



Ups and Downs of Political Activity in Iran after the Islamic Revolution of Iran

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Introduction

According to the importance of political party activities to achieve development goals, identify the factors that lead to depression in Iran's political activity may be useful both in theory and in practice in order to improve the situation and strengthen political parties in Iran. The main questions that this study seeks to answer is that it is an expression of what the ups and downs of political activity after the revolution were involved? This core question can be decomposed into the following sub-questions:

- What political party?
- What are the functions of political parties?
- What activities of political parties has been a surge in post-revolutionary Iran?
- What factors in the prosperity or stagnation of political activity in Iran have been effective?

In the lower part of the effort is the appropriate response to this question. Firstly, due to different definitions of political parties discussed a revision of the concept of political party different from that of other civil society organizations, including groups' influential in terms of method and goal and then referred to the functions of the main and sub parties. The transparency of party and its functions, in the second part, the attention to the importance of political parties in the constitution, and turbulent political activity following the Islamic Revolution in four periods, stagnation of political activity at all levels of government, civil society institutions. And the masses, and examined ways to strengthen party activities. In this study, the analytical method has been used to answer questions, primary and secondary research. Using descriptive primary and secondary functions of the political party and it is under review and will be discussed using causal analysis to examine why and how the activities of the party and blazing over the stages of the revolution.

First part:

Revision of the concept of political party and its functions

Like other concepts of political science, political parties are defined in confusion and ambiguity that could be caused by the tendency of some political scientists in the importing non-partisan organizations such influential pressure groups in their definition and removal of non-competitive political parties that this result is the definition of Euro-centrism of most



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Western scholars that the parties in the West at the center of their own definitions. Definitions of political parties can be categorized in the following four categories:

In the second case, a group of political scientists like Lasswell and Kaplan are not only non-party organizations have been out in their definitions. They regarded the party as a group that developed the overarching issues and the election shall introduce the various candidates (Lasswell and Kaplan: 169). This definition of a hand, is very limited, because reality has not considered the one-party system and on the other hand, the scope of the definition is very broad summary, this definition also define the key features of a comprehensive people and prevents strangers, respectively, but have the opposite properties, namely of strangers and prevented people. In the third category definition of party political scientists are also many who believe that the one-party system, party organization is considered the antithesis of monopoly.

Sigmund Neumann, for example, says:

"The definition includes the Democratic Party itself, and so the assumption of nominal party in an authoritarian system is abstract. One-party system has an inherent conflict there. The only other competitor with at least one party is a political reality." (Neumann 1956: 395). In this definition, the race for the power element of the main characteristics of the party that has a key role in the definition of other scholars, (Riggs Schumpeter 1950: 283). This was clearly a fan of political parties with pluralistic one they encounter parties, and therefore cannot conclude that non-competitive political parties dressed in their party. Of course, the development of comparative political studies from the 60s onwards, Western scholars have expanded the boundaries of their definitions of political parties to include the type of monopolistic one-party systems. According to the definition of the three above-mentioned problems of political parties, and while that should not be a distinction between competitive and non-competitive political parties were unaware, in the fourth category of organizations excluded from the definition of the two indices comprising non-partisan and one-party regimes considered Coleman, Rosberg and Sartori is:

Political parties are associations that are officially aimed implied or stipulated achieve or maintain regulatory control, either individually or as a consortium in the race with other similar groups of people and policies of the state government organized for the potential or actual (Coleman and Rosberg 1964: 2).

Sartori's definition of political parties is also in this category:

"Any political group, the officials and the election is valid, and that ability through elections (free or non-free) candidates for the public enterprise management» (Sartori 1975: 63). In this article, with regard to the definitions treble of previous weaknesses, strengths definitions Coleman and Rosberg and Sartori, and the definition provided in the Columbia Encyclopedia (The Columbia encyclopedia 2001). The definition of "a modern political institutions and civil society in seeking power individually or coalition won the popular vote by election" has been accepted for a political party. This definition has the following characteristics: political parties, a strong civil society, as an intermediary between the people and the government as unorganized masses, are considered.



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Political parties are political modernization process and to a new technology, due to the complexity of modern societies, separation and specialization of structures exist. With this feature traditional societies such as Saudi Arabia or non-Party Pre-party societies are, of course, with modern societies have systems of anti-party systems, such as military regimes, is different because it is not competitive or democratic essential elements in the definition of a political party. Field of parties, is political. According to various definitions of definition is clear that partisan politics is a process in which a group shall adopt collective decisions (a process by which a group can make a collective decision) are parties in the struggle for power (a Struggle for power).

In the event of power to an authoritative allocation of values and are engaged in a peaceful resolutions of disputes. The impact of this military organization, which seeks to achieve power through non-political and resolving conflicts and tensions are, by definition, are outside the party. In the event of power to an authoritative allocation of values and are engaged in a peaceful resolutions of disputes. The impact of this military organization, which seeks to achieve power through non-political and resolving conflicts and tensions are, by definition, are outside the party.

The purpose of political parties is in power. This is a distinguishing feature from other parties, organized groups of civil society such influential groups.

Political parties, depending on the type of party system and the electoral system, individually or in coalition come to power. In a one-party or two-party system in Britain and America, usually one of the parties is in power. But in multi-party systems with proportional representation system, as the ruling party systems of most European countries, that one party alone cannot obtain a majority, the coalition parties are together on the power (Bashiriyeh, 1995, 125 -126).

Method to power, winning the popular vote with mechanisms of elections. Therefore, the parties need to attract the participation of citizens for political participation, not as influential groups that seek to influence centers of power and decision-making to achieve their own corporate interests, and not as a military leader who took power through violent gain. In addition, the election does not necessarily mean that it is not competitive in some totalitarian or authoritarian countries may be election, but is not the choice. For example, if only one candidate in the elections, or that two or more candidates of one party. In fact there is no choice because every choice of at least two different policy options to achieve its objective finding. Furthermore, these unelected bodies including the jurisdictional definition of political parties outside the circle.

When the relative vagueness of the concept of political party had referred to its functions. A sign of political development is the breakdown of structural differentiation and functional Almond and Powell Specialization 1992. Political parties are also considered one of the important structures are developed in a political system that, along with other government agencies and NGOs have important functions that are discussed in this section. Functions of political parties can be divided into two types: primary and secondary or primary and secondary. The main functions of political parties can be seen as expressions of political participation, political selection, development and implementation of policies (Sederberg 1977: 139-146).



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Second part:

Assess the factors affecting the ups and downs of political activity in Iran after the revolution

Political parties play a weak role of primary and secondary functions, mentioned in the previous section, have, though people with their spontaneous political participation in electoral activities, protests and demonstrations have had a decisive role in the selection of the executive authority; the function of political parties in making requests and demands of the people to alternative policies are very weak and therefore have little role in the development of ----- and consequently cross-sectional parties and especially in the country appeared on the political scene; individual citizens, not for their party identity and consciousness of party programs, but also because of the association with reliable figures for random selection of their executive and legislative offices, political parties are a host of government programs, and not channel independent for transfer requests and messages to the authorities and the people concerned; political parties rather than the legitimacy of the rulers, the survival and continuity thanks to the characters and the political elite rather than the legitimacy of the rulers, the survival and continuity thanks to personalities and political elite of the executive branch know; and finally, political parties weak role in resolving tensions in society and in turn have important political figures that reduce conflicts and tensions between various groups and parties were effective. With all that said, four of the ups and downs of political activity in Iran after the Islamic Revolution is evident: the first period, it can be a boom period from the beginning of the activities of different groups of civil society organizations is called the Revolution and the beginning of the war continued. In this period, the revitalization of the old political forces, which has Marxist tendency, nationalist, religious, new political parties, such as the Islamic Republic Party, the People's Republic of Muslim and Islamic Revolution Mojahedin Organization, took the field. During this period, almost out to all political tendencies and thoughts of old and new, non-monarchist organizations, political parties and groups in the form of the activity (Modir Shanechi 1996, 92-94); the second period, which can be called the beginning of the war recess to accept Resolution 598, the demise of Imam Khomeini and Rafsanjani's government that political activity subsided; the third period, during reconstruction and is 8-year presidency of Hashemi. During this period, although economic activity is centered activities, but parties such as government agencies began their construction. At this point, the activities of political parties and organizations approved in 1981, due to the poor performance of some parties in the beginning of the revolution was suppressed, actually was conducted in 1989, followed by 39 political groups were able to obtain licenses from the Ministry of the Interior; and finally, the fourth period, the period of revival of political activity that is related to President Khatami of June 1997 so far. At this stage, the strengthening of civil society, including political parties to achieve political development was the president's agenda and parties in addition to the previous, new political parties and organizations, such as the Islamic Iran Participation Front and the Islamic Republic of Iran always, was start activity (Mortajei 1999; identification of organizations and political parties 1998). With regard to the above, the main question will return again to explain why, despite the lack of legal prohibition to carry out party activities, political parties have failed to perform the desired functions and reduce activities in some of the country faced period is Since political parties and civil society institutions intermediate



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between the state and citizens stagnation of political activity can be considered at three levels of government, civil society organizations and the masses were analyzed.

A) State level

It can be noted at this level are three important elements distributed or rentier nature of the Iranian government, the nature of the revolution and the events following the revolution in political activity were effective stagnation. Among the important features of the Iranian government, both before and after the Islamic Revolution, this is the largest source of government revenue, without the mediation of the local economy, the oil in the international markets has been achieved. The main issue for this kind of state is the wealth distribution of oil revenues, and not how to extract resources from society, and that is why this government as the distributive, or rentier state were called. Citizens to take advantage of the offers rentier state in different sectors of education, health, housing, consumer goods do not need to pay taxes, but in exchange for this privilege must adhere to their political leaders and their decisions follow. The concentration of power and wealth in the hands of the government has caused the freedom of civil society groups, government is dominated by power and wealth. This feature causes of political parties in conformity with the policies of the government in various spheres of political, economic, or political and economic isolation for independent and critical policy (Ashraf 1995; Gause 1994; Herb 1999). Political parties after the Islamic Revolution are also parties that are politically and in terms of financial resources, are the most dependent on government figures and government, as the strongest political entity and due to the inverse relationship between authority and freedom, the parties have taken further steps to strengthen the authority of the state and problems of the state and of its original function, namely the formulation of policies, programs and policies, have been unable. Because of the dependence of political parties on the sources of power and wealth in the hands of the government, political parties have a role to play in the national political scene around a key figure in a special section has been created. In this regard, the Islamic Iran Participation Front party to the Executives of Construction Party and noted that owe their formation and continued success of the presidents Rafsanjani and Khatami in various fields of economic and political history. It is clear that by reducing the authority of the characters in the next sections also reduced the scope of activities of the parties. The concentration of power and wealth in the hands of government to another has been effective in reducing political activity. A second element of political activity is effective in reducing the role of popular participation in the revolution and employment in government positions and executive leadership of the revolution after the victory of the revolution. Political leaders gained power as a result of spontaneous participation of the masses, and not thanks to the support of institutions and organizations of the party, and so they feel they have no need for civil society organizations, intermediary between himself and the people, can directly through the public media connect people, applications and raise your expectations of them, and mobilize them for the purposes of the system. Of course, this type of participation in the approval and implementation of the decisions taken by its governing elite. While



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the dynamics and persistence of a political system developed in the long term will require that such an organized political parties and strengthen the demands and requests of people to be able to identify and classify them according to adopt necessary policies and implemented. Occupation government top leaders of the natural things in any kind of radical change and revolution is considered. A third element that is effective in reducing political activity is to prioritize security and economic development during the eight years of war and eight years of construction. In this era of political and development priority of the government is not certain. Inappropriate conditions in most of the country's resources in order to deal with the destruction caused by the war of aggression and the building was allocated (Mortajei 1999). Security and economic development more priority role of the military institutions, bureaucrats and technocrats in the formulation and implementation of decisions that further hierarchical centralization, specialization and efficiency emphasize democracy and inclusion in political activity they encounter a waste of money and resources . However, due to economic development under construction.

B) The level of civil society institutions

At the level of civil society institutions, although Article 26 of the constitution on freedom of the activities of parties, societies, political or professional associations and Islamic associations have stressed, however, not specified which institutions are subject to certain functions. The ambiguity of the functions of the various institutions of civil society have been caused by the political parties in their party functions, which is to become the requests and demands to policies in various fields of political, economic and social, are disabled and non-party activities turn and vice versa many government structures, including the executive and the legislative and non-partisan civil society organizations such as the clergy, students and labor unions and the media have become party functions. In the early Islamic Revolution in some groups and political organizations that could achieve through peaceful means to hold a public office or policies of the revolutionary government and his group did not know the nature of armed conflict and violence to achieve their goals adopted and their opposition to the expansion of some people and policies to the entire system. This change tactics and target the leaders of the revolution, which had a high degree of legitimacy among the masses, led by non-peaceful means against them adopt policies that result not only increase the limitations of legal and illegal political activity. Another factor is the stagnation is political activity hostile relations and the elimination of political parties, electoral competition after achieving power. Political participation and the party has a high cost, especially in case of defeat in elections. With the victory of one faction in the elections staff and efficient even excluded the previous cabinet and the new forces are ineffective although absolute power. Zero-sum game in the relations between actors in Arabic, in which victory is one cause complete failure of another, leading to waste of resources, neglecting the problems of society, resulting in a loss of public confidence in groups and parties is available. Mr. Khatami in front of the members of the Coordinating Council of June in observance of civil behavior in interaction with others is a good indication of trends among



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different political groups: We must learn that their competitors are not our enemies and we do not imagine that anyone who is not with us is against us in front. Especially when it comes to the majority and the minority, the majority who really claim to democracy should be extremely concerned about the rights of minorities, especially the critical review will take into account as a gift (Azad Newspaper, 4 June 2002). Organizational weakness elitism popular parties and parties of the factors that contributed to the stagnation of the party backbone facility. The situation that existed before the revolution, the organization and the organized communist parties on the one hand, because of cuts of national and cultural identity of Iranians, have had little influence in society, and on the other hand, the Islamic parties, which enjoyed mass popular reputation, lack of organization and the organization necessary to achieve their desired goals. The nationalist parties and nationalist influence both people and the organization was in a state of intermediate (Modir Shanechi, 1996: 39).

C) The masses level

The masses level of factors such as mistrust, reluctance in political activities and the weakness of collectivist attitudes downturn parties activities were effective. Political distrust expression of emotions, evaluations and judgments unfavorable to political elites and the citizens of a nation state structures and non-governmental institutions and political culture of the masses, which can also be disabled (Inglehart 1997; Putnam 1993), and illusion caused by the failure of party institutions (Coleman 1990; Craig 1998; Hetherington 1998) political culture means that something that people know about their political system has three components of knowledge, feelings and people's assessments of its political system (Almond and Verba 1963: 13-17). One of the components of political culture, political uncertainty, in the sense that people in civic life well into the rules of the game and is distrustful of political rivals. Political uncertainty caused by the corruption and tyranny of kings and the accumulation of historical trade pillar of royal and dependence on foreigners in society aversion to politics and political depression is manifested (Razzaghi 1996; Bashiriyeh 1996). The majority of the Iranian people against the actions of the parties before the revolution, because of its dependence on the colonial and imperial despotism and intolerance to some parties with historic identity, religious, national and cultural society had a negative mindset. After the revolution, with a view to reducing the gap between government and people and increase public confidence, people have a good attitude towards the new political parties, but later due to poor performance of some government parties made their inattention to the real demands of the people, further distrust of the institutions that has revived old cultural and political establishment cannot allow that this encounter with the public. In addition, misuse of the party elite party channels to achieve windfall has been effective in reducing public confidence. Similarly, the low level of political education of the masses on the importance and necessity of political activity and feel and a negative assessment of the actions of the parties to strengthening the political activity had the opposite effect. With regard to the phenomenon of modern political party, it is necessary for Iran in its relation to religion and religious community identified and their function be institutionalized



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system of velayat-e faqih (Mir Mousavi, 1996, Haghghat 1998; Firahi 1998). In addition, elements of political distrust, high cost of political participation through the parties, especially in times of crisis among the factors that contributed to the stagnation of political activity. Since the failure of the campaign, depriving many people of the advantages of economic, social and political life are many, according to the theory of rational choice, prefer to engage in social and economic activities that interest them most of their losses (Cammack 1993: 95). And finally, weak Iranian citizens' collectivist attitudes of political activity is strengthening barriers. Although in theory and ideological conflict between the interests of the individual and the society said that if the materials is a priority, but in practice, individualism and egotism is part of the culture of Iranians who desired record people in sports, science and research individually, and not as a group, confirms this claim. Uniaxial, especially among Iranian intellectuals, would be that they not only failed to refer other classes and political and organizational links active and maintain stability, but also in establishing consensus among themselves faced with many problems that splits frequent internal and political parties after the acquisition of the power of its manifestations (Delavari 1996).

Conclusion

In this paper, we tried to be the perfect answer to the original question and secondary research. In the first part, after pointing out the weaknesses of the definition of political party, the definition of "a modern political institutions and civil society that is seeking power individually or coalition is to win public opinion through elections" accepted. This is the definition of a comprehensive, one-party system in which uncompetitive included, and all-round barrier, which the non-partisan organizations and groups such as the military and influential groups, which are distinguished in terms of purpose and political parties, were excluded from the definition. After a review of the political parties, was the primary and secondary functions in a developed political system. The primary function of political participation, political choices, and especially the formulation and implementation of policies, and the secondary functions of political parties, political socialization, political communication, regulate the tensions and legitimize noted. In the second part, on the dynamics of political activity in Iran after the revolution in Iran, according to which four were taken into account in the first period (from the beginning of the revolution to the war), with peak activity of the party organization, in the second period (point war) with recess political activity, in the third period (under construction) to improve the party's activities, and in the fourth period (Khatami) is faced with the revival of political activity. In response to the question of why, despite the lack of legal restrictions, the country is faced with recession, political activity in the three levels of government, civil society organizations and the masses were investigated. At the state level was pointed to three basic elements: First, Distributive and rentier nature of the Iranian government before and after the revolution that concentration of power and wealth in the hands of the government, political and economic dependence of political parties in the government and the ruling political elite as opposed to the people and policies as opposed to the system, the second element, nature and characteristics of



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spontaneous popular revolution without leaders who prefer it without the mediation of civil society organizations, including political parties and called for mass participation of the people have not organized them to achieve the goals to be maintained. In addition, the leader of the revolution, instead of political activity, further its efforts to fill executive positions and state government officials were due to the departure of former elite, and the third element, events such as the war and the post-revolution priorities and security post-conflict reconstruction that will strengthen state institutions such as the military and unelected government, bureaucrats and technocrats. The political development and parties were not a priority. At the level of civil society institutions as well as uncertainties about the functions of the various institutions of civil society was mentioned. Major and minor political parties instead of doing their duties non-peaceful methods adopted to achieve power, respectively. With its competitors hostile relations and the elimination, after gaining power because of lack of risk faced internal splits, and instead relying on the resources of the people were connected to public funds and, consequently, of policies critical independent incapable respectively. On the other hand, non-partisan news organizations of civil society, such as student unions and workers, the clergy and the media, and even government agencies can perform functions related to the party. This interference with the duties and responsibilities stagnation was more political activity. Finally, political and cultural level of the masses, referred to three basic variables that were effective in reducing the activities of political parties: first, political distrust, caused by emotions, judgments and beliefs about the relationship between people and government of the masses and the negative mentality of dependence and inefficiency is party institutions; second, people do not want to engage in partisan political activities, they organized a party for the cost of participation in economic and social activities is high; and third, the individualistic behavior of the masses and intellectual arrogance that is incompatible with the strengthening and continuation of the activities of the organization. Given the importance of political party activities for achieving development goals, identify downturn party activities in the three levels of government, civil society and the masses of interest to scholars and practitioners policy could be to improve the existing situation, and to use specialized fields of the parties political, political as modern technology, to achieve sustainable development policy comes into action.

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