

**THE FOREIGN POLICY TRAJECTORY OF  
THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN:  
A SOCIALIZATION ANALYSIS**

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This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science and International Relations

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Oğuzhan İRGÜREN', written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.

## ABSTRACT

### THE FOREIGN POLICY TRAJECTORY OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: A SOCIALIZATION ANALYSIS

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Throughout history, the set of values that emerge with revolutions has aimed to change and transform the world order. This effort of transformation can be seen as an attempt by the revolutionary states to find themselves a place in the international system that surrounds them. Therefore, the post-revolution relations of revolutionary states with other actors of international politics have always been noteworthy. After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran, too, has gone through, similar to other revolutionary states, experiences of trying to interact and face with the international system. As have all other revolutionary states, Iran has had to deal with the problem of being loyal to the revolution's ideals, while at the same time, trying to find itself a place in the international order. The revolutionary ideals, which contradict with the rules and norms of the international system, have led Iran into a conundrum as to what kind of a path it will follow in the global politics. This work seeks to answer what type of a foreign policy post-revolutionary Iran followed in the international arena, whether an ideological policy that stayed loyal to the revolutionary ideals or a pragmatist one where the requirements of the international system are fulfilled. The main argument of this thesis that tries to explain Iran's relationship with the global system utilizing the theory of socialization is that in the post-revolution period, Iran has had a rational socialization process, which includes foreign policy methods that are based on its ideology and interests. This research, which focuses on Iran's foreign policy starting from 1979 until 2016, when the

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was implemented, aims to bring to the light the fluctuant foreign policy that Iran has followed since the revolution by scrutinizing certain foreign policy decisions in this period.

Keywords: International Relations Theories, Socialization Theory, Foreign Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Rational Socialization.



ÖZ

İRAN İSLAM CUMHURİYETİ'NİN DIŞ POLİTİKA YÖRÜNGESİ:  
BİR SOSYALLEŞME ANALİZİ

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Tarih boyunca devrimlerle birlikte ortaya çıkan değerler bütünü temel olarak dünya düzenini değiştirmeyi ve dönüştürmeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu dönüştürme çabası devrimci devletlerin kuşatılmış oldukları uluslararası sistemde kendilerine bir yer edinme çabası olarak da görülebilir. Bu sebepten, devrimci ülkelerin, devrim sonrası dönemde uluslararası siyasetin diğer aktörleri ile olan ilişkileri her zaman dikkate değer olmuştur. 1979 İslam Devrimi'nden sonra İran da diğer devrimci devletlerin tecrübe ettiği uluslararası sistemle yüzleşme ve bu sistemle etkileşim içerisine girme deneyimlerini yaşamıştır. Bütün devrimci devletlerin karşılaştığı devrim ideallerine sadık kalarak uluslararası düzende yer alma sorunsalı İran için de çözülmesi gereken bir problem olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Uluslararası sistemin kural ve normları ile çatışan devrimci idealler İran'ı küresel siyasette izleyeceği yol konusunda bir ikileme sürüklemiştir. Bu çalışma devrim sonrası İran'ın uluslararası arenada nasıl bir dış siyaset stratejisi izlediği ve devrim ideallerine sadık kalarak ideolojik bir siyaset mi yoksa uluslararası sistemin gerekliliklerini yerine getirerek çıkar odaklı bir siyaset mi izlediği sorularına yanıt aramaktadır. İran'ın küresel sistemle olan ilişkisini sosyalleşme teorisi ile açıklamaya çalışan bu tezin temel iddiası devrim sonrası dönemde İran'ın ideolojik ve çıkar temelli dış siyaset yöntemlerini kapsayan rasyonel bir sosyalleşme süreci geçirdiğidir. 1979'dan İran'ın uluslararası sistemin başat aktörleri ile nükleer enerji hususunda imzalamış olduğu Kapsamlı Ortak Eylem Planı (JCPOA)'nın uygulamaya geçtiği tarih olan 2016 yılına kadarki zaman

aralığında İran dış siyasetinin mercek altına alındığı bu araştırma belirtilen dönemdeki dış politika kararlarını inceleyip kategorize ederek İran'ın devrimden bu yana izlemiş olduğu değişken dış siyaset tavrını gözler önüne sermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri, Sosyalleşme Teorisi, İran İslam Cumhuriyeti Dış Siyaseti, Rasyonel Sosyalleşme.



DEDICATION

*To my dear mother Feride and my dear father Ahmet...*





## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

الا يا ايها الساقى ادر كاسا و ناولها  
كه عشق آسان نمود اول ولى افتاد مشكلها

**Hafiz**

***“Ala ya ayyuha ‘s-Saki!”-Pass round and offer thou the bowl***

***For love, which seemed at first so easy, has now brought trouble to my soul***

***Herman Bicknell***

This couplet is the first two lines of Hafiz’s divan. Here Hafiz emphasizes how love, in the beginning, seems so easy, yet when fallen into it, things can become much harder. I have felt compelled to include these lines because they express my feelings prior to starting my thesis and after finishing it. I was under the impression that since I had already done quite a bit of reading and research on Iran by that time, I could easily overcome this task, but, as Hafiz says, the reality of how challenging things can become proved itself.

My curiosity regarding Iran, which started around the time I was an undergraduate student, has led me to write my Master’s thesis on Iran. I am quite happy that the excitement of an undergraduate who had just entered university has ended up this way. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my mentor, my guide, and my thesis advisor İsmail YAYLACI, who has helped in this long journey of mine. I also thank my friends, Yusuf Süha KULU, who has supported me logistically, Ahmet BULUT and Seyit Hüseyin BAYZAN, who have proofread this thesis for hours on end tirelessly. If it hadn’t been for them, I am sure this process would have been much harder.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my dear mother Feride and dear father Ahmet, despite knowing that it would not do any justice to them, considering what they have done for me. Feeling their constant support and knowing that they were with me in every step of the way, I am forever grateful.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In his keynote speech at Tehran's Shahid Beheshti University on 7 December 2013, Hassan Rouhani, the current president of Islamic Republic of Iran, said that "We need to strike the right balance between idealism and realism."<sup>1</sup> Only six months had passed since the victory of Rouhani, but as the last president of the Islamic Republic, he has tried to answer the question ever since the beginning of the revolution: What attitude will the Islamic Republic have in foreign policy? This problem was not exclusive for Iran. Almost all revolutionary states have faced with same puzzle that David Armstrong describes revolutionary states' "dilemma"<sup>2</sup> one in which revolutionary states are torn between their revolutionary ideals and the restrictions of the international society. On one hand, revolutionaries try to spread their own norms and beliefs over the world endeavouring to hold revolutionary identity in their relations with international actors. On the other hand, dominant powers and hegemons of the world politics seek to preserve the status quo and they strive to impose international norms upon revolutionary states. The prevalent actors of international politics aim to change 'deviant' behaviours of revolutionary states through different strategies such as persuasion, pressure and inducement in order to infuse predominant way of thinking into the ruling elites of revolutionary states.

This thesis takes this puss-in-the corner game between revolutionary states and the international society is a process of 'socialization' in which revolutionary states try to fulfil their obligations of both having a revolutionary identity and being a member of

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<sup>1</sup> Jason Rezaian, "Rouhani urges Iran's divided students to find 'balance between idealism and realism,'" *The Washington Post*, December 7, 2013, Accessed May 31, 2019.  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/rouhani-addresses-irans-divided-students/2013/12/07/0ee345a2-5f14-11e3-8d24-31c016b976b2\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.77dd7a1d659a](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/rouhani-addresses-irans-divided-students/2013/12/07/0ee345a2-5f14-11e3-8d24-31c016b976b2_story.html?utm_term=.77dd7a1d659a).

<sup>2</sup> David Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 1.

international society in the global system. Socialization is defined as “the process of inducting new actors into the norms, rules and ways of behaviour of a given community.”<sup>3</sup> Through this process, revolutionary states who were new commers of the international society regulated their behaviours according to the international norms even though these norms contradict with revolutionary values. This thesis aims to investigate the socialization process of revolutionary states to explore the main impetus that drives revolutionaries during that process. I argue that socialization process has been considered as a monolithic concept by International Relations theorists which decrease its explanatory power on revolutionary states. Most of the researchers who study the concept of socialization in international relations discipline regard internalization of norms as a sine qua non for socialization process. Because of this premise Fred Halliday, a student of revolutions argues that the concept of socialization could not explain the path revolutionaries followed in their relations with international society by emphasizing underlying dynamics of conflict between revolutionary states and international hegemons.<sup>4</sup> However, this is not a problem embedded in the socialization concept itself, instead, treatments of socialization in a monolithic way in which norm internalization is a necessary condition results in the reduction of the explanatory power of the concept. Therefore, I bring the rational socialization approach that presents the possibility of a socialization without norm internalization into the forefront in Chapter 2. This chapter is devoted to scrutinizing socialization concept in detail and I try to explain foundations of an alternative rational socialization process by analysing other researchers’ studies. The main argument of the rational socialization framework is that in behaving according to some new norms and rules, states do not have to internalize them. As far as they do not break principles, their intentions about those principles or subjects’ positions toward them cannot determine the borders of socialization. In other words, rational socialization argues that in norm acceptance, appropriateness and

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<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey T Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe Introduction and Framework," *International Organization* 59, no.4 (2005): 804.

<sup>4</sup> Fred Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics* (London: Macmillan Press, 1999), 298.

persuasion cannot be considered as the sole reasons of socialization. There could be some material reasons which forced the socializing state to behave according to the determined standards. This is the gist of rational socialization. This chapter constitutes the theoretical arguments and framework of my thesis. By utilizing the lenses of rational socialization that I develop in this chapter, I analyse my research question: How did Iran behave in the international society since the revolution? This research question contains several questions such as 'Is there a discernible path that the Islamic Republic of Iran has followed in its foreign relations after the revolution?', 'As a revolutionary country, did Iran prioritize ideology or material interests in foreign policy?' and 'How did the interaction between the international society and revolutionary Iran occur until now?' In chapter 3 and chapter 4 I try and provide an answer to these research questions.

In Chapter 3, I explain the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy decisions that one can identify as being based on revolutionary ideology. This chapter of the thesis aims to clarify policies that isolated Iran in the international realm and through exhibiting these policies, this part tries to shed light on influence of isolationist policies in turning Iran into a potential subject of socialization process. This isolation is the first component of Iran's socialization process after the revolution. Because of its revolutionary ideals, the Islamic Republic behaved in unexpected ways which contradicted with the norms and rules of the states that set the status quo in the international politics. This is why it has been called as a 'rogue state' by the international powers and in order to 'normalize' this unorthodox member of the international society different strategies were implemented. Yet, this 'normalization' did not completely take place. The Islamic Republic continued its ideology based foreign policy operations and by the influence of its revolutionary identity Tehran did not hesitate while taking decisions in foreign policy that are incompatible with dominant powers of global politics. Although this attitude intensified in the first years of the revolutionary regime and reign of Ayatollah Khomeini, state structure of the Islamic Republic enabled Iranian statesmen to maintain ideology based foreign policies even after the death of the revolution's father.

Chapter 4 examines Iran's interest-based pragmatist foreign policies since the revolution. In this chapter I try to showcase Tehran's foreign policy decisions that have contradicted with its revolutionary discourse. Categorizing the Islamic Republic's international interactions as pragmatic or interest-based is a difficult task because the fundamental principles that the Islamic Republic has been constructed upon have the power to present almost every action of the government as an ideologic preference. Only when Ayatollah Khomeini's stance about the government's authority on decision making process is considered in depth, can the disappearance of explanatory power of pragmatism on Iran's foreign policies be understood efficiently. The leader of revolutionaries, or as Iranians referred to him *Imam Khomeini*, stated that: "The government is empowered to unilaterally revoke any Shari'ah agreements which it has concluded with the people when those agreements are contrary to the interests of the country or of Islam."<sup>5</sup> This understanding explains how actions that can be described as pragmatism are attributed to a lofty aim by emphasizing the survival of the state. By this way even the most obvious discrepancies between the revolutionary discourse and practices can be accommodated. Therefore, to explain Iran's pragmatic or interest-based policies in international realm I take contradiction with revolutionary discourse as the main criteria. Tehran's foreign policies that are not in the same line with its revolutionary identity are defined as its interest-based pragmatist reactions in this chapter. By discussing Iran's pragmatist decisions, the second part of the Islamic Republic's rational socialization puzzle is completed. Thus, this chapter displays how Iran gave up its revolutionary commitments and under which conditions it made this preference.

As for the methodology of this thesis, I use both discourse analysis and process tracing methods to determine the Islamic Republic of Iran's engagement with the international society and its behavioural patterns in post-revolutionary era. I take discourses as structures that give meaning to the world and explain it in a systemic way. Based on this

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<sup>5</sup> Brenda Shaffer, "The Islamic Republic of Iran: Is It Really?" In *The Limits of Culture Islam and Foreign Policy*, ed. Brenda Shaffer, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006) 250.



point of view I accept that discourses construct social realities and can alter existing recognitions. Therefore, discourse analysis enables us to understand how revolutionary commitments and ideals shape the Islamic Republic's decision-making processes in foreign relations and how Tehran has interpreted international system after the revolution. Because discourse "constrains what is thought of at all, what is thought of as possible, and what is thought of as the 'natural thing' to do in a given situation"<sup>6</sup>, in chapter 3 and chapter 4 I have benefitted from the writings, speeches and declarations of the revolution's father Ayatollah Khomeini and other high-ranking Iranian statesmen such as presidents, ministers of foreign affairs etc. . Another source of my analysis is the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In order to describe the revolutionary identity and the ideology-based structure of the Iranian state, I analyse Iran's constitution and to identify the influence of revolutionary ideology on Iran's foreign relations through examining related parts of the constitution. Other than that, I have also resorted to secondary sources that reflect Iran's revolutionary ideology.

The second methodology that I benefit in the research is process tracing. Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel define process tracing as "the analysis of evidence on processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a case for the purposes of either developing or testing hypotheses about causal mechanisms that might causally explain the case."<sup>7</sup> In order to catch the causal mechanism of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy decisions after the 1979 revolution, I investigate Tehran's foreign policy decisions from 1979 to 2016 and categorize them as ideology-based and interest-based actions according to their conformity with Iran's revolutionary discourse. By focusing on the most significant cases, I intend to show the appropriateness of rational socialization concept to explain the Islamic Republic's behaviour pattern in the international realm.

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<sup>6</sup> Iver B. Neumann, "Discourse Analysis," in *Qualitative Methods in International Relations A Pluralist Guide*, ed. Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash, ( New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 62.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Process tracing From philosophical roots to best practices." in *Process Tracing From Metaphor to Analytic Tool*, ed. Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel ( Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 62.

Table 1.1 (Continued) Some of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Policy decisions from 1979 to 2016

IDEOLOGY BASED	AMBIGUOUS	INTEREST BASED
<p>** Export of Revolution (Sudur-e Enqlâb)</p> <p>*** Seizure of U.S. Embassy (Hostage Crisis)</p> <p>*** Neither East Nor West discourse</p> <p>*** Khomeini's letter to Gorbachev and Gulf Monarchs</p> <p>** Khomeini's emphasize for isolation (We must become isolated in order to be independent) (Khod-kifaye Self-reliance)</p> <p>** Khomeini's critique on Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan</p> <p>-1981 Iran deputy foreign minister Ahmad Azizi's proposal for solution in Afghanistan: Establishing a similar Islamic government in Afghanistan (Export of revolution)</p> <p>*** Salman Rushdie Affair</p> <p>*** Constitution articles that identify Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy decisions on an Islamic foundation (Article 3,11,152,153,154)</p> <p>*** Nuclear power (Turning into a stubborn and fervent advocate of Uranium enrichment policies; especially post-Khatemi and first Ahmadinejad years)</p>	<p>*** Changes in Khomeini's ideas on ISOLATION -Firstly he advocated isolation for success of revolution after, he declared that isolation would mean defeat and annihilation</p> <p>*** Khomeini's declaration and conditional permission for restoring relations with USA -Tehran could establish new relations with Washington if the U.S 'behaves itself' (Agar adam beshaved)</p> <p>*** 9<sup>th</sup> Islamic Summit Conference: Tehran Declaration 1997 - Getting rid of regional isolation especially gaining confidence of Gulf Countries.</p> <p>** Discourse of Dialogue Among Civilizations</p> <p>*** Iran's joining to Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCA), ASEAN, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SARC), D-8, Economic Cooperation Organization (From Neither East Nor West to East against the West ?)</p> <p>** Signing the Non-proliferation treaty on Nuclear Weapons?</p>	<p>*** Arms Deal with USA during the Iran-Iraq war. (Iran contra affair)</p> <p>** Selling oil to USA (Great Satan) over a Geneva based company</p> <p>*** Hama massacre -Iran described Muslim Brothers as the agents of Iraq and Zionism</p> <p>*** Accepting UN resolution for ceasefire with Iraq in 1988. -This affirmation has been made for the survival of the revolution, even though it was like drinking poison.</p> <p>*** Khamanei's open-door policy. -Iran's new posture seeks a much better balance between what he calls Iran's needs and its message that is between its <b><i>national interest and its Islamic ideology.</i></b> (Maybe one of the first signals of accepting socialization)</p> <p>*** Support the UN position on the Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. (Consequently, Europeans removed sanctions)</p> <p>-Immediately after, permitting UN special representatives on Human Rights to visit the country for the first time since revolution.</p> <p>*** Withdrawing from Salman Rushdie affairs even it has not been abrogated by Khomeini (Khatemi era)</p>

\*\*\* represents higher significance level      \*\* represents lower significance level

Table1.1(Continued)

IDEOLOGY BASED	AMBIGUOUS	INTEREST BASED
		<p>*** Cooperation with the International Atom Energy Agency</p> <p>** Joining the Eurasian Group who is a regional body established for combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (12 June 2016)</p> <p>**Rapprochement with Saudi Arabia in 2004-5</p> <p>*** Supporting U.S.A in destroying the Taliban regime through Iran's proxy: The Northern Alliance (In order to breach the wall of distrust with USA)</p> <p>*** Iran's attitude for Chechen War -They took position on the side of Moscow (We are respectful to territorial integrity of Russia)</p> <p>*** Support to Armenia on the conflict of Nagorno- Karabakh.</p> <p>*** Tajikistan Rebellion. Withdrawing support from Islamist rebels because of the close relations with Russia. (Iran's approach to Central Asia and Caucasia in post-Soviet era)</p>

The above table shows the cases of the Islamic Republic's ideology or interest driven foreign policies. The 'ambiguous' category of the table indicates that although these decisions or policies are important for Iran, they do not contradict nor confirm the revolutionary discourse directly. Therefore, these decisions are not included in this

dissertation. Another exception is Iran's involvement in the Syrian civil war which has been ongoing since 2011. Although it contains very specific and significant examples of both Iran's ideological and pragmatist decisions, because of the continuation of the war and its multivariate nature I do not include Tehran's foreign policy decisions on the Syrian civil war in my research.

This project has two important arguments distinguishing itself from other researches. The first argument is about the theoretical identification of socialization concept. In the International Relations discipline socialization concept has been considered as a landmark of constructivism. Although some researchers argue for the possibility of a rational/realist socialization process, these studies do not get enough attention as constructivist thinkers' socialization models. However, without accepting the importance of both constructivist and rationalist approaches' arguments, the concept of socialization cannot be comprehended substantially. In addition, most of the socialization studies in the IR are made about states' socialization in international institutions or international organizations. More often than not, scopes of these studies are narrow, and they are microscale studies. With this study I intend to extend the scale and I want to make a macro level socialization study of a revolutionary state in international order.

The second argument of this project is about post-revolutionary Iran's foreign policy attitudes. This study argues that the Islamic Republic of Iran has maintained a rational socialization in international society after the 1979 revolution. Both ideological and pragmatist behaviours of Iran demonstrate that there has not been a linear foreign policy understanding of the Islamic Republic. This non-linearity illustrates that the Islamic Republic has not internalized the entirety of the norms and rules of international society, and it has pursued ideological policies in its foreign relations from time to time. Therefore, rational socialization model/concept is a useful analytical tool for describing revolutionary Iran's interaction within the international system. In this context, the next

chapter is devoted to the analysis of the concept of socialization and its relationship with revolutionary states.



## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAME OF SOCIALIZATION

Most of the time international relations discipline gets different concepts from different disciplines and tries to make sense of its own objects from these different perspectives. When we considered the separation social sciences that do not go back too much historically, intertwining nature of social sciences will be understood more easily. In international relations theories this situation becomes apparent. “The rational actor” approach which got its fame from economy and “mutual construction of identity” which identified with sociology have constituted bedrocks of the two main approaches of international relations. This means that theorists and members of different schools try to explain same phenomenon with various and different approaches.

Socialization concept is one of these approaches that international relations schools interpreted according to their own inclinations. The concept has been used in different fields in social sciences. Many researchers utilized the concept to explain the focused phenomena in different fields such as linguistics, sociology and social psychology, political sciences, international law and anthropology.<sup>8</sup> The international relations discipline can be counted among these different social science disciplines, however, even in the international relations’ inner workings, the employment of the concept differs. Various international relations theories use this concept in order to understand, explain and describe the state of affairs in world politics. These factions have their own presuppositions about world order and world politics. According to these presuppositions, the definition of the socialization concept or explanatory role of the concept changes. Every school employs socialization in different positions, but this situation does not make a radical change in the nature of the concept. Even if these

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<sup>8</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, “Treating International Institutions as Social Environments,” *International Studies Quarterly* 45, no.4 (December 2001): 488-489.

factions diverge about the concept's delineative function, they are obliged to converge on some components of the concept.

In this section I intend to analyse the socialization concept with respect to the international relations theories and I contemplate about demonstrating how socialization is related with revolutionary states' behaviours. Firstly, I investigate and try to make a genealogical analysis of socialization. This investigation begins with the inquiry about the concept's origins. From which social science discipline did this concept arise? What kind of constitutive cornerstones does socialization have? When and under which conditions does socialization come into existence? I believe that by anatomizing socialization through these questions, the nature of the concept will be understood adequately, and analysing the concept is going to act as a catalyser to comprehend this research's main hypothesis, which is to show that post-revolutionary Iran did not fully implement an ideology-based foreign policy nor did it pursue a wholly pragmatist approach.

After a semi-archaeological investigation about socialization, I try to clarify the position of socialization in the international relations. This second part, which constitutes the backbone of my arguments, touches on socialization's function in the international affairs. How has socialization been used in international politics? On which points did different international relations schools diverge from each other or did they converge? What kinds of attitudes can be considered as socialization on a state level, and in which respect is this concept useful in understanding the behaviours of states in global affairs? The third part of this section is dedicated to figuring out the role of socialization in revolutionary states' international activities. I assert that revolutionary states' international activities and global positions can be understood and analysed as part of the socialization processes. David Armstrong, in his influential book 'Revolution and World Order', has delineated this close relationship. He contends that revolutionary states are confronted with a global society which has its own rules and norms. After the

revolution, states are left with only three options: trying to instigate a worldwide revolution, isolation or reforming the international system. But, in all three ways, the states must go through the socialization process.<sup>9</sup>

In the last part, I discuss the vulnerabilities and deficiencies of socialization. As all concepts and phenomena do have some descriptive limitations and weaknesses, socialization also has some explanatory shortcomings in the international relations discipline. Besides the inter-disciplinary disputes and its appropriateness for the international relations field, there are some intra-disciplinary controversies about the definition of socialization and its utilization in global politics. These vulnerabilities decrease the explanatory power of the concept in some points. However, despite its deficiencies, I claim that the concept turns some complicated issues of the international politics into easily understandable ones. In intra-disciplinary debates, while some scholars such as Martha Finnemore & Kathryn Sikkink<sup>10</sup>, Alastair Iain Johnston<sup>11</sup> and Kai Alderson<sup>12</sup> describe socialization through internalization of norms and examine its micro level functions; Ikenberry & Kupchan<sup>13</sup>, Frank Schimmelfennig<sup>14</sup> and Cameron Thies<sup>15</sup> describe socialization through structural imperatives and analyse its macro level functions. This situation depicts disagreements over a common ground for socialization

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<sup>9</sup> See. Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order*.

<sup>10</sup> Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no.4 (Autumn 1998).

<sup>11</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, *Social States China in International Institutions, 1980–2000* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> Kai Alderson, "Making Sense of State Socialization," *Review of International Studies* 27, no.3 (July 2001).

<sup>13</sup> G. John Ikenberry and Charles A. Kupchan, "Socialization and Hegemonic Power," *International Organization* 44, no.3 (Summer 1990).

<sup>14</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig, "International Socialization in the New Europe : Rational Action in an Institutional Environment," *European Journal of International Relations* 6, no.1 (March 2000).

<sup>15</sup> Cameron G. Thies, "State Socialization and Structural Realism," *Security Studies* 19, no.4 (November 2010).



concept and makes the concept vulnerable against criticism. Armstrong also emphasizes these vulnerabilities of the concept, but adds that the benefits of the concept to grasp revolutionaries' behaviours in society of states compensate socialization's theoretical deficiencies.<sup>16</sup> I agree with Armstrong's opinions about socialization as a consciously framed socialization concept would be highly beneficial to take notice how states affect each other, how they determine their positions in the international society and especially how revolutionary states act in the international system.

### **2.1. Identification of the Socialization Concept**

The concept of socialization has been used by different social science disciplines in various times. Its characteristic features have been observed in psychology, anthropology and sociology before its identification as 'socialization'. This wide spectrum usage generated a negative effect on having a clear definition about socialization. However, from common points of these different fields, socialization can be defined as: "the process[es] by which individuals selectively acquire the skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, and motives current in the groups of which they are or will become members." This is the definition of William H. Sewell, a social psychologist, and generally other definitions of socialization were built on the same components and elements of this definition.<sup>17</sup> Another influential research that defines and frames socialization has been made by Theodore E. Long and Jeffrey K. Hadden and they define socialization as: "the process of creating and incorporating new members of a group from a pool of newcomers, carried out by members and their allies."<sup>18</sup> Although there is no unanimously accepted definition of socialization, definitions from different disciplines show slight distinctness.

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<sup>16</sup> David Armstrong, "Globalization and the Social State," *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 4 (October 1998).

<sup>17</sup> William H. Sewell, "Some Recent Developments in Socialization Theory and Research," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 349, no. 1 (September 1963).

<sup>18</sup> Theodore E. Long and Jeffrey K. Hadden, "A Reconceptation of Socialization," *Sociological Theory* 3, no.1 (Spring 1985): 42.

Psychology can be considered as the first discipline that use indicators or main components of socialization in its analyses. The behaviour theory and child psychology were sub-fields that socialization considered as fundamental sources for explanations. Child psychologists tried to understand infants' development in family through this concept and behaviourist psychologists also interpreted subjects' actions and practices in a particular environment with socialization. Social anthropology which investigates primitive societies and their inner structure, also report socialization's role in cultural transmission process of primitive communities. Just as social anthropology, sociology, which includes research fields that explore individuals' adaptation and conformity to social structure, institutions, norms and rules, demonstrates these processes with socialization.<sup>19</sup>

The employment of the concept by all these different fields indicates that subjects' interactions with structured organizations such as family, culture, society etc. converge on some points. All agents that undergo the socialization process such as: infants in a family, individuals in a culture and citizens in a state are converted into a compatible part of these institutions. Although systems do have different features, the main object of them is similar: in order to maintain stability and harmony, mould your agents. This moulding process is defined as socialization and it is considered as a 'medium for transformation.'<sup>20</sup> After accepting socialization as a tool for transforming structural conditions, now we will scrutinize its components.

### **2.1.1. Subjects**

In the socialization process, the socializee (or the socialized one) and the socializer have different burdens and obligations. The socializee is the novice one, who has just entered the group or society and does not have much of an idea about the group/environment

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<sup>19</sup> Sewell, "Some Recent Developments in Socialization Theory and Research," 164.

<sup>20</sup> Long and Hadden, "A Reconceptation of Socialization," 42.

in which he or she is. The other side of the process is the socializer. The socializer is one of the group members and they have the role of a guide. Casting roles of the process in this way is a caricaturized and roughly sketched depiction but these two sides constitute the central partners of the process.

The relation between the socializee and the socializer changes according to the status of the socialization process. If there is an application to become a member of a certain group, then, the applicant must fulfil all requirements of the membership. Otherwise, the membership cannot be gained, and the applicant fails. Throughout the process, members of the group take an active guide and instructor role for the applicant but most of the effort is made by the applicant. On the other hand, if the membership is certain, members of the group again take an active role to form the novice's preferences, values and the way of thinking but most of the effort is made by the instructor. Child socialization and adult socialization are two important instances of these different attitudes of partners in socialization.<sup>21</sup>

In the socialization process, it is not necessary to have a human socializer. This means that bigger institutions or discourses can be considered as socializers for the process such as a market, elections, human rights, autonomy, etc. These kind of belief systems, entities, worldwide phenomena might shape the other(novice). We can summarize the fundamental argument of the concept in this way; there should be an entity that makes the rules or shows the right path for the newcomers. It might be a group of people, an institution, a discourse or a belief system but there should be a way, a path that must be followed.

### **2.1.2. Time Interval**

Another significant point of socialization is its time span. Is socialization a time limited process or an open-ended chain of interactions? The social Interactionist scholars, who

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 43.

assert that society is constructed upon human beings' interactions<sup>22</sup> consider socialization as a lifelong development. In their perspective, since individuals' interaction with each other does not cease until their death, their adaptations, integrations and transformations also will continue until the end of life. To some extent, their arguments are legitimate, however, such a simplistic understanding of socialization restricts any scientific research opportunity of the concept. Different consequences of different socialization processes cannot be observed by an understanding that considers socialization as an open-ended operation. There may be sequential socializations such as starting school, moving from one district to another, switching jobs or affiliating with an NGO, and all of them have different socialization processes. If all these different socialization processes are acknowledged as just one unitary socialization, then, the uniqueness of these operations disappears and causal analyses of them would not be realized as appropriately. Therefore, instead of a monolithic, open-ended or lifelong proposition, time restricted or period and process-based definitions are more appropriate for socialization. Long & Hadden also emphasizes this time interval problem. They claim that scientific utility of a concept is relied on its definition's adequacy and one of the most important components of an adequate definition is the location of the definition in time and space. With predetermined start and end points of socialization, it turns into a more accurate and powerful concept. Therefore, even if interactionist scholars assert that socialization is a lifelong operation, they accept it as a "*process*" in definitions.<sup>23</sup>

## **2.2. Socialization in International Relations**

Similar to other disciplines, in the IR, the concept of socialization is a contested notion. Different schools in the discipline define and use socialization according to their own premises. Hence a stable, neat definition does not emerge. Although there is not a

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<sup>22</sup> Dmitri N Shalin, "The Genesis of Social Interactionism and Differentiation of Macro - and Micro Sociological Paradigms," *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 6, no.1 ( Fall 1978).

<sup>23</sup> Long and Hadden, "A Reconceptation of Socialization," 41.

general agreement on its inner system and mechanisms, the constitutive idea that generated socialization is acknowledged by all. Alexander Wendt depicts this idea in his book *'Social Theory of International Politics'* as "the daily life of international politics is an on-going process of states taking identities in relation to Others, casting them into corresponding counter-identities, and playing out the result."<sup>24</sup> Wendt's explanation sheds light on constitutive consequences (on state identity) of states' interactions in the international realm. Social relations among states affect their identities, behaviours and status. Through the medium of state level social relations, actors are inducted into "the norms and rules of a given (international) community."<sup>25</sup> It is a "process of learning"<sup>26</sup> in which norms and ideals are transferred from one side to another. Global actors redefine their goals and interests, change their value understandings and reshape their mode of operations according to their position in these social interactions. The significant point in this conceptualization is that because agents have been encircled by a society/environment, they have an expected role which is determined by society itself. This expected role makes agents open to change in their duties and obligations. Therefore, socialization is called a process in which "social interaction leads novices to endorse 'expected ways of thinking,' feeling and acting."<sup>27</sup>

Interest alteration and norm change constitute a fundamental feature of the socialization process. In the social theory perspective, identities, interests and behaviours are produced through interactions. Global actors diversify their norm repertoire through these intense social relations. Norms' diffusion on a global level is realized through socialization and therefore socialization symbolizes "the dominant mechanism of a norm cascade – the mechanism through which norm leaders persuade

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<sup>24</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>25</sup> Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization," 7.

<sup>26</sup> Ikenberry and Kupchan, "Socialization and hegemonic power," 289.

<sup>27</sup> Johnston, *Social States*, 20.

others to adhere.”<sup>28</sup> In an environment, where, interests, identities and norms “get produced and reproduced” through interactions, socialization is considered as “a ubiquitous feature of interaction”.<sup>29</sup> Because in societies, interactions occur in some predetermined patterns and these patterns turn an association into a society. Socialization refers to “the process by which the new comer- the infant, rookie, or trainee, for example- become incorporated into *organized patterns* of interactions.”<sup>30</sup> The ‘organized patterns’ limitation saves us from investigating all kinds of norm transformations. Norms are not stable nor permanent elements of society. While some new-born norms increase their influence, some others lose their impact and validity. For instance, there are some norms that can be labelled as dead-norms which seem illegitimate and void in today’s world such as slavery or conquest. This means that not all norms, beliefs and practices are subjects of international socialization. If we frame socialization as the “reproduction and diffusion of a social order,” then appropriate norms for socialization are “those that are institutionalized in, and constitutive for this order.”<sup>31</sup>

I argue that when all these significant features of socialization are gathered, Frank Schimmelfennig’s definition of international socialization becomes a prominent one. He defines international socialization as “the process that is directed toward a state’s internalization of the constitutive beliefs and practices institutionalized in its international environment.”<sup>32</sup> I share most parts of Schimmelfennig’s definition, but at

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<sup>28</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," 902.

<sup>29</sup> Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no.2 (Spring 1992).

<sup>30</sup> Sheldon Stryker and Anne Statham, "Symbolic Interaction and Role Theory," in *Handbook of Social Psychology* (Vol. 1), ed. G. Lindzey, and E. Aronson, (New York: Random House, 1985), 325. In order to emphasize significance of predetermined motifs in society I wrote "organized patterns" in italic.

<sup>31</sup> Schimmelfennig, "International Socialization in the New Europe," 112.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

the same time, I also problematize some parts of it. Especially, the *internalization* section is of vital importance. Most of the divergences and debates arise from this part in the international relations discipline. I clarify this element of the definition in the following pages and I will try to illustrate why *internalization* constitutes the fundamental aspect of controversies in international socialization.

Constructivism is known as the sociology-based interpretative framework of the international relations discipline. Contrary to the realist schools' materialist premises about global politics, constructivism argues that interests, identities and circumstances of states emerge from social interactions of states. The realist schools' predetermined materialist structure perception is not completely disregarded by the constructivists. The divergence is about the constitutive effect of material restrictions. The constructivist scholars maintain that material constraints exist in the international realm, however, the fundamental idea that lies under the international system does not come into existence from this material structure but from states' recognition and attitude toward each other. Alexander Wendt, in his famous article *Anarchy is what States Make of it*<sup>33</sup> tries to demonstrate that anarchy, the international system's foundational feature, is not an exogenous factor which states do not have any contribution to, except implying its requisites, but it is a collective understanding states have formed together. This formation process is part of the social interactions between states, and by interacting with one another, states determine both their own identities/interests and the nature of their own environment. When we turn back to socialization, it can be easily said that constructivism is the closest international relations school to socialization. However, it does not mean that socialization is exclusive to constructivism. Constructivism criticizes the rationalist IR theories because of their disregard of the social construction effects. By putting social interactions at the centre of the international system, it turns rationalist approaches upside-down. Because of this understanding, socialization has a significant

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<sup>33</sup> For advanced reading see: Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no.2 (Spring 1992).

place in the constructivist theory and it is seen as a “staple” for sociological discourse whose reflection in the international relations is constructivism.<sup>34</sup> However, the socialization concept does not only belong to the constructivist approach, there are also rationalist socialization types.

The rationalist and constructivist approaches consider different functions of socialization. Basically, there is a teleological difference between these two viewpoints. While the rationalists investigate the “behaviour changes”<sup>35</sup> of states according to the norms that are accepted by the international society, the constructivists try to explain the “identity and interest alterations”<sup>36</sup> through states’ norm confirmation. After roughly associating socialization with norm confirmation, questions such as ‘Why do states accept norms?’ and ‘How do they implement these norms?’ come into prominence. Finnemore and Sikkink answer these questions by pointing out “utility maximization” and “logic of appropriateness” as the two significant reasons of norm confirmation.<sup>37</sup> These two reasons constitute the rationalist and constructivist socializations fundamental arguments.

As I mentioned before, the debate on socialization between constructivism and realism stems from *internalization*. Internalization is described as a state where in “a norm’s maintenance has become independent of external outcomes – that is, to the extent that its reinforcing consequences are internally mediated, without the support of external events such as rewards or punishment”<sup>38</sup> Most of constructivist scholars claim that

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<sup>34</sup> Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 4.

<sup>35</sup> Thies, “State Socialization and Structural Realism,” 715.

<sup>36</sup> Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press 1996), 34-69.

<sup>37</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” 912.

<sup>38</sup> Giulia Andrighetto, Daniel Villatoro and Rosaria Conte, “Norm internalization in artificial societies” *Ai Communications* 23, (2010): 325.



internalization is an indispensable part of the socialization process. According to them, without this essential component, socialization does not occur or the process that takes place cannot be addressed as socialization. Kai Alderson emphasizes the significance of internalization in socialization with the words: "It is impossible to speak meaningfully about state socialization without the notion of an "internal gyroscope" which keeps states behaving in certain ways even as external conditions change."<sup>39</sup> Moreover, there are some indicators of norm internalization in the eyes of constructivist scholars, such as legislation adjustments, institutionalization of norms, norm education of bureaucratic cadre etc. These changes in the state structure are seen as trademarks of socialization. The constitutive idea of internalization is independence from any kind of external factor. Both negative and positive outside factors will affect internalization's purity and it cannot be distinguished clearly whether the cause of behavioural changes (socialization) is internalization or external factors. This belief indicates that constructivist interpretation excludes any kind of consequentialist approach from the definition of socialization. Contrary to consequentialist understandings, the logic of appropriateness constitutes the origin of internalization. Any actors' compliance to society's rules and norms or any behavioural changes of actors are devoted to normative 'appropriateness' condition. In such a manner, we can say that internalization is the highest stage of pro-social behaviour for constructivist thinkers. Therefore, according to the constructivist viewpoint, states in the international arena identify convenient behaviours and build up their own identities/interests by interacting with other states/non-state actors like NGOs, norm entrepreneurs, international institutions etc. and the path that they mould their identity or interests is called internalization.

Constructivism associates international interactions with the "homo sociologicus" perspective however, it is not the only system of thought in global politics. The rationalist perspective puts the "homo economicus" understanding at the centre of its worldview.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Alderson, "Making Sense of State Socialization," 423.

<sup>40</sup> Schimmelfennig, "International Socialization in the New Europe," 117.

While the first one asserts that states adopt, learn and internalize society's norms and rules because those rules and norms are legitimate, the second one claims that cost-benefit analysis and interest based strategic evaluations generate international actors' attitudes for norm confirmation. I think, although the constructivist perspective identifies socialization with internalization, the rationalists' -interest-driven or instrumentalist- norm endorsement approach shows that the socialization process could not be confined to only one perspective. My argument is that; components of the socialization process that the constructivist thinkers attach great importance to such as persuasion, legitimacy, and internalization have considerable effects on states' norm confirmation and behavioural changes. On the other hand, material-based incentives are also as important as the idea-based components. Sanctions, punishments, rewards and prizes have great an influence on states' behaviour changes and norm confirmation. Therefore, I will try to explain that the interest calculation-based norm confirmation is also a part of the socialization process. Without giving due credits to both approaches, socialization cannot be understood properly.<sup>41</sup>

To reveal the rationalist aspects of socialization, we should first remove the barrier of internalization since the rational dimension of socialization cannot be understood without determining the role of internalization in the process. Internalization is considered as a gate keeper for socialization by the constructivist perspective whereas it is not a gate keeper, it is only one of the significant phenomena that stand behind the gate. Long & Hadden point out that internalization itself is not a puzzling issue but its position in the process is. According to them "As the defining characteristic of socialization, internalization was not problematic but taken for granted."<sup>42</sup> Also, behaviourist thinkers regard internalization as a thin concept for norm-confirmation.

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<sup>41</sup> Armstrong, "Globalization and the Social State," 474.

<sup>42</sup> Long and Hadden, "A Reconception of Socialization," 40.

According to them “even well socialized persons needed regular control by sanctions to guarantee continued compliance.”<sup>43</sup>

Alexander Wendt also supports the idea that internalization is a significant component of the socialization process but it is not identical with the process itself. While he is analysing Kenneth Waltz’s structural realism theory, he also describes behavioural transformations, which are signs of obtaining society’s norms, as socialization. However, he considers solely the behavioural changes as the lowest level of socialization. Having criticized Waltz’s socialization understanding, which, according to Wendt, is limited to “behavioural conditioning”, he points out that behavioural changes are a part of socialization. Referring to his critiques, he says “This is not to deny that socialization may sometimes change only behaviour, but if this is all it can do then the concept loses much of its significance.”<sup>44</sup> This argument shows Wendt’s layered approach towards socialization. The process does not work out in the same way for all actors. There are different degrees and mechanisms of norm confirmation. Norms can be obtained for different purposes such as power exploitation, utility maximization or behaviour legitimization. In other words, there are various paths and mechanisms in socialization. However, in terms of constructivism, internalization is the climax point of the process. Because of constructivism’s fundamental claim that actors’ identities are socially constructed, Wendt argues that only the third degree of socialization, internalization of norms on the base of appropriateness or legitimacy, can be considered as “the real” socialization. His inclusion of solely behavioural changes on socialization paves the way for decomposing internalization from socialization. Frank Schimmelfennig also emphasizes gradual nature of socialization and he attributes this feature of socialization to the concept’s defining term: ‘process’. According to him socialization is not an outcome, it is a process. Hence, internalization is not a necessary part of socialization but

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 102.

an outcome of “successful” process. By his own words: “Socialization does not, by definition, have to be successful. If it is, it results in the actor’s internalization of beliefs and practices.”<sup>45</sup>

Alastair Iain Johnston is another thinker who associates socialization with internalization. While describing the “common themes of socialization,” he takes the side of scholars who identify norm compliance with internalization. On the opposite side of the consequentialists, he advocates that in order to qualify a norm confirmation process as socialization, accepted “values, roles, and understandings” should not be an outcome of calculated material cost-benefit evaluation. Instead of this understanding, he prefers the notion of social calculation which means “the benefits of behaviour are calculated in abstract social terms rather than concrete consequentialist terms.”<sup>46</sup> Other than that, he also acknowledges variation of socialization mechanisms. Johnston, like Alexander Wendt, is aware of the unique characters of international actors therefore, instead of an identical socialization interpretation, he underlines a gradual process that has different levels of internalization. By saying that “there can be degrees of internalization, given that not all actors are always exposed to exactly the same configuration of social interaction with exactly the same prior identifications.”<sup>47</sup> he emphasizes the possibility of different socialization paths.

Johnston investigates different socialization mechanisms under three headlines: mimicking, social influence and persuasion.<sup>48</sup> He asserts that these three different microprocesses enable us to understand for which reasons actors demonstrate pro-

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<sup>45</sup> Schimmelfennig, “International Socialization in the New Europe,” 112.

<sup>46</sup> Johnston, *Social States*, 22.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

social behaviours and what the conditions that continuity of pro-normative behaviours depend on.

Mimicking is asserted as “the least social of socialization” by Johnston.<sup>49</sup> In this mechanism novice ones are inaugurated as members of a group and they have to comply with the group’s norms and rules. The point that differentiates mimicking from other mechanisms is that in mimicking socializee only imitates what the other group members are doing. The new-comer has an ultimate goal: survival. In a “new and decentralized social environment” survival is contingent upon copying behaviours of other survivors. Under this kind of situation, new-comers do not have enough time to make analysis on environment or behaviours of other members. Because of immediate reaction necessity, novices imitate successful members’ behaviours when they face a struggle. This ‘unconscious’ or ‘immediate’ reaction differentiates mimicking from intentional selection: emulation. “Emulation involves the conscious and careful search for exemplars and success stories and the application of these lessons to the maximization of some specific expected utility.”<sup>50</sup> Although this nuance that makes mimicking different from emulation puts mimicking away from the consequentialist view, mimicking is considered as “the process closest to a logics of consequences rationalist process.”<sup>51</sup>

Another socialization mechanism in Johnston’s explanation is ‘social influence’. Social influence denotes norm confirmation actions that are actualized by social rewards and punishments.<sup>52</sup> Main idea of this mechanism bases upon societies’ authority over its members. A society member will be honoured if he/she carry out obligations that come from his/her role in society. Mirror image of this rewarding case is also another definitive

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 45-46.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 72

<sup>52</sup> Johnston, “Treating International Institutions as Social Environments,” 499.

feature of society. In other words, any behaviour that is not compatible with member's role in society will be penalized. According to Johnston, rewards might include "psychological well-being, status, a sense of belonging, a sense of well-being" and some of the punishments can be counted as "shaming, shunning, exclusion and demeaning or dissonance."<sup>53</sup> Common ground for these rewards and punishments is a result of attitudes toward societal expectations. Societal expectations i.e. social pressure is the real reason behind the norm conformity in social influence and social influence is summarized as "public conformity without private acceptance." by Franklin J. Boster.<sup>54</sup>

This summary which confirmed by Johnston supports the idea that internalization is not compulsory for socialization because public conformity indicates socialization and private acceptance indicates internalization.

Similar to mimicking, social influence also has a consequentialist dimension. Divergence point from mimicking is actors' analytic calculation about costs and benefits of norm conformity or resistance. In this point we can ask the question what makes social influence different from rationalist pragmatism? It is a well-known fact that in pragmatism agents try to maximize their utility and benefits. Therefore, they make detailed cost-benefit analysis and act upon the famous avoid costs(punishments) seek benefits(rewards) principle. When we turn back to social influence, the same thing happens in this micro-process. Members of a society tries to behave in line with the rules and norms to obtain advantages and to evade disadvantages. The goal is same with the rationalist argument. Johnston tries to explain this situation by emphasizing 'societal' aspect of the mechanism. According to him these punishments and rewards are social i.e. without being a society and sharing same values, social influences cannot be observed. In his words Johnston states conditionality of social influence: "It cannot exist

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Franklin J. Boster, "Commentary on Compliance-Gaining Message Behavior Research," in *Communications and Social Influence Processes*, ed. C. R. Berger and M. Burgoon (Ann Arbor: Michigan State University Press, 1998): 96.

without the prior existence of a group and without a common understanding of the value or meaning that the group places on putative markers. This, much at least must be shared by the actor and group.”<sup>55</sup> I share Johnston’s societal explanation of rewards and punishments but I also argue that agents’ behaviour preferences could not be asserted completely devoid of material incentives and restraints. Johnston does not deny the significant impact of external variables on actors’ behaviour however, in his explanation the material incentives are being shadowed by the ideal ones. Nevertheless, this does not change the implicit acceptance of material cost-benefit calculation in the process.

He claims that the most relevant part of social influence in international relations theory is states’ ambition to “maximize their status, prestige, reputation” and refrain from “humiliation, loss of reputation and social sanctions.”<sup>56</sup> Moreover, after describing status as “others’ expectations of ability or competent performance”, he emphasized the non-mechanical function of status. In Johnston’s view, presenting a high ideal or being competent enough to lead a conceptual movement may also determine actor’s status.<sup>57</sup> On individual level these arguments might be right however on state level questions like ‘why does a state want to get a higher status or why does a state abstain from being labelled as rogue state?’ should be answered. In my opinion answers to these questions are Janus-faced ones. One side of the answers are related to Johnston’s assertion, i.e. ideal based attitudes or acting according to logic of appropriateness may maximize states status and prestige but the other side is related to material consequences. As an outcome of high status or good reputation in international society states obtain some advantages like increasing their wealth through intense trade relations or being protected from material sanctions. I accept that states’ behaviours and identities may change and evolve through their multi-dimensional interactions, on the other hand carrots and sticks still exist in the same place. If we discuss this balance approach only in terms of social influence, states’ behaviour changes which stem from logic of

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<sup>55</sup> Johnston, *Social States*, 88.

<sup>56</sup> Johnston, “Treating International Institutions as Social Environments,” 500.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

appropriateness and their attitude alterations arising from a desire to reap the benefits of reputation and status should be held at the same level. Hence, while figuring out the incentives of social conformity, beside ideational ones like reputation or humiliation, material consequences such as increase in power and wealth should also be considered as much as ideational ones.

The last mechanism of socialization in Johnston's classification is persuasion. Persuasion refers to changing one's ideas, opinions and attitudes without any "material or mental coercion."<sup>58</sup> In this microprocess members of group, norm-entrepreneurs or epistemic communities (professionals of a specific topic) try to convince novice to accept norms, ideas or values presented by these groups and to affirm that these norms are correct and should be followed. There are different factors that affect the persuasion process like counter attitudinal assessment, relationship between persuadee & persuader and persuadee's own character. Counter attitudinal assessment refers to cognitive practice that includes intensive investigation of opposite ideas and values. Through a systemic investigation of counter arguments, actors may conclude a belief which is different from his/her departure point. Relationship between persuadee and persuader is another important component of persuasion. On the one hand, there is a cognitive asymmetry between persuadee and persuader because the latter is in instructor role who shows the right paths and the former is the pupil who tries to follow steps of his/her mentor. On the other hand, coming from the same background or sharing the same ideational base affects persuasion positively. Therefore, relationship between the actors of persuasion is another critical determinant for this process. Lastly, persuadee's attitude toward the new norms and values are considered as game changer in the process because, reaction to unusual norms and beliefs is closely related to agent's character. For example, persuasion of conservative agents is more difficult than open minded ones. Hence, personality and evaluation procedures of agents have an important role in persuasion.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 496.



What makes the persuasion unique and exclusive is being completely devoid of any compulsion. In a sanction imposed or reward promised system persuasion cannot be performed properly. The idea behind the persuasion process is logic of appropriateness. States or state officers conform a new norm not because of its benefit or profit but because of only its appropriateness to their own ideas or identities. Furthermore, because of their adoption they would lose some relative advantage to their competitors. Johnston's the China case in his book "Social States, China in International Institution" explains the change of Chinese security understanding through persuasion mechanism.<sup>59</sup> Hence, persuasion is the most distinct representative of constructivist way of thinking in international socialization. It can be also considered as the peak point of norm internalization. Being devoid of external constraints makes the persuasion microprocess ideal form of internalization. Contrary to social influence's "public conformity without private acceptance" understanding, persuasion is a symptom of "public conformity with private acceptance" belief. When it comes to international field, persuasion mostly occurs in global scale institutions. High-level state officers come together in these international institutions and as a consequence of mutual interactions persuasion occurs. Diplomats, bureaucrats and scholars undergo a normative process in these international institutions and this process paves the way for norm changes and behaviour alterations. Beside international institutions, NGOs and norm entrepreneurs play a role in persuasion.

After investigating Johnston's three mechanisms of socialization, one can argue that his understanding of equating socialization with internalization has lost its significance. Because, only one of the three mechanisms of Johnston's socialization process is completely compatible with 'logic of appropriateness' based internalization concept. Mimicking is based on the idea of copying behaviours of group members to survive. It does not necessarily contain internalization. In the same way, social influence is a double-edged mechanism. On the one hand, actors may confirm society's norms and

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<sup>59</sup>Johnston, *Social States*.

rules either to acquire promised social rewards like prestige, reputation and high status or to avoid social sanctions like humiliation, exclusion and identity discrepancy. On the other hand, actors may behave in line with society's rules and values because of their material interest maximization or refrain from concrete sanctions. Also, social rewards and punishments are implicitly related with the material cost-benefit calculations. Therefore, internalization-based descriptions cannot embrace the social influence integrally. Only the persuasion approach can be considered as a sign for internalization, but I think it is not enough to equate socialization with internalization. As I suggested before, realist-rationalist model of socialization is also important to understand states' norm conformation incentives and constructivist scholars also do not deny this reality. Even Johnston himself accepts this reality by saying that:

at least two of the socialization microprocesses I will discuss could fall within the "rationalist" paradigm (mimicking and social influence)—an actor is, roughly speaking, maximizing some utility by choosing alternatives that appear to increase the probability of meeting some goal.... Only persuasion entails a process that might fall clearly within the rubric of the logics of appropriateness, where socialization leaves actors with new definitions of self that provide self-evident and normal notions of expected behavior. The reality is that socialization, broken down this way, does not fit neatly into either a constructivist or a rationalist approach.<sup>60</sup>

After removing internalization yoke from socialization, we can turn to rational perspective of it. Kenneth Waltz, who is considered as the founding father of structural realism, delineates socialization as either of international system's two functions: competition and socialization. According to him, states' confirmation of "common international practices" despite their contradicting internal preferences demonstrates state socialization in international system.<sup>61</sup> Use of a discrete concept like socialization by Waltz might be understood as a miss-use or mistake at first glance. However, when Waltz's power and material capability based international structure interpretation is

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., xxvii.

<sup>61</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), 127.

taken into consideration, states' compliance with this structure's standards goes into socialization's orbit. Waltz argues that because his theory of international relations assumes international politics as a "competitive system", actors of the system will display common characteristics of a competitor, i.e. "they will imitate each other and become socialized to their system."<sup>62</sup> This conformation or socialization in the international system can be understood as a manifestation of anarchy in the eyes of structural realism. It is an obvious fact that socialization is not a constitutive principle of Neorealist way of thinking, but it is a mechanism that puts structural realists' doctrines into practice.

Cameron Thies tries to explain socialization's function through the role theory in structural realism. He introduces socialization as a mechanism which "transmits material constraints imposed by anarchy and the distribution of capabilities to the level of unit interaction through a focus on the roles adopted by states."<sup>63</sup> In his argumentation, the role theory indicates states position in the international system. Namely, roles refer to both states' position in the structure and their socially recognized category in the international order. Power and distribution of material capabilities which are constitutive elements of structural realism are also essential features of states' roles in the global affairs. Roles in international politics are determined according to material capabilities. In an anarchic environment states act according to roles that are compatible with their material capabilities. If a state's role does not correspond to its material capability, socialization mechanism steps in and changes this state's position in the structure. This might be realized through sanctions, cooperation and status alteration etc. The main proposition that underlies the Neorealist socialization is that structures influence states and their behaviours however this influence does not take place in a direct manner. Instead, actors meet with the system's rules, norms or standards through socialization mechanism.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 128.

<sup>63</sup> Thies, "State Socialization and Structural Realism," 690.

In the constructivist perspective socialization signifies behaviour changes as a consequence of identity or belief alterations and these alterations are realized through interactions between the system's units. In other words, the transformation power which is able to change states' values, identities and interest concepts is embedded into relations occurring between states. In the Neorealist perspective states' identities and interests are formed by anarchy and the material capability based international structure. The unique entity which can change states' beliefs and understandings is this international structure. Therefore, socialization refers to states' behaviour adjustments in accordance with the international structure's standards.

Frank Schimmelfennig shows an elaborate approach about the socialization's inside-out and outside-in functions. He considers both the constructivist and the rationalist arguments valuable and by asking questions such as: 'Why states accept international norms and what are the incentives that lie behind the norm confirmation?' he depicts a rationalist socialization process. He respects the constructivist arguments because he affirms that states are interacting in a "normatively institutionalized international (and domestic) environment." On the other hand, he might be considered as a member of rationalist camp because he also accepts rationalists' state assumptions like: "being egoistic, interest driven and rational actor."<sup>64</sup> What Schimmelfennig tries to prove is that states' endorsement of "constitutive beliefs and practices" might be imposed by their own self-interest calculations. This means that, rational choice per se might be the principal reason of appropriate behaviour.<sup>65</sup>

In a completely mechanical environment i.e. condition that indicates the absence of any restrictions except material ones, actors make their choices according to material criteria. There are not any kind of normative beliefs or metaphysic norms that can regulate actions and behaviours. By drawing a rough analogy, the Hobbesian state of

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<sup>64</sup> Schimmelfennig, "International Socialization in the New Europe," 116.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

nature may be regarded as the pinnacle of mechanical environment. In such an environment, political actors do not pay attention to legitimacy. They behave according to their self- desires and interests and they realize their goals through shortest route. However, today's world does not display a complete mechanic environment. Although it has some substantial features of mechanic environment like anarchy, current international system has some institutions, to some extent common norms, values etc. Existence of common norms and values is not a sign of undisputed acceptance of these norms. They have been challenged and accepted to some extent however, this presence remarks that the international system is not totally devoid of ideal variables. Therefore, the international actors have to take into consideration these ideal variables in this institutional environment.

By acknowledging the international environment as a normatively institutionalized atmosphere, Schimmelfennig affirms the existence of states' legitimacy apprehension. Under these circumstances, states could not behave according to their whims. Because overpassing accepted norms or ignoring stated rules may not eliminate states from the international system but it will put a heavy burden on them. Therefore, if states want to be successful in pursuing their goals, they have to take institutionalized norms and rules into consideration. In other words, they have to show their legitimacy by acting in line with group's, institution's or structure's rules and values. Insofar statements of Schimmelfennig are in the same direction with the constructivist approach. However, the divergence point of Schimmelfennig from the constructivist understanding is about internalization. He argues that political actors do not have to internalize norms and values but "they have to live up to them in a credible way."<sup>66</sup> He investigates the international socialization process from two perspectives. The first one is the 'socializer' perspective. Some states and international institutions which constitute the international community act as a custodian for "resources in the social environment

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 117.

which the actor needs or desires to have.”<sup>67</sup> In order to reach these resources actors have to adopt beliefs and rules of the social environment. This adoption of norms and rules takes place through socialization. The second perspective through which Schimmelfennig examines socialization is the ‘socializee’ perspective. In this view point, novice actors(states) try to keep in step with their social environment. The core argument and what makes Schimmelfennig different from the constructivist thinkers emerge from his explanation of socializee actors’ reasoning mechanism. According to him rational actors do confirm the beliefs of the community not because they consider these norms and rules as “true or right” but because “adoption is necessary to further political goals.”<sup>68</sup> This means that rational actors of the international politics adopt the rules and concepts in accordance with their cost-benefit calculations. Receiving the title of legitimate actor enables states to play an active role in the international affairs. Besides making gain in the international affairs, like participating the international institutions’ decision-making processes and getting a slice from the “internationally distributed material gratifications”<sup>69</sup>, material benefits that are acquired in the shade of international legitimacy may also strengthen domestic legitimacy.<sup>70</sup> However this description presumes the reverse reasoning also valid. If states regard the international legitimacy as an instrument and don’t need material benefits or advantages of the international legitimacy on their domestic politics, they would not give much weight to international legitimacy. I think a person would not have difficulty in giving example for this statement at least from the last century of the international relations.

Schimmelfennig’s internalization assessment is also different from the ‘logic of appropriateness.’ He argues that rational actors confirm the international standard’s as

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>70</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," 903.

long as they consider compliance is efficient for them. They may deviate from the adopted norms in return for a higher clear-cut benefit. Also, he indicates that the society's members try to interpret and paraphrase the norms of the society in the manner of their own standards. By virtue of this manipulation actors intend to evade from costs of adopting norms and rules. This shows rational actors' instrumental approach to norm confirmation and their fundamental incentive for socialization. The peak of the divergence between the constructivist and the rationalist perspectives is based on the causality of the last step of socialization. Contrary to the constructivist understanding, the rationalist approach explains the "habitualization of confirmed norms" as an "equilibrium" condition. In the rationalist approach there is not any room which is completely devoid of cost-benefit calculation in the international realm. A costless behaviours or attitude would be given up because of a more beneficial substitute. Therefore, actors behave in compliance with norms not because of changes in their beliefs or identities but because "they have no incentive to deviate from the institutionalized norms."<sup>71</sup>

Arguments that have been issued until here are not presented to ascribe socialization process only to the rational approach. As I said before, main intention of this part was to demonstrate the possibility of a rationalist socialization approach exactly like there is a constructivist socialization understanding. Socialization may occur because of different intentions and incentives. It is not exclusive to the 'logic of appropriateness'. There are other ways of reasoning that associate socialization with utility maximization, cost-benefit calculation and more consequential terms. Norm confirmation might occur either because of pure material motivations or pure preferential reasons. None of these causality mechanisms negate the other one. I argue that reducing socialization to a rationalist concept will decrease socialization's domain and explanation power. In the same way, reducing socialization to a constructivist concept will decrease its terrestrial

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<sup>71</sup> Schimmelfennig, "International Socialization in the New Europe," 119.

connection and will turn it to a thin concept for international relations. Therefore, during the evaluation of any actors' socialization, the concept's dualist nature should not be ignored. Zürn & Checkel emphasize this phenomenon in their study "*Getting Socialized to Build Bridges*".<sup>72</sup> They indicate that instead of using an 'either/or' language, implementation of a 'both/and' policy will be more beneficial for clarification of the socialization concept. In their own words: "it is more telling and adds more to our understanding when both constructivist and rationalist lenses are used."<sup>73</sup> Finnemore & Sikkink also supports the rationalist approaches' contributions to ideational discourses. Especially for the norm confirmation process they argue that "rational choice theorists can and do have great deal to say about how norms work, just as empirical studies of social construction and norm emergence repeatedly reveal highly rational strategic interaction."<sup>74</sup>

### **2.3. Socialization and Revolutionary States**

When the socialization process is taken into consideration, the most significant characteristic of the subject of the socialization process is its noviceness. In other words, socialization could be described as the story of a newcomer actor's mutual interaction with the structure that encircles it. Being a novice, newcomer or literally an infant in the system and trying to live in this system necessitates to learn, and understand that system's requirements. For instance, for an infant to be born into a family, for an outsider to migrate to a new community, or for a newcomer to join a new environment are the first steps of the socialization process. Therefore, the term noviceness is one of the constitutive elements of socialization. In psychology, sociology or anthropology disciplines, noviceness may be determined easily. However, in the international relations

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<sup>72</sup> Michael Zürn and Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Getting Socialized to Build Bridges Constructivism and Rationalism, Europe and the Nation-State," in *International Institutions and Socialization in Europe*, ed. J. T. Checkel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007)

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 259.

<sup>74</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," 917.



discipline, according to which criteria will noviceness be determined or which states can be considered as novice are vague questions. Johnston emphasizes the “undertheorized” nature of noviceness in international relations and argues that “newly liberated or created states” and “recently isolated states” can be regarded as novice ones in the international realm.<sup>75</sup> States that gained their freedom as a consequence of decolonization in the 1950s or states that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union could be examples of novice states. On the other hand, states that newly entered an international institution such as the NATO, the European Union, or the World Trade Organization etc. can also be deemed as novice states. In terms of being a stranger to norms and standards of the society in which they have entered, they stand at the same point and in order to adopt to the norms and values of their society, they are going to have to go through the socialization process.

Besides these mentioned groups, there is also another important category that has the characteristics of being novice: revolutionary states. Revolution, conceptually, includes political, sociological and more generally an entire systemic change in a given state. It indicates a total disengagement from the previous system. As making a genealogical analysis of revolution will change our main subject, I will try to delineate the close relationship between revolutionary states and socialization.

David Armstrong describes revolutionary states’ situation as a “dilemma” because after the revolution, revolutionaries find themselves in an “ambiguous” puzzle in the international society.<sup>76</sup> From then on, they are not only a challenging movement against the old regime, but they are the regime themselves. Because of their very existence as a state, they join the international society which has its own norms, rules or at least some interaction patterns. The dilemma that Armstrong emphasizes emerges from revolutionary states’ encounter with the international society. During their struggle with

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<sup>75</sup> Johnston, *Social States*, 33.

<sup>76</sup> Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order*, 1.

the regime, revolutionists often get in touch with external powers but after their success, they interact with those external powers as a state agent. These old revolutionists turn into the guardians of the new regime and make more detailed calculations when they interact with other states. This thorough calculation might vary from state to state but, more often than not, the reaction of revolutionary states to the international society takes shape in three forms: The first one is that revolutionary states may choose isolation. Instead of going into an intense interaction with the international society, revolutionary states may prefer to minimize their relations with other states. The second one is rejecting and challenging the international society's regulations. This mode of operation is the most prevalent one among the revolutionary states. Because they consider the international norms, standards or values as distorted, corrupt and depraved, and also because these norms used to be the mastermind of the old regime, revolutionary states try to change the international values and reach a global revolution. In Freed Halliday's remarks, revolution has purposed both internal transformation of societies and alteration of relations between nations and societies. He argues that revolutionaries do not only want to spread their own beliefs and ideas to other states but the main reason of opposing the international norms is "aiming to alter the norms, the very ways, in which states and peoples have interacted."<sup>77</sup> The third one is being in accord with the international society's requests. Instead of confronting the international norms, states choose compliance to these standards. These three ways of action are revolutionary states' possible positioning against the international society. On other side of the coin, there is the international society's attitudes against revolutionary ones, which is just as important as the revolutionaries' reaction. Independent from a revolutionary state's reaction to the international society, "it [the revolutionary state] encounters strong pressures to conform to the conventions of the society of states: to become 'socialized'."<sup>78</sup> Most of the revolutionary states have faced the international

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<sup>77</sup> Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 3.

<sup>78</sup> Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order*, 1.

society's powerful reaction because of their challenging ideas about the status quo such as the 1789 French revolution which generated a denial of the treaties of Westphalia of 1648.<sup>79</sup> European monarchies regarded the revolutionary ideas as a threat for their own existence and because of this assessment, the Revolutionary Wars occurred between France and Prussia & Austria. The 1917 Bolshevik revolution also presented an antagonistic attitude to the global system, as the Bolsheviks denied capitalist/imperialist world order and, because of this confrontation, the world witnessed a bipolar international realm until 1991. The essence of this confrontation comes from the revolutionary values, which the revolutionary states built their organization upon. A revolutionary state's relations with other states are also formed by their revolutionary ideas. Therefore, revolutionary states, by objecting to the existing world order, find themselves "alienated"<sup>80</sup> in the international society.

Even if isolation seems a reasonable route for revolutionary states, the revolutionaries themselves know that a complete isolation is not possible. Being an alien in their environment or the alienation of their surrounding actors to them do not require them to give up interacting with others entirely. Initially, revolutionaries try to protect their domestic society from any external intervention or influence to ensure the success of revolution. However, this isolationist effort can only be maintained for a short while, "in the longer run they were compelled to interact with it [*external world*]."<sup>81</sup> The Bolsheviks' attitude to the Genoa Conference, which was held to discuss the economic recovery of the post-WWI Europe in 1922, can be seen as one of the most distinct indicators of the revolutionary states' perception of the international order and their interaction style with these status quo powers. One of the founding fathers of the Bolshevik Revolution and the leader of the Soviet Russia Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, whose

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<sup>79</sup> Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 12.

<sup>80</sup> Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order*, 3.

<sup>81</sup> Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 263. Italics are belonged to me.

alias is Lenin, declared that “we welcomed Genoa and would attend it.”<sup>82</sup> His explanation of attendance was grounded in Soviets’ economic situation and Lenin emphasized the importance of economic relations with their ideologic deadly enemies. According to him their attendance did not represent any other meaning than trade. By introducing themselves as merchants he said that “we were going there as merchants, because trade with capitalist countries is absolutely essential for us (until they have entirely collapsed).”<sup>83</sup> Another important signal that shows revolutionary states’ evaluation of relation with other actors of the international field might be Lenin’s monition to his foreign affairs commissar Chicherin before the Genoa conference. Lenin advised Chicherin to “avoid big words” in his speech in the conference.<sup>84</sup>

I think Lenin’s advice and his opinion about the Genoa conference is an indication of consciousness. Robespierre, Lenin, Mao, Castro, Khomeini, and other revolutionists were aware of the fact that they were not alone in this world. They knew their ideas and beliefs would be either challenged or approved by some international actors. In other words, revolutionists recognized that their newly founded state would compulsorily establish relations with other states. The content and context of this relation would variate but the presence of the relation was undeniable. Therefore, they took their steps according to this reality. The influence of international norms and rules over revolutionary states and revolutionary states’ potential to alter standards that have been accepted by the international society revealed the significance of revolutions for international politics. Within this scope I argue that investigating revolutionary states with the socialization perspective opens the way for understanding odd states’ (revolutionary states in the eyes of others) turmoil in international politics. And, questions such as ‘how do revolutionary states react to the demands and desires of other states, how does the

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<sup>82</sup> Barrington Moore, *Soviet politics -The Dilemma of Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), 204.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

relation between the international society and revolutionary states take form, and according to which motifs do revolutionary states act in global politics?’ constitute an adequate atmosphere to evaluate revolutionary states under the concept of socialization.

When we return back to the novice status of revolutionary states, we should indicate that their noviceness comes from being a nascent political institution in the international field. They are considered as novices not because of their inadequate knowledge of the international society or their tabula rasa identity but because of their recent entrance to the international club. Due to their challenging ideas, revolutionary states are regarded as cracks in the existing order. They are labelled as rogue states and being a rogue state makes them an important subject of the international norm confirmation. As emphasized by Finnemore and Sikkink, “being labelled a ‘rogue state’ in international interactions”<sup>85</sup> has costs for states. In a world that international legitimacy has a substantial effect on states, being identified as rogue state will lead to some disadvantages for the labelled state. Exclusion from international institutions, and being prevented from reaching international resources might be depicted as some of the costs of being a rogue state. Therefore, revolutionary states’ relation with the international society contains vital activities for both sides. In the revolutionary perspective, there are revolutionary ideas, desires, beliefs, and values and this revolutionary way of thinking is an ontological base for their political existence. On one hand, they have to interact with their social environment and there are many norms and standards that contradict with their revolutionary values. While at the same time, representatives of the international society also have hesitations about revolutionary states. According to them, these new born revolutionary states constitute a threat to established order. The norms and values of revolutionaries are not compatible with the international society and the revolutionaries intend to change these international norms in their favour. On the other hand, under these circumstances, custodians of the international order react against

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<sup>85</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change,” 903.

revolutionary states out of necessity. Therefore, a tension between the revolutionary states and the international society appears. I am interested in the revolutionary states' side of this tension and I propose that socialization process is a useful concept in understanding how revolutionary countries handled the issue of complying with the international norms and regulations when they have their own unique and often contradictory revolutionary beliefs. Besides, until now the socialization process has been investigated mostly at a micro level. Socialization studies have frequently focus on highly institutionalized organizations like European Union, NATO etc. These institutions have concrete frames in terms of rules and regulations and the socializer position can be easily identified in this kind of environments. However, on a macro level socialization i.e. states' reciprocal action with other international subjects and their attitudes to the international system's dynamics also constitute an important part of socialization. In order to understand this part of socialization, the revolutionary states provide a good opportunity in understanding the international politics of rogue states "such as the early Soviet Union, or the People's Republic of China, or more contemporary examples like North Korea and Iran, they must be analysed through the lens of socialization."<sup>86</sup>

#### **2.4. Vulnerabilities and Weaknesses of Socialization**

In social sciences, comprehensive descriptions rarely emerge. Every hypothesis, theory and approach try to explain its object phenomenon completely. However, even the most inclusive explanations have some deficiencies or exceptions. Socialization is also an imperfect concept that has some weaknesses and vulnerabilities. In addition to its conceptual weaknesses about its home turf disciplines like psychology and sociology, especially its employment in the international relations field brings about many debates. International relations scholars criticized the inter-disciplinary usage of socialization because according to them, even if social sciences are not totally independent from each other, every discipline has its own methods and subjects. Therefore, a concept that has

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<sup>86</sup> Thies, "State Socialization and Structural Realism," 717.

a great explanatory power in one discipline may turn into a useless tool when analysing phenomena from another discipline. When we consider socialization in the international relations field, we come across three deficiencies in the concept: anthropomorphism, agency problem and pedagogic approach.

Anthropomorphism, in its most basic dictionary definition, is “the showing or treating of animals, gods, and objects as if they are human in appearance, character, or behaviour.”<sup>87</sup> In the socialization perspective, human actions such as learning, adopting, implying norms and rules are attributed to states. This approach has been criticized by the rationalist camp of the international relations who generally take issue with the constructivist scholars’ falling into an anthropomorphic illusion. This attribute of socialisation of acting states, as if they can present human behaviours, may be considered a vulnerability but as Armstrong emphasizes “it enables an otherwise impossibly complex reality to be reduced to manageable proportions.”<sup>88</sup>

The second weak point of socialization is its agency problem. The agency problem can be considered a reflection of the anthropomorphic character of the concept. In an institutional international world, global institutions are regarded as the perfect places for socialization as high-ranking bureaucrats get in contact with each other under the umbrella of these institutions. Consequently, norms and regulations of these institutions are spread among the state representatives. The problem which arises is whether the state socialization will be regarded as part of the norm conformation process of these officials or is there another mechanism that can define state socialization in other ways? The last topic that could be noted as a weak spot of socialization does not result from its conceptual nature but its way of employment. As we have said before, the asymmetry between the socializer and the socialized one is embedded in the socialization process.

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<sup>87</sup> Press, C. U. (2018). Retrieved from Cambridge Dictionary: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/tr/s%C3%B6zl%C3%BCk/ingilizce/anthropomorphism>

<sup>88</sup> Armstrong, "Globalization and the Social State," 471.

The socializer leads the right path and the socializee follows the socializer's instructions. This is the main characteristic of socialization. However, in the international relations literature, this asymmetry has turned into a "pedagogic"<sup>89</sup> discourse. Pedagogic discourse refers to one-sided socialization. In this approach, the socializee is totally passive and the socializer occupies role of a teacher, who educates, trains or disciplines their pupils. It is not a deficiency that arises from the concept itself but ignoring one side of the process or considering the socializee as not a subject but only an object of the process diminishes the concept's validity and its comprehensiveness.



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<sup>89</sup> Further reading: Ismail Yaylaci, "Performative Socialization in World Politics," (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2014)



### CHAPTER 3

#### IDEOLOGY ORIENTED FOREIGN POLICIES OF IRAN

The 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution transformed modern Iran decisively. From the institutions of state to the customs of social life, Iran's socio-politic atmosphere has changed dramatically. Adjectives that have been attached to the word 'Iran' describe the content and direction of this change directly. The name of the state ruled by the Pahlavi Dynasty was the *Imperial State of Iran (Keshvar-e Shâhanshâhîy-e Iran)* but the revolution that destroyed the Pahlavi Dynasty gave the name *Islamic Republic of Iran (Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Iran)* to this new-born state. These two adjectives *Islamic* and *Republic* were signs of a complete disengagement from the previous regime and they were also the fingerprints of the administration. Alterations and adjustments were to be made according to these two principles and they would be the point of departure for the new regime.

The Islamic identity got in up to the capillaries of the new state and the constitution of this new state has been an indicator of the extent of this infiltration. In the part of The Form of Governance in Islam the new constitution described the foundations of Islamic Republic by indicating that "political institutions and organs that are the basis of the society, the pious will take on the responsibility of governing and administering the country, in accordance with the Qur'anic verse, 'My servants, the righteous, shall inherit the earth'"<sup>90</sup> Under this kind of a comprehensive approach every state institution has been redesigned according to Islamic tenets and reflexes of the state regulated in accordance with this understanding.

The revolution bestowed a new explanation of the world to Iranians and changed their relations with the existing global system. This new understanding has altered the nationalist discourse with a more religious one. However, because in this much

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<sup>90</sup> Firoozeh Papan-Matin, "The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1989 Edition)." *Iranian Studies* 47, no.1 (2014): 162.

globalized world and at a period in which states' interdependency has reached an enormous level, maintaining pure religion-based relations with other actors does not seem possible. Therefore, the newly found Islamic Republic's reactions to the external world have been established upon religious-Islamic tenets but Iran displayed characteristics of an amalgamation that was composed of national and religious discourses.

The Islamic Republic's foreign policy understanding terminated Shah's foreign policy strategies and formed a new frame. In article 3 of the constitution, the corners of this frame is indicated with the words: "the organization of the nation's foreign policy [is] based on Islamic criteria, fraternal commitment to all Muslims, and unrestrained support for the impoverished people of the world."<sup>91</sup> From this article and revolutionary elites' discourses about foreign policy these four principles can be considered as the corner stones of Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy: "rejection of all forms of domination, preservation of Iran's independence and territorial integrity, defence of the rights of all Muslims without allying with hegemonic powers and the maintenance of peaceful relations with all non-belligerent states."<sup>92</sup>

In this chapter I try to explain and demonstrate Iran's ideology based foreign policy understanding. The chapter will be constituted of two parts. The first part will include Iran's three ideology based foreign policy approaches. These approaches are 'Neither East nor West', 'Export of Revolution (*Sudur-e Inqilab*)' and 'politics of confrontation'. These three policies have been the fundamentals of revolutionary foreign policy and they have determined Iran's position in the world. The second part will also describe the ideological movements of the Islamic Republic but the issue that differentiates the first part from the second part is the scale of this phenomena. In the first part, the main

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 167.

<sup>92</sup> Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Mahjoob Zweiri, *Iran's foreign policy From Khatami to Ahmadinejad* (Berkshire U.K.: Ithaca Press, 2008), xiii.

focuses of concerns are going to be 'the policy understanding' that has been implemented by the state but in the second part more specific events will be investigated. These events can be considered as reflections of the foreign policy understanding but their impact on Iran's position in the international community and their symbolic power that represent the Islamic Republic's world view have made them worth mentioning. Therefore, in the second part I am going to explain three historic events and their meaning for the Islamic Republic's foreign policy: 'US embassy seizure', 'Salman Rushdie affair' and 'Khomeini's letter to Gorbachev'.

The essential argument of this chapter is that Iran has isolated itself from international community because of its ideology-based foreign policy understanding. Its rejectionist and oppositional attitude against the international system and its noncompliant character alienated it from its own international environment. Therefore, the Islamic Republic started to be mentioned as a 'rogue state' by other actors of the international community. This isolation was a direct result of some ideological reactions and non-compliant posture but at the same time, this isolation was the reason of a new process, namely, socialization.

### **3.1. Neither East Nor West**

During the revolutionary struggle in Iran, protestors were chanting two important slogans which were the indicator of unrests and blueprints of the new regime's *raison d'être*. These two slogans were: Freedom, Independence, Islamic Republic (*Esteqlal Azadi Jomhuriye Islami*) and Neither East Nor West but Islamic Republic (*Na Sharqi Na Garbi Jomhuriye Islami*). Even a superficial investigation of Iran's last two centuries can reveal the reasons of these slogans and their psychological background. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of the weak state system and central authority problems, Iran turned into a sphere of influence for its northern neighbour Russia and Great Britain. These two powers had considered Iran as a chessboard for their power struggle. Qajar dynasty was defeated by the Russians and as a consequence of this defeat they were forced to make

two “humiliating” agreements named Gulestan (1813) and Turkmanchai (1828).<sup>93</sup> Thanks to these two treaties the Russian influence over Iran increased dramatically. On the other hand, the British regime which had already settled in the Persian Gulf started to worry about the Russian influence over Iran. In order to protect their own interests on Iranian soil, they forced the Qajars to give up Herat and dictated a treaty which was just as humiliating as the Russian one: Treaty of Paris (1857).<sup>94</sup> From then on, the great game between Russia and Great Britain continued until Reza Khan’s abolishment of the Qajar dynasty and establishing his own Pahlavi regime. With the establishment of Pahlavi monarchy British and Russian influence elevated to a different level. While Reza Shah was trying to strengthen his state, he was looking for a more independent and self-reliant foreign relations. Yet, his independency dreams cost him a great deal, as the World War II that made Russia and Great Britain allies also changed their policies against Iran. In 1941, Reza Shah was overthrown by an Anglo-Soviet invasion and he was forced to abdicate his power in favour of his son Mohammed Reza. Pahlavi dynasty was not destroyed but redesigned by Soviet Russia and Britain<sup>95</sup>. The new Shah remained faithful to his sources of power and maintained convenient relations with these powers. Maybe the most dramatic and influential event that took place in Iranian people’s conscience has been executed by those foreign powers. In August 1953 nationalist prime minister Mohammed Mosaddeq was overthrown through a coup d’état. Because of his nationalization policies on Iran’s oil industry, as the British government felt that they were losing their interests in Iran. Therefore, in order to fortify British interests and annihilate the danger, an Anglo-American coup plan has been carried out by the CIA. Having toppled down Mosaddeq, Americans have started to increase their influence day by day. The relationship between the USA and Reza Shah had come to such a degree that

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<sup>93</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 34.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 197.

Iran started to be considered as “the policeman of the Persian Gulf” by Americans.<sup>96</sup> Especially Shah’s western oriented modernization movements and his ambitions to make Iran one of the strongest military powers of the region constituted the framework of the relations between the two countries. While this partnership was praised at a state level, the people’s unrest and anti-imperialist discourses’ effect on society was increasing. The pinnacle manifestation of this unrest presented itself in the revolution. Protestors who were shouting independence slogans were also describing Shah as “American Shah” and this slogan was one of the most famous slogans of the revolution.<sup>97</sup>

Iranian people’s strong opposition to dependency presented itself with the revolution. Different fractions of the revolutionary opposition gathered under the anti-imperialist discourse against the Shah. Especially Khomeini’s severe criticism of Shah’s policies laid the groundwork of mass resistance against the Pahlavi regime. Ayatollah’s speech on 27 October 1964 that cost him an exile was a prominent example of Khomeini’s antagonism towards Shah’s close relations with USA. In his speech performed immediately after the approval of capitulatory rights for US citizens in Iran, Khomeini indicated the regime’s request of \$200 million loan from America by saying that “The government has sold our independence, reduced us to the level of a colony, and made the Muslim nation of Iran appear more backward than savages in the eyes of the world!”<sup>98</sup> In his letter dated to 10 July 1972, Khomeini was calling out to Iranian Muslim students who were living in North America and Europe. By saying that: “Imperialism of the left and imperialism of the right have joined hands in their efforts to annihilate the Muslim peoples and their countries”<sup>99</sup> Khomeini emphasized his anti-imperialist world view and by mentioning USSR together

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<sup>96</sup> Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *The United State and Iran: The Patterns of Influence* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982)

<sup>97</sup> Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom Iran's Foreign Policy* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 189.

<sup>98</sup> Hamid Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini* (Berkely: Mizan Press, 1981), 182.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

with the US he presented his complete refusal of domination. Political, economic and cultural dependency was on the target of Imam and his pre-revolutionary critiques on the Pahlavi regime has turned into the policies of the Islamic Republic.

Anti-imperialist characteristic of the revolution engendered a rejectionist foreign policy after the downthrown of the Pahlavi regime. Nationalist and Communist participants of the revolution were fervent supporters of independency therefore an anti-imperialist discourse emerged as an immediate reaction of post-revolutionary Iran. However, implementation of reactionary policies that have been the symbol of Islamic Republic were realized after the consolidation of the revolutionary regime by the Islamic elites. Particularly, ideas of the revolution's leader have prevailed in the Islamic Republic and his Neither East nor West doctrine which has its roots in Islamic tenets have determined the Islamic Republic's place in the international arena. As a clear indicator, revolutionaries started to withdraw from bilateral agreements that Pahlavi regime signed with America and Soviet Russia. On 12 March 1979 Karim Sanjabi, the foreign minister of the provisional government, withdrew Iran from the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and on 3 November 1979 Ibrahim Yezdi, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic, cancelled the US – Iran defence agreement that was signed on 5 March 1959.<sup>100</sup> In order to annihilate the remains of Shah's alliance with America, all military agreements and arms sales were abrogated by the revolutionary regime. On the other hand, complementary part of the 'Neither East nor West' policy presented itself at the same day with the abrogation of the US defence agreement. Bazargan government declared the annulment of article 5 and 6 of Iran's "1921 treaty with the Soviet Union."<sup>101</sup> These were precise and powerful signs of the Islamic Republic's desire for independency. However, although the Neither East nor West doctrine converged with nationalist and communist factions on some points, its Islamic-rooted projection transcended those two approaches and played a significant role in Iran's decisions on foreign policy.

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<sup>100</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 113.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

The bipolar nature of the international environment in which Islamic revolutionaries found themselves was their first challenge in terms of foreign affairs. Two superpowers of the globe were competing to dominate the international realm and enlarge their own influence around the world. The division of the world as West and East did not leave much alternatives to other countries. There was a non-alignment movement however it did not propose too much of a different path. It was a decision of not preferring one power to other one whereas the Islamic republic's assertion was a new understanding, a new approach to the international system. Therefore, Mir-Hossein Mousavi who held foreign ministry and prime ministry offices after the revolution expressed that the Neither East nor West approach should also include Islamic Republic's principles because while the first part of the slogan presents a revolutionary rejection of the established system, the second part emphasized the alternative way of emancipation.<sup>102</sup>

Khomeini's conceptualization of oppressed people (*Mustazafin*) and oppressors (*Mustakbarin*) has divided the international community differently. Instead of a Western and Eastern classification, Islamic world view differentiated people as oppressors and oppressed according to Khomeini's universal Islamic approach. The only way for independence of the oppressed people was following the right path of Islam in this principle. Therefore, the Islamic Republic was the first spark of an international transformation and it could not take a side between Western or Eastern powers. Most of the Ayatollah's speeches and declarations contained either direct proclamations of his Neither East nor West doctrine or signs of this principle. He directly indicated the Islamic Republic's place by saying that: "It is our duty to stand firm against the superpowers, as we are indeed able to do, on condition that the intellectuals stop following and imitating either the West or the East, and adhere instead to the straight path of Islam and the nation. We are at war with international communism no less than we are struggling

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 83.

against the global plunderers of the West, headed by America, Zionism, and Israel.”<sup>103</sup> As has been said previously, this policy is different from nationalist factions’ negative equilibrium policy. Instead of carrying a balance of power approach, the revolutionary elites adopted a bellicose discourse against the international superpowers. Right after the foundation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini issued a statement on 1 April 1979 in Qum, in which he emphasized the confrontational nature of the Islamic Republic’s position in the international world and heartened his followers for an open battle against the superpowers: “I ask the government that, fearing neither East nor West and cultivating an independent outlook and will[.]”<sup>104</sup>

Neither East nor West policy of the Islamic Republic was the framework of revolutionary Iran’s political stance in international affairs. While historical and psychological variables paved the way of this attitude, Islamic discourse of post-revolutionary Iran gave the final shape to the doctrine as a foreign policy understanding. This non-discriminatory and powerful system critique resulted in Iran’s isolation. Especially the non-discriminatory character of the policy directed Iran to non-aligned countries. Yet, it was not enough to prevent being labelled as a rogue state. It was a self-isolation and this self-isolationist behaviour has been chosen intentionally because isolation was considered as an inseparable part of independence. Ayatollah Khomeini said that: “We must become isolated in order to become independent.”<sup>105</sup> The thing that made isolation a necessary condition for independence of the Islamic Republic was coming from the memories of the Iranian society about the downfall of Mosaddeq. Any kind of counter revolutionary action would sound the death knell for the Islamic revolution and the return of the fugitive Shah by force of America was not a remote possibility. On the other hand, there was not too much of a difference between America and Soviet Russia in the sight of Islamic revolutionaries. While the US was described as ‘The Great Satan’, Soviet Russia

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<sup>103</sup> Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings*, 286.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>105</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 119.



was marked as 'The Atheist East' by Ayatollah Khomeini. His harsh criticism of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan showed that the Islamic Republic did not intend to put itself in the Soviet camp against the United States. Invasion of a Muslim country by a status-quo power could not be accepted by Muslims and Ayatollah gave his support to Afghan fighters against Soviet Russia.<sup>106</sup> When political, economic and cultural dimensions of the Neither East nor West doctrine are taken into consideration, Iran's ideology based foreign policy approaches turn into more comprehensible actions in terms of international relations. From the socialization perspective this doctrine was the fundamental element of Iran's isolation. The Islamic Republic deliberately turned its back on the predominant norms of the Cold-War period. Declaration of a third way and denial of mainstream relation models in a bipolar world would result in an isolation and it did. Iran encountered a complete isolation during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88) but it did not give up its Islamic-rooted daring discourse. Therefore, the anti-status quo based Neither East nor West doctrine was the most significant policy that alienated the Islamic Republic from the international community and enabled it to be a subject of socialization process.

### **3.2. Export of Revolution**

"We must strive to export our Revolution throughout the world, and must abandon all idea of not doing so, for not only does Islam refuse to recognize any difference between Muslim countries, it is the champion of all oppressed people."<sup>107</sup> On 21 March 1980, Ayatollah Khomeini used these sentences while addressing his new year's speech. The export of revolution which roughly means illuminating other people with the ideas and methods of the Islamic Revolution has become one of the primary duties of the revolutionary regime of Iran after the revolution. While in the beginning, the export of the revolution was an ideational consequence of the Islamic revolutionary ideology, it later on turned into a foreign policy for the Islamic Republic. However, the endorsement

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<sup>106</sup> Farhad Rezaei, *Iran's Foreign Policy After the Nuclear Agreement* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 52.

<sup>107</sup> Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings*, 286.

of the export of revolution as a state policy did not take place right after the revolution. There were alternative approaches for the new regime's foreign policy understanding but with the intensification of the Islamic identity of the post-revolutionary state system and with the occupation of high ranked state positions by Khomeini's close followers, the notion of the export of revolution also increased its influence. The export of revolution has constituted one of the major modus operandi of the Islamic regime in its engagement with the external world and this tenet has been a strong indicator for the ideology based foreign policy of Iran after the revolution. In order to understand this very crucial doctrine's nature and its implementation as a foreign policy we should scrutinize this concept's theoretical background and its practical application after the revolution.

Ayatollah Khomeini's world view consisted of four main approaches: 1)rejection of the contemporary world system, 2)Islamic universalism, 3)assuming the standard-bearer role of the Islamic world order and 4)exporting the Islamic revolution to the world.<sup>108</sup> According to him, the nation state system and modern states are "products of man's limited ideas" whereas "the world is the home of all masses of people under the law of God."<sup>109</sup> In this Islamic universalism and Islamic world order understanding, human beings are divided into two categories: the oppressors and the oppressed. Before the revolution Khomeini emphasized this oppressed and oppressor dynamic for countries that are mostly populated by Muslims. When he gave a series of lectures about the *Islamic government* and *the necessity of the Islamic government* at Najaf between January 21 and February 8, 1970, he put forward the idea of 'ummah' and emphasized the vital role of the Islamic government for independence of the Islamic ummah and the Islamic world order.<sup>110</sup> In his view point, all kinds of political systems that are not Islamic hinder the implementations of Islamic tenets and Islamic political order. These non-

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<sup>108</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 78-80.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*,78.

<sup>110</sup> Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings*, 46.

Islamic systems of government (oppressors) should be eliminated from the lives of the Muslim society (oppressed).<sup>111</sup> This elimination is a necessity for the unity of the ummah and its independence. Under these circumstances, the oppressed Iranian people should overthrow their own oppressor government at first and then other Muslim countries, by iterating this practice, would abolish their own governments, which are described as servants of the arrogant world oppressors by Khomeini<sup>112</sup>, and the independence of the ummah would be realized.

When the revolution succeeded and the Islamic Republic of Iran replaced the Pahlavi monarchy, the universal aspect of Ayatollah Khomeini's oppressed people and oppressor governments discourse enhanced. While he was emphasizing the Iranian aspect of oppression during the revolution process, after the revolution he raised the position of this discourse to a global extent and started to qualify the Islamic revolution as an inspiring movement for all oppressed people of the world. By criminalizing the USA as 'the oppressor' of the world, Khomeini indicated revolutionary Iran's support to all oppressed people around the world. In his message to pilgrims on 12 September 1980 he declared that "The most important and painful problem confronting the subjugated nations of the world, both Muslim and non-Muslim, is the problem of America."<sup>113</sup> Khomeini's categorization found itself a place in the Islamic Republic's constitution. On article 154, the Islamic Republic's support to all oppressed peoples of the world under the conditions of non-intervention and non-discrimination has been clearly indicated.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.,48.

<sup>112</sup> Shireen T. Hunter, "Iran and the spread of revolutionary Islam," *Third World Quarterly* 10, no.2 (April 1988): 734.

<sup>113</sup> Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings*, 305.

<sup>114</sup> Article 154: "The Islamic Republic of Iran considers human happiness throughout human society as its ideal. It considers independence, freedom, and the governance of justice and truth as the right of all the people of the world. Consequently, while it completely abstains from any kind of intervention in the internal affairs of other nations, it supports the struggles of the oppressed for their rights against the oppressors anywhere in the world." Papan-Matin, "The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1989 Edition)," 195.

Moreover, in the constitution, the duty and responsibility of *the army of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Pasdaran Revolutionary Corps* have been delineated as “not only guarding and protecting the borders but also striving for an ideological mission i.e. Jihad”<sup>115</sup> Although Khomeini had a universal Islamic perspective as he opposed the existing world order, his ideas about the Islamic world order do not impose a monolithic Muslim state system. He did not assert “the dissolution of current borders the in Islamic world” as a sine qua non condition for the Islamic world order. Rather than this kind of supra-national view, Khomeini’s and naturally revolutionary Iran’s desire was the establishment of Islamic governments in Muslim populated countries.<sup>116</sup> With close cultural, economic and political relations among Islamic governments, they would be enabled to stand against global oppressors and attain their independence from these arrogant powers.<sup>117</sup> When all these viewpoints and approaches are brought together, revolutionary Iran’s desire for exporting the revolution become clearer. According to the revolutionaries, the Islamic revolution brought Muslim communities’ desire of an Islamic governance and the oppressed people’s desire for freedom to light. These desired conditions have been realized by the Islamic Republic of Iran for Iranians and because Iran constituted the sole case of a right government system over the world, it should support other people in their efforts for independence. In the revolutionary vision this is not only a favour for other countries, it is the duty for Iran to assist and promote the

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<sup>115</sup>Ibid., 164.

#### An Ideological Army

In establishing and equipping the defense forces of the country, the focus shall be on maintaining ideology and faith as the foundation and the measure. Consequently, the Army of the Islamic Republic and the Islamic Pasdaran Revolutionary Corps are formed in accordance with the aforementioned objective. They will undertake the responsibility of not only guarding and protecting the borders, but also the weight of ideological mission, i.e. striving (jehād) on the path of God and struggle on the path of expanding the sovereignty of the law of God in the world; in accordance with the Qur’anic verse: “Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into (the hearts of) the enemies, of Allah and your enemies” (8: 60).

<sup>116</sup> Hunter, “Iran and the spread of revolutionary Islam,” 735.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

establishment of Islamic governments. This approach has constituted basis of export of revolution.<sup>118</sup>

The first years of the post-revolutionary period has presented a vague picture in terms of political and social affairs.<sup>119</sup> This general ambiguity and indeterminacy of Iran affected its positioning in the international affairs. With the blessing of Ayatollah Khomeini, Mahdi Bazargan from the Liberation Movement of Iran was assigned for establishing the provisional government on 4 February 1979. Until his resignation on 6 November 1979, Bazargan tried to conduct a more nationalist foreign policy on the same line with Iran's overthrown leader Mosaddegh.<sup>120</sup> Because of the provisional government's equilibrium policies in the international realm and their wishes to "establish friendly relations" with America increased the level of criticism against Bazargan and the provisional government.<sup>121</sup> While Bazargan was trying to keep a distance in the international world and while his endeavour for preventing isolation of the new-born revolutionary state was obvious, Ayatollah Khomeini's utter challenge to 'the owners of the international system i.e. super powers' made things hard for Bazargan. The gulf between liberals and radicals continued to expand and Khomeini's anti-imperialist and anti-American speeches provided him a great popularity among both leftist Iranians and the more conservative ones. This popularity would show its pinnacle with the seizure of the US embassy on 4 November 1979. The occupation was considered "more significant than the overthrow of Shah's regime" by Khomeini and the invasion itself was called a second revolution.<sup>122</sup> Two days after the seizure, the provisional government resigned. This enforced resignation meant the discharge of liberal powers from state cadres. Especially

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 736.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 732.

<sup>120</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 113.

<sup>121</sup> Panah, Maryam. *The Islamic republic and the world*. 56.

<sup>122</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 131.

with Khomeini's popularity and his anti-imperialist discourse, leftist supporters of the revolution also backed the elimination of liberals from the government via revolutionary clerics. As a consequence of the resignation of Bazargan "concentration of the power in the hands of a small group"<sup>123</sup> paved the way of taking radical decisions. Afterwards, the Islamization of the revolution increased its acceleration. Firstly, the constitution was ratified via a referendum on 2-3 December 1979 and with the approval of the constitution Ayatollah Khomeini's *velayet-e faqih (Guardianship of Jurist) doctrine* was recognized officially. Hereby, the invisible hand of the Ayatollah became visible and more powerful, from then on, his ideas and dreams of spreading the revolution to the world, in more elegant words, the export of revolution, would become a state policy effortlessly. The final nail in the coffin for non-cleric and non-Islamic revolutionaries was the dismissal of the Islamic Republic's first elected President Abolhassan Banisadr on 22 June 1981. As a lay supporter of Khomeini and the Islamic Republic, Banisadr could not fulfil the requests of hard-line Khomeini supporters. Although Banisadr's emphasize of "a universal mission" of the revolution, his approach did not overlap with hard-liners' vision. In the eyes of the hard-liners, because of his insufficient execution and improper interpretations of the revolutionary ideas, Banisadr had to be disposed. Harsh criticisms of hardliners against Banisadr loosened his ties with the fundamentalist community and getting into a power struggle with Khomeini's close disciples accelerated his deposal.<sup>124</sup> The power struggle within the revolutionary cadres retarded the implementations of some revolutionary ideas. Especially the export of revolution doctrine, which was one of the trademarks of the Islamic Revolution, faced some difficulties when implemented as a state policy. Rouhollah Ramazani who claims the principles of the revolution was officially adapted during Mir-Hossein Mousavi's foreign ministry tenure (July-December 1981) argues that with the exception Mohammad Ali Rajai, not a single foreign minister

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<sup>123</sup> Maryam Panah, *The Islamic republic and the world* (London; Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press 2007), 58.

<sup>124</sup> For further information on domestic power struggles between "right-wing Muslim militias" and other revolutionary factions see 'Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy' in Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom Iran's Foreign Policy* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 71-76.

believed the export of revolution until Mousavi. Mousavi was the first foreign minister who established a committee under the Foreign Ministry Affairs that “would determine the basis of foreign policy from an ideologic perspective.”<sup>125</sup> After the export of revolution’s adoption as a foreign policy, another question posed by the revolutionaries came to the forefront: ‘How would Iran export its revolution?’

Iranian revolutionary cadres had the consensus on exporting the revolution however, the method and the means for the exportation had not been determined clearly. While the moderate wing was defending peaceful means like propaganda and message, the more ideology oriented hard-liners were advocating a direct involvement to help Muslim revolutionary movements in the form of financial aid and military training.<sup>126</sup> Undoubtedly, the method of exporting the revolution has had a significant importance because the revolution itself has been considered variously by different actors of international realm. As John Esposito and James Piscatori indicate in their influential book *The Iranian Revolution: Its Global Impact* “For some, it (*revolutionary Iran*) has been a source of inspiration and motivation; for others, revolutionary Iran has symbolized an ominous threat to the stability of the Middle East and security of West...”<sup>127</sup> Under these circumstances, the implementation of the doctrine, which has already affected both the Muslim World and the West, would determine the level of reaction against the Islamic Republic.

At first glance, Ayatollah Khomeini’s discourses on the method of exporting the revolution was prohibiting the use of force. He declared that: “It does not take swords to export this ideology. The export of ideas by force is not export.” and in another speech

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<sup>125</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 132.

<sup>126</sup> Hunter, “Iran and the spread of revolutionary Islam,” 732.

<sup>127</sup> John L Esposito and James P. Piscatori, “The Global Impact of the Iranian Revolution: A Policy Perspective” in *The Iranian Revolution : Its Global Impact*, ed. John Esposito (Miami: University Press of Florida, 1990)

Ayatollah said that: “When we say we want to export our revolution, we do not want to do it with swords.”<sup>128</sup> However, by looking only at these statements, making an analysis does not seem possible because there were also other statements in which Khomeini justified the use of force for expanding the revolution. For instance, “... If governments submit and behave in accordance with Islamic tenets, support them; if not, fight them without fear of anyone.”<sup>129</sup> On the other hand, his statement, “You should discuss the situation in Iran. You should call on people to rebel like Iran” in the Second Global Congress of the World Friday Prayer Leaders on May 13 1984, indicates that even if Khomeini did not advocate Iran’s direct use of force against the oppressor governments, he encouraged other states’ people to use force against their arrogant governments if necessary.<sup>130</sup> All these aforementioned means have been used during the export of revolution. In terms of peaceful means, Iran tried to be an authentic example of Islamic government from socio-economic issues to political ones, also by supporting liberation movements and making propaganda for the Islamic government, it attempted to spread revolutionary ideas to the world. Moreover, inviting foreign Muslim religious leaders to Iran and carrying religious summit diplomacy for Muslim *ulema* have constituted one of the most significant strategies for exporting the revolution through non-coercive means. However, beside these peaceful means some armed groups who want to establish an Islamic government on their own countries have been supported militarily and financially by Iran. These direct financial and military supports have been particularly given to Shiite movements in Iraq and Lebanon.<sup>131</sup>

Iran’s desire to export its revolution to other countries and its support to ‘liberation movements’ have deteriorated its international legitimacy. Although their expressions about respecting non-interference principle, the export of revolution policy was an

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<sup>128</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 137.

<sup>129</sup> Esposito and Piscatori, “The Global Impact of the Iranian Revolution,” 322.

<sup>130</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 246.

<sup>131</sup> Hunter, “Iran and the spread of revolutionary Islam,” 743.



obvious evidence of a direct interference in the sight of other countries. While the West, namely the USA and her allies, associated Iran's revolutionary actions with terrorism and promotion of revolutionary actions, the governments of Muslim populated states considered Iran's export of revolution as a threat because of the destabilizing effect of the doctrine in their own countries.<sup>132</sup> These fears and threat perception were not entirely baseless. For Western powers, Iran's conspicuous rejection of the current system and its demonization of the two superpowers, namely the US and the USSR, as guardians and protectors of the prevailing world order were enough to label Iran as a threat for the international system. When it comes to Muslim populated states, as almost none of them had an Islamic government in accordance with Iran, they feared the spread of the revolution in their own soil. These local and global images of Iran isolated the regime from both regional and global relations. However, I suggest that the export of revolution could not be considered as just a reason or a consequence for Iran's isolation. There was a mutual relationship between Iran's export of revolution policy and its isolation. Leaders of the revolution were aware of the contradiction between their own worldview and the current international system. Therefore, they knew that because of their antagonistic approaches against the established order, they would be alienated, and marginalized by the exploiters of the system. Only way out was finding partners and supporters to resist these arrogant powers. Ayatollah Khomeini has declared this fact in a very succinct way: "All the superpowers and all the powers have risen to destroy us. If we remain in an enclosed environment, we shall definitely face defeat"<sup>133</sup>in his new year speech in 1980. This was an indicator of the place of the export of revolution in revolutionary foreign policy. In revolutionary conscience, the export of revolution was a duty and a necessity for Iran. It was a duty because only in this way the true Islamic governance system that had been already established in Iran after the revolution could be spread to the world. On the other hand, it was a necessity for Iran because during the confrontation with the arrogant powers, the Islamic Republic was going to need other

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<sup>132</sup> Efraim Karsh, *The Iran-Iraq War 1980-1988* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2002)

<sup>133</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 80.

Islamic states' assistance thus global oppression could be annihilated only with Islamic governments' cooperation.

Iran supported most of the opposition groups in Iraq, Gulf States, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Pakistan during the 1980s. The establishment of the Islamic Revolutionary Council as an umbrella institution was an evidence for Iran's pursuit of exporting the revolution to its close neighbours and the desire to break the siege of isolation. This umbrella institution contained revolutionary groups and organizations such as "the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), the Islamic Revolution Movement of the Arabian Peninsula, the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, and a liberation group for Syria and Lebanon."<sup>134</sup> Although the revolution inspired Islamic movements "from Egypt to southern Philippines,"<sup>135</sup> it failed to become something more than just heartening ideas for those periphery places. This reality was known very well by the Iranian revolutionary elite. Even if they supported movements from distant countries, Iran's first priority was its immediate neighbours. Especially the Shiite communities that had been oppressed by their governments were uniquely suited for exporting the revolution. Iraq, Lebanon and the Gulf States' (e.g. Bahrain and Kuwait) large amount of Shiite population<sup>136</sup> and Shiites' unrest about their socio-political standards made these countries open target for the revolution export.<sup>137</sup> When all of these pieces are brought together, two remarkable cases of Iran's export of revolution discourse, namely the Iran-Iraq War (22 September 1980-20 August 1988), and the genesis of Hezbollah demonstrate their undeniable and irreplaceable position in exporting the revolution.

The Iran-Iraq War was a unique instance for Iran's export of revolution policy. Almost all the dimensions of the export of revolution doctrine emerged during Iran-Iraq War. From Iran's international isolation to Shiite subjected exportation, from using violence as a

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.,132.

<sup>135</sup> John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999,) 115.

<sup>136</sup> Vali Nasr, "When the Shiites Rise." *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 58 (2006): 65.

<sup>137</sup> Hunter, "Iran and the spread of revolutionary Islam," 747.

means of exportation to justifying the export by declaring Saddam as a non-believer and his government as a non-Islamic government, all parts of the export of revolution was present in the war. Especially two important features of Iraq played a crucial role in Iran's decision for exporting the revolution to Iraq. The first one was related to the demographic status of Iraq. Almost 60 percent of the Iraqi population consists of Shiites who, at the time, were being governed by a Sunni minority. Because of discrimination against the Shiite community, Iraqi Shiites had already been alienated from the government and this alienation or unrest among the Shiites made them an invaluable market for Iran's export of revolution. The second characteristic that attracted Iran's attention to Iraq was its geopolitical position for the revolution. Iraq was the most powerful Sunni Arab state in the gulf according to Iranians and this powerful state was the main obstacle for the spread of revolution through the region.<sup>138</sup> Therefore, the fall of Iraq's Baath regime and its substitution with an Islamic government would present a catalysing effect for the spread of revolution. "Just as hope of a German revolution sustained the Bolsheviks, so the chimera of an uprising against Saddam Hussein, producing a sister Islamic Republic of Iraq sustained Iran for several years."<sup>139</sup> After Iran's propagandist attitude toward Iraq's Shiites, the Baath regime exiled some Shiite leaders and also executed some of them. However, this was not enough for the Baathists because fighting with local dissidents was nothing more than postponing the main problem. It was as though striving to kill mosquitoes instead of draining the swamp, so to speak. Saddam Hossain was convinced that the new revolutionary regime was not going to be like the former Iranian Shah who also did not have a friendly relationship with the Baathist Iraq, but he did not intend to change Iraq's regime either. This new-born Islamic republic was threatening the Iraqi regime directly and this threat was carried out by Iraq's own citizens. Therefore, the only way to overcome this problem was confronting the source of this issue according to Saddam. He wanted to exploit Iran's

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<sup>138</sup> Karsh, *The Iran-Iraq War*, 13.

<sup>139</sup> John L. Esposito and R. K. Ramazani, *Iran at the Crossroads*. (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 177.

weakness caused by the revolution and accused Iran with shelling Iraqi border towns from the territories that belonged to Iraq according to Algiers Agreement.<sup>140</sup> With the escalation of tension and Iraq's operation on disputed territories, Iran declared their withdrawal from the 1975 Algiers Agreement on 14 September 1980 at first, and then as a retaliation, Saddam declared the agreement's annulment on 17 September 1980. Five days after Saddam's official proclamation of the abrogation, Iraqi army crossed the border on 22 September 1980 and gave the signal, which marked the beginning of an eight-year-long war between Iran and Iraq.<sup>141</sup>

The significance of the Iran-Iraq War with regards to exporting the revolution policy was its uniqueness in the sense that the first concrete reaction against Iran's desire to spread the revolution through propaganda and supporting opposition groups. Before Iraq's invasion, Iran was backing domestic Iraqi dissidents and trying to help them change the Baath regime. However, with Iraq's direct intervention on Iranian soil, the Islamic Republic's relatively implicit objectives regarding Iraq started to express itself more explicitly. During the war, an organization called the Supreme Assembly of Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) was established by the Iraqi Shiite leaders in Tehran in 1982. Members of this organization were trained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and the Iraqi counterparts of the organization were funded by Iran throughout the war.<sup>142</sup> Saddam's invasion changed Iran's position on the regime change struggle in Iraq. Iran's active support gave its place to an active confrontation against the Baath regime. The most important sign of this aim was embedded in the war: On 20 June 1982, Saddam announced that the Iraqi troops would withdraw from the Iranian territory within ten days. This was a clear offer of ceasefire and armistice, however, the Iranian side insisted on continuing the war in an attempt to overthrow the Baath regime. The Iranian regime

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<sup>140</sup> Karsh, *The Iran-Iraq War*, 14.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>142</sup> Hunter, "Iran and spread of revolutionary Islam", 745.

also requested 150 billion dollars as war reparations as well as the repatriation of almost 100.000 Iraqi Shiites.<sup>143</sup> These demands and especially the reverie of overthrowing Saddam caused the war to last another six years, ending only on 18 July 1988. During the war, Iraq offered ceasefire many times, however, these offers were rejected by the Iranians. The rejection of the offers while the Iraqi armies were on Iranian soil can be considered as logical and legitimate, however, Iran's desire to sustain the war inside Iraqi territory and rejecting any offers, even after liberating its own lands from invasion, can only be explained by the export of revolution policy. Ayatollah Khomeini's desire to topple down Saddam and exporting the revolution to Iraq explains the continuation of the war and the denial of ceasefire. Hashem Rafsanjani, the second president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Khomeini's representative in the High Defense Commission during the war period, presented Khomeini's aspiration to help Iraqi people take down the Saddam regime. In his diary, Rafsanjani says that "Although Imam (Khomeini) is in favour to end the war, he does not want to be on the concessive side. He is worried about the possibility of a condition that will forbid Iran to help the Iraqi people against Saddam in a peace agreement."<sup>144</sup> Therefore, it will not be an exaggeration if we say that the Iran-Iraq War, especially after June 1982, was the pinnacle of the export of revolution policy.

The second important feature of the war was its evolution into a litmus paper for Iran on international relations. Because of the regime's anti-establishment discourse on the international system and its revolutionary actions for changing the actual order, the Islamic republic had been already treated with suspicion. However, the Iran-Iraq War revealed Iran's isolation with all its aspects. As an expected reaction to the war, the Western powers and the Soviet Union supported Iraq politically and militarily. According

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<sup>143</sup> Karsh, *The Iran-Iraq War*, 36

<sup>144</sup> Italics are belonged to me. The book has been translated from Persian to Turkish. I have translated related parts from Turkish edition. Haşimi Rafsanjani, *Hatıralar*, trans. Hakkı Uygur (İstanbul: Pınar Yayınları, 2006), 52.

to their perspectives, Iraq could save the world from the “fundamentalists in Iran.”<sup>145</sup> The United Nations’ attitude towards Iraq in the imminence of war was an explicit indicator for Iran’s loneliness in the international realm. Rouhollah Ramazani’s comparison of the Security Council’s both resolutions, Resolution 479, which was adopted six days after the Iraqi invasion of Iran and Resolution 660, adopted on the same day Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, display Iran’s isolation.<sup>146</sup> In both cases, Iraq was the aggressor and according to the UN charter, chapters VI, VII, VIII and XII of article 1, the Security Council should act in order to resolve disputes in peaceful manners.<sup>147</sup> While Resolution 479 was adopted six days after Iraq’s invasion of Iran, Resolution 660 was adopted on same day. This was a sign of reluctance and complacency toward Iran’s situation against Iraq. Moreover, although resolution 660 included a direct call for withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait’s soil, Resolution 479 was confined to a call to “refrain immediately from further use of force”<sup>148</sup> to Iran and no request whatsoever for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Iranian soil were mentioned in this resolution. On the other hand, similar to western countries, the Gulf States also considered Iraq as a protective agent against the spread of the revolution. As far as they were concerned, if Iraq failed to stop revolutionary Iran, then their regimes would encounter a severe threat and the possibility of a revolution against their regimes would increase substantially. Therefore, the Gulf States and other Arab countries implicitly supported Iraq in political and economic terms even though they had declared their neutrality. By the end of 1982, financial aid from Gulf countries to Iraq had reached almost US \$40 billion.<sup>149</sup> This war

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<sup>145</sup> Adam Tarock, "Iran-Western Europe Relations on the Mend," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 26, no.1 (1999): 43.

<sup>146</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 295.

<sup>147</sup> "Charter of the United Nations," *United Nations org*, accessed March 11, 2019, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf>.

<sup>148</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 296.

<sup>149</sup> Joseph A Kechichian, *Oman and the World The Emergence of an Independent Foreign Policy* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1995), 103.

was a chance to eliminate the Iranian threat in the sight of Gulf countries and therefore, they did not take any action to settle the dispute until the Iranian army's penetration into Iraq in May 1982. After the Iranian army crossed the Iraqi border, the Gulf States called for an immediate ceasefire, yet this demand could not find an affirmative response from Iran<sup>150</sup>

Ayatollah Khomeini's post-war statement is crucial in understanding Iran's perspective about the Iraq war. In his statement, Khomeini touched on almost all main points of the war. On the export of revolution he said that "We exported our revolution to the world through the war; we proved our oppression and the aggressor's tyranny through the war."<sup>151</sup> In order to show Iran's revolt against the current international system he said that: "It was through the war that we unveiled the deceitful face of world-devourers,"<sup>152</sup> and continued, "it was through the war that we recognized our enemies and friends. It was during the war that we concluded that we must stand on our own feet."<sup>153</sup> Khomeini referred to Iran's isolation and its unavoidable fate of self-dependency. The Iran-Iraq War did not lead to a cessation of Iran's export of revolution policy however it kept its unique position of being the most obvious illustration of the policy in terms of both its effects and outcomes.

The second exclusive illustration that significantly reflects the export of revolution policy of the Islamic Republic was the Lebanese Islamic movement, Hezbollah. What makes it different and unique in terms of the export of revolution policy is that it has been the only successful example of the exportation. Before Hezbollah's foundation, there were

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<sup>150</sup> Eva Patricia Rakel, *The Iranian Political Elite, State and Society Relations, and Foreign Relations since the Islamic Revolution* (Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2008), 153.

<sup>151</sup> Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report, vol:8, Near East (FBIS-NES), 24 February 1989.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

some Shiite political movements due to Lebanon's demographic structure, especially under the leadership of Musa Sadr, the Lebanese Shiites gained a sectarian conscience after the failure of Arab nationalism and weakening of socialism in 1967.<sup>154</sup> However, the disappearance of Sadr in 1978 and the Shiites' unrest about the country's Maronite and Durzi dominated political structure opened the way for the externalization of Shiite reactions. Moreover, these kind of domestic problems such as poverty, political discrimination, worsened social relations, combined with Israel's invasion of south Lebanon in 1982 became the last straw for the Shiite community. The occupied territories were mostly Shiite populated places and the invasion's heavy toll motivated them to resist Israel military. At that time, the Islamic republic got involved in the struggle and supported the Lebanese Shiites against one of the revolutionary Iran's archenemies: Israel. Before the revolution, the Iranian actors had already close relations with Lebanese Shiites. The revolutionary cadres practiced in military camps in Lebanon and this sort of close link enabled Iranian revolutionists' penetration into Lebanon.<sup>155</sup> The Islamic revolution and the revolutionary elites' connections played a vital role in influencing the Lebanese Shiites. With the euphoria of the Iranian revolution, a group of Lebanese Shiites took courage to implement an Islamic revolution in Lebanon. However, internal disturbances in Lebanon and Israel's occupation were urgent problems of the population. While these groups were trying to find ways of resistance, disagreements between them and other Shiite groups, and some of the leaders' discomfort about the insufficient resistance against occupying forces widened the gulf between different members of Shiite community. Especially their criticism to Amal movement, which was the umbrella organization of Shiite movements in Lebanon, on the insufficiency to organise resistance against Israel accelerated separations and with the reunion of these separated groups, the establishment of Hezbollah was realized.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Nassif Hitti, "Lebanon in Iran's Foreign Policy: Opportunities and Constraints," in *Iran and the Arab World*, ed. Hooshang Amirahmadi and Nader Entessar (London: Macmillan, 1993), 182.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>156</sup> Dominique Avon and Anaïs Trissa Khatchadourian, *Hezbollah A History of the Party of God*, trans. Marie Jane Todd (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 23.



In 1982 “three Lebanese clerics who knew Ayatollah Khomeini travelled to Tehran”<sup>157</sup> to call for aid and the Islamic Republic sent three thousand revolutionary guards to Lebanon in order to show its “solidarity with Lebanese Muslims.”<sup>158</sup> Iran’s direct involvement in the situation and its financial & military support to Hezbollah gave a great chance to export its revolution to Lebanon. Lebanon’s demographic structure and its political circumstances had already presented it as a suitable market for Iran since the very beginning of the revolution.<sup>159</sup> Moreover, the confrontation with Israel increased the value of supporting Lebanese movements in Iran. Because through this way, Iran would be able to declare that its strategy to liberate al-Quds, which was the symbol of the regime’s passionate battle against Israel, was not unidimensional. Supporting the PLO<sup>160</sup>, which was established on socialist and nationalist ideas, and Hezbollah, which was a Shiite opposition movement, simultaneously could prove its claims about being the protector of Muslims and a fervent defender of al-Quds. Another important point about Hezbollah was its mouldable nature for Iran, as it was a newly established organisation and its leader’s affirmative opinions about the Islamic revolution placed the movement on the top of Iran’s export of revolution list. Three fundamental objectives of Hezbollah were almost a reflection of Iran’s revolutionary ideals. The first objective was liberating south Lebanon from Israeli occupation. This direct confrontation with Israel was overlapping with Iran’s anti-Zionist policies and it was an invaluable chance for Iran to put its anti-Zionist discourse into practice. The second institutional aim of Hezbollah was protecting and promoting “the physical, intellectual and spiritual well-being of the Shiite community.”<sup>161</sup> This aim was another convergence point for Iran and Hezbollah.

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<sup>157</sup> Marc R. DeVore, "Exploring the Iran-Hezbollah Relationship: A Case Study of how State Sponsorship affects Terrorist Group Decision-Making," *Perspectives on Terrorism* 6, no.4-5 (2012): 92.

<sup>158</sup> Hunter, “Iran and the Spread of Revolutionary Islam,” 745.

<sup>159</sup> Haleh Vaziri, "Iran's Involvement in Lebanon: Polarization and Radicalization of Militant Islamic Movements," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* XVI, no.2 (1992): 8.

<sup>160</sup> Hunter, “Iran and the Spread of Revolutionary Islam,” 741.

<sup>161</sup> John Calabrese, *Revolutionary Horizons Regional Foreign Policy in Post-Khomeini Iran* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1994), 150.

Although the Islamic revolution has affected both Sunni and Shiite opposition movements, its Shiite based principles like Welayet-e Faqih (governance of jurisprudence) or twelver Shiism<sup>162</sup> associated the revolution mostly with the Shiite Muslims. Therefore, the Shiite populated places like Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain and Lebanon had a significant weight in the export of revolution. Especially Hezbollah's acknowledgement of Khomeini's Welayet-e Faqih doctrine presents the Shiite dimension of exporting the revolution to Lebanon and as well as its success. The third and may be the best indicator of the revolution's impact on Hezbollah was their desire to establish an Islamic government in Lebanon.<sup>163</sup> This ultimate objective of Hezbollah was already the main pillar of the Iranian revolution. As it has been stated in previous pages, Iranian revolutionaries desired proliferation of Islamic states around the world and in order to hasten the emergence of such Islamic regimes, the export of revolution was considered the best way.

When considering Iran's support to Hezbollah, it is best to consider the conditions that encircled the revolutionary regime. In 1982, Iran was fighting for its own survival, and apart from some underdeveloped states, the international community turned its back on Iran, while at the same time, internal political problems, conflicts and disputes among revolutionary groups, broken state system and inexperienced cadres deteriorated Iran's situation. Under these circumstances, dispatching three thousand revolutionary guards to Lebanon and allocating "an annual subsidy of 9-million-barrel Iranian oil"<sup>164</sup> to Hezbollah shows that Iran gave Hezbollah a helping hand without hoping any short-term payoff. Moreover, it was not a one-off grant that the Iranian regime provided to the

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<sup>162</sup> Twelver Shiism (*Ithna asheris*) is a branch of Shiite sect. According to this belief right of government was belonged to prophet Mohammed (pbuh) when he was alive. After his death this right transferred to his son-in-law Ali (pbuh) and this transfer has continued via Ali's descendants until 12<sup>th</sup> Imam. 12<sup>th</sup> successor hid because of some divine reasons and he will turn back before the day of judgment and will fight to save world from evil.

<sup>163</sup> Calabrese, *Revolutionary Horizons*, 150.

<sup>164</sup> DeVore, "Exploring the Iran- Hezbollah Relationship," 92.

Lebanese opposition. The regime continued to support Hezbollah and undertook the mentor role for its institutionalization. Thanks to Iranian guidance and backing, Hezbollah invested in social, economic and cultural fields. By doing this, Iran strengthened Hezbollah's loyalty and planted its revolutionary ideas into Lebanon. Last but not least, Hezbollah's position against Israel and Iran's enthusiasm to stand against the Zionist regime motivated Iran to assist Hezbollah in their holy war against Israel. This assistance would be an indicator of Iran's Islamic sensitivity and as it has been said before, it was a duty for the Islamic regime to protect and support Muslims against oppressors. Besides that, Iran's Islamic identity was strengthened in the eyes of Arab Muslims<sup>165</sup> who were disappointed with their states' opposition to Israel. Because of its assistance to opposition movements, in particular to Hezbollah, Iran was accused of sponsoring terrorist organizations. Yet, these accusations could not prevent Iran from backing such groups as the regime continued its support and developed very close relations with Hezbollah, so much so that the former Iranian Interior Minister, Mohtashami, who is one of the founders of the Revolutionary Guards described this close relationship as: "Hezbollah is part of the Iranian rulership; Hezbollah is a central component of the Iranian military and security establishment; the ties between Iran and Hezbollah are far greater than those between a revolutionary regime with a revolutionary party outside its borders."<sup>166</sup>

### **3.3. Politics of Confrontation: Anti-Israeli discourse and Nuclear Power**

The neither East nor West doctrine and its complementary factor, the export of revolution strategy has been the two main pillars of revolutionary Iran's foreign policy. While the first one has constituted the international horizon for the Islamic Republic, the second one has visualized potential modus operandi in this determined route. From socialization perspective the Islamic Republic's position in international world reflects

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<sup>165</sup> Hunter, "Iran and the Spread of Revolutionary Islam," 741.

<sup>166</sup> Frederick W Kagan, Kimberly Kagan and Danielle Pletka, *Iranian Influence in the Levant, Iraq, and Afghanistan*, Report, (American Enterprise Institute, 2008,): 9.

attitudes of a community's new member who does not have same rule perception with other members of the community and even confronting the global powers about the status quo. It can be said that confrontation is embedded in these two approaches, especially for the Neither East nor West understanding, this interpretation is true. What makes Neither East nor West different from a passive discourse was its adversary attitude and revolutionary proposals regarding the existing international system. This means that those two policies, having been previously explained, include the idea of confrontation and illustrate how it can be implemented in practice. Therefore, allocating a section for the confrontation policy might be understood as repeating what has already been said. However, I think that anti-Israeli discourse and Iran's insistence on nuclear power are two important policies of the Islamic Republic which present its ideology-oriented action method and these two important issues deserve to be mentioned to fully grasp Iran's confrontation policy.

While Ayatollah Khomeini was criticizing the Iranian regime before the revolution, there were three subjects that were mentioned over and over again. Two of them were the Shah and America, he held these two actors responsible for the situation Iran was in by emphasizing their extremely close relationship. However, the third subject which was criticised no less than the first two in terms of responsibility was Israel. The Ayatollah accused Israeli agents for the attacks that were carried against Iranian people<sup>167</sup> and especially Israel's invasion of Palestinian lands gave an opportunity to the Ayatollah to criticise Israel from an Islamic manner.<sup>168</sup> After the revolution Khomeini's ideas and beliefs about Israel constituted the Islamic state's main policy against Israel. In his message to pilgrims on 24 September 1979, Khomeini said that "Every Muslim has a duty to prepare himself for battle against Israel,"<sup>169</sup> and gave a fatwa on prohibiting economic

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<sup>167</sup> Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings*, 120.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 276.

and political relations with Israel.<sup>170</sup> This hostile attitude against Israel was actualised with the supporting of Palestinian freedom fighters against Israel. Economic and military assistance to Lebanese and Palestinian fighters, who were in an actual battle with Israel, was a part of Iran's export of revolution policy but the significance of these groups was their position in confrontation with Israel. Maybe the most symbolic indicator of the Islamic republic's position against Israel and its encouragement to Palestinian fighters was allocating the Israel embassy in Iran to the PLO emissary.<sup>171</sup> Although Yasser Arafat, the leader of the PLO, took side with Saddam in the Iran-Iraq war, Iran's assistance to the Palestinian opposition did not come to an end. Iran continued to help Palestinian groups and established close relations with them. Particularly, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad were the two main groups that benefitted from the Iranian support<sup>172</sup> and the Islamic Republic's assistance to non-Shiite origin groups can be considered as its unconditional desire to confronting Israel. Most of the researches about post-revolutionary Iran argue that after Khomeini's death and with the presidency of pragmatist Rafsanjani or moderate Khatami, the Islamic Republic's enthusiastic ideological policies gave their place to more pragmatist and utilitarian policies.<sup>173</sup> This trend cannot be overlooked when approximately forty-year-long Islamic regime's

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 440.

<sup>171</sup> Ray Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 65.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 170.

<sup>173</sup> Anoushiravan Ehteshami classified Islamic Republic's foreign policy under five phases: 1) Consolidation (1979-1981), 2) Rejectionist (1981-1988), 3) Reorientation (1988-1990), 4) Pragmatism (After Iraqi invasion of Kuwait), 5) Moderation (1997- Presidency of Khatemi). This chronologic classification has been composed of very precise distinctions. Although other researchers of post-revolutionary Iran do not categorize Islamic Republic's foreign policy evolution identically in this way, most of them agreed on this kind of trend in Iran's foreign policy after the revolution. Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "The Foreign Policy of Iran," in *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, ed. Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (Lynne Rienner, 2002) For more information look: Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Maryam Panah, *The Islamic republic and the world* (London; Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press 2007), Eva Patricia Rakel, *The Iranian Political Elite, State and Society Relations, and Foreign Relations since the Islamic Revolution* (Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2008), Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom Iran's Foreign Policy* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013).

policies are investigated. However, confrontation with Israel and anti- Israeli discourses did not change even under the pragmatist or moderate administrations. For example, Hashem Rafsanjani, who was famous with his pragmatism, said that: “Our policy toward Israel is very clear. We reject the very existence of Israel as an entity on the territory of Palestine. This is a usurper regime. This is our position and nothing can be above this.”<sup>174</sup> Khatami, the architect of *Dialogue among Civilizations*, also remarked the Islamic Republic’s auxiliary position on the Palestinian issue and indicated this position with these words: “We believe that there can be no peace until all the legitimate demands of the Palestinians are met.”<sup>175</sup> These are clear hints of Iran’s ontological stance against Israel because the anti-Israeli discourse was not assuaged even during the reign of more conciliatory presidents. This policy presented its most conspicuous stage during Iran’s neo-conservative president Mahmood Ahmadinejad. Ahmadinejad, who was considered as the champion of resurgence of revolutionary ideas, placed confrontation to the centre of his foreign policy understanding. In many areas, Ahmadinejad resorted to an anti-imperialist discourse of the 1980s and he acknowledged confrontation as a “constant reality rather than a means to an end.”<sup>176</sup>

Statements on the destruction of the Israeli regime and the denial of Holocaust stigmatized Ahmadinejad’s reign with regards to the ubiquitous confrontationist attitudes. He used the words: “This regime that is occupying al-Qods [Jerusalem] must be eliminated from the pages of history,”<sup>177</sup> in a conference that gathered Holocaust deniers in Tehran in 2005. These initiatives and extremely hostile discourses of Iran triggered strong reactions around the world. Even Vatican declared a statement about

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<sup>174</sup> Calabrese, *Revolutionary Horizons*, 153.

<sup>175</sup> Ghoncheh Tazmini, *Khatami’s Iran The Islamic Republic and the Turbulent Path to Reform* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 89.

<sup>176</sup> Ali Ansari, *Iran Under Ahmadinajad: The Politics of Confrontation* (London: Routledge, 2007), 46.

<sup>177</sup> Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance The secret dealings of Israel, Iran, and the United States* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 1.

the existence of Holocaust after the conference and called the event as an “immense tragedy.”<sup>178</sup>

The confrontation policy that might be considered as the zeitgeist of the Islamic Republic has been one of the most substantial ideologies of post-revolutionary era. This constituent view emerged as Neither East nor West doctrine during the Cold War period. After the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the East part of the discourse lost its significance and resistance against domination of the West gained importance. Yet, the revolutionary elites did not have a uniform West understanding in their perception. However, the US was always placed in the Western bloc and considered as the standard-bearer of Western world. Therefore, reactionary attitudes against the dominant power were aimed at America and her closest partner Israel. While Hezbollah and Hamas were positioned in the terrorism lists of the dominating powers and Iran was being accused of supporting terrorism because of its assistance to these organizations, Iran’s constant approach to the Palestine struggle presented its oppositionist character and confrontationist identity.

I argue that, the second important policy that pitted Iran against the West was the Islamic Republic’s nuclear power policy. Iran’s nuclear ambition is a controversial issue, especially the question whether it has originated from an ideological perspective or a national interest still preserves its complexity. However, I argue that the national interest dimension of nuclear power is a subsegment of Iran’s confrontation policy. Because during the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic, which started right after the revolution, some compromising periods and some defiant stages took place between Iran and the Western world. In spite of these unstable relations with the West, the Islamic Republic’s insistence on maintaining its nuclear programme has never ended. When the Iranian nuclear policy is considered as an ongoing process, it can be easily

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<sup>178</sup> Christine Hauser, "Holocaust Conference in Iran Provokes Outrage." *The New York Times*. December 12, 2006 accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/12/world/middleeast/13holocaustcnd.html>.

argued that reconciliatory attitudes of the Islamic regime enabled it to maintain the nuclear project in a more mellifluous way and provided a shelter from international hostility. However, the same nuclear process also turned Iran into a target for the international community because of its persistence on making its own nuclear power. This means that whenever the Islamic Republic pursued its nuclear ambition with a more 'rational' and commonly accepted international discourse, reactions of the Western powers softened and differed. Yet, when the justification of the nuclear project changed and started to diverge from a permitted path, disciplinary actions were implemented against Iran. This twofold process catalysed both the Republic's isolation and socialization.

Before the Islamic revolution, Iran had already started to establish nuclear facilities under the Shah Mohammed Reza regime. The close friendship of the Shah with the US enabled him to get assistance from the American regime in order to establish nuclear reactors. Besides the US, other Western nuclear powers such as France and Germany also provided nuclear technology to Iran. The Shah made agreements with the United States in 1974 to get nuclear reactors built, while in the same year, a deal was made with Germany to build a power reactor at Bushehr. Also, in 1977 France accepted constructing two reactors in Darkhovin.<sup>179</sup> After the revolution, the fate of the nuclear facilities became ambiguous. Initially, the revolutionary elites did not care about any nuclear projects that heavily depended on foreign assistance. The countries that were assisting Shah's nuclear project had already ceased their operations after the revolution and the head of the provisional government, Mehdi Bazargan, considered the nuclear programme as a waste of money.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Gawdat Bahgat, "Nuclear proliferation: The Islamic Republic of Iran," *Iranian Studies* 36, no.3 (September 2006): 308.

<sup>180</sup> Farhad Rezaei, *Iran's Nuclear Program A Study in Proliferation and Rollback* (Cham:Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 26.



Therefore, he halted all agreements regarding the nuclear programme, even the projects that had already been paid were cancelled. This decision coincided with the Ayatollah Khomeini's opinions about the nuclear programme. However, some of the revolutionary elites like Rafsanjani, Khamenei, Mousavi and Hassan Rouhani were insisting on the continuation of the nuclear programme.

The Iran-Iraq war has had a significant role in Iran's perception of nuclear power and its decision to develop a nuclear project. Saddam used chemical weapons in order to repel the Iranian forces from Iraq and Iraq's exploitation of chemical weapons increased with the international community's acquiescence.<sup>181</sup> Although Iranian forces wanted to respond to Iraq's chemical warfare, the Ayatollah Khomeini did not permit this kind of retaliation by stating that using chemical or nuclear weapons are forbidden according to the Islamic canon.<sup>182</sup> However, Hashem Rafsanjani, who was appointed as the chief commander during the Iraq war, and Hassan Rouhani, a Majlis member at that time, argued that they informed the Imam about Saddam's use of chemical weapons and he gave permission to reciprocate with similar attacks.<sup>183</sup>

Although Khomeini's opinions about chemical weapons and nuclear power did not demonstrate a clear-cut stance, the Islamic Republic learned a lesson from the Iraq War and this lesson urged them to acquire nuclear weapons. Iran's isolation during the Iraq War demonstrated the vitality of self-reliance unequivocally. The lion's share of the ideas for continuing the nuclear programme and the desire to have weapons of mass destruction can be attributed to the unpleasant experiences of the Iraq War.

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<sup>181</sup> Karsh, *Iran-Iraq War*, 42.

<sup>182</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Nuclear Program*, 28.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

After Khomeini's death and with Khamenei's takeover as the Supreme Leader, the Ayatollah Rafsanjani precipitated his endeavours about the nuclear programme. Because of the devastating Iraq War and Iraqi forces' direct assaults on the Iranian nuclear plants, the first step that was going to be taken was restoring the existent facilities. Iran tried to find international co-operators that could assist them in the restoration and until 1989, the Iranian authorities held official talks with some European and Latin American countries for the reconstruction of the nuclear power plants. While some of the parties that Iran was engaged in a dialogue such as Argentina responded Iran's call positively and expressed their will to make a deal with Iran, the US which was doubtful about Iran's nuclear programme forced these countries to refrain from cooperation.<sup>184</sup> The American containment policy directed Iran to look for a more irresistible power, that is, Russia. Russia and Iran signed a nuclear agreement on March 1990 and Russia accepted to rehabilitate Iran's Bushehr nuclear plant cooperate on nuclear technology. Moreover, in order to clear the air, Russia tried to appease the Western world by emphasizing the convenience of its cooperation with Iran in accordance with the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. However, with the disclosure of the secret parts of the agreement between Iran and Russia, Americans got further worried about the course of events regarding the Iranian nuclear project and stepped into action. On May 1995, the Clinton administration criticized their Russian counterparts for assisting Iran's military nuclear project at the Moscow summit. In the presence of this kind of a harsh criticism, Boris Yeltsin backtracked on the parts of the agreement that could improve Iran's military nuclear capability and the two presidents appointed their deputies to negotiate the issue. In December 1995, the Russian side declared their reservations regarding the nuclear technology transfer to Iran. Besides Russia, the United States had also persuaded China, Iran's second alternative to nuclear technology, to waive its assistance to Iran. By making a peaceful nuclear cooperation with China in 1997, America continued to contain Iran

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid.,38.

both politically and economically.<sup>185</sup> Under the Rafsanjani administration, Iran endeavoured to improve its nuclear capacity and due to the United States' inhibitory measures, the Iranian's had to maintain their programme and relations surreptitiously. Hashemi Rafsanjani admitted that Iran had obtained nuclear technology and know-how from the black market, but it was a compulsive action because of restrictive policies of the international community.<sup>186</sup> Especially affiliations with Pakistan and North Korea on nuclear technology indicated that Iranian authorities placed a great importance on nuclear power and wished to benefit from it at every opportunity.<sup>187</sup>

President Mohammad Khatami, the successor of Rafsanjani, maintained his predecessor's policy on the nuclear programme. During Rafsanjani's tenure, the Islamic Republic benefitted from the weakness of the international non-proliferation system and its vulnerability to dissimulation. The Iranian authorities exclusively insisted on the nuclear programme's peaceful purposes and their right to develop nuclear energy, which has been guaranteed by the treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. By doing this, on one hand, they pursued their nuclear agenda while on the other hand, they parried the attacks that might have injured the Islamic Republic's legitimacy. Under these conditions, Iran started its nuclear programme and reached high levels expeditiously. However, because of its revolutionary identity and America's close follow-up, advancing the nuclear programme to the desired level turned into a delicate issue for Iran. Khatami and his nuclear negotiator Hassan Rouhani managed this nuanced process very circumspectly. They enhanced Iran's nuclear capacity and improved the nuclear project but what made these two figures significant was their international policy on Iran's nuclear energy. Without attracting the international powers' attention and by

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<sup>185</sup> See Robert J. Einhorn and Gary Samore, "Ending Russian assistance to Iran's nuclear bomb," *Survival Global Politics and Strategy* 44 no.2 (2002).

<sup>186</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Nuclear Program*, 56.

<sup>187</sup> Siegfried S Hecker and William Liou, "Dangerous Dealings: North Korea's Nuclear Capabilities and the Threat of Export to Iran," *Arms Control Association*, March 1, 2007, accessed March 25, 2019. [https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007\\_03/heckerliou](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007_03/heckerliou).

collaborating with international institutions, Iran protected its nuclear programme. Especially, cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the IAEA's exonerating statements on Iran's nuclear programme has been a protective shield for Islamic Republic.<sup>188</sup> However this protection did not last long. On 14 August 2002, an Iranian dissident group that opposes the Islamic Republic revealed two secret nuclear facilities of Iran that were not reported to the IAEA.<sup>189</sup> This was the first turbulence in Khatami's famous *Dialogue among Civilizations* discourse. While the philosopher president was trying to improve Iranian image in the international area, this disclosure raised doubts and suspicions among the international community. From then on, the idea that the Islamic Republic is pursuing a secret nuclear agenda got stronger and Iran has found itself at a crossroads. Iranian politicians were going to adopt either a socialisation way or an isolation path. The tactics that were chosen by Khatami administration to defend Iran's nuclear programme before the international community constituted socialization part of Iran's nuclear power policy. Instead of negating international reactions, Khatami and his nuclear negotiator Rouhani chose an appeasement policy. Being the subject of the process rather than an alienated object was more preferable for the Iranian cadres, but this did not mean a complete withdrawal from nuclear programme. Rouhani described this period as 'a time buying period.' He stated that: "We wanted to provide enough time for our nuclear scientists to finish the programme in a calm atmosphere."<sup>190</sup> Khatami officially endorsed Iran's secret nuclear facilities on 9 February 2003 and invited the IAEA for an investigation. This invitation was a bona fide sign to the world public opinion; however, the following period would be a "cat and mouse game."<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Nuclear Program*, 89.

<sup>189</sup> David Albright and Andrea Stricker, "Iran's nuclear program," in *The Iran Primer: Power, Politics, and U.S. Policy*, ed. Robin Wright (United States Institute of Peace, 2010).

<sup>190</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Nuclear Program*, 91.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

This means that after Iran's assent to the investigation of the IAEA, a tactical manoeuvre was implemented to turn inquiries into Iran's favour, and almost the same tactic has been used against other investigation requests. When experts demanded to examine a specific facility, the Iranian authorities initially denied or postponed the date that the agency intended to do the investigation on. By stalling the international community's requests and by redirecting or restricting experts' investigation zones, Iran wanted to kill two birds with one stone. Thanks to this policy, the Islamic Republic presented its state of readiness for cooperation and avoided direct isolation. On the other hand, the continuation of the secret agenda, and the revelation of new secret facilities proved Iran's resolution to maintain its own nuclear agenda.

One of the most significant indicators of the socialization phase in nuclear policy may, very well, be Iran's decision to sign an additional NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) protocol. The Iranian administration believed that they could maintain their nuclear programme under the surveillance of the international community, but they would not comply if they were alienated as North Korea. Avoiding the sanctions was the main objective of Khatami and Rouhani. Therefore, they accepted to sign the additional protocol that limits Iran's nuclear programme and halts the uranium enrichment process. On 18 December 2003, Iran signed the additional protocol and thus, evaded being referred to the UN Security Council.<sup>192</sup> In spite of the protocol, in 2004, Iran announced that uranium enrichment process started again. Although this announcement discomforted the Western countries, due to a failure to come to a consensus on how to give a proper reaction to Iran, a serious reaction did not emerge from the Western powers. With the support and protection of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran advanced its nuclear programme and did not face any vital international threat under the Khatami administration. This was the consequence of Hassan Rouhani's subtle policy. He handled

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<sup>192</sup> "Iran Signs Additional Protocol on Nuclear Safeguards," *International Atomic Energy Agency* December 18, 2003, accessed March 26, 2019, <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/iran-signs-additional-protocol-nuclear-safeguards>.

this quite difficult and intricate process with a great diplomacy. In this period, hidden parts of Iran's nuclear agenda were protected under the legality umbrella. Rouhani indicated that the suspension of the enrichment process was a bait for the European countries.<sup>193</sup>

As such, Iran was supplied with the necessary nuclear technology for its nuclear programme and managed to protect itself from the American-organized international opposition. Moreover, clandestine nuclear projects which needed time and a calm atmosphere, benefited from the President Khatami's moderate posture. The President's communication style with the international actors and his appraised personality ensured the necessary time and a calm atmosphere for Iran and paved the way for strengthening Iran's nuclear power.

The isolation phase started with Ahmadinejad's presidency. He has been considered as the guardian of revolutionary ideas because of his discourses on the international system and his attitudes against Western powers. The nuclear policy turned into a domain in which Ahmadinejad demonstrated his revolutionary identity frankly. During the Khatami era, Ahmadinejad was among the opponents who criticized the administration for being too concessive against the West. Especially Iran's approval of the additional protocol and the former administration's insistence on staying in the NPT were the primary points of Ahmadinejad's castigation. According to him these kinds of international agreements or international organizations such as the UN were Western oriented institutions and cooperating with them damaged Iran's independence. Although the notion of independence had already been acknowledged by former Iranian statesmen, it became the core discourse of Ahmadinejad on nuclear policy. He described himself as "the champion of nuclear programme" and characterized the programme as a yardstick for Iran's self-determination.<sup>194</sup> The first indicator of the resistance against pressures of the

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<sup>193</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Nuclear Program*, 106

<sup>194</sup> Maaike Warnaar, *Iranian Foreign Policy during Ahmadinejad* ( New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 139.

international powers and the signal flare of Ahmadinejad's upcoming nuclear policy emerged on 3 August 2005. Iran neglected the 2004 Paris Agreement and put the Natanz nuclear facility, which had been closed in accordance with the agreement, into operation.<sup>195</sup>

In doing so, Ahmadinejad and his neo-conservative supporters depicted their staidness on changing Iran's strategy of nuclear policy. The Islamic Republic's legitimacy-oriented nuclear policy understanding was substituted with a confrontation-based self-reliance doctrine. The replacement of Rouhani, the architect of legitimacy-oriented nuclear policy and chief nuclear negotiator, with Ali Larijani, a conservative former commander of the Revolutionary Guards, was a symbolic but powerful sign for Iran's track change on nuclear policy.

The Ahmadinejad administration continued defying IAEA's decisions and on 10 January 2015, three nuclear plants which had been sealed by the IAEA reopened. The President defined this confrontational behaviour as an emancipatory action that saved Iran from "Western nuclear colonialism."<sup>196</sup> Iran's uncompromising attitude on uranium enrichment and non-cooperation with the IAEA stimulated the international community. Fears of the conciliatory predecessors came true and the United Nations Security Council got involved in the process. On 08 March 2016, the Security Council issued a resolution which called Iran to stop uranium enrichment and invited the Islamic Republic to cooperate with the IAEA.<sup>197</sup> This was a prelude for the Security Council's involvement. Iran responded to the call with an escalating language. Just one day later, the Supreme Leader Khamenei publicly declared that: "The Islamic Republic will resist and resume the

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<sup>195</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Nuclear Program*, 132.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

<sup>197</sup> "Security Council, in Presidential Statement, Underlines Importance of IRAN's Re-establishing Full, Sustained Suspension of Uranium-Enrichment Activities," *United Nations* March 29, 2006, accessed March 26, 2019. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2006/sc8679.doc.htm>.

progress path.”<sup>198</sup> Ahmadinejad’s response was more concrete. He answered the Security Council’s demand to suspend uranium enrichment by declaring that the uranium enrichment capacity of the Islamic Republic was increased. Such negative, even counter-productive responses provided enough material for the United States to force the Security Council to adopt a new resolution that included sanctions. On 31 July 2006, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1696, which gave Iran 30 days to suspend its uranium enrichment programme and warned the Iranian authorities about further sanctions in the case of noncompliance.<sup>199</sup>

Ahmadinejad maintained his silence until the last day of the deadline. On the last day, he described the resolution as “a useless scrap of paper.”<sup>200</sup> Ahmadinejad accused the Security Council of being an instrument of the world powers and criticized the institution of adopting political decisions. Besides these ignoring statements, the President gave a *sui generis* answer to the international community, where he stated that in order to respond to the “arrogant foreign nations” Iran would establish 3000 more centrifuges.<sup>201</sup> After the confrontation with the Security Council, the escalation between Iran and the international community increased dramatically. Both parties raised the tension and the conflict turned into an escalation spiral. The second resolution of the Security Council can be considered as a beacon that reflects the scale of the tension between Iran and the international community. On 27 December 2006, the Security Council adopted resolution 1737, which was the second resolution adopted about Iran’s nuclear policy.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Rezaei, *Iran’s Nuclear Program*, 137.

<sup>199</sup> "Resolution 1696." *United Nations Security Council* July 31, 2006, accessed March 26, 2019. [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1696\(2006\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1696(2006)).

<sup>200</sup> Kasra Naji, *Ahmadinejad The Secret History of Iran's Radical Leader* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008) 129.

<sup>201</sup> Rezaei, *Iran’s Nuclear Program*, 138.

<sup>202</sup> "Resolution 1737," *United Nations Security Council* December 27, 2006, accessed March 27, 2019. [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1737\(2006\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1737(2006)).



In this resolution, by indicating Iran's non-compliance with resolution 1696, the Security Council demanded Iran comply with the former resolution and cooperate with the IAEA. In order to deter Iran from non-transparent nuclear programme a set of sanctions that included freezing Iranian assets and inhibiting nuclear technology transfer to Iran etc. was attached to the resolution. This second resolution was a foreshadower of the international community's sanction policy against Iran. Just as before, Iran retaliated by increasing the escalation. The response against the UNSC resolutions was not a compromise or dialogue, instead, the Ahmadinejad government started to put withdrawal from the NPT into words.

The escalation game between the Security Council and Iran continued without slowing down during the Ahmadinejad tenure. The Security Council adopted seven resolutions, resolution 1696/1737/1747/1803/1835/1929/2049, during Ahmadinejad's presidency. The content and frame of the resolutions were almost the same. In principle, all resolutions called Iran to halt its uranium enrichment programme and invited the Islamic Republic to cooperate with the IAEA. However, in every new resolution, the extent of sanctions expanded and the Security Council tried to inhibit Iran's desire to continue its opaque nuclear programme by intensifying the pressure. As far as the Iranian side was concerned, Ahmadinejad's analogy of "a train without brakes"<sup>203</sup> can be considered the epitome of his stance against international community's requests. Besides Ahmadinejad's ardent rhetoric on confronting the Western powers, implementations of his administration represented that the Islamic Republic ventured to enhance its nuclear project at the cost of its isolation.

All in all, the Islamic Republic's nuclear programme was a multi-dimensional phenomenon. As I have argued before, the foundational principal of the programme and its goal was the consolidation of Iran's independence and self-reliance. After the

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<sup>203</sup> "Iran defiant on nuclear programme," *BBC News* February 25, 2007, accessed March 27, 2019. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/6395203.stm>.

revolution, the uncommon and confrontational identity of the Islamic Republic caused international powers' scepticism about Iran's nuclear project. The main doubt that gained ground on Western powers' conscience was the probability of coming across with an atomic Iran. Especially the United States and her close ally, Israel, considered the Iranian nuclear endeavour highly dangerous. Israeli statesmen described the possibility of a nuclear Iran as an 'intolerable' and 'existential threat.'<sup>204</sup> The Israeli parliament's chairman of Foreign Affairs and the Defence Committee stated Israel's anxiety explicitly. He said, "The minute Iran turns into a nuclear power, a 'black curtain' will drop over Israel, the Middle East, and the entire free world."<sup>205</sup> However, the Islamic Republic also had the same existential anxiety. The Iraq War experience convinced the Iranian elites that without self-reliance, the Islamic Republic cannot survive. Particularly, the international community's indulgence in Saddam's chemical attacks taught the vitality of self-reliance to the Iranians. Therefore, the Islamic Republic built the legitimacy of its nuclear programme on independence and self-reliance. I argue that confrontation which was one of the exclusive characteristics of the Islamic Republic constituted a supra-category that includes independence and self-reliance together. Revolutionary Iran's opposition to the international powers' domination and its repudiation of the international system were reflections of its confrontational stance. With regards to nuclear energy, this confrontational approach manifested itself as independence and self-reliance. Because of these two concepts, Iran's ultimate goal in the nuclear programme did not change, just the tactics to achieve the goal did. While Rafsanjani and Khatami tried to manage the nuclear programme with more conciliatory policies, Ahmadinejad picked a blustering path. Secret facilities and hidden nuclear establishments displayed the Khatami administration's loyalty to the Islamic Republic's confrontation policy, but his openness with regards to negotiation and dialogue enabled Iran to create a 'normalizing' depiction in the sight of the international community. On

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<sup>204</sup> Nicole Gaouette, "Israel: Iran is now danger No. 1." *The Christian Science Monitor* November 28, 2003, accessed March 27, 2019. <https://www.csmonitor.com/2003/1128/p06s01-wome.html>.

<sup>205</sup> Bahgat, "Nuclear Proliferation," 316.

the other hand, Ahmadinejad turned this 'normalizing' image upside-down. By iterating Iran's independence on the nuclear programme and its inalienable right to nuclear technology, Ahmadinejad resisted the supervisory role of the international community. His responses to the Security Council resolutions and his reckless language further isolated Iran from the international community. The Islamic Republic, which had been already included in the axis of evil list by George W. Bush in 2002,<sup>206</sup> started to be called a rogue state in the international community because of the Ahmadinejad administration's adamant, uncompromising and inflexible policies on Iran's nuclear programme.

### **3.4. U.S. Embassy Seizure**

On 26 October 1979 a group of protestors headed towards U.S embassy and massed in front of the gates. They were chanting slogans against the America and maybe the most frequent slogan was *Marg bar Amrika* (Death to America). The event that gathered Iranians to curse America was admittance of Shah to United States. After his departure from Iran in January 1979, Shah stayed for a while in Egypt, Morocco, the Bahamas and finally Mexico.<sup>207</sup> On 22 October 1979 he was allowed to enter America for his medical treatment. This accommodation permission has annoyed Iranian revolutionaries because hosting a person who was being accused of devastating Iran was unacceptable for Iranians. Therefore, they represented their anger by protesting America before its embassy. Protests did not go too far and protestors did not resort to violence. However, same scene was not going to be observed in the protests that were going to occur approximately ten days later.

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<sup>206</sup> "Text of President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address," *The Washington Post*, January 29, 2002, accessed March 27, 2019. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/sou012902.htm>.

<sup>207</sup> Warren Christopher and Richard M. Mosk, "The Iranian Hostage Crisis and the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal: Implications for International Dispute Resolution and Diplomacy," *Pepperdine Dispute Resolution Law Journal* 7, no.2 (2007): 166.

On 4 November 1979 a group of students who called themselves as followers of Imam's line invaded U.S embassy and took approximately 100 people including 63 Americans hostage.<sup>208</sup> After a while some of them were released, but during the 444 days, 53 embassy staff were detained. This event went down in history as Iran hostage crisis and ruined international legitimacy of the Islamic Republic.

The occupation shocked the Carter administration but they thought that it was a temporal situation and belief that Iranian government is going to solve this crisis as they did before was strong in American side. However, they could not estimate that this crisis was going to sound the death knell for Iranian provisional government. Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan and Foreign Minister Ibrahim Yazdi, who have met with U.S. National Security Adviser Brzezinski in Algiers just a few days before hostage taking, wanted to solve crisis and opposed the occupation but the leader of the revolution Imam Khomeini endorsed the takeover and supported students.<sup>209</sup> Bazargan and Yazdi were forced to resign just two days after the occupation because of their position on hostage taking. Ayatollah Khomeini has praised the occupation in an interview that has been made eight days after the occupation. He said that: "Now that the existence of a conspiracy has been proven to our nation, it unanimously supports the action of our youths (only a few perverted individuals do not support it). Their action represents the will of the entire nation, not the arbitrary whim of a small group."<sup>210</sup> The conspiracy that Khomeini mentioned in his speech was referring to a counter revolution or a coup d'état against Iranian revolutionaries. Especially with the memory of 1953 coup by which Mossadegh has been overthrown, sheltering the escaped Shah by United States associated with preparation of Americans to play back the same disc. Meeting of Prime Minister and Foreign Minister with American authorities strengthened the suspects about a counter

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<sup>208</sup>Ibid., 167.

<sup>209</sup> David Farber, *Taken Hostage The Iran Hostage Crisis and America's First Encounter with Radical Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 141.

<sup>210</sup> Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings*, 279.

revolutionary intervention of U.S. and seizure of the U.S. embassy was executed for revealing and preventing U.S. based counter revolutionary action. Occupier students declared the reason of their invasion by releasing a communique. They said that: “We Muslim students, followers of Ayatollah Khomeini, have occupied the espionage embassy of America in protest against the ploys of the imperialists and the Zionists. We announce our protest to the world; a protest against America for granting asylum and employing the criminal shah... for creating a malignant atmosphere of biased and monopolized propaganda, and for supporting and recruiting counterrevolutionary agents against the Islamic Revolution of Iran” <sup>211</sup>

In the early days of crisis United States tried to negotiate with Islamic Republic. Carter intended to send two presidential emissaries for negotiating the release of the hostages. On November 5 negotiation offer was refused by Iran and on November 12 president ordered suspension of oil import from Iran and two days later all Iranian assets in US banks were frozen.<sup>212</sup> While on the one hand America was trying to pressure Iran individually, on the other hand they brought the crisis to international level. On 28 November United States requested United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim to travel to Iran for negotiating the hostages’ release. However, negotiation proposal refused by Khomeini again. Then, in order to be backed by international community United States appealed to United Nations Security Council and International Court of Justice on 29 November 1979. International Court of Justice unanimously adopted an order on 15 December 1979 that counselled immediate release of hostages.<sup>213</sup> Moreover, the case concerning United States diplomatic and consular staff in Tehran has

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<sup>211</sup> Farber, *Taken Hostage*, 136.

<sup>212</sup> David Patrick Houghton, *US Foreign Policy and the Iran Hostage Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 104.

<sup>213</sup> "Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders." *International Court of Justice* December 15, 1979, accessed March 28, 2019. <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/64/064-19791215-ORD-01-00-EN.pdf>.

been concluded in favour of United States by International Court of Justice on 24 May 1980.<sup>214</sup> United Nations Security Council also issued two resolutions about hostage crisis. Resolution 457 of 4 December 1979 and resolution 461 of 31 December 1979 demanded immediate release of hostages and advised to not increase tension but at the end of resolution 461 Iran was warned by adoption of effective measures under Articles 39 and 41 of the charter in case of noncompliance.<sup>215</sup> These decisions and resolutions may not be valid and convincing for Khomeini because he was already criticizing these institutions for being the tool of super powers. However, the Organization of the Islamic Conference's two resolutions in January and May 1980 on Iran hostage crisis proved Islamic Republic's undeniable international isolation.<sup>216</sup>

Hostage crisis lasted 444 days. During the detention United States endeavoured to save both its citizens and its national prestige. On the one hand, they invoked international community to pressure Iran and hoped to get a result through legal channels. On the other hand, a military rescue operation, code named operation Eagle Claw, was attempted on 24 April 1980 however it has ended with a complete failure. Before reaching the place that hostages were held US forces encountered with technical problems. After the cancelling order from presidential office a crash has occurred in operation area and eight US soldier died.<sup>217</sup> When it comes to Iran, hostage crisis was a powerful indicator of domination of ideology in Islamic Republic's internal and external affairs. Resignation of Prime Minister Bazargan and Foreign Minister Yazdi can be considered as the first sign of this domination. Because both of them did not confirm students' occupation of consulate and taking consulate staff hostage, they forced to

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<sup>214</sup> "Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders," *International Court of Justice* May 24, 1980, accessed March 28, 2019. <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/64/064-19800524-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>.

<sup>215</sup>"Resolution 461," *United Nations Security Council* December 31, 1979, accessed March 28, 2019. [https://undocs.org/S/RES/461\(1979\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/461(1979)).

<sup>216</sup> Ramazani, *Independence without Freedom*, 311.

<sup>217</sup> Farber, *Taking Hostage*, 174.

resign. The resignation of Bazargan labelled as the second revolution by Khomeini. Moreover, Khomeini considered seizure of embassy even more significant than overthrow of Shah.<sup>218</sup> In Khomeini's perception hostage crisis was not a conflict between Iran and United States, it was a battle between Islam and blasphemy.<sup>219</sup> To conclude, hostage crisis has sparked by both Iranians' rage against America who harboured exiled Shah and fear of any counterrevolutionary action that would invalidate all achievements of revolution. This illegitimate action has been affirmed and championed by Islamic Republic. Praising an action that is contrary to international law and customs has isolated Iran in international realm conspicuously. This isolation was in so much that some of the analysts argued reluctance of international community on condemning Saddam or taking into action against Iraq in Iran-Iraq war was a consequence of Iran's attitude in hostage crisis.

### **3.5. Salman Rushdie Affair**

End of the Iran-Iraq war and Iran's affirmation of United Nations resolution motivated European powers for establishing new relations with Islamic Republic. German, French and British foreign ministers visited Tehran in 1988 and 1989.<sup>220</sup> However this euphoria did not last long. On 14 February 1989 Ayatollah Khomeini issued an edict (*fatwa*) against the British author Salman Rushdie and by describing his book '*The Satanic Verses*' as blasphemy he sentenced Rushdie to death. In his fatwa Khomeini called all zealous Muslims for execution of sentence and he stated that with the implementation of edict nobody will dare to insult Muslim sanctities.<sup>221</sup> After the announcement of fatwa, European countries condemned Ayatollah's edict unanimously. On February 20 Foreign

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<sup>218</sup> Ramazani, *Independence without Freedom*, 131.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>220</sup> Fred Halliday, "An Elusive Normalization: Western Europe and the Iranian Revolution," *Middle East Journal* 48, no.2 (Middle East Institute, 1994): 309.

<sup>221</sup> Daniel Pipes, *The Rushdie Affair : The Novel the Ayatollah and the West* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 27.

Ministers of 12 member states of European Community met in Brussel and described the fatwa as a violation of most elementary principles of relations among sovereign states. Moreover, they declared that Ministers decided to recall their Heads of Missions in Tehran and suspended exchanges of high-level of official visits.<sup>222</sup> Khomeini's fatwa has turned into a diplomatic crisis and through the president Ali Khamenei's description of fatwa as irrevocable and irreversible crisis deepened. The British administration withdrew its embassy staff from Tehran and stated that relations can be normalized as soon as Khomeini's fatwa was revoked. To respond British government Iranian Parliament passed a bill which conditioned continuation of relations with Britain's condemnation of the book and positioning itself against anti-Islamic and anti-Iranian discourses. According to bill if British government does not fulfil the conditions until March 7, Islamic Republic will break all its relations with Britain.<sup>223</sup> In addition to Majlis decision, Tehran exacerbated the situation by promising \$2.6 million for an Iranian assassin and \$1 million for a non-Iranian murderer.<sup>224</sup>

In March 1989 Iran broke diplomatic relations with Britain. British embassy that was closed down in 1980 and reopened towards the end of 1988 closed again. Return of other European countries' ambassadors did not last long however Salman Rushdie affair stayed as an ominous issue between Britain and Iran until 1998. In September 1998 Britain and Iran agreed an exchange of statements about Salman Rushdie affair. According to this statement Iran has declared that they were not interested in the death of Salman Rushdie and they would not take any action against Rushdie or support anybody who will assassinate the author.<sup>225</sup> After that two sides accepted the exchange of ambassadors and relations that have been maintained through lower levels since 1980 elevated to ambassadorial level.

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>224</sup> Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution*, 58.

<sup>225</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran's foreign policy*, 106.



Salman Rushdie affair was a significant indicator of ideology's victory on Islamic Republic's foreign policy. First of all, when the period in which the fatwa was issued is considered, it is an undeniable fact that such a move would not serve to the interest of Iran. Beginning of the struggle can be considered as an ardent reaction of a zealot Muslim cleric however Iran's state level endorsement escalated the affair into a diplomatic sphere. Détente in Iran and European relations was an invaluable opportunity for Islamic Republic to find a partner on restoration of the country after Iraq war. Moreover, by improving relations with Europe Islamic Republic would be freed from international isolation to some extent. However, Salman Rushdie affair weakened the burgeoning relations between Europe and Iran. Because Salman Rushdie was a British citizen, tension has presented itself especially between Iran and Britain. Yet, the affair's symbolic representation evoked Europeans to defend their beliefs against the belligerent Mullahs. Custodians of liberal democratic values and freedom of speech preferred to break up their relations with Islamic Republic even at the cost of diplomatic and commercial cost.<sup>226</sup> It was a clear evidence for European powers to discredit Iran as a 'theocracy' and after the Salman Rushdie affair European powers felt the need of evaluating their tolerant attitudes against Iran.<sup>227</sup> On the side of Islamic Republic, the fatwa has been considered as a source of pride because according to Iranian hardliners by issuing fatwa and by standing behind the edict, Islamic Republic lead the Muslims and became the first and only state which articulated Muslims feelings on Salman Rushdie's derogatory book. Even Islamic Conference Organization's resolution that did not confirm Khomeini's death sentence but condemned the book in March 1989 has been interpreted as Iran's victory by Iranian hardliners.<sup>228</sup> Lastly, I claim that Ayatollah Khomeini's speech on Salman Rushdie affair elegantly explains Iran's general attitude against external world and

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<sup>226</sup> Shireen T. Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy in the Post-Soviet Era* (Santa Barbara Calif: Praeger, 2010), 82.

<sup>227</sup> Rakel, *The Iranian Political Elite*, 194.

<sup>228</sup> Ramazani, *Independence without Freedom*, 141.

Salman Rushdie question in that time. In his speech that Khomeini has reprimanded pragmatist Iranian elites and demonstrated Salman Rushdie affair as an example of other countries' ultimate stand against Islam and Islamic Republic. He said: "those who still believe that extremist slogans or war will cause the West and the East to be pessimistic about us, and that ultimately all this has led to the isolation of the country; those who believe that if we act in a pragmatic way they will reciprocate humanely and will mutually respect nations, Islam and Muslims—to them this [Rushdie's novel] is an example"<sup>229</sup> In that sense, Khomeini was in effect trying to show by discourse and practice that the revolutionary Iran would not socialize into the norms of international society.

### **3.6. Khomeini's Letter to Gorbachev**

His stance on U.S. embassy seizure and his fatwa against the author of *The Satanic Verses* were examples of Ayatollah Khomeini's ideological interferences to political realm. In hostage crisis by giving his support to hostage takers Ayatollah Khomeini has declared his denial of international customs about consular relations that has been guaranteed by Vienna Convention in 1963. When it comes to Salman Rushdie affair, European states has criticized the edict by indicating that the fatwa is a violation of sovereignty. Giving a death sentence to another country's citizen and promoting people to execution of the sentence was considered as an unacceptable attack to sovereignty of Britain by British authorities. Both of the events were reflections of ideology on political realm. However, may be the last effort of Ayatollah to bring his religious stance on international was his official letter to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Approximately six months before his death, on 1 January 1989 Ayatollah Khomeini wrote an official letter to Gorbachev. In this letter leader of the revolution by describing Soviet Russia's situation made a call to Gorbachev for following the Islam's message in order to solve his country's deadlock problems.

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 144.

Khomeini started his letter with emphasizing Gorbachev's reform movements and he praised Gorbachev for his courage to re-evaluate Soviet ideology. However, he argued that the thing that will ensure Gorbachev's success is "that you re-evaluate your predecessors' policy of obliterating God and religion from society, a policy that has no doubt given the heaviest blow to the Soviet people."<sup>230</sup> Later on, Khomeini warned Gorbachev about the danger of falling into error of capitalism for remedying his own countries problems. He stated that if Gorbachev appeals to capitalism for solving problems of Soviet Russia, he will have committed a "mistake which those to come will have to erase."<sup>231</sup> Khomeini was aware of that collapse of the Soviet Union will be considered as the victory of America and always in history losers imitates winners. Therefore, he has alerted Gorbachev to not going after Iran's mortal enemy. He indicated that "I earnestly call on you, however, not to get trapped, while tearing down the walls of Marxist illusions, in the prison of the West and the Great Satan."<sup>232</sup> Through the letter Khomeini mentioned lots of Islamic Scholars' names such as al-Farabi, Avicenna, Suhrawardi, Mulla Sadra and Ibn al'Arabi and invited Gorbachev to send some of his brilliant scholars to Iran for getting more information about those Islamic Scholars' doctrines. Towards the end of the letter, Khomeini appealed Gorbachev to "study Islam earnestly" and he stated that this is not because Islam needs Russia but by only Islamic methods Soviets' can get rid of their problems.<sup>233</sup> In conclusion part, Khomeini explicitly declared that Islamic Republic of Iran "as the greatest and most powerful base of the Islamic world" is ready for help Soviets on learning Islam and he emphasized qualification of Iran to "fill the vacuum of religious faith in your(*Soviet*) society."<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Rouhollah al Musawi Khomeini, "The Letter," *Al-Islam Org* January 1, 1989, accessed March 30, 2019. <https://www.al-islam.org/call-divine-unity-letter-imam-khomeini-president-mikhail-gorbachev-imam-khomeini/letter>.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid. Italics are mine.

Ayatollah's official letter to Gorbachev did not produce expected effect on Gorbachev however what made it memorable is Khomeini's endeavour to spread religious thoughts through official ways. Therefore, this letter constituted a powerful symbol of Iran's desire to export its revolution and beside that, it has represented the Ayatollah's and inherently Islamic Republic's proposal to World about possibility of a third way different from both Socialism and Capitalism.

### **3.7. Conclusion**

The Islamic revolution that was the absolute rejection of Shah's both domestic and foreign policies took effect on Islamic Republic's foreign relations. Neither East nor West doctrine was solid and extensive reflection of this effect. By declaring their disaffirmation of current global system Iranian revolutionaries gave international community a sign of Islamic Republic's track in foreign relations. Export of revolution principle has constituted the method of this new and though track. In order to increase Islamic Republic's radius of action in international realm, Iranian's tried to find fellows. However, because of the revolution's uniqueness and singularity, it was not possible to find peers that have same world view and understanding with Islamic Republic. The last resort was transforming other actors into same identity with Islamic Republic. Iranian elites knew the difficulty of transformation, but they wanted to change other nations' perception at least to some degree. The export of revolution method adopted for this transformation and it turned into a tool for Islamic Republic to weaken international system. Confrontation policies were another method of Islamic Republic for declaring their challenge to international structure and rejection of any kind of domination. Until the end of Cold-War this denial of domination presented itself against both super powers of system namely America and Soviet Russia. When Soviet bloc fell, Iran's attention gathered around the U.S. and its abettor Israel. Before Soviets' defeat there has already been anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist discourses in Islamic Republic. Especially Iran's patronage to Palestinian resisting groups and so to speak its creation of Hezbollah indicated Islamic Republic's intense concern

about Israel. Yet, after the cold war this concern has increased and became one of the characteristic features of Islamic Republic.

When it comes to the events that were described in second part of this chapter, those events cannot be considered as direct policies, but they can be understood as direct reflections of grand policies and attitudes. U.S embassy seizure was an indicator of denying domination of any power and Islamic Republic's reflex for guarantee its independence. Salman Rushdie affair was a powerful manifestation of Islamic dimension of Republic. It was a litmus test for Iranians to demonstrate their legitimacy in Muslim world and it was also evaluated as a good opportunity for exporting revolution. Khomeini's letter to Gorbachev was not as important as U.S embassy seizure and Salman Rushdie affair in terms of Islamic Republic's foreign relations but it was a crucial document for grasping ideology's position in state's foreign affairs.

All in all, after the revolution Islamic Republic has established an Islamic-oriented foreign relations system. From time to time rise and falls have been observed in ideologic stance however, this fluctuation did not harm foundations. Islamic Republic performed a noncompliant behaviour in the eyes of the international community and because of this performance it has been isolated from international system. Isolation was not an ultimate destination for the Islamic Republic. By opposing norms and rules of prevailing international system Iran displayed its unorthodox stance and this unorthodoxy clued in the possible norm adoption way of the revolutionary Iran. The ideology-based policies demonstrated that Tehran would not accept international norms totally. However, a complete isolation was also impossible for this new-born state. Therefore, a socialization model that makes room for Iran's revolutionary values and its revolutionary ideology was revealed as the path to be followed by Iranian statesmen. From this point of view, the Islamic Republic's ideology driven policies in the international field can be described the first step of its rational socialization process that is composed of both ideology-based and interest-based approaches.

## CHAPTER 4

### INTEREST FAVOURED ISLAMIC REPUBLIC

The interaction between revolutionary states and the international system has at least been as important as the revolution itself. To emphasize significance of this interaction, Fred Halliday says that in order to understand post-revolutionary transformation “the ways in which international factors shape the development of post-revolutionary states” should be analysed.<sup>235</sup> Although revolutionary forces get on the history stage with challenges against existing system, the relation between them and international structure has a transformative impact on revolutionary states. Halliday describes this impact as ‘external pressure’ and explains its method as “radicalizing the revolutionary state in the short run, debilitating and pushing it towards conformity with an international norm in the longer run.”<sup>236</sup> As I explained in the first chapter, David Armstrong, by emphasizing this external pressure, calls the status of the revolutionary states as a dilemma in which revolutionaries are caught between the ideals of the revolution and the rules of the international order.<sup>237</sup> Iranian revolutionaries have encountered this problem many times since the revolution and they tried to hurdle this dilemma by behaving in harmony with desires of ‘external pressure’.

In this chapter I am going to discuss Islamic Republic’s foreign policies that have presented a conciliatory image with international structure. Research shows that Islamic Republic of Iran gave some concessions from its revolutionary ideology and behaved in line with international norms because of two reasons. The first reason was its existential needs. Whenever Iran has faced with an existential threat it preferred to sacrifice its ideological values in return for survival. The second reason was improvement of state’s

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<sup>235</sup> Halliday, *Revolutions and World Politics*, 261.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order*, 1.

position in international arena. After the revolution, Iran has presented a rebellious image by neglecting international norms and rules. However, in order to improve its international legitimacy and to protect itself from an international isolation Iran started to play the game in accordance with its rules despite the fact that some of these rules contradicted with Islamic Republic's own norms. To explain this contradiction, I will start with explaining Iran's interaction with its so-called archenemy America. I think the relation between Islamic Republic and U.S. contains too much critical points for understanding Iran's behaviour pattern. Then I am going to mention two important foreign policies of Islamic Republic which played a kind of modifier and complementary role for Iran's famous 'Neither East Nor West' policy: 'Open Door Policies' and 'Looking East'. Under the 'Open Door Policies' title I will explain Iran-European relations with the lenses of making concessions for turning back to diplomatic sphere and under the 'Looking East' headline I will discuss Iran's relations with Russia, China and other Eastern states for presenting change in Iran's perception of the East. Following that, I am planning to talk over 'the Nuclear Agreement' which is, in my opinion, a summary of Iran's socialization process. I think approximately thirty years long nuclear struggle of Iran and finally confirmed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreement has a historical significance in Islamic Republic's relations with international community. Therefore, taking this process under scrutiny will be substantially beneficial for comprehending limits of Iran's ideological behaviours. Last but not least, I want to shed light on Islamic Republic's one of the most disputed policies: 'export of revolution'. Because of 'export of revolution' discourse Iran has been accused for supporting terrorism and I believe that this policy was another breaking point for understanding Iran. According to export of revolution policy Islamic Republic was going to support insurgency movements who has rebelled against oppressor forces. Although there was not any discrimination in definition of oppressed people, Muslim communities were being constituted focal point for Iran. However, Iran's this policy has been another source for making concessions to protect Islamic Republic's interests. Therefore, I

denominated this process as 'Exhaustion of the Revolution' and I intended to explain metamorphosis of export of revolution policy under this headline.

The main objective of this section is to present the foreign policies of Iran that can be considered as pragmatism or a reflection of realist understanding. I contemplate to delineate the tension between Islamic Republic's ideological world view and constraints of the international system. Basically, the fluctuation in this tension determined Iran's position in international community and Iran's interactions with international community constituted second phase of its socialization process. Isolated Iran comprehended that in a world where interdependency is that much high, surviving without interacting other international agents or continuing to live without having some common ground at international system is not possible. Therefore, it obliged to behave in accordance with international structures requirements and this situation paved the way of Iran's socialization.

#### **4.1. Iran and 'The Great Satan'**

'The Great Satan' (*Shaytan-e Bozorg*) was the epithet that Ayatollah Khomeini has used to characterize United States' position in the eyes of Islamic Republic. After the Iranian youth's occupation of U.S. embassy on 4 November 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini made a statement in which he put his weight behind occupying students. In this statement by emphasizing American plots against Iran he demonized United States and described it as 'the Great Satan'.<sup>238</sup> After that time this description has turned into a symbol for Islamic Republic's attitude against U.S. and presented Iran's fierce hostility against America. Equating United States with the devil and considering it as main source of all evils was a manifestation of Iran's ideological defiance against American hegemony. Soviet Russia and Israel also got their shares from Iranian demonization. However, they have been regarded as 'lesser Satan' vis-à-vis United States. Especially after the collapse of the

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<sup>238</sup> Cristopher Buck, *Religious Myths and Visions of America How Minority Faiths Redefined America's World Role* (London: Praeger, 2009), 136.



Soviet Russia and with the end of the Cold War America's demonized position consolidated but since the revolution Islamic Republic interacted with the 'devil' so many times and its relation with United States became one of the most explanatory indicators for understanding limits of Islamic Republic's ideologic stance.

I have emphasized significance of 1980 Iran-Iraq war for comprehending Iran's ideologic posture in the third chapter but this war also witnessed the first and one of the most conspicuous pragmatic attitudes of Islamic Republic which was called as Iran-Contra affair. During the Iraq war, Iran has faced a deadly isolation in international arena. Because of its anti-hegemonic discourse about international system, Iran could not get any support from international community in Iraq war except few small-scale powers like Syria, North Korea and Libya<sup>239</sup>. While Iraq was enjoying vast financial support of Arab states and military support of Western countries, Iran has had to content with military equipment that has been inherited from Shah's regime. In initial phase, Iran relied on Shah's military stockpiles however as war went on Iran needed more military equipment to fight back against the Saddam. This necessity for military equipment made Iran open for all alternatives and United States (the great Satan) with Israel (the lesser Satan) were also included in these alternatives. On 26 May 1986, a group of American delegates came to Iran for talking with Iranian authorities about release of American hostages who have been taken in Lebanon and two governments' views on the geopolitical issues in the region.<sup>240</sup> This confidential interaction has been leaked to a Lebanese newspaper al-Shiraa on 6 November 1986 and American governments' arms sale to Islamic Republic in exchange for release of American hostages in Lebanon became a scandal in United States. President Regan was forced to admit U.S.'s arms sale to Iran despite its own arms sale embargo. According to him this secret dealing with Iran was rational because Iran has a great strategic importance in region, and it has a great influence on Islamic world in which U.S. is looking for good relations. Therefore, Regan claimed that interacting with

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<sup>239</sup> Karsh, *The Iran-Iraq War*, 44.

<sup>240</sup> Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 122.

Iran is not a wrong choice.<sup>241</sup> Moreover in order to increase plausibility of dealing and present it as a beneficial action, American authority stated that the money gained from arm dealing was transferred to Contra guerrilla army who was fighting for overthrown Marxist Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Yet, this was not enough for escaping from both domestic and international criticisms. To investigate scandal the House of Representatives and the Senate conducted investigations about event and this event became a source of disgrace for Regan administration.

Based on the agreement six shipments of arms have arrived to Iran and after each delivery some of the American hostages released. Disclosure of the secret dealing caused a great reaction in Iran as in the U.S. Dealing with 'the Great Satan' considered as an unacceptable behaviour by Iranians therefore Hashemi Rafsanjani was obliged to deny the dealing and any kind of arms purchase from both America and Israel.<sup>242</sup> However internal pressure for investigation have increased and appointment of a parliamentary commission for investigation was decided. At this stage Ayatollah Khomeini stepped in and suppressed the investigation demands.<sup>243</sup> Yet, this covering effort could not change the fact of Islamic Republic's close contact with its assumed archenemy. According to Jaffe Institute for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University, Iran purchased approximately \$500 million worth arms from Israel in the time interval from 1980 to 1983<sup>244</sup> and moreover almost \$300 million of this purchasing has been followed by CIA.<sup>245</sup> Iran-Contra affair was a meaningful evidence for limits of Islamic Republic's ideology-based viewpoint. This relationship can be considered as Islamic Republic's first examination on

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>243</sup> Ramazani, *Independence without Freedom*, 191.

<sup>244</sup> Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 107.

<sup>245</sup> Gary Sick, *October Surprise* (New York: Random House, 1991), 200.

its ideologic discourse and in this test pragmatist instinct has overcome its ideological character.

Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 opened another page for Islamic Republic in terms of its relations with both regional powers and America. A U.S. led international coalition established to expel Iraq from Kuwait and from United Kingdom, France and Italy to Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan 37 countries were in this coalition. On 17 January 1991 this international coalition started a group of operations against Iraq and on 28 February 1991 ceasefire between the coalition and Saddam was accepted. Significance of First Gulf War for Islamic Republic was its unique feasibility to demonstrate Iran's desire to be a part of international community. Islamic Republic had three options in first gulf war: first option was denying American led operations against Iraq and supporting Saddam against international coalition. This option was uttered by anti-imperialist ideologic elements however eight-year war of Iran against Iraq made this option improbable. The second option which is being a part of coalition against the Saddam was as improbable as the first option. Because this will mean destruction of Islamic Republic's anti-imperialist posture and will render Iran's Islamic character meaningless. Furthermore, in a condition that some of the radical factions declared jihad against international coalition, being a part of the coalition would destabilise Iran's domestic world.<sup>246</sup> The last option was staying neutral and Iran has preferred this way but as Fred Halliday emphasized this neutrality was not a totally excluded neutrality, in its neutral position Iran tilted towards to coalition powers.<sup>247</sup> Neutrality and conforming the United Nations' decisions were strong gestures that indicated Islamic Republic's desire to fix its rogue image in international community. Especially Iran's enabling role in war has been appreciated by U.S. authorities. Its permission to the U.S. Air Force to use Iranian airspace and its non-interventionist attitude against southern Iraqi Shiites' call

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<sup>246</sup> Takeyh, *Guardians of the Revolution*, 135.

<sup>247</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 49.

for aid to topple down Saddam Hossain made America's work easier in war and post war period.<sup>248</sup>

Islamic Republic's attitude in the first Gulf War was a start point for Iran in terms of acting according to international norms and international system. In Iran-Iraq war Islamic Republic acquiesced the United Nations' resolution at the end of eighth year but Ayatollah Khomeini's statements about UN and his description of UN as a tool of arrogant powers indicated Iran's compulsory approval of the United Nations' resolution. Khomeini has stated his reluctance about UN resolution with his famous allegory: drinking poison. He said that what he has done was 'in the interest of the survival of the revolution, even though it was like drinking poison.'<sup>249</sup> However after the first Gulf War Iran declared its support to the UN position and this was a powerful sign for international community about Islamic Republic's changing policies toward global structures. Reflections of this change crystalized in U.S.-Iran relations at American invasion of Afghanistan. After the 9/11 attacks America declared global war against terrorism and Afghanistan was determined as the first destination because American authorities stated that Osama bin Laden who has been blamed for being the mastermind behind the attacks was hiding in Afghanistan and de facto ruler of Afghanistan, Taliban, denied to extradite him to U.S. Iran's implicit approval of American invasion of Iraq in the first Gulf War has turned into a strategic cooperation in Afghanistan War. American and Iranian interests have converged in destruction of Taliban regime. Therefore, Iran has offered a great assistance to American powers during the war. Iran opened its airbases to United States, they assisted American powers in search – and – rescue operations for downed American pilots and maybe as the most vital assistance Islamic Republic played an intermediary role between United States and anti-Taliban Northern Alliance in Afghanistan war.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 142.

<sup>249</sup> Ehtesami and Zweiri, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 8.

<sup>250</sup> Shahram Akbarzadeh and Dara Conduit, "Rouhani's First Two Years in Office: Opportunities and Risks in Contemporary Iran," in *Iran in the World President Rouhani's Foreign Policy*, ed. Shahram Akbarzadeh and Dara Conduit (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 1-17.

Close co-operation of Iran and America continued after the war. In Bonn conference which has been held for determination of interim government after the fall of Taliban in December 2001, Washington and Tehran worked together for involving Northern Alliance to political process.<sup>251</sup> Again Iranian's efforts were appreciated by American representatives same as in first Gulf War period. James Dobbin, U.S. special envoy to Afghanistan, gave Iranian's credit by saying that: "We might have had a situation like we had in Iraq, where we were never able to settle on a single leader and government."<sup>252</sup> Islamic Republic tried to maintain its cooperation with U.S. by offering to help rebuilding Afghan army under the leadership of the United States and Tehran made a commitment which provide more than \$500 million for re-construction of Afghanistan after the war.<sup>253</sup> Iran's assistance to United States in Afghanistan was a strategic decision but its endeavours for keeping interactions with U.S. alive and sustaining cooperation indicated that Iran wants to "breach the wall of distrust"<sup>254</sup> with one of the most powerful norm setters of international system and its number one guardian after the cold war.

After Afghanistan invasion United States steered the helm towards Iraq on the name of War on Terror. This was a worrisome decision for Islamic Republic. Even though they did not have good relations with Saddam, presence of United States at its borders was not a preferable option for Iranians. Especially after the overthrown of Taliban in Afghanistan, Iran got rid of one of its enemies in eastern boarders but United States' existence in Afghanistan continued Iran's apprehensions on its eastern front. In this circumstance confronting with U.S. at its western front too would not be a desirable situation for Islamic Republic. On the other hand, any kind of unsuccessful post-war reconstruction

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<sup>251</sup> Nasr, "When the Shiites Rise," 73.

<sup>252</sup> Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 229.

<sup>253</sup> Ramazani, *Independence without Freedom*, 312.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 313.

scenario in which Iraqi Kurds had declared their independence and because of power vacuum other actors of the region i.e. Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Syria had involved into Iraq would affect Iran deeply and would cause destabilization of Iran.<sup>255</sup> Therefore Iran has opposed to occupation of Iraq but when rulers of Islamic Republic understood that this occupation is inevitable, they chose to imply same policy that they have adopted in first Gulf War. Iranians was compelled to choose lesser evil and they decided to support American invasion indirectly. This indirect support has realized through Iran's proxies in Iraq. Iran has told its proxies like ad-Dawa and Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq to not resist against United States occupation.<sup>256</sup> Instead of resisting occupiers, Tehran counselled its proxies to participate United States led construction process.<sup>257</sup> Iran's support to United States in invasion of Iraq was not similar with its support in Afghanistan war. However, it is a fact that if Iranians wanted to hamper United States' occupation, they could easily made it more difficult and painful for Americans via its proxies but they did not.<sup>258</sup>

Because of both sides' mistrust and scepticism against each other, relations between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran has continued on an unstable ground. In order to alleviate burdens of U.S. based sanctions and to reduce negative effects of international isolation, Iran tried to exhibit its readiness to establish a relationship with America via its direct and indirect assistance to U.S. in the region. Afghanistan war was may be the most explicit indicator of this assistance. However, Iranian authorities shocked by American President George W. Bush's 'axis of evil' speech. In his 2002 State of the Union address, Bush blamed North Korea, Iraq and Iran for sponsoring terror and

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<sup>255</sup> Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 242.

<sup>256</sup> Kenneth M Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle The Conflict Between Iran and America* (New York: Random House, 2004), 353.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

qualified these regimes as 'axis of evil'<sup>259</sup>In the same speech Bush accused Iran of pursuing weapons of mass destruction and exporting terror.<sup>260</sup> In a period that Iranian President Khatami endeavoured to promote his country's relations with regional and global actors American attitude against Islamic Republic interrupted Khatami's dialogue policy. Especially after the invasion of Iraq Iranian anxiety about being the next target of America has increased. Iranian silence on invasion and even its indirect assistance to American government might be considered as a ransom in exchange for being free from U.S. invasion. However, the real ransom offer was going to reveal just after the President Bush's declaration of victory on 1 May 2003. A negotiation proposal has been prepared and delivered to American authorities by the top of the Islamic Republic government in May 2003. The proposal has been prepared by Iran's ambassador of France and was edited by Islamic Republic's UN ambassador Javad Zarif. Yet, the things that made this proposal a historical document was firstly its content and secondly its ratification by the supreme leader Ayatollah Khamanei and the president Khatami.<sup>261</sup> Because of Iranian offers in the proposal, this negotiation offer has been denominated as 'Grand Bargain'. Islamic Republic wanted to interact and make a deal with 'the Great Satan' once more and when Iran's revolutionary values and offers of the proposal are considered together, it would be easily noticed that this bargain offer to 'the Great Satan' was not less dramatic than Faust's.

The proposal was composed of two parts. In the first part Iranian aims were described and these were basically Iran's requests from United States. In the second part U.S. aims were defined and these aims were the Iranians' offer to U.S. at the expense of their requests. Iranians tried to put a comprehensive proposal which includes almost all

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<sup>259</sup>"Text of President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address," *The Washington Post* January 29, 2002, accessed April 23, 2019. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/transcripts/sou012902.htm>.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 243.

contradictive issues between them and America. Firstly, Iranian side wanted Americans to stop hostile behaviours against Islamic Republic. This request was including interference to internal and external relations of Iran, axis of evil description and may be as the most important one abolishment of all sanctions.<sup>262</sup> Iranian frozen assets, commercial sanctions against Iran and United States' inhibitor role against Iranian involvement in international economic organizations constituted main subjects of this request. Secondly, Islamic Republic wanted recognition and respect of its interests in Iraq. This article covered Iran's claim for Iraqi reparations and recognition of Islamic Republic's religious links with Najaf and Karbala.<sup>263</sup> Thirdly, and may be the most vital point of the proposal, Iranian part demanded recognition of its right to develop peaceful nuclear technology, bio technology and chemical technology and full access to aforementioned technologies.<sup>264</sup> Lastly recognition of Iran's legitimate security interests in region and cooperation against anti-Iranian groups, especially MKO(*Mojahedin-e Halq, People's Mujahidin Organization*), in Iraq and U.S. have been demanded by Islamic Republic.<sup>265</sup> These were main requests of Iranian authorities from Americans but offers of Islamic Republic were surprising when revolutionary values of Islamic Republic is taken into consideration. First of all, Iran proposed to open its nuclear program to international organization and full cooperation with IAEA. In order to prove Iran's indifference to WMDs and full transparency, Iran submitted to adoption of all relevant instruments and ratification of additional IAEA protocols.<sup>266</sup> Iran has tried to develop its nuclear program from Hashemi Rafsanjani era to Khatami's presidency under the pressure of international community. Especially disclosure of some clandestine nuclear plants were indicators of Iranian persistence on nuclear project. By complying to international investigation and

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid., 341.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.



affirmation of cooperation with IAEA Iran has given a great concession. The second and one of the most important suggestions of proposal was related with Iraq. Iranian part promised to contribute stabilization of Iraq and support to establishment of democratic institutions and assistance to creation of a *non-religious* government has been guaranteed.<sup>267</sup> Iranian support to stabilization of Iraq was not an unexpected behaviour however emphasis on supporting establishment of a non-religious government was very surprising. When Iran-Iraq war and revolutionary regime's export of revolution policy are considered, Iran's withdrawal from its desire to transform Iraq into an Islamic state can be described as one of the most conspicuous evidences of Islamic Republic's concession from revolutionary discourse. Last part of the Iranian offer was related with Iran's stance against Israel and Palestine struggle. Iran suggested to stop any material support to Palestinian opposition groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad and promised to press on these groups to stop violent actions against civilians within borders of 1967.<sup>268</sup> Moreover, they stated that Iran would demilitarize its organic proxy Hezbollah in Lebanon and transform it to a mere political organization.<sup>269</sup> These two proposals were powerful signs of Islamic Republic's eagerness to give up its ideological hallmarks in return for emancipation from marginalization of U.S and international isolation. The last offer of Iran was a historic decision for Islamic Republic's elites. In the last article of proposal, the Iranians offered the accept 2002 Beirut declaration of Arab League in which Arab states offered to make peace collectively with Israel, normalizing their relations with Jewish state in return for Israel's withdrawal from occupied territories and its recognition of a fully independent Palestinian state.<sup>270</sup> The Islamic Republic who was objecting two states solution in Palestine and who was considering this solution as an injustice for Palestinians suggested to accept this Saudi Arabia led declaration.

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<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

This authentic proposal of Islamic Republic has been delivered to Washington via the Swiss ambassador of Iran. However American authorities has rejected to deal with Islamic Republic. Some of the American bureaucrats wanted to sit negotiation table. Yet, final word was very tragic for Iranians because Americans has refused the proposal by saying “We don’t speak to evil”<sup>271</sup> It seemed that roles have changed and Iran which has characterized U.S. as ‘the Great Satan’ was described as ‘the evil’ by Americans this time. I think affirmation or rejection of the proposal is not very important to understand Islamic Republic’s motivation in its foreign policy decisions. Even proposing this kind of resolution to its so-called archenemy revealed that Islamic Republic might give up its revolutionary commitments at the expense of its fundamental need of survival. Especially American based containment policies brought Iran to negotiation table and in order to break isolation siege Iran tried to convince the leader of the containment policy but this effort remained inconclusive.

#### **4.2. Open-Door Policy**

Iran’s self-isolationist Neither East nor West policy has emerged as an independence declaration but revolutionary elites knew that a complete isolation was not possible for new-born Islamic Republic. Therefore, to avoid domination of Western or Eastern states Islamic Republic should balance its relations with two blocs by either side.<sup>272</sup> Even Ayatollah Khomeini’s himself was aware of this fact and he admitted that Iran needs foreign aid to become a powerful actor in international world.<sup>273</sup> This awareness revealed as ‘open door policy’ during the Iran-Iraq war period. Ayatollah Khomeini said that “Iran must end its hermit status in the world”<sup>274</sup> and with the confirmation of

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid.,248.

<sup>272</sup> Ramazani, *Independence without Freedom*, 144.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., 120.

supreme leader, President Ali Khamenei initiated 'open door' foreign policy on 30 July 1984. The aim of this policy was establishing 'rational, sound and healthy relations with all countries and this aim, according to Khamenei, will ultimately serve Iran's interest and ideology.'<sup>275</sup> I think 'open door' policy initiative was a symbol for Islamic Republic's eagerness to be freed from complete isolation and it was a signal to international actors. Iran's conciliatory policies toward United Nations and its endeavours to cooperate with European powers are indicators of open-door policies. Thus, these two behaviour spaces of Iran are important to understand Tehran's desire to break segregation circle by behaving according to rules of the international system that it has challenged ontologically.

During the hostage crisis president Banisadr wanted to settle the crisis through the United Nations however, Ayatollah Khomeini has opposed Banisadr's will by describing the United Nations as an instrument of American foreign policy.<sup>276</sup> This opposition was reflection of Khomeini's and intrinsically Islamic Republic's disobedience to international system. However, this disobedience did not last long. On 17 July 1988 Iran notified UNSC resolution 598 which called on "Iran and Iraq to observe an immediate ceasefire, discontinue all military actions and withdraw all forces to the internationally recognized boundaries."<sup>277</sup> It was an obligatory ratification for Islamic Republic because of the conditions and this has been considered as the first accomplishment of Iranian realists since the revolution. Ayatollah Khomeini's famous 'drinking poison' statement presented the obligatory aspect of UNSC resolution 598 however, Islamic Republic's other interactions with international institutions and change in its attitudes toward United

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>277</sup> "Security Council Resolution 598: Iraq-Islamic Republic of Iran," *United Nations Peacemaker* July 20, 1987, accessed May 1, 2019.  
[https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/IQ%20IR\\_870720\\_Security%20Council%20Resolution%20598%20%281987%29.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/IQ%20IR_870720_Security%20Council%20Resolution%20598%20%281987%29.pdf).

Nations meant a lot in terms of its socialization. Iran's position in the first Gulf War might be considered as the first sign of alteration. Islamic Republic has supported the UN position on Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and this time there was no compulsory condition for confirming United Nations' decisions. By accommodating the UN Iran tried to show its "endeavor to become a good citizen"<sup>278</sup> and its bona fide efforts have been appreciated by European countries. They removed economic sanctions against Islamic Republic and normalized their relations. Iran wanted to benefit from this opportunity and opened its doors to the United Nations Special Representative of Human Rights.<sup>279</sup> Another important gesture that represented Iran's desire to remove its outsider image was Islamic Republic's acceptance to mediation of UN over Pakistan-backed Taliban militia's killing of 11 Iranian consulate personnel in Afghanistan in 1998.<sup>280</sup> In order to avoid war with Taliban which would strengthen the allegations of being a rogue state Iran preferred to draw a responsible state portrait on the eyes of international community.

As I have emphasized before, Iran's open-door policy was a consequence of Islamic Republic's need of foreign aid to provide promised prosperity. Especially after the Iran-Iraq war re-construction process of ruined Iran was in need of cooperation of other countries. Western part of the world which was a suitable partner for re-construction process of post-revolutionary Iran was consisted of two major players: U.S. and Europe. Although, Iran-U.S. relations have deteriorated after the revolution and the hostage crises, Islamic Republic did not close diplomacy door totally. Ayatollah Khomeini has indicated the condition of diplomatic contact with United States as "if America behaves itself"<sup>281</sup> This means Iran wanted U.S. to give up its hegemony claims on Islamic Republic. However, this conditional interaction did not take place and Iran turned its face to

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<sup>278</sup> Anoushiravan Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck in transition* (London; New York: RoutledgeTaylor & Francis Group, 2017), 192.

<sup>279</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 58.

<sup>280</sup> Akbarzadeh and Conduit, "Iran in the World," 24.

<sup>281</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 10.

remained part of the West: Europe. Relations of Islamic Republic and the West has developed through Europe and mutual economic interdependency of both sides kept relations alive.

After the Iran-Iraq war state of emergency atmosphere dispersed and postponed needs of Islamic Republic, due to the fight for survival, has appeared conspicuously. Hashem Rafsanjani, the president of post-war period, tried to overcome difficulties by improving relations with European powers and he pushed hard to promote cooperation between Iran and European states. This was a win-win situation for two sides because Iran needed industrial equipment, spare parts and technological know-how and European states like Germany, Great Britain, France and Italy were in need of Iranian oil.<sup>282</sup> Iran's desire to establish a discreet relation with European countries was responded positively after Iran's effort to release of hostages that have been captivated in Lebanon until 1992. At 1992 EU summit in Edinburgh European powers declared start of a new chapter in relations with Islamic Republic. This new phase called as 'critical dialogue'<sup>283</sup> which was described as an 'attempt' to change Islamic Republic's incompatible behaviours and support to advocates of moderation in regime.<sup>284</sup> This attempt was EU's endeavour to integrate Iran into global system and by participating reconstruction of Islamic Republic European powers aimed to increase their influence over post-revolutionary regime. While Europeans asserted the main goal of critical dialogue as raising the awareness of Iran about human rights and terrorism, the process was criticized by others for being the cover of European countries' desire to legitimize their trade with a rogue state.<sup>285</sup> To some extent critical dialogue has succeed on its goal to arise awareness of human right issues in Iran. In 1995 Iran set up the Islamic Human Rights Commission and, a

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<sup>282</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 83.

<sup>283</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck*, 194.

<sup>284</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 83.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*

department named as 'Department of Human Rights' has been established under the umbrella of foreign affairs ministry.<sup>286</sup> These regulations can be considered as mirror images of Iran's awakening about that it cannot neglect some international norms in its external relations. To satisfy its needs Islamic Republic had to play the game by the rules. Especially in relations with European powers some international norms like human rights, freedom of speech and terrorism played a vital role for development of relations however Iranian attempts to enhance relations failed with assassinations of some Iranian dissidents in Europe e.g. Mykonos affair<sup>287</sup> and continuation of Salman Rushdie affair.

Relations between Europe and Islamic Republic witnessed ups and downs too many times and could not stabilize since the revolution. After the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989 and with Hashem Rafsanjani's takeover of presidency, hopes for coming up to a sensible level in relations have emerged in both European actors and Iranian pragmatists. However, constituent revolutionary values of Islamic Republic and conservative elements of the regime posed problems for enhancement of relations. Although his enthusiasm for establishing robust relations with European countries, Hashem Rafsanjani could not overcome arduous domestic obstacles inhibited advancement of relations. It was not totally Iranian oriented failure but, in any case, bridge of trust could not be constructed between two sides. Earning the confidence of Europeans and bringing the relations at a higher level have been performed by Rafsanjani's successor. Euphoria that has revealed with Mohammad Khatami's reformist domestic policies echoed through Iran's external relations and Islamic Republic's relations with Europe started to rise again.

Seyyed Mohammad Khatami has been elected as the fifth president of Islamic Republic in 1997. His presidential term was described as period of détente because of both his

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<sup>286</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 85.

<sup>287</sup> On 17 September 1992 four Iranian-Kurdish opposition leaders were assassinated at a Greek restaurant named Mykonos in Berlin. In 1997 a German court found top leaders of Islamic Republic namely Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, President Hashem Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister Ali Velayati responsible for giving order of assassinations. Rezaei, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 84.

foreign and domestic policy understanding. Khatami attached a particular importance to civil society and rule of law during his tenure. His promotion of democratic principles and his emphasize on Iran's integration to international system were two prominent policies of Khatami government. These two policies namely 'democracy at home and peace abroad' were two sides of the same coin according to Ramazani.<sup>288</sup> Khatami presented new foreign policy paradigm of Islamic Republic via his speech at United Nations in 1998. In his speech Khatami proposed his 'dialogue among civilizations' paradigm and he rejected clash between different cultures and civilizations. He stated that Islamic Republic "has accorded removal of tension the highest priority in its foreign policy."<sup>289</sup>and by saying "today, the Iranian nation draws on its past to contemplate a better tomorrow"<sup>290</sup> he exhibited Islamic Republic's readiness to socialize in international community. Khatami's new approach has yielded in short term. United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the year 2001 as 'the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilization' on 4 November 1998<sup>291</sup>and Khatami's efforts started to be considered as radical changes in Islamic Republic's foreign policy by European powers. As a consequence of this evaluation relations between Iran and some European countries like France, Greece, Italy and Spain started to ameliorate and president Khatami became the first Iranian president to be accepted by these countries since the revolution.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> Rouhollah K. Ramazani, "The Shifting Premise of Iran's Foreign Policy: Towards a Democratic Peace?" *Middle East Journal* 52, no.2 (1998).

<sup>289</sup> "Statement by H.E. Mohammad Khatami President of the Islamic Republic of Iran before the 53rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly," *Pars Times* September 21, 1998, accessed May 1, 2019. [http://www.parstimes.com/history/khatami\\_speech\\_un.html](http://www.parstimes.com/history/khatami_speech_un.html).

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>291</sup> "Meetings Coverage and Press Releases." *United Nations* November 4, 1998, accessed May 1, 2019. <https://www.un.org/press/en/1998/19981104.ga9497.html>.

<sup>292</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, XV.

Khatami's 'dialogue' initiative was the first step of Islamic Republic's "synthetic integration"<sup>293</sup> to international system and in order to earn trust of European powers the dialogue commitment had to be supported by a concrete step. This concrete step was taken in 1998. The most significant barrier that deteriorated the relations between European powers, especially the United Kingdom, and Islamic Republic was Ayatollah Khomeini's 1989 fatwa against British author Salman Rushdie. Most of the European countries had considered this fatwa as a direct assault to their universal values and the struggle has turned into a litmus test for Europeans. Because of the fatwa, European countries temporarily suspended their relations with Iran but impact of the Salman Rushdie affair continued to cast a cloud on relations. In 1998 the barrier was replaced through negotiations between Iran and the UK.<sup>294</sup> After the negotiations Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said: " The government of the Islamic republic of Iran has no intention, nor is it going to take any action whatsoever, to threaten the life of the author of The Satanic Verses or anybody associated with his work, nor will it encourage or assist anybody to do so."<sup>295</sup> This was a historic moment for both Iranians and Europeans. It was historic for Iranians because fatwa of the spiritual leader of revolution has been described as Ayatollah Khomeini's personal view and not Iran's official policy. Until that day nobody could dare to disavow Khomeini's fatwa, even Hashemi Rafsanjani could not take this step to ameliorate relations with European powers. For Europeans it was the first bold action of Islamic Republic to show its change and support its dialogue claims. The issue of Salman Rushdie was one of the issues that led Iran to be called a rogue state. Moreover, it has been used for proving Iran's claims on being the leader of Muslim world by Iranian conservatives. In every aspect Salman Rushdie affair was a distinctive sign of Islamic Republic's ideologic stance. Disavow of the fatwa was the clearest evidence of

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<sup>293</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck*, 201.

<sup>294</sup> Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance*, 204.

<sup>295</sup> Ian Black, "Rushdie's nightmare is over," *The Guardian* September 25, 1998, accessed May 2, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/1998/sep/25/ianblack>.



the triumph of national interest over ideology.<sup>296</sup>By this way Islamic Republic has presented its openness to change and cooperation to both European and international powers.

Islamic Republic's post 9/11 attitude, its condemnation of attacks<sup>297</sup> and its enabling and facilitating acts in Afghanistan war influenced Iran's relations with Europe positively. However, with Iranian dissident group MEK's disclosure of secret nuclear plants in Iran on 3 February 2003, a new crisis emerged in Iran's relations with Europe. This incident has destroyed remaining chances of progress in Iran-European relations and brought the relation on a different ground.<sup>298</sup>

After the revelation of clandestine nuclear plants and Iran's official acknowledgment of its uranium enrichment projects in these secret places European powers got involved to Iran's nuclear struggle. France, Germany and the UK sent a joint letter to Iran on 26 August 2003 and they demanded Iran to ratify and implement additional protocols of NPT and halt its uranium enrichment activities.<sup>299</sup> One of the most important things that European powers cared about Islamic Republic's nuclear program was Iran's full-cooperation with IAEA and European Union Foreign Policy chief Javier Solana indicated this situation by saying : "only if there is a rapid progress in Iran's discussions with the IAEA, it will be possible to avoid unwelcome effects on the EU's relations with Iran"<sup>300</sup> It was an explicit indicator for Iranian authorities about on which ground European-Iranian

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<sup>296</sup> Rouhollah K. Ramazani, "Ideology and Pragmatism in Iran's Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal* 58, no.4 (2004): 558.

<sup>297</sup> "Iranian president condemns September 11 attacks," *CNN* November 12, 2001, accessed May 2, 2019. <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/meast/11/12/khatami.interview.cnn/>.

<sup>298</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 89.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> "EU envoy warns Iran," *BBC* August 30, 2003, accessed May 2, 2019. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/3190319.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3190319.stm).

relations going to continue. Disclosure of secret nuclear plants put Iran behind the eight ball in international arena and in order to prevent delivery of its nuclear dossier to UNSC by IAEA Iran approached to negotiate its nuclear program with EU.

European representatives and Iranian statesmen met in Tehran in October 2003 and a statement called as the Tehran statement has been issued. In this statement Europeans wanted Iran to stop enriching uranium without anticipating something in return. Then another statement named as Saadabad statement followed the Tehran talks on 21 October 2003. With this statement Iran committed to suspend its uranium enrichment process in accordance with directives of IAEA.<sup>301</sup> On 23 February 2004 Iran and European countries, France-Germany and the UK, were agreed on Brussels Agreement according to which Iran accepted to suspend its uranium enrichment program and European powers accepted to collaborate with Islamic Republic in economic and technologic fields on condition that if Iran's nuclear program is exculpated as a peaceful program.<sup>302</sup> Iranians hoped that with this agreement European powers would close Iranian nuclear program dossier in 2004 June meeting of IAEA Board of Governors' meeting. However, when the IAEA reports showed that information given by Iranian authorities about their nuclear program had contradictions, Europeans refrained from standing behind Iran, despite their commitment to the Brussels Treaty.<sup>303</sup> Because of European troika's attitude in June meeting of IAEA Iran stated that European powers breached their commitments in Brussel Agreement therefore by writing letters to Director General of IAEA as well as the foreign ministers of Germany, France and the UK Tehran officially announced cancellation of its obligations that arose from Brussel Agreement.<sup>304</sup> After the collapse of Brussel Agreement, concerns of Iranian authorities on being referred to UNSC increased. In order to diffuse the crisis that started after the collapse of Brussel

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<sup>301</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 90.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>303</sup> Seyyed Hossein Mousavian, *Iran–Europe Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 170.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, 172.

Agreement and preventing referral of nuclear dossier to UNSC Iran has submitted a proposal to Germany, France and the UK on 24 July 2004. Iran's first proposal was not accepted by European powers but after negotiations both sides reached a common ground that basic requirements of both sides were satisfied. This common ground was officialised as Paris Agreement on 14 November 2004 just a few days before the crucial IAEA Board of Governor's meeting. In 25 November 2004 dated meeting, referral of Iran's dossier to UNSC was going to be discussed and indicators were pointing that referral of the dossier would be probable because of the United States' pressure. Therefore, to avert this scenario Iran and European powers signed Paris Agreement and by taking Paris Agreement as reference IAEA did not send Iran's dossier to UNSC.

European powers have been an alternative part of the Western world for Iranians. During the Cold War period Islamic Republic did not equate European powers with United States. Increased economic and political relations after the 1979 Iran Hostage crisis might be considered as an example for this differentiation. After the Cold War eastern front of Iran's confrontation policy has disappeared by itself and Islamic Republic concentrated to Western front. Values and beliefs that Iran has opposed did not belong to only United States. These values are European originated values and Iran has directly encountered with this fact in Salman Rushdie affair. However, significance of the European powers for survival of Islamic Republic in both economic and political senses was considerable. Especially European powers' attitudes on Iran's nuclear project proved that United States and European powers had different roles in Islamic Republic's socialization process. Instead of United States' isolationist policies European powers followed integrationist policies toward Islamic Republic.<sup>305</sup> Iran has benefitted from this divergency. President Khatami's détente policy towards international community and especially his endeavour to establish more powerful relations with the Europe were parts of Islamic Republic's countering U.S. influence strategy.<sup>306</sup> All in all, Islamic Republic did

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<sup>305</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 74.

<sup>306</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck*, 203.

not close the policy door totally. In order to rehabilitate its relations with international actors Iran gave up some of its ideological approaches. Disavowal of Khomeini's fatwa for Salman Rushdie was one of the most obvious concessions that Iran made for protect its material interests. Also approaching to European powers for being safe from referral to UNSC on nuclear program indicated that Islamic Republic preferred to make ideological concessions in exchange for being free from heavier costs. The question that 'how making an agreement on nuclear program can be considered as a concession' is a fair question. Considering domestic debates of Iranians on nuclear agreements can help us to answer this question. Hardliners were criticizing government for submitting the Western pressure. The most explicit reflection of this stance was hardliner Larijani's comment about Iran's nuclear negotiations. He stated that "in nuclear negotiations Iran gave up pearls in exchange for box of chocolates."<sup>307</sup>

#### **4.3. Looking the East**

'The East' was the first component of the Islamic Republic's famous 'Neither East nor West' discourse. The epithet 'east' was referring to the Soviets and by mentioning both the Soviets and the Americans, revolutionists denied impositions of the Cold War's bipolar atmosphere. As I explained broadly in the third chapter, Ayatollah Khomeini opposed Western influence on Iran and accused the Western powers of infidelity. Yet, while he was describing the West as 'Infidel West', the Soviets were being called 'Atheist East' by him. The Soviets were vilified by the revolutionary ideology like their Western counterparts but, the Islamic Republic did not break off its relations with the Soviets. After the collapse of the USSR, Iran's relations with Russia gained a new dimension and its outlook on the East started to reflect on Iran's relation with the Asian powers. Iran has always tried to counterbalance the Western pressure by increasing its relations with the Eastern powers. Both powers were considered as alternatives of each other and Iran

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<sup>307</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 55.

did not totally ignore one side while it was trying to improve its relations with the other side.

The Islamic Republic's relations with Soviet Russia could not improve expeditiously after the revolution. Because of the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, Ayatollah Khomeini harshly criticized the Soviets in his 21 March 1980 dated new year's message. He said: "I vehemently condemn once more the savage occupation of Afghanistan by the aggressive plunderers of the East, and I hope that the noble Muslim people of Afghanistan will achieve victory and true independence as soon as possible, and be delivered from the clutches of the so-called champions of the working class."<sup>308</sup> Iran's ideological stance decelerated the rapprochement of both countries but increase in Iran's needs for reconstruction and the Islamic Republic's endeavours to defeat American containment policies made Russia a desired partner for Iran.

After the revolution there were some pragmatists who wanted to establish close economic and political relations with Soviet Russia. They anticipated getting support of the Soviets during the Iraq War or at least deterring the Soviets from supporting Saddam. The Soviets, who were not as eager as the Iranians, were lenient towards the cooperation, but they had to wait until the death of Ayatollah Khomeini.<sup>309</sup> Just two weeks after the death of Khomeini, Hashem Rafsanjani visited Moscow and he was greeted warmly by the Russian authorities. The main goal of Rafsanjani was cooperation with the Soviets on the nuclear energy field and benefiting from the Soviet nuclear technology and experience. Because of the US pressure, European countries were reluctant to assist Iran in nuclear technology. Therefore, the Soviets became the first source that Iran can get nuclear technology and know-how. On 22 June 1989 Rafsanjani and Gorbachev signed an agreement on nuclear cooperation and as a continuation of

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<sup>308</sup> Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings*, 287.

<sup>309</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 52.

this interaction in 1990 the Soviets agreed to complete Bushehr nuclear power plant with a comprehensive deal.<sup>310</sup> Although the Soviets improved their relations with Iran, there were not many incentives for the Soviets to bring relations into a higher level. After the dispersion of the Soviet Union Central Asia became a breathing ground for the Islamic Republic. Especially when Americans' containment policies and European powers' reluctance to help a non-audited nuclear Iran are taken into consideration, the value of the newly liberated Central Asia for Iran can be understood easily. But Iran did not attempt to enter this geography by ignoring Russia. This good behaviour of Iran in Central Asia and its compatible strategy with Russia contributed to Moscow-Tehran rapprochement.<sup>311</sup> However, Russia was not ready for establishing close relations with the Islamic Republic despite the pressure from the Western powers. The Gore-Chernomyrdin Agreement was an obvious evidence for this. According to the reports, the US vice president Al Gore warned the Russian prime minister Victor Chernomyrdin about Russia's arms sale to Iran and he told that "U.S. might be forced to impose sanctions on Russia if it sold arms to Iran."<sup>312</sup>

Russia withdrew from the Gore-Chernomyrdin Agreement in 2000s and this decision opened the way of enhancing the relations with Iran. However, during the presidency of Khatami, relations with Russia did not show a significant improvement. Khatami visited Moscow in March 2001, but this visit did not result in a military cooperation or a strategic partnership. This was not a surprise because Iran-Russia relations had never progressed on a smooth plane. There were some conflicts like sharing Caspian Sea resources and the Bushehr nuclear plant which had turned into a long-winded story. Although the agreement to build Bushehr nuclear facility was signed in 1995, the plant could not be activated until 2010. Russians gave Iranian non-payment and technical difficulties as

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<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 111.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

pretext for the delay, but these were not enough to persuade the Iranian authorities. In 2009 Iran declared that 96 percent of the plant was finished and remained parts were going to be completed by the Iranians.<sup>313</sup> The volatility of Russian attitude against Iran did not change the Islamic Republic's desire to cooperate with Russia in nuclear technology and some other fields.

Khatami was famous for his dialogue paradigm and other side of the dialogue was the Western world. He spent most of his energy to change the Islamic Republic's image in the eyes of America and Europe. However, without finding a common solution to Iran's nuclear dilemma with the Western world he handed over the presidency to Ahmadinejad, one of the most vigorous advocates of Iran's looking East policy. In Ahmadinejad's view 'the East' means the world minus the West. Because the nuclear power became a litmus test for Iran's sovereignty and independence during the Ahmadinejad era, Iran tried to find suitable partners who can cooperate with Iran without proposing its nuclear program as a matter of negotiation. Most of the Iranian politicians embraced Ahmadinejad's non-Western approach because they believed that "moving towards the East is less risky than building relations with the West, with its hegemonic tendencies."<sup>314</sup> Within the context of looking at the East, Iran submitted its application for becoming a full member of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2006.<sup>315</sup> In 2005, Iran obtained observer status in SCO however increased the Western pressure pushed Iran to the Eastern powers and while submitting its full-membership application, Iran declared that the Islamic Republic desire to "see the SCO emerge as a counterforce to NATO and Western domination."<sup>316</sup> During the first term of Ahmadinejad, Iran hastened its Asia-leaning policies. It tried to take a place in existing

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<sup>313</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>314</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, XIV.

<sup>315</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck*, 227.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid.

Asian groups and build up new intra-Asian cooperation bodies. By getting an observer status in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and by attempting to gain the same position in the Association of South Asian Nation (ASEAN), Iran exhibited its strong aspiration to become a part of the growing Asian economy.<sup>317</sup> Iran did not remain limited with Asia in its pursuit of finding non-Western partners. Ahmadinejad tried to reach out to the developing countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa. He emphasized Iran's and these countries' shared identity of being victims of arrogant powers<sup>318</sup> and through he endeavoured to fortify the Islamic Republic's anti-Western position in the international realm. This strategy of cooperation with the middle range rising powers succeeded to some extent. Iran-Turkey and Iran-Brazil rapprochements and these two countries' willingness to play an active role in Iran's nuclear issue in 2010 can be considered as achievements of Iran's raising powers strategy.<sup>319</sup>

In order to complete the Islamic Republic's 'looking East' policy puzzle, I think relations between Iran and China should be scrutinized. After the Iran-Iraq War, China and Russia constituted two options of the Islamic Republic in the nuclear energy field. In 1993, Iran and China signed an agreement for the construction of two nuclear power plants but because of the sanctions United States imposed on Iran, China was forced to withdraw from the agreement in 1996.<sup>320</sup> However, the Chinese investments in Iran's energy sector continued, this cooperation was a win-win situation for both sides because China was heavily dependent on foreign energy sources and Iran had an acute need of foreign investment. Although Iran's détente policy encouraged hopes for West based improvements in Iranian economy, Iran did not turn a deaf ear to the East. President

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<sup>317</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 140.

<sup>318</sup> Warnaar, *Iranian Foreign Policy*, 86-87.

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>320</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 123.



Khatami visited China with a strong delegation that included ministers, industry leaders and high-ranking defence officials.<sup>321</sup>

This was a powerful indicator of Iran's eagerness to increase its alternative partners in international society. Especially in a US dominated post-Soviet era China was a prominent actor in Iran's pursuit of an alternative socializer. Beside China's potential for technologic transfers and investment, Iran wanted to cooperate with China because of its indifference to the Islamic Republic's ideologic posture. Therefore, Iran considered China as a promising strategic and political counterweight to United States and tried to improve its relations with China after the revolution.

Islamic Republic's tilt toward the Eastern powers, more precisely non-Western powers, was a consequence of the Western powers' capricious approach to Iran and domestic actors' desire to negate the American pressure. In order to lessen the harmful impact of the American containment policy, Iran tried to improve its relations with Europe but this strategy did not create desired results. At the end of the day, despite its more integrationist discourse towards Iran, Europe failed to be nothing more than a shadow of United States. This disappointment pushed Iran to pursue a track change policy in its external relations. Since the revolution Iran had relations with Eastern countries like Russia and China. Yet, these relations could not reach to desired levels. Because in the post-Cold War period, the American hegemony did not allow other countries to increase their relations with the Islamic Republic. The Gore-Chernomyrdin Agreement and China's withdrawal from the installation of the two nuclear centrifuges in Iran were conspicuous indicators of the American influence over other countries. However, with the rise of multipolarity in the first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century more opportunities have emerged for Iran to cooperate with these Eastern big powers. The newly elected Iranian president Rouhani has emphasized this situation at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting in September 2013. He said that "following the end of bipolar power tensions,

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<sup>321</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck*, 204.

the trend of cooperation and competition has taken the place of absolute competition or absolute cooperation. Regional cooperation and regional gravitation, alongside the use of intra-regional capacities, bring the promise of a multipolar world order.”<sup>322</sup> On the other hand, relations between Iran and the non-Western countries did not develop totally independent from the United States’ influence even in the multipolar era. Russia, China and India used their relations with Iran as a tool for winning some concessions from their Western counterparts. Because these powers were not ready for competing with America and composing a “full-blown anti-American alliance”<sup>323</sup>, they did not give the expected support to Iran in the international arena. For instance, Russia approved the referral of Iranian nuclear dossier to UNSC in February 2006 and in UNSC it voted for the imposition of UN economic sanctions on Iran. Although China opposed the sanctions on Iran, it refused to veto UN-imposed economic sanctions on Iran.<sup>324</sup> This was another disappointment for Iran but despite these discrepancies the Islamic Republic continued to seek out partners to counter the United States originated international pressure and to socialize. I think former Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati’s statements about Iran’s looking East policy explains both the Islamic Republic’s motivation to approach the Eastern powers and its realist socialization. He said that “cooperation with the West is not possible except through the granting of many concessions and political retreats.”<sup>325</sup> The implicit message of this statement was that while doing business with the West human rights records, revolutionary implementations and the Islamic Republic’s domestic features are being put before Iran to improve relations. However, dealing with the East does not require these kinds of preconditions. Emphasizing the success of China and Russia in the emerging world markets without changing domestic policies, Velayati showed these countries as a role model for the Islamic Republic.

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>323</sup> Hunter, *Iran’s Foreign Policy*, 116.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid, 127.

<sup>325</sup> Rezaei, *Iran’s Foreign Policy*, 54.

#### **4.4. Nuclear Agreement**

From my point of view, the history of Iran's nuclear struggle would be a trailer of the Islamic Republic's overall socialization process after the revolution. In the third chapter I tried to explain Iran's nuclear dispute oriented foreign policy understanding until the first term of the president Ahmadinejad under the subtitle of '*Politics of Confrontation*'. I argued that from Hashem Rafsanjani to Ahmadinejad, Iran did not give up its nuclear ambition despite increasing international pressures to abandon its nuclear program. Within this period only, methods of the presidents varied and these different approaches of the Iranian authorities to international dimension of the nuclear program determined the Islamic Republic's position in the international community. Khatami preferred to defuse the tension between Iran and other international actors. Especially his détente policy toward the US and Europe reflected on his position in the nuclear program negotiations. President Khatami and his top nuclear negotiator Rouhani tried to steer a middle course between the Western powers' desire to control the Islamic Republic's nuclear program and Iran's ambition to get an independent nuclear technology. The goal of Khatami government was to prevent the referral of Iran's nuclear dossier to United Nations Security Council and to keep Iran out of being subjected to international sanctions. In order to achieve these goals Iran preferred to cooperate with the international powers and endeavoured to comply with internationally accepted nuclear rules. The Brussel Agreement, which was signed by Iran and the European troika (UK, France and Germany) on 24 February 2004 and the Paris Agreement, which was made by the same actors on 14 November 2004 were the outcomes of the Islamic Republic's effort to inhibit the emergence of an international consensus against itself. In short term, these policies succeeded to prevent the IAEA from referring Iran's nuclear file to the UNSC but in the long run it seemed that Keynes was right. By the election of Ahmadinejad in 2005, Khatami's efforts to hold the international community back from imposing sanctions on Iran died. Ahmadinejad's uncompromising attitude towards the Western powers on the nuclear issue and its non-cooperative stance against the IAEA resulted in the UNSC's resolution 1696. In this resolution, the United Nations demanded Iran to

suspend all enrichment activities and to cooperate with the IAEA. Other than these requests, the resolution indicated that if Iran did not comply with this resolution, the Security Council would “adopt appropriate measures under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to persuade Iran to comply with this resolution and the requirements of the IAEA.”<sup>326</sup> After the resolution 1696, Iran started negotiations with the P5+1 (the UNSC’s permanent members and Germany) however, no agreement was reached.<sup>327</sup> However, communication between these countries and Iran did not break off. While, the Security Council continued to take new sanction decisions, negotiations between the P5+1 and Iran continued. For instance, the day after the signing of the resolution 1803, which was another sanction resolution adopted by the UNSC, the representative of the P5+1 sent a letter to the head of IAEA in which they emphasized their desire to resume negotiations with Iran.<sup>328</sup> On 14 June 2008, because of the tension between the IAEA and Iran, the P5+1 offered a proposal in which they appealed to Iran to suspend its enrichment and reprocessing activities to restart the negotiations. The Iranian side responded to this proposal with a counter proposal in which they demanded the P5+1 to remove the international sanctions without mentioning Iranian concessions and this counter proposal was rejected by the P5+1.<sup>329</sup> While the relations between Iran, the P5+1 and the IAEA were continuing on a knife-edge, on 21 September 2009 Iran informed the IAEA about its decision to establish a new enrichment facility. However, the construction works had already been started before Iran’s notification. The disclosure of the Fordow facility increased doubts about Iran’s desire to cooperate with the IAEA. Especially hiding this kind of a nuclear plant from the international community shook the foundations of trust built between Iran and the P5+1.

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<sup>326</sup> "Resolution 1696." *United Nations Security Council*. July 31, 2006, accessed March 26, 2019. [https://undocs.org/S/RES/1696\(2006\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/1696(2006)).

<sup>327</sup> Warnaar, *Iranian Foreign Policy*, 139.

<sup>328</sup> Michele Gaietta, *The Trajectory of Iran’s Nuclear Program* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 134.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

After the disclosure, the IAEA demanded extensive information about the Fordow facility, but Iran rejected to answer all questions on the pretext that the investigation did not have a legal basis.<sup>330</sup> The Islamic Republic's intransigent attitude gave rise to new UNSC sanctions and unilateral sanctions by the US and the European powers. In June 2010, both the United States and the European Union adopted decisions to impose new sanctions on Iran that included the energy sector of the Islamic Republic. These new sanctions crippled the Iranian economy. Because of the severe decrease in Iran's oil export and the strong devaluation of its currency, Ahmadinejad felt the pressure of the international community closely. During Ahmadinejad's presidency, the Islamic Republic's oil income increased Iran's state revenue dramatically. While the oil prices were less than \$25 per barrel in 2003, they increased to \$75 per barrel in 2006 and \$141 per barrel in 2008.<sup>331</sup> This extraordinary income source enabled Ahmadinejad to act unrestrictedly in his foreign policy decisions but, the sanctions that targeted Iran's oil exports and energy sector devastated the Iranian economy. Therefore, the negotiations which were continued despite their ineffectiveness to reach a final solution turned into a way out for the Islamic Republic after the 2010 sanctions. With the IAEA's 2012 August report on Iran's nuclear program, the international pressure increased. Although Iran and the IAEA have engaged in a dialogue since January 2012, no concrete result has emerged. On 8 November 2012, Ahmadinejad stated that "Iran's nuclear dispute should be resolved by direct Tehran-Washington talks."<sup>332</sup>

This was an obvious indicator of Iran's endeavour to remove the isolation circle; even if this removal required a talk with the United States. The last manoeuvre of the Islamic

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<sup>330</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>331</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck*, 230.

<sup>332</sup> "Ahmadinejad: Iran's nuclear dispute should be resolved by direct Tehran-Washington talks." *IRNA (The Islamic Republic News Agency)* November 08, 2012, accessed May 5, 2019. [http://www.irna.ir/en/News/80406298/Politic/Ahmadinejad\\_\\_Iran%CB%88s\\_nuclear\\_dispute\\_should\\_be\\_resolved\\_by\\_direct\\_Tehran-Washington\\_talks](http://www.irna.ir/en/News/80406298/Politic/Ahmadinejad__Iran%CB%88s_nuclear_dispute_should_be_resolved_by_direct_Tehran-Washington_talks).

Republic under the Ahmadinejad government to break the isolation and to remove sanctions through negotiation with the international powers was realized on 26 February 2013 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

In this new phase of the negotiations, the P5+1 countries submitted a proposal to the Islamic Republic. They demanded Iran to suspend its enrichment activities in Fordow and to take necessary measures “that would constrain the ability to quickly resume the operation in the plant.”<sup>333</sup>

As a matter of course, in order to observe these implementations, Iran was asked to provide extended supervisory power to the IAEA for inspection. In return, relief from sanctions on petrochemical commodities and the gold trade were promised. The talks continued in a constructive atmosphere, however, instead of making an agreement, the sides decided to schedule another meeting in Almaty on April 5 in order to discuss the technical details of the proposal, and holding an experts’ meeting in Istanbul on 18 March was decided. The Iranian experts believed that the P5+1 countries’ proposal demanded large concessions from Iran in exchange for modest incentives. Therefore, Iran made a counterproposal to the P5+1 representators in the 5 April meeting. In this counterproposal, Iran demanded the removal of all sanctions and the recognition of Iran’s nuclear rights. It was considered a step-back in the negotiations by the P5+1 and the negotiations did not result in an agreement or a common proposal.

The negotiations between Iran and the international powers did not come to a complete conclusion but at the same time, the negotiators could not reach an agreed solution. Both parts wanted to maintain the dialogue channels however, each side expected the first step from the other one. Under these circumstances, Iran was the wronged party because of the international sanctions and a game changer was needed to cut the gordian knot. This changer was sighted on the Islamic Republic’s horizon in June 2013.

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<sup>333</sup> Gaietta, *The Trajectory of Iran’s*, 177.

Hassan Rouhani, Khatami's top negotiator on nuclear policy, was elected as the Islamic Republic's seventh president on 14 June 2013. With the election of Hassan Rouhani, a new leaf has been turned over in Iran's nuclear issue. After his election, indicating Iran's worsening economy he stated that "interactions with the world are a way out of the crisis."<sup>334</sup> This was a signal of the new president's method on nuclear talks, but another sentence of Rouhani presented his limits regarding the nuclear program. His expression "Our centrifuges must turn, but so must our country"<sup>335</sup> exhibited that he would try to defend Iran's nuclear rights while struggling to remove international sanctions. President Rouhani called the P5+1 countries to continue nuclear negotiations as soon as he took office in September 2013. On 26 September 2013, the Islamic Republic's new Foreign Minister Javad Zarif handed Iran's new proposal to his counterparts and a new meeting with the representatives of the P5+1 was scheduled on 15 October. The main issue that differentiated the new proposal from its former counterparts was its design. In this proposal the new government did not try to solve the crisis at once, instead they preferred a long term but planned process. This strategy proved successful and the P5+1 countries embraced Iran's new approach, so much so that the US secretary of state John Kerry described the proposal as "very different in tone and very different in the vision."<sup>336</sup> Furthermore, domestic support to the new government for the nuclear negotiations reached a peak point. Before restarting the nuclear negotiations in September, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei sanctified the direct negotiation strategy of Rouhani by expressing his endorsement of "heroic flexibility"<sup>337</sup> in diplomacy.

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<sup>334</sup> Thomas Erdbrink, "Iran's President Puts New Focus on the Economy." *The New York Times* August 3, 2013, accessed May 10, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/04/world/middleeast/irans-president-puts-new-focus-on-the-economy.html>.

<sup>335</sup> Siavash Ardalani, "Can Hassan Rouhani break Iran nuclear impasse?" *BBC Persian* July 12, 2013, accessed May 10, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23354420>.

<sup>336</sup> Anne Gearan, "Kerry, Iran's Zarif hold unusual private meeting on sidelines of nuclear talks," *The Washington Post* September 26, 2013, accessed May 11, 2019. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kerry-irans-zarif-hold-unusual-private-meeting-on-sidelines-of-nuclear-talks/2013/09/26/d2fddfacc-2700-11e3-9372-92606241ae9c\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.da41b3792c3e](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kerry-irans-zarif-hold-unusual-private-meeting-on-sidelines-of-nuclear-talks/2013/09/26/d2fddfacc-2700-11e3-9372-92606241ae9c_story.html?utm_term=.da41b3792c3e).

<sup>337</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck*, 238.

Supreme Leader's backing was important for the president, because in the previous negotiations, Khamenei's stance on the issue was decisive and because of the political structure of the Islamic Republic it was hardly possible to do anything contrary to Khamenei's will.

Iran pursued a two-track policy in its nuclear negotiations. The first strategy was resuming and improving the negotiations with the P5+1. In order to ease the tension between Iran and the world powers, the Islamic Republic prioritized negotiations with the US and European countries.<sup>338</sup> The second and parallel strategy was normalizing the relations with the IAEA in this manner, Iran intended to alter its marginalized image. In line with this strategy, the IAEA director general Yukiya Amano and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) president Ali Akbar Salehi signed the Joint Statement on a Framework of Cooperation on 11 November 2013.<sup>339</sup> According to the agreement, Iran and the IAEA were going to cooperate to solve all the past and present problems of Iran's nuclear program. Iran complied with the agreement and suspended its activities of producing more advanced centrifuges. Moreover, to ensure the continuation of on-going negotiations, Iran almost stopped the construction of the Arak heavy water research reactor. These steps were substantial decisions for Iran in presenting its eagerness to go forward with the negotiations and this eagerness yielded the demanded results. On 24 November 2013, the Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, Catherine Ashton, the high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy, and the representatives of the P5+1 signed the Joint Plan of Action.<sup>340</sup> This agreement was a

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<sup>338</sup> Gaietta, *The Trajectory of Iran's*, 192.

<sup>339</sup> "IAEA, Iran Sign Joint Statement on Framework for Cooperation" *International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)* November 11, 2013 accessed May 10, 2019.  
<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-iran-sign-joint-statement-framework-cooperation#annex>.

<sup>340</sup> Julian Borger and Saeed Kamali Dehghan, "Iran seals nuclear deal with west in return for sanctions relief," *The Guardian* November 24, 2013, accessed May 10, 2019.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/24/iran-nuclear-deal-west-sanctions-relief>.



prelude for a more comprehensive one. It was a road map for reaching a long-term solution, which would ensure peaceful character of Iran's nuclear program. As in the previous agreements and negotiations, in this agreement Iran was requested to stop uranium enrichment activities in exchange for sanction reliefs. However, the heart of the JPA was that international powers wanted Iran to freeze progress and "to roll back key elements of Iran's nuclear program related to enrichment and construction of the Arak heavy water reactor."<sup>341</sup> These were compulsory concessions that Iran had to make, but also there were some voluntary measures like giving advanced capability of monitoring to the IAEA (daily access to Natanz and Fordow enrichment sites) and these voluntary measures enabled Iran to remove some international sanctions. The P5+1 responded Iran's voluntary concessions positively and the Islamic Republic's blocked oil funds, approximately \$4.2 billion,<sup>342</sup> were gradually unblocked. The European Union and the United States halted their sanctions on Iran's petrochemical industry and gold exportation. Above all, the P5+1 assured Iran that there would be no nuclear related sanctions adopted by the UN Security Council. These reciprocal steps continued gradually. On 24 November 2014, after the Vienna meeting, the parties announced that the negotiations would be extended to June 2015 and according to parties' foresights the political deal would be made in March and the conclusive technical deal would be made in June 2015. Confidence-building process has been maintained until July 2015 with the implementation of a series of agreed measures. On 2 April 2015, Javad Zarif and Federica Mogherini, on behalf of the P5+1, made a joint declaration which announced that the parties agreed on key parameters of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action<sup>343</sup> and finally on 14 July 2015, the multilateral agreement which was considered as a remedy for the ruined Iranian economy was signed by six world powers and Iran. By signing this agreement Iran accepted to limit its centrifuges to 5,060 IR-I centrifuges,

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<sup>341</sup> Gaietta, *The Trajectory of Iran's*, 195.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*, 215.

dispose its medium-enriched uranium, enrich uranium only in the Natanz facility and limit the enrichment to only 3.67 percent, and give the IAEA inspectors legal and extended authority to control facilities even closed or converted ones.<sup>344</sup> In return, other signatory states accepted to remove all sanctions.

Almost six months later, on 16 January 2016 the JCPOA came into force. The IAEA verified that Iran fulfilled its obligations under the JCPOA and the IAEA's report formed the basis for removing sanctions by UN, US and EU. However, on 1 December 2016 the US senate approved ten years extension of the famous Iran Sanctions Act<sup>345</sup> This decision stunned the other parties of the agreement. Iran raised its voice against the US' ISA decision and the Iranian authorities denounced this decision as a violence of the agreement. Divergence of the American and the European approaches toward Iran emerged again. The EU High Representative Federica Mogherini and other EU officials stated that the JCPOA is an international agreement and cannot be invalidated by unilateral sanctions.<sup>346</sup> While the European Union and the other parties of the agreement were standing behind the agreement, the United States introduced new sanctions on Iran under the name of "Countering Iran's Destabilizing Activities Act of 2017 (CIDAA 2017)" on March 23.<sup>347</sup> This was an American bypass of the JCPOA because the US argued that these sanctions were not based on Iran's nuclear program. They asserted that the CIDAA 2017 aims to limit the Islamic Republic's ballistic missile program and arms sales. Beside its restrictive dimension, according to Americans the act was adopted to punish Iran for its sponsorship of terrorism and human rights violations.

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<sup>344</sup> Kenneth Katzman and Paul K Kerr, *Iran Nuclear Agreement* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, 2015)

<sup>345</sup> Patricia Zengerle, "Extension of Iran Sanctions Act passes U.S. Congress," *Reuters* December 1, 2016, accessed May 12, 2019. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-usa-sanctions-idUSKBN13Q5JW>.

<sup>346</sup> Rezaei, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 96-97.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*

Despite America's stance, Europe took a number of steps to protect the agreement and integrate Iran into the international system. Assisting Iran to improve its banking system, including Tehran into some international associations like the Eurasian Group Combating Money Laundering and Financing to Terrorism and World Trade Organization, and encouraging the other parties of the JCPOA i.e. Russia and China to protect the agreement were outstanding efforts of the Europe to balance the United States' harmful sanction policies toward Iran.<sup>348</sup>

When Iran's approximately 30 years long nuclear program is considered, I argue that both ideologic and pragmatist aspects of the Islamic Republic can be observed. As I emphasized in the previous chapter, despite the international pressure and devastating sanctions Iran did not give up its nuclear program and tried to improve it. However, the method used to protect and to enhance the nuclear achievements varied from time to time. For instance, President Khatami pursued a conciliatory policy when the nuclear program was put on the agenda by global actors. On the contrary, Ahmadinejad tried to demonstrate his loyalty to the revolution and its values by challenging the international community's desire to control Iran's nuclear project. In my opinion, although the Khatami era was remembered as détente period and although Iran gave some concessions from its nuclear achievements in order not to be isolated from the international community, the nuclear program maintained. It shows that even during the most compatible period of the post-revolutionary era the resistance against the pressure of the international system implicitly continued. On the other hand, although the Ahmadinejad era was described as more revolutionary than the revolution's itself and although he challenged international powers as if there was no tomorrow, the Islamic Republic never ever broken up its ties with big powers during this period. In his second term, Ahmadinejad tried to defuse the tension, which had escalated because of his resistance discourse against 'the world hegemons' and together with economic

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<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 100-101.

indicators' downward motivation Ahmadinejad's himself proposed to negotiate with the international community. Iran's nuclear policy presented a yin and yang image. When we look at the final point with the JCPOA, the Islamic Republic manifested its determination to preserve the nuclear program and international powers acknowledged this situation. However, with the same agreement international powers demonstrated their undeniable concerns for inspecting Iran's nuclear program and by limiting its nuclear program the Islamic Republic accepted the supervision of the international community over its nuclear program. The JCPOA was considered as a unique chance for Iran's socialization in the international community. However, on 8 May 2018 United States' new president Donald Trump declared US' withdrawal from the JCPOA.<sup>349</sup> After its withdrawal, on 5 November 2018 the US re-imposed a range of sanctions that had been lifted in accordance with the JCPOA.<sup>350</sup> Moreover, American statesmen announced incoming new sanctions on additional Iranian entities.<sup>351</sup> After the United States' CIDAA 2017, its withdrawal from the JCPOA destabilized the relations between Iran and the P5+1. In order to keep Iran on the table the UK, France and Germany established an alternative trade channel named Instrument for Supporting Trade Exchanges (INSTEX)<sup>352</sup> This was a new payment system, which allowed European businesses to trade with Iran without being caught by the American sanction radar. However, this new system could not live up to expectations. Therefore, Iranian president Hassan Rouhani sent an ultimatum to European powers on 8 May 2019. He stated that if other parties of the

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<sup>349</sup> "Donald Trump declares US withdrawal from Iran nuclear deal," *AL JAZEERA NEWS* May 9, 2018, accessed May 13, 2019. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/05/donald-trump-declares-withdrawal-iran-nuclear-deal-180508141155625.html>.

<sup>350</sup> Lesley Wroughton and Parisa Hafezi, "U.S. reimposes Iran sanctions, Tehran decries 'bullying'," *Reuters* November 5, 2018 accessed May 13, 2019. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-sanctions/us-reimposes-tough-curbs-on-iran-tehran-hits-at-bullying-idUSKCN1NA0ZR>.

<sup>351</sup> "Remarks and Releases – Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism -"Countering Iran's Global Terrorism"," *U.S. Department of State* November 13, 2018 accessed May 13, 2019. <https://www.state.gov/countering-irans-global-terrorism/>.

<sup>352</sup> "UK, France and Germany create payments system to trade with Iran," *BBC* January 31, 2019 accessed May 13, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-47072020>.

JCPOA -Russia, China, France, Germany and Britain- fails to protect Iran from US sanctions within 60 days, the Islamic Republic would give up fulfilling its obligations under the nuclear agreement.<sup>353</sup>

Nowadays, escalation between Iran and US is increasing day by day but the Islamic Republic is trying to use the advantage of multipolarity. I think by calling the signatory parties to defend the rights of Iran, Rouhani wants to get return of Islamic Republic's socialization.

#### **4.5. Exhaustion of the Revolution**

The 'Export of Revolution' policy was one of the characteristic policies of the Islamic Republic. Like all revolutionary movements, Iran tried to use all opportunities to spread its revolutionary ideology and because of the revolution's so-called 'Islamic aspect', it inclined towards Muslim groups. In line with the constitutional provisions that define the Islamic Republic as the protector of all Muslims, Iran considered it a duty to support all Muslims against oppressive forces. Its support to Hezbollah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Iraqi Shiites was regarded as implementations of the export of revolution policy and because of this policy Iran was accused of supporting terrorism. However, a close investigation of Iran's attitude towards the Islamic groups and movements reveals discrepancies and contradictions in the export of revolution policy. In the beginning of the revolutionary era, the export of revolution discourse was being constituted as the fundamental impetus of the Islamic Republic, but in time this discourse lost its weight and varied according to Iran's pragmatic policies. Therefore, I characterized this metamorphosis as a variation from exportation of revolution to exhaustion of revolution. This transformation of stance towards the Islamic movements was a significant indicator of Iran's pragmatism. Because when Iran was torn between preserving its vital interests

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<sup>353</sup> "Rouhani gives 60-day ultimatum to JCPOA parties to save Iran deal," *Iran Daily* May 8, 2019 accessed May 13, 2019. <http://www.iran-daily.com/News/252535.html?catid=3&title=252535>.

and supporting Islamic groups, it turned its back to Islamic movements to protect its benefits.

The first contradiction that disfavoured Iran in the eyes of Muslims emerged from Iran-Syria alliance during the Iran-Iraq War. The friendship of Syria, the enemy of Iran's enemy, was a golden opportunity for Iran during the war. By ensuring the cooperation of Syria, Iran took the opportunity to reach the Levant and the Arab world, negate Saddam's Arab-Persian conflict propaganda, and access the Soviet Union's military hardware via Damascus.<sup>354</sup> Because of these strategic benefits, the Syrian government's secular nature and the Baath regime's anti-Islamic implementations did not deter the Islamic Republic from allying with Syria.<sup>355</sup> However, to maintain the alliance and to ensure the Syrian support, Iran was obliged to ignore and justify some practices of the Syrian regime, which contradicted with the Islamic Republic's revolutionary values and discourse. 1982 Hama massacre that was executed by the Syrian president Hafez al-Assad's brother Rif'at al-Assad was the most prominent example of the Islamic Republic's indifference to its revolutionary commitments in exchange for its vital interests. In 1980, the Islamic Front, which was composed of various anti-regime organizations, succeeded destroying some government stations in Damascus and made their protests a county-wide rebellion against the regime. The aim of the Islamic Front was declared as "overthrowing the regime and establishing an Islamic State in Syria" by rebels' themselves.<sup>356</sup> In February 1982, rebels took control of the city of Hama and called all Syrians to join the jihad against the regime. The Syrian military forces launched a deadly attack against Hama and its civil population. After the cloud of dust dispersed a ruined city and approximately 10.000 dead body came into sight as a consequence of Hafez al-Assad's order.<sup>357</sup> When stories of Iranian revolutionaries and Syrian rebels are compared,

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<sup>354</sup> Ehteshami, *Iran Stuck*, 187.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

<sup>356</sup> William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2009), 406.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 407.

it can be said that these two movements went through almost identical steps. Both of them revolted against their secular governments, both of them aimed to establish an Islamic state, and both of them paid dearly to realize their goals. Iranians achieved their goal and established the Islamic Republic, but Syrians could not do it and paid the price with their lives. The remarkable point is that while Iranians want to export their revolution and to establish similar Islamic states in Muslim world, they accused the Syrian rebels of being the agents of Iraq and Zionism.<sup>358</sup> In order to keep the Iran-Syria alliance alive, Iran turned a blind eye to al-Assad regime's inhumane treatment of the Syrian Islamist opposition.<sup>359</sup> This attitude was totally contradicting the Islamic Republic's export of revolution discourse and its constitutional norms but the benefits of alliance outweighed values of the revolution.

Another difficult choice that exhausted Iran's revolutionary policies emerged right after the First Gulf War. After Iraq's defeat in the First Gulf War, some Iraqi groups revolted against Saddam in 1991. Among them there was southern Iraqi Shiites who wanted to topple down Saddam and establish an Islamic state in Iraq.<sup>360</sup> Because of their sectarian affinity and anti-American attitude, southern Iraqi Shiites anticipated the Islamic Republic's generous assistance. However, Tehran wrecked the hopes of Shiite insurgents and did not help them. The main reason for giving Iraqi Shiites the cold shoulder was the Islamic Republic's efforts to restore its rogue state image in the international community because Iran was accused of intervening other states' domestic affairs by virtue of exporting revolution. Therefore, Iran restrained itself by condemning the suppression of Shiites and described the event as Iraq's internal affair.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>358</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 84.

<sup>359</sup> Hunter, "Iran and the Spread," 738.

<sup>360</sup> David Menashri, "Iran's Regional Policy: Between Radicalism and Pragmatism," *Journal of International Affairs* 60, no. 2 (2007): 153-167.

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid.*

I think Iran's decision to turn a deaf ear to Iraqi Shiites had an exclusive significance. Because, as I explained in the third chapter, in 1980 the Iran-Iraq War the Iranian army succeeded in removing Iraqi forces from their territory in the summer of 1982. However, with Ayatollah Khomeini's order the Iranian troops carried the battle to Iraqi soil on 13 July 1982 to overthrow the Iraqi regime. This was one of the most conspicuous indicators of the export of revolution policy. In order to change Iraq's political system and provide a basis for an Islamic state, Iran continued to fight the war six years more. The war devastated the Iranian economy and the Islamic Republic's human capital was damaged severely. The Islamic Republic dared to continue the fight and suffered the consequences of extending the war to transform Iraq but it could not reach its goal. Only a decade later this transformation request was made by a domestic Iraqi power and conditions were suitable for overthrowing the Iraqi dictator. However, this time the Islamic Republic rejected to help the Iraqi Shiites because any kind of assistance would be considered as intervention and leave Iran in a difficult situation in the international arena. Therefore, to protect its reasonable image that took shape after Iran's attitude in the First Gulf War, the Islamic Republic preferred to be indifferent to southern Iraqi Shiites' 'invitation' to spread the revolution in Iraq.

The Islamic Republic's policies in Caucasia also has contradicted with Iran's overall Islamic revolutionary values. Tehran's position in the Chechen insurgency and the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict demonstrated Iran's ability to negate its revolutionary principals under critical conditions. With the collapse of the USSR some of the central Asia powers declared their independency but some of the Soviet federal subjects recognized with regional autonomy and remained a part of the USSR's successor Russian Federation. Chechenia was one of the autonomous republics but in 1991, Chechens declared their independency and entered into armed struggle against the Russian Federation.<sup>362</sup> The Chechen independence struggle and Russia's intervention to

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<sup>362</sup> Tracey C. German, *Russia's Chechen War* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 51.



Chechenia attracted the attention of Muslim populated states because of Chechens' Muslim identity. When Iran's claim of being standard-bearer of Islam is taken seriously, the highest voice against the Russian intervention and cruelty had to come from the Islamic Republic. However, it did not happen. The Russian oppression against Muslim Chechens did not hinder cooperation between Iran and Russia. Quite the contrary during the escalation period of the Chechen war visits of Iranian military and security delegations to Moscow substantially increased.<sup>363</sup> Moreover, at the beginning of the second war in Chechenia in 1999, Iran was in the chair of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Islamic Republic tried and succeeded keeping the Chechen War out of the OIC's agenda despite Turkey's insistence for including the issue in agenda.<sup>364</sup> The president Khatami declared that Chechenia was Russia's internal affair and thereby he tried to avoid antagonizing Russia.<sup>365</sup> Iran's approach to the Chechen struggle did not change even in the Ahmadinejad era, who was famous for his emphasis on the values of revolution. In 2004, Sergei Mironov the Chairman of the Russian Federation Council indicated Russia's appreciation of Iran's principle position on Chechenia problem while giving a speech to the Iranian Parliament.<sup>366</sup> Furthermore, Iran pioneered Russia's taking observer status in the OIC in 2005 and Putin thanked Ahmadinejad for Iran's distinguished efforts.<sup>367</sup> However, there was a small detail that Iran failed to notice, while Iran was trying to make Russia an observer state in the OIC, the battle called the second war between Chechens and Russia was still going on.

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<sup>363</sup> Shaffer, "The Islamic Republic of Iran" 227.

<sup>364</sup> Hunter, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 111.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>366</sup> Martin Malek, "Russia, Iran and the Conflict in Chechenya," *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 2, no.1 (Winter 2008): 27.

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

Another pragmatist approach that failed Iran's Islamist discourse emerged during the Nagorno-Karabagh dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia. According to demographic indicators Azerbaijanis constituted the largest non-Persian ethnic group of Iran.<sup>368</sup> During the revolution Azerbaijanis made great contributions to overthrow the Shah regime and Tabriz, the largest city of Azerbaijan province of Iran, was one of the centres of the revolution. With the establishment of the Islamic Republic, Azerbaijani citizens demanded improvements in their cultural rights and believed that through democratization of Iran they would get autonomy.<sup>369</sup> Although their autonomy desire could not be realized, they did not demonstrate a secessionist attitude against the Islamic Republic. However, with the establishment of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1991, many Azerbaijanis in Iran started to bring their Azerbaijani identity into forefront. This situation worried the Iranian authorities and in October 1992, the Islamic Republic decided to split and rename its East Azerbaijan province.<sup>370</sup> This was an indication of Tehran's apprehension of Azerbaijani secession and changing the name of East Azerbaijan province was only a domestic precaution against secessionist incentives. There was an external dimension of Iranian anxiety, the Islamic Republic feared that rise of a powerful Azerbaijan would influence its Azerbaijani population's loyalty to the Islamic Republic.<sup>371</sup> Therefore Iran preferred an underdeveloped and weak Azerbaijan as a neighbour and Tehran manifested this desire with its position in the Nagorno-Karabagh dispute. The Islamic Republic supported Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict, and this support was led by Iran's fear of encountering a strong Azerbaijan in the future.<sup>372</sup> Like the Islamic Republic's other policies, this policy also caused a contradiction in the

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<sup>368</sup> Brenda Shaffer, "The formation of Azerbaijani collective identity in Iran," *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 28, no.3 (2000): 449.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*, 452.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.*, 463.

<sup>371</sup> Rakef, *The Iranian Political Elite*, 163.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*

revolutionary discourse. The Republic of Azerbaijan was not an Islamic state however in terms of the Shiite population density, it was the second most concentrated country in the world after Iran.<sup>373</sup> This means that Iran supported a non-Muslim populated country against a Muslim and Shiite populated country and explaining this policy with Iran's so-called Islam-based and Shiite-oriented revolutionary values is all but impossible.

The last example that constitutes a strong evidence for presenting the flexibility of the Islamic Republic's foundational values is Iran's policies toward the Tajikistan civil war. In 1992, a civil war between the Islamists and pro-Soviet groups erupted in Tajikistan. In the beginning Iran and Russia supported opposing forces. The Islamic Republic supported the groups who affiliated with the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) and provided asylum to the IRP leaders in Tehran.<sup>374</sup> However, with the improvement of relations with Russia in 1993, Iran stopped assisting Tajikistan's Islamist movements. Instead, the Islamic Republic endeavoured to include Islamist opposition in peace process and to integrate them into broad coalition backing pro-Russian groups for leading Tajikistan.<sup>375</sup> The Islamic Republic refrained from exporting its revolution to Tajikistan and did not support establishment of an Islamic state in this country. This was both a sign for Russia and a concession from Iran. It was a sign because by this way Iran manifested that Tehran would not act against Russian interests in former Soviet countries in Central Asia. It was a concession because by not supporting the rebels, Iran sacrificed its opportunity to get a substantial position in Tajikistan to protect and improve its relations with Russia.

The 'export of revolution' discourse was not a man of straw in Islamic Republic's decisions after the revolution. As I explained in chapter three, the revolution and its intellectual outputs impacted Muslim populated countries and the Islamic Republic was appreciated by other Islamist movements. Islamist groups constituted a convenient

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<sup>373</sup> Nasr, "When the Shiites Rise," 65.

<sup>374</sup> Brenda, "The Islamic Republic of Iran," 234.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid.

market for Iran to export revolutionary ideas and Ayatollahs intended to benefit from this opportunity. However, this euphoria did not last long. Firstly, Tehran's alliance with Syria and its neglect of the Hama massacre cost the Islamic Republic its reputation in the eyes of Muslim communities. Almost the same scenario repeated itself in the Chechen struggle. In order to save its positive relations with Russia, Iran did not show a reaction to the Russian oppression on Chechens. Some of the analysts attributed these attitudes to sectarian differences. According to them the Islamic Republic did not help these movements because of the Sunni identity of Chechens and Syrian opposition. However, Iran's attitude toward Iraqi Shiites in 1991 and its position in the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict demonstrated that Iran's stance could not be explained by only sectarian impetus. All these experiences revealed that Iran behaved according to its revolutionary ideology until the ideology-based policies endanger state's vital interests. I think, the last indicator of this understanding is Iran's changing position in the Arab spring. When Ben Ali and Mubarak were overthrown by protestors, the Iranian authorities celebrated Arab protestors by referring to their own revolutionary identity. The Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei described events as 'Islamic liberation movements' and he said that "people are witnessing the reverberations of Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution."<sup>376</sup> However, when the spring arrived to Syrian deserts the Islamic Republic's attitude changed. Because of the Islamic Republic's close relations with the Al-Assad regime since 1980 and because of Syria's critical position in Iran's access to the Hezbollah, collapse of the Syrian regime would be a geopolitical disaster for Tehran.<sup>377</sup> Therefore, Iran intervened in the Syrian civil war on behalf of the Al-Assad regime and put its weight behind the failed Syrian government.

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<sup>376</sup> "Khamenei hails 'Islamic' uprisings," *AL JAZEERA* February 4, 2011, accessed May 15, 2019. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201124101233510493.html>.

<sup>377</sup> Akbarzadeh and Conduit, "Rouhani's First Two Years," 3.

#### **4.6. Conclusion**

The post-revolutionary period of the Islamic Republic started with the isolation and in order to consolidate the power the Iranian authorities considered this isolation a necessity. Protecting the achievements of the revolution and improving its effectiveness were among the most important duties of the revolutionary cadres and the isolation made these duties easier for them. However, it did not take long for Iran to notice that surviving through isolation is not sustainable. One of the most striking examples of this reality for Iran emerged in the Iraq War and the Islamic Republic quickly learned how to behave. What made Iran isolated was its challenging discourse and behaviours against the international system. Therefore, Iranian statesmen understood that they had to make some sacrifices from their ideologic stance to satisfy the vital needs of the state. The Iran-Contra affair was a good example of these sacrifices. Iran had to make a deal with its so-called archenemy and as a matter of fact, it was a complete betrayal to values of revolution. Yet, this situation was justified by putting forward the matter of survival of the state. Later on, giving up the Salman Rushdie fatwa for improving relations with Europe, approaching Russia and China to counterbalance the Western pressure and making some concessions to reach a nuclear agreement proved that the Islamic Republic regulated its behaviours according to external pressures to some extent. I think, these regulations explained the second phase of the Islamic Republic's socialization process. According to the socialization theory, in the second period, novice subjects learns to act in compliance with system's rules and adjust their behaviours in accordance with the entity that has encircled them. In this sense, examples and cases of this chapter demonstrates that Iran would give up its ideology-based attitudes at the expense of its vital needs. The International community and especially hegemonic powers who considered Iran's ideologic position a threat for their interests made some preparations to deter the Islamic Republic from maintaining its ideologic position. American sanctions and the UNSC resolutions that confirmed imposing sanctions on Iran were a part of international community's disincentives to prevent Iran from acting uncompromisingly in the international realm. On top of these concrete external pressures, to protect its

own interest Iran backed down from some of its revolutionary policies without any direct constraint. Its indifferent stance against Caucasian and Central Asian Islamist movements and its negative response to Southern Iraqi Shiites who had requested help to topple down Saddam Hossein represented the Islamic Republic's self-restraint behaviour in its distinguishing 'export of revolution policy. All in all, when Iran's post-revolutionary policies are investigated, the outcome would demonstrate that Islamic Republic followed both ideologic and pragmatist policies in its foreign relations. Because of the external pressures it was obliged to make concessions from its revolutionary position and behave compatibly with international powers. In my opinion, this situation enabled Iran to become a subject of socialization process and constituted realist dimension of this socialization process.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

Transfer of dominant norms and rules of international system to the agents who do not have those behaviour patterns has been framed as socialization. This process actualized in almost every structure which has some characteristic features and these features constitute basic behaviour patterns for being a part of the structure. In international relations discipline international institutions like United Nations, World Trade Organization and European Union can be considered as just a few examples of structures that have their own norms and rules. States or international actors that intended to join these institutions come across with socialization process. However, questions ‘Why do actors want to be a part of these structures?’ and ‘Why do they accept those norms and rules?’ become distinguishing questions for understanding socialization. Because answers of these questions identify the nature of socialization process, definition of the concept has been made according to answers of these questions. Theorists who defined socialization process through social ideals-based answers argued that states have accepted norms and rules of determined structures because of appropriateness. By positioning internalization at the centre of socialization process, they claimed that recently joined states adhere norms of the structure because those norms are worth to be accepted.

This viewpoint confined socialization process to only social interactions of states and did not make any room for material incentives. Therefore, it failed to comprise all dimensions of socialization. My dissertation attempts to address this problem first by identifying nature of socialization and position of internalization in this process. I argued that internalization is not a sine qua non condition for socialization. Because in international realm states could regulate their behaviours according to some rules and norms to reach some material benefits and they are not obliged to internalize these rules and norms. As far as they behaved according to stated procedures their intentions

cannot be considered as obstacles for socialization. I denominated this approach as rational socialization. Rational socialization problematizes suspension of cost-benefit analysis from socialization process and argues that subjects of socialization process would follow directives of the structure without altering their own identity. Besides, rationalist socialization bridges the gap that has been emerged because of other socialization theorists' shortcomings in considering states material incentives to compromise with encountered norms and rules.

Most of the researchers used socialization concept for explaining a state's admission and integration to international organizations. Diffusion of recently emerged norms and states' adoption of these norms have been discussed under the socialization concept. However, a broader, large scale analysis of socialization progress has not been conducted. Therefore, in order to make a macro level analysis I investigated revolutionary states' socialization in international society. I particularly look at Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy actions in post-revolution period and by indicating both its revolution based ideological foreign policies and pragmatist, real-politic oriented actions in international system I concluded with two important outcomes about Islamic Republic's post-revolutionary interactions with international society and its socialization process.

My first conclusion is that Islamic Republic of Iran has pursued a rationalist socialization in its post-revolutionary period. E.H. Carr described revolutionaries' relations with international society by a 'dual policy' approach which predicts first a confrontation with international structure than socialization through accommodation.<sup>378</sup> However this socialization understanding indicated a full integration to international society and disappearance of revolutionary behaviours that contradicted with dominating norms and rules of international system. When we analysed Iran's foreign policies after the

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<sup>378</sup> Maximilian Terhalle, "Revolutionary Power and Socialization: Explaining the Persistence of Revolutionary Zeal in Iran's Foreign Policy," *Security Studies* 3, no.18 (2009): 564.



revolution, we cannot observe a full integration and a complete defiance from revolutionary claims. The third chapter of this dissertation depicted Islamic Republic's ideology based foreign policies that has contradicted with dominating international norms and gave rise to isolation of Iran in international society. Instead of a full compliance, Islamic Republic maintained its revolutionary policies in international realm. On the other hand, as Fred Halliday indicates, revolutionary states have been restrained by limits of international system and "broader world context in which they found themselves."<sup>379</sup> This means that international pressure limits the desires of revolutionaries, even if the revolutionaries want to change and design the world system according to their own values. Islamic Republic encountered with this fact so many times and compelled to make some sacrifices in order to preserve its vital material benefits. The fourth chapter of this dissertation was devoted to explain and demonstrate Islamic Republic's concessions which revealed as either retreat from ideological position or adoption of a policy contradicted with revolutionary discourse.

I think that these two chapters, chapter 3 and chapter 4, presented components of Iran's rational socialization process. The second part shows reasons for analysing Iran under the concept of socialization and its resistance for continuing on a revolutionary path, while the third section describes the logic of the Islamic Republic's post-revolutionary policies with the lens of pragmatism and explained its conciliatory approach to the international community. Therefore, by combining these two chapters, it is a reasonable approach to conclude that the Islamic Republic has entered a rational socialization process in which it adopted both ideological and pragmatist policies together. I think, this dissertation also makes a direct contribution to ongoing discussions about whether Iran prioritizes its ideology or its material interests in foreign policy. For this discussion, I want to indicate a crucial point about pragmatism of Islamic Republic. When we talk about pragmatism, generally, decisions that serve to interests of the state come forward. However, while we are discussing Iran's pragmatism, the word pragmatism falls into a

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<sup>379</sup> Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 156.

meaning extension. The pragmatic approach might justify all decisions of Islamic Republic as pragmatic because both ideologic moves that are grounded in revolutionary ideals and other policies that are adopted for protecting material gains would be considered as serving interest of the state. Without indicating limits of the approach and frame of pragmatism, “any foreign behaviour of Iran can be given as evidence of pragmatism.”<sup>380</sup> Thus, there should be a touchstone that would determine whether it was a pragmatic policy or not and for Islamic Republic this touchstone was its revolutionary discourse. Foreign policies of Iran that contradicted with its revolutionary discourse can be described as pragmatic policies and existence of these policies in Islamic Republic’s foreign policy spectrum signifies duality of Tehran’s foreign policy understanding. Rouhollah Ramazani described this ambivalent nature of Islamic Republic’s foreign policy by stating that: “the nature of revolutionary Iran’s foreign policy is neither linear nor dialectical, but kaleidoscopic.”<sup>381</sup> This kaleidoscope analogy is a good summary of Iran’s stance between ideology and realism. This stance always caused a tension in Iran because although both idealists and realists agreed on Islamic nature of Iranian revolution and although both of them tried to change world system, they followed different paths to realize this goal. Idealists tried to change the system by confronting it but realists tried to make alterations by identifying realities of existing international system. Therefore, Islamic Republic did not follow a linear or straight foreign policy understanding, instead, it developed a flexible strategy in its decisions and this strategy enabled Iran to pursue a rational socialization. I think interpretations of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a veteran actor of Iranian politics and one of the founding fathers of Islamic Republic, on Iran’s foreign policy are remarkably precious for comprehending the balance of ideology and interest in Tehran’s foreign policy decisions. He stated that “the relative weight of ideology [Islam] and national interest in foreign-policy decision making depends on the circumstances of a particular case at a given point

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<sup>380</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran’s Foreign Policy*, 29.

<sup>381</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 119.

in time.”<sup>382</sup> The situation of being dependent on circumstances explains flexibility of foreign policy decisions and it facilitates Iran to pursue both ideological and pragmatist behaviours in international relations.

The second inference of this dissertation is a subjective judgement about Iran’s multi-coloured foreign policy pattern since the revolution. I argue that there has been a parallelism between Islamic Republic’s foreign policy decisions and its architect Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini’s modus operandi on relations with other states or international system. In other words, I claim that Karl Marx’s fabulous description of communism’s position in Europe can be adapted to Khomeini’s position in Islamic Republic. In the prelude of the communist manifesto Marx has drawn an analogy in which he depicted communism as a spectre haunting Europe.<sup>383</sup> I assert same thing for Ayatollah Khomeini, in my opinion, since 1989 a spectre has been haunting Iran ---the spectre of Khomeini. It was a well-known fact that the authority and influence of Ayatollah Khomeini on new born Islamic Republic was beyond the argument. His authority was legally ratified by the addition of his *Velayet-e Faqih* doctrine to the constitution. However, before the constitution referendum this authority has already been accepted by Iranians and one of the most significant indicators of this approval has emerged during Khomeini’s first mass meeting “after setting foot on Iranian soil for the first time in more than fourteen years”<sup>384</sup> at Bihist-i Zehra cemetery. In this February 2, 1979 dated speech, after criticizing overthrown Shah’s implementations and appreciating brave uprising of long-suffered Iranian people, he stated his position by these words: “I will appoint a government, and I will give this government (*Shah’s government*) a punch in the mouth. With the support of the people, and by virtue of the acceptance the people have granted me, I will appoint a government.”<sup>385</sup> This was the unofficial prelude of faqih governed

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<sup>382</sup> Ibid, 191.

<sup>383</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Oxford University Press, 1992).

<sup>384</sup> Algar, *Islam and Revolution Writings*, 252.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid., 259. Italics are belonged to me.

state system and with the confirmation of *Velayet-i Faqih* imbedded constitution Iran officially came under Khomeini's authority.

During his decade-long rulership Ayatollah Khomeini used his supreme authority derived from *Velayet-i Faqih* doctrine and said the last word about almost all state affairs. His implementations and decisions have been conceptualized as *Khatti Imam*<sup>386</sup> (Ideologic line of the Imam) and this ideologic line demonstrated examples of both ideologic and pragmatic attitudes that overlapped with Islamic Republic's foreign policy decisions in post-Khomeini era. His successor Ayatollah Khamenei described this ideologic line as the path of the revolution and indicated that this path has been continuing since the revolution and will continue in the future.<sup>387</sup> Chapter 3 and chapter 4 explain examples of Ayatollah Khomeini's both ideologic and pragmatic decisions in detail but, I want to clarify two-sided nature of *Khatte-i Imam* concept by briefly touching upon examples. By this way, I intend to demonstrate correlation between the line of the Imam and Islamic Republic's foreign policy understanding.

More often than not, Ayatollah Khomeini's reign is considered as the most ideology driven period of Islamic Republic. This premise is not wrong but, when policies of Khomeini period are examined closely it will be determined that by adapting "the pristine ideological principles of the early days of the Islamic Republic to the realities of changing world politics"<sup>388</sup> Ayatollah Khomeini introduced a new spiritual pragmatism paradigm for Iranian statesmen. There are too many events and decisions that could be regarded as reflections of spiritual dimension of this paradigm. The seizure of the U.S. embassy, challenge to both superpowers of the Cold war period, extension of the war against Iraq in order to export the revolution, Salman Rushdie affair and letter to Gorbachev can be counted as prominent examples of Khomeini's ideologic posture. However, during the same period Iran purchased weapons from its archenemy (Iran-Contra affair), the

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<sup>386</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 197.

<sup>387</sup> Warnaar, *Iranian Foreign Policy*, 91.

<sup>388</sup> Ramazani, *Independence Without Freedom*, 197.

Ayatollah accepted the United Nations resolution for ceasefire with Iraq, Islamic Republic sold oil to the United States indirectly<sup>389</sup>, Tehran decided to establish relations with Turkey and Germany despite some Islamic zealots opposition and Khomeini left the door of negotiation with America ajar by stipulating United States' abandonment of policies that aims to dominate Iran<sup>390</sup>. These cases have occurred under the authority of Ayatollah Khomeini and they constituted pragmatist aspect of his ideologic line. This Janus-faced nature of Imam's line elicited its flexibility and demonstrated that from time to time Ayatollah Khomeini adapted his idealistic worldview to dictates of circumstances. His attitude toward isolation is another obvious indicator of alteration in Imam's line. In the early years of the revolution Khomeini pursued a pro-isolation policy in order to consolidate his position and to preclude externally supported counter-revolution movements that would nullify achievements of Islamic revolution. He has said that "we must isolate ourselves in order to achieve independence"<sup>391</sup> and maintained a position which was compatible with isolation. However, subsequently he changed his stance on isolation and he strongly criticized isolationists by saying that isolation would mean defeat and annihilation.<sup>392</sup> These changes in Ayatollah Khomeini's modus operandi are evident but I think another crucial point which is as important as changes is the mentality that made these alterations possible. Without legitimacy, this oscillation between ideological and pragmatic decisions was unsustainable. Therefore, Khomeini attributed his pragmatist decisions to a lofty aim: survival of the regime. He stated that "the government is empowered to unilaterally revoke any Shari'ah agreements which it has concluded with the people when those agreements are contrary to the interests of the country or of Islam"<sup>393</sup> and by this way every behaviour that contradicted with

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<sup>389</sup> Ibid., 312.

<sup>390</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran's Foreign Policy*, 10.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>392</sup> Ibid.

<sup>393</sup> Ali M. Ansari, "Civilizational Identity and Foreign Policy: The Case of Iran," in *The Limits of Culture Islam and Foreign Policy* ed. B. Shaffer (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2006), 250.

revolutionary ideals become legitimate under the umbrella of “the survival (baqa’) of the revolution.”<sup>394</sup> His statement on accepting the UN resolution for a ceasefire with Iraq can be seen as the best example of legitimation of an inconsistent behaviour with the highest revolutionary accomplishment. Khomeini called approval of the decision to drink poison, but he drank this poison for survival of the regime. This legitimation mechanism has been used by Iranian authorities even after Khomeini’s death. Supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei used this mechanism to support president Rouhani’s nuclear negotiations. He argued that Iranian authorities would present a flexibility “to reduce sanctions and stave off economic pressure” but he also added that “He (*Rouhani*) should not forget who his opponent and enemy is.”<sup>395</sup>

In my viewpoint, Ayatollah Khomeini’s decisions on foreign affairs has presented a similarity with Islamic Republic’s overall behaviours in international relations. Therefore, I can say that the concept of *Khatt-i Imam* relies on same roots with Islamic Republic’s rational socialization and consciously or unconsciously Iranian statesmen walked through same path with Ayatollah Khomeini.

Fred Halliday claims that “revolutionary states do not get socialized.”<sup>396</sup> However, the socialization that Halliday referred is the approach that puts internalization into the heart of socialization process. In this kind of a process revolutionary states cannot remain revolutionary anymore. According to this suggestion, revolutionary states would be a ‘normal’ member of international community by adapting and internalizing international norms. However, this understanding disregards “the underlying dynamics of conflict”<sup>397</sup> between revolutionary states and international norms. Expecting revolutionaries to give

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<sup>394</sup> Ehteshami and Zweiri, *Iran’s Foreign Policy*, 8-9.

<sup>395</sup> Karim Sadjadpour, “Ayatollah Machiavelli,” *Hoover Institution Essay on Middle East Strategy Challenges*, June 20 (2017). Italics are belonged to me.

<sup>396</sup> Terhalle, “Revolutionary Power and Socialization,” 564.

<sup>397</sup> Halliday, *Revolution and World Politics*, 298.

up their all revolution-based behaviours that clash with world system means castration of the revolution and this is not acceptable for revolutionary movements. This full integration or complete unification with international system symbolizes bringing back to pre-revolutionary times and it makes revolutions meaningless. Therefore, they cannot internalize international norms while they are still revolutionary. Yet, they can behave according to these norms without internalizing them and this is what Islamic Republic of Iran has done since the revolution. I think that without an internal or domestic power shift, anticipating emergence of an Iran that fully integrated with international community, seems impossible and understanding foreign policy patterns of Iranian authorities with internalization centred socialization lenses is as impossible as the first expectation. Especially in a multipolar world system that seems international structure is moving towards; Iran will find more chances to maintain its two-sided foreign policy understanding. Rational socialization model, I hope, will enable us to understand and estimate Tehran's foreign policy decisions in this kind of a multi polar world system as far as they maintain the claim to be a revolution based Islamic Republic.

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