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Imam Khomeini: The Spiritual and Political Leader of Iran

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Abstract

Imam Khomeini is not only the spiritual but also the political leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Under his leadership, the Islamic Revolution that emerged in Iran in the late 1970s had a significant impact not only on this country but also on political processes worldwide. He presented the world with a completely new reality—the establishment of Islamic governance in Iran. As the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Imam Khomeini led the country for ten years based on his theoretical model.

Consequently, Imam Khomeini is a globally recognized spiritual and political figure. As the consummate leader of the Islamic Republic, he put an end to the monarchy in Iran, subsequently creating a completely new type of state—the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Since its establishment, the Islamic Republic of Iran has faced various challenges. Despite the numerous challenges it has encountered, this country has been steadfast in its progress for over four decades. Moreover, it holds a significant position in the political life of both a specific region and the wider world. The primary basis for this is the continued adherence to and deep respect for the ideology of the founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini, which has supported the country for decades.

The Iranian Islamic Revolution, led by this country's spiritual and political leader, the learned theologian Ayatollah Khomeini, is regarded as one of the most significant events of the post-World War II era. As the leader of the Islamic Revolution and the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he was also the country's first Rahbar (leader).

It should be clearly noted that the Islamic Revolution of 1978-1979, which Imam Khomeini directed, was truly remarkable among significant political events in the world due to its dynamism, scale, widespread participation of the populace, and their selfless struggle.

Even 45 years after the Islamic Revolution, not only in the Islamic Republic of Iran but also in many other countries, Imam Khomeini's worldview is shared and holds great importance.

Keywords: Khomeini, Imam, politics, religion, leader, revolution, Iran, Islam.

Discussion

There has been considerable writing regarding the evaluation of Imam Khomeini's phenomenon, both within Iran and beyond its borders. Some portray him with idealistic-mystical traits, while others attempt to view his political portrait through the lens of historical conditions and time. He exhibited rare leadership qualities that brought him into the global spotlight. Khomeini was not a politician in the Western sense of the term, but he wielded significant political tools as weapons. The Islamic Revolution, which he led, significantly altered the balance of power in the world following World War II.

Imam Khomeini's worldview as the leader of the Islamic Revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran has not lost its relevance. Even 45 years after the Islamic Revolution, it is still shared and holds great importance.

The Islamic Revolution that took place in Iran at the end of the 1970s had a profound impact not only on Iran but also on political processes worldwide. Therefore, this revolution, which unfolded directly under the leadership and ideology of Ayatollah Khomeini, belongs to the category of significant global events.¹

It is important to note that Khomeini is regarded not only as a spiritual leader for Iranians but also for many other Muslims. He is officially referred to as Imam. Sayyid Ayatollah al-Uzma Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini was not only a prominent Shia cleric but also a political leader in Iran. The Islamic Revolution he led in 1979 fundamentally transformed the political system of Iran, bringing an end to the 2,500-year reign of the Shahs.

Imam Khomeini presented the world with a new and largely unpredictable reality—the establishment of Islamic governance in Iran. As the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Khomeini led the country for the last ten years of his life (1979-1989) based on his theoretical model for governance.²

In the 1970s, the popular movement in Iran, led by Khomeini, was not solely of a religious nature. It was a powerful reflection of widespread public discontent arising from acute political, economic, and social problems in the country. This discontent took on both religious and political dimensions under the authoritarian regime of the Shah and the secularization policies it imposed.

The Islamic Revolution resulted in the establishment of a completely new type of state in Iran, merging Islamic Shia legal

concepts with elements of modern governance. The Iranian Muslim clergy actively participated in the struggle against the monarchy, guided by Shia political traditions. This involvement was largely due to the repressive measures of the last Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (1941-1979), who severely restricted the activities of Muslim clerics and imposed strict control over Shia organizations.

As a result, by the mid-1970s, the Shia clergy emerged as a significant opposition force in Iran, utilizing madrasas, the shrines of the holy Imams, and mosques as venues to protest the political and socio-economic conditions that primarily benefited the royal family and its circle. The opposition Shia clergy was led by Ayatollah Khomeini (1900-1989), who became the prominent figure of the Islamic Revolution. His influence extended not only throughout the Islamic world but also across the globe.³

Khomeini's father was a marja (a senior religious authority). He began studying fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) in 1920 under the guidance of Marja Abdolkarim Haeri. In 1922, Khomeini traveled to the holy city of Qom for further studies. In addition to fiqh, he also studied ethics, philosophy, and logic. From Qom, Khomeini moved to Najaf (in Iraq) for his education.

Imam Khomeini emerged on the political scene in Iran at the onset of the 1960s. From the very beginning of his political activism, he openly articulated his religious and political ideas. Following the death of the prominent Shia religious leader, Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Mohammad Boroujerdi, in 1961, Imam Khomeini achieved the highest religious rank, becoming a Grand Ayatollah himself.⁴

It is important to note that after Reza Shah Pahlavi came to power in the 1920s (1925-1941), the clergy in Iran found themselves in an unfavorable position due to his secular and anti-clerical policies. This attitude toward the Shia clergy did not change under his son, the last monarch of Iran, Mohammad Reza Shah (1941-1979). The Pahlavi regime's policies culminated in the early 1960s with the "White Revolution."

From 1962 onward, Khomeini openly opposed the Shah due to the reforms associated with the "White Revolution." The policies enacted by Shah Mohammad Reza, known as Enkelab-e Sefid (White Revolution), aimed at complete secularization and Westernization of the country, which placed both the people and the clergy in a difficult position.

Khomeini's popularity grew rapidly, particularly as opposition to the Shah intensified. The Shah recognized the White Revolution as the central doctrine of the state's actions, leaving no room for other

¹ Kapanadze M. Political portrait of Imam Kho Mein. "Hadiths about the first international scientific conference dedicated to political, economic and cultural relations between Georgia and Iran". Tbilisi, 2015. P, 60

² Giunashvili J. Chipashvili G. Iranian Revolution - Islamic Republic. "Georgian diplomacy". V. 2. Tbilisi 1995. P, 258).

³ From Khomein, A biography of the Ayatollah, 14 June 1999, The Iranian. p, 74

⁴ Khomein life of the ayatollah. 2000. p, 85

authorities. It is noteworthy that among the broader populace, the clergy were viewed as primary authorities, with Ayatollah Khomeini enjoying significant stature during this time.⁵

On June 3, 1963, during the Ashura ceremony at the Faiziah seminary, Ayatollah Khomeini delivered a strong criticism of the Shah and his White Revolution. On June 5, he was arrested by SAVAK (the Shah's secret police), which triggered a wave of unrest across Iran from June 5 to June 8. On June 8, Khomeini addressed the public, urging them to cease their resistance to the police to prevent further casualties.

Eight months later, Khomeini was released from prison, but he was soon forced to leave Iran in 1964. Initially, he moved to Bursa, Turkey, but quickly left for Najaf, Iraq, where he began his active political and theological work. It was in Najaf that Khomeini produced many of his fundamental writings.⁶

Following Khomeini's arrest and subsequent exile, he launched an uncompromising struggle against the Shah's regime. He became a hero for Iranians and, more broadly, for devout Muslims. Khomeini's initial confrontation with the authorities revealed his worldview, as well as his qualities as a tactician and charismatic leader.

It is crucial to emphasize that a significant aspect of Imam Khomeini's work was the inseparability of religion and politics, and the unity of spiritual and secular foundations. He urged Muslim theologians not only to actively engage in Iran's socio-political life but also to exercise control over the country's domestic and foreign policies. Khomeini succeeded in elevating the role of the clergy as spiritual guides of society, a role that had been undermined during the Pahlavi era (1925-1979). Additionally, he granted them special rights that were implemented in the Islamic Republic.

During his time in exile, Imam Khomeini delivered lectures, the transcripts of which circulated among the people. These lectures condemned the Shah's regime and gained immense popularity, helping the public recognize the regime's corrupt practices. This awareness fueled increasing protests against the Shah. As the protests grew, so did Khomeini's authority and influence.⁷

During his time in exile, Khomeini developed a doctrine for an Islamic system of governance in the modern era. In his work "Governance of the Islamic Republic," he provides a theoretical justification for the structural model of an Islamic state. Khomeini's concept of the Islamic Republic is based on a republican form of governance with a theocratic essence, which implies a coexistence of spiritual and secular authorities, where the former holds a dominant and defining role.⁸

One of the reasons for Imam Khomeini's open opposition to the Shah's regime was the extensive privileges granted to foreigners by

Mohammad Reza Shah. Khomeini demanded the abolition of these privileges, emphasizing their detrimental impact on Iranian society. Additionally, he called for the government to account to the clergy regarding the resolution of the country's political, social, and economic issues.⁹

It is essential to recognize that in the early stages of his political activism, Imam Khomeini did not possess a clearly defined action plan or a comprehensive concept of an Islamic Republic. His primary focus was on calling for the cessation of reforms that were perceived as inconsistent with Islamic principles and detrimental to the interests of the broader populace.¹⁰

Khomeini gradually articulated a demand for the overthrow of the monarchy, describing it as being destined for "the dustbin of history." By the 1970s, his discourse increasingly emphasized the theme of ulama (religious scholars) seizing political power, resulting in a more pronounced anti-monarchist stance. He viewed Islam and the Muslim clergy as the most effective means of protecting Muslim countries from Western influence.

In Khomeini's perspective, Islam encompasses all that the West refers to as freedom and democracy. He consistently asserted in his sermons, speeches, and writings that Islam addresses every aspect of human life—personal, social, material, spiritual, cultural, political, and beyond. He highlighted the obstacles faced by society and aimed to assist individuals in overcoming their challenges.

Khomeini regarded Islam and Islamic governance as a divine phenomenon that ensures the highest level of human well-being. He believed that Islam and its principles could ultimately eradicate injustice, brutality, and all forms of moral decay.¹¹

Ayatollah Khomeini was not only critical of the West but also held a negative view of communism, considering it a significant threat to Iran. One of his primary objections was that the communist regime recognizes collective ownership over private property. In contrast, Khomeini argued that Islam represents a balanced system that acknowledges and respects private ownership.

He believed that by properly applying Islamic laws, it would be possible to activate healthy economic mechanisms and implement the stable justice necessary for a sound governance structure. Khomeini articulated these views in his religious-political testament, emphasizing the potential of Islamic principles to foster economic vitality and social justice.¹²

During his time in exile (1964-1979), Imam Khomeini was highly active, expressing his views on significant political issues. It was during this period that he produced important writings (which will

⁹ Kapanadze M. Political portrait of Imam Kho Mein. "Hadiths about the first international scientific conference dedicated to political, economic and cultural relations between Georgia and Iran". Tbilisi, 2015. p. 62).

¹⁰ IMAM KHOMEINI: FIGURE OF THE IRAN ISLAMIC REVOLUTION, [file:///C:/Users/h/Downloads/Article+1-+Firdaus,+Azizah+dan+Yenti%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/h/Downloads/Article+1-+Firdaus,+Azizah+dan+Yenti%20(1).pdf)

¹¹ Ayatollah Khomeini and The Anatomy of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Toward a Theory of Proph, <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780761854852/Ayatollah-Khomeini-and-The-Anatomy-of-the-Islamic-Revolution-in-Iran-Toward-a-Theory-of-Prophetic-Charisma>

¹² (The last epistle, a political-religious testament. Tbilisi, 2002. p. 70

⁵ Kapanadze M. Political portrait of Imam Kho Mein. "Hadiths about the first international scientific conference dedicated to political, economic and cultural relations between Georgia and Iran". Tbilisi, 2015. p. 64

⁶ Motadel D. Iran and the Aryan Muth. "Perceptions of Iran History". 2014. p. 126

⁷ Ethics and Politics from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini. 2024. p. 138

⁸ From Khomein, A biogrlaphy of the Ayatollah, 14 June 1999, The Iranian. p. 98

not be detailed here) that laid the foundation for the Islamic Republic. He systematically organized the principles of clerical authority in the notes from his lectures delivered in Najaf in 1971. Khomeini methodically approached the formulation of the principles of Islamic governance step by step.

He emphasized the global nature and comprehensiveness of Islam, stating, "Islam is a unified program for addressing the various problems of society. It is a form of governance and administration, regulating relations among individuals, defining the relationship between the state and the people, and managing interactions with foreign countries, alongside all other economic and political matters."¹³

During his exile, Imam Khomeini spent the majority of his time in Iraq (1964-1978). In 1978, following the assassination of his son Mustafa by Iraqi Vice President Saddam Hussein, Khomeini was "advised" to leave Iraq. He subsequently departed for France, where he spent four months.¹⁴

It is important to note that in the early stages of the revolution, Khomeini was not perceived in the West as a genuine political cleric. During his time in Paris, he sought to cultivate an image of a somewhat liberal democrat fighting against the Shah's dictatorial regime. In an interview with a magazine, he stated, "We advocate for total freedom. The future regime of Iran will be based on freedom".¹⁵

During his time in exile, Iran faced increasingly difficult circumstances. There was a significant contrast between the general population and the ruling elite, rampant corruption, and extensive privileges granted to foreigners. As a result, the wave of protests against the Shah's regime intensified, particularly from the 1970s onward.¹⁶

Two weeks after Mohammad Reza Shah's departure from the country on January 16, 1979, the main architect of the Islamic Revolution and Iran's future Supreme Spiritual Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, triumphantly returned to his homeland after 15 years of forced exile. He took the helm of the revolutionary processes unfolding in the country, bringing with him the vision of Iran's renewal, the establishment of a new order, and the creation of a state unlike any the world had seen before.¹⁷ February 11, 1979 (22 Bahman in the Iranian calendar) is etched in history as the day of victory for the Islamic Revolution in Iran. This day was officially

¹³ The last epistle, a political-religious testament. Tbilisi, 2002. p. 97

¹⁴ Khomeini: Life of the Ayatollah, Martin's Press, 2000, https://books.google.ge/books?id=BihPNR4iaoC&dq=Seyyed+Ahmad+Musavi+Hindi&pg=PA2&redir_esc=y

¹⁵ Imam Khomeini's Biography, <https://english.khamenei.ir/news/2116/Imam-Khomeini-s-Biography>

¹⁶ Xavier V. Imam Khomeini: the distinct legacy of a Muslim leader Politics June 5, 2024 - <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/499482/Imam-Khomeini-the-distinct-legacy-of-a-Muslim-leader>. The day on which Imam Khomeini moved to France from Iraq, October 4, 2024 - <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/504549/The-day-on-which-Imam-Khomeini-moved-to-France-from-Iraq>

¹⁷ Imam Khomeini: the distinct legacy of a Muslim leader, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/499482/Imam-Khomeini-the-distinct-legacy-of-a-Muslim-leader>

declared the triumph of the Islamic Revolution on national television.

Imam Khomeini was a highly influential and innovative Islamic political theorist, distinguished by the development of the theory of "Velayat-e Faqih." According to this theory, the ruler of the country should be a "spiritual leader" or "Rahbar," who holds superior authority over all others. This leader must possess knowledge of Islamic law, or "Sharia," as well as qualities of justice, intellect, and the best governance skills. Decisions made by a parliament elected by the people must align with Islam; if they do not conform to Sharia, the Rahbar will not approve them, rendering them invalid. This system of governance is deemed essential to prevent injustice.¹⁸ The governance system known as Velayat-e Faqih was established in Iran after Imam Khomeini came to power, which made him the first "Rahbar" (Supreme Leader) of the Islamic Republic.

He quickly formed a provisional government. On March 30 and 31, 1979, the provisional government held a referendum on the new form of governance and constitution of the Islamic Republic, in which over 98% voted in favor of replacing the monarchy with an Islamic Republic. On April 1, the country was declared an Islamic Republic. Following the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Imam Khomeini became the country's first spiritual leader, or Rahbar.¹⁹ At one point, secular Iran became the world's only unique Islamic semi-theocratic country. The new state, the Islamic Republic of Iran, was structured according to the Velayat-e Faqih model. As previously mentioned, the first spiritual leader and head of the country from 1979 to 1989 was Ayatollah Khomeini.

After coming to power, Imam Khomeini completely transformed Iran's political landscape. He integrated Shia Islam as an inseparable part of the country's political structure. The constitutional changes that occurred after the revolution elevated the Supreme Spiritual Leader, the Rahbar, above the traditional three branches of power.

Thus, following the victory of the Islamic Revolution, Khomeini had the opportunity to create a state that he had envisioned in his writings. In his religious-political testament, Imam Khomeini reflects on the significance of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, stating: "The Islamic Revolution represents the achievement of millions of people. Its importance is so profound that it cannot be captured or conveyed through mere words. I believe in this revolution, in the protection of its achievements, and in the realization of its goals in life."²⁰ Since the victory of the Islamic Revolution, as Khomeini believed, the achievements of this revolution have been preserved in Iran, and its goals have been realized in practice.

It is important to note that the structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran is firmly based on the Islamic faith, as outlined in its constitution. Its legitimacy stems from the teachings of Velayat-e

¹⁸ IRAN: The Unknown Ayatullah Khomeini, <https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,920508-1,00.htm>

¹⁹ COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS OF IMAM KHOMENI http://en.imam-khomeini.ir/en/c778_51010/Book/English/Complete-Poetical-Works-of-Imam-Khomeini

²⁰ The last epistle, a political-religious testament. Tbilisi, 2002. p. 175

Faqih and the expression of the people's will. In this system, the leader, or Rahbar, is a "just Mujtahid" (scholar-theologian) with significant authority. The selection of the Rahbar is conducted indirectly by a council of experts chosen by the people.

The governing power in the Islamic Republic consists of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Elections for the parliament and the president are conducted through direct voting. A council of constitutional experts, composed of scholars and legal experts, oversees the legislation passed by the parliament to ensure its compliance with Islamic norms.²¹

Khomeini emphasized that the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran weakened the hands of the world's rulers and aggressors, freeing the country from their influence. Consequently, Ayatollah Khomeini advises the Iranian people to recognize the value of this achievement and not to fear the difficulties and obstacles along this righteous path. It is also worth noting that he did not allow major powers to interfere in Iran's affairs.

Imam Khomeini wanted to restore the unity and solidarity of Muslims. To this end, he declared the week of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday as the Week of Unity. Following this, he declared the last Friday of the month of Ramadan as International Quds Day.²² However, due to the Shiite ideology of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he received less support from other Muslim countries.

Arab secular regimes saw a significant threat in the spread of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, particularly the Baathist regime in Iraq. In addition to being Iran's immediate neighbor, Iraq has a large Shiite population, which posed a considerable threat to Saddam Hussein. In August 1980, Iraq canceled the 1975 Algiers Agreement with Iran. In September, the Iraqi army invaded Iran and occupied Khuzestan. During the Iran-Iraq War, Saddam Hussein, the leader of Iraq's secular Arab nationalist-socialist Baath Party, sought to exploit the revolutionary chaos in Iran to seize the oil-rich province of Khuzestan located near his borders and undermine the newly established Islamic Republic of Iran. Thus began the eight-year Iran-Iraq War, which continued until August 1988.²³

Many believe that Iraq launched a full-scale invasion of Iran with the encouragement of the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. Due to significant patriotic resistance, the Iranians quickly halted Iraq's advance into Iran and, by early 1982, regained almost all the territory lost as a result of the invasion.

Due to the Islamic ideology of the Islamic Republic of Iran, most rulers of other Muslim countries were opposed to it and supported Iraq in the war against Iran. However, the majority of Islamic

parties and organizations in Muslim countries supported Khomeini's ideas.²⁴

Iran lacked ammunition, weapons, and military equipment in this war. It also did not have foreign military specialists. In contrast, Iraq was supplied from abroad (Soviet Union, USA, etc.), which allowed it to conduct a prolonged war against Iran, albeit with less favorable results. At that time, Saddam Hussein was considered "the West's best friend" because he was fighting the Islamic Revolution. Regarding the fact that the Soviet Union and the USA supported Iraq in the war against Iran, Khomeini stated in 1980: "We are not fighting against Iraq. The Iraqi people support our Islamic Revolution. This is our conflict with America, which is cloaked in the guise of defending the Iraqi government against Iran."²⁵ should be noted that Iraq's invasion in 1980 further united the Iranian people around the new regime brought by the Islamic Revolution, which significantly strengthened Imam Khomeini's influence and authority both within the country and abroad. This allowed him to consolidate the Iranian nation under his religious and political leadership and maintain stability in the country.

It is also important to emphasize that the West, particularly the United States, was alarmed by the potential of the Islamic Revolution, fearing its spread to oil-exporting Gulf countries. Consequently, assistance was provided to Iraq. The war lasted for eight years, resulting in significant casualties on both sides. The costs of the war also increased, leading to a ceasefire brokered by the United Nations. The warring countries returned to their pre-war borders.²⁶

In December 1988 (before the fall of the Berlin Wall), Ayatollah Imam Khomeini sent a letter to the General Secretary of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, in which he predicted the fall of communism. He invited Gorbachev to study Islam. In this historic letter, he wrote, "It is clear to everyone that communism should henceforth be sought in the museums of world political history."²⁷

It is essential to note Imam Khomeini's stance on the rights of religious minorities living in Iran (where the absolute majority of the population are Shia Muslims). After his return from exile, he quickly issued a fatwa stating that Jews and other religious minorities (except for the Baha'is) should be treated well. According to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, seats are reserved in the parliament for representatives of religious minorities.²⁸ Here's the English translation of your text:

²⁴ A Critical Introduction to Khomeini, By L. A. Reda Edited by Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 05 June 2014. P, 167.

²⁵ Ruhollah Khomeini, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Iranian-Revolution>

²⁶ The Wayfarer's Quest. Imam Khomeini's Mystical Influence on the Islamic Revolution of Iran, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378158526_The_Wayfarer's_Quest_Imam_Khomeini's_Mystical_Influence_on_the_Islamic_Revolution_of_Iran

²⁷ Khomeini, R. Islamic Government. Governance of the Jurist. The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works. 2005. P, 224. Ludington, N. (1988). Khomeini Says 'Neither East Nor West' In. 1988. p, 118.

²⁸ Khomeini, R. A Call for Divine Unity. Letter of Imam Khomeini, The Great Leader of the Islamic Revolution and Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran to President Mikhail Gorbachev, Leader of the Soviet Union. The Institute for

²¹ Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Tbilisi, 2011

²² THE LAST MESSAGE THE WILL OF IMAM KHOMEINI (R.A.) THE GREAT LEADER OF THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION AND FOUNDER OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN - <https://goaloflife.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/ayatollah-sayyed-ruhollah-khomeini-wasiyya-will.pdf>

²³ GOVERNANCE OF THE JURIST ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT IMAM KHOMEINI, <http://staticsml.imam-khomeini.ir/en/File/NewsAttachment/2014/1358-IslamicGovernment.pdf>

As mentioned above, Imam Khomeini also called for unity among Sunni and Shia Muslims (with Sunni Muslims being the largest religious minority in Iran), but achieving this proved to be impossible.

Imam Khomeini passed away on June 3, 1989. His funeral was attended by millions of people, who nearly overwhelmed Khomeini's wooden coffin as everyone tried to get closer and touch the Imam. With his death, the world lost one of its fighters for peace, who had a decisive influence on the Islamic world. He was an unparalleled leader.

Conclusion

Thus, it must be emphasized once again that the Islamic Revolution in Iran was the world's first religious-political revolution, in which the prominent role was played by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Through his dignified life, he contributed to the awakening of Muslims and the revival of Islam. The Islamic Revolution gave rise to a new religious-political ideology based on the principles of Sharia. The Islamic Republic of Iran, founded on Khomeini's ideology, exhibits characteristics of a theocracy. Specifically, it is a form of governance in which political power is exercised from the standpoint of religious regulation of the state and social life. At the same time, Iran also has principles of a democratic state: there is a full parliament (Majlis), citizens have universal voting rights, and the president of the country is elected through a popular vote.

Imam Khomeini's political and religious ideas are considered progressive and reformist and remain relevant even nearly half a century after the Islamic Revolution.

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