



Al-Buhuuth

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Factors that Unite and Divide Iranian American Communities in California

Leesa Bingham

Introduction to the Iranian Diaspora

The United States and Iran had relatively amiable relations until 1921, when Iran's democratically-elected prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh nationalized Iran's oil industry. In a controversial effort to remove Mosaddegh from power, the CIA, with British support, engineered a coup d'état to reinstall Mohammed Reza Pahlavi as the Shah (monarch) of Iran. This engendered mistrust amongst some Iranians who felt that the United States had not only impaired Iran's growing democracy, but also wanted to benefit economically from exploiting Iran's oil. In 1957, the CIA helped the Shah create SAVAK, an Iranian intelligence agency meant to repress political dissenters. However, the American-backed Shah surprised the United States during the 1973 Oil Crisis when he prioritized Iranian interests by standing with OPEC states in refusing to lower oil prices. Suddenly, the Shah and the United States were no longer strong allies. Looking for an ally in the Middle East, the United States turned to Saudi Arabia to form a

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surreptitious deal to lower oil prices, indirectly contributing to economic instability and social unrest in Iran.^{1 2}

Meanwhile, the Shah's unpopularity in Iran grew. Revolutionaries wanted to abolish SAVAK, end the Shah's lavish lifestyle, limit foreign involvement, and decrease Iran's wealth gap. Mixed with this socio-political rhetoric was a renewed theme of Shia Islamic values. As tension mounted, the Shah fled the country in January 1979. His abdication created a power vacuum that allowed pro-Revolutionary leaders in government to invite Ayatollah Khomeini—a Shia religious scholar who had been in exile during the Shah's reign due to his opposition to the Shah's secular reforms—back to Iran in February 1979. As Khomeini reestablished political influence, a group of pro-Khomeini college student revolutionaries stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in November 1979, holding 52 American diplomats hostage and demanding the Shah return to Iran to face the consequences of his regime's impact on Iran. In response, the United States froze \$12 billion of Iranian assets. The Iranian Hostage Crisis lasted 444 days, during which time Ayatollah Khomeini became Supreme Leader of the new Islamic Republic of Iran in December 1979.^{3 4}

Due in large part to the Hostage Crisis, the United States has had no diplomatic relations with Iran since 1980. The United States has frequently imposed sanctions on Iran, further souring relations. The United States has also been staunchly opposed to Iran's nuclear program. Between 1980 and 1988, Iran went to war with Iraq. In the conflict, the United States sided with Iraq, using chemical weapons on Iranians, blocking Iran from access to foreign loans, and inadvertently shooting down an Iranian passenger plane. Partially as a response to 9/11 attacks, President George W. Bush labeled Iran as part of the "Axis of Evil," along with Iraq and North Korea, notwithstanding help Iran had recently given the United States in Afghanistan.^{5 6}

At various stages of this timeline, many Iranians moved out of Iran. Some moved temporarily for education, some emigrated permanently, and

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- 1 Sam Sasan Shoamanesh, "History Brief: Timeline of US-Iran Relations Until the Obama Administration," *MIT International Review* (2009): 1-2, <https://web.mit.edu/mitir/2009/online/us-iran-2.pdf>.
 - 2 Andrew Scott Cooper, "Showdown at Doha: The Secret Oil Deal That Helped Sink the Shah of Iran," *Middle East Journal* 62, no. 4 (2008): 567-91, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25482569>.
 - 3 Shoamanesh, "Timeline of US-Iran Relations," 3.
 - 4 Andrew Scott Cooper, "Showdown at Doha," 567-91.
 - 5 Shoamanesh, "Timeline of US-Iran Relations," 4-5.
 - 6 Andrew Scott Cooper, "Showdown at Doha," 567-91.

some who originally expected to return to Iran ultimately decided not to return. The United States of America is home to the most Iranians living outside of Iran of any country in the world.⁷ Iranian Americans came to the United States in what historians have often described as three main waves—the first before the Iranian Revolution, the second during the Revolution, and the third post-9/11 to present.⁸ Of the fifty states, California is by far home to the most Iranian Americans; almost fifty percent of Iranian Americans live in California.⁹ As such, I chose to focus my research on Iranian Americans in California.

Research Question

My research seeks to understand what aspects of life divide Iranian Americans living in California and what aspects of life unite them. Past research has looked at Iranian American communities specifically living in Los Angeles, Texas, or the United States as a whole, and it has examined Iranian Americans as part of the Middle Eastern American experience as a whole. As far as I am aware, there has not yet been research done on factors that unite and divide Iranian Americans across California. Furthermore, research on California has not been conducted recently enough to account for the impact of the internet on Iranian American communities. The age that a person was when they first began using the internet greatly impacts how they currently use it, and Iranian American communities are likely not an exception. A more updated study would better reflect how Iranian American communities connect in 2022. It could also suggest whether the internet is causing division between generations of Iranian Americans. In California, where a large portion of Iranian Americans live in or near Silicon Valley, and are heavily involved in business, this could be a significant missing detail.

7 Secretariat of the Supreme Council of Iranians Abroad. "Dispersal Statistics of Iranians Living Abroad," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, (2012), <https://iranian.mfa.ir/files/mfairanian/Amar.pdf>.

8 Jessica Emami, "Iranian Americans: Immigration and Assimilation," *Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans*, (April 2014): 5-11, <https://paaia.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/iranian-americans-immigration-and-assimilation.pdf>.

9 Mohsen Mostafavi Mobasher, *The Iranian Diaspora: Challenges, Negotiations, and Transformations* (United States: University of Texas Press), 37.

Literature Review

The majority of research on Iranian Americans is divided into two main categories—research conducted before 9/11, and research conducted after 9/11. Both categories of research tend to highlight discrimination in the United States as a uniting factor for Iranian Americans, who have historically formed communities in the United States to support one another. Hundreds of such groups can be found across the United States in major cities, on social media, and online.¹⁰ Typically, research before 9/11 emphasizes the negative impact of the Iranian Hostage Crisis on American perception and treatment of Iranian Americans. Research after 9/11 generally focuses on the negative impact of Islamist extremism stereotypes on Iranian Americans.

Sources tend to disagree with one another about the extent to which the Iranian American experience is homogenous. While all agree that there are some common experiences among Iranian Americans and some experiences unique to certain ethno-religious groups of Iranian Americans, scholars disagree on which common elements are most important. Some also disagree on whether those common elements are as important as the ethno-religious differences that divide the Iranian American community.

In *Middle Eastern Lives in America*, Amir Marvasti and Karyn McKinney argue that Iranian American communities are relatively young compared to other populations, have a common history of leaving Iran to escape the Iranian Revolution or service in the war against Iraq, are typically composed of larger households than the average United States household, have higher household income compared to the United States average, and typically achieve higher average education levels than other Americans.¹¹ These similarities bring Iranian Americans together.

In *Educating Immigrants: Experiences of Second-Generation Iranians*, Mitra Shavarini argues that factors second-generation Iranian Americans have in common include wanting to blend in and not associate only with other Iranians, wanting to acquire socioeconomic status, having parents who emphasized education, fostering a sense of connection with Iran's history (even in cases where they have never visited Iran), and experiencing confusion over identity as Iranian, American, Persian, a combination, or something else.¹²

10 Pars Times: Greater Iran and Beyond, "Iranian-American Organizations," <http://www.parstimes.com/iranian-american.html>.

11 Karyn D. McKinney and Amir B. Marvasti, *Middle Eastern Lives in America* (United Kingdom: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 29–30.

12 Mitra K. Shavarini, *Educating Immigrants: Experiences of Second-Generation Iranians* (New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC, 2004), 81–151.

In *Whitewashed: America's Invisible Middle Eastern Minority*, John Tehranian argues that Iranian Americans compensate for discrimination due to nonwhiteness by self-identifying as white (either to avoid discrimination, because that is what they identified as in Iran before coming to the United States and having people tell them they were not white, or because a parent or other trusted figure has told them it is better to identify as white), dying their hair or wearing color contacts to hide “ethnic” features, taking on American nicknames, protecting their image of wealth or success by driving BMW or Mercedes vehicles and by wearing designer fashion, and—if they have lived in a European country before coming to the United States—answering the question of ‘where are you from’ with the name of that European country.¹³

In “Adult Children of Professional and Entrepreneurial Immigrants: Second-Generation Iranians in the United States,” Mehdi Bozorgmehr and Eric Ketcham point out shared experiences amongst Iranian Americans, particularly “high levels of education and top white-collar occupations” amidst discrimination spurred by the Oil Crisis of 1973, Hostage Crisis, Iranian Revolution, 9/11, George W. Bush’s labeling Iran the “Axis of Evil,” and Iran’s nuclear program. Bozorgmehr and Ketcham assert that many second-generation Iranian Americans see high educational achievement as their way to return the favor their parents gave them by sacrificing to come to a new country. They also suggest that, if future generations of Iranians choose to “identify more with their ethno-religious background” than with being Iranian, the Iranian American community may fracture. Identifying as Iranian American brings together Iranian Americans as a group, whereas identifying as Armenian or Jewish makes it more likely that Armenian Iranian Americans will associate with other Armenians, while Jewish Iranian Americans will associate more with other Jews.¹⁴

In *Iranages: Iranians in Los Angeles*, Ron Kelley argues that looking at subcategories of Iranian Americans—Muslims, Jews, Armenian-Iranians, Baha’is, Assyrians, Zoroastrians, and Kurds—is the best way to explore uniting factors for Iranian American communities in Los Angeles.¹⁵

13 John Tehranian and Irwin R Buchalter, *Whitewashed: America's invisible Middle Eastern Minority* (United Kingdom: NYU Press, 2009), 79-86.

14 Mehdi Bozorgmehr and Eric Ketcham, “I. Adult Children of Professional and Entrepreneurial Immigrants: Second-Generation Iranians in the United States,” In Mohsen Mobasher, ed., *Iranians in Texas: Migration, Politics, and Ethnic Identity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012), 31.

15 “Ethnic and Religious Communities from Iran in Los Angeles,” In *Iranages: Iranians in Los Angeles*, ed., Ron Kelley, Jonathan Friedlander and Anita Colby, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020), 81-157, <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520328341-toc>.

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Muslim Iranian Americans in LA, Kelley says, are often not religious at all. In fact, many who identify as Muslim are actually atheist. Nonetheless, the cultural and traditional aspects of Islamic culture, such as marriage ceremonies and community gatherings summon nostalgia and a mutual connection amongst many Iranian-Americans who grew up in Iran or with an Iranian influence in their homes.¹⁶

Jewish Iranian Americans share 2,500 years of Persian history. With the rise of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jewish schools and rabbinical teachings were stifled. In the United States, many Jewish Iranians were spared prejudice that followed Muslim Iranians. However, the cohesiveness of their social group is withering as the younger generation becomes more integrated into American culture. The younger generation did not grow up with Jewish education like their parents or grandparents, and often disagree with them concerning religious ideas, seeing the preservation of heritage as less valuable. The younger generation is less attached to the idea of Judaism because the positive impact of remaining involved in the Jewish religious and cultural community is not obvious to them. Not only is the benefit not measurable, but it pales in comparison to the immediate benefit of assimilation.¹⁷

Compared with other Armenian immigrants, from the Soviet Union or Lebanon for example, Armenians immigrants from Iran had a much easier time adjusting to life in the West. The Westernization of Iran by the Shah and the favorable exchange rate between currencies meant that many Iranian Armenians, especially those who settled in Glendale, California knew how to navigate Western culture and also had the money to do so. Iranian Armenians are typically Christian (mostly Armenian Apostolic), and they were mostly immune from Islamophobia. In Los Angeles in 1956, the Iran Armenian Society was founded to fund community events like dances and parties, sporting leagues, and Boy Scout troops. After the Iranian Hostage Crisis and the subsequent vandalism and threats to their organization, they simply changed their name to Armenian Society of Los Angeles. This not only deemphasized the Iranian component to their culture, but opened the door to a broader Armenian diaspora. One of the last remaining Iranian cultural elements for the current generation of Iranian Armenians is their appreciation for Persian pop music.¹⁸

16 Kelley, "Ethnic and Religious Communities from Iran in Los Angeles," 81-98.

17 Kelley, "Ethnic and Religious Communities from Iran in Los Angeles," 99-113.

18 Kelley, "Ethnic and Religious Communities from Iran in Los Angeles," 115-123.

Baha'i Iranian American immigrants are stuck between two worlds. They became accustomed to being repressed, persecuted, and unable to proselyte like their tenets dictate while in Iran and, now that they are in the United States, have a hard time integrating into the broader Baha'i community, which values bold proselytizing and activism. This divide and others, possibly economic, is so influential that some Iranian Baha'i leaders in Los Angeles prefer to have meetings in their native tongue to exclude others. Many of the older Iranian Baha'is look back fondly at the time when the Shah, who was strongly affiliated with Baha'is, was in power. It was a contrasting switch between the Shah, who nationalized and modernized Iran, and the Islamic nationalist state. Though the Baha'i are relatively few, Shia religious majority saw them as the political enemies. The Islamic Republic of Iran is traditional and nationalist compared to the Baha'i religious tenets, which are progressive and globalist. Whereas other immigrants from Iran such as the Iranian Armenians could find a sense of community with the broader Armenian community, which was relatively large and still had relatively good relations with Shia Iranian American who shared their same language, Iranian Baha'i immigrants are much more limited. Even in the younger generations where religion is relatively irrelevant in marriage, very tense relationships between families still exist.¹⁹

Of all the Iranian immigrant groups, the Iranian Assyrians who arrived in Los Angeles were most ready to give up cultural and emotional ties to Iran. The British and Russians promised the Assyrians their own homeland in World War I. Not only were their losses in the war devastating, including being left unsupported and without a sovereign homeland, but Muslim Kurds and Arabs massacred a third of their population. Due to social, cultural, and linguistic disconnect with Iran, and their shared religious identity with many Christians in the United States, integration was relatively quick and easy. Through Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the adoption of American holidays rather than Persian holidays, Iranian Assyrians in Los Angeles have much more in common with other Iraqi Assyrians in Chicago than any other Persian immigrant sub-group. A popular sentiment with Assyrians born in Iran is that they would like to have their own homeland in Iraq, but have no interest in going back to Iran.²⁰

The Zoroastrian Iranian Americans are one of the smallest sub-groups of Iranian immigrants and have a very unique situation compared

19 Kelley, "Ethnic and Religious Communities from Iran in Los Angeles," 124-132.

20 Kelley, "Ethnic and Religious Communities from Iran in Los Angeles," 133-140.

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to other Iranian Americans. Zoroastrianism has been around longer than Islam, yet has never been a real threat to it. Zoroastrians were few and content not to make waves. This led to them, despite living in the Islamic Republic of Iran, to being left more-or-less alone. Compared with the Indian sect of Zoroastrianism, the Iranian sect is much more liberal and open to integration with the community. They typically do not actively proselyte but are open to sharing their beliefs. Because of their deep religious conviction, they typically do not feel threatened by other religious groups and can interact with them rather than compete with them.²¹

There are a few thousand Kurdish Iranian immigrants in the United States, and many of them are here for political asylum. Compared with other ethnic minorities, the Iranian Kurds share a relatively homogeneous cultural region with the corners of three other countries: Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Unlike the other Iranian minority groups, because of their distinct cultural and geographic separation, they were consistently destabilized so they would not become a threat. This led to lower literacy and over-all education. In their situation of poverty and lack of power, some were exploited to carry out proxy wars with Iraq. After a surprise truce between Iran and Iraq and the subsequent withdrawal of support, there was a great need for political asylum for the Iranian Kurds. Their integration process into American society relied strongly on assistance from those already in the United States, including Iranian Americans. This was very different from some other Persian immigrants who came to America with enough money to buy a house.²²

I think that the shared Iranian American experience is equally as important as the ethno-religious subgroup experience when it comes to understanding what unites and divides the Iranian American community. Ultimately, the extent to which Iranian Americans lean into their shared identity with other Iranian Americans will determine whether an Iranian American identity persists at all. If there are more disunifying factors for Iranian Americans in California than there are unifying factors, Iranian Californians will likely lean into their ethno-religious identities and be swallowed up in the larger identities of 'Jew,' 'Armenian Christian,' or 'Muslim' for example. I do not seek to determine which would be best, but rather to understand the trajectory of Iranian American identity in California.

21 Kelley, "Ethnic and Religious Communities from Iran in Los Angeles," 141-148.

22 Kelley, "Ethnic and Religious Communities from Iran in Los Angeles," 149-157.

Hypotheses

I hypothesize that causes of *unification* among Iranian Americans in California will be a desire to preserve and celebrate Iranian culture, a belief in the importance of social justice causes, an appreciation for the American education system and a disliking of the Iranian education system, a common stance on American foreign policy, and a common distaste for unpredictable Iranian criminal punishment.

- A. Preservation of Iranian Cultural Heritage: I anticipate that most Iranian Americans will want to preserve Persian culture in the United States not only as a way of connecting their children with their past, but also as a way of establishing a community in the states, through shared holidays, food, celebrations, and gatherings.
- B. Social Justice: As many Iranian Americans share a common immigrant story of being discriminated against, I anticipate that most will share the desire to promote social justice, including fair treatment toward Iranian American immigrants.
- C. The American Education System: Because education is typically emphasized in Iranian American households as a major tool for economic mobility, and because Iranian Americans typically achieve high levels of education, I anticipate that most Iranian Americans will agree that the American education system is working well, or at least significantly better than the Iranian educational system.
- D. The Iranian Education System: Because the younger generation of Iranians have been known to host demonstrations, citing that the education system in Iran holds no hope for their futures, I anticipate that most Iranians will dislike the Iranian education system.²³
- E. American Economic Policy: Because so many Iranian Americans became involved in business and entrepreneurship in the United States, I anticipate that Iranian Americans will be unified in wanting economic policies that benefit private businesses.
- F. Iranian Criminal Punishment: Because many Iranian Americans left Iran due to legal persecution of their ethno-religious group, I anticipate that most Iranian Americans will dislike Iran's criminal punishment system, considering it unfair or unpredictable.

I hypothesize that causes of *division* among Iranian Americans in California will be disagreements over traditional versus Western parenting approaches, the importance of religion, marital roles, the preservation of the Persian language, adherence to social norms in America, moral values,

23 Mitra K. Shavarini, *Educating Immigrants*, 33.

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American and Iranian politics, American and Iranian foreign policy, and American criminal punishment.

- A. Parenting: Because the Iranian American community is composed of many cultures, I anticipate varied views on parenting.
- B. The Importance of Religion: Because the Iranian Revolution was religiously charged, I anticipate that most Iranian Americans will have strong opinions about the role of religion. Because Iranian Americans come from a wide range of religious backgrounds and levels of piety, I anticipate that these opinions will vary widely from individual to individual.
- C. Marital Roles: I anticipate that the older generation of Iranian Americans hold more traditional views on gender roles while the younger generation of Iranians emphasize gender equality.
- D. Preservation of Persian Language: As not all Iranian Americans speak Persian, and as the younger generation of Iranian immigrants is assimilating into American culture and likely using English most, I anticipate Iranian Americans will be divided on the importance of preserving the Persian language.
- E. Social Norms: I anticipate that the older generation and the younger generation of Iranian Americans will disagree over the extent to which American social norms should be adopted.
- F. American Politics: I anticipate that Iranian Americans of various ethno-religious and generational groups will have a wide variety of opinions on American politics.
- G. Iranian Politics: I anticipate that Iranian Americans of various ethno-religious and generational groups will have a wide variety of opinions on Iranian politics.
- H. American Foreign Policy: I anticipate that Iranian Americans of various ethno-religious and generational groups will have a wide variety of opinions on American foreign policy.
- I. Iranian Foreign Policy: I anticipate that Iranian Americans of various ethno-religious and generational groups will have a wide variety of opinions on Iranian foreign policy.
- J. Moral Values: I anticipate that Iranian Americans of various ethno-religious and generational groups will have a wide variety of opinions on moral values.

Research Design and Methods

To test my hypothesis, I used a combination of a structured survey and an unstructured interview. First, I sought out Iranian American communities throughout California. I personally contacted several Iranians in El

Dorado Hills and Folsom, California and in Los Angeles, California, asking them to participate in a survey. I also posted the survey to 15 Iranian Californian Facebook groups—each with 1,000+ members—asking for interested respondents. I found 12 willing participants. Two were willing to have a longer discussion about their responses after answering the survey, and with both I conducted an unstructured interview.

The survey consisted of 16 questions:

- I. Which of these is your primary identity? (Multiple choice)
 - a. Iranian American, Persian American, Iranian, American, Persian, Other (please specify)
2. What is your gender? (Multiple choice)
 - a. Female, Male, Other (please specify)
3. What is your age? (Multiple choice)
 - a. Under 18, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65+
4. Where were you born? (Multiple choice)
 - a. Iran, United States of America, Other (please specify)
5. Where was your father born?
 - a. Iran, United States of America, Other (please specify)
6. Where was your mother born?
 - a. Iran, United States of America, Other (please specify)
7. Do you feel more Iranian or more American? (sliding scale with 5 options)
8. If you'd like, explain why. (open-ended)
9. Do you currently live in California?
 - a. Yes, No
10. What city in California have you lived in the longest? Answer the following questions about that city. (open-ended)
11. Do you feel the Iranian-American community in your city is united? (scale from 1-5 with 1 being 'not united' and 5 being 'very united')
12. On what topic(s) do Iranians in your city typically AGREE with one another? (Select all that apply.)
 - a. Parenting, the importance of religion, marital roles, preservation of Iranian culture, preservation of Persian language, social norms, social justice, moral values, the American education system, the Iranian education system, American politics, Iranian politics, American foreign policy, Iranian foreign policy, American economic policy, Iranian criminal punishment, Other (please specify)
13. On what topic(s) do Iranians in your city typically DISAGREE with one another? (Select all that apply.)
 - a. Parenting, the importance of religion, marital roles, preservation of Iranian culture, preservation of Persian language, social

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norms, social justice, moral values, the American education system, the Iranian education system, American politics, Iranian politics, American foreign policy, Iranian foreign policy, American economic policy, Iranian criminal punishment, Other (please specify)

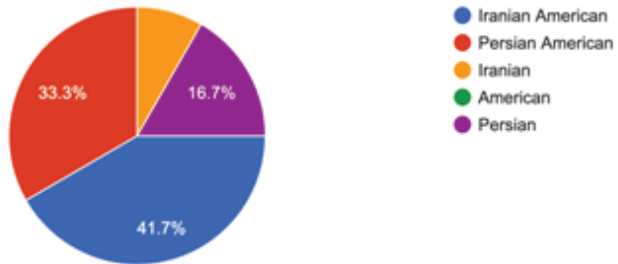
14. What unites (brings together) the Persian-American community in your city? (open-ended)
15. What disunites (brings apart) the Persian-American community in your city? (open-ended)
16. Would you be interested in participating in a Zoom or in-person interview about Iranian-Americans? If yes, type your name and email or phone number. (open-ended)

Results and Alternative Hypothesis

I ultimately had 12 respondents. As Figure I indicates, five of them thought of themselves as Iranian Americans, four as Persian Americans, two as Persians, and one as Iranian. When asked to rate whether they feel more Iranian or more American on a sliding scale of 1-5, where one is Iranian and five is American, four answered one, one answered two, five answered three, one answered four, and one answered five. Five of the respondents were male and seven were female. All respondents were over 18 years of age. Of the 12 respondents, two were 18 to 24, two were 25 to 34, three were 35 to 44, two were 45 to 54, two were 55 to 64, and one was 65 years or older. Eight of the respondents were born in Iran, while four of the respondents were born in the United States. All of the respondents' fathers were born in Iran. Eleven of the respondents' mothers were born in Iran, and one respondent's mother was born in the United States. Respondents were from Sacramento, El Dorado Hills, San Jose, Hollister, San Francisco, Redwood City, and Anaheim Hills. When asked how united their city's Iranian community is on a scale from 1-5, with one being not at all united and five being very united, six answered two, five answered three, and one answered five.

Which of these is your primary identity?

12 responses

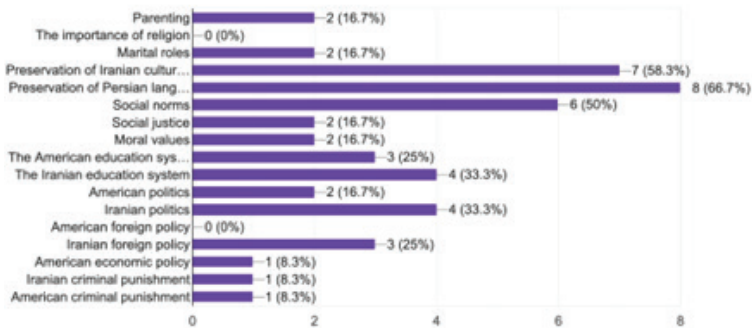


The top three topics Iranian Californians said their community agrees upon were the preservation of the Persian language, preservation of Iranian cultural heritage, and social norms.

- Preservation of Persian Language (8/12 respondents)
- Preservation of Iranian Cultural Heritage (7/12 respondents)
- Social Norms (6/12 respondents)

On what topic(s) do Iranians in your city typically AGREE with one another? (Select all that apply.)

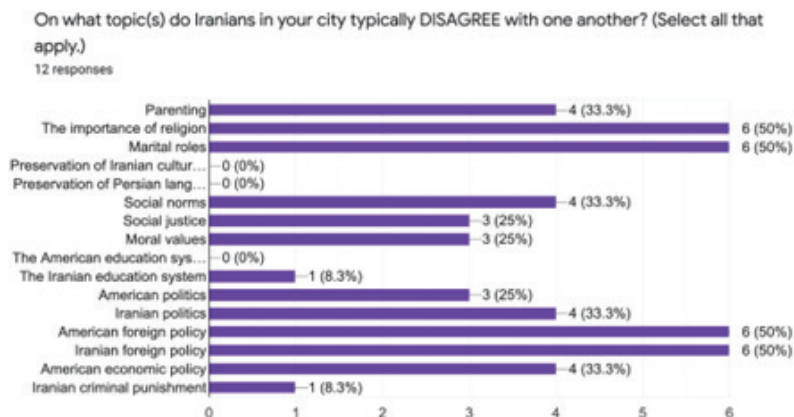
12 responses



The top four topics Iranian Californians said their community disagrees on were the importance of religion, American foreign policy, marital roles, and Iranian foreign policy.

- The Importance of Religion (6/12 respondents)
- American Foreign Policy (6/12 respondents)
- Marital roles (6/12 respondents)
- Iranian Foreign Policy (6/12 respondents)

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I also provided an opportunity for respondents to add additional thoughts regarding unifying and disunifying factors in their respective Iranian communities. Several themes arose in respondents' answers. Nowruz gatherings, cultural events open to the community, a shared bond over a common language, and friendships created at activities and parties were common responses to the question of what unites Iranian communities in the United States. Politics was a strong theme in responses to the question of what disunites Iranian communities in the United States. Other disunifying factors respondents mentioned were differences in education level or social class, traditional versus less traditional upbringing, and cultural differences between Iranian communities in Northern and Southern California.

Discussion and Conclusion

The main points I gathered from my research were that Iranian Americans in California are strongly united over the idea of preserving Persian culture and language, and they are strongly disunified over politics, American and Iranian foreign policy, the importance of religion, and marital roles. Perhaps the diversity of ethnic and religious backgrounds among Iranian Americans accounts for some of the disagreements over politics, policy, and religion. It is surprising however that, considering the diversity of ethnic, linguistic, and generational backgrounds, so many respondents said that a unifying factor is the desire to preserve the Persian language. Perhaps this would change with a larger sample size. It was also notable that, while the data supported my hypothesis that Iranian Americans in California

would agree on the value of preservation of Iranian cultural heritage, social norms seemed to be both a strong uniting and dividing factor.

The data was inconclusive about my hypothesis that Iranian Americans in California agree on the value of social justice, American economic policy, and Iranian criminal punishment. Furthermore, there was insufficient respondent data to conclude whether moral values, Iranian economic policy, or American criminal punishment are significant topics of agreement or disagreement.

There are several factors that potentially contribute to the margin of error in my study. A potential margin of error could be the way that I phrased “American criminal punishment” and “Iranian criminal punishment” ambiguously in my survey. It may have been unclear whether I was referring to the way criminals are punished in the United States or Iran, or whether I was referring to ‘the punishment of American criminals’ or ‘the punishment of Iranian criminals’ as opposed to other ethnicities of criminals. Another potential area of error was that the study was limited to English speakers only. A future study would ideally also offer the same survey in Persian, Kurdish, and Armenian for a more representative sample.

Several trends I noticed during my research are worthy of further exploration. While reaching out to various groups of Iranians in California for people willing to take the survey, I was surprised by how many entrepreneur-specific social media groups and community organizations existed in the Iranian community, particularly in the Bay Area. The stated goal of the groups was to promote Iranian Californian businesses. It would be beneficial for further research to look specifically at Iranian American entrepreneurship and its impact on connecting Iranian Californian communities. Another topic to explore further is how marital roles are a subject of disagreement. What aspect of marital roles do Iranian Americans disagree over? Is it the role women play in the workforce versus raising children? One interviewee cited disagreements over whether divorce was appropriate as a reason their Iranian friend group dissolved. Is there disagreement over traditional marriage and engagement traditions? Is there disagreement between the older and younger generations? I also noticed, consistent with how many respondents pointed to politics as a dividing factor among Iranian Americans, many online groups designed to bring together Iranians Americans had specifically banned political discussion in their rules pages. A future study could benefit from looking at the role of politics in disunity in Iranian American communities. Furthermore, it is notable that a respondent specifically mentioned the disunifying effect of uninvolvement on social media among some in the Iranian American community. This could also be a potential area for further research.

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How the rising generation of Iranian Californians, together with the next wave of Iranian immigrants to California, navigates differences and similarities within their communities will determine the extent to which Iranian American communities in California remain distinct from other communities. If Iranian Californians in the next generation identify more with their respective ethno-religious or political groups than with their Iranian descent, Iranian American communities in California could dissolve. If large numbers of Iranian Californians in the next generation identify primarily with their Iranian descent, Iranian American communities in California may increase in cohesiveness. Overall, the study suggests that there are factors which unify and disunify Iranian American communities in California, though further research and a larger sample size could help clarify the impact of individual factors. As we further explore factors that unify or disunify Iranian Californian communities, we will likely also uncover better ways to test their relative impacts on unity and disunity.

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This project is an account of Shala Ahmadi's experiences and adjustment as an Iranian immigrant to the United States. In particular, she discusses embarrassing cultural moments growing up.

Alavi, Roksana. *Iranian Identity, American Experience: Philosophical Reflections on Race, Rights, Capabilities, and Oppression*. Blue Ridge Summit: Lexington Books, 2021. Accessed January 22, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

This source is a monograph. Its topic is oppression in general, but it uses Iranian Americans as a case study. Alavi's basic argument is that we, both individually and as communities, need to take more steps to root out prejudice against racial minorities such as Iranian Americans.

Al Jazeera. "أمريكا وإيران.. اتفاق أم احتراق؟". *دولي | الجزيرة نت*. Al Jazeera, September 21, 2021. <https://www.aljazeera.net/podcasts/2021/7/7/%D8%A3%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%83%D8%A7-%D9%88%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%82-%D8%A3%D9%85-%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%9F>.

Al Jazeera. "قيادي طلابي إيراني يندم على أزمة السفارة الأمريكية في ذكرائها الأربعين". *أخبار | الجزيرة مباشر*. Al Jazeera, November 13, 2020. <https://mubasher.aljazeera.net/news/reports/2019/11/2/%D9%82%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%8A-%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%85-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A3%D8%B2%D9%85%D8%A9>.

Bozorgmehr, Mehdi and Ketcham, Eric. "1. Adult Children of Professional and Entrepreneurial Immigrants: Second-Generation Iranians in the United States" In *The Iranian Diaspora: Challenges, Negotiations, and Transformations* edited by Mohsen Mostafavi Mobasher, 25-49. New York, USA: University of Texas Press, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.7560/316641-006>.

Colby, Anita, Jonathan Friedlander, and Ron Kelley. *Irangels: Iranians in Los Angeles*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.

This is a collection of primary sources. It contains interview transcriptions and photographs focusing on various aspects of the history of Iranian immigration to Los Angeles during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The book's intent is threefold: to increase cultural understanding of Iranians in LA, to

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demonstrate that there are many subgroups of Iranian identity within the United States, and to preserve a history of the complex issues surrounding the Islamic Revolution as they were seen in LA.

Der-Martirosian, Claudia. *Iranian Immigrants in Los Angeles: The Role of Networks and Economic Integration*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC, 2007. Accessed January 22, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

This is a survey source. It assesses the role that social networks played in the economic integration of Iranian immigrants to Los Angeles. The basic argument is that, for Iranians who moved to Los Angeles in 1987 and 1988, economic success was associated with a number of ethnic, educational, and social factors, and that a large factor was the social capital of the immigrants.

Hashemian, Sahar. "Finding the Correct Language: Defining Fragmented Ethnic Identity in the Second Generation Iranian Americans." *Berkeley Undergraduate Journal*, 33(2). <http://dx.doi.org/10.5070/B3332046899>. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7pv5b48v>.

This source is an academic journal article. The topic is the cultural paradox that many second-generation Iranian-Americans feel as they attempt to preserve their Iranian identity despite having grown up in the United States. The main argument is that a multidisciplinary approach needs to be created to help second-generation Iranian-Americans integrate into American society.

Iranian-American Relations Project. Accessed February 1, 2022. https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cweb_collection%7C4222859.

This primary source collection consists of 17 interviews with Americans who were directly involved in Iranian-American relations during the Revolution—via diplomacy, the foreign service, intelligence, and government—including Michael Matrisko, who was one of the American hostages during the Hostage Crisis.

Izadi, Ferideh. 1975. Interview by Margo Nash. Ellis Island Oral History Project, Series NPS, No. 0092. April 17. Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street, 2004. https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C4166557.

This is a primary source interview with Iranian immigrant Izadi Ferideh. Ferideh discusses arriving in the United States, learning English, adjusting to new cultural norms while growing up, and Americans' association of Iran with oil.

Limbert, John, and Suzanne Maloney. 2022. *Suzanne Maloney: The Iranian Revolution at 43: Sources of Tensions and Conflict with the US*. Baskerville Institute, February 18, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBdO9xasuKA>.

Marandi, Seyed Mohammdd and Zeinab Ghasemi Tari. "Representations of Post-Revolutionary Iran by Iranian-American Memoirists: Patterns of Access to the Media and Communicative Events." *ReOrient*. Vol. 2(2):146-159. doi: 10.13169/reorient.2.2.0146.

This source is an academic journal article. It addresses the ways media portrayal of Iran impacts American views of post-Revolutionary Iran and Iranians. The main argument of the article is that American politicians would like present-day Iran to be seen as undemocratic, radical, and even barbaric, so that sanctions and other unfair treatment, and unrealistic views) of Iran and Iranians seem justified. The article asserts that this narrative is made possible by cherry-picking which types of Iranian voices present at events with high visibility and which Iranian voices are praised as educated or experts in politics or international relations.

McKinney, Karyn D., Marvasti, Amir B. *Middle Eastern Lives in America*. United Kingdom: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004.

Meshkat, Kian Arash. "The Burden of Economic Sanctions on Iranian-Americans." *Georgetown Journal of International Law* 44, no. 3 (2013): 915-972.

This source is an academic journal article. It argues that sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran negatively impact individual Iranian-Americans to the extent that their Constitutional rights are infringed upon. It does not make assertions about whether or not sanctions are effective in achieving United States interests with regards to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mobasher, Mohsen Mostafavi. *The Iranian Diaspora: Challenges, Negotiations, and Transformations*. (2018). United States: University of Texas Press.

Mobasher, Mohsen Mostafavi. *Iranians in Texas: Migration, Politics, and Ethnic Identity*. Vol. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012.

This is a monograph. Its topic is the ways in which Iranians in the United States have integrated into the culture and politics of the country and the ways they have not. It also asserts possible historical reasons for this, addresses the low satisfaction rates of Iranians living in the United States, and gives examples of cities—such as Beverly Hills—which have more successfully assisted Iranian immigrants in becoming politically involved. The basic argument of this book is that, as long as U.S.-Iran relations continue to

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be as hostile as they are, Iranian-Americans will unfortunately continue to have an experience not unlike that of the Japanese and Germans in America during WWII.

Pars Times. "Iranian-American Organizations." *Pars Times: Greater Iran and Beyond*. Accessed April 20, 2022. http://www.parstimes.com/iranian_american.html.

Shavarini, Mitra K. *Educating Immigrants: Experiences of Second-Generation Iranians*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC, 2004.

This is a monograph. The book highlights the statistical successes of second-generation Iranian immigrants in the United States, and it points out the statistical emphasis on education that many Iranian-Americans brought with them to the United States. The book argues that Iranian-Americans are a diverse group, and actually could be subdivided into at least seven ethnic or religious groups. The book broadly gives information about Iranian-Americans' experiences within the historical context of the first and second generations in America after the Revolution.

Shoamanesh, Sam Sasan. "History Brief: Timeline of US-Iran Relations Until the Obama Administration." *MIT International Review*. (2009): 1-5. Accessed January 22, 2022, <https://web.mit.edu/mitir/2009/online/us-iran-2.pdf>.

Soomekh, Saba. *From the Shahs to Los Angeles: Three Generations of Iranian Jewish Women Between Religion and Culture*. Ithaca: State University of New York Press, 2012. Accessed January 22, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

This source is a monograph. Of particular interest is chapter four, which paints a picture of what life is like for second-generation Iranian-Jewish women in Los Angeles. The book's main argument is that immigrants assimilate into their new mainstream societies, but they also assimilate their new mainstream societies into themselves.

Secretariat of the Supreme Council of Iranians Abroad. "Dispersal Statistics of Iranians Living Abroad." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Office of Communications and Information of Iranians Abroad, 2012. <https://iranian.mfa.ir/files/mfairanian/Amar.pdf>.

Tehrani, John., Tehrani, Irwin R Buchalter Professor of Law John. *White-washed: America's invisible Middle Eastern minority*. United Kingdom: NYU Press, 2009.

Yalzadeh, Ida. "'Support the 41': Iranian Student Activism in Northern California, 1970-3." In Shannon, Matthew K., 168-182. *American-Iranian Dialogues: From Constitution to White Revolution, C. 1890s-1960s*. New Approaches to International

History. London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. <https://search-ebscohost-com.eri.lib.byu.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=3046079&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

This source is a section within an edited volume. The edited volume itself includes sections on various topics related to U.S.-Iran relations from the 1890s to 1970s. This particular essay addresses the culture among Iranian-American college students in San Francisco just before the Iran Hostage Crisis. Yalzadeh's main argument is that this culture was part of a more broad set of tensions between the United States and Iran as well as among Iranians who differed in opinion one from another. The extension of this argument is that these tensions led to the Iran Hostage Crisis and to aspects of the Islamic Revolution.



Decision Memorandum:

Analysis of Alternative Approaches Regarding U.S. Policy Toward JCPOA Nonproliferation Sanctions on the Political Economy of Iran

Ethan Gillett

Issue

As the United States and its allies begin to engage in diplomatic negotiations with Iran in context of the JCPOA two questions come to light: first, how should nonproliferation sanctions be structured and second, how will these sanctions affect the political economy of Iran?

History of Nonproliferation Sanctions and Iran's Nuclear Program

As a response to the seizure of the U.S. embassy, the kidnapping of its employees, and the support of international terrorist organizations following the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the United States imposed widespread sanctions on Iran. The United States targeted the Iranian hydrocarbon sector, financial sector, and other commercial activities in hopes of compelling Iran to cease supporting acts of terrorism and to limit Iran's strategic power in the Middle East more generally.¹ Following these initial actions, the United States imposed several iterations of further sanctions coinciding with the development of Iran's illicit nuclear weapons program. This

1 U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, Iran Sanctions, by Kenneth Katzman, RS20871, Updated February 2, 2022. <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/RS20871.pdf>

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decision memo outlines the history of these sanctions, their effects, and provides policy options for the United States going forward.

When Iran became a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), it assumed a series of obligations surrounding nonproliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear technology.² In return, Iran was legally granted certain rights as a potential nuclear power state.

As stated in the NPT:

Affirming...that the benefits of peaceful applications for nuclear technology, including any technological by-products which may be derived by nuclear weapon States from the development of nuclear explosive devices, should be available for peaceful purposes to all Parties to the Treaty, whether nuclear weapon or non-nuclear-weapon States...³

From this we read that Iran has the ability to legally develop nuclear energy technology as long as it “concludes a safeguards agreement with the IAEA.”⁴ This safeguards agreement includes Iran-specific limitations on the amount of enriched uranium, a clear declaration of nuclear power locations and material, and accessibility to those sites by IAEA inspectors.⁵ However, in 2003, IAEA inspectors discovered that Iranian reactors held both high enriched uranium (HEU) and low enriched uranium (LEU) which, running contrary to these safeguard obligations, effectively made Iran ineligible for the NPT signing benefits.⁶ In addition to revoking Iran’s NPT benefits, the United States introduced secondary sanctions which successfully resulted in Iran temporarily suspending aspects of its nuclear program, like uranium enrichment.⁷ When these sanctions were lifted following Iranian compliance it wasn’t until 2006, when Iran again announced it would begin

2 Ambassador Sudjudnan Parnohadiningrat, Opening Statement of the Preparatory Committee for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Third Session of Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, April 26, 2004.

3 United Nations, Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Signed July 1, 1968. <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/text>

4 United Nations, Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 1968.

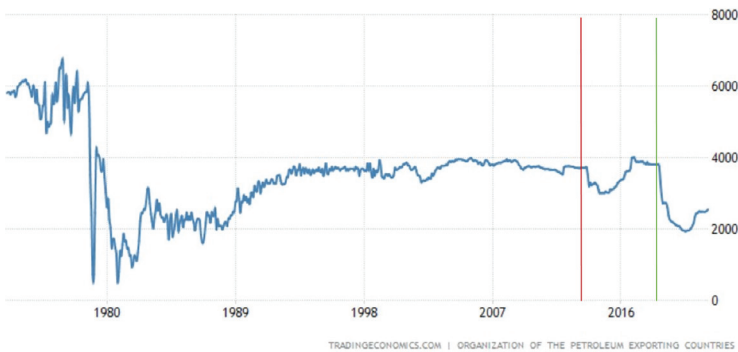
5 IAEA Board of Governors Meeting, NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran. November 25, 2021. <https://tinyurl.com/23wtt8e>

6 Director General Mohammed ElBaradei, Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, International Atomic Energy Agency, Board of Directors, GOV/2003/75 (2003). <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/gov2003-75.pdf>

7 U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, Iran Nuclear Agreement and US Exit, by Paul Kerr and Kenneth Katzman, R43333 (July 20, 2018). <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/nuke/R43333.pdf>

research and development efforts of nuclear weapons, that sanctions were reimposed on Iran.⁸

How did these sanctions affect Iran's economy? To fully grasp the impact of sanctions, one must look at past revenue streams of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC). The NIOC is one of the largest oil companies in the world—second only to Saudi Arabia's Saudi Aramco. In FY 2016, the NIOC accounted for nearly 40% of Iranian government revenues.⁹ As a heavy contributor to Iran's revenue, sanctions targeting the oil industry effectively triggered economic collapse. When the UN installed further NIOC sanctions during negotiations aiming to curb Iran's nuclear weapons development,¹⁰ Iran's ability to export oil decreased from 3.8 million barrels a day to roughly 1.5 million barrels, a reduction of nearly 60%.



Iranian Oil Exports 1960–2022. The red line indicates the first decrease in oil exports as a result of nonproliferation sanctions. The green line represents Trump-era “maximum pressure” sanctions.

It wasn't until member-states of the P5+1 finalized the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015 that sanctions targeting the hydrocarbon and foreign assets of Iran were lifted. This short-lived sanction relief ended when, in 2018, the Trump administration unilaterally pulled out of the JCPOA and applied “maximum pressure” sanctions in attempts

8 Congressional Research Service, Iran Nuclear Agreement and US Exit. 2018.

9 United States Energy Information Administration, Country Analysis Executive Summary: Iran, Last Updated July 16, 2021. https://www.eia.gov/international/content/analysis/countries_long/Iran/pdf/iran_exe.pdf

10 United Nations Security Council, “Resolution 1929,” S/RES/1929, June 9, 2010. https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/unsc_res1929-2010.pdf

11 U.S. Energy Information Administration, Country Analysis Executive Summary: Iran, July 16, 2021. https://www.eia.gov/international/content/analysis/countries_long/Iran/pdf/iran_exe.pdf

to negotiate a revised JCPOA that considered U.S. security concerns beyond Iran's nuclear program. These security concerns included support for regional armed forces (those specifically targeting Israel and which the US has designated terrorist organizations), human rights abuses, and Iran's efforts to acquire missile and conventional weapons technology.¹² Unfortunately, these sanctions seemingly backfired, as following this rupture Iran began incrementally exceeding certain limits provided for in the JCPOA such as the level of enriched uranium.

Rapid uptake in nuclear material and failure to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons becomes just one of two possible negative outcomes of sanctions. The second is that sanctions have the capacity to strengthen the Iranian regime while hurting the general population.¹⁵ As the newly formed Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran came into power in 1979, it tasked revolutionaries with managing the asset accounts previously controlled by the Shah.¹³ In order to secure these assets "for Islam," these massive accounts were put under control of state entities made up of revolutionary fighters. Overtime, particularly in the 2010s when nuclear nonproliferation talks began, the political elite and *bonyads* (cleric-controlled foundations) partially privatized these national accounts.¹⁴ As the rate of privatization has increased with heavy nonproliferation sanctions, the power and influence of Iran's politically elite has increased as well.¹⁵

This process is similar to what happened in Russia following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Oligarchs loyal to President Putin have shielded him from the damages western sanctions caused following the invasion by absorbing financial losses and continuing to fund Russia's propaganda machine. As a result, the sanctions did seemingly little to prevent the war's unfortunate trajectory. These oligarchs are similar to the elite clerics and *bonyads* in Iran, as many of these men control large portions of the Iranian economy and are all extremely loyal to Ayatollah Khamenei.

12 Congressional Research Service, Iran Sanctions, 2022. 15 Congressional Research Service, Iran Sanctions, 2022.

13 Ali A. Saeidi, "The Accountability of Para-governmental Organizations (bonyads): The Case of Iranian Foundations", *Iranian Studies*. September 2004. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/431165>

14 Akbar Karbassian, "Islamic Revolution and the Management of the Iranian Economy", *The Johns Hopkins University Press*, Summer 2000. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40971487>

15 Karbassian, *Islamic Revolution and the Management of the Iranian Economy*, 2000.

Realizing this, the Biden administration has sought to reenter the JCPOA in exchange for resumption of full Iranian compliance with its previous JCPOA obligations. These JCPOA obligations would include Iran capping its uranium-235 enrichment at 3.67%, decreasing the number of nuclear centrifuges from 6,104 to 5,060, and holding joint quarterly meetings for 25 years with the Joint Commission (P5+1, EU, and Iran) to oversee further details of the JCPOA.¹⁶ While these negotiations have been slow coming, the possibility of once again engaging in a dialogue with Iran means the United States must utilize its leverage of sanctions to carefully persuade Iran into IAEA compliance. If the United States hopes to persuade Iran to resume full compliance with its JCPOA obligations, it should first consider whether maximum pressure sanctions may be counterproductive to its diplomatic, economic, and nonproliferation goals.

Overview of Options

The United States could pull many levers to entice Iran into full JCPOA and IAEA compliance. Just as the topic of this report centers around the use and misuse of sanctions, all options outlined below likewise focus on possible sanctions activity. Sanctions are the favored tool among American politicians due to their cost benefits, “politically safe” perception, and intervention speed. Sanctions are quickly becoming the go-to strategy in international emergency situations in which compliance of a certain country is needed.

From a cost perspective, sanctions provide impressive results for the United States. This is largely due to the United States’ role as the main issuer and controller of the dollar, the world’s most important currency. Trillions of US dollars flow throughout world economies every day. Iranian foreign assets, trade deals, and more are all conducted in dollars, giving the United States impressive access and sanctioning power. Compared to traditional military intervention, sanctions allow the United States to encourage nonproliferation efforts without the expensive deployment of military personnel. To mitigate the cost of life and resources to the American public all options below exclude the use of active military personnel.

Politically speaking, sanctions are also seen as very low cost. Few presidents, especially those aiming for reelection, want to be remembered as the one who invaded Iran because of “weapons of mass destruction” and fail. Of these US presidents that have gone down that road and returned, many say that it was not the best option available to them.¹⁷

16 Arms Control Association, “The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) at a Glance” Arms Control Association, March 2022. <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/JCPOA-at-a-glance>

17 Matthew Cella & Paul D. Shinkman, “The Great Iraq Mistake,” U.S. News &

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Today, utilizing executive orders, an American president has widespread access to the powers of sanctions without the cost of suffering in domestic politics. This allows them to make hard decisions on a subject hotly debated in the US. Regarding Iran, Professor Robert Reardon has stated, “any Iranian development of nuclear technology [legal or illegal] is politically dead in the water in the United States, especially considering the political weight of the Israel lobby.”¹⁸ It is extremely important to remember the domestic ramifications of utilizing nuclear nonproliferation sanctions on Iran, as it could potentially destroy a politician’s career. This, combined with the quick intervention speed of sanctions, allow politicians and sanction enforcers to quickly back-peddle if the sanctions are seen as going against US interests or, as the Trump administration did, enforce further sanctions for the purpose of strong-arming countries into compliance.

The intervention speed of sanctions is very effective for US foreign policy. Just recently, with the invasion of Ukraine, the United States and European powers were able to apply sanctions on Russia targeting imported goods, investments, and access to the EU’s financial markets just two days after the invasion.¹⁹ Unlike Russia, the sanctions on Iran have been continuous since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. However, with the development of their illicit nuclear weapons program the United States was able to quickly add additional sanctions targeting key members of the Iranian regime and nuclear specific industries.²⁰ This broadened the scope of Iranian sanctions to include more influential sectors of Iran’s economy.

Utilizing sanctions as a method of encouraging Iran into nonproliferation compliance has been the United States’ main strategy since the early

World Report, May 26, 2015. <https://www.usnews.com/news/the-report/articles/2015/05/26/gop-agrees-bushwas-wrong-to-invade-iraq-now-what>

18 Alexandra Van Dine, “Robert Reardon: Sanctions, Inducements, and How To Handle Iran,” Belfer Center Newsletter, Winter 2013-2014. <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/robertreardon-sanctions-inducements-and-how-handle-iran>

19 Chad P. Bown, “Russia’s war on Ukraine: A sanctions timeline,” The Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE), April 8, 2022. <https://www.piie.com/blogs/realtime-economicissues-watch/russias-war-ukraine-sanctions-timeline>

20 George Perkovich and Silvia Manzanero, “Plan B: Using Sanctions to End Iran’s Nuclear Program,” Arms Control Association, Accessed April 10, 2022. <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2004-05/iran-nuclear-briefs/plan-b-using-sanctions-end-iransnuclear-program>

2000s. Costs, political popularity, and intervention speed all play a major part in choosing to opt for a strategy involving sanctions as opposed to a more conventional approach that would use active military personnel or resources. As such, the following policy options only involve the use of sanctions and their respective pros and cons. Option 1, and recommendation, details the use of a positive inducement strategy. Option 2 outlines a plan for a continued strategy approach, while option 3 mirrors that of the Trump administration's strategy of 2018 with an increase of current sanctions.

Pro/Con Assessment of Policy Options

Option 1: Positive Inducements

Many see positive inducements as the opposite of sanctions. Where traditional sanctions prevent individuals or organizations from utilizing their assets, inducements encourage cooperation through the promise of reduced tariffs, trade deals, or financial assistance. In the context of Iran, the United States could use a variety of inducements such as direct foreign aid payments or subsidies in exchange for nuclear coordination. These inducements would need to extend beyond the JCPOA provisions, as stipulated during the Obama administration, to have the largest effect on the Iranian economy and population.

Pros: The case for incorporation of positive inducements in exchange for nuclear coordination is straightforward. Inducements can permit Iran to develop economically as it would gain access to foreign capital, lost hydrocarbon revenues, and diplomatic relations with western countries.²¹ With the signing of the JCPOA in 2015 and removal of additional nonproliferation sanctions, the GDP of Iran grew by 13.39%—the largest annual growth rate since the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1989.²² It is important to note that this growth came from the *removal* of nonproliferation sanctions, there were no positive inducements involved. If inducements were added to the removal of sanctions, Iran's economy would surely grow much more than 13%. This would come as a show of good faith towards Iranian citizens, would relieve tensions with European allies, and provide immediate

21 Tamas Dudlak, "After the Sanctions: Policy Challenges in Transition to a New Political Economy of the Iranian Oil and Gas Sectors," *Energy Policy*, October 2018. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326476201_After_the_sanctions_Policy_challenges_in_transition_to_a_new_political_economy_of_the_Iranian_oil_and_gas_sectors

22 The World Bank, GDP growth (annual %) – Iran, Islamic Rep, Accessed April 11, 2022. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=IR>

humanitarian relief to those most hard hit by the recession caused by maximum-pressure sanctions.

Cons: Positive inducements could, however, result in worsened relations with Israel and Saudi Arabia, who are seen as the United States' leading allies in the region. This would be politically damaging for the domestically minded politician as most Americans do not distinguish between the legal developments of nuclear energy programs with illegal nuclear weapons development as previously discussed. Popularity in the polls makes up a serious component to foreign policy decisions and must be controlled for. In a recent poll of American voters on US-Iran relations, 46% would favor a more aggressive approach by the Biden administration.²³ In addition to this, many see permitting Iran to develop nuclear energy as simultaneously supporting Russia. As Russia underwent negotiations with Iran for a \$10-billion contract to build atomic reactors in Iran, many would see any move to forego nuclear sanctions as supporting Russia, which would be an additional political cost.²⁴ However, the Biden administration's stance has been in-line with the Nonproliferation Treaty that states countries can build nuclear energy infrastructure, just not nuclear weapons. So, were the sanctions fully removed, Russia would have access to that source of income.

Option 2: Continue diplomatic negotiations towards previous JCPOA obligations

Current efforts of the Biden administration to negotiate the JCPOA obligations are slow coming. That being said, "the US, Iran, and other world powers are close to resurrecting the 2015 deal that ensured Iran's nuclear program could not develop weapons-grade uranium."²⁵ While a return to the JCPOA would allow Iran access to its foreign assets and permit it to develop its nuclear energy infrastructure it would not, however, be a renewal of the original JCPOA. Dr. Trita Parsi, from the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, said in a recent interview that, "It's going to be very similar, [but] obviously there's going to be some change here and

23 United States Institute of Peace, "Polls: American views on Iran, Nuclear Deal," The Iran Primer, December 1, 2021. <https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2021/dec/01/polls-american-viewsiran-nuclear-deal>

24 Adam Kredo, "New Iran Agreement Would Let Russia Cash in on \$10 Billion Contract To Build Nuclear Sites," The Washington Free Beacon, March 16, 2022. <https://freebeacon.com/national-security/new-iran-agreement-would-let-russia-cash-in-on-10billion-contract-to-build-nuclear-sites/>

25 Jonathan Guyer, "What's the deal with the Iran nuclear deal?" Vox News, April 6, 2022. <https://www.vox.com/23002229/return-iran-nuclear-deal-vienna-explained>

there.”²⁶ These changes could include Trump-era sanctions that will not be lifted or increased IAEA involvement in nuclear projects. They will not be publicly known until negotiations have been finalized. As such, this policy option will consider the pros and cons *as if* both parties agreed to return to the original JCPOA structure.

Pros: The case for a “continue-as-is” strategy is based on the importance of domestic and international popularity for the current administration. In a previously mentioned study, 28% of voters would prefer that the Biden administration continue their current strategy with 15% being unsure.²⁷ That is a significant portion of the voting body. These voters want to see the Biden administration uphold its promises to its P5+1 allies. The P5+1 refers to the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (France, Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, and China); plus, Germany. This group of countries worked on the original JCPOA negotiations with Iran. Following the unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA by the Trump administration, tensions with these countries were high. Former US diplomat James Dobbins said:

The decision to abandon the nuclear agreement with Iran isolates the United States, frees Iran, reneges on an American commitment, adds to the risk of a trade war with America’s allies and a hot war with Iran, and diminishes the prospects of eliminating North Korea’s nuclear threat.²⁸

To reenter into the JCPOA would eliminate these additional risks and reestablish the United States as a leader in nonproliferation negotiations.

Cons: Negotiations to reenter the JCPOA have been slow and easily susceptible to delay. This is largely due to the lack of direct communication between the two main parties: the United States and Iran. Current talks between the two countries are indirect while talks between Iran and the other P5+1 countries are direct. This lack of coherence has resulted in no less than three major delays in the negotiations. The Russian invasion of Ukraine also slowed the progress of JCPOA negotiations as Russia demanded that sanctions designed to target the invasion would have no effect on nonproliferation efforts. After the United States and its allies rejected these demands, Russia quickly walked back on its lobbying efforts.²⁹ Meanwhile, as other

26 Jonathon Guyer, “What’s the deal with the Iran nuclear deal?” 2022.

27 United States Institute of Peace, Polls: American Views on Iran, Nuclear Deal, 2021.

28 Laura Rozen, “The P5 minus 1: Trump exits Iran deal,” Al-Monitor, May 8, 2018. <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2018/05/trump-exit-iran-deal-plan-b.html>

29 Jonathon Guyer, “What’s the deal with the Iran nuclear deal?”, 2022.

international events constantly interrupt the painfully slow negotiations, the Iranian economy continues to suffer without access to foreign capital.

Iranians are eager to rejoin the JCPOA in efforts to reduce economic hardship. Without access to foreign capital and international aid markets due to sanctions, Iran plunged into a recession. Exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, conditions only continue to get worse. While exact numbers are difficult to verify, some reports estimate roughly 140,650 COVID-19 related deaths have occurred since the beginning of the pandemic.³⁰ Iran suffers economically and socially as it is unable to gain access to medicines and other sources of aid. Slow negotiations perpetuate this suffering in Iran that JCPOA sanctions relief could account for.

Option 3: Continue the Trump administration's strategy of sanctions maximum pressure sanctions without negotiations

Continuing maximum pressure sanctions as outlined by the Trump administration is a viable, yet unpopular policy option. The Biden administration current position is that Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA was "one of the worst policy mistakes since the invasion of Iraq," yet it continues to use those sanctions as bargaining chips instead of removing them.³¹ Out of the three policy options presented in this decision memo, this is the least favorable as it is retroactive in application rather than proactive and forward thinking.

Pros: Continuing the maximum pressure campaign would allow the United States to make aggressive policy moves against Russia, China, and Iran. Both Russia and China are the primary suppliers of Iranian aid and development work since European and American companies have been barred from doing business with Iranians. As previously mentioned, Russia has the potential to benefit from a \$10 billion nuclear power infrastructure deal with Iran. In 2021, China agreed to invest \$400 billion in Iran over 25 years in exchange for a steady supply of oil to fuel its growing economy.³² Many see this infusion of capital as undermining the Trump administration maximum pressure strategy. A continued, or enhanced, version of this

30 Reuters, COVID-19 Tracker: Iran, Last Updated April 11, 2022. <https://graphics.reuters.com/world-coronavirus-tracker-and-maps/countries-and-territories/iran/>

31 Laura Rozen, "The P5 minus 1: Trump exits Iran deal," 2018.

32 Farnaz Fassihi and Steven Lee Myers, "China, With \$400 Billion Iran Deal, Could Deepen Influence in Mideast," The New York Times, March 29, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/27/world/middleeast/china-iran-deal.html>

maximum pressure campaign would prevent both Russia and China from benefiting from the lack of US and European presence.

Other benefits of continuing the maximum pressure campaign include improved US ties with regional allies. Saudi Arabia and Israel have long been key American partners in the Middle East. In Saudi Arabia, US military infrastructure aided in the deterrence of Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen. In Israel, the US supplies aid to protect against Iranian-backed militias in Syria and Palestine. Continued support for these two regional powers aid in balancing the scales of regional hegemony.

Cons: Policy option #3 is retroactive and isolationist. There is much evidence showing that increased sanctions are not useful to long-term US diplomatic or nuclear nonproliferation efforts. Increased sanctions make the United States appear as the Middle East “boogie-man”, constantly haunting states with its expansive powers to manipulate foreign economies. In addition, this policy would negate 15 years’ worth of efforts to negotiate the JCPOA. This strategy would also undermine the efforts of the NPT to encourage the use of legal nuclear energy without the development of nuclear weapons. Signed in 1968, the NPT is one of the pillars of the United States’ nuclear nonproliferation strategy. Many would see this effort to renege on the NPT as a horrific, isolationist policy blunder that would bring the world one step closer to potential nuclear war.

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Poisoned From Within:

How Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's Secularization and Turkification Reforms Catalyzed Sectarianism and Factionalism in Modern Turkey

Ryan Wolff

1. Introduction: A History and Future of Factionalism

Beginning with the *Tanzimat* reforms, the Ottoman Empire sought to replace a tradition of relative communal autonomy with a stronger, more centralized authority structure. Rather than ruling over a loose conglomerate of ethnolinguistic and religious communities loyal to the sultanate primarily for defense, Ottoman leadership recognized that developing a widespread Ottoman identity that transcended these communal differences and tribal loyalties would strengthen the empire against both internal dissent and external pressures. World War I amplified this push for a common identity by raising Turkish nationalists and secularists—Mustafa Kemal chief among them—to power, thus enabling the forced Turkification and secularization of dozens of unique groups and minorities within the state's political boundaries. These groups—Turkish by citizenship alone, in many cases—have now suffered from state-sponsored oppression for close to ninety years. Consequently, modern Turkey experiences frequent political and cultural clashes between both Turkish nationalists and ethnolinguistic minorities (primarily the Kurds) and secularists and Islamists. Overall, then, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's policies of secularization and Turkification catalyzed issues of sectarianism and factionalism originating from the Ottoman Empire's departure from the *millet* system, poisoning modern Turkey with seemingly endless political and cultural conflict and, most ironically, the distinct lack of a common Turkish identity.

2a. The Birth of a United Nationalist Ottoman Identity: The *Tanzimat* Reforms

The Ottoman Empire (1299–1922) consisted of a mosaic of cultures, religions, ethnicities, and languages. Consequently, it created the *millet* system to both appease and control at least some of these communities. Specifically, various minority communities—especially monotheistic religious minorities—within Ottoman territory existed in semi-autonomous millets. Within these *millets*, the communities could maintain and practice their legal, political, religious, and cultural traditions while remaining loyal to the sultanate in Istanbul. While Ottoman Muslims, for example, lived under Shariah law, local leadership governed non-Muslim subjects according to their own unique religious traditions.¹ In short, the *millets* represented distinctly separate societies within the Ottoman Empire that managed themselves at a local level while binding together with other millets and broader Ottoman society for protection.²

The flexible *millet* system aimed to ensure loyalty across the empire's heterogeneous population and generally allowed the sultanate to effectively govern a diverse empire that spread, at its territorial peak in 1683, from Morocco in the west to Iran's western border in the east and from the Caucasus Mountains and the gates of Vienna in the north to Yemen in the south.³ However, this somewhat loose confederation of communities lacked unity, as loyalty to one's clan, tribe, or other local identities typically trumped allegiance to the sultanate in most regions across the empire. Thus, while decentralized leadership had effectively incorporated the Ottoman Empire's non-Muslim, ethnically-diverse subjects into a sort of pyramidal administrative structure and helped the sultanate easily incorporate newly-acquired territories into the empire, major differences in status and legal obligations—including military service, taxation, and legal punishments—separated Ottoman non-Muslims from Ottoman Muslims and kept the empire fragmented in day-to-day affairs.⁴

These differences—along with rising nationalist sentiments among many *millets* in the Balkans and Muhammad Ali's rise to power in Egypt—began to

1 Yesim Bayar, *Formation of the Turkish Nation-State, 1920–1938* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 17.

2 Mine Eder, “Turkey,” in *The Middle East*, ed. Ellen Lust (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2019), 695–696.

3 Malcolm Edward Yapp, “Ottoman Empire,” *Britannica*, last modified March 7, 2022, accessed April 2, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ottoman-Empire>.

4 Bayar, *Formation of the Turkish Nation-State*, 17–18.

threaten the sultanate in the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1839, internal unrest and external pressure reached a breaking point, culminating in Muhammad Ali's Egyptian forces soundly defeating the Ottoman army in Syria and threatening to advance towards Istanbul. With British support, Ottoman forces pushed the Egyptian invaders out of greater Syria, but the damage was done. Encouraged by the British, Sultan Abdul Mejid decided to stabilize the empire through a series of reforms, starting with the Hatti Sherif of Gülhane in 1839.⁵

Specifically, the Hatti Sherif of Gülhane sought to alleviate civil tension within the empire by promising to protect life, honor, and property for all subjects, essentially dismantling parts of the *millet* system by standardizing some aspects of how the sultanate treated all subjects. While the Hatti Sherif of Gülhane stopped short of granting equal citizenship rights and status to all subjects, it marked a turn towards a more united and standardized citizenry—a goal further pursued by the Young Ottomans, the Young Turks, and, in its most extreme forms, Mustafa Kemal:

[The sultanate] [deems] it right to seek by new institutions to give the provinces composing the Ottoman Empire the benefit of good administration...henceforth each member of Ottoman society should be taxed for a quota of a fixed tax according to his fortune and means...[and] the cause of every accused person shall be publicly judged as the divine law requires, after inquiry and examination...These imperial concessions shall extend to all our subjects of whatever religion or sect they may be...without [these] several laws...there can be neither strength, nor riches, nor happiness, nor tranquility for the empire.⁶

Thus, Ottoman leadership replaced parts of the *millet* system with the infant notion of Ottomanism, or a common citizenship based on an Ottoman identity. Such a shift, it believed, would consolidate and centralize power, preventing another regional nationalist uprising like Muhammad Ali's.⁷

Contrary to the idea of a common citizenship based on standardized treatment of all Ottomans, however, the empire's economic systems featured a structure that favored Ottoman Christians—an issue that Ottomanism could not immediately solve. As Western traders gained unprecedented access to Ottoman markets through lopsided trade agreements like the Treaty of Balta Liman (1838) and the 1862 Treaty of Commerce and Navigation,

5 Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles D. Smith, *The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 71.

6 Sultan Abdul Mejid, the Hatti Sherif, November 3, 1839, in *The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 71-73.

7 Bayar, *Formation of the Turkish Nation-State*, 18.

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international commerce began disproportionately benefiting Ottoman Christians who, partially because of religious values shared with the Christian merchants, attracted more business than their Muslim counterparts. The 1862 Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, for example, echoed almost word-for-word Ottoman capitulations to British merchants twenty-four years earlier, stating that American citizens and their agents “trading in goods...of foreign countries [would] be subject to the same taxes, and enjoy the same rights, privileges, and immunities as foreign subjects dealing in goods...of their own country.”⁸

As Ottoman Christians reaped the benefits of increased Western dominance of the Ottoman economy, both Ottoman Muslims and the sultanate became increasingly concerned. In 1850, a frustrated Muslim mob in Aleppo attacked hundreds of Christian residents, killing dozens.⁹ The violence spread between factions and sects until the Ottoman forces sent to enforce peace and order in Aleppo ultimately bombarded the city, killing more than five thousand people.¹⁰ Unfortunately, the Ottoman Reform Edict of 1856, which “promised...to all the subjects of [the] Empire, without distinction of classes or of religion...all the privileges and spiritual immunities...to all Christian communities or other non-Muslim persuasions,” backfired and further strained Christian-Muslim relations across the empire.¹¹

The edict granted non-Muslims full legal equality, abolishing “every distinction or designation tending to make any class...of the subjects of [the] Empire inferior to another class, on account of their religion, language, or race,” strengthening religious freedom, promising that “the very idea of Muslim proselytism [was] unknown in the Ottoman Empire,” allowing people of all religions to work in the government, “respecting the admission into and service in the army of Christian and other non-Muslim subjects,” standardizing taxes, and abolishing the *jizya*.¹² While these reforms sought to standardize legal status and encourage a unified Ottoman identity, the edict also preserved aspects of the *millet* system that the sultanate

8 Abraham Lincoln, the Treaty of Balta Liman, August 15, 1838, in *The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 33.

9 Eugene Rogan, *The Arabs* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 93.

10 Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 71

11 World History Commons, “Primary Source: Ottoman Reform Decree, 1856,” accessed April 2, 2022, <https://worldhistorycommons.org/ottoman-reform-decree-1856>.

12 Ibid.

recognized as crucial to keeping distinct communities satisfied. For example, it legislated that “civil proceedings...between subjects of the same Christian or other non-Muslim faith, may...be sent before the Councils of the Patriarchs or of the communities” and “each community, inhabiting a distinct quarter...[would] have equal power to repair and improve its churches, its hospitals, its schools, and its cemeteries.”¹³

Despite the sultanate’s attempt to burn the candle at both ends, Ottomanism had all but replaced the *millet* system, igniting tensions between Ottoman communities that the *millet* system had previously pacified and loosely united. Notably, Ottoman Muslims refused to see Christians as equals, while their Christian counterparts used their new legal status to provoke their Muslim neighbors. The Christian vice consul of the United States in Damascus, Mikhayil Mishaqa, described the destabilizing effects of Ottomanism and legal equality, complaining that:

As the Empire began to implement reforms and equality among its subjects regardless of their religious affiliation, the ignorant Christians went too far in their interpretation of equality and thought that the small did not have to submit to the great, and the low did not have to respect the high...They should have known that the leaders and important people of the area were Muslims...The Christians in Syria were the smaller and weaker portion in everything, and in all regards the Christians should have not only paid great respect to the Muslims but given them total obedience to the authorities.¹⁴

This tension ultimately erupted into sectarian violence demonstrating widespread rejection of Ottomanism, as Druze and Maronite communities around Mount Lebanon began fighting to fill the power vacuum left when the British defeated the region’s Egyptian occupiers in the early 1840s. In 1860, six hundred Druze defeated an army of three thousand Maronites and began systematically exterminating Maronite towns in a bloody ethnic cleansing.¹⁵ The earliest experiments in forming a united Ottoman identity to replace local nationalist tendencies had failed, and Ottoman academics and politicians knew it.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Mikhayil Mishaqa, *Murder, Mayhem, Pillage, and Plunder: The History of the Lebanon in the 18th and 19th Centuries* by Mikhayil Mishaqa (1800-1873), trans. W.M. Thackston (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1988), 244.

¹⁵ Rogan, *The Arabs*, 94.

2b. The Birth of a United Nationalist Turkish Identity: The Young Ottomans and the Young Turks

In the wake of the vicious violence that had engulfed the Druze and Maronites, British representative to the International Commission of Inquiry Lord Dufferin declared that:

As a general rule when you have to deal with a large population differing in their religious opinions, but perfectly assimilated in language and manners and habits of thought, the principle of fusion rather than that of separation is the one to be adopted. Religious beliefs ought not be converted into a geographical expression, and a wise government would insist upon the various subject sects subordinating their polemical to their civil relations with one another. [The] barbarous distinctions which have hitherto divided its inhabitants into innumerable tribes and sects, may be expected to soften down; differences of race and of religion will to a certain extent become subordinate to those social relations, which a community of interests will establish.¹⁶

Ever eager to adopt Western strategies, Ottoman leadership adopted this policy and continued to thrust Ottomanism onto its subjects. As part of this effort, Sultan Abdulhamid II and a secret group of Islamic modernists and constitutionalists called the Young Ottomans pushed for a brand of Ottomanism that placed Islam at the center of Ottoman identity. The Young Ottomans argued that the empire could only build a common identity around Islam, a sentiment captured perfectly by theologian Said Nursi more than forty years later when he concluded that “the strongest bond of Arab, Turk, Kurd, Albanian, Circassian, and Laz, and their firmest nationhood, is nothing other than Islam.”¹⁷ While such sentiments certainly set the stage for the common identity that Mustafa Kemal would later seek, Mustafa Kemal ultimately replaced the Young Ottomans’ focus on Islam as the center of that identity with a fierce secularism.

Undoubtedly, the Young Ottomans’ most important contribution to Mustafa Kemal’s eventual rise to power was the 1876 Constitution, which promoted a common Ottoman identity by granting equal rights to all Ottoman subjects while simultaneously standardizing Turkish as the empire’s

16 Lord Dufferin, Correspondence to Bulwer from Beirut, November 14, 1860, in *The Origins of the Lebanese National Idea: 1840-1920*, ed. Carol Hakim (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2013), 76.

17 Said Nursi, *The Letters: Epistles on Islamic Thought, Belief, and Life*, 1925, in “Nationalism in the Light of Said Nursi Badiuzzaman and His Framework for Social Solidarity,” ed. Adibah Abdul Rahim and Elmira Akhtmetova, *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2019): 41

official language—principles later confirmed in Mustafa Kemal’s 1924 Constitution. By declaring that “the Turkish tongue will remain the official state language,” “official correspondence and discussion will take place in Turkish,” “non-Muslims will be equally liable to the military law,” “all schools will operate under the surveillance of the state...in order to obtain for Ottoman citizens an education of a homogenous and uniform character,” and “instruction in Turkish will be obligatory in public schools,” the 1876 Constitution unambiguously produced a blueprint for Kemalist principles fifty years later.¹⁸ The *millet* system was a relic of the past, and the Turkification of the Ottoman (and later Turkish) people had begun. Though Sultan Abdulhamid II suspended the constitution only two years later, the 1908 Young Turk Revolution reinstated the 1876 constitution, which remained in effect until the interim 1921 Constitution was ratified by the Grand National Assembly.¹⁹ Three years later, the 1924 Constitution officially initiated the period of intensively secular and nationalist reforms that was Mustafa Kemal’s regime. Before Mustafa Kemal could become Turkey’s first president, however, the Ottoman Empire would have to endure a world war and independence movement.

3. World War I: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Rise of Mustafa Kemal

World War I and the Paris Peace Conference facilitated the Young Turks’ push for a united Turkish identity. It also brought one Mustafa Kemal—later named Atatürk, Father of the Turks—to prominence, forever changing Turkish culture and politics. If nothing else, World War I enabled the rise of Kemalist principles that repressed the sectarian and ethnolinguistic differences accentuated by the *millet* system, leaving a legacy of identity politics and the brutal repression of minorities for modern Turkey to inherit.

Subsection 3a: Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Born in 1881 in Salonika—a city within current Greek borders—Mustafa Kemal grew up in a sectarian society.²⁰ Jews comprised half of the city’s inhabitants, Muslims another fifth, and Bulgarians, Europeans, and

18 Sultan Abdulhamid II, the 1876 Constitution, December 13, 1876, in *The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 82–84.

19 Ibid, 82.

20 Norman Itzkowitz, “Kemal Atatürk: President of Turkey,” *Britannica*, last modified January 1, 2022, accessed April 9, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kemal-Ataturk>.

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Ottoman Greeks the rest.²¹ Somewhat ironically, this heterogenous community contributed to Mustafa Kemal's yearning for an overarching, unifying identity that could connect these groups. As a young man, he demonstrated an attachment to his homeland and Turkish identity. While in his early twenties, Mustafa Kemal wrote in a personal notebook that he was "pleased, with a feeling of good fortune, to be from Selanik. If you want to know the truth better," he continued, "I feel that my chest is overflowing with a feeling of pride...The most perfect qualities come to life in my mind."²² In fact, when Selanik fell to Greece during the Balkan Wars (1912), Mustafa Kemal reportedly cried and verbally wondered whether he would "ever see [the city] again as a Turk," confirming his conviction that, in all its diversity, Selanik belonged to a greater Turkish cause.²³ In 1893, after attending both a religious school selected by his pious mother and a modernist private school selected by his father, Mustafa Kemal enrolled in the Selanik Military Preparatory School, where his favorite teacher instilled a deep sense of Turkish pride in him.²⁴ Unsurprisingly, reformist and nationalist movements led by the Young Turks and the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) attracted the young officer, who joined the CUP in 1907.²⁵ Appointed director of operations for the Bolayir Army Corps based at Gallipoli in 1912, Mustafa Kemal participated in his first major conflict between large armies in conventional warfare during the First Balkan War, foreshadowing his heroic rise to prominence during World War I's Gallipoli Campaign.²⁶

In 1914, Ottoman military leadership appointed Mustafa Kemal commander of the 19th division stationed on the northern shore of the Sea of Marmara. Once again, Mustafa Kemal's vision of a powerful Turkish identity revealed itself. Complaining to his corps commander's chief of staff, Mustafa Kemal claimed that his forces were "made up of Arabs. Some...are opposed to the war....Please take them back and give me two other regiments from the Tekirdag depot. These are real Turkish lads."²⁷ His frustration with a general lack of loyalty to the Ottoman cause peaked when a regiment of Arab conscripts under his command fled their post

21 George W. Gawrych, *The Young Atatürk*, (London: I.B.Tauris, 2013), 2.

22 Ibid, 2-3.

23 Ibid, 3.

24 Ibid, 3-5.

25 Itzkowitz, "Kemal Atatürk: President of Turkey."

26 George W. Gawrych, *The Young Atatürk*, 29-31.

27 Andrew Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey* (New York: The Overlook Press, 2002), 144.

after successfully repelling brutal attacks on a vital position at Conk Bay-iri.²⁸ During the eleven-month Gallipoli Campaign, which stretched from February 1915 to January 1916, Ottoman forces suffered close to 250,000 casualties but maintained their positions and saved the Turkish capital at Istanbul.²⁹ For his heroic actions throughout the Gallipoli Campaign, Mustafa Kemal received the Iron Cross and was promoted to full colonel.³⁰ While far from famous, Mustafa Kemal built a reputation of fierce ambition, and Gallipoli became the cornerstone of his political career.³¹ In 1916—in the midst of the Caucasus campaign—Turkish authorities promoted Mustafa Kemal to brigadier general, granting him more exposure to larger cross-sections of Ottoman society.³² Thanks to his promotion, Mustafa Kemal became the immediate boss of Turkish nationalist officers like Ali Fuat, Cafer Tayyar, and his future successor as Turkey's president, Ismet Inonu.³³ The relationships he forged with these officers primed the small band of nationalists for the daunting campaign for Turkish independence that awaited them after the war. In July of 1917, Mustafa Kemal found himself in Syria suppressing the Arab Revolt created by Great Britain and Sharif Hussein, Emir of Mecca.³⁴ While he resigned his command exactly three months later, this position may have amplified his previous experiences with Arab soldiers and furthered his distrust of Arabs who refused to conform to Ottoman leadership.³⁵

Subsection 3b: The Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Sevres: Grounds for Revolution

Initially, the Ottoman Empire delayed entry into World War I, citing economic difficulties and a lack of armaments when questioned by their German allies. In 1915, however, the German government granted the Ottomans subsidies and armaments. On October 27, the Ottoman navy set sail to attack the Russian fleet in the Black Sea. By November 11, the Ottomans were officially at war with Britain, France, and Russia.³⁶ Thus, the Ottoman Empire sealed its fate and guaranteed its eventual defeat and dissolution.

28 Ibid, 147.

29 Ibid, 156.

30 Ibid, 148.

31 Ibid, 156.

32 Ibid, 160.

33 Ibid, 162.

34 Ibid, 167.

35 Ibid, 170.

36 Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: IB Tauris, 2004), 113.

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In 1920, the Ottoman sultanate signed the Treaty of Sevres as part of the Paris Peace Conference. Among other things, the treaty restored capitulations, placed the Dardanelles and Bosphorus Strait under Allied administration, and reduced Ottoman territory to Anatolia by removing the state's Arab provinces and dividing Western Anatolia between Greece, Italy, and France.³⁷ Most relevant to the nationalist themes of Ottomanism and Turkism that had undergirded recent Ottoman political developments, the Treaty of Sevres explicitly outlined a future for independent Kurdistan and Armenia—developments that Turkish nationalists like Mustafa Kemal reviled. Specifically, the treaty's third section stated that:

A commission...composed of three members appointed by the British, French and Italian Governments respectively shall draft within six months from the coming into force the present Treaty a scheme of local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates, south of the southern border of Armenia as it may be hereafter determined, and north of the frontier of Turkey and Syria and Mesopotamia...The scheme shall contain full safeguards for the protection of the Assyro-Chaldeans and other racial or religious minorities within these areas. If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples within the area defined...shall address themselves...in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the Council [of the League of Nations]....recommends that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas.³⁸

Similarly, the treaty declared that "Turkey, in accordance with the action already taken by the Allied Powers, hereby recognizes Armenia as a free and independent State."³⁹ To ensure that Turkey complied with these terms, the Allied Powers threatened to remove the sultanate from Constantinople if Turkey failed to ensure the "protection of the rights of racial, religious or linguistic minorities" and "facilitate...the return to their homes...of the Turkish subjects of non-Turkish race who have been forcibly driven from their homes."⁴⁰

37 Versailles Peace Settlement, Treaty of Sevres, August 10, 1920, in *The Treaties of Peace, 1919-1923*, ed. Lawrence Martin (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1924), 787-941.

38 Ibid, 807-808.

39 Ibid, 814.

40 Ibid, 799 and 829.

Mustafa Kemal and his nationalist allies despised the formal breakdown and factionalization of Turkish society, almost certainly disagreeing with the very idea presented in the Treaty of Sevres that Turkish subjects of non-Turkish race were not simply Turks. Accordingly, he and his allies in the CUP vehemently rejected the Treaty of Sevres and sought a new path to Turkish rebirth. In short, World War I facilitated the rise of Mustafa Kemal to a position from which he could harness angry nationalist sentiment, win the Turkish presidency, and enforce the Turkification of the Turkish populous, ensuring a future of political and cultural repression of minorities and public religion.

4. The War for Turkish Independence: Establishing a Formal Foundation for Turkification

During the First World War, Mustafa Kemal reportedly memorized Namik Kemal's *Poem of the Fatherland*, a patriotic and nationalist poem that inspired Mustafa Kemal and his allies to build an independent, united Turkish state:

Wounds are medals on the brave's body;
The grave [martyrdom] is the soldier's highest rank;
The earth is the same, above and underneath;
March you brave ones, to defend the fatherland.⁴¹

Based on the assumption that Turkey was the fatherland of dozens of sects and ethnoreligious groups, this sentiment virtually required aspirations to a transcendent Turkish identity. In the years that followed World War I, Mustafa Kemal and his allies completed Turkey's formal transition from an Ottoman empire struggling to patch up regional nationalist crises to a Turkish Republic with the constitutional and legal power to enforce legitimate secularization and Turkification.

In November 1918, the Turkish air buzzed with talk of independence. The CUP derived from US President Wilson's Fourteen Points a promise that the Turkish state would retain any territories deemed overwhelmingly Turkish. In fact, Wilson's Fourteen Points explicitly declared that "the Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which [were]...under Turkish rule should be assured...an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development."⁴² The CUP moved quickly to secure contested regions,

41 Namik Kemal, "Vatan Sairi," in *The Young Atatürk*, ed. George W. Gawrych, 15.

42 Woodrow Wilson, The Fourteen Points, January 8, 1918, in *The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles D. Smith

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creating so-called societies for the defense of rights, which essentially consisted of spontaneous pockets of local resistance dedicated to Turkish nationalism.⁴³

As part of the Paris Peace Conference, the Allies had granted Greece portions of Ottoman land around western Anatolia. In 1919, Greek forces landed at Smyrna (modern-day Izmir) and, after occupying Smyrna and Ayvalik, decided to move further into Ottoman territory.⁴⁴ As 1919 drew to a close, Allies engaged in diplomacy at the Paris Peace Conference drew the Milne Line to demarcate Ottoman and Greek territory, ceding more land than previously determined to the Greeks.⁴⁵ On May 19, 1919, Mustafa Kemal arrived in Samsun to direct the nationalist irregulars who had patched together a resistance movement to counter the Greek offensive.⁴⁶ He quickly unified local resistance movements into a largescale union called the Society for the Defense of the National Rights of Anatolia and Thrace, which then held a congress at Sivas to elect Mustafa Kemal as its president.⁴⁷ With allies from his youth in the CUP and a more local Young Turk-related group called the Fatherland and Liberty joining his newly-founded Republican People's Party and his new position as president of the Society for the Defense of the National Rights of Anatolia and Thrace, Kemal appeared to be face of the Turkish independence struggle.⁴⁸ In April 1920, the greatly expanded congress met again in Ankara, where they formed the Great National Assembly, rejected the sultan-caliph's authority, formally rejected the Treaty of Sevres, and all but accepted imminent conflict with the Allies.⁴⁹ During the conflict that ensued, Mustafa Kemal's forces emphasized Turkish nationalism and Islamic character to unify Turkey's Muslim majority against its enemies.⁵⁰ In 1923, Mustafa Kemal's Grand National Assembly agreed to the Treaty of Lausanne, officially ending hostilities between the United Kingdom, Italy, France, and Turkey. Thus, the international community officially recognized the Grand National Assembly, accepted Turkish

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 120.

43 Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 147

44 Ibid, 148.

45 Ibid, 148.

46 Ibid, 149.

47 Ibid, 150.

48 Hasan Kayali, "The Young Turks and the Committee of Union and Progress," in *The Routledge Handbook of Modern Turkey*, ed. Metin Heper and Sabri Sayar (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2012), 27 and 33.

49 Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 151-152.

50 Ibid, 152.

sovereignty, and endorsed the birth of the Republic of Turkey in place of the fallen Ottoman Empire. Mustafa Kemal and his supporters could mold the new Turkish state into anything they desired, starting with the Treaty of Lausanne itself.

The Treaty of Lausanne righted many of the perceived wrongs that worried Mustafa Kemal and other Turkish nationalists. Of particular interest, it avoided explicitly mentioning both the Kurds and Armenians, creating a legal basis for the Turkification of minorities in Turkey and justifying almost ninety years of state-sponsored suppression of minorities spanning from 1923 until present day.⁵¹ Furthermore, the Treaty of Lausanne created the official foundation for Kemalist policies targeting religion in the public sphere and ethnolinguistic minorities. Article 38 stated that “all inhabitants of Turkey shall be entitled to free exercise, whether in public or private, of any creed, religion or belief, the observance of which shall not be incompatible with public order and good morals,” perhaps intentionally leaving a loophole through which Mustafa Kemal could deem public displays of religion “incompatible with public order” and thereby justify his secular reforms.⁵²

Article 41 further prepared the Turkish government for Kemalist principles by declaring that the Turkish government would grant adequate facilities and primary schools “through the medium of their own language” but would “not prevent the Turkish Government from making the teaching of the Turkish language obligatory in the said schools.”⁵³ Thus, the Turkish nationalists who helped draft the Treaty of Lausanne subtly left the door open for the Turkification of language and education across Turkey, enabling Mustafa Kemal to begin a series of educational and linguistic reforms that ultimately culminated in his predecessors’ banning of the Kurdish language in private life, broadcasting, publications, schools, and courts in 1980.⁵⁴ Overall, then, the Turkish independence movement and its corresponding Treaty of Lausanne enabled Mustafa Kemal’s two decades of Turkification and secular reform.

5. Atatürk’s Reforms: Forcing a Unitary Identity onto a Heterogenous Society

As the new Turkish Republic’s first president, Mustafa Kemal wasted no time pursuing an agenda meant to standardize Turkishness and encourage a

51 Martin, *The Treaties of Peace*, 959–1022.

52 Ibid, 971.

53 Ibid, 972.

54 Held and Cummings, *Middle East Patterns*, 615.

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cohesive Turkish nationalism rather than local nationalism. Thus, Mustafa Kemal decided to reconcile the state's heterogeneous groups and, unlike the overextended Ottomans before him, create a state built around a common identity. The programs he used to accomplish this goal—collectively known as Kemalism—completed the transition from the Ottoman Empire's heterogeneous, multi-ethnic, multi-religious society to the Turkish Republic's unitary system.

Announced on October 29, 1923—the same day that Mustafa Kemal took power—and ratified the following year, the 1924 Constitution formed a basis for Turkish fundamental law from 1924 until 1961. In it, Mustafa Kemal and the loyalist Grand National Assembly standardized linguistic, religious, and legal structures across the state. Article 2, for example, declared that “the religion of the Turkish State is Islam; the official language is Turkish; the seat of government is Angora.”⁵⁵ Furthermore, the 1924 Constitution insisted that “all Turks are equal before the law and are obliged to respect the law. All privileges of whatever description claimed by groups, classes, families, and individuals are abolished and forbidden.”⁵⁶ Rather than permitting individual communities to practice relative legal autonomy as they had under the *millet* system, Mustafa Kemal expected general conformity across all of Turkey's various groups. Legal traditions elevating Muslims above Christians, exempting Christians from military conscription, and permitting religious communities to administer themselves based on communal traditions were to be left in the past. The moving of the Turkish capital to Ankara marked this clear delineation between the Ottoman past and Mustafa Kemal's modernized future, as it broke with the Ottoman tradition of ruling from Istanbul and placed the administration in the geographic center of the country.

To ensure that upcoming generations of Turkish youth would prioritize their Turkish identity over local, ethnic, and religious identities, Mustafa Kemal's 1924 Constitution also insisted that “primary education is obligatory for all Turks and shall be gratuitous in the government schools.”⁵⁷ These schools could teach Turkish nationalism and secular concepts approved by the government instead of the local agendas and Islamic curricula taught at the community schools and madrassas that had traditionally formed the bulk of Ottoman education. In short, the 1924 Constitution—one of Mustafa Kemal and his supporters' first contributions to Turkish

55 World Statesmen, “The New Constitution of Turkey,” 89, accessed April 4, 2022, <https://www.worldstatesmen.org/Turkeyconstitution1924.pdf>.

56 Ibid, 96.

57 Ibid, 98.

history—explicitly declared the regime’s intention to create a new, common identity that could unite all of Turkey and overcome factional and sectarian differences. After all, “The name Turk, as a political term, shall be understood to include all citizens of the Turkish Republic, without distinction of, or reference to, race or religion. Every child born in Turkey.... is a Turk.”⁵⁸

Shortly after the 1924 Constitution, which had declared Islam the Turkish state’s national official religion, Mustafa Kemal began his war on Islam and religion in the public sphere. In 1925, Mustafa Kemal outlined his vision for the infant Turkish Republic, stating that:

[He had] no religion, and at times [he wished] all religions at the bottom of the sea. He is a weak ruler who needs religion to uphold his government... Let them worship as they will; every man can follow his own conscience, provided it does not interfere with sane reason or bid him against the liberty of his fellow men... The Turkish republic cannot be a country of sheiks, dervishes, and disciples.⁵⁹

In his mind, religion was a personal matter and should remain separate from government, law, and culture. Consequently, Mustafa Kemal initiated an aggressive campaign to remove religion from the public sphere and establish an unyieldingly secular Turkish society. In a 1925 speech, Mustafa Kemal vigorously denounced traditional Islamic clothing such as fezzes and hijabs, encouraging Turks to replace such garb with modern (read “Western”) apparel. Specifically, he humiliated a man wearing a turban, fez, and smock, asking whether “a civilized man [would] put on this preposterous garb and go out to hold himself up to universal ridicule.”⁶⁰ Consequently, in 1926, Mustafa Kemal passed laws banning fezzes.

In the same speech, Mustafa Kemal described hijabs—a sacred veil that he was certainly very familiar with—as “a piece of cloth or a towel or something” that women put “over their heads to hide their faces” as they “turn their backs or huddle themselves on the ground when a man passes by,” insinuating that the hijab was a sign of the savage oppression of women within

58 Ibid, 98.

59 Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Quote to Author Grace Ellison, 1926-1927, in “Atatürk Triumphed Over Religion,” ed. James A. Haught, *Free Inquiry* 37, no. 6 (October/November 2017), <https://secularhumanism.org/2017/09/cont-atatuumlrk-triumphed-over-religion/>.

60 Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Regional Tour Speech, August 1925, in *The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 157.

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Islam.⁶¹ In his mind, such “barbarous” clothing had no place in Turkish culture, as “it is a spectacle that makes the nation an object of ridicule.”⁶²

In yet another sweeping set of reforms, Mustafa Kemal and the Grand National Assembly abolished the caliphate and began closing madrasas across Turkey in 1924.⁶³ Soon after, Turkish authorities officially closed Sufi orders, effectively banning the combination of Islamic mysticism and folk religion that had previously been an important cornerstone of many Ottoman communities.⁶⁴ To add insult to injury for the Ulama, Turkish authorities also changed the national weekly rest day from Friday to Sunday, thereby rejecting the importance and necessity of public accessibility to Friday prayer. In another substantial break from Islamic tradition, Mustafa Kemal ordered imams to recite the Quran, give the call to prayer, and deliver their sermons in Turkish rather than the holy language of Arabic, thereby inserting Turkishness into the very essence of Islam.⁶⁵ In perhaps his most striking attack on Ottoman tradition and systemic Islamic influence, Mustafa Kemal replaced the Islamic legal system based on Shariah with a Swiss civil code, Italian legal code, and German commercial code, further distancing the new Turkish identity from any one distinct heritage—Islamic or otherwise.⁶⁶

To cap off his crusade against religion in public spaces, Mustafa Kemal pushed for a 1928 constitutional amendment that removed Islam as the state religion and replaced it with an overtly Turkish nationalism based on Kemalist principles. As if to permanently enshrine this commitment to secularism and Turkish nationalism in place of public religion, Turkey’s 1982 Constitution declared that “The Republic of Turkey is a democratic, secular, and social state...loyal to the nationalism of Atatürk.”⁶⁷

Even outside of the Islamist-secular divide, Mustafa Kemal and his allies decisively eliminated local identities. In 1926, for example, Mustafa Kemal pushed for the standardization of outward expressions of Turkish identity. Not only would Turks dress in a homogenous way, but they would all have to learn to read a new script, as Mustafa Kemal decided to replace the

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid.

63 Eder, “Turkey,” 697.

64 Ibid, 698.

65 Umut Azak, *Islam and Secularism in Turkey: Kemalism, Religion and The Nation State* (London: IB Tauris, 2010), 54–55.

66 Eder, “Turkey,” 698.

67 Grand National Assembly of Turkey, “Constitution of The Republic of Turkey,” 11, accessed April 11, 2022, https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf.

traditional Arabic script used in the Ottoman Empire with a Latin script. According to Mustafa Kemal, it was each Turk's "patriotic and national duty" to learn this new script, which would allow Turkey to "show with its script and its mind that its place [was] in the civilized world."⁶⁸ Along with this new script, Turkish nationalists further Turkified their language by systematically removing Arabic and Persian words from the Turkish lexicon.⁶⁹ Additionally, Kemalist reforms saw Kurdish placenames changed to Turkish to signify a united populous under one culture and language.⁷⁰ Finally, Mustafa Kemal passed the Surname Law of 1934, standardizing naming conventions for Turkish citizens and downplaying ethnic and religious differences in names by enforcing the registration and adoption of Turkish surnames.⁷¹ For his part, Mustafa Kemal received the surname "Atatürk," meaning "father of the Turks" that same year.⁷²

In his endeavor to unify Turkey, Mustafa Kemal left no stone unturned and no identity unaltered. Even gender-based divides could threaten Turkism, so Mustafa Kemal swiftly moved for full gender equality. Most importantly, a 1934 amendment to the Turkish constitution gave women universal suffrage and the right to be elected to public office.⁷³ When Mustafa Kemal died in 1938, he had essentially nationalized culture by separating Turkish culture and history from Muslim culture and history and enforcing equality of sexes, religions, and ethnicities, paving the way for a Turkish identity that could override the regional identities that had fragmented the Ottoman Empire in its twilight years.⁷⁴

68 Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Regional Tour Speech, August 1925, in *The Modern Middle East and North Africa: A History in Documents*, ed. Julia Clancy-Smith and Charles D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 158.

69 Azak, *Islam and Secularism in Turkey*, 54.

70 Human Rights Watch, "Restrictions on the Use of the Kurdish Language," accessed April 5, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/turkey/turkey993-08.htm>.

71 Meltem Turkoz, "Surname Narratives and the State-Society Boundary: Memories of Turkey's Family Name Law of 1934," *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 6 (November 2007): 893.

72 Ramazan Hakki Oztan, "Nationalism in Function," in *War & Collapse: World War I and The Ottoman State*, ed. M. Hakan Yavuz and Feroz Ahmad (Salt Lake City, UT: The University of Utah Press, 2016), 164.

73 Mustafa Kocak and Fuat Andic, "Governance and The Turkish Constitutions: Past and Future," 6, accessed April 11, 2022, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1112833.

74 Eder, "Turkey," 698.

6. Modern Implications: A Legacy of Group Conflict

Not everyone in Turkish society supported such decisive movements towards a consolidated Turkish identity. Outside of the largely secular bureaucratic and elite class, Turkish citizens generally belonged to a political periphery defined by localism, religious heterodoxy, and regionalism.⁷⁵ Mustafa Kemal's Turkey—like the Ottoman Empire before it—attempted to force top-down modernization onto a heterogeneous society often divided into more homogenous communities.⁷⁶ By sloppily concealing sectarian fractionalization behind radical Turkification efforts, Mustafa Kemal failed to solve the Turkish state's identity crisis. In fact, Mustafa Kemal's forcing of an inauthentic identity onto Turkey's non-elite population exacerbated schisms that have boiled over in modern times. Specifically, Mustafa Kemal left a legacy of group conflict between the government and ethnolinguistic minorities—especially the Kurds—and between Islamists and secularists.

While official Turkish censuses diminish ethnolinguistic differences by grouping small minorities like Turkmans, Yoruk, and Tatars as Turks, Turkish minorities remain fiercely proud of their distinct heritage and culture.⁷⁷ Turkey's most influential and sizable minority, the Kurds, have had particularly bitter relations with Turkish authorities in recent years. In 1984, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) rebelled against the Turkish government in southeastern Anatolia. During the following fifteen years of conflict and insurgency, approximately thirty thousand government forces, rebels, and civilians died.⁷⁸ In response, the Turkish government resorted to overtly Kemalist strategies to undermine Kurdish identity, including banning the usage of the Kurdish language in broadcasting, publications, schools, and courts.⁷⁹ After decades of fighting for recognition and legal rights, the Kurds won a minor victory when, in 2008, a state-run TV channel began broadcasting in Farsi, Arabic, and Kurdish.⁸⁰ The following year, Kurdish placenames were restored to Kurdish-majority areas and Turkish authorities legalized usage of the Kurdish language in certain situations, including within political campaigns.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Colbert C. Held and John Thomas Cummings, *Middle East Patterns: Places, Peoples, and Politics*, 6th edition, (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2018), 614.

⁷⁸ Held and Cummings, *Middle East Patterns*, 614–615.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 615.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

Almost immediately, however, Kemalist tendencies regained prominence in Turkish politics, as the country's constitutional court outlawed the leading Kurdish political party and police arrested the mayors of eight Kurdish towns.⁸² After the 2016 coup attempt, Turkish authorities arrested Kurdish presidential candidate Selahattin Demirtas, who had vocally opposed Erdoğan and his authoritarian tendencies.⁸³ Two years later, the Turkish government replaced 90 of the 102 legally-elected mayors loyal to the pro-Kurdish HDP with hand-picked loyalists and arrested pro-Kurdish activists and journalists.⁸⁴ Even when the PKK rebellion formally requested a ceasefire in 2013, however, Turkish nationalists opposed the measure, claiming that if Erdoğan accommodated or negotiated with Kurdish militants, he would simultaneously betray the Turkish Republic's founding Kemalist principles.⁸⁵ Consequently, numerous rebel groups have recently turned to anti-Turkish nationalism, necessitating a brutal enforcement of Turkishness by state authorities.⁸⁶ Thus, Mustafa Kemal's repression of ethnolinguistic minorities in hopes of forging a united Turkish identity outlives him, encouraging conflict and hatred between the Turkish government and separatist and minority movements seeking legal recognition and status.

With between twelve and fourteen million Kurds living in Turkey, the Kurdish movement has plenty of support and resources to mount a political and militaristic campaign against the Turkish government, which often refuses to recognize the very existence of a Kurdish community separate from the broader Turkish community.⁸⁷ In fact, the 1923 Lausanne Treaty, which replaced the Treaty of Sevres as Turkey's official conclusion to World War I, only recognized non-Muslim minorities, including Armenians, Jews, and Greeks.⁸⁸ The Treaty of Sevres had originally sought to create an independent Kurdish state, suggesting that a general awareness of the clear divisions between Turkishness and Kurdishness existed as far back as 1920.⁸⁹ Still, Mustafa Kemal and his successors insisted upon standardizing an artificial Turkish identity that repressed Kurdish and general minority identities. Consequently, modern Turkey has a serious schism constantly threatening its political integrity, as around 20% of its population resolutely rejects Turkification and insists on achieving Kurdish autonomy.

82 Ibid.

83 Eder, "Turkey," 704.

84 Ibid, 704-705.

85 Held and Cummings, *Middle East Patterns*, 612.

86 Ibid, 614.

87 Held and Cummings, *Middle East Patterns*, 614.

88 Eder, "Turkey," 703.

89 Ibid.

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In addition to ethnolinguistic conflicts, Turkey suffers from political and cultural tensions between secularists and Islamists. Beginning with the *Tanzimat* reforms, which granted the Ottoman Empire's non-Muslim and Muslim subjects legal and civil equality, many Islamists and devout Ottoman Muslims grew frustrated with Ottoman leadership, which had long claimed to be the protector of Islam and the leader of the Sunni Islamic world.⁹⁰ In fact, the Ottoman Empire had long been the world's preeminent Islamic power, with the newspaper *La Turquie* even venturing that "Islam is not only a religion, it is a nationality."⁹¹ As Mustafa Kemal began his cycle of reforms, the army, judiciary, business community, mainstream press, and educated elite class all eagerly adopted secularism.⁹² The bulk of the Ottoman working class and poor, however, were Muslims who felt marginalized and disempowered. In recent years, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) has harnessed popular Islamist sentiment and has run on a platform criticizing the secular state, which has countered by arguing that democracy cannot exist without secularism, as Islamists cannot possibly guarantee universal equal rights to all Turks regardless of identity.⁹³ Turkish secularists also point to Islamist experimentation in social engineering—including state regulation of public displays of affection, family planning, and alcohol consumption—as signs of authoritarian tendencies. Ironically, such policies mirror similar policies created by Mustafa Kemal and his secularist allies and predecessors, including the regulation of clothing, familial names, and place name—issues that the AKP and other Islamists have not been shy about addressing.⁹⁴

Since 1960, for example, the Turkish government has both banned and encouraged headscarves. In 1997, the Turkish army took a decisively Kemalist step towards preserving a public image of secular homogeneity by banning headscarves for women fulfilling their duties in state employment and elected posts in parliament, as well as for women attending university.⁹⁵ In 2007, Islamist AKP candidate Gül Abdallah overcame a counter-campaign from the secular Turkish army and won the state's presidency. In 2013, Abdallah lifted the headscarf ban for most public officials, and by 2017 female

90 Hakan Ozoglu, *From Caliphate to Secular State: Power Struggle in the Early Turkish Republic* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2011), 15.

91 James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*, 5th edition (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2020), 154.

92 Eder, "Turkey," 700.

93 Ibid.

94 Ibid.

95 Ibid, 701.

judges, police, soldiers, and prosecutors could all wear headscarves, signifying a major cultural victory for Turkish Islamists.⁹⁶

Other issues that divide Turkey's Islamists and secularists include educational reform and corruption charges. The two factions regularly swap education packages changing the duration and structure of public education, often either restoring religious schools (*imam hatips*) or forcing religious schools into a strictly peripheral and vocational role.⁹⁷ Deeper still, Turkey's warring Islamists and secularists use brutal crackdowns to find and punish corruption in each other's movements. Over the last twenty years, for example, the AKP has asserted that an alliance between a firmly entrenched Kemalist bureaucracy, secular judiciary, and secular military prevented the party from pursuing its Islamist agenda—even while officially holding the state's presidency.⁹⁸ Perhaps unsurprisingly, the AKP spent the first decade of the 21st century creating an alliance with the controversial Gülenist Islamist movement and hunting down supporters of this Kemalist secret network, called *Ergenekon*. In 2010, the AKP-run government arrested more than three hundred members of the Turkish military after discovering an alleged coup plot.⁹⁹ Four years later, secularists managed to retry two hundred and thirty of those servicemembers, overturning most of the sentences and infuriating Islamists, who saw the ordeal as further proof of a corrupt Kemalist establishment embedded deeply into Turkish society.¹⁰⁰

In short, Mustafa Kemal's harsh repression of Islamist sentiments and identities in the 1920s and 1930s created a bitterness and anger that continues to shape Turkish politics and culture. Since 1984, Islam has seen periodic resurgences in Turkish society, with unprecedented growth in *imam-hatip* schools, religious curriculums at all levels of public schooling, Islamic publications and general presence in both private and state media, and explicit participation of government officials in religious ceremonies.¹⁰¹ As Kemalist elites continue to push for a unitary Turkish identity based on modernization and secularization, Islamism has become the political left's voice of the disenfranchised, forgotten, and oppressed.¹⁰² While such a resentful rivalry might have emerged in Turkey—as it has in virtually every other Middle Eastern country—regardless of Mustafa Kemal's crusade

96 Eder, "Turkey," 701.

97 Ibid.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid, 702.

100 Ibid, 702.

101 Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 289.

102 Ibid.

against religion in the public sphere, his wave of reforms certainly seems to have alienated entire classes, cultures, and religious groups, optimizing conditions for the political and cultural turmoil that currently engulfs Turkish society.

7. Conclusion

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk invented neither Turkish nationalism nor secularism. In fact, much of his so-called Kemalist policies originated in Ottoman efforts to unify the populous throughout the 19th century. Likewise, Ottoman involvement in the First World War did not explicitly revolve around Turkish nationalism. Ultimately, however, the war enabled Atatürk's rise to power and the brutal Turkification process that ensued. Forced secularization and Turkish nationalism inherently repressed Islam and local nationalism in Turkish politics and culture, feeding a social powder keg that has exploded numerous times during Kurdish movements for independence and Islamist struggles to regain power. Accordingly, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk catalyzed the sectarianism and factionalism that constantly threaten public stability in modern Turkey.

Thus, Mustafa Kemal's legacy leaves Turkish citizens and onlookers alike wondering whether any Turk truly fits the mold Mustafa Kemal envisioned—a model nationalist who, according to the student oath recited daily by Turkish students from 1933 until 2013, claims:

I am a Turk, honest and hardworking. My principle is to protect the younger, to respect the elder, to love my homeland and my nation more than myself. My ideal is to rise, to progress. O Great Atatürk! On the path that you have paved, I swear to walk incessantly toward the aims that you have set. My existence shall be dedicated to the Turkish existence. How happy is the one who says, I am a Turk!¹⁰³

103 Steven A. Cook, "How Happy is the One Who Says, I Am a Turk!" Foreign Policy, last modified March 28, 2016, accessed April 11, 2022, <https://foreign-policy.com/2016/03/28/how-happy-is-the-one-who-says-i-am-a-turk/>.



Democratic Deficit and Oil Dependency's Consequences on The Middle East

Zachariah Qureshi

Many consider the Fertile Crescent the cradle of civilization because many of the first cities and city-states emerged there during the Neolithic Revolution. Today, however, the societies and states that find their home in the historical Fertile Crescent and the rest of the Middle East face a consistent yet diverse set of problems which challenge further civil development. Why is this the case? Observers both from inside and outside the region have sought to explain and measure the impact of a plethora of challenges, some better than others. Among the many issues the Middle East faces, democratic deficit and oil form the most extensive and crucial because of the dire and direct threats they pose to stability and security.

Democratic deficit is an urgent subject because it has drastic impacts on the Middle East's political stability and regional security. According to its Global Freedom Scores list, Freedom House classifies Morocco, Mauritania, Kuwait, and Lebanon the only "partly free" countries in the MENA region with Israel and Tunisia as the only "free" (2021). Given recent events, Tunisia may soon lose its "free" classification in the next Freedom House Freedom in the World report, meaning the organization will no longer consider any Arab country in its report fully "free" (Masoud and Hamid, 2021). Many scholars had always thought the authoritarian regimes of the Middle East to be vessels of political and economic stability regardless of whatever repressive tactics they employ and preferred them above pursuits for democracy within the region. However, the scholars' failure to predict the movements and uprisings during the Arab Spring proved the assumptions of authoritarian stability false (Gause 2011). Academics overlooked

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that less-institutionalized security forces' loyalties aligned with ruling families or parties, prompting more violent crackdowns on protests and popular uprisings. Also, Arab authoritarian regimes' lack of a mandate from their constituencies enabled them to further marginalize widespread dissent against unpopular policies. Ben Ali and Mubarak's embracing economic liberalization and modernization only shifted wealth from the public sector to private entities (often closely associated with the families of the presidents). Such policies only further exacerbated inequality in Tunisia and Egypt leading to demonstrations against the then-standing regimes (Gause 2011). Even the few who stood to gain from such government policies still rose in opposition because they valued political freedom above conditions for certain financial opportunism. For example, Wael Ghonim, a bilingual, American University of Cairo-educated Google executive, risked everything he had creating the "We are all Khaled Said" Facebook page which mobilized Egyptians against the government after Egyptian police beat a man to death in their custody.

When constituencies cannot express their dissatisfaction with government policies in the form of peaceful protests and elections that hold officials accountable for their actions, dissent often takes the form of violence, and, in the most extreme of cases, this can mean total civil war. In Syria, what began as a nationwide uprising to oust President Bashar al-Assad led to an ongoing eleven-year-old conflict resulting in over 606,000 killed, 13.5 million people forcibly displaced (about half of them internally and the other half abroad), and nearly 11.1 million people in need of humanitarian aid with 80% of the population living in poverty (Reid 2021). A colossal influx of asylum seekers in neighboring Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey has also upset local economies and strained governments' capabilities in providing basic services, not to mention the transformation of demographics in Greece and the rest of Europe where refugees seek asylum. An ongoing civil war in Yemen since 2013 has produced what the United Nations labeled "the world's worst humanitarian crisis" (World Food Programme 2021). With authoritarian regimes having regional and international impacts such as these, democratic deficit remains one of the most relevant pestilences plaguing the Middle East.

Regime change does not happen overnight. The process is difficult and can take years to achieve its intended result. However, both Middle Eastern regimes and foreign entities can undertake certain actions to bring about a more democratic Middle East. A theory states that strong, natural civil society acts as a check to coercive authority used by a state (Samuels 2012). Therefore, if the international community established more non-governmental organizations in the Middle Eastern countries or provided aid to already-existing social movements, then a stronger, higher-quality

civil society could become the vessel for widespread democratic reform. However, a truly strong civil society must develop organically without state intervention. So long as corporatist entities like the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) exist, then a state can always restrict potential opposition through a complex legal code and messy bureaucracy thereby infiltrating civil society and compromising its intended purpose (Wiktorowicz 2000). Under such circumstances, civil society fails to become strong enough to effect prolific pushes towards democracy. Therefore, real civil society flourishes in bringing about democratic transformation when a state cannot disrupt its activities by means of regressive laws or meddling executive agencies.

Another paramount concern that echoes direct instability throughout the Middle East is oil. Essentially, more populous, resource-poor countries (e.g., Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria) export labor to less populous, resource-rich countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait) to work in the oil processing facilities, connecting the entire regional economy with a single commodity. While the first and second oil shocks brought growth to the region, a 1986 crash marked the end of an oil boom era in which oil-exporting states saw their revenues decline by nearly 400%. This cut the budget of not only many rentier states' provision of services and private investments but public expenditure in labor-exporting countries that depended on foreign aid from oil-exporting countries as well (Kuran 2004).

The Middle East's regional economy's dependence on oil represents a catastrophic challenge to progress above others because it has inhibited development on a regional level and continues to do so. Kuran also argues that focus on immediate returns and profits from developing the oil sector of the Middle East economy has let the region suffer from "Dutch Disease" in that as one sector of the economy flourished, others became neglected and underdeveloped (2004). Of course, this means in the case of a world-wide event that disrupts regional oil production, like the First Gulf War, much of the labor force has few skills in any other sector. For example, 52% of the workers who returned home to their labor-exporting motherlands after Iraq invaded Kuwait worked in the agricultural sector prior to their tenure in oil, but only 4% of these workers returned to farming when they came home, perpetuating the labor deficit in that sector (Kuran 2004). Sectors that oil revenues often fund, like construction, also follow the same boom-bust cycle as oil, meaning when the flow of oil begins to slow, production in those industries slow as well.

The Middle East can rid itself of its dependence on oil by promoting regional economic diversification. A certain theory suggests that increased public expenditure leads to increased non-oil economic growth (El-Radhi 2018). Essentially, non-oil sectors of the economy do not fare well without

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the support of public funds. It is only when non-oil sectors of the economy become secure enough that they draw private investment both locally and from abroad. If the Gulf countries can dedicate public expenditure to developing non-oil sectors of the economy just enough to attract lasting private investment, only then can they free themselves of their heavy dependence on oil. Likewise, the boom-bust cycle of the petroleum market will cease to wreak havoc on oil-exporting countries and their labor-exporting counterparts because a steady demand for workers will remain in other sectors of the economy.

Democratic deficit and oil dependency pose the most riveting and detrimental threats to the Middle East's development and stability because the instances of these problems are not limited to the places where they happen but are felt throughout and often even beyond the region. It requires little imagination to understand why bad governance and a monolithic economy can spell a recipe for disaster. Although civilizations may rise and fall, each accompanied with its own unique set of adversities, if policymakers and activists can work together to address these issues, then perhaps the Middle East can live up to its reputation as the cradle of civilization once again.

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Explaining Islamist Elections

Lydia Shaw

What accounts for the success of Islamist movements in the Middle East? A wide definition of Islamist movements includes everything from civil society organizations to violent non-state actors. For the purpose of explaining their success in elections, this paper limits Islamist movements to political parties with official recognition which claim Islam as a central pillar of their platform. This definition excludes organizations like the Islamic State and Al-Qaeda who, because of their position outside of the state, behave in different ways than state actors. Despite the autocratic and tightly controlled regimes in the Middle East, Islamist parties became significant power contenders in several states within the last decade. Especially after popular uprisings in wake of the Arab Spring, Islamists managed to win support and claim victories in democratic elections. Yet after a decade, every Islamist party that came to power fell out of its governing coalition. What important factors contributed the most to both the rise and fall of Islamist parties? Reputation, built through organizational capacity, ideological hegemony, and social welfare provision, best explains Islamist parties' electoral success.

Melani Cammett and Pauline Jones Luong, among others, first raised this issue of reputation as the leading factor of Islamists' success in elections (2014). They rejected other hypotheses which assert that Islamist parties find their support through economic dissatisfaction, political motivations, or finding alternatives to rent-seeking (Tessler 1997, Rohac 2012). Yet, Islamists function mainly as an identity party, not a platform party (Mecham 2017). Therefore, with regards to voter preferences and behavior, platform

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and policy issues do little to explain Islamists' popularity and support in contrast to the perception of Islamist identity.

First, Islamists enjoy a reputation founded on their proven organizational capacity. Long before many Middle Eastern states allowed for opposition political parties, Islamic centers already organized both people and movements. Ennahda, the Islamist party in Tunisia, started as a banned underground organization in the 1970s. Under decades of authoritarianism, the movement grew to include tens of thousands of supporters. Tunisians who opposed the Bourguiba regime and felt excluded from the political system frequently gathered together in mosques as the center of community life. Discussions in these mosques often turned political, with a majority of participants speaking out against the regime. They united in one movement, and linked with other mosques. By 1989, local polling indicated that Ennahda had up to 30% of popular support in urban areas. Thus, when Tunisia held its first free and fair elections in October 2011, Ennahda already had a widespread and politically mobilized voter base ready to lead it to victory (Ghannouchi 2016). Most other parties in Tunisia, including the main opposition party, Congress for the Republic, did not enjoy the same networks and pre-election organization. Many Muslim countries experienced the same procedure of Islamist organization. Mosques served as community centers where the politically active constituency could gather together, free of state supervision. In countries with weak civil society and sharp class divides, the organizational ability of Islamist parties builds their candidates' reputations as capable leaders. Due to their mosque and madrasa networks, Islamists can better disseminate information, aid, and education than other parties that do not enjoy a natural ground presence.

Secondly, Islamists have a comparative advantage in ideological hegemony which provides them a reputational electoral advantage. Islamist parties' ideological hegemony comes from two places: a lack of other legitimate opposition parties and a consolidated platform. After the democratic opening from the Arab Spring, many political parties entered the political sphere. In Egypt, more than 80 parties formed in the period following the January 2011 revolution; among these parties, Islamist parties won over 71% of the vote. In contrast to other opposition parties, Egyptian Islamist parties, most notably the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party and the Salafi Nour Party, clearly contested Hosni Mubarak's regime and its remnants. The Freedom and Justice Party joined in the people's grievances about the lack of political freedom and civil liberties, high unemployment, inflation, and corruption. The party's platform rejected the status quo of Egypt's political situation. Because of this, it managed to garner support from other camps of Arab Spring protesters who otherwise did not identify as Islamist as many of the other secular or leftist parties, in some aspects, expressed sympathies for the former regime. In addition to their position as the most

legitimate opposition parties, in contrast to their secular competitors, Islamists also distinguished themselves by their platform. In their efforts to govern society according to Islamic law and norms, Islamist parties assume many of the positive characteristics associated with Islam including honesty, fairness, incorruptibility, and pure and benevolent intentions (Cammett and Luong 2014). While campaigning for the 2011 elections, the Justice and Development Party (PJD) in Morocco stressed issues regarding unemployment, anti-corruption, and raising the minimum wage. All of their primary issues appealed to a broad base. They also took on more Islam-centric issues such as conservative family law and opposing usury, which won them support among the religious. Especially after years of corruption, Islamists' ideologically pure and seemingly incorruptible reputation won them broad support.

Lastly, Islamists have a reputation of providing social welfare more competently than incumbents or other opposition. Islamist parties enjoy support from both cadres and organized religion, so they have a source of income independent of the state. This reduces the likelihood of corruption and increases available resources. Especially combined with their local organizational networks for distribution and their perceived pure intentions, Islamists' ability to provide social welfare services appeals to a broad voter base. The Islamist party in Bangladesh, Jamaat el-Islami (JI), strategically followed this pattern to achieve electoral victory. The JI organized itself through a network of mosques and provided rural people with access to schools, simple civil services, and Islam-centric financial aid. Since much of the Bangladeshi population resides in rural, economically underdeveloped regions with high rates of illiteracy, the schools and services established by the JI have built a robust support base. A ranking official within the JI said that it "enjoys the reputation of being a clean, ideologically firm, and corruption-free party." He continued, "[the] JI is able to attract a wide section of support through a host of local networks and social welfare programs. Calculatedly, [the] JI knows – and exploits the fact – that the goodwill and popularity it generates through various welfare activities in the community will transform into political support and electoral gains" (Datta 2003). Additionally, the JI has independent sources of income which allow it to provide social services without monetary support from the government. This independent funding is crucial in appearing uncorrupt. After years of grassroots growth based on establishing Islamic schools and providing other social services, the JI began to win support outside of their identity group. The JI's ability to positively impact localities contributed to their electoral successes starting in the 1990s.

Cammett argues that these three mechanisms directly increase support among certain segments of the population that share an Islamist identity.

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However, the larger effect of organizational capacity, social welfare provision, and ideological hegemony results in Islamists' reputation for good governance which then wins Islamist parties broader support. These three mechanisms create a positive feedback loop, where "the provision of social services helps to foster a positive reputation, which in turn boosts perceptions of the quality of services offered by Islamist organizations" (Cammett and Luong 2014). If this feedback loop were broken, then the Islamist advantage would dissipate.

In the last year, the Middle East witnessed sharp changes in the prevalence of power of Islamist movements due to shattered reputations that eliminated their electoral advantage. Islamist parties used to have majority control over the governments in Morocco and Tunisia. Now, both the PJD and Ennahda face disastrous political marginalization in their governments. Their rise to power relied upon a reputation built through the three previously mentioned mechanisms. These same mechanisms also explain their decline. For example, the PJD came to power through an electoral advantage based on its reputation. It proved its organizational capacity through the al-Misbah caravan which consisted of a "series of town-hall-style meetings held in villages and cities to communicate directly with citizens" (Masbah 2013). The PJD also presented ideological hegemony through its anti-corruption, religious-principled platform and made believable commitments for the provision of social welfare.

Yet after a decade in power, the PJD shattered its reputation through each of these same mechanisms. When the PJD entered elections in 2011, it agreed to give up its biggest mobilizing space, the mosque, and abide by laws that forbade parties from campaigning in places of worship (Spiegel 2015). As a result, the PJD lost much of its organizational capacity. Additionally, the PJD sacrificed its ideological hegemony for moderation. For example, Moroccan Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in 2015, despite the latter's reputation as a symbol of the political repression of Islamists (Storm 2018). The PJD also lost its position as the clearest opposition party. Many parties, such as the Istiqlal Party and Socialist Union of Popular Forces, became clear opposition parties without an Islamist identity. In turn, these parties drew away a portion of the PJD's voter base that wanted change in Morocco, but not Islamism. Even the party endorsed by the king, the Authenticity and Modernity Party, ran on a monarchy-moderating platform, offering a mild opposition to the old regime. Lastly, the PJD failed to deliver on promised social welfare, including an economic growth rate of 7% per year, a 25% increase in the minimum wage, and overall improvements to the education system (Writer 2013, Achy 2011). The PJD also lost its independent funding when it agreed to operate as a political party. Independent funding provided assurance of non-corruptibility as they would be able to function without financial

support from the monarchy. In the end, the PJD ruined its reputation and lost its electoral advantage, holding on to a mere 13 seats in the Moroccan House of Representatives in 2021 from a 125-seat plurality previously won in 2016.

The significance of this argument comes in predicting the future success of Islamist parties. The international reputation of Islamists suffered significantly, and the most recent rounds of elections in countries like Morocco and Tunisia show it. Both the PJD and Ennahda failed to keep their promises and surrendered ground that otherwise boosted their prestige. This damaged reputation will surely impede the future political advances of these parties' counterparts in other countries. To make any kind of electoral comeback, Islamist parties must first revive their character among their electorate. Unfortunately, most Middle Eastern countries systematically bar Islamist parties from meaningfully participating in governance. Were Islamists to restore their honor in the political game, such a happening must coincide with the improbability of another democratic opening that allows for free and fair competitive elections like that of the Arab Spring.

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ما هو مستقبل التجارة الإلكترونية في العالم العربي؟

James Vogel



يقول الكثير من المتخصصين في إدارة الأعمال في وقتنا الراهن إن مستقبل التجارة سيبقى على الإنترنت، وبعد تضاعف الإمكانيات للتعاملات الإلكترونية في البلدان المتقدمة في السنوات الأخيرة دليلاً لذلك. مع هذا، فهل تنتشر التجارة الإلكترونية في العالم العربي إلى الحد نفسه الذي يشهده الغرب؟

قبل أن نتبحر في كل الإمكانيات والحواجز التي تواجهها التجارة الإلكترونية في المنطقة العربية، دعوني أروي لكم قصة. في يوم من الأيام، كنت أفق على حافة طريق ترابي في مدينة مكناس الواقعة في قلب المملكة المغربية. كان الظهر حاراً وكنت عطشاً ورغبت بأن اهرب من القيط وأشرب كأساً كبيرة من الماء البارد في الظل. على الرغم من ذلك، بقيت في هذا المكان غير المريح – لمدة نصف ساعة تقريباً – حيث أنني كنت أنتظر عامل توصيل البيتزا التي كنا قد طلبناها أنا وأصدقائي قبل أكثر من ساعة. قررنا أن نطلب البيتزا من خلال تطبيق مشهور في المغرب يسمى جوفو (Glovo) لتوصيل الأكل من المطاعم إلى المنازل إذ إننا كنا بعيدين عن المطعم. وامتد انتظاري عامل التوصيل هذا لفترة لم تبد لي طويلة بصورة مزعجة لأنني توقعت أنه لم يعرف الطريق إلى المكان الذي كنا ننتظره فيه.

تعتبر تطبيقات الهاتف المحمول المتخصصة بتوصيل منتجات غذائية من المطاعم إلى البيوت جزءاً من ظاهرة كبرى تتسم باستخدام مواقع وتطبيقات الكترونية لتسهيل البيع والشراء. ويستعمل خبراء اقتصاديون مصطلح "التجارة الإلكترونية" بصفة عامة لتعريف جميع التبادلات التي تجري في الإنترنت والأجهزة المحمولة، وذلك في مقابل التجارة التقليدية في المحلات والمطاعم والشوارع.

للتجارة الإلكترونية تاريخ طويل حيث يعود إنشاؤها إلى أواخر السبعينات من القرن الماضي، عندما اخترع رائد الأعمال البريطاني مايكل ألدرتش نظاماً

للتسوق عن بعد من خلال حاسوب موصول بتلفازه. بعد ذلك، ظهرت أنظمة أخرى خلال الثمانينات، وفي أعقاب اختراع الشبكة العنكبوتية العالمية (world wide web) في ١٩٩١، تشكلت فرص هائلة للتجارة الإلكترونية وازداد عدد مواقع التسوق الرقمي ازدياداً لافتاً، وقد ظهرت وفي السنوات الأخيرة منصات ضخمة للتجارة الإلكترونية بينها أمازون وإيباي ما انعكس على أمن التبادلات الإلكترونية، وأدى ذلك إلى ازدياد ثقة الزبائن فيها.

في ظل تفشي وباء كوفيد في فبراير/شباط ٢٠٢٠ وفرض قيود شديدة من أجل الحد من انتشاره، أخذ اناس كثيرون في البلدان المتقدمة يلجؤون إلى مواقع إلكترونية لكي يتواصلوا ويتسوقوا. وبدأت هذه المواقع تشكل بديلاً مثالياً لتبادلات بشكل شخصي حيث إنه لا بد من أن يتجنب المستهلكون مراكز التسوق الأكثر ازدحاماً وأن يحاولوا دعم المطاعم والشركات المحلية في مجتمعاتهم. ومع أن موجات كثيرة من الوباء قد انتهت ويستطيع المتسوقون العودة إلى منافذ التجارة، فما زال الكثير منهم يستعملون منصات رقمية لشراء منتجاتهم وهم يجلسون مرتاحين في منازلهم.

وبغض النظر عن كل هذه التطورات في بلدان الغرب أثناء العقود السابقة وخصوصاً السنتين الماضيتين، فلننتفت إلى الوضع الحالي في الدول العربية. ونسأل كيف يشارك المستهلكون في هذه البلدان في التجارة الإلكترونية، وما هو مستقبلها على المدى الطويل؟ وماذا تقول الإحصاءات؟ أولاً، يشير تقرير أصدرته شركة "باي فورت (Payfort)" في دبي إلى أن قيمة التجارة الإلكترونية في المنطقة العربية في عام ٢٠١٤ تقارب ١٤ مليار دولار. ويضيف التقرير أن منطقة الشرق الأوسط كانت تعتبر المنطقة الأكثر ازدهاراً في مجال التجارة الإلكترونية وكان ينمو هذا القطاع بنسبة ٤٥٪، مقارنة بنسبة ٣٥٪ في آسيا و ٢٠٪ فقط في أوروبا. ومع ذلك، تأتي هذه الأرقام قبل بداية الوباء الذي غير كل شيء، خصوصاً في عالم التجارة. لحسن الحظ، تسلط دراسة من السنة الماضية الضوء على تكيفات المنطقة مع كوفيد موضحة أنه في عام ٢٠٢٠، كان أكبر قطاع للسوق في الشرق الأوسط قطاع التجارة الإلكترونية من حيث عدد الصفقات. وتفيد الدراسة أيضاً أن المستهلكين، كما حدث في بقية العالم، في الدول العربية يتدفقون إلى المواقع الإلكترونية متسوقين بقدر كبير بسبب القيود اللبانية التي فرضتها الحكومات، وإغلاق معظم المحلات التقليدية. كما وتضيف دراسة أخرى أن الشبان العرب يشكلون نسبة

هائلة من المتسوقين الإلكترونيين، وأن ٨٠٪ منهم يتسوقون عادة في الإنترنت. ونهاية يمكننا القول أن هذا الجيل سيصبح بالطبع هذا الجيل غالبية المستهلكين بعد عقد أو عقدين، وسيؤدي ذلك إلى انتشار التجارة الإلكترونية في الشرق الأوسط بدرجة غير مسبوقة.

وتالياً، ينبغي أن نتساءل، هل ستتعزيز وتنتشر المتاجر الإلكترونية حتى تستبدل المحلات التقليدية؟ هل تخاطر تلك المحلات التي ترفض أن تتكيف مع التطورات السريعة في مجال التجارة الإلكترونية بالاختفاء من وجه المنطقة؟ أنا شخصياً أعتقد أن هذا- لحسن الحظ- فإن ذلك من المستحيل ويرجع السبب إلى بعض المشاكل القائمة في التجارة الإلكترونية. والمسألة الأولى هي نقص إمكانية التوصيل في مناطق متعددة في البلدان العربية. وبالعودة إلى قصتي، ففي ذلك اليوم الحار في المغرب لم يستطع عامل التوصيل أن يجد عنواننا بسبب قلة العناوين الموثوق بها في منطقتنا، ويمثل ذلك مشكلة في كل أنحاء العالم حتى في الولايات المتحدة، حيث من الصعب توصيل المنتجات المشتراة من منصات إلكترونية في المناطق الأقل تمدناً. وحتى في الأماكن المتقدمة، فما زال التوصيل مستحيلاً في بعض الفصول بسبب ظروف خطيرة مختلفة، بما في ذلك الطقس الصعب والصراعات المدمرة التي تشهدها بعض الدول في الشرق الأوسط. وبسبب ذلك، لا يمكننا أن نستغني كلياً عن المتاجر

التقليدية. علاوة على ذلك، فالكثير من المستهلكين، بينهم أبناء الجيل الجديد، ما زالوا يفضلون رؤية المنتجات ولمسها قبل شرائها، وخصوصاً السلع الباهظة الثمن مثل السيارات والمجوهرات. ختاماً، ما زال يوجد طلب على الخدمات المتوفرة في المحلات التقليدية في الاقتصاد، وحسب قواعد العلم الاقتصادي، كلما وُجد طلب على شيء، يسعى تجار السوق لتوفيره.

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الظهير البربري وبداية الحركة الوطنية المغربية

Ella Baldwin



لا يمكن تصوّر التاريخ المغربي بدون الإشارة إلى الاستعمار الفرنسي والإسباني بقدر أقل ونضال المغاربة من أجل الاستقلال. وبما أن هذا الموضوع يعد من المواضيع التي أسالت الكثير من الحبر فأود أن أسلط الضوء على عنصر محوري من بداية الحركة الوطنية المغربية التمهيدية لاستقلال المغرب. فكانت النقطة التي أشعلت الفتيل الذي أثار نيران الحركة الوطنية لا شيء غير ظهير ١٦ ماي أي الظهير البربري الذي تم تصديره من قبل الاحتلال الفرنسي عام ١٩٣٠.

ومما يلفت النظر هو أن الملك محمد الخامس وقع الظهير البربري بدون إكراه، بينما اصطدم إصداره بسخط ومعارضة واسعة من الشعب المغربي، الأمر الذي يرجع إلى أن الظهير نص على فصل بلاد السببة من بلاد المخزن على مستوى المحاكم. فقد اشترط الظهير إلى تأسيس محاكم عرقية تستند إلى قوانين وأعراف أمازيغية محلية في بلاد السببة، وعلاوة على ذلك فقد ستكون هذه المنظومة المستقلة عن القضاء المغربي الإسلامي جميع أمورها في اللغة الفرنسية. وبالتالي أعتبر الظهير خطوة باتجاه لفرنسة الأمازيغ وتتنصيرهم من قبل المستعمر وفعلاً استهدف السيطرة على الأراضي الأمازيغية وتضعيف الوحدة الوطنية المغربية.

لا أحد ينفي أن الظهير البربري سببت ضجة كبيرة في المغرب ولكنه من المهم أن نخوض في تفاصيل الأيام التالية لكي نميز جذور المقاومة السياسية المغربية ضد الاستعمار. أولاً أود أن أتطرق إلى الاحتجاجات والمظاهرات الكبيرة التي اندلعت بعد إصدار الظهير وانضم إليها آلاف الطلبة الجامعية وبعد ذلك أصبحوا يُعرفوا باسم الحركة الطلابية. وأثناء هذه الاحتجاجات صعد زعماء أحزاب الحركة الوطنية الناشئة إلى محط أنظار المغاربة من خلال خطاباتهم الفصيحة وأفكارهم المؤثرة، ومن ثم بدأت أحزابهم تتحد وتترسخ.

من بين هؤلاء الزعماء للحركة الوطنية علال الفاسي، وهو سياسي وأديب اشتهر بخطبه القوي والمفتع ضد الاستعمار والظهير البربري على وجه الخصوص. وأسس الفاسي حزب الاستقلال

الذي لعب دور ريادي في المقاومة السياسية. وبعد تحقيق استقلال المغرب، اختير الفاسي عضواً رئيسياً في مجلس الدستور لوضع دستور البلاد، ثم انتخب رئيساً له فلا جدال في أنه شخصية محورية في تاريخ المغرب. وإلى جانب الفاسي هناك شخصيات أخرى مثل محمد حسن الوزاني، الصحفي والسياسي الذي اختلف مع الفاسي في بعض الأحيان وابتعد عن حزب الاستقلال من أجل تأسيس حزب الشورى والاستقلال وعدة جرائد بارزة. بعد الاستقلال عُين الوزاني وزيراً دولة في حكومة الملك حسن الثاني.

وفي طبيعة الحال كانت الحركة الوطنية المغربية مستوحاة أيضاً من الحركات التحريرية في المشرق وتيارات القومية العربية. وخير دليل على ذلك أن "أمير البيات" أي شكيب أرسلان، أحد أبرز العلماء والسياسيين العرب ورائد الفكر القومي العربي، قام بزيارة المغرب في بداية الثلاثينات واقترح تأسيس لجان للدفاع عن القضية المغربية في الخارج. ولا زال الكثير من أفكاره وكتاباتاته بخصوص حالة المغرب تؤثر في النظرية السياسية ما بعد الاستعمار.

خلاصة القول لا بد من الاعتراف بيوم ١٦ ماي كبداية الحركة الوطنية المغربية الفعلية وإصدار الظهير البربري كالنقطة التي أفاضت كأس المغاربة تحت الاستعمار الفرنسي. ويرجع ذلك إلى تبلور الأحزاب الوطنية أثناء المظاهرات والاحتجاجات الناتجة عن الظهير وصعود زعماء الحركة الوطنية في الوقت ذاته. ولا شك أن هذه الأحداث لا زال انعكاسها ملموس في السياسات والمجتمع المغربي الحديث وبالتالي يجب على محلي سياسات وعلاقات ومجتمعات المغرب أن يأخذها في عين الاعتبار من أجل الحصول على صورة كاملة لهذا البلد ثرية التاريخ.