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## **Cultural-Political Development in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Analysis of Transformations of 1990-1998**

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### **Abstract**

Considering the inclusion of cultural-political orientation in the propaganda of the Islamic Republic (Independence, Freedom, Islamic Republic), the present paper aims to address how the cultural-political development in the Islamic Republic of Iran could be analyzed and evaluated in the period 1990-1998, i.e. the first years following the Islamic Republic and the Imposed War. The answer that will be analyzed in this research is that in this period, despite the foreign historical hindrance and domestic mental impediments, which made cultural-political developments face various dilemmas, the government's cultural-political development, endeavors of political forces and theoretical experts created a positive transformation in cultural-political development. The reasoning set out in this paper is that, based on the modified Communicative Action Theory and its adaptation to the Iranian history and society, and also the dominant religious traditions in the social relations in Iran, the first revision of the Constitution led to some cultural-political practices from government and some cultural-political efforts by the experts and political forces which, ultimately, resulted in an open cultural, and somehow political, atmosphere. These are clues to the cultural-political development in this period.

### **Keywords**

Communicative Action, Cultural-political development, Critical Theory, religious tradition, the period of 1990-1998.

## Introduction

Thinking of chronic social harms, specifically in the political realms, is an inevitable necessity to guarantee the stability and dynamicity of the Islamic Republic. Historically, on the one hand, the religious tradition has surrounded all aspects of the individual, private and social life. On the other hand, the government has always been the centroid of the social system and organized all living areas. Therefore, the opportunities, threats, strengths, and weaknesses could be easily recognized in political affairs. Regarding the higher correspondent functionality of political relations in the social life, political development in Iran is a substrate of the development in other areas. Since religious tradition has always been dominant in other aspects of social life, a critical analysis of the political development in Iran is not possible without regarding the religious tradition. So, a cultural analysis of policy is prioritized taking into account the aforementioned historical reality. Also, prioritizing political development is also a prerequisite in each political revolution.

One of the concerns in recent big revolutions has been removing the retrogradation and coming to a concurrent development along with an acceptable and legitimate cultural bond. A large part of the cultural propaganda of these revolutions is addressing the political problems and the necessity of political development with a cultural approach. The French Revolution was characterized by the three mottos of liberty, fraternity and equality. On the same basis, in the Persian Constitutional Revolution, the law was the main problem of the revolutionists. The Iranian revolution has always put through the fundamental motto of “Independence, Freedom, Islamic Republic”, which undeniably reveals its political charge on the religious-cultural approach. So, with the Islamic Revolution and the establishment of the Islamic Republic, it was expected that the new system prioritizes political development as the major public request. The initial days spent with domestic chaos and foreign war, which made any development plan impossible. The period 1990-98 (Construction Period) was the time when the Islamic government could take fundamental steps in line with its basic mottos. With the two major plans for development and construction, this period was the

first real test of the Islamic Republic to achieve its political goals.

Taking a cultural-critical approach, the present paper mainly addresses the question that, with the emphasis on the construction period, what the cultural necessities to achieve the political development in the Islamic Republic of Iran are considering the existing hindrances, theoretical requirements and practical grounds. The answer, which is the main hypothesis of the research, is as follows: achieving the cultural-political development would be only possible with an acceptable conditional plan for the social life in the political aspect and the criticism of the current conditions. The acceptable condition is not the ideal condition which is not achievable. It shows the general road to development to society. In the present study, in order to prove the hypothesis, the communicative action theory on the one hand, and the religious tradition on the other were taken into account as the appropriate theoretical framework. In fact, the communicative action theory has been modified by the religious tradition to be employed for the analysis of the problem at hand.

With that in mind, the major problems of the research are provided in some discourses: the first discourse provides conceptual discussions. In the second discourse, the communicative action theory is introduced with its cultural load as the theoretical framework of the study. It will be modified to be in the next discourse to adapt the theory and to be used in the analysis of the research problem. In yet another discourse, the political transformations of the period 1990-1998 will be followed with a cultural approach based on the employed theory. Ultimately, we conclude the study in the final section.

### **First discourse: Conceptual discussions**

A short definition of the key concepts of the research will be provided in this discourse. The four concepts of "communicative action", "religious tradition", "cultural-political development", and "critical theory" are discussed.

Communicative action: In this theory, three correct and incorrect social life areas are distinguished. These areas include the inner world, social outer world, and the objective outer world. According to this theory, we are related to each other in these areas of life simultaneously, in a correct or incorrect

way. Through these three areas, the analysis of the correctness or incorrectness of the social outer world, which indicates a normative approach to the social realities, will transform the communicative action theory into a sociological theory, which includes the politics as one of its aspects (Shafiei, 2005a).

Religious tradition: A collection of hereditary teachings from the social world history in the framework of religious knowledge which is the guiding light for living an honest life today. The religious world, as a specific type as a social world, may flow with appropriate and defensible relations, and it also may undergo distortion and be reasonably non-defensible. However, the correct or the appropriate religious world is in a relationship with the other worlds and could be effective in the improvement of life in the other three worlds (Shafiei, 2010).

Cultural-political development: This is a type of development that is not based on political aspects but on a collection of intellectual-mental components that guide the political life from within. For example, elections in a political system indicate systemic political development; but the bargaining culture and discussion for a proper selection is an internal tendency in people which shoes the cultural-political development (Shafiei, 2006).

Critical theory: Theories that are based on the criticism of the status quo and try to find the deficiencies to create better alternative conditions. For example, the communicative action theory, such as the psychoanalysis at the individual level, tries to identify the chronic social diseases at the social level to create a proper alternative condition (Shafiei, 2005b).

### **Second Discourse: Communicative action theory and analysis of political transformations**

The communicative action theory is a linguistic theory on social systems, which describes the various aspects of a proper social relation. This theory analyzes the language paradigm in the application and in speech mode. The theory seeks for tenets that are dominant on the language application when speaking. Language has a general dimension reading the apparent condition of creating speech. The objective of these overall rules is the identification of

the general capabilities of human beings to create speech.

According to his theory, we are living in three worlds simultaneously: the outer world, belonging to the objects and affairs; the inner world of decisions, thoughts and emotions; and the normative world of values and norms which are set out in an intersubjective manner. Every statement or speech is related to these three worlds (Habermas, 1984). The three credible claims - related to the three worlds- are reality or truth about the outer world; honesty about the linguistic aspects of intentions, and the correctness of relations between people. What is important to know in the present study is that according to this theory, in every speech, the speaker comes to an understanding with the other person. The speaker has to select his part of speech correctly so that the listener could perceive it and both could come to an agreement in terms of the determined norms in the part of speech. Here, the communication between the persons takes place through illocutionary actions.

In the illocutionary action, "a specific action", such as promising, wishing, ordering, etc. is made with the tongue. In this action, the agreement and interactive aspects of communication are addressed. Here, the communication between people is made through dictation decrees (such as orders, promises, advice etc.).

According to the communicative action theory, every statement is the implied or explicit indication of the correctness of interpersonal communication. The testability and criticality of every claim is a guarantee to the intellect. For example, the interactive application requires persuasive justifications. The reasonable justification sometimes requires "discourses". In case there is a discussion, the speaker and the listener could come to a discourse level regarding their normative hypotheses. In fact, in the discourse conditions, freedom from imperatives and requisites of the inner or outer world is not assumed, and the participants provide the conditions for a proper communicative action through discussion on the communication conditions and taking a criticizing approach toward any type of claims from both parties. The more tangible aspects of the theory have become possible

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through using the two concepts of lifeworld and system.

### **Lifeworld and system: The ideal and colonial aspect**

Compared to the three previously described worlds, lifeworld is a virtual world. It is a semantic horizon that is formed in the process of communicative actions and currently, acts as a background of each communicative action. No one could trespass the lifeworld. The lifeworld is the area where agreement and consensus are achieved in the communicative actions based on the acquired norms. Lifeworld is a transcendental area where the speaker and the listener meet each other and make reasonable statements in a bidirectional manner based on their parts of speech related to the world (objective, social or subjective), or they could criticize, reject or acknowledge each other, resolve their contradictions and come to an agreement (Nowzari, 2003).

According to this theory, in the political transformation analysis, political relations are not merely indicative of the outer world with the intermediate power. In fact, the correctness or otherwise of these relations are examined critically taking into account the values ruling this area. Such an analysis helps us compare the status quo and the ideal condition so that we could revise the defensible requisites in the discourse process of the communicative action theory considering the identified gap. Therefore, we could achieve new agreements in case that is not satisfactory. The collection of the new values, make a new lifeworld based on which the political relations flow ideally. According to the above, using such a theory to analyze the political problems in Iran depends on its adaptation to the religious tradition. This is explained in the following.

### **Third discourse: Adaptation of the communicative action theory with the Shiite religious tradition**

To modify the communicative action theory and its adaptation to the Shiite Islamic tradition, and also the requirements of the Iranian social system and political history, some discussion have to be made in this discourse. Since

the communicative action theory is to critically improve the worldly life, its use in the political analysis of the political problems in the Islamic Republic, which is based on the religious teachings, is not appropriate without assuming the authenticity of worldly life in religious terms. Also, depending on the critical understanding of the historical and social human beings and their consensus, the theory is to achieve social development. So, it remains to be explained in the religious thinking whether there is a recognized independent area of religious jurisprudence which is explained by humanly thinking in historical-social terms or such a thing is not possible on the basis of religious thought. After all, our discussion is the analysis of the government as a factor of the outer objective world, depending on the theory of communicative action. So, a religious discussion should be made on whether the government is accepted as a worldly phenomenon and not areligious or divine one, or that the secular aspect of the government has been neglected from the religious point of view. This will be addressed in the following, and in addition, the communicative action theory will be adapted to the religious tradition.

### **Religious assumptions about worldly materialistic affairs**

*In the correct* religious worldview, the worldly and divine lives are simultaneously original to the life of a social individual. Therefore, the requisites of the communicative action theory based on the worldly life could be accepted within the religious system as well. *The bi-worldly* worldview, which at the same time credits the worldly life as well as the afterlife, has been reflected in the Quran: "But seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world" (Holy Quran, al-Qasas, 77). This verse recognizes the worldly life and distinguishes it from the afterlife. "[Are] men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and giving of zakah. They fear a Day in which the hearts and eyes will [fearfully] turnabout" (Holy Quran, An-Nur, 37). According to the above verse, the Godly men are those who not only address the spiritual life but also the worldly life; because *being spiritual is not possible without*

regard to business and trade.

*This worldview of Hadiths could also be deuced: "The one who leaves his world for his afterlife or that leaves his afterlife for his world is not one of us" (al-Hurr al-Amili, 1983). "Do whatever you can for your worldly life as though you will live eternally, and for whatever you can for your afterlife as though you will die tomorrow" (al-Hurr al-Amili, 1983). Another Hadith has addressed the originality of the worldly life: "You (the ignorant Arabs) had the worst religion and were living in the worst world. You lived between hard rocks and deaf snakes; drank dirty water; ate harsh foods, shed blood from each other; you were disconnected with your relatives; you embraced idols and sins and offenses surrounded you" (Aeinevand, 1992; Imami & Ashtiani, 1994). The Hadith condemns the "bad world" of ignorant Arabs alongside their "bad religion" by distinguishing the secular world from the religious world.*

#### **Legalization and extra-religious lifeworld**

The doctrine of "Legalization", in the religious literature, recognizes a world out of the circle of the sharia. Legalization means that God has made all human beings free in all aspects of the rules of life, and the assignments of the sharia are exceptions to the general rule of freedom of human beings in the regulation of life by him. *Quran says: "It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth" (Holy Quran, al-Baqarah, 29). Also, Imam Sadiq (PBUH) said: "Everything is lawful to human beings unless it is clearly proven banned for him" (al-Kulayni, 1407 AH; Tusi, 1985). In addition, "Everything is of no rules, except a prohibiting rule is placed on it" (al-Hurr al-Amili, 1403 AH). Shi'a theologians have also rationally proved the arguments of legalization.*

*According to the rule of legalization, it is known that regulation of life in the social area is necessarily the responsibility of human beings. Through the permissions of God, human beings are able to decide freely in their own worldly interest out of the divine-religious domain. To achieve social cohesion and also a balance in social relations, humans could reach fluid and posterior agreements. Prior religious norms will not hinder the posterior agreements. The prerequisite of making social life communicative is not to*

*trespass the divine-religious space. Meanwhile, focusing on such a space, the strategic rationality could be passed off and the totality of the social systems could be guaranteed based on the communicative rationality in the realm of the religious norms so that the sovereignty of the strategic rationality on all aspects of social life and colonization of lifeworld is overcome.*

### **Qur'an and a critical analysis of the government**

According to Quranteachings, despite the necessity of the *government for the social life, it has always been* overwhelmed with all types of social corruption. In the story of Queen "Saba" (Holy Quran, An-Naml, 34), corruption of the political power indicated as a rule (Tabatabaei, n.d.). The claim of divinity by Namrud was due to the grant of governance by God (Holy Quran, al-Baqarah, 258). *The order of Pharaoh regarding the assassination of Moses* was based on his political power (Holy Quran, Ghafir, 29), which is known as the rebellion of Pharaoh (Holy Quran, Taha, 43 & 45; Holy Quran, An-Nazi'at, 17; Holy Quran, al-Fajr, 11). In the light of his political power, he ordered the Israelites to worship him. He killed children and kept their wives (Holy Quran, Ash-Shu'ara, 22; Holy Quran, al-Qasas, 4). Pharaoh made people feeble *in the apparent, bodily, mental and physical terms* (Holy Quran, al-Qasas, 4 & 38), and humiliated them (Holy Quran, Az-Zukhruf, 54). He made people his slave and was arrogant in ordinary life (Holy Quran, al-A'raf, 133; Holy Quran, Yunus, 75; Holy Quran, Ghafir, 48; Holy Quran, al-Ankabut, 39). There are also other verses indicating his divinity claims (Holy Quran, Ash-Shu'ara, 29; Holy Quran, al-Qasas, 38; Holy Quran, An-Nazi'at, 24), being aggressive toward Israelites (Holy Quran, Taha, 74; Holy Quran, Ghafir, 25), and his vilification in the maintenance of his monarchy (Holy Quran, Ash-Shu'ara, 35 & 39). The story of Kheyr narrates the seizure of people's possessions by the ruler (Holy Quran, al-Kahf, 79). Also, the story of Yusof also suggests the immorality of the government.

In contrast, some verses from the Quran explain the ideal formation of political-social decisions and orders in the Islamic society. The top verse in this regard is verse 159, Ali 'Imran. It could definitely be claimed that this verse recognizes and recommends the communicative rationality. In other words, the soul of the communicative action theory at the political level is

recognized in this verse. The verse is translated as follows: "So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]."

According to the verse, political rulers should take various decisions on secular (and not spiritual) matters by consulting the general public. This verse recognizes the right of society to participate in political and social affairs. According to the verse, an area separated from the asserted spiritual realm as an active public presence that is considered desirable in such areas. It is inferred from the verse that the political decisions made by the Prophet Muhammad were based on consultation, consensus and understanding. Without a desirable picture of disagreements, the order of Quran to the consultation is useless. God invites believers to declare on the one hand, and on the other, He warns the rulers to keep people's rights. It is clear from the legalization of people's rights to participation that the political society belongs to all of them; because, in another verse, Quran legalizes consultation in private family affairs to reach the consensus and satisfaction on both rightful parties (Shebr, 1414 AH). Therefore, in the political consultation circle of Prophet Muhammad, there were not only believers, but also hypocrites such as Abdullah ibn Abi and his companions, and the consultation session was not to include only particular groups (Tabatabaei, n.d.).

Some conclusions could be made from what was set out above: 1. The communicative action theory is a linguistic theory that has been generalized to the sociological area to critically analyze social relations; 2. Although this theory has been formed in the modern secular world, it may be used to analyze political transformations after reconstruction and adaptation to the Iranian history and society and also to the religious tradition of social transformations in the Islamic Republic; 3. Teachings in religious sources could be relied upon to facilitate the application of communicative action theory for the analysis of political and social change in the Islamic Republic

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of Iran. Accordingly, the following discourse provides a critical analysis of cultural-political transformations in the Islamic Republic based on the modified and adapted communicative action theory.

#### **Fourth discourse: A critical look at the cultural-political transformations in the Islamic Republic of Iran**

The Islamic Republic of Iran was formed on the basis of great ideals and claimed to meet basic needs: the need for political, economic, religious and cultural development. Development in these areas at the system level refers to the formation and institutionalization of strategic rationality, and at the global level, it refers to the formation and institutionalization of communication rationality. Rationalization of institutions, values, norms, traditions, rights, and regulations is achievable in the light of the development of communicative rationality. Communicative action and its development is the only comprehensive tool to realize the rationality in various aspects. Although strategic rationality refers to the one-directional experimental intellect, it only plays a necessary and sufficient role in a balanced social system when there is harmony in the communicative actions.

The problem is, to what extent, in the Islamic Republic, the objective transformations in the cultural and political areas have served as the facilitators of the development of communicative actions, and to what extent, it has re-encountered with the previous hindrances. In this discourse, we examine the transformations of the two areas in order to answer this question. The current analysis focuses on the political and cultural transformations of the period 1990-98, i.e. the construction period of the presidency of Hashemi Rafsanjani in his first and second administration.

#### **Cultural and political transformations of 1990-98**

“The historical freedom from the redundant outer-structural and inner-psychological burdens” is one of the major goals of the Islamic Republic. The realization of such goals was delayed until the end of domestic chaos and foreign war. Although an open political atmosphere was created in the

first months and years after the revolution, it was only a flash that was put out too soon, albeit inevitably. However, in this period, with the end of the war, Iraq was formally named an aggressor and was condemned by the UN Secretary-General. And at the same time, Iran not only could feel its strength inside and out due to overcoming domestic and foreign wars it also gained international credibility. Therefore, it was necessary to take steps to overcome the crises-induced before and after the Islamic Revolution. In the analysis of the cultural-political transformations of this stage, clues could be seen regarding the move towards a desirable situation. Bashiriyeh, a professor of political sociology, believes that, in the period 1990-98, traditional authority replaced the charismatic authority. This replacement took place not through rejection of the charismatic authority, but from within, i.e. through maintaining the Vilayat-e Faqih (jurisconsult guardianship). In other words, with the sovereignty of the clerical class, a traditionalist concept of charismatic authority came into play which was in line with the interests of the clerical class and its social base, i.e. market and commercial capitalism. Bashiriyeh believes that with the intensified political monopoly and the sovereign oligarchy, its inconsistency with the democratic institutions set out in the Constitution became more obvious (Bashiriyeh, 2002). The Iranian government had to perform three specific tasks with the conformation of the traditional charismatic authority (1990-98): first, it had to keep the cohesion and integrity of the traditional and pre-capitalist classes ruling in the power bloc through ideological dominance to prevent the formation of potential gaps; second, it had to prevent the formation and strengthening of the groups of modern classes in order to make them dissociated and separated; third, it had to be able to mobilize the masses to achieve its own purposes. However, the government failed to unify the forces of the power bloc, and the main core of the power bloc took the approach of monopolization in governing and political obstruction in practice.

In the 90s, a gap was formed in the traditional bloc of powers, which showcased as a conflict between tradition and modernity, as the traditional and modern right wings. These conflicts kept the government from other

specific works, and class conflicts that had been suppressed outside the government penetrated the political and governmental realms. Overall, the sociological transformations of the ruling bloc showed that the clerical rulers have not been successful in keeping its internal unity and cohesion over the long term. The party gap produced in the Islamic Republic embodied as the Mujahedin Khalq Organization, the Islamic Consultative Assembly and the Combatant *Clergy* Association were the same conflicts that plagued the power blocs. It was among such weaknesses in the traditional political power that the ground was made for a reunion of the left-wing of the traditional powers with the modern middle class. At this time, the traditional left-wing, which had radical economic slogans at the beginning, turned to political radicalism (democratic slogans, civil society, participation and competition). Turning toward oligarchy and away from the charismatic element and thus, the intellectual separation between the masses and the government, paved the ground for participatory crises that was unveiled partly in the June 1997 elections. In this period, the participation was most influential, instead of democratic or mass-based. So it could be realized in informal, personal, and relationship-based forms. Elitism, the emergence of the new ruling class, accumulation and monopoly of power resources, and the misuse of the political power to exploit the economic privileges are the major characteristics of this period. However, the overt conflicts between performance and ideal, interference in the private life, ignorance of basic needs, emergence of social anomaly among the youth, inclination toward capitalism and the evolution of the system to rely on order and security instead of ideology created problems in maintaining these situations (Bashiriyeh, 2002).

This sociological analysis reveals the reconstructed gaps in the Islamic Republic in political, cultural, social and economic areas during the study period. It seems that the repetition of the negative cultural-political phenomena of this period refers more to the lack of a democratic tradition in Iran, especially the legacy of the modern dictatorship of the Pahlavi dynasty in the contemporary history of Iran, that to the deficiencies of the ruling body. Although the reasons provided in the short term sociological analyzes are

more convincing, the major hindrance in making a systematic government, culture, and economy in Iran is our historical deprivation of rationalization of the various social aspects. The analysis by Bashiriyeh, which refers to the political issues as the reasons for the political shortcomings and chaos, could not include the more fundamental reasons from the cultural areas into his political analysis. Reasoning the triple charismatic, traditional and legal authorities in the evolutionary history and the explanation of the Iranian political crises such as legitimacy, participation and sovereignty (as argued by Bashiriyeh) based on the socio-historical realities of the country, could not provide proper reasoning. The major concern of Iran today maybe that how we can reconstruct the historical traditions inside the legal-intellectual authorities in a new way and adaptable to the rationalized society in a comprehensive manner.

According to the present study and in contrast with the viewpoint of Bashiriyeh, the tendency to mediocrity and passing through the multifaceted domestic chaos faced by the young Islamic system prior to this period provided some indications of an evolutionary movement with the cultural-political dimensions in the Islamic Republic. Such indications among the limitations faced in the wake of the Islamic Revolution, the most significant one being the post-war economic turmoil, which made the economic development the major priority, seem to be promising.

The conscious and collectively-decided changes in the Constitution in 1990 led to the strengthening of the democratic aspect of the Constitution. The leader was not required to be a "Marja" anymore, and so, it made the leadership much more competitive. The change also facilitated the combination of charismatic authority with the legal authority. In the face of this change, the Assembly of Experts could more practically oversee the leader. One of the main effects of such a change would also be the more criticality of the leadership at the civil society level. Some members of the Assembly of Experts, however, felt the hazards of elimination of the "Marja" requirement on the basis of the separation of religion and politics.

The establishment of the Expediency Discernment Council could bring the decisions of the leader close to the public opinion, considering that the tasks of the council to consult with the leader and to resolve the disputes between the Consultative Assembly and the Guardian Council could bring some posterior facilities, made in the context of the constantly transforming society, for the social rules and regulations.

The election of Hashemi Rafsanjani (who was one of the first cultural-political clerical champions during the 60s, and also one of the ardent disciples of Imam Khomeini and who was interested in perceiving the politics based on Islam and was concerned with adapting Islam to the modern intellectuality) as the first president after the death of the leader of the revolution, without taking into account his theoretical constraints and actual practices, was effective in the formation of comprehensive development contexts. Rafsanjani wrote the book "Amir Kabir" because he stated: "Amir Kabir was interesting to me from an Islamic point of view. He was a nationalist who started to take actions and provide services that adapted to the Islamic viewpoints" (Milani, 2003). Such a viewpoint of Islam, (an adaptation of nationalism and Islam) could potentially have many implications for the rationalization of religious society. When he was elected as the president, he was faced with major problems, with the main ones being a weak economy, craving for liquidity, with a chaotic infrastructure, widespread and inefficient public bureaucracy, and the extremist party who vowed for the reconstruction of the previously closed conditions. Domestically, the strategic basis of the Rafsanjani administration was on the reconstruction of the war-ridden economy of the country. Interestingly, Rafsanjani had repeatedly said that his policies were the logical generalization of Imam's thinking, indeed. In selecting his ministry cabinet, Rafsanjani did not invite extremists such as Mohtashimi. The mediocre policies are taken by Rafsanjani also covered the social and cultural areas. Although it was a powerful government with a relatively high power concentration, the opposition party always criticized the government in its newspapers, that is, the best-selling newspapers in

Iran, such as Salam (Milani, 2003).

The present paper argues that the gradual development of the political, social and economic dynamism indicates the gradual growth of the seedling, the seed of which was planted in 1979, and as much as the external hindrances were lowered, it moved toward prosperity and also toward reduction of the historical sovereignties. As the transformations of this period prioritized economic development and sought to increase the participation of the nation in the economy, it could help the individuals and social groups to better communicate.

The intellectual and cultural transformations in the political parties in this period promised the departure from the ideological space and the acceptance of rationalization requirement, although neither on a large scale nor in all parties. The Islamic leftists (Mujahedin of the Islamic Revolution, Combatant Clergy Association, etc.) gradually accepted the theories of some religious modernism and normative and libertarian considerations. Therefore, these intellectual and cultural groups sought to reconstruct themselves in an evolutionary way. But of course, each movement would bring some errors inevitably. The mediocre clerical wing, which was practically in the power cycle, when approached the intra-system experts and professionals, started to embrace some revisions (as noted above) in the economic, social and cultural policies with its new Islamic expediency, realism, and moderation. One of the positive cultural developments was the spread of opportunities for the dissemination of diverse cultural ideas and discourses which were more prominent than the 70s in the field of publications.

Although an open look to the culture at the start of the Islamic Revolution (1978–1979) with the establishment of the Ministry of National Guidance (later, the Ministry of Islamic Guidance), with the leadership of Nasser Minachi, indicated the inner significance of culture, but the previously mentioned hindrances made this process impossible, and during the war period, the sovereignty dominated and the cultural policies of the country were mainly approved and implemented by the government. The changes in the post-war period were toward the beginning of the Islamic Revolution

status. In this period, at the cultural level, much earlier than economics, diverse cultural patterns emerged, which were different from formal government models, some of which were previously explained. However, it has to be asserted that, in this period, too, the major discourse in culture was unidirectionally guided by the government and other cultural discourses were marginalized. But the important point was that, from the general perspective, the government took a policy that made possible the opening of the cultural atmosphere of the country. The combination of Rafsanjani administration made it possible for an intellectual-cultural openness to respond positively to the hidden call of culture (Mirsalim, 2005). Meanwhile, the major problem in this paper is the weakness of the discourses in problematic cultural-political realms. In this period, three cultural discourses could be formed based on the political are, i.e. inter-religious, extra-religious and the discourses with the controversial religious position. In a proper discourse context, these discussions could have led to the communicative rationalization of the political values derived from religious teachings and also clarification of the ambiguous boundaries of value in the political field.

In the cultural transformations of this period, with the development of publications, cultural centers and institutions, leaflets such as “Name-ye Farhang”, “Dariche-ye Goftegu”, “Negah-e No”, “Kian”, “Women”, “Culture and Cinema”, “Sure-ye Nojavan”, “Sure-ye Honari”, “Iran Shenasi”, “Kalame Eslami”, “Aieneye Pajouhesh”, “Development Culture”, “Kalak”, “Iran-e Farda”, “Aieneye /andisheh”, and “Arghavan” were published, each of which had their own claims of the subjective, social, natural, and religious worlds. The diversity of these claims could bring arguments which facilitated the intellectual development and paved the way for the next period of cultural-political developments, although superficially.

Overall, compared to the war period, the production and supply of modernist cultural commodities increased. This increase was not accidental. It originated in the ideals of the Revolution, and practically, the inevitable closure of the cultural atmosphere did not ruin the cultural growth but organized it. In other words, in the 70s, some irrational strictness created

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excessive restrictions on the quality and diversity of theories and thoughts for the publications, where many modernist culturalists were marginalized and tried to make cultural reservoirs such as creating literary works and storytelling. Soon after the war, they took new opportunities to publish books and magazines. In companionship with the conservatives and religionists, the traditional and religious modernists were involved in the production and marketing of cultural goods and these were more welcomed than the merely religious works. This created costs and fluctuations, resulting partly from the reconstruction of the previous radicalism. Significantly, the atmosphere and facilities for this endogenous cultural development were provided through official public channels.

This is synonymous with the infiltration of culture into politics, which makes their interaction possible. On this basis, the relative flexibility of the cultural politics and its implementation agencies not only provided formal support for the increase in the number of publications, but also a number of experts and directors of the executive body contributed to the production of modernist journals. For example, "Arghanun" was *quarterly* which was published from the spring of 1995 by the editorial director Ahmad Masjid Jamei in the Ministry of Guidance, whose main goal was said to be "Western Studies". The major purpose was to "know", instead of irrationally oppose, the western world, and then to criticize, not reject, it. The argument put through by Arghanun was that speaking of cultural evasion without knowing the western world is vague fear.

As stated, the expansion of the atmosphere to rationalize the various social areas could not logically be without challenge and cost. It seems that at this period, the domestic and foreign blockade forced the theoretical and practical movements with the intention to eliminate the unidirectional sovereignty of the political power on all other areas, especially culture, to become "slow", "backward" and "constrained". From among the domestic obstacles, two were more prominent; the first being the dominance of ideological views which emphasized the prior religious supervision on culture. Practically, under this ideology, any type of modernism was constrained by political obstacles. The

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second obstacle was the traditional absolutism that could not perceive the religious atmosphere of society as a social reality and ideologically, it was distorted from the criticism area and toward the violation of the morals and induced fragile sensitivities. The traditional sovereignty of political power over the cultural area, still affecting the cultural atmosphere as a sustainable legacy, made obstacles in the cultural realm with the engagement of some parties, and so, created some challenges.

### **Conclusion**

Some points are to be made on the discussion in this research regarding the transformations of the period 1990-1998. In this period of theoretical and cultural maturity, with the increase in the cultural-political activities, the various political forces and the exchange of opinions also increased. However, foreign hindrances such as chronic tyranny and ideological prejudices slowed down the developmental movement in the communicative action process. The third point to be made is that the legacy of political sovereignty from the tyrannical history of Iran was still being reconstructed in this period, and its elimination necessitated a gradual cultural revolution. The fourth conception of the cultural-political developments of this period relates to religious traditions that have not yet been rationalized in the process of communicative action. As with any other areas of life, religious morals remain sensitive without communicative rationality and require serious transformations. Finally, we must accept that elimination of these irrational effects from the society and embracing the rationalization process in the society is not without costs and requires patience, practical delicacy, cooperation between the state and the nation, and the overcoming the radicalism.

Overall, despite the unpleasant events in the relatively open atmosphere of the 90s, with all its disappointing arguments, these are considered positive and promising in the communicative action theory. Cultural stresses are not always interpreted as a departure from morality and fairness. Criticizing crude thoughts is not easy. The owners of such opinions usually resort to harsh reactions due to high psychological pressures. However, the dialogue

is the Holy Grail; because, it is the paving ground of overrunning the unpolished theoretical traditions. In the communicative action process, challenging ideas are transformed and turn into new common values and also accepted norms.

Rationalization of the communication in the process of constant criticism of the status quo, gradually infiltrates the upper and lower layers of the society, making the society discover the necessity of resorting to liberating dialogues in its entirety and also in its systemic fragments. In this process, with the coordination of the government, the costs gradually decrease and benefits increase with the expansion of the materialistic facilities, and the cultural possibilities also increase in the light of the expansion of communicative actions. The evolutionary process of the Islamic Revolution shows that the initial determination to liberate from the historical crises and embrace rationalization, and also to find a comprehensive development path, is still there and the movements are being made in the institutionalization of the new historical era.

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