

RELIGION AND
DEVELOPMENT
IN THE
THIRD WORLD

A RE-EVALUATION

RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD A RE-EVALUATION



MINISTRY OF ISLAMIC GUIDANCE
THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

On the Occasion of April the 1st. (Farvardin 12th)
The Establishment of Islamic Republic
of Iran

Author: Yadollah Alidoost

**Title: Religion and development in the
Third world: A Re-evaluation.**

Published by: Ministry of Islamic Guidance.

Date of publication: April, 1982.

Circulation: 10,000.

Table of Contents

Preface	5
Introduction	8
Development:What Does it Mean	10
The Evolutionary Concept of Development	11
The Emergence of New Development Theories	14
The Common Characteristics of Underdeveloped Countries	16
The Objective of Development	21
Political Development	30
The Identity Crisis	31
The Legitimacy Crisis	37
The Penetration Crisis	38
The Participation Crisis	40
The Integration Crisis	41
The Distribution Crisis	42
Development and Religion	45
The Iranian Experience	46
Summary and Conclusion	60
References and Footnotes	63

Preface

Sociologists, along with many other social scientists, have for long advocated the idea that the separation of religion and politics is a positive factor in the development process of Third World nations. Moreover, according to their early predictions, with the passage of time and along with the progression of sciences, the importance attached to religion as a determining factor in the political, economic and social areas, was to decline. However to date, religion has remained to be one of the most influential elements in human life. For one thing, "Against all the predictions of nineteenth century sociologists," R. Wuthnow points out, "religious movements have survived and flourished in the modern world."¹ These "movements have been distributed neither evenly nor at random in space and time....In the twentieth century, every decade has witnessed religious movements, but these movements have varied greatly in kind and location. Few decades have given rise to as many religious movements as the late 1960's and early 70's. By the early 1970's, in fact, some estimates suggested that the number of local new religious groups in America might number in the thousands, with some of the larger movements claiming adherents in the hundreds of thousands."²

This being the case, scholars of various social sciences disciplines have tried to figure out the causes of religiously oriented movements. That is, they have tried to understand the reasons why so many people are attracted to religion in our modern time. Some have come to the conclusion that special economic orders give rise to particular religious movements. Others have attributed more importance to the power of the belief systems and ideas themselves. Whatever the cause, in this paper, we have tried to deal with the question from another, perhaps more pragmatic view point.

Witnessing the extraordinary power and the dynamics

of one of the greatest religious movements of our times – the Iranian revolution that is – and relying on the insights that this unique experience can provide us with, we have tried to come to a conclusion as to the impact of having or not having, mixed religion with politics in a given Third World country, on the degree of success that it may have, relative to its ‘development’ objectives. Needless to point out that the Iranian experience and the path it has chosen towards development and independence deserves particular attention. This is so because, although it is too early to say, it may set a new pattern for underdeveloped countries. Its unique and unprecedented brand of development may serve in not too distant a future, the role of a vanguard whose experiences will be copied by many Third World nations – especially among the Muslim countries.

Concerning this essay, a few points need to be mentioned. First, this essay has not been written for the exclusive use of professionals. Therefore, a professional reader, i.e., a social scientist, may rightly say that some parts of the article are not needed and there is some repetition in other parts. However, the paper has been written for a broader audience. As such, the author had to provide all the necessary background information which is not needed for professionals; but a lay reader may not understand the discussions without it.

Second, as A. Frank puts it, “I have thus far been unable to liberate myself from the cultural colonialism which imposes upon us a terminology (and with it, perhaps an approach) that is erroneous and inconsistent with the reality we analyze so that we may change it.”³ This being the case, we have employed the commonly used words in doing our analyses. But that should not mean that the concepts are all accepted as they are commonly used. To mention one example, we have used words such as ‘underdeveloped,’ ‘less developed,’ ‘traditional,’ ‘developing’ and the like, interchangeably, to designate a particular state

of being and/or a particular process. Although none of these concepts are fully accepted, yet they were used because there was no alternative.

Lastly, the present work has incorporated many individuals' contributions and ideas. Without the help of so many people, this final product would not have been completed. It is unnecessary to say, however, that although many have contributed to the completion of this work, I alone bear the responsibility for the work as presented here.

It would be too long a list if I wanted to offer my appreciation to each person individually and by name to all of those who have, one way or another, contributed to the completion of this work. However, under the risk of doing injustice to whomever I might leave out of the following list, I would like to thank those whose help has been outstanding. First and foremost, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to Mr. M.M. Jamei for both his intellectual and moral help. In addition, Dr. A.A. Nourbakhsh, Dr. H. Adibi, Mr. A. Pour Reza and Mr. J. Siahpoush have all been kind enough to listen to what I had to say and share with me their own ideas. And last but not least, I should express my thanks to my friend, Mr. A. Mollazadeh for his help.

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Should religion and politics be mixed with one another, or should they be separated from each other? This is indeed an old question in the domain of social sciences to which various contradictory answers have been given.

As is the case with many other issues of social sciences, interest in the subject of religion/state relations changes depending on the political conditions of the time. At present, primarily because of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, interest in the subject has increased dramatically among politicians and scholars alike.

That the Iranian Revolution and the downfall of the Shah was in itself one of the most important incidents of the past few decades which deserved careful observation and study, is of no doubt. However, a glance at many of the scholarly books and articles published about the Iranian Revolution and a review of various seminars and conferences given about the subject, vividly demonstrates that the focus of interest among scholars is mainly the religious nature of this revolution.⁴ A review of the political decisions and alliances made in regard to this revolution – both in the region and in the international arena – is a living testimony to this fact also. That is, analyzing and evaluating the policies of the superpowers as well as their supporters and friends in the region, would easily reveal that the religious nature of the Iranian movement is what concerns them the most.

It should be pointed out, however, that politicians and statesmen are interested in the subject for what may be called political, immediate and pragmatic purposes. More specifically, freedom fighters, leaders of liberation fronts and supporters of liberal causes in general may be interested in finding ways to utilize the Iranian method in gaining popular support for their causes in other parts

of the world. On the other hand, opponents of the Islamic Revolution, i.e. the imperialist powers of the world, the reactionary regimes of the region and, in general, supporters of the status quo, are interested in finding ways to block the spread of the Iranian experience into other countries. The interest of scholars (save state-scholars, of course) in the subject, however, transcends these short-run and political purposes. Scholars of various disciplines of the social sciences, chief among them, sociologists and political scientists, are interested in the subject for totally different reasons.⁵ These scientists may want to understand the implications of the religious components of the Iranian movement, for the Iranian social structure, political system and also its economy. In short, these scholars would like to use the experience of Iran, as well as similar cases, to provide an answer for the old question posed at the outset of this essay, 'Should religion and politics be mixed or separated?'

Our purpose in this paper, though much more modest, is very similar to what was just mentioned. That is, we are going to analyze the implication of the Iranian Revolution's religious nature, for its very survival and success. Then based on the Iranian experience, we will try to arrive at some conclusions as to the relevance of religion/state relations, on the one hand, and development objectives, on the other. It should be pointed out, however, that the subject of religion/state relations is not going to be dealt with in abstraction or as a philosophical question. Rather, religion/state relations will be discussed and analyzed to the extent that it affects the process of development, be it social, political or economic, in the Third World countries. In other words, we have assumed that: a) development is an objective that every nation strives for; b) development in the Third World is virtually inseparable from planning; and finally, c) formulating effective plans and successfully implementing them cannot be isolated from the total social context in which planning is pursued.

This being the case, religion/state relations in the Third World countries, is seen as an important factor that affects on the one hand, the process and the politics of planning and, on the other, the ability of the governments to implement them effectively. And it is in such a context that the issue of religion/state relations will be evaluated.

Mechanically, this essay will consist of the following sectors. Part one is to provide a brief history of how the concept of development has been used in the past and how it will be used in this paper. Enumerating the characteristics associated with development, identifying the problems and difficulties that Third World countries of today have to cope with in the process of developing, and discussing the remedies prescribed for solving and overcoming these problems and difficulties, constitutes the bulk of what is going to be included in the second part. Part three will analyze the role that religion has played in Iran regarding development problems and difficulties. The final part will include an analysis of the theoretical and policy implications of the Iranian experience for the issue of religion/state relations on the one hand, and developmental policies of Third World countries, on the other.

Development:What Does it Mean?

“Issues in the social sciences,” says Chodak, “raised hundreds or even thousands of years ago are still pondered. Philosophers, social and political theorists, and social scientists return to these same question, to pose them anew from the perspective of their own time, to propose answers only to discover that these answers pose new questions, requiring a review of the issues. Old writings are re-interpreted in the light of new discoveries and temporary understanding, concepts are re-defined and given new meanings. And, after a time, the questions will be posed again, and the answers reviewed and reformulated.”⁶

The concept of development is one such concept

and issue. It has been defined and redefined many times. Broadly speaking, however, two major schools of thought that provide totally different definitions of the concept, can be easily distinguished. First, there are those who are primarily concerned with describing the process of change and identifying its characteristics. The main question for this group is, "What is development?" Or, "What happens in its course?" Second, there are those who are primarily concerned with understanding the mechanism that causes development. Writers of this inclination, instead of asking, "What is development?", ask "Why it happens?"

Within the context of this school of thought when one speaks of development, it is understood as a policy. It is perceived as a carefully planned, effectively accelerated activity in the implementation of objectives and goals which are defined in advance. Such a perception and understanding of development is qualitatively different from the notion that views development as a result of spontaneous evolution. It is indeed different from the development that is a result of an interplay of factors not under the control of human beings. Finally, development as a conscious struggle to implement a particular vision or program, is totally different from that which is resulting from the exteriorization of an inherent and/or implicit potentiality. To understand these two notions better, and to introduce the definition which will be used in this essay, each strand of thought will be discussed briefly.

The Evolutionary Concept of Development

This school of thought was the dominant theoretical perspective in the social sciences in the 19th and early 20th centuries.⁷ The founding fathers of this strand of thought were to a great extent under the influence of the discoveries and achievements in biology and related sci-

ences. The concept of evolution utilized in the natural sciences seemed to provide a key to questions raised about the character of society by social thinkers and philosophers. Thus, as Chodak puts it, "The writers concerned with development at that time (late 19th century) described the world as evolving towards prosperity, abundance, rationality, supreme justice and even total happiness."8

These writers wanted to provide explanations of the chain of events and transformations of the past, on the one hand, and to gain access to perspectives which would enable them to envision the future, on the other. This being the objective, a framework that can be and, in fact, has been, called a 'general theory of social evolution' was constructed. This framework attempted to accommodate the history of human society as a whole.

The general theory of social evolution is based on a particular perception and understanding of the word 'development'. As Dale B. Harris puts it, "Discussions of development commonly include as essential the ideas of 1) **organism conceived as living systems**; (2) **time and** 3) **movement overtime towards complexity or organization**; (4) **hierarchization** and (5) **an end-state of organization** which is maintained with some stability and self-regulation." (emphasis mine)9

It is worth mentioning that there are several diverse leanings inside this framework. These include (a) those whose understanding of the concept of development is certainly a genetic understanding, (b) those who are more inclined towards a structural-functional notion of it, (c) those for whom the element of inevitability and determinism are the core elements, and finally, those who have a pure evolutionary understanding of the concept.

What is of interest here, however, is not the differences among various perspectives within this general framework. Rather, we are interested in what can be called the common denominator of all the theories that fall into the domain of the general theory of social evolution. These

common characteristics are the following. Firstly, being greatly influenced by the biological discoveries of the time, all of them accept the notion that human society goes through various successive stages or states, each of which is perceived to be unique and qualitatively higher, or, at least, more complex, than the one it succeeds and a prerequisite to the one which will follow.¹⁰

Secondly, all these theories claim that the movement is one way. That is, once a given society passed a stage and entered the next more complex and qualitatively higher stage, it will never regress to the previous one.

Thirdly, **none of these theories are in themselves concerned with how to generate change or development.** These theories try to provide an accurate description of how human societies change over time. The described process, however, is seen as a self-generating, inevitable and spontaneous process of gradual evolution towards higher stages of complexity and organization.

Fourthly, the element of 'time' in these theories is not something to be measured in terms of days, months, years or even decades. Finally, **all these theories promote nebulous and speculative visions of the future.** Although stated in different languages and in different manners, the story of human societies, according to these theories, will have a happy ending – classless, egalitarian and utopian societies.

In short, knowledge of these theories does not, necessarily guide one as how to alter the course of history of a society. On the contrary, due to the fact that the element of determinism and inevitability plays a crucial role in these theories, one might feel helpless once encountered with a situation where change in a particular direction is desired. **For in these theories, the importance attached to human volition as far as determining the direction of change, is minimal.**

The Emergence of New Development Theories

Around the turn of the century, evolutionary theories of development had become subjects of serious criticisms and attacks. As a result, the concept of development, as such, was not in the center of scholarly interests. However, following World War II and the subsequent emergence of many new nations in Asia and Africa, interest in a comprehensive theory of societal development was greatly revitalized. This time, however, the interest was qualitatively different from the previous one. In fact, by then – 1950's – the necessity for every society to pass through the same stages of development, that is, having accepted a deterministic and unilinear progression of society, had been rejected. And, due to the fact that nation-building and economic growth were the two most pressing problems of the newly freed nations, and because the course of events in the new nations as well as their very survival depended on how these two important problems were dealt with, a comprehensive developmental theory, which could guide these nations as how to go about solving these problems, was needed for **practical and immediate** use.

To satisfy the above mentioned needs, the quest for a new theory of societal development gained momentum.¹¹ Various new theories were constructed. These new approaches to development were fundamentally different from the old ones. For this time, the objective was not to provide an accurate description as to how a given society had moved from one state to another. Rather, the objective was to construct a theory which would function as a policy guide for new nations and help them make such a transformation. As Ponsioen asserts, “Developing as used for countries today, is rather a euphemism, designated not as a spontaneous process of growth, but a process of **induced change, induced by consciously framed policies of indigenous as well as of assisting agencies. They aim at introducing new institutions, new social forces into the existing field of social forces. It re-orientates those exis-**

ting forces and tries to motivate them in a new way. It frames new instruments to produce that particular brand of social change, called development.” (emphasis mine)¹²

With such a conception of development in mind, the issue of religion/state relations becomes a relevant and important issue. Here, before trying to evaluate critically the role attributed, by social scientists, to religion as a determining factor in the process of the transformation of a given society from a so-called ‘traditional’ stage to a ‘modern’ one, it is necessary to provide an accurate definition of what we mean by development and what its characteristics are. This issue will be dealt with rather extensively. The reason is that “to pursue the meaning of development,” in Henry Bernstein words, “...is not to initiate an exercise in semantics but is a necessary first step in thinking clearly about the range of situations problems and possibilities subsumed in the uses of the term. **Modes of definition embody particular assumptions and concerns and give rise to particular methods and uses.**” (emphasis mine).¹³

To make our purpose and task very clear, let us assume that A is a country that belongs to the ‘underdeveloped’ or ‘developing’ world. Further, let us assume that B is a set of developmental objectives and goals that country A wants to achieve. That is, country A is presently at the stage of X (the state of underdevelopment). But A wants to make a trip. It wants to transform itself to the state of Y (the state of development). Now let us assume that C symbolizes religion/state relations in country A, given that C+ designates the condition where religion and politics are mixed and C- designates the condition where religion and state are separated. Our main purpose in this paper is to arrive at some understanding as to whether A will be more successful in achieving B under the condition of C+ or C-. Stated differently, we are interested in knowing if the trip from state X to state Y will be easier and faster for A, should it take road C+ or C-.

To be able to arrive at a conclusion of some sort, we have to do the following. First, we ought to know what the state of X is. It is of paramount importance for us to know the characteristics whose presence constitutes the state of underdevelopment. For these characteristics are the anomalies, or the diseases, if you will, that we want to correct or get rid of. Second, we ought to identify the characteristics of the state of Y. It is crucial for us to know where we want to go and what it is that we want to transform ourselves, or be transformed into. Knowing where we are and where we want to be, our third task is to identify the surest and fastest way.

The Common Characteristics of Underdeveloped Countries

Well over 100 nations of the world are labeled underdeveloped or developing. Some analysts have distinguished three major groups within the Third World. They are: (1) the least developed group (sometimes referred to as the 'Fourth World'); (2) the non-oil exporting developing nations and finally (3) the petroleum rich OPEC countries. 14 Despite the obvious diversity, these countries do share both common problems and a set of rather well-defined goals. At present, we would like to enumerate the similarities between these countries. Following the identification of the most critical developmental problems of Third World countries, we will have a discussion of their common objectives and aspirations.

"The common problems shared in various degrees by most developing countries," states Todaro, [include] "widespread and chronic absolute poverty, high and raising levels of unemployment and under-employment, wide and growing disparities in the distribution of income, low and stagnating levels of agricultural productivity, sizeable and growing imbalances between urban and rural levels of living and economic opportunities, antiquated and inappropriate educational and health systems, and substantial and increasing dependence on foreign

and often inappropriate technologies, institutions and value systems.”¹⁵

To study these common characteristics more fully and systematically, Todaro classifies them into six broad categories. They are:

1-low levels of living

2-low levels of productivity

3-high rates of population growth and dependency burdens

4-high and rising levels of unemployment and under-development

5-significant dependence on agricultural production and primary production exports

6-dominance, dependence and vulnerability in international relations

As has been mentioned repeatedly, our main objective in this paper is to arrive at some conclusions, based on the Iranian experience, as to the role that religion can play in helping or preventing Third World countries in overcoming their development problems. As such, we shall not spend too much time identifying and analyzing the problems themselves. However, in order to provide our readers with an adequate understanding of the range, depth and intensity of the problems that Third World countries are faced with, here we will discuss the first of the above mentioned six categories in some detail.

What does it mean when it is said that compared with economically advanced nations, Third World countries have low levels of living? To begin with, low levels of living have both qualitative and quantitative manifestations. The various forms in which it can be experienced include , among other, poverty, housing shortages and inadequacies, literacy problems (limited or no education), high death rates, particularly among infants, poor health, low life expectancy, unemployment and under-employment, and finally, some psychological manifestations. As will be discussed later, the Gross National Product (GNP) per capita is normally viewed as the sole indicator of the

economic well-being of a nation. In regard to this indicator, in the early 1970's, for example, "approximately 85% of the world's total income [was] produced in the economically developed regions by less than one third of the world's people...[This means that] the Third World, with almost 70% of the world's population, subsists on less than 20% of the world's income. The collective per capita incomes of the under-developed countries average less than one fourteenth of the per capita incomes of rich nations." 16

The extent of poverty in the Third World cannot be appreciated only by knowing the fact that per capita income there, is much lower relative to the 'advanced' nations. At least two more factors, and in fact two more characteristics of underdevelopment, should be kept in mind as well. One is external and the other is internal. The internal factor is that there is a very important distribution problem in these countries. That some degree of inequality is present among all nations of the world is of no doubt. However, economic disparities among rich and poor is much greater in the Third World than in 'advanced' countries. This means that whatever the overall per capita income for a given less developed country, chances are that a large portion of that income is consumed by an elite minority; whereas the majority would have to live on an income much less than the overall national per capita. In short, for the masses of the less developed countries, poverty, in reality, is worse than what the aggregate national per capita income indicates. 17

The external factor to be kept in mind is that as compared with 'advanced' nations, most developing countries experience slower GNP growth rates. For example, between 1965-1974, the non-oil producing Third World countries showed an average GNP growth rate of almost 2.5% per year. During that same period, however, the GNP growth rate for all developed countries was approximately 4.6 percent. The widening gap would be

more obvious if one takes into account the population factor. For that same period, whereas the annual rate of population growth was 0.8 percent for the developed nations, it was approximately 2.5% for the developing countries. This means that "the actual gap between per capital incomes in all developed and less developed countries widened at an annual rate of 3.8 percent." 18

Another consequence of low levels of living is that in addition to struggling on low income, Third World masses have to fight an ever present battle against malnutrition, diseases and ill health. Let us mention a few specific examples .

Whereas per capita grain consumption in 1973 was approximately 650 kilos for developed countries (including the Soviet Union), in the Third World countries, it averaged only about 180 kilos. Further, while in developed countries of every 1000 live births, less than 27 children die before their first birthday, the average rate of infant mortality is about 120 per 1000 for the developing countries. Finally, while the developed countries have an average of 135 doctors per 100,000 people, developing countries have access to only 27 doctors for that same number of people. The inadequacy of health care provision would become clearer when it is recalled that in developing countries, most doctors and medical facilities are concentrated in urban areas where only a minority of people live.

The spread of educational opportunities will be mentioned here as a final illustration of the prevailing low levels of living in the Third World countries. It is true that in the past few decades, developing countries have put a great emphasis on providing primary school educational opportunities for children in the age bracket of 6 through 13. It is also true that they have experienced an impressive quantitative progress in school enrollment. However, in spite of all their attempts and achievements, still, whereas literacy rates are 97% for advanced countries, it

is not more than 50%, on the average, for developing countries (the lowest rates are about 10-15%). What is more discouraging is the fact that much of what is taught and learned in schools of the Third World countries, is irrelevant to their developmental needs. 19

At this point, we can provide a summary of our previous discussion regarding 'low levels of living' in the Third World. From this general category was derived the following:

"1-low relative levels, and in many countries, slow growth rates of national income.

"2-low levels, and in many countries, stagnating rates of income per capita growth.

"3-highly skewed patterns of income distribution with the top 20% of the population often receiving five to ten times as much income as the bottom 40 percent.

"4-as a result of 1-3 above, great masses of Third World populations suffering from absolute poverty, with anywhere from 650 to 1,200 million people living on subsistence incomes of 50 to 75 US dollars or less per year.

5-large segments of the populations suffering from ill health, malnutrition and debilitating diseases...and finally,

6-in education, low levels of literacy, significant school drop out rates and inadequate and often irrelevant educational curricula and facilities

"More important is the interaction of all the characteristics which tends to reinforce and perpetuate the pervasive problems of poverty, ignorance and disease that restricts the lives of so many people in the Third World. 20

The other five general categories under which the common characteristics of developing countries were classified, can be discussed in some detail also. As mentioned earlier, however, this will not be done. We discussed the first general category in detail in order to provide our readers with a better understanding of the range and depth of the problems that underdeveloped countries are faced with. Now that we think this has been done, we

ought to move to the second task of ours – that is, identifying the objectives of development in the Third World countries.

The Objectives of Development

The task of identifying the objectives of development is not too difficult a task. This is so because we have already identified the common development problems that Third World countries, albeit in varying degrees, have to cope with. Naturally, overcoming and resolving these difficulties and problems constitutes the main objectives of any development program. “Indeed, the movement for development,” as H. Bernstein puts it, “embodies a value judgement with which few would disagree: the desirability of overcoming malnutrition, poverty and disease which are the most immediate and widespread aspects of human suffering. In positive terms, some advocate a commitment to development that transcends the limiting terms of economic growth to embrace such features of social justice as equality of opportunity, full employment, generally available social services, equitable distribution of income and basic political freedoms.”²¹

The objectives of development is expressed by Todaro in a similar manner also. In his words, “...most Third World nations do share a set of common and well defined goals. These include among others, the reduction of poverty, inequality and unemployment, the provision of minimum levels of education, health, housing and food to every citizen, the broadening of economic and social opportunities and the forging of a cohesive nation-state.”²²

In short, it can be claimed that a broad consensus, as far as the objectives of development are concerned, has been achieved. However, such an agreement for desired ends does not necessarily mean the existence of a consensus on how to achieve them. This means that for achieving

the same accepted goals, social scientists of various disciplines and various experts who belong to different schools of thought have chosen different and at times contradictory methods. Studying various development policies, therefore, is the next subject that we are going to deal with.

How to do it?

Up to this point, we have: a) discussed the common characteristics of underdevelopment and b) identified the goals and objectives of development (states X and Y in our previous terminology). At present, we are going to discuss various avenues and paths that can, theoretically, take us to our desired destination (state Y).

To begin with, let us point out that development theories are in essence paradigms constructed around some selected independent and dependent variables. Theories of development, therefore, differ with one another along various lines. They might be different from one another in respect to the number of variables – be it dependent or independent – that each theory takes into account. Or, they may differ over the selection of variables regarded as independent, dependent or intermediary. Or, they may differ because of their different views of the relationship of the variables in the paradigm which are regarded as ‘given’ and which are regarded as changing. A rather important and relevant question might present itself here: “Why is it that theories differ with one another along the above mentioned lines?” To be sure, different diagnosis of the original causes of the phenomenon under study is one source that leads to the construction of various theories. To translate this into our present discussion, the question is: “Why is it that various scholars who are in agreement with one another regarding both the common characteristics of underdevelopment as well as the objectives of development, differ with one another in regard to their chosen way to make the desired changes?”

A partial answer to this question is that, "Because their notion of what has caused underdevelopment is rather different." This being the case, prior to having a discussion of various development theories, a brief discussion of what has caused underdevelopment is in order.

Economic growth is not the same as development, for development is a multi-dimensional process. As such, it is a "process involving the re-organization and re-orientation of entire economic and social systems. **In addition to improvements in income and output, it typically involves radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes and, in many cases, even customs and beliefs.**"(emphasis mine).²³ However, economic progress is an essential component of development. Thus, in particular, in the past, most of the explanations of and remedies for, underdevelopment are economic in nature. Keeping this in mind, some major approaches to the study of development will be discussed very briefly.

"Among explanations of the causes of underdevelopment," writes Chodak, "those using the concept of vicious circles have to be mentioned first. [According to this explanation], a country is poor because it is poor, and its people are poor because its economy has not developed; its economy cannot develop because the country is poor and cannot attract capital."²⁴

This explanation of the causes of underdevelopment has been criticized on various grounds. Some of its critics argue that underdevelopment is a by-product of capitalist and imperialist expansion and exploitation. Others, on the contrary, maintain that underdevelopment will be cured when capitalism and the entrepreneurial activities experience a remarkable spread. Each line of criticism originates from a particular theoretical perspective.

More specifically, some theories view under-development as totally a consequence of lacking sufficient amounts of capital in the Third World countries. According to

these theories, development will materialize, when the right mixture and quantity of saving, investment and foreign aid were present. Once, as a result of having access to the right amount of capital, a country reached the so-called 'take-off' stage, then it will proceed along the same economic growth path which historically has been followed by developed nations.²⁵

There are various versions of the 'stages of economic growth' theories. On the whole, according to these theories, development is almost always seen as an economic phenomenon. Typically, development is seen as a "planned alteration of the structure of production and employment so that agriculture's share of both declines, whereas that of the manufacturing and service industries increases. Development strategies, therefore, have usually focused on rapid urban industrialization often at the expense of agriculture and rural development."²⁶

As a rule, writers of this inclination do not worry about non-economic and social indicators of development – literacy rate, schooling, health conditions and services, housing and the like. It is not because they do not see these social indicators as desired goals. Rather, it is because they feel that rapid gains in GNP would benefit the masses either in the form of jobs and other economic opportunities, or in the form of giving birth to the necessary conditions for a fairer distribution of the economic and social benefits of growth. In other words, supporters of these theories claim that once economic growth became a reality, non-economic indicators of development will happen automatically.

With such an understanding of development, the main goal of all development agencies – Third World governments as well as all relevant international agencies – was to achieve a present GNP growth rate per annum. The magic rate of growth in GNP, which was perceived to generate development, during the 1960's, that is, the "Development Decade," was 5 to 7 percent or more.²⁷ Although

some alternative economic index of development were used also the underlying theoretical understanding was the same.

However, despite the fact that during the 1950's and 1960's, a relatively large number of 'developing' nations did achieve the overall GNP growth rate set by the UN, the levels of living of the majority of their population remained unchanged. This was a viable indicator that something was wrong with the narrow economic definition of development. Thus, **"...development was re-defined in terms of the reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy."** (emphasis mine) 28

In addition to attaching primary importance to the non-economic indicators of development in their definition, the new approaches also attributed very important roles to the imperialist economic and political world orders as determining variables generating, sustaining and perpetuating underdevelopment. For example, A.G. Frank proposed that underdevelopment in a dependent region, i.e. Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, cannot be comprehended except as a product of a particular policy formulated in response to the interests of a particular social group (class), which is in turn determined by the very fact that given region is dependent on the colonialist, imperialist metropolis. In other words, Frank and others, although with some differences, argue that the patron-client relationship between the imperialist powers and the dependent governments of Third World countries, has created unique internal political, social and economic structures which by themselves restrict and limit the **"nationalist development policies."**29

In these new approaches, particular stress is laid on the fact that, as Frank himself puts it, "for the generation of structural under-development, more important

still than the drain of economic surplus from the satellite after its incorporation as such in the world capitalist system, is the impregnation of the satellites domestic economy with the same capitalist structure and its fundamental contradictions...[which] organize and dominate the domestic, economic, political and social life of that people.” 30

In short, the new approaches to development and under-development argue that under-development, to a great extent, is an externally imposed phenomenon on the Third World. The creation of dependent political, economic, military and social systems in the dependent satellite countries, are the paths through which imperialist powers, with the co-operation of their indigenous agents, give rise to what is known as underdevelopment. Further, they argue that to eliminate the phenomenon of underdevelopment and to achieve real development objectives, Third World countries have to , first, end their dependency on the imperialist metropolis. Economic planning and progress, according to these theories, would benefit the masses of underdeveloped countries, if it is done within a truly independent political, as well as economic system. Given a dependent political and economic system, however, planning would generate more dependency.

To recap, providing new definitions of development and attaching primary importance to social indicators of development took place at the same time that new theories and explanations about the causes and possible remedies of underdevelopment were emerging. These theories, which are called ‘structural-internationalist theories,’³¹ deal with the question of underdevelopment in a totally new fashion.

The new approaches begin with an avalanche of criticisms of the old approaches. It is pointed out that according to the old theories, the best known models of developed societies are western Europe, Japan, the Soviet Union and the United States. Further, it is pointed

out that as the old approaches would have us believe, **underdeveloped countries will progress towards this model as soon as they have eliminated certain social, political, cultural and institutional obstacles. These obstacles are represented by 'traditional societies,' 'feudal systems' depending on the particular school of thought.**" (emphasis mine).³²

To begin with , the new approaches criticize the 'model of developed' society as being ahistoric, and thus 'an ideological abstraction'. Moreover, they agree that a) the belief that the central problem for under-developed countries is how to arrive at a stage of development similar to that of the model, is not correct; and b) the claim that the historic experience of the model countries will be repeated for developing countries is a baseless claim. Because, as Dos Santos puts it, "The historic experience of developed capitalist societies has been completely transcended; their basic source of private capital formulation in foreign trade, the incorporation of vast masses of workers in industrial production, their indigenous technological development, constitute options no longer open to underdeveloped countries of today. The history of developed socialist societies is rooted in the experience of 'socialism in one country' or 'socialism in one bloc', of primitive socialist accumulation at the expense of peasant agriculture, of the autocratic establishment of a heavy industry, and of closing off foreign trade and the so-called 'iron curtain'.

The model of development in existence are, therefore, not to be repeated, nor can models of developed society be taken as a crystalization of aims to be achieved." (emphasis mine) ³³

If it is accepted that the historic experience of the existing developed nations is not going to be repeated for developing countries, then it follows that developing nations will never be at the exact stage where developed nations of today are. Put differently, if A is a developed

country and B is a developing nation, due to the historical specificity of A's and B's conditions as well as their unique roads to development, B will never be at the exact stage where A is now. This being the case, a comprehensive and realistic theory of development "must be concerned with the laws of development of those societies which we seek to understand. We must discover to what extent those laws are specific to those societies and to what extent one can also identify them with the laws of development of advanced societies, be they capitalist or socialist."34

In addition, the 'stages of economic growth' theories claim that the optimum use of resources can be codified permanently. This claim is based on two assumptions: first, that there are 'certain definable aims of development,'; second, that the optimum use of resources depends on certain procedural 'characteristics of modern, rational industrial or mass societies'. Whereas the first assumption is acceptable, the second one is not. "For the rational use of resources," as Don Santos states, "must be understood in the context of particular historical situations...The rationality of an economic or political measure can only be defined on the basis of an understanding of the social system in which it is taken."(emphasis mine)35

The previously mentioned criticisms lead us to reject the rationality of having a set model, or an existing ideal type for development in mind. They also lead us to accept that the specific historical experiences of developed nations will not be repeated for the under-developed ones. Finally, they make us understand the dangers as well as the impracticality of trying to codify in a general and unchangeable theory 'the practices to be adopted in specific situations'. This being the case, it was decided to re-evaluate, based on the experience of Iran, the role that religion can play in the process of development in Third World countries. Stated differently, various theories of development have claimed that 'certain economic, political and psychological processes can be singled out as

allowing the most rational mobilization of national resources” which, in turn, can be channeled towards generating development. Almost all these theories, however, claim that as far as affecting development process, religion is either a hinderance or an unimportant factor. This is why the separation of religion and politics is seen as a positive and necessary step in the direction of generating development in the Third World.³⁶

In the remainder of this paper, we are going to review this subject. We are going to analyze the Iranian experience and thus arrive at some conclusions as to whether Third World countries, taking into account their particular characteristics and their historical situations, can afford to either ignore and neglect or oppose religion and yet achieve their developmental goals. However, we believe that “political development and diverse arrangements of political organization,” as stated by Chodak, “open and stimulate or block and impede the process of economic development. An inverse proposition cannot be asserted in the same degree. The effect of economic development on political organization and on individual aspects of political development seems to be rather more indirect and less determining. It is much easier to predict the effect of political changes and transformation on economic development than the effect of economic development on politics.”³⁷

Therefore, first we will try to identify that process which is called political development. Then we will see step by step, how the religious nature of the Iranian Revolution has affected the degree of success of the Iranian government relative to the problems associated with that process. Later we will provide a brief discussion of how the religious nature of the Iranian Revolution has affected the ability of the Islamic Republic to survive. Finally, we will have a theoretical discussion of how the separation of religion and politics affects the ability of Third World

countries to cope with their mounting problems. Based on this theoretical discussion and the analysis to be provided in the case of Iran, we will conclude the paper with some policy recommendations.

Political Development

'Political development', although a term hardly more than two decades old, is in wide circulation in the literature of political science as well as some other social sciences disciplines. However, as is normally the case with social science issues, political development is a concept interpreted differently by different scholars. Some people have tried to scrutinize this variation in interpretations and construct a coherent theory of political development which could be used both as a policy guide for new nations and as an explanation for the processes of political change. Lucian Pye, for example, after reviewing a vast array of literature and discerning at least ten different interpretations of the concept, "proposes to recognize three dimensions lying at the heart of the process of political development: equality, capacity and differentiation. All three, he writes, have a natural tendency to increase. In addition, he finds that the process of political development includes six crises 'that may be met in different sequences but all of which must be successfully dealt with for a society to become a modern nation state.' These are: (1) The Identity Crisis which has to be resolved in attainment of a common sense of national identity; (2) The Legitimacy Crisis, which has to lead to recognition of the authorities and their right to undertake binding decisions; (3) The Penetration Crisis, which means the build-up of channels of downward communication; (4) The Participation Crisis which refers to the emergence of interest groups and the resolution of problems of mass participation in the political process; (5) The Integration Crisis which consists of problems and solutions related to the organization of the entire polity

into a system; (6)The Distribution Crisis which is a code for the variety of problems stemming from allocation of power, prestige, offices, wealth (goods and services)... The theory assumes that should it be possible to resolve all these crises in orderly, sequential stages, political development and stability will eventually ensue.”³⁸

Our task at this stage is to see how the religious nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has affected its ability to resolve the above mentioned crises. We will deal with them one by one.

The Identity Crisis

It is not too far fetched an idea to claim that the identity problem is a common problem of the world today. In advanced industrial states, however, its manifestation is mainly at the individual level. There, systems, as a whole, rightly or wrongly, know what they want. But most individuals within them do not. Their lives have become rather meaningless. People do not know who they really are. They do not know their true identity. They are alienated so to speak. This aspect of the problem, though very important in itself, is not of our concern here. What is of our concern is the national identity crisis which is so widespread among Third World countries. These countries used to be rather independent units, countries, communities, tribes or whatever one may call them. They used to have their own political, social, cultural and economic laws and regulations. They used to know and adhere to certain well-known , well-respected norms and behavioral patterns. In short, these countries, for better or for worse, used to have their own identity. Then came the period of global expansion of capitalism and its political consequences – i.e. the direct or indirect colonialization of these countries. As a result, along with the alteration of the indigenous political, cultural, social and economic ways of life, the viability of the traditional identity of these people was no longer an accepted proposition. Confron-

ted with the superior technology and the stronger military of the colonial powers, some indigenous people willingly and some unwillingly, began to adopt the invader's way of life. The 'state' of underdevelopment was seen as a consequence of being 'traditional'. Thus abolishing the indigenous way of life was seen as a prerequisite of development.³⁹

When the masses of these countries were awakened and decided to gain their political independence, the traditional way of life had been distorted without a new common identity having replaced it. Meanwhile, to rally all people against the colonizers, the existence of an accepted identity and/or ideology was absolutely essential. In the case of those countries which were directly under the colonial rule, providing such an ideology was not too difficult. There, getting rid of foreign invaders and gaining one's independence, nationalism that is, could be utilized to the fullest. But in countries where the colonial powers rule not directly, but via their indigenous agents, nationalism may not be able to provide strong enough an ideological base for the opposition. This is because in such countries, i.e. Iran, under the Shah, the government which the opposition wants to replace, may create a monopoly, albeit a superficial one, over all symbols of nationalism and hence render them idle . . .

This being the case, with the exception of replacing the government in power via democratic avenues, which is highly unlikely in the Third World, there remains only two viable ways of bringing down such governments. They are : (1)military coups and (2)ideological movements – that is, movements which are based on ideologies beyond nationalism. The Iranian Revolution of 1978-79, being Islamic, was an ideological movement. The question to be answered is, "How did its religious character affect the new regime's ability to resolve the identity problem?"

Before trying to answer this question, let us provide a definition of what the identity problem is. At the in-

dividual level, as O. Klapp puts it, "it is any serious dissatisfaction with the kind of person one is."⁴⁰ To generalize this simple definition to a national level, identity problem would be any serious dissatisfaction by a sizable majority of the population of a nation about the status quo—be it political, social or economic. Having this definition in mind, we do know that the Iranian people have had an identity problem under the shah. The Revolution was in part a manifestation of their serious dissatisfaction with the status quo.

This being the case, the question of our interest becomes, "What could possibly resolve the identity problem that the Iranian people had under the Shah?" That is, "What could alleviate or eliminate their serious dissatisfaction about their state of being?"

Analytically speaking, the Iranian Revolution could have been a movement either with pure nationalist tendencies or with liberal, western democratic tendencies; or, with leftist political orientations; or, as it happened to be the case, with religious characteristics.

A nationalist movement as such was neither able to mobilize a sizable majority of the Iranians against the Shah, nor was it able to resolve the identity problem that the Iranian people were faced with.⁴¹ This was so because, on the one hand, the Shah had portrayed himself and his regime as the cornerstone of nationalism. In fact, by changing many symbols to the so-called Persian symbols and via a variety of activities, the Shah had tried to institute himself as a national hero. As a result, for the uneducated masses, nationalism, one way or another, might have been understood as a continuation of the Shah's way and hence be rejected by the majority of those who were dissatisfied with his regime.

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, nationalism is a powerful ideological base for situations where a society is directly controlled by a foreign power or where its land is occupied or something similar to this. In the

absence of any physical and formal hostile foreign agent on one's soil, it is not too easy to rely on nationalism as such, as the main point of departure for opposing an already established regime. Under such circumstances, for a movement to be able to mobilize a large section of a population, an ideological base stronger than nationalism is needed. This coupled with the fact that in 1978 Iran was neither ruled, at least directly, nor occupied by any foreign power, made it rather difficult for nationalism to be used as a solution to the identity problem felt by the Iranian people at the time.⁴²

In addition to all of these, Iran is a country with diverse nationalities. In the absence of any foreign threat, a strong case can be made that nationalism could be a source of conflict and disunity as much as it could be a unifying factor. There is no convincing evidence to believe that what the concept of nationalism means for Persians is the same meaning that Iranian Turks, Kurds or any other nationality understand from it. On the contrary, there are convincing evidences showing that different nationalities have different, and at times, conflicting understandings of the concept. This being the case, one could not seriously advocate the notion that nationalism was able to resolve the identity problem of the Iranians.

The second option, that is, the Iranian movement being a revolution with western ideological orientations, is closely tied with the first option. This option could not resolve the crisis either. Anyone who knows a little about the history of Iran in the past half century, knows that Iranians could not wish to be any closer to the West than they were. In fact, Iranians, the same as all other exploited people, felt cheated by westerners. They saw most of their problems to be, at least, in a final analysis, the result of westerner's interference in their internal affairs. As such, no movement with a slight tendency towards the West could either generate any support for itself, or

restore the lost self-pride of the Iranians.⁴³

A variety of reasons, chief among them, the political nature of the Shah's regime that did not allow the introduction of leftist ideologies, the existence of an historical animosity between Iran and the USSR, and finally the anti-communist feelings of the Iranian masses, made the third option, namely, the Iranian revolution being a movement with leftist political tendencies, impractical as well. Given the circumstance of 1978, no leftist ideology could gain widespread social acceptance and redress the thwarted pride of the Iranians.⁴⁴

Having rejected all other possibilities, it is claimed that by 1978 it was only the religious nature of the revolution that could rally so much popular support on its behalf as to overthrow one of the most seemingly stable regimes of the world.⁴⁵ In addition, it is argued that it is this very religious nature of the new regime in Iran which has enabled it to survive in the face of ever mounting internal and external problems. Put differently, it is the distinct religious identity which has been reintroduced to the Iranians via the revolution that should be seen as responsible both for its original success and its subsequent ability to survive.

It was said that the distinct religious identity has been reintroduced to the Iranians. This is so because the religious identity has always been there. On the one hand, Islam, as I have pointed out elsewhere, is a religion with an all inclusive nature. It is a religion that embraces all spheres of activities of its adherents. And, on the other, most Iranian people have been, and are, religious people. A combination of these two factors, that is, having an all inclusive belief system and a society that an overwhelming majority of its members have been practicing the principles of that belief system for a long time, has resulted in a brand of culture which is gravely ingrained and colored by Islam. Therefore, in 1978, even those Iranians who were not religious as such, could identify with a religious

movement due to their cultural backgrounds.

Moreover, those familiar with the recent history of Iran know that this country, due to its strategic importance, has always been a bone of contention, so to speak, between rival superpowers. In the last part of the 19th century as well as in the early 20th century, the competition as to who should dominate Iran, was between Russia and England. Later on, the race was between the US and the USSR. This being the case, no matter who won and who lost the battle, the fact was that the Iranian people were the real losers.

Being tired of constant subjugation and dependence, the Iranian people were looking forward towards a movement which would free them once and for all. On the other hand, Islam, according to its believers, is a religion with its own distinct and independent identity, a religion that seeks to govern the lives of its believers solely according to its own laws and regulations. This characteristic of Islam was conveyed, during the revolution, via the slogan 'neither East nor West, but the Islamic Republic,'. The combination of these two factors, that is having a population tired of being dominated by foreigners and seeking their true identity and independence and having a familiar ideology that claimed to do just that and provide them with a unique and independent identity, made Islam the only appealing ideology for the Iranians.

Before the revolution, however, Islam was a potential source of power. Now the revolution has actualized it. The religious character of the Iranian government, has created, or better, has actualized, an inherent identity which is far more powerful than nationalism or any other secular ideology. In fact, as the short history of the Islamic Republic of Iran shows, this religious identity has transcended with some exception, the boundaries of nationality. It has given rise to a very strong and powerful sense of awareness' which is unprecedented in the history of Iran.

To conclude, the religious character of the Iranian

regime has greatly enhanced the ability of the government to resolve the identity crisis. It is not an exaggeration to claim that Iran did not become another Lebanon in the Middle East, mainly because of the religious nature of the central government (we will come back to this point later). And this conclusion, I believe, can stand the test of evidence regardless of whether one is or is not supporting the Islamic Republic politically and ideologically.

The Legitimacy Crisis

It is true that no government, particularly given the present world system, can afford to rely for its survival solely on non-violent methods. Obviously, force, including naked force, plays a crucial role in that respect. However, no government can survive on naked force alone either. The power of guns may crush the opponents of a given regime and silence them for a while. But they cannot insure its survival forever. Gaining legitimacy, and winning the hearts of its subjects, if not the most important, is one of the most crucial elements that enables a government to cope with its problems. In countries where authorities have not gained legitimacy, governments may come and go without really being felt, or noticed, by the common people. Such governments, naturally, do not have the support of the masses. They cannot successfully undertake important policy matters for which the cooperation of ordinary people is needed.

On the contrary, among nations that their rulers possess legitimate power, authorities have access, at least potentially, to a great amount of power that they can mobilize and use in whatever direction they wish to. This is because gaining legitimacy, or resolving the identity crisis, leads to a recognition by the masses that authorities have the right to undertake binding decisions on their behalf. Further, it is at least an implicit agreement that the masses would give the authorities their help whenever they (the authorities) were in need of it. As such, the ques-

tion of our interest is, "How has the religious nature of the Iranian regime affected its ability to gain legitimacy?"

Without any exaggeration, it can be said that the religious character of the Iranian government has been the most helpful factor in giving supreme legitimacy to it. The reason is that in Iran, for centuries, the religious leaders not only have had legitimacy to rule, but have been the de facto rulers of the country.⁴⁶ As such, when the religious groups assumed formal power, for a majority of the Iranians who were religious in their private lives, no recognition of any new legitimate authority was needed. Indeed, it can be rightly said that the assumption of formal power by the religious authorities, was a sign of relief for an overwhelming majority of the Iranian masses. Prior to the revolution, due to the fact that in Islam, no government could have legitimate authority except if its authority was sanctioned by the religious authorities, something which rarely would have happened, the religious masses had to obey two different sets of laws and regulations. On the one hand, they had to obey the governmental laws. On the other hand, they wanted to obey the religious laws which were, for the most part, incompatible with the secular governmental regulations. With the revolution, however, these two conflicting sources of power became one and hence made it easier for the citizens to be law-abiding ones.

The Penetration Crisis

The communication or penetration problem is one of the most formidable obstacles to growth and development in the Third World. In part, due to their demographic characteristics, Third World governments are not able to penetrate their own masses in order to educate them and provide them with basic political and ideological information. Moreover, as a consequence of this lack of communication, Third World governments are not able to explain and justify their developmental and political programs for

their subjects. Hence they cannot win their whole hearted support. The inability of these governments to communicate with their own masses is to a great extent due to the lack of adequate technology and other material facilities. However, there is a great cultural barrier to communication as well. That is, government agencies are normally not from the same socio-economic background that their clienteles are. This, coupled with the fact that these agents have not undergone adequate training, causes them not to be able to communicate as effectively as they should.

All in all, due to lack of communications between governments and their own people, a gap between these two parties, whose co-operation is essential if any real development is desired, appears. And this gap, unfortunately, is normally a widening one. At the extreme, lack of communication leads to lack of understanding and hence to the alienation of the masses and thus to lack of mutual confidence. Lack of mutual confidence, or distrust, if you will, results in the governments not having a wide enough social base which could lead to their programs not being as successful as they should be. Lack of success in implementing their development policies, on the part of governments, in turn, may result in political instability. Having this in mind, our question is, "How has the religious nature of the Iranian regime affected its ability to penetrate the masses?"

Undoubtedly, the Iranian regime, because of its religious character, has been able to communicate with its people very effectively. In fact, it can be claimed that if the Islamic Republic has had any problems, it has hardly been due to its inability to penetrate the masses. The enormous success of the Islamic Republic in regard with penetrating the masses and educating them, has been due to several factors of which the most important are going to be mentioned briefly.

To begin with, oral and face to face communication in Iran, as in many other Third World countries, is the

most important channel of communication. And, if a government wants to be successful in utilizing this crucial channel of communication, it must have access to a very large, organized and skillful number of people who would act as the government's cadre in taking to the people its wishes, orders and programs. Organizing such a group is not something to be accomplished overnight. It takes years and perhaps decades to do that. In Iran, because of its religious nature, the new regime has had in its service such a cadre from the very start; that is, the Muslim clergy. The huge, powerful and organized Muslim clergy, with all its facilities – mosques and other religious centers – has been playing a crucial role in explaining to the masses the policies of the government and also in soliciting their support on its behalf. If it was not for its religious nature, needless to point out, this huge organization might have acted in a totally different manner. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, usually governments of the Third World have important cultural barriers of communication with their masses. The religious character of the Iranian Revolution has helped the government overcome this obstacle as well. Finally, the existence of a great amount of political trust between the government and the masses, something that eases the task of communication, is another area where the religious nature of the revolution has helped the government. In short, being of a religious nature, has tremendously helped the government of Iran in its successful communication with the masses.

The Participation Crisis

Being successful in implementing developmental policies and to some extent the very survival of a government may heavily depend on the degree of popular support for that government and its policies. The degree of popular support, in turn, can be measured and understood by the degree of genuine mass participation in governmental programs. The least that lack of partici-

pation may indicate is indifference and apathy, neither of which is the sign of a healthy government. Carrying out three presidential elections with phenomenal and increasing participation of the voters, huge participation by the masses in various governmental demonstrations, being ready to participate in numerous funeral processions and that in amazingly huge numbers, these and many other instances demonstrate the increasing rate of participation by the Iranian masses in current political activities.⁴⁷In fact, the very survival of the Islamic Republic in the face of ever mounting internal and external problems, political, economic, social as well as military ones, is primarily due to the extraordinary rates of participation by the people and also their readiness to participate in the political affairs of the country.

The extraordinary and orderly rates of participation in political and social activities by the masses of Iran has, to be sure, its main roots in the religious nature of the regime. This is because, as mentioned earlier, following the assumption of formal power by the religious authorities, the boundaries between what are called secular and sacred were abolished. As such, in the belief of many Iranians nowadays, participation in a demonstration, for example, is not any different from praying or doing any other religious duty. They are one and the same. In short, the religious characteristic of the Iranian revolution has insured massive and orderly participation of the people in politics (we will discuss this subject in more detail later).

The Integration Crisis

The existence of numerous competing power centers has always been associated with failure. Being able to create a central authority and a central co-ordinating body, therefore, is an essential component for a government, if it is to be successful in its development policies. As we know, the Islamic Republic, although not completely

overcoming the problem of competing power centers yet, has taken great strides towards organizing the entire polity into a unified political system. What is more, it can be rightly claimed that the issue of competing power centers as such, is no longer the dominant feature of the Islamic Republic government. To be sure, whether, it surfaces or not, there are various factions in the Islamic Republic who compete for the implementation of their point of view vis-a-vis other factions. However, this is only natural, given that the parties are not involved in mutually destructive activities.

Taking into account the difficulties that the Iranian government had to cope with ranging from external war to internal terrorism and rebellion, to economic and trade embargo, etc. what it has been able to accomplish in regard to creating a powerful central government and in respect to integrating various competing centers into one rather well functioning system, over such a short period of time, is really commendable.⁴⁸

Here again, the religious characteristic of the government has been of great help to its success. To mention only one example, a glance at what happened in regard to various autonomy-seeking ethnic movements in comparison with what could have happened if the government had not have a distinct religious identity, is very much revealing. There is no doubt that the religious character of the government prevented a particular sector of the Kurds to join the rebellion in Kurdistan. Further, it can be claimed and substantiated too, that the Iranian Turks, for instance, did not go for autonomy, primarily because of their religious affiliation. In short, religiousity has helped the Iranian government in regard to creating an integrated centrally powerful government.

The Distribution Crisis

This is the last crisis in the series mentioned by L.

Pye. Arriving at an acceptable procedure for the allocation of wealth, power and prestige is the issue here. Historical evidences show that if a system cannot arrive at an agreed upon manner of distributing wealth, power and prestige, sooner or later the contradictions and antagonisms between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' will destroy it from within. Although establishing a society where social justice prevails has been one of the objectives of the Islamic revolution and although the Islamic government has done a lot in the direction of re-allocating wealth and power, however, due to the fact that we are going to be discussing its activities relative to agriculture in another paper, we will not discuss this subject here. Suffice it here to point out that the new regime's religious nature has been a very positive factor in this respect as well.

Up to this point, we have discussed the problems (or crises) that each nation has to overcome, according to L. Pye, if it is to be transformed from a 'traditional' state to a 'modern' state. We have argued that as far as the successful resolution of these crises is concerned, the fact that the Iranian revolution was of a religious nature, has been very helpful. Two points need to be mentioned here. First, although it was a part of it, our objective was not to discuss the relationship between political development, on the one hand and religion and state relations on the other. Rather, our objective was to evaluate, based on the Iranian experience, the effects of religion/state relations on development policies as a whole. And this, we have not yet done. Second, we have discussed how the religious nature of the Iranian government has affected its ability to cope with the crises whose resolution are essential if a transformation from a 'traditional' state into a 'modern' state is desired. However, political development as understood by Pye is not the only way the concept is understood. To have a better understanding as to how the element of religion has affected the process of political development in Iran, the issue should be discussed, albeit briefly, from

another perspective. Hereafter, we are going to deal with these two points. Again the concept of political development will be dealt with first.

Some scholars argue that the level of political development achieved by a given society is a reflection of the type of political culture it has attained. To mention one example, J.P. Nettl distinguishes four thresholds of development of political cultures each of which reflects a specific degree of institutionalization of political authority. In other words, Nettl claims that there is a direct and positive relationship between the degree of development of political culture on the one hand and the degree of institutionalization of political authority, on the other. According to him, thus, when a society becomes aware that an institutionalized authority exists, it has reached the first threshold of development of political culture. When a societal structure embodies in itself a structure of political rules, then it has reached the second threshold of development of political culture. The third threshold is reached when individuals develop a consciousness that they belong, either because of coercion or of their own accord, to a particular system. At this stage of development of political culture, not only separate roles, but also separate systems and types of government are institutionalized. The last threshold of development of political culture according to Nettl "is where evaluation matches the level of internalization so that there is little disparity between cognition as such and meaningful evaluation of some sort."⁴⁹

If the above mentioned classification of political culture is valid, then it can be said that due to its religious nature, the Iranian government has developed the political culture of the Iranians to the highest level. It was mentioned earlier that religious Iranians under the Shah had to obey two different sets of roles and regulations. One set that they might not have believed in, but they had to obey because it was governmental law. The other,

that they believed in it, but it was not the laws of the state. This being the case, as far as development of political culture goes, most Iranians under the Shah had not passed the third threshold. The reason was that for a majority of the Iranians, there was no meaningful correspondence between their level of evaluation and internalization. However, after the revolution, due to the fact that the two governing systems became one, there remained no contradiction and duality between their evaluation and internalized values. This means that for a majority of the Iranians nowadays, there is no disparity at all between what they believe in and what the system wants to accomplish. Thus, for a great number of the Iranians at present, "the evaluation matches the level of internalization."

To sum up, utilizing this approach one will reach the previous conclusion that the religious nature of the Iranian revolution has positively affected the process of political development in that country.

Development and Religion

Normally, when one speaks of developed societies, two different types of development come to mind. That is, there are two well-known developed models each of which has become the 'ideal type' and 'the goal to be achieved' for some Third World countries. They are: (a) the West European and American model and (b) the model of the East. Although these two models are genuinely different from one another in many respects, there are some areas where the two models have identical or similar view points. One such area is the role they attribute to religion as a determining factor affecting the process of development in a given country. Both models, in essence, attribute a negative role to religion. The capitalist model takes the separation of religion and state as a very positive step in the direction of implementing one's development policies. The communist model goes further and claims that historically there has always been a negative relation-

ship between people's degree of religiosity and their prosperity. In short, both developed models argue that to get the growth job done, one will be better off if religion did not have any say in its process. What is more, is that both schools of thought claim that the aforementioned statements are conclusions based on historical evidence, hence they transcend both time and place, That is, they both claim that religion not having anything to do with politics, regardless of the nature of the religion in question and regardless of the specific historical conditions of the countries in question, is a positive factor, if achieving a particular set of development objectives is desired.

Based on the experience of Iran and taking the historical conditions of Third World countries of today into account, we are going to critically re-evaluate this statement.

To have a better understanding of the situation, a brief review of what the Iranian government has gone through, how it has responded to various crises and the like will be helpful.

The Iranian Experience

As I have substantiated the matter somewhere else, the Iranian Revolution succeeded in overthrowing the Shah's regime in an atmosphere of international hostility. Further, as it is a known fact by now, it did so due to its enormous strength inside Iran. Shortly after the revolution succeeded, internal disputes began in various parts of the country. These internal disputes, which are almost all over by now, lasted at least two years. Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Azarbijan, Turkaman Sahra and Baluchestan were places where ethnic problems led to troubles for the central government.

Not having a constitutional government in place and faced with various internal problems – ethnic, economic and political – the Hostage Crisis came along. The country, in addition to its serious internal problems, was

forced to clash with a superpower too. The Hostage Crisis, as a result of American pressure, made Iran an international outlaw and forced on her a rather costly economic embargo. While being subject to strong international pressures, political as well as economic, and while faced with serious internal problems, the newly formed Islamic regime could manage to adopt her new constitution and also elect her first president, both in less than one year since her birth. Moreover, the ratification of the new constitution and the election of the first president were both done in two separate national elections.⁵⁰

As soon as the new president was elected, there were signs of the existence of serious disagreements between him and other factions in the government. Still having all the above mentioned problems, it managed to elect, again in a national election, the deputies of the Islamic Consultative Assembly. Following the election of the deputies, with some serious political battles, the new prime minister was approved. In short, in less than two years since its victory, under very serious adverse international and internal political, social, economic and military conditions, the Islamic Republic firstly managed to have, in addition to referendums, five national elections and secondly, could put in place its first fully elected and constitutional government.

Having its constitutional government in place did not lessen the internal political dispute among various factions. Nor did it cause any break with the guerrilla war which was raging in Kurdistan. Nor did it alleviate the tension between Iran and the U.S. In fact, once the government was complete, the problems began to increase. The American imposed economic embargo began to take its toll. Inflation and unemployment were increasing in very high rates. Political feuds between rival factions was preventing the government, to say the least, from performing a proper job. As though these and other problems were not enough, a border dispute between Iran and Iraq was used as an excuse for Iraq to attack Iran militarily.

While the American pressure was mounting by the day, Iraq attacked the Islamic Republic and sent its army into Iran occupying large chunks of her land, particularly in the oil-rich province of Khuzestan. Thus, by late October, 1980, the Islamic Republic was a country with the following characteristics:

(1) It was a new regime, less than two years old, which had assumed power via a year long revolution. (2) Although it had managed to put in place a totally new constitutional government through national elections, there were serious disagreements between various factions of this government, hence it was not functioning smoothly and properly. (3) The new government had inherited a vastly damaged economy partially because of the long strikes during the revolution and partially because of the nature of the dependent economy where the know-how had left the country. (4) There were serious guerilla movements in different parts of the country with the main one being conducted in Kurdistan. (5) Because of the Hostage Crisis, Iran had become politically isolated and it had to fight – on a political level – a superpower. (6) Due to the American sponsored economic embargo, the state of her economy had begun to make a turn from bad to worse with staggering high inflation and unemployment rates. (7) A sizeable portion of its lands were occupied by a foreign army. (8) In addition to its internal wars, it had to fight a whole scale external war with an enemy supported and financed by major world superpowers and regional countries respectively. And finally, (9) With most of its oil installations bombed and its oil rich province in danger of being occupied, the Islamic Republic not only did not have the money to finance its broken economy, but there was no prosperous future in sight either.

As we know, every one of the previously mentioned problems can bring down a rather powerful government. Therefore, one could hear prediction after prediction

that the downfall of the Islamic regime was near. However, despite the fact that the Islamic Republic had to deal with all these problems simultaneously, it could manage to survive. As time passed, with the release of the Hostages and with the formal removal of the economic embargo, politically speaking, Iran began attaining a better situation than before. Economically some problems were eased also. However, the war was still raging both internally and externally. Moreover, whereas the international political situation was easing, the internal political feud was on the increase.

The fact that Banisadr – as President – was politically incompatible with the Islamic Revolution, caused a political battle between the office of the president and other governmental bodies. This political dispute eventually led to the formal removal of the president. Moreover, beginning with the summer of 1980, Iran witnessed some political disorder, a series of bombings and terrorism. During this period, which has lasted even to this very moment that I am writing this article,⁵¹ many first hand leaders and high ranking officials have been assassinated.

After Banisadr was removed from office, according to the Constitution, the new president should have been elected in less than two months. But before the elections could be held, the IRP headquarters bombing incident (July 28, 1981) took place. In that incident more than 70 people were killed. Among the dead were Ayatullah Beheshti, as well as more than 30 deputies of the Assembly and also 10 cabinet ministers or their deputies. However, despite the fact that the war was still raging, and despite the fact that there were high rates of assassinations and bombings, the authorities could manage to stay within the constitutional law and have the new president elected in less than two months.

The second president, as we know, did not stay in office that long. In another bombing incident, Mr. Rajai

and his prime minister, Javad Bahonar, were martyred. Again, in less than two months after Rajai's martyrdom, the Islamic Republic elected, via a national elections, its third president. All in all, in a very short period of time, while the country was engaged in an external war as well as an internal one, and while Iran was faced with many economic, political and social problems, it had three national presidential elections.⁵² Further, during this same period, it has managed to score impressive victories against the Iraqi forces. Still further, it has been able to lessen its dependence on foreigners, particular in agriculture, to a considerable degree. In short, against all odds, the Islamic Republic, not only has not vanished, it is alive and much stronger. How could this be? What gives the Islamic Republic the strength to survive and fight back against all these difficulties?

Undoubtedly the most important, if not the only factor that has enabled the Islamic Republic to resist all the pressures and has insured its very survival to date, is its religious nature. Before going further, let me point out that, in my opinion, this conclusion will stand the test of evidence whether one is for the Islamic Republic, against it, or, if possible, completely indifferent to it. In other words, all that is needed for a researcher to arrive at such a conclusion is objectivity and fairness.

Having said this, a glance at the war and how the Islamic government has been able to, utilizing the religious sentiment, mobilize people on its behalf, is one good indicator of how the religious nature of the regime has enabled it to cope with its difficulties. Since the inception of the war, tens of thousands of people have voluntarily gone to the warfronts with no fear of death. Hundreds of thousands more have announced their readiness to do so. All over the country there are volunteer groups working for the war doing things ranging from preparing clothes for warriors, to preparing food stuff that can be sent to the warfronts, to taking care of the wounded and

the like. The importance of these kinds of support relative to the ability of the government to successfully manage the problems related to the war will become more obvious if one is reminded of the fact that due to the inhumane bombing, of the Iranian cities and towns by the Iraqi forces, Iran, in addition to all other problems, has to take care of close to two million migrants of the war. Needless to mention that the motives for all these volunteer jobs are religious. The same situation exists regarding many other areas where the government is in need of popular support and backing. That is, the government asks the people to make various political, economic and social sacrifices, on religious grounds. And they do.

Before proceeding further, two claims need to be substantiated and two questions need to be answered. First, "Why is it that the religious nature of the Iranian regime has enabled it to have the confidence of so many people?" And, second, "Why is it that having the confidence of the masses is so important in the process of implementing one's development objectives?" We will deal with this latter question first.

Generally speaking, to have successful development policies, governments of Third World countries need to be able to mobilize all their resources, chief among them, their human resources, in a particular direction. Moreover, they need political stability. Either lack of political stability or inability to mobilize the needed resources for the successful implementation of a policy, may result in failure. Having the confidence and the support of the masses can be of great help in both respects; that is creating political stability and insuring wide massive mobilization. This is because a government that has the trust of its people:(a)can mobilize them to the fullest in the direction of the implementation of its development goals and policies, and, (b) it cannot be displaced by neither external nor internal forces that easily. Put differently, if people of country A have enough confidence in their leaders,

these leaders can, utilizing that trust, ask them to make sacrifices, work harder and so on and so forth. They can explain to them (the people) why the more educated and the well-to-do people do not cooperate with the government and why they (the people) have to accept the present shortcomings as a necessary stage, if real development and progress is desired. In fact, utilizing that trust, leaders can explain and justify their failures also. The people, on the other hand, because of their trust in their leaders, are more apt to accept these explanations and adhere to them.⁵³ In short, having the confidence of the people plays a very important role relative to achieving two of the most determining factors that affect the degree of success in development policies: political stability and widespread participation by the masses in current political affairs. And this is why being able to gain the confidence of the masses is so crucial for any governments.

In reply to the first question: "Why is it that the religious nature of the Iranian Revolution has enabled it to have the confidence of so many people?", it can be said, as was discussed earlier, that the religious nature of the revolution was effective because it provided the movement with a distinct identity, an identity which was both comprehensible and acceptable by an overwhelming majority of the Iranians. This identity was not an imported identity. It was an indigenous and Islamic one; something that most people have had in their private lives for years. Thus, identifying with the movement, adhering to it and giving their trust to its leaders was not too difficult to do. However, here we would like to present the answer in a different and a more general setting.

Speaking about the Third World countries, most social scientists agree that religion is an important part of people's lives there.⁵⁴ Although it might be alluded to under various guises, the fact remains that most of what Third World people do are, to say the least, heavily influenced by centuries old values and traditions. These

traditions and values might have, strictly speaking, religious origins. But they might not. In most cases, however, they do. Now, whatever the ultimate goals of a development policy, in the short run, there is an urgent need for people's co-operation. The question is: What is the best way to have this co-operation? As mentioned earlier, both well-known developed models, and hence the theories based on their experiences, suggest, one way or another, that success would be ultimately more, if people were induced to co-operate without religion having anything to do with it. But how realistic is it to expect people to work for programs and policies without religion having any role in it?

Let us restate the problem in a different manner. We have a society which is ruled by various forces. Some of these forces, their components and their importance are known to us. But some are not. Now, this society (A) is in a given state (B). Some well-wishing planners want to transform society A from state B to a, qualitatively speaking, better state, say (C). However, there is a very strong force in this society that (a) covers a large portion of it and, (b) covers those portions very extensively. But planners want to exclude this force from their calculations for planning.⁵⁵ In other words, a great many of the members of society A are heavily under the influence of this force (say D). But planners, while accepting that if A is to be transformed from B to C, its members have to be mobilized, for a variety of reasons, believe that D should be left out – either be ignored or be opposed, weakened and possibly eliminated. The question is: “What are the implications of such a policy decision – that is leaving D out of the calculations?”

To begin with, some people argue that separation of religion from politics does not necessarily mean ignoring or opposing religion. But it does. For, analytically, two different possibilities present themselves. First, that separation means the existence of two rather independent

governing processes; that of the government and that of the religious institutions. Obviously, this is not what supporters of the separation of religion and politics have in mind. What they mean is that when there is a difference of opinion regarding a political matter (which includes development policies), religion should give up and accept the decision made by the government. As such, in a final analysis, separation of religion and state means either ignoring or opposing religion.

To translate what was just mentioned into our discussions, we have an underdeveloped society. Rulers and authorities of this society or nation want to transform it to the state of 'development'. To do so, they know that they need to mobilize all their resources and effectively manage them to achieve their present development objectives. On the other hand, they know that for whatever reason, most people of that underdeveloped country are heavily religious. That is, for the most part, people of this country try to do things according to some particular well-known, well-respected traditions and values. Now, planners and authorities, who happened to support the notion of separation of religion/state, believe that these traditions and values that people adhere to should not be taken into account when development objectives and procedures are decided. However, some supporters of this opinion interpret separation of religion and state as the two not mixing with one another, with religion taking into its hands morality and private inner lives of the people and state taking into its hands the social, political and economic affairs of its subjects. Others, on the other hand, go further and make it their objective to weaken or eliminate religion altogether.

The first group invites the majority of the people of this hypothetical country to do all that they can to implement a set of development objectives and at the same time it fails to respect most of what these people dearly cherish. The second group, while challenging the

rationality of performing and believing in what these people perform and believe in, asks them to support its programs wholeheartedly. Under the former condition, the least that can be expected is apathy and lack of participation on the part of the masses, while given the latter situation, conflict and hostility between the government and the religious masses is a likely outcome. In short, according to this logic, separation of religion and state in the Third World countries either leads to lack of participation or to lack of political stability. But we know that both of these conditions are necessary if real development and growth is to be achieved. Thus, to support the notion of separation of religion and state and at the same time ask people to actively be behind the government development plans, are, to say the least, two rather incompatible things.⁵⁶

To recap, up to this point, we have argued that in the Third World countries of today, achieving political and economic development will be an easier task for developers and authorities, if they choose to mix religion with politics. Further, we have argued that given the present characteristics of Third World nations, separation of religion and state either leads to apathy or gives rise to open conflict and hostility between the government and the masses. In either case, the implementation of development policies would be really difficult. To substantiate this, we have argued that the Islamic Republic of Iran has managed to survive and progress, despite the fact that it had to cope with many difficult problems simultaneously, primarily because of its religious nature. It was argued that utilizing people's religious sentiments has enabled the authorities in Iran to ask the Iranians for sacrifices, understanding, co-operation and constant participation and support for the government. In short, we have reached the conclusion that, contrary to the popular and widely circulated notion that separation of religion and politics is a positive factor in regard to the

degree of success in implementing development objectives, mixing religion and politics is a better combination.

As we know, however, an overwhelming majority of social scientists disagree with such a conclusion. An important question, therefore, presents itself. One may ask, "Why is it that so many social scientists support the notion of separation of religion from politics?"

Briefly, the answer to the proposed question lies in the fact that the available theories regarding societal development are Eurocentric. More specifically, social scientists take the present state of western European countries, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. as 'model' and 'ideal' types developed countries. Moreover, they see the current states of Third World countries as similar to that of developed nations some time ago. Then they study the process through which developed countries could transform their social, political and economic structures from what they were to what they are. Once this information is gathered, it is concluded that to get the development job done, Third World countries should pass through the same phases that developed countries did. This conclusion, and, generally speaking the theoretical discussion of the subject is based on two critical, although unannounced, assumptions. These assumptions are (1) that the present state of developed countries is the ideal type for all Third World countries. Thus, it should be the 'goal to be achieved' for all planners and authorities of these nations. This being the case, the possibility that Third World countries might be better off aiming for a state different from the present state of developed countries, is seen as an impractical possibility. The second assumption is that if Third World nations want to achieve the present state of developed nations, they can go through the same processes that developed countries have gone through. In other words, not only the end state is assumed to be that of developed nations, but also the path through which that end state can be achieved, is assumed to be shown in

the developed countries experiences. Thus, it follows naturally that the same path and hence its end state can be copied by the Third World nations.

In this essay we have accepted, although with some reservation, the first assumption. That is, we have agreed that development, which means eliminating poverty, greater industrialization, better communication, a just social system, increased participation by the masses in the current political affairs, is the goal to be achieved for Third World countries. The second assumption, however, was not accepted, at least in its totality. Before explaining why it was not accepted, it will be useful to discuss the assumption at some length.

According to this second assumption, the historical experiences of the developed nations should guide the developing countries, or the late comers as they are sometimes called, in their march toward modernization, industrialization or whatever it may be called. Therefore, since a few centuries ago, a positive factor that enabled the developed countries to begin their march towards industrialization was the fact that church and state assumed separate functions, Third World countries at present should try to separate religion from politics as well. Stated differently, it is historically documented that western European countries did not take off, so to speak, except when the role of the Church was separated from that of government. Therefore, it is concluded that if Third World countries want to be successful in implementing their development objectives, they should learn their lesson from history and separate religion from politics. This notion, which is widely supported among social scientists in both the developed and the underdeveloped world, was not accepted here. The question to be answered is, "Why do we not accept this notion?"

The notion of the separation of religion and state being a positive factor in the development process of Third World countries of today, as well as the logical

framework behind it, are not accepted primarily because of the following reasons. Firstly, it is not possible and sociologically advisable to treat all religions at all times and in all places the same. In other words, the fact that Christianity has been a negative element preventing scientific and societal development in the Middle Ages does not necessarily mean that all religions perform a similar function all the time all over the globe. Nor does it even mean that Christianity has the same role all the time.⁵⁷ More specifically, concluding, based on the European experiences, that the separation of religion from politics is always a factor positively affecting the effective implementations of countries development policies is not accepted on two different grounds.

On the one hand, under similar conditions, the function of one religion, say Islam, may be completely different from the function of another religion, say Christianity. Thus, to arrive at a general law that transcends the nature of the religion in question is contestable. And, on the other hand, the function of even one same religion in two different societies at two different points of time, may differ greatly.

Therefore, to claim the universality of a law that transcends both time and place is empirically unfounded. As such, to be realistic and fair, the role that religion can play regarding the successful implementation of a nation's development policies should be studied separately for different religions, given similar conditions. Moreover, given substantial differences in time or place, the role that one particular religion or belief system can play in that respect, ought to be studied separately as well.

In short, to say that because Christianity has played a negative role in the process of industrialization in western Europe several centuries ago, Islam should be separated from politics in the Middle East or Africa in the 20th century is a baseless claim. What is more, to claim that because Christianity has played such a role

several centuries ago in Europe, nowadays it will play that same role in Latin America, is unfounded as well.

The second reason why the assumption that the European experience can be copied by the Third World countries is not accepted, is that this assumption fails to take into account the existence of very crucial political, social, economic and historical differences between Third World countries of today and developed countries several decades ago. To begin with, developed countries have never been underdeveloped. They have been, to be sure, undeveloped. But that is different. Moreover, developed countries have never been colonized.⁵⁸ Most Third World countries, however, have a long history of being directly dominated and ruled by foreign powers. Most importantly, the world political order, when developed countries were at the stage similar to the present situation of the Third World countries, was completely different from the present world order. Nowadays, there is hardly any country in the world which can follow an independent development policy. There is a state of inter-dependence, on the one hand, and a state of patron-client relationship, on the other, which makes the implementation of independent and purely national, or even regional policies a practical impossibility. As such, following the footsteps of developed countries is not feasible for developing countries of today.

It is not enough for the Third World countries of today, only to try to achieve their present economic development objectives. Along with this, due to their specific historical conditions and because of the world economic and political orders, developing nations have to fight direct and indirect colonial and imperialist legacies, which has penetrated their social, political and economic lives very deeply. To be able to do this, they must provide their people, above all, with a genuine indigenous and acceptable identity.

The importance of providing their people with an

accepted and powerful identity has not been unknown to the Third World governments. They have tried to create such identities via creating or popularizing, common symbols. In other words, they have tried to strengthen their subjects' nationalistic feelings. This has been useful to some extent. But nationalism as such can be, and in fact has been, a source of conflict and instability both within and among developing countries. And, on the other hand, nationalism does not provide strong enough a motive and commitment among all people. Religious beliefs, on the contrary, can provide a more powerful identity and generate a more intense commitment for a majority of the population of these countries.

Summary and Conclusion

In the preceding pages we have discussed the role that Islam has played in Iran. We have analyzed, albeit, briefly, the ways in which the religious nature of the Iranian regime has enabled the government to successfully cope with its mounting problems. Further, we have discussed the role that social scientists have attributed to religion as a factor in the development process. It was pointed out that, being based on the European experience alone, various theories of development claim that mixing religion with politics is not the right thing to do. However, it was noted that for several reasons, the logic from which the several notion of separation of religion from politics is derived is not a strong logic. Specifically, it was mentioned that the separation of religion and politics in the Third World countries of today may either lead to apathy or lack of participation by the masses in governmental policies. Or, it may lead to open and active opposition by the masses and hence create political instability. It was mentioned further, that in addition to western social scientists, most Third World social scientists advocate the separation of religion from politics as well. The relevant questions to be answered are: (1) Why do Third

World social scientists support such a notion? and (2) What should be done?

As for the first question, unfortunately the state of social sciences in the Third World is not that much different from the state of their technology. That is, social scientists in these countries, the same as their technocrats, have become mere consumers of what the metropolitan theorists have to say. This being the case, once it was believed in the metropolises that religion and politics should not mix and once it was claimed that Third World nations will, and should, march along the same road towards development and industrialization that developed nations did, Third World social scientists accepted them as proven facts. Rarely have they ventured to critically re-evaluate these ideas and adjust them to their own particular states of being. Hardly ever have they tried to explore new theoretical frameworks in explaining and understanding their own problems and difficulties and offering new solutions and remedies for them.

As for the second question, I should like to point out that if any real change and development is desired, if it is wanted by Third World governments that their nations someday be able to stand on their own and be self-sufficient, they must venture new approaches toward development. They have to understand that the European road to development is not the only one. Moreover, they have to accept that their particular road to development will be, of necessity, different from the one passed by developed countries. Having understood this, they must stop being mere consumers and followers of western thoughts and ideas. They have to multiply their efforts to understand and diagnose themselves and their own societies. If I may use a psychological term, they have to undergo a process of self-actualization. Having done that, they have to find ways as how to fully mobilize all their resources and manage them very effectively.

The Iranian experience does provide Third World

countries of today, particularly the Muslim nations, with invaluable insights and guidance. It vividly demonstrates the power of the masses and the wonders it can do. Moreover, it shows the channel through which access to this great bank of power is possible. It clearly indicates that if Third World nations want to have the confidence and trust, and hence the support of their masses, they must not separate religion from politics. For this leads to apathy or conflict and hence lessens their success relative to their development objectives. Rather they must utilize religion and religious sentiments as a powerful instrument in generating desired changes and marching towards true independence and development.

References and Footnotes

1. Wuthnow, Robert. "World Order and Religious Movements", unpublished paper (Princeton University, 1979), p. 1.
2. Ibid., pp. 1-2.
3. Frank, Andre, G. *Lumpen Bourgeoisie Lumpen Development*, Monthly Review Press, N.Y., N.Y., 1974, p. 8.
4. See Fischer, M.J. Michael, *Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1980.
5. Although the idea of science for science is a controversial idea, and although the principle of value neutrality is studying social phenomena is not a totally accepted principle, yet, in this essay, we go along with both of them.
6. Chodak Szymon, *Societal Development*, N.Y., Oxford University Press, 1973, p. v.
7. For a detailed discussion see *Societal Development* (Chodak, 1973) and *Masters of Sociological Thought* (L. Coser, 1971).
8. Chodak, 1973, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
9. Dale B. Harris (ed.). *The Concept of Development*, p. 3.
10. The number of stages as well as the mechanisms by which a society is transformed from one stage to the next, is not an agreed upon matter.
11. Although in this era, system theories emerged and experienced a remarkable spread, here we did not deal with them. This was done partially because system theories are a special variant of the general theory of social evolution and partially because in the past two decades, they have lost their appeal as an explanatory device in the domain of societal development.
12. Ponsioen, J.A., *National Development: A Sociological Contribution*, The Hague, Mouton, 1968, p. 13.
13. Bernstein, Henry, (ed), *Underdevelopment and De-*

velopment, Penguin Books, 1976, p. 14.

14. See Todaro Michael. *Economic Development in the Third World*, Longman, London and N.Y., 1977, p. 19.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

17. To show the extent of poverty among the Third World, the concept of 'absolute poverty' has been utilized by many scholars. To get involved in that discussion, however, is out of the domain of this paper.

18. Todaro, *op. cit.*, 1977, p. 26.

19. The statistics mentioned in the last two paragraphs were all taken from Todaro, 1977.

20. Todaro, *op. cit.*, 1977, p. 30.;

21. Bernstein, H., *op. cit.*, 1976, pp. 13-14.;

22. Todaro, *op. cit.*, 1977, p. 20.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

24. Chodak, S., *op. cit.*, 1973, pp. 227-28. It should be pointed out here that vicious circles are not all economic in nature. Psychological theories claim that lack of achievement-orientation causes underdevelopment which, in turn, causes lack of achievement motivation.

25. See Rostow, W.W., *The States of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge, U.P., London, 1960.

26. Todaro, M. *op. cit.*, 1977, p. 60.

27. The decade of the 1960s was dubbed the 'Development Decade' by the United Nations.

28. Todaro, M. *op. cit.*, 1977, p. 61.;

29. See Frank, A., *op. cit.*, 1974.;

30. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

31. The term is Tadaro's.

32. Dus Santos, T. "The Crisis of Development Theories and the Problem of Dependence in Latin America," in Bernstein, H., *op. cit.*, 1976, p. 58.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 58-60.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 60.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

36. Needless to mention that the separation of religion from politics is the thesis of capitalist style development. The socialist style development goes further and aims at eliminating religion.

37. Chodak, S. *op. cit.*, 1973, p. 246.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 229-230.

39. In the history of Iran, even though she has never been directly colonized, we had such people too. Taghizadeh is the most famous (or infamous) in this respect.

40. Klapp, Orrin. *Collective Search for Identity*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1969, p. 6.

41. Let us repeat that identity problem as used here implies a serious dissatisfaction with the status quo.

42. Indeed, a strong case can be made that the fact that in many Third World countries, most oppositions with some popular support have a socialist color is because nationalism as such cannot accommodate those movements.

43. Here I am aware that having a western ideology does not necessarily mean becoming or being dependent on the West. However, political trust or distrust is generalizable both horizontally and vertically. As such, the unpleasant experience of being dominated by the West had made western ideologies less appealing as well. Moreover, nationalism in Iran has always been perceived as a toward-the-West leaning political movement. And this was another important reason why nationalism could not provide the needed ideological base to resolve the prevailing identity crisis in Iran.

44. Let there be no misunderstanding here. I am not claiming that leftist ideologies could never gain wide social acceptance in Iran. Rather, it was meant that given the conditions of late 1970s, when the revolution was in the making, leftist ideologies were not accepted.

45. For a detailed discussion, see my unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, *Religious Revolutionaries: An Analysis of the Religious Groups' Victory in the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1981.

46. For a lengthy discussion see Algar, H., *Religion and State in Iran*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1965.

47. Regarding the number of voters in elections, some people might claim that many people vote not because they want to but because they have to. While there might be an element of truth to this, the fact is that an overwhelming majority of the Iranian people – the religious masses that is – participate because of their own free volition.

48. In fact, while in the past there were roomers and analyses that the competing power centers may eventually cause the revolution to destroy itself from within, nowadays, primarily because of the strength of the central government, these roomers and analyses have faded away.

49. Netti, J.P. , *Political Mobilization: A Sociological Analysis of Methods and Concepts*, London, Faber and Faber, 1967, p. 68.

50. Whether the elections were 100% democratic by worldly accepted criteria or not is of no relevance here. What is important is that the mounting problems that the country was faced with, were not used as excuses to postpone or avoid having the new Constitution adopted or having national elections for Presidency.

51. This part was written the night of December 11, 1981. On December 10th, Ayatullah Dastghaib was martyred in Shiraz.

52. Again let me point out that whether the elections were acceptable by western standards or not and whether the number of voters were as high as the government claims or not, are irrelevant here.

53. That there is a limit as to how much this mutual confidence can be used and relied upon and that someday it might not work if other conditions are not ripe, is of no concern here.

54. Various sociological studies have demonstrated the importance of religion as a socio-political factor in devel-

oped societies as well. See for example, Robert Wuthnow's article.

55. To believe that cultural and religious values are, in a final analysis, a product of other factors, say the economic relations of a society, does not justify ignoring these values in the short-run planning. For in the short run, at least, values and beliefs, ideologies so to speak, do affect behavior and hence the success rate of any policy.

56. Let us point out that to say religion and politics should not be separated is not necessarily the same as having a theocracy.

57. The fact that church is an important radical element in Latin America and the fact that Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. was primarily originated in Black Churches, are two recent examples indicating the revolutionary role that Christianity can play.

58. The U.S. and Canadian experiences cannot be seen as colonization as such.

I sincerely congratulate the great Iranian nation because Almighty God favoured us and with his powerful hand which is the force of the oppressed, annihilated the oppressive monarchic regime. During the history of the monarchy, tyranic kings had humiliated and maliciously treated this nation. But God Almighty made our great nation the leader and the example of oppressed nations and granted them their true heritage by the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On such an auspicious day which is the day of the leadership of the Ummah and the day of victory and triumph of the nation, I announce the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Extracted from the Message of Imam Khomeini
The Founder of the Islamic Republic
of Iran

On the Occasion of April the 1st. (Farvardin 12th)
The Establishment of Islamic Republic
of Iran



MINISTRY OF ISLAMIC GUIDANCE
THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN