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Democratically elected government of Mosaddeq was ousted by a US-British Coup

The American political class and its supporters are not in the 'nostalgia business,' and the American public's lack of interest in politics allows for the formulation of domestic and especially foreign policy with overwhelming participation not by the public but by pressure groups in pursuit of their narrow interest. The American public is mostly disengaged from politics, although the political system allows for the public and special interest input into the political process.

The essence of political electioneering and power structure in the US lends itself to the narrow interest of the dominant political class as opposed to the long-term national interest of the country. The money penetration of the political establishment, pork-barrel politics, and 'political defects' in the system, e.g., gerrymandering, electoral college system, filibustering, and a weak political party system, allows for the domination of the political system by a narrow political class. In a 1975 study, Peter Freitag found that between 1897 and 1973, 76 percent of all presidential Cabinet members possessed corporate affiliations, and that little difference existed between Republican (78 percent) and Democratic Cabinet members (73 percent) when it came to corporate affiliations. The public disengagement means leaving the power elite with the determination of what constitutes national interest. For example, a public opinion survey shows the public wishes for a more restrained US foreign policy in the post-cold war, while the neoliberal dominated thinking has led to disastrous foreign policy interventions, e.g., Iraq, Libya, Syria, among others.

U.S. foreign policy goals in the Middle East have remained steady since World War II, but with tactical adjustments in the post-cold war era, e.g., substituting its anti-communism policy with its 'global fight against terrorism.' President Eisenhower's administration decided to intervene in Iran to thwart a communist threat and to support a young Shah who desperately needed US help. Recall the Soviet Union's intervention and occupation of Iran and its refusal to withdraw after World War II. The threat of communist insurgencies in Greece and Turkey, the Berlin crisis (June 1948-May 1949), the communist victory in China under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung in 1949, and the US/UN intervention in the Korean War (1950-53) demonstrate how Washington perceived events at a global level as a battleground between capitalism and democracy and communism and dictatorship. The US-UK-sponsored 'successful' coup d'état in Iran in 1953 was possible through intelligence, bribery, and opportunism and with a minimal financial cost. The successful and inexpensive coup in Iran encouraged US intervention in Guatemala in the following year. Subsequently, the US intervened to instigate and execute other military coups in the Arab world and central and south America, most infamously in Chile in 1973. The American public supported the US intervention abroad in the name of

anticommunism and containment!

Iran has throughout its history guarded its national identity, expressed in its language and multiplicity of races, religions, and traditions. The 'unforeseen' 1978-79 revolution in Iran was a manifestation of over one-hundred-year history of resistance to foreign exploitation, territorial loss and occupation, incompetent national leadership, and a battle over the heart and soul of the country. The revolution may have been a manifestation of Iran's past historical experiences, but that was (is) irrelevant to the American foreign policymakers interested in anti-communism and containment of communism during the cold war, and with the rise of Iranian power and the regional balance of power in the post-cold war era. It is doubtful to think that American political leaders give the US 1953 intervention in Iran a second thought, especially not one of a 'mistake.'

■ ■ The Iranian revolution is intertwined with the idea of 'Ghodrathay-e Istikbaari-e Jahani' (roughly meaning 'global arrogant powers'), which is its closest concept to the more widely known notion of 'imperialism'. How do you see the genesis of that concept rooted in Quranic discourse? Is it almost entirely interchangeable with imperialism? Or the revolution meant something even only marginally different?

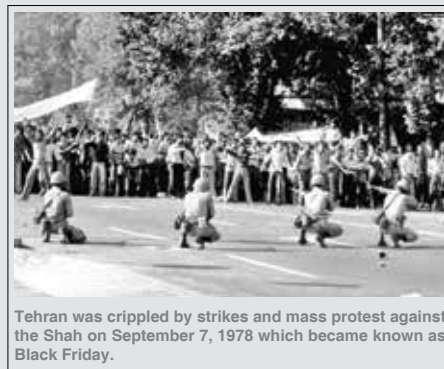


Islamic Revolution in Iran aimed at restoring national sovereignty.

The advocates of liberalism see capitalism as an economic system based on private property, market, and individualism that is also best suited for economic and social development, political democracy, and individual liberty. Capitalism at global level can produce prosperity and development for all countries if the countries produce and exchange commodities based on the principles of comparative advantage. The historical Marxist-Leninist, and Neo-Marxist thinkers invoke a different definition and understanding of capitalism and its relations with Imperialism. The historical notion of Imperial powers of the Rome or the Persian differ from Lenin's notion of Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism. The neo-Marxism's persists that capitalism remains the culprit for the immiseration of the working class and humanity, and free trade is the latest manifestation of (neo)imperialism. The concept, Ghodrathay-e Istikbaari-e Jahani or 'global arrogant powers' is broader in its meaning and implications. It sees exploitation and domination as a broader understanding that the struggle between the good and the evil is a permanent one it is manifested in all human relations. This is regardless of the prevalent mode of production or time the interval. At global level, any powerful country can act as an arrogant power if not guided by the enlightened (divine) principles and values. Indeed, all three Abrahamic religions highlight the struggle between just and unjust, the ruler and the ruled and the virtue of forgiveness, generosity in possession and in spirit, and fearing the ultimate power God. What is contro-

versial and unclear is how to rule and remain true to the spirit and the letter of the religious laws and principles. Who represents the will of the Almighty? This has remained unresolved throughout the history, including the history of Islam since the death of Prophet Muhammad [PBUH] in 632AD. In short, the notion of Ghodrathay-e Istikbaari-e Jahani represents the perennial question of inequality in power between the rulers and the ruled, the powerful and the powerless.

■ ■ 'Esteghlal', meaning 'independence' or perhaps in more technical terms 'national sovereignty', was one of the cornerstones of the Islamic Revolution, and to the people it often meant independence from foreign, imperial powers. How successful has been the Islamic Republic in establishing its sovereignty?



Tehran was crippled by strikes and mass protest against the Shah on September 7, 1978 which became known as Black Friday.

A country's national interest includes national security, cohesiveness and integrity, national development, and sovereignty. The question is whether sovereignty can exist separate from the other components of national interest. Without national safety and security, a country can be exploited or overrun by hostile foreign powers to the detriment of its population and even to the point of mass suffering and the threat of national disintegration, e.g., Afghanistan since 2001, Libya since 2011, Yemen since 2015. The threat to national cohesiveness heightens when the state uses suppression instead of accommodation to promote national integrity, e.g., Iraq under Saddam Hussein. The threat is more serious if the country remains socioeconomically underdeveloped, instigating secessionism, e.g., Sudan prior to its division. National development is necessary for the long-term national integrity, as poverty, illiteracy, absence of infrastructure, and the like can erode the ruling government's legitimacy and instigate rebellion, instability, and even foreign intervention, e.g., Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, among others. Sovereignty becomes relative in the presence of the other elements of national interest. A secure, cohesive, and socioeconomically developed country can afford to engage with other countries in economic, social, and political arenas if it is watchful of its national (not specific tribal, racial, cultural groups or interest's) interest.

'Esteghlal' or 'independence,' or perhaps in more technical terms 'national sovereignty, is elusive if taken literally. One cannot think of any one country today as being literally 'Mostaghel' or independent. Most global trade and commerce, investment and banking, and finance are conducted by the private sector. The largest and most powerful economic entities are privately owned by their shareholders. True, state companies still play an important role on the global stage, and they can be large and compete with their rivals, like the state oil companies, and commerce and high technology corporations like Huawei and Alibaba. Still, global finance, commerce, trade, investment,