture? To what degree have these foreign policy models been successful? With the aim of answering these questions, six models of Iranian foreign policy will be studied.

## I. Theoretical Framework

Several theoretical frameworks have been at work to analyze the logic of Iranian foreign policy from the constitutional revolution to the Islamic revolution with the use of prevalent political science formulas. Iran has a century and half record of Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucracy and a century old School of Political Science. This country strived to present different and successful foreign policy models in the course of international developments in the years between the two revolutions. Apart from diaries and dispersed historiographies, there is limited research that presents scientific explanation of the Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions. In order to be attached to each other and having a logical narrative, events need a metaphysic i.e. an ordered subjective manifestation in relation to reality which can only be created by creative and hardworking researchers. Events are not meaningful by their own; contracts, agreements, military threats, assaults, occupations, coalitions and alliances occur in an anarchical context and in extremely uncertain relations. Here, like professional strategists, these are the historians that try to embed these raw historical materials into a legitimizing story or narrative according to the necessities of the time.

**Dependence:** The primary research studies conducted about Iranian foreign policy have been based on the theory of dependency. Based on this approach all Iranian efforts to act as a sovereign state in international environment in the years between the two revolutions have failed. In the Qajar dynasty Iran was under direct influence of Russia and Britain and lost parts of its territory during confrontations with these two powers. During the constitutional revolution Iran was attacked by the great powers once it tried to attain freedom from their influence. In the two world wars Iran was totally occupied and if it was not for balance of forces considerations, the country would have been dissolved. During the oil nationalization movement, there were

some independence-seeking efforts, but to little avail. After 1953, Iranian government was inclined towards the United States and Iran became protector of the West's interests (particularly the United States and Israel) in the region. The policies of neutrality and 'resort to a third force' were always unsuccessful. Iran could enter the great powers games only when it became the strategic partner of the West by replacing both of Russian and Britain with the United States. According to the dependence theory, this is the whole picture of Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions and all political activists who tried to break the dependence pattern failed. Even when Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (the Shah) adopted an independent policy regarding the oil and Arab states, he lost the West's support which paved the way for his demise.

**The Modern Divide:** some research about the Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions maintains that Iran entered a new era by the constitutional revolution. Before the revolution, Iranians became familiar with the new governing techniques through the works and practical contributions of intellectuals and politicians like Ghaemmagham Farahani, Amirkabir, Sepahsalar, Mostashar-aldolah, Foroughi and Talebof. By the time of the constitutional revolution, the traditional autocratic techniques imposed on the people were suddenly discontinued. Bureaucracy as a powerful institution for exercise of power and constitutional terms, civil rights and democracy for transparency and efficiency of governance entered Iranian the political arena from constitutional revolution onwards. As a consequence of such developments, Iranian foreign policy underwent two major developments. Firstly, disciplines of Political Science and International Relations were established and universities were tasked with training and education of Iranian diplomats. Secondly, Iranian diplomats were directed by specific approaches to foreign policy including third party (third force), non-alignment, negative balance, positive nationalism and national independence. Although Iranian power and its influence on international developments was no match

for the great powers of the United States and the Soviet Union; Iran was now able to defend its national interests effectively and avert the threat of dismemberment, civil war, dissolution and occupation. This theory is of the belief that analysis of Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions is only possible through the understanding of modernization-modernity patterns.

**Nationalism:** some nationalist intellectuals maintain that the only viable model for study of Iranian foreign policy developments and presenting a real narrative of events is the nationalist narrative. Iranian foreign policy before the constitutional revolution has no understanding of national interests. The nationalist current was gradually formed through the thoughts and ideas of Pirnia, Foroughi, Akhoundzadeh, Afshar, Iranshahr and Taghizadeh that called for the seeking of independence and prestige in foreign policy. The constitutionalists strived but failed in reaching their objectives due to external interferences and internal modern and traditional divides. As a result nationalist intellectuals and politicians concluded to set aside Islamic and democratic principles and push Iran towards development by underlining Iranian nationalism. This theory contends that all Iran's foreign policy after the constitutional revolution can be analyzed only by nationalist model. Iran was pursuing a powerful third party, other than either of Russia or Britain, initially by resorting to leaning on Germany and later on the United States. At the same time, however, Iranians were sensitive to preservation of their independence and national identity which is reflected in protection of territorial integrity, prestige and self-sufficiency in foreign policy; all by exercising nationalistic approach. As a result Iran's foreign policy between the two revolutions has a nationalist representation which has survived many crises.

**Active Trilateral Levels:** the trilateral model is introduced by the prominent researcher of Iran's foreign policy, Rouhollah Ramazani, who is a well-known figure in study of third world countries foreign policy models. Nearly eight years of specialized

work aimed at scientification of foreign policy events of the third world and, in particular Iran has been profound and should be considered a basic theory about Iran's foreign policy. According to Ramazani, Iranian foreign policy should be analyzed through a collection of collective subjective constructs inherited from Iranian, Islamic and modern heritage. The Iranian heritage is rooted in ancient Iran embracing the retrieval of the lost territories and also autocratic-monarchical patterns. The Islamic heritage is a collection of Islamic and Shia texts and traditions which have drawn along elements of idealism and the phenomenon of the separation of state from the nation to the advantage of a justice-seeking and end-of-history philosophy. The modern heritage has penetrated the political literature of Iran in the new era and has casted aside some traditional elements with its bureaucratic and democratic features. Ramazani begins his journey to study Iranian foreign policy from the Safavid era and extends its trilateral foreign policy model to the present time. In study of foreign policy, trilateral model refers to an examination and study of domestic circumstances (including arrangement of forces, structure of constitution, elites and change and continuity in the traditional culture) on the one hand, and necessities and obligations of the international system on the other hand. The dialectic between the domestic and foreign conditions shapes the model that the Iranians have applied. Ramazani analyzes this model according to the criteria of national interests. His intended model is realism and protection of territory and territorial integrity of Iran and adopting expedient policies. In his point of view, Iranians have acted idealistically due to national and religious phenomena and have been unrealistic in pursuit of national interests and therefore have failed.

In this article all research regarding the Iranian foreign policy is used including documents from one hundred years ago. In the Center of Documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nearly forty million documents are kept which are classified on a yearly basis. This article intends to demonstrate that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the



diplomatic apparatus of Iran has been able to manage the most crisis-hit international issues of the country (Farmanfarmaiyan, 25-35). In this article the Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions is not studied within dependency, divide, and autocracy forms; rather, the author holds the belief that Iran has had foreign policy models. These models were designed for the protection of national interests and have been efficient in protecting the country from being hit by war, disintegration and chaos. The bureaucracy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the oldest ministry, has adopted the wisest policies during the regional and international crises (Flour, 1384). Centered on the subjective phenomenon of the Iranians about politics, which is a kind of an idealist narrative, the article assesses to the interaction between this mindset and the reality. Iranians have a mythical, utopian and gloomy nostalgia that drive their styles of political thought about regional and international relations in a critical direction.

#### Theoretical Frameworks for Study of Iranian Foreign Policy between the Two Revolutions

Theoretical Framework	Researchers	Internal Patterns	Internal Reasoning	Criticisms
Dependency	Manoochehr Mohammadi	Dependency continuation	Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions has been dependent on great powers, particularly the U.S.	One-dimensional, does not cover developments.
Modern divide	Taghizadeh	Divide from tradition and continuation during the research period	Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions is institutional, specialized and bureaucratic	Does not consider tradition continuation
Nationalism	Fuller	Divide from the tradition and continuation during the research period	Iranian foreign policy has been quite independent and concerned with materialization of national interests	Dose not consider the continual dimensions of tradition and is one-dimensional
Active trilateral	Roohollah Ramazani	Continuation and divide	Dialectic between the domestic and external circumstances and dominance of idealism as a result of continuation of national and religious ideas	Is focused on exploration of developments, does not analyze domestic patterns and presumes a predominantly failed Iranian foreign policy
The dialectic between a grieving nostalgia and realism	Roohollah Eslami	Continuation and divide	Extraction of six Iranian foreign policy models and analysis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs achievements	Subjective phenomenology of Iranians in foreign policy and predominance of Iranian models in times of crisis

## II. Iranian Worldview

To understand Iran's foreign policy between the two revolutions, the principals of Iranian thought should be analyzed. Iranians have a subjective essence and unconscious which has been dragged from the ancient times to date. This continuation is observable in the works of thinkers, intellectuals as well as the actions of Iranian politicians. Iran is among a few countries which despite being at the crossroad of thoughts, tribes and military campaigns (Zarrinkoub, 1387, 20-23) has maintained identity, religion, and collective character from the mythical and epical world to the contemporary world in the form of an unconscious. Iran is a continual territory with a continued history. The collection of theology, philosophy, literature and written and oral popular traditions has transmitted the soul of Iranian culture. From the Letter of Tansar and the Adreshir era to the works of Farabi, Avicenna, Ferdowsi, Saadi and Mulla Sadra, the continuation of Iranian soul is easily traceable. Even in the most disastrous international and regional conditions, Iranians did not lose their hope; for instance, Ferdowsi and Hafiz turned a scene and text of Iranian defeat into a glorious victory (Meskoob, 1384). Iranians usually have some elites who manage the dire and crisis-hit conditions in the best possible ways. In the remainder, some of the components and indicators of Iranian unconscious which are regarded as main variables of Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions are addressed.

Ancient Iran is a technical reality in political affair and the manifestation of a people who could rule half of the world with accumulation of power through very effective methods. The Iranian's governance has been characterized by tolerance, respect for human rights and decentralization and have been praised by Herodotus, Plato, Montesquieu and Hegel. Ancient Iran can be considered as the outset of the formation of political practical reason and some ideal kings created a utopian territory which has lasted within the memories

of Iranians and non-Iranians. The nostalgia of ancient Iran has always been in the mindset of Iranian thinkers and politicians and in fact one of the behavioral currents in the Iranian politics between the two revolutions has been restoration of Iran's magnificence and authority and also maintaining Iran's influence in the cultural territory of Iranian civilization. Iranians have looked at the ancient times as an example and model of magnificent ruling and these are the Median and Achaemenidian standards that modern rulers are compared to. Iranians aspire to retrieve the Iranian identity and territory by defending territorial integrity and expansion of influence into Shia and Persian speaking countries. In relation to the colonized countries, newly independent states as well as western countries, Iranians regard themselves as an ancient nation-state which possesses huge experience in power techniques (Ramazani, 2001).

States and nations who do not have ancient history and thought, possess little subjective predispositions inherited from the past. Therefore the nations with no history or little history do not shoulder the burden of the past. Iranians, however, are among the nations with the most symbols and cultural treasures in the world. Many Iranian beliefs and ways of life are unwritten and carry symbols and signifiers which has brought upon happiness, sadness and common rituals and manners. The Iranian's inherited literature has predominantly shaped standards for behavior that create principles, approaches and technical methods for foreign policy. In the current of Iranian political thought principles a kind of contrast between good and evil is always evident. Although Iranians are tolerant people, in their ontology and cosmology, the world is divided into evil and divine spheres. Based on this, Iranian political thought has an essence of duality and is inclined towards white-black dichotomies. This is while the logic of diplomacy and the rules of negotiations for countries with short history are only concerned about interests and power accumulation in whatever way it demands.

History, in terms of real and truthful occurrences can only be

seen in cosmopolitan narratives which set forth descriptions for humanity from the beginning to the end of days. History has limited meaning in itself; through accumulation of power, sympathetic masses for the desired causes are produced. Iranians, however, do not believe in separate historical occurrences that each occupies its own place. The Iranian subjectivity tends to see the world much better than it appears. Iranian mindset is always preoccupied by a mythical history of a holy geography - Iran. History is the combat between good and evil forces and the duty of humans in this pre-given trend is to pave the way for the emergence of a sacred force. The world has an ideal face and a hidden narrative that challenges all the physical flaws and criticizes them. Iran is always the center of the universe and Iranians have always seen themselves as followers of different sacred narratives ranging from the Khosrau to Shia wisdoms (Jaberi, 1387: 111-131). This constructs has the ability to create the heavenly earth in which all hidden faces are revealed and the good rule the world. Therefore, what is now seen and narrated (hegemonic faces of knowledge of the contemporary era) is only a false consciousness and some illusions cloaked in the truth.

Felicity, ethics and achieving an ideal society is not relegated to an unlikely future; rather, if willing, people are able to put their ideas into action (Meskoob, 1384: 111). Death, suffering and annihilation is the doomed fate of the universe but it is the heaven that destines an eternal life for human in which justice, freedom and all the goods are gathered all together without defying on another. The continuation of the Mazdakist wisdom followed by Shia wisdom in Iran calls into question the status quo particularly the routine and daily obsession with joy, power and wealth and their subjectivities are not based upon daily treatment of affairs (Corbin 1382). The world is meaningless without complete humans and if it was not for their presence the world had fallen apart. The complete human is a philosopher, prophet, Imam or another individual who is connected to active reason and is capable of understanding reality in a truthful way. There

were sacred times and places in the ancient Mithraist rituals and the Zoroastrian religion (Lahoori, 1380: 23) and with dividing the life of the universe into four periods (each three thousand years) they were expecting emergence of the Saoshyant (Amoozegar, 1385: 80-90) who will fill the world with justice. This utopian human and city was later reflected within Shia wisdom through the philosophy of Mahdi (the twelfth Shia Imam). Iran is always passing through critical disasters and considering them unavoidable creates a hope and motivation for them to take distance from realities. For Iranians, Symbols, signifiers, places and times are not as they appear; they rather have a philosophy of history based on the aspirations of the golden age. Iranians are always waiting and in their waiting find the possibility for criticism and design of ideal models (Corbin, 1383).

### III. Iranian Epistemology

The Iranian subjective phenomenon continued after Islam preserving the same collective structures and constructs (Meskoob, 1385: 5-10). Islam and later on the Shia wisdom expanded rationality among the people and by breaking the rigidity of the castes made social mobilization possible. The mythical and Mazdakist phenomenon, as described before, moved towards deductive and advisory methods after Islam and were ideologically combined with Marxism and postmodernism. Therefore the Iranian's awareness formation which is the source of their knowledge and philosophy of science has impacted Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions through specific indicators.

Deduction is to infer conclusions from general laws and principles. Deduction is used by epistemological apparatuses, in them the thinkers and experts hold preconceptions about religion, nationalism, myths or other social or political ideas and accept them without examination, criticism, exploration or reference to the outer realities. The deductive thinking is not concerned about the restrictions and problems in the real world and its utmost effort is to

keep the present thought constellations intact. Deduction is the main thought paradigm of Iranians prior to the revolution from Farabi to Avicenna and Allameh Tabatabai. Iranians have qualitative means of thinking which separate them from reality in international relations analysis particularly when it comes to foreign policy strategies.

The stiff and criticism-intolerant tradition which was an accumulation of deductive premises would draw the legitimacy of governing into theories of despotism. In such an atmosphere the political theories which had to strike a balance of power in domestic and foreign spheres were nonfunctional; they instead were advising for society avoidance and search for felicity outside political relations. After Allameh Majlesi and Hakim Sabzevari, even the jurisdiction had no ability to create political knowledge in Iran. The constitutional revolution made a breakthrough possible but the Iranian foreign policy thinking could not escape from the deductive methods in the dictatorial atmosphere. Not only did the Iranian despotism block the way before any verification or creation of an examination environment but it also hampered advancements of the critical and rival theories. Once again Ferdowsi, Khaje Nezamolmolk, Ibn-e-Muqaffa and Saadi were revived and the theories and sorts of awareness found normative and advice letter-like faces (Tabatabai, 1384: 174). Politics was still an elite affair and the masses who as citizens must experience the production of science in the public square were effectively prohibited from the scene.

Models of Iranian foreign policy were still produced in deductive and normative structures by state-dependent thinkers and theoreticians. Iran is the fifth power of the world, the magnificence of the ancient era has to be revitalized, monarchy is the best system of governance, Iranian race and Persian patriotism has been the first civilization on the earth, an approach towards third parties who respect Iranian magnificence needs to be adopted, and regardless Britain, Russia and the Arabs are enemies. The Shah himself as well as the foreign policy elites held such deductive beliefs which prevented

the emergence of moderate and realist process that could be capable of securing Iran's national interests. In the meantime partnership with the United States, Germany and even Israel were justified on such grounds; in parallel and reaction to that, scholarly elites and intellectuals who belonged to the religious and scientific classes were producing collective and Islamic knowledge which collided with nationalism and modernity (Arjomnd, 1988: 178). In their narratives, the United States was the not third party but rather a hegemonic force and manifestation of international corruption. From the 1960s to the 1980s, Iranian foreign policy literature in exile, found a revolutionary tone which delegitimized formal discourse about standards of relation with the rest of the world. The dissemination of collectivity and anti-modernity reached its momentum gradually and formed a government after gaining popularity. After the revolution, the subjective constructs of Iranians continued the dimensions of the mentioned approach centered on the continuation of traditions.

#### IV. Absence of Realism

With regard to the great absence of realism a reference should be made to the realist epistemology. Iranians have hardly moved towards scientific knowledge as a result of their ancient civilizational depth and also their normative and deductive epistemology which has been reinforced by critical and postmodern approaches. In aristocratic structures and despotic systems, advise and normative knowledge have direct and indirect effectiveness; however, science has a democratic and civil nature. Iranian foreign policy with production of unconscious, deductive and normative propositions, was unable to understand the international environment and analysis of the realities. Due to the rentier structure of power, unexaminable ideals were introduced to the foreign policy practices.

Positivism is the main method for the gathering, interpretation and analysis of data, formulization, control and prediction of the natural and human environment. Positivism is a proven and

comprehensive method by which the majority of research is conducted throughout the world. The mathematical and inductive language of this methodology has made it possible for the researchers to do in-depth examinations about minor issues and prove their hypotheses in relation with the realities. The mathematical language, graphs and known formulas have given such power to the positivism that could not be replaced by none of the post-structuralist, postmodern and interpretive criticisms. The principles of positivism were not welcomed in Iran in the period between the two revolutions. The bulk of the books written in Iran about philosophy of science and positivism contend that falsifiability and in particular postmodernism have casted aside positivism. The death of positivism in the Iranian normative and deductive epistemology has given way to its unsuccessfulness in both theory and practice. Iranian foreign policy has never been examined by positivist and quantitative indicators or mathematical data. Positivism is not a complicated method and contends that norms and deductions should be used in hypothesis formation; however, at the end the relationship between the hypothesis and the reality needs to be analyzed and expedient changes have to be made to the hypothesis for it to have utility to the people.

The consequences of indicator building, mathematical propositioning, quantification of the environment, time and space exploration of phenomena and experiment centrism makes us realistic. In International Relations, however, realism means statism and belief in power centrism in international social interactions. From the realists point of view there is no power like the governments within national boundaries that guarantees exercise of laws and rules. International actors are all after improvement of their status and no one is easily trustable (Little, 1389: 224). In order to reach the goals, a careful examination of capabilities and military and economic power is needed and a positivist analysis of national income, gross domestic product as well as level of technological advancement should be done.



You have to be either powerful or coalesce with a powerful country (Donnelly, 2009, 107-124). In the foreign policy of Iran between the two revolutions a predominantly non-realist pattern of foreign policy is adopted which presents an idealist and normative picture of the international environment and international actors. In fact the whole Iranian foreign policy is a dialectic between realism and the Iranian grieving nostalgia which has jeopardized Iran's national interests in many cases.

One of the assumptions of realism is balance of power. Within the realist paradigm, international peace, war avoidance and materialization of national interests are not achievable without understanding and exercise of balance of power (Smith, 1999, 61-91). Iran is a country at the crossroads that has been mostly playing between great powers (Fischer, 1968, 182). Eastern and Western powers have been confronting each other in Iran and as a result the country has experienced raids and occupations. In Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions, the alliances and coalitions are not in line with the balance of power and in most cases coalitions stem from dependency, idealism and the self-proclaimed universal missions of Iran which would bring about immense costs to the country and the citizens. The only case of success for balance of power in Iranian foreign policy between the two revolutions is Qavam's realist model in 1945 which could successfully expel soviet army from Iran and by pursuing realistic principles balance USSR with the Western powers particularly the U.S. and managed to save the country's territorial integrity (Showkat, 1379). In all other foreign policy models, balance of power is not complied with and there is not a correct evaluation and assessment of Iran's military power and capabilities. As a result, one of the main techniques for achievement of peace and preserving national interests is in a long absence.

## V. Cases

The clash of Iran's political culture and the existing realities in foreign

policy has resulted in regular models of foreign policy. With regard to the subjective, normative and deductive constructs which is a continuation of ancient wisdom to the Shia wisdom, six coherent models in Iran foreign policy formed during the two revolutions that can be subject to assessment. These models are clashes and dialectics between realities and the Iranian mindset. Though having limited personnel and budget, the bureaucracy of the country particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have pursued a predominantly realist procedure; however most of their potential was consumed for implementation and protocols observation. In fact, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not active in designing, counseling or evaluation, and was not expected to serve such functions. The autocratic environment and significant crises Iran was entangled in as a dependent variable, used to make independent actions impossible. Although the territorial integrity was saved and Iran did not lose its regional status, a bitter and costly experience was imposed on the citizens as a result of the Iranian collective subjectivity and the harsh realities.

In the six models some questions are under constant examination. Domestic and foreign circumstances, foreign policy actors and elites, declared policy, initial result, great crisis, allied countries, balancing countries, long-run result of the policy and at the end criticism and evaluation are practiced about all the six models. In most of the cases within these six models, when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has had independence and has used experienced experts, the crises were solved; while interventions and instrumentalization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has inflicted most serious damages to the national interests.

**The First World War neutrality (1908-1925):** dictatorship, irregularities, lack of judiciary, drought and natural disasters had pushed Iran to the depth of corruption during the late Qajar Era. While the West was developing with the use of engineering technology, Iran was compromising national interest for sake of the

ruling elite and their dependents. Meanwhile Iran's foreign policy had no coherent model. A number of intellectuals and scholarly ministers formed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucracy together with the Political Science School; the process of developing a reasonable foreign policy was completed by the advent of the constitutional revolution (Foroghi, 1389). If it was not for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Political Science School and the specialized elites they trained, Iranian territorial integrity would be violated after the constitutional revolution. Iran stepped into the new world with the constitutional revolution; its foreign policy was aimed at reducing dependence on Russia and Britain and achieving independence in a way that enables it to develop technologically, militarily and economically to a degree that can suit its national interests. During the constitutional era, an immense disagreement between the nationalist, Islamist and west-inclined narratives occurred that led to the intervention of Russia and Britain leading to the defeat of the constitutional revolution. Tyranny resumed, the parliament was fired upon by cannons, the Russians occupied the north of the country and secessionist movements emerged throughout the country supported by these foreign forces. At the same time, the First World War created the largest crisis for Iran. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to cope with rifts among political elites, the occupation of the country, the risk of disintegration, foreign intervention and political and economic dependency. Famine and contagious diseases had exacerbated the already critical situation. In such dire conditions, the Ottoman Empire from the West, Russia from the north and Britain from south entered the country and occupied Iranian territory. Closure of the parliament, exile of the Shah, crowning of Ahmad Shah, empowerment of the aristocratic elites and finally involvement and activation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs led Mostowfi ol-Mamalek to declare Iran's neutrality policy to the embassies of all countries involved in the war.

Some in Iran were supporting Germany and Ottoman Empire and issued decrees for attacking the axis states with the aim to expel

Russia and Britain with the motto of unification of the Muslim world. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs advised neutrality as the best model and made it clear to all the Islamic scholars and particularly the elites of the state in exile that it is only the policy of neutrality that can assure territorial integrity and national interests. Adopting such policy did not bear a direct result but later on and during the Paris Peace Conference empowered Iran to make an official complaint against the occupying forces and obliged them to leave the country on the grounds of accepted international law principles. This is while if Iran formally sided with any of the camps at war, there was a significant possibility of its dismemberment. In this vein, the Iranian policy of neutrality which was exercised through the expertise of the Iranian diplomatic elites could return Iranian independence after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, crowning of the Reza Shah and annulling of the Reuters Agreement. In other words it was the policy of neutrality which operationalized some of the constitutional aspirations (Majd, 2001, 61-75).

**The Second World War neutrality (1925-1941):** The wishes of Iranshahr, Bahar, Taghi Zadeh, Afshar, Teymourtash, Davar and many other political elites of the country finally transformed Reza Khan to Reza Shah (Mirsepassi, 2003, 66-73). With the advent of the tyrannical monarchy the democracy-seeking and Islamist narratives were casted aside and instead the modern nationalist narrative sat at the upper echelons of the Iranian policy-making pyramid. In the foreign policy dimension, initially Foroughi and later on Davar were following the victorious narrative. Reza Shah signed friendship agreements with the Soviet Union and nullified the capitulations contracts. Moreover, the Reuters and 1919 agreements were annulled and a new oil contract was signed with the Britain (Majd, 2001, 243). In the meantime Reza Shah was after preserving Iran's independence through establishment of factories, universities, army and most importantly a solid bureaucracy. Gradually Iranian foreign policy moved towards the third party. Iran embarked on extensive political

and economic interactions with Germany which was a symbol of an Aryan state that is supposed to take the place of Russia and England (Atabaki, 2003, 71-75). The policy of third party in line with the balance of power considerations were conducted by an increasingly despotic Shah who had started to cast all intellectuals and scholars aside (Azghandi, 1376). The relations with the neighboring countries particularly Afghanistan, Iraq and Turkey were pacified and normalized, and many of the old disputes were resolved. This increase in Iranian national power and advancements in bureaucracy and organization was hampered suddenly, by the start of the Second World War in which Iran once again fell at the center.

One day after outbreak of the second world war, Mahmood Jam, the then Prime Minister of Iran declared that: in this unfortunate time of war in Europe, the Kingdom of Iran, hereby, declares its decision to the public that it is and will continue to be neutral in this fighting (Mahdavi, 1377, 301-302). The Soviet Union pressed Iran to expel the Germans, lower the level of economic interactions with Germany and declare war against it. Iran considered such actions a violation of its neutrality and therefore Reza Shah declined their request. But after the invasion of German army to the Soviet Union, Britain and the United States occupied Iran (Zahir Nejad, 1375). The Iranian railway was needed for assisting the Soviet Union and therefore Iran was attacked on the pretext of giving protection to the German spies and being turned into the fifth column of the axis powers. Reza Shah who had casted diplomats like Foroughi aside and was pursuing Aryan ambitions faced a major defeat against the realities. Iranian army could not resist the invasion and with the collapse of economy the government lost control over all affairs. Foroughi was appointed as the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs set out once again to manage another crisis. The neutrality helped Iran this time as well and if it was not for this wise policy Iran would have definitely been disintegrated (Foor, 1384).

**Cold war balance of power (1941-1947):** Reza Shah's modern

nationalism established by inclination towards third party i.e. Germany had been collapsed by the foreign invasion. The presence of Russia and Britain in the Iranian capital and the territorial occupation showed the weaknesses of Iranian military and economy relative to the great powers. Although Iran pursued the neutrality model, the country was not able to realize its subjective aspirations. Iranians wanted to resist against Russian and British forces in order to compensate for the historical humiliation the nation suffered from violations of Iranian fundamental rights by moving towards a third party. The foreign policy apparatus was aware that such a confrontation, considering Iran's capabilities, is impossible and therefore compromised the confrontation to a neutrality status. But the neutrality model was baseless and bereft of necessary requirements and as a result surrendered before the global powers. Iran was obliged to expel the Germans and declare war against the axis forces.

The army faced a defeat, Reza Shah was ousted and sent into exile and access to all state infrastructure was granted to the allies to help the soviets defeat Germany (Blake, 2006, 28-60). The north and south of the country were occupied and the centrifuge forces gained power by weakening central authority. In such an atmosphere, the media bloomed and many parties and syndicates were formed throughout the country. The Soviet Union and the U.S. pledged to give compensation at the end of the war and leave the country. The Soviet Union, involved in political party and revolutionary activities in Iran and with financial, media and in some cases military support to the leftist Tudeh Party, tried to extract petroleum favorable petroleum agreements (Yegora, 1379, 104). In the meantime the conservative parties were supported by the Britain. The conditions turned critical when the Soviets and British refrained from leaving the country despite the defeat and surrender of the German army. Some inexperienced and utopian politicians like Ghazi Mohammad and Pishevari were deceived by Stalin and became pawns of the Soviet

Union in order to put pressure on the government to give concessions (Katem, 1379, 42). As was the case in the First World War, the freedom and justice seeking movements were subverted in favor of Soviet objectives and the nation's interests were sacrificed (Fawest, 1373, 55). The foreign policy apparatus and most particularly figures like Qavam, Foroughi, Taghizadeh and Ahi instituted one of the most expert and effective models of Iranian foreign policy in order to rescue the country from crisis. With the Soviet efforts to occupy and disintegrate Iran and the subsequent U.S. involvement, the United States and the Soviet Union confronted each other in a way that many have considered the start of the cold war. (Rabertson, 1379, 156). After the U.S. threatened the Soviet Union and Iran's complaint to the United Nations, the Soviet Union was obliged to leave Iran (Abrahamian, 1392, 80). In fact, for the first time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs elites exercised the balance of power model and did it successfully.

**The Oil Industry Nationalization Negative Balance (1947-1953):** The Iranian parliament passed a law by which all the international treaties involving granting rights to foreign countries should be approved by the parliament (Blake, 2006, 63). Although Qavam convinced Sadchikov regarding the granting north oil rights and the Tudeh party's support for this initiative; soon after departure of the allied forces from Iran, the parliament declared the Qavam-Sadchikov agreement illegal and nullified it. Gradually the leftist and nationalist currents gained much power due to the weakness of the Shah's court and the formation of an active and dynamic civil society (Katem, 1379). In such an atmosphere, only shortly after the exit of foreign forces and consequent preservation of territorial integrity, the idealist and national model returned and gained momentum. Once again democratic, justice-seeking, nationalist and constitutionalist aspirations as well as enmity to the great powers prevailed in Iran's political sphere. In the country's internal politics, many intended to return to the freedom and democracy they experienced during the

constitutional revolution. Parliament turned into the major policymaking institution and parties and nationalist politicians directed the foreign and domestic policies models. In the foreign policy arena, the main priority was negating any capitulations to foreign forces – with no differentiation between Britain and Russia. Russia and Britain were both after extracting concession from Iran. The nationalists, like Mohammad Mosaddegh, took leadership of the political currents. Mosaddegh was of the belief that no concession should be made to other countries and the main model for directing Iran's foreign policy is the negative balance and non-alignment (Abrahamian, 1392, 76). During the cold war the least developed and third world countries were having two models for development. The capitalist model led by the United States and the socialist model led by the Soviet Union. Adoption of each would mean inclination to either the Soviet Union or the United States. Mosaddegh refused both models and believed that none of them is suitable for Iran's foreign policy. Not only will Iran not concede to them but will also nationalize its industries pursuing a non-aligned model (Blake, 2009, 86). Such a policy was a type of negative balance which led to invalidation of all the oil contracts signed with the Britain and cut off relations with this country once nationalization occurred. The main thesis was designed based on a local model of self-sufficiency which argued that if Iran refuses to give concessions to foreign countries, defends its own technology and resources and remains non-committed to the East or the West it can preserve its national interests. The concept of negative balance and non-alignment in foreign policy were an idealist phenomenon which hindered diplomatic bargains and give and takes. However, Britain and the U.S. gradually used the internal divisions (Bayandor, 2010, 159) and could launch a coup against Mosaddegh's government (Zoghi, 1380). Regarding Iran's economic and military weaknesses, this model led to a bankruptcy and the 1953 coup casted all the idealist thoughts aside (Petherick, 2008, 78).



### **The Shah's Positive Balance and Defensive Realism:**

Mosaddegh's persistence on inward-looking development and independence constructs led to a loss of connection with the international system and the ultimate bankruptcy of the country. The negative balance model which was based on the non-alignment approach combined with the staunch stances of nationalist, leftist and religious groups that all hold unrealistic narratives led to isolation and an incorrect relationship with the international community. The Mosaddegh era and the bitter experience of American and English interference in Iranian affairs led to formation of an anti-western construct and negative bias against the U.S and Britain within the Iranian collective subjectivity. The United States that was considered non-colonial and a just third party, lost all its credibility as a force for freedom and became a symbol of the evil and a colonial power which deprived Iranians of their independence, national identity and internal – external aspirations. With the coup, two important developments occurred in the Iranian policy-making structure. Firstly, the Shah became the primary policy-making figure (Fawest, 1373, 245). Mohammad Reza Shah who used to be a trembling young figure in comparison to Qavam, Foroughi and Mosaddegh gradually ascended to the top of foreign-policy pyramid and after casting the Qajar aristocrats and elites aside reconstructed the dictatorship using the new bureaucratic middle class (Azghandi, 1376). Therefore the major source for the establishing of an understanding of Iran's foreign policy is the speeches and phenomenology that demonstrate of the Shah's mindset and reveals the models of foreign policy from 1953 to 1979. In this timespan, the other major issue is the replacement of Britain and Russia with the United States. In the course of the oil nationalization movement, Britain was humiliated by the Iranian nationalists and was expelled from the country and must now share its interests with the fledgling yet powerful United States. As one put it, Britain lent the Middle East to the United States after the 1953 coup (Petherick, 2008). In such circumstances, the United States

was a model for Iran's development and prevented it from falling into the socialist block. After the Shah regained the power with the coup after the oil nationalization developments, he tried to change the political landscape of the country in favor of the court and consequently moved further towards the United States, taking further distance from the Iranian currents and classes. The Shah was afraid of the people and tried to push the country towards becoming the fifth world power and the modern civilization by presenting a development-inclined dictatorship through a paternalist approach. In line with this approach, the United States as a new military and economic empire could support Iran militarily, economically and diplomatically. The Shah despised Mosaddegh's resistance and critical model, and considered it an unconscious move towards the Soviet Union and the leftist models; The Shah called the people his children who should not be relied on. He wanted the technological, military and economic capabilities of the U.S. but did not accept the domestic political patterns of the U.S. and instead relied upon the traditional monarchical model. The instrumental and one-dimensional approach of the Shah towards Iran's development led to an unbalanced and dysfunctional development (Abrahamian, 1385). He followed the lead of Naser al-Din Shah who once told the Iranian students in Europe: Go, earn and bring anything useful to the country but do not get involved in politics and leave the monarchical system alone.

The Iranian foreign policy model in this era was based on following and relying on the foreign power. Shah declared it necessary to move towards a positive balance and relieving the country from isolation and the fences surrounding it. The positive balance, however, insists on adopting foreign policy models from the more powerful states and receiving loans and military technology. The Shah accepted the capitalist model and moved towards the U.S. leading to Iran becoming the protector of U.S. interests in the region. While Mosaddegh cut ties with Israel, the Shah's policies were in full conformity with Israeli interests and intended to ally with Israel

against Arab countries including the Persian Gulf littoral states (Azghandi, 1376). Using Israeli agricultural technologies, intelligence, and security model as well as exporting oil to Israel were all in line with the mentioned policy. The Shah refuted the Soviet and socialist models and considered them against religion and the monarchical system. The best model for the Shah was preserving relations with the U.S. for the economic development of the country through capitalism.

### **National Independence and Offensive Realism (1963-1979):**

Iran accepted the political model of the West but refused its political consequences. Gradually the social movement from the rural areas to the cities expanded and a new bureaucratic class was formed in Iran. (Abrahamian, 1384) During this period the power of the court increased and the independence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in decline to the point that the reports of ambassadors and diplomatic missions were sent directly to the court instead of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Prime Minister. Selection and dispatch of diplomatic staff was under the shah's jurisdiction and the court wanted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to operate in a strictly ceremonial capacity and serve the top rank of the power echelon. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is the oldest, most specialized and most effective ministry which had in several cases saved the country from the most dangerous crises, was turned into an obedient and dependent apparatus with no role in design, implementation and evaluation of foreign policy. The Shah designed foreign policies in relation to the magnificence of the court and the retention of its power over all the policy settings to the point where Political Science and International Relations had no status in the country's foreign policy. All advancements and improvements were seen within the context blind obedience of the King, who in lack of domestic support, was trying to preserve foreign backing. The land reforms and the White Revolution of 1963 as well as the democratic reforms and the opening up of the political space in 1978 was the result of U.S

pressures.

In 1963, with the aim of resolving the socialist crisis, Shah dismissed Amini and appointed Court Minister Amir Asadollah Alam to the premiership. At the same time, to pacify the country further and stabilize the country politically and religiously, he crushed the religious movements and sent Ayatollah Khomeini into exile. The Shah intended to transform the Shia-Islamic culture of Iran into a nationalist and modern. His priorities were to receive foreign support and to create coalitions and alliances with them through which he could unite the court, army, bureaucracy and his supporting classes. The middle class was his enemy because they did not buy his narrative particularly those infused with items of Islamic identity. In the 1970s the rise in petroleum price increased Shah's confidence. This coincided with the start of détente in the international arena (Ramazani, 1975). China was accepted as a member of the United Nations and Soviet-American tensions started to ease. Consequently, the Shah tried to enhance ties with the eastern bloc. In the 1970s with the increase in oil revenues and Iran's massive military purchases from the West Iran's foreign policy model shifted to a national independence and an offensive positive balance one. The offensive positive balance signified that Iran has gained enough capabilities and equipment to enter the central structure of the international relations and to play great games. The Shah was trying to revive Iran's imperial power by massive weapons purchases for the military and security apparatus as well as holding the "2,500 year celebration of the Persian Empire". In confrontation with Western powers, the Shah tried to reintegrate OPEC which led to increase in oil price. He interfered in U.S. elections and advised the western leaders that their liberal democratic model is in decline and they need to turn to Eastern ethics and religion. The positive balance model led the Shah to enter negotiations and cultural, economic and commercial interactions with China and Russia and at the same time actively engage the Islamic countries and challenge Israeli policies in the region. The Shah

showed a national independence model, suppressed the Dhofar Rebellion in Oman and defined himself as a regional and international actor. All this led to the questioning of the Shah's authority and independence-seeking legitimacy by internal and external forces. The U.S. and France did not accept Iran's role and obliged the Shah to do political reforms. Internally, the previously marginalized nationalist, Islamist and socialist forces started to protest and eventually the national independence and offensive positive balance model collided with the Islamic revolution (Arjomand, 1988).

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### The Six Models of Iran's Foreign Policy between the Two Revolutions

Foreign Policy Model	Era	Foreign Policy Actors	Domestic Situation	Foreign Situation	Technic	Result	Criticism
Neutrality 1	The constitutional revolution	Ahmad Shah, Mostowfi ol-Mamalek, Foroughi	Occupation of Iran	First world war	Scattered elites, internal disunity, final neutrality prudence	Preserving Iran's independence and territorial integrity after war	The best decision was made in the Foreign Ministry
Neutrality 2	Reza Shah	Reza Shah, Teymourtash, Foroughi	Occupation of Iran	Second World War	Initial inclination to Germany, fight with Russia and England, Final neutrality	Occupation and change of the King	Iran's defeat and occupation
Balance of power	Ahmad Qavam	Qavam, Ahi, Taghizadeh, Foroughi	The Soviet presence in Iran	Beginning of the cold war	Placing powers against each other, using the United Nations	Expelling the soviet union from Iran	Iran's victory, preserving territorial integrity
Negative balance	Mohammad Mosaddegh	Mosaddegh, Fatemi	Oil crisis	Cold war	Nationalist idealism, Independence, confronting colonial power,	Nationalization of oil industry in short run	Iran's defeat, resumption of tyranny, replacement of Britain with the U.S.
Positive balance	Mohammad Reza Shah 1	Mohammad Reza Shah, Amini, Alam	Dictatorship and internal suppression 1	Cold war	Strategic alliance with the West and making deals with the U.S.	Tying the national interests to the capitalist bloc	Iran's dependence
National independence	Mohammad Reza Shah 2	Mohammad Reza Shah	Internal repression 2	End of the cold war	Independence and construction of the great civilization, fifth world power	Islamic revolution	Indifference to domestic needs, national pride, idealism

## Conclusion

During the contemporary period the geographic location of Iran as well as subjective constructs gave Iranians great opportunities to play a role in global affairs and enabled them to be more than a dependent variable in the international system. The Iranian subjectivity has affected Iran's foreign policy which is itself a product of an old history; some of its features still play a role in Iranian lives either consciously or unconsciously. The Mazdaki and Shia wisdoms have created a collection of ideal and normative identities with deductive methods which are not scientific or academic and refuse to accept normal human knowledge methodology. This characteristic has led to an only marginal presence of realism in the face of the many internal and external crises Iran had faced during the time between the two revolutions. Iranian mindset could not establish a rational contact with the realities and this led to the presence of self-centered and confrontational processes into the Iranian logic and political language. Realism, positivism and most importantly balance of power technique (Little, 1389, 224) were not respected in this period and therefore Iranians were unable to reach their goals. Iran was placed at the center of regional and international affairs with an old heritage which defined a formidable task for it. Such contradictions made Iranians experience six models of foreign policy between the two revolutions. The majority of these models had normative, idealist and deductive traits which were rooted in the Mazdaki and Shia wisdoms. Therefore Iran was able to confront international developments and navigate them with creativity stemming from the old heritage. However, they overestimated their military and economic abilities and in some cases had ethical and normative expectations from the international system.

Evaluation of the six foreign policy models answers certain questions. Iranians have been able to overcome international crises when management of affairs has been entrusted to the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and used the expertise of this apparatus; in contrast, whenever Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been relegated, the country's national interests have suffered. By asking about domestic and foreign circumstances, and about the main elites and decision-making institutions, the declared policies and their results, and about the original crises to be resolved and other countries both friend and foe, the tracing of the six foreign policy models becomes possible. Setting together the answers given to these questions reveals the presence of an Iranian gloomy nostalgia with deductive and normative elements. Among the six models only Qavam's balance of power could overcome the Iranian idealist subjective construct (Showkat, 1379, 277). In other models the national and religious models entered the designing and implementation phase of foreign policy in the form of reality-free concepts by those sitting on top of power echelons which ultimately jeopardized national interests and imposed immense costs to the public and the country.

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