

Revolutionary Movements in different part of Iran 1918-24

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Abstract

The revolutionary movements formed – in Gilan , Azerbaijan , Khurasan and Khuzestan primarily to fight foreign intervention in Iran and for an end to Iranian tyrannical rule which oppressed its people . These aim banded people together and thus furthered the development of the revolutionary movements in different part of Iran between 1918 - 24. . All revolutionary movement were ultimately defeated in turn by internal reactionary forces and their Western backers , and its own tactical errors. It is appropriate to divide the reaction against the revolutionary movements into two parts , internal and external . These correspond to pressure which came from within Iran , primarily from the central government , and to international coverage of the movements , both from the West and from the Soviet Union . At points , the two aspects into one and we will indicate as much . The central governments played a major role in the reaction against the revolutionary movements on two fronts , as it were . The immediate policy adopted by the central governments towards the revolutionary movements was suppression leading to its elimination . The campaign had been initiated by action against progressive and radicals movements throughout Iran . During the crisis , the soviet Union professed to regard the revolutionary movements in Iran as a democratic movements struggling against the reactionary approach of the central government , and treated it as legitimate indigenous demand for local rights

Key words: Revolutionary Movements – Shaikh Mohammad Khiyabani – Mohammad Taqi Khan Pisyani – Mirza Khochik Khan Janghali - Soviet Union – Britain – Central Government.

INTRODUCTION

As world war 1 came to a close , London found itself at the head of the largest empire the world had ever seen . Between 1914 and 1919 the British government had vastly expanded the territory under its control . The majority of this empire's new acquisitions were in the Middle East Central Asia , territories formerly held by the Ottoman Turkish Empire , which met its demise during the Great war .

Concurrently , Lenin's Bolshevik Revolution had ,in 1917 , succeeded in toppling the Kerensky government in Moscow . Throughout 1918 , 1919 and 1920 the Bolsheviks waged a civil war for control of their country ; their enemies were tsarist and moderates leaders who received huge amounts of financial and military assistance from the British . As the pushed their foes back from the cities of Russia , the fighting spread to Transcaucasia and Transcaspia , along the northern border of British 's newly acquired Middle Eastern possessions . Simultaneously , Lenin 's government worked to extend its communist uprising to other nations make a truly international revolution .

From 1919-1921 , a series of uprisings , revolts , and against British rule rocked the Middle East , and threatened to exhaust the imperial forces of occupation . Historians have established that the Bolshevik state , while supporting and promoting these uprisings , was in no way responsible for their outbreak , and that in general , the strength of Islam in the Middle East severely limited the possibilities of spreading atheist Bolshevism .

By the beginning of the twentieth century a popular awareness was beginning to grow that the

ruling classes were 'selling' Iran to foreign power, particularly to Russia and to Britain through oil concession. The ruling Qajar dynasty became increasingly weak and oppressive, and was almost totally obedient to the great power. But the oppression under which peasants meantime suffered produced no more organized reaction than a gradual trickle of migrants seeking work in Russia.

At this stage, Iran was in very bad order, facing economic disaster. The country was plagued by the foreign intervention, for example the Anglo-Iranian agreement of 1919, which faced much internal opposition, and the situation within the country worsened to the state that numerous revolutionary movements appeared but were negative and purely anti-Imperialist and were too physically disparate to claim any robustness; however, the way was prepared for the defeat of the Qajar dynasty and the restraint British interference.

The war ended with Russia in revolution, Turkey powerless and Iran largely destroyed.

The success of the October 1917 revolution in the Soviet Union was coupled with revolutionary and anti-imperialist movements within Iran and among some of her neighbors, such as Turkey and Afghanistan. These movements, together with a popular discontent over the 1919 Treaty, persuaded the British to bring about a much more radical administration; a move which had three problem intentions – to safeguard British interests in Iran, to suppress the revolutionary atmosphere and to keep Communism at bay.

If historical facts are accepted, it will be seen that the really disruptive movement was that among the Southern tribes, who were acting under the influence of the British. As a planned warning as to the consequences of an autonomous Azerbaijan, the British encouraged the southern tribes to agitate for their own autonomy, to show how the idea would snowball throughout all Iran. The Southern tribes had formed a precedent in that respect already in the 1920s, with the British using Shaikh Khazal on that occasion. In contrast to the southern tribes, the Democratic movement in Azerbaijan led by Shikh Mohammad Khyabani was truly democratic, its aims directed towards an end to the discrimination against Azerbaijan by the central governments, an end to British influence in and over Iran, and to Sayyad Zia's terrorization connected with it and to end up finally with the setting up of a democratic government initially in Azerbaijan, and then to Tehran.

However, more general reasons exist for the failure of the progressive movement in country to overthrow what they viewed as a repressive and reactionary Central Government. The recourse by such movements as the Azerbaijan democratic movement to foreign support meant that nationwide co-operation was unfortunately foreign and there was insufficient progressive co-operation to seize the crucial opportunity granted by the resignation of Reza Shah.

Although the geographic and logistical factors enumerated above cannot be ignored. Foreign interest in Iran must not be ignored altogether. The country was strategically and economically very important indeed to Britain, American and the Soviet Union, and none of these powers wanted either of the others to have an under advantage. The suppression of the Revolutionary Movements were due in large part to the fears of the big power that serious repercussions would be felt throughout the Middle East because of the influence enjoyed by the movements throughout Iran. The diversity of Soviet interests worldwide meant that she could not give the concentrated attention which would have been necessary to prevent the defeat of Revolutionary Movements of Iran.

Concurrently with rise of the parties , and in direct response to the presence of foreign power in Iran and their influence over the central government , together with the economic decay within the country , a series of revolutionary movements arose . Various Communist or nationalist according to the majority of historians , it may be maintained that all were in fact nationalist , since support from an external source does not necessarily indicate domination by that source (e.g. Soviet support for the Tudeh Party) and all were anti – foreign . Through analyzing these movements , we shall attempt to substantiate and demonstrate this fact.

UPRISING IN AZERBAIJAN

Azerbaijan has always been a revolutionary province . She has always suffered from neglect and discrimination and remained sadly under-developed despite enjoying rich natural resources . As not only an Azari, but an Azari with the strong interest in politics .

Azerbaijan had consistently supported the idea of a strong Iranian government , able and willing to promote the interests of Iranian instead of those of foreign powers . When the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution resulted in the withdrawal of the Russians . Who had occupied the country under the reactionary puppet , SHUJA AL – DAWLA , the Azerbaijan increased their efforts towards achieving these aims .

In December 1917 , a Tabriz group demanded the removal of the pro – Russian governor of Azerbaijan , the return of anti- Russian political exiles , and the holding of parliamentary election . The weak Tehran government neither responded to this demand , nor tried to fill the political vacuum created by the Russian withdrawal . Consequently , Shaykh Mohammad Khiyabani (1879-1920) was able to take power . “1 “

Sheikh Muhammad Khiabani turned to religious sciences early in his life and rapidly achieved scientific qualifications. The Constitutional Movement was a turning point in his life Khiyabani was an eloquent middle – class politician who had taken part in the revolution of 1908-9 , . During the World War I, he resisted against Russian pressures and at the same time hindered Communism infiltration , therefore Khiabani had been arrested in the first World War by the Ottomans and deported to Gars.

As one of the Liberal Nationalist faction in the Majlis , and a Democrat , Khiyabani was regarded by his supporters as a democrat and Iranian patriot , not linked to any ideas of Azerbaijan separatism “ 2 ”. Nor did he encourage foreign intervention , and in fact rejected the help of Russia and Turkey , preferring instead to introduce his own style of government , which encouraged individual responsibility within the community . “ 3 ”

On April 10 , 1920 , Khiyabani broke with Tehran over the 1919 Anglo – Iranian Treaty . The Democrats subsequently expelled the governor, occupied government offices , less than two days , and established a National Committee, for the welfare of the people . Various cities , including Urumiya and Zanzan “ 4 “ came under this committee , which was strongly republican and anti – imperialist , and wanted reforms, autonomy for Azerbaijan , and improvement of relations with the Soviet Union .

This opposition to the 1919 Treaty caused the downfall of Vusuq al Dawla ,s Cabinet on June 25 , 1920 . Dawla was replaced by the nationalist federal lord , Mushir al Dawla , who was obliged to declare the treaty null and void until it received ratification from the Majlis . Ivanov⁵ “ points out that new government was opposed to the British policy of open dictatorship , and sought better links with the Soviet Union . It wanted also to calm down the situation in Azerbaijan by

negotiating with Khiyabani , who claimed that “ the will of the people must be above everything . If it so wishes , it must even overthrow the Shah , and if it so wishes and considers necessary , declare a republic “.” 6 “ Khiyabani also believed in the strength of local rather than national government , and promoted the idea of a people ,s paper (His own was Tajaddud, Revival) , to protect them from the absolute control of a strong central government . The building of his newspaper became his headquarters, where he engaged in delivering his orations and people enthusiastically listened . These orations were in Azeri and their Persian translation was published in Tajaddod the following day. Public enlightenment and promotion of people’s understanding of the issues underpinned his movement and for the very same reason he never sought to equip his forces to guard the movement , that was one of a main reason for his failure.

Mushir al – Dawla proceeded to advance on Tabriz , but he was resisted and forced to retreat . A new governor, Mukhbar al –Saltana was dispatched to Tabriz , and on his arrival began fruitless talks with Khiyabani , which only lasted a few days . This was long enough , however , to enable him to unite his reactionary forces and make a surprise attack against the divided and disorganized Democrats in their own homes on September 4 . Khiyabani and many other were killed , Khiyabani himself being arrested and put to death “7” ; under Saltana ,s command , more than three hundred families were killed , their property seized and houses destroyed . “ 8 “

Ivanov “ 9 “ suggests that this revolutionary movement had two major weaknesses : one , the failure to arm itself , and second , its failure to disarm the Cossacks . These two factors , linked to the absence of land reforms and neglect of conditions of the proletariat , demonstrates the movement ,s underestimation of the masses . Ivanov ,s further claim , however , that Khiyabani probably did not understand the importance of a broad popular front of support , is spurious , for Khiyabani had neither the time nor the finance to arm the masses .” 10 “ The night preceding Saltana ,s attack , Khiyabani had send his 200 best fighters to aid the Shahsavan tribesmen against Arshad , who was rebelling in Ahar , with the result that he lacked sufficient military strength to counter the offensive of September 4 .” 11 “ Furthermore , an assault launched very early in the morning allowed him no time to unite. “ 12 “

After this crushing defeat , the movement struggled for existence for a period in Ahar , and the fighting was continued in these difficult mountainous regions by a band led by Qiyami called the Qiyamiyyun va Intiqamiyyun (Revenge insurgents) “ 13 “ . Two years later , Azerbaijan broke once again with Tehran . Again , it was not an issue separatism : this time Reza Khan was attempting to bring the gendarmerie under his control . The gendarmes , in conjunction with the Azadikhwahan , rose in opposition to the central government following the expulsion of the Democrats . Azadikhwahan and Itidaliyyun by Nasir al Mulk . They finally revolted on February 1 , 1922 , together with the Democrats , supporters of Khiyabani , and some of the gendarmes . The latter were under the leadership of Lahurti Khan “ 14 “ , a man who had fled the death penalty in Qum and taken up a post in the Azerbaijan gendarmerie under Mahmud Khan Fuladi in 1922(1300).

After occupation of government offices , Khiyabani ,s followers set up a National Committee , demanding British withdrawal , the expulsion of Reza Khan from the Ministry of War , payment by the central government of the gendarmes , and the institution of reforms .” 15 “

Opposition to Reza Khan had did effect of providing recruits among the revolutionary movement in Azerbaijan directed towards strengthening resistance against Reza Shah . These force did in fact the Iranian Army , which could hold only Bagh-I Shah . Command was

subsequently taken over by Habib Allah Khan –I Shaybani , an influential gendarmerie officer who persuaded Mahmud Khan –I Fuladi to withdraw his support from Lahuti ." 16 "

Shaybani began hopeless talks with Lahuti upon his appointment , and war followed their inevitable collapse . Astonishingly Lahuti then defected to the Soviet Union upon the verge of victory , and left his army without a leader or instructions ." 17 " The resultant breakdown of morale within the national army was more than likely the case of its ultimate defeat : the Iranian Army entered Tabriz on February 7 , 1922 , looting the town , and arrested and tried many of the member of the movement , and the revolt was suppressed .

The two revolutionary movements in Azerbaijan were suppressed through internal pressure exerted by Tehran , from where the central government tried to prevent the dissemination of revolutionary ideas , but also by external source . It is rumoured that British stopped all movement and relations between Azerbaijan and the Caucasus , bribed clergy to help suppress the revolution , and spread false rumours about repression in Soviet Azerbaijan " 18 ". They furthermore organized private forces through Iran as a whole and Azerbaijan in particular .

This victory and its subsequent Khiabani's movement lasted for more than 5 months., Khiabani and his movement encountered different challenges during its 5-month life.

The central government propaganda against the movement was in the long term to the advantage of the Democrat movement in Azerbaijan : the highlighted of the political , geographical , historical and economic importance of Azerbaijan focused attention on the Azerbaijan as a nation , different from the other nationalities in Iran , with their own language , customs , etc . It was pointed out that Azerbaijan was ethnically different from the rest of Iran not only within Iran , but also in the international press. It was this kind of national identity which lay at the heart of this considerable enthusiasm for autonomy and which inspired the impetus which encouraged the badly – needed reforms.

Thus , the revolts may not have brought autonomous government to Azerbaijan , but they did achieve the collapse of the Cabinet of Vusuq Al –Dowla and the cancellation of the 1919 agreement . The consequent close ties with the Soviet Union resulted then in the 1921 agreement of February 26 . Despite its suppression , the revolution was not rooted out totally , and indeed 25 years later , it took the first opportunity offered , under the leadership of Jafar Pishavari in 1945 , to rise up once again.

Mohammad Taqi Khan –I Pisyani

Colonel Mohammad Taqi-Khan Pisyani was a popular military leader of Iran and became a national hero after his assassination. In November 1915 as commander of the Gendarmerie in Hamedan 1916 Mohammad Taqi went to live in exile in Berlin . During his time in Berlin, he was trained as a pilot in the German Airforce and was rewarded with the Eisernes Kreuz Medal for shooting down more than 25 enemy aircraft during World War I. In 1920 Mohammad Taqi returned to Iran and joined the Gendarmerie. In June 1920 he was promoted to the rank of Colonel and in September 1920 he became commander of Gendarmerie of Khorasan

Another revolutionary movement arose in the province of Khurassan , under the leadership of Mohammad Taqi Khan –I Pisyani , in 1921 .

Khurassan and its capital Mashhad had previously played a large part in the Constitutional Revolution ; although the province was big and was economically independent , the social base

for nationalism and autonomy weak . Demands for reform , better governors , and independence from foreign influence were made in Bahar , the liberal nationalist newspaper published in Mashhad yet no organized movement was ever set up as happened in Azerbaijan to work towards autonomy .”19 “

The governor of Khurassan between 1919-20 was Ahmad Qavam , who worked with the liberal nationalist element in the province , energetically tackling the problems caused by the depredation of tribes and bandits. With sayyid Ziya ‘s coup d’etat in 1921 , Qavam lost his influence and position due to his criticism of the new regime . Ziya subsequence gave order to Pisyani , as commander of the Khurassan gendarmerie , to arrest Qavam and bring him to Tehran . Pisyani executed the order and took over Qavam ‘s post as acting governor . He was later appointed as commander of the Khurassan army by Ahmad Shah . Future development moved quickly to change the situation , and sayyid Zia was within a few weeks replaced by Qavam himself , who naturally held no sympathy for Pisyani and the scene was set for a collision course between the two men .

Pisyani ‘s activities coincided with Iran’s most turbulent era . 1921 was watershed in modern Iranian history , with a complex of factors bringing matters to a head : general insecurity and confusion , incompetent leadership , and foreign intervention . On July 7 , 1921 , Pisyani received instructions from Ahmad Shah forbidding him to intervene a national affaire . Two days later , he received a further telegram , confirming the premiership of Qavam al –Saltana .

Qavams ‘s official appointment led him to take a firmer line over internal affairs , and his arrest and exile of certain influential people and attempted control of Khurassani matters led largely to the uprising. “ 20 “ Pisyani feared reprisals by Qavam after the coup of 1921 . but he had strong support among the Khurassani people . The populace chose a commission of six to dictate a telegram to the central government presenting Pisyani’s case “ 21 “ , laid out in the following points :

1. The budgetary status of the gendarmes should not change .
2. The gendarmerie ‘s promotion ladder should operate as previously .
3. Qavam al –Saltana ‘s horses and ammunition belonged to the gendarmerie even though the former carried his emblem , and should not therefore be reclaimed by Qavam .
4. Pisyani should be given two years paid leave in order to complete his studies abroad .
5. He should be escorted to the border by gendarmes .
6. The Belgian financial advisor , dismissed by the central government , should be re-instated. “ 22 “

These conditional were accepted by the Shah , with the exception of permission for Pisyani to travel abroad . Pisyani agreed , and released one of those arrested in order to make him governor in his place .

The situation in Khurassan was meanwhile rapidly deteriorating . Societies known as committees ‘ sprang up in Mashhad publishing tirades Tehran and the prime Minister , as well as Najm al –Saltana , governor of Khurassan . At the point , the government realized the precarious situation in Khurassan , and the danger of its imminent fall into the hands of Pisyani . Samsam al – Saltana was therefore chosen to govern the province . The appointment was resisted by Pisyani ‘s supporters , who requested his re-instatement as Commander of Khurassani forces .

Pisyani regained his influence once again in August 1922 , with the dismissal of his opponent

Shawkat ai –Mulk Pisyani reappointed the Belgian financial advisor to the Khurasan treasury , and various other government officials , including Col . Gillerup “ 23 “ were sent back to Tehran , disarmed . In control of the provincial government and gendarmerie . Pisyani resisted the pressure of the central government , and gained in local conflicts nor collaborated with foreign powers .” 24 “

Pisyani 's objective was autonomy for Khurasan not , as was commonly supposed , to attack Tehran and seize control of the central government . It seems that Pisyani could have seized Tehran with relative ease , since he had 8,000 trained men , against a badly organised government force of fewer than a thousand “ 25 “ . The central government instigated serious measures against Pisyani , provoking Khurasani 's tribes against him , with the result that 5,000 mounted guerrillas were soon headed towards Mashhad , but Pisyani successfully defeated the force before it reached Mashhad .

Quchan and Turbat Haydariyya rose against Pisyani and he left Mashhad to crush them leaving Mahmud Khan Nawzari in command . Pisyani then arrived at Quchan with the gendarmes and at Jafarabad where in 3 October 1921 when Pisyani and his small force of 150 gendarmes were circled by a force of strong 1,000 plus mounted Kurdish tribesmen in a battle fought half the gendarmes were killed and the other half fled . Pisyani fought bravely but was killed .” 26 “ his head was brought to Tehran to prove that he had been killed Mahmud Khan Nawzari reported the incident to the central government and was made governor , temporarily , of Khurasan . Although the movement had been suppressed , Major Ismail Khan – Bahaduri rose in an attempt to avenge Pisyani but was defeated and exiled .” 27 “

For five continuous years after his death, on 3 October people of Khorasan mourned his death. However, when Reza Shah came to power, any mourning for Pisyani was banned. The Pisyani family had been rivals to Reza Khan and had opposed the British plan to install him as Shah.

He is buried in Mashhad, Khorasan in the same garden that contains Nader Shah's tomb

GILAN MOVEMENT 1918-1922

Gilan was a likely area for a local nationalist movement , being separated from the Iranian plateau and Tehran by the Alburz mountain range and was distinct geographically , economically and linguistically and had a large enough middle class to support such a movement . “28”

The formation of brief rebellious Provincial Government in Kermanshah was followed in Gilan by armed insurrection organized by young Mashruti revolutionaries headed by Mirza Kuchik Khan , who was a Shiite Muslim and patriot of remarkable fighting qualities and who was an incorruptible leader . His intention was to free the country from external and internal corruption . “29” He drew up plan of national reform with a group of sympathetic men in Tehran in 1915 . It called for National independence , social reform and Islamic unity . “30 “

By 1918 , the Jangali movement of the lower classes was calling for agrarian reform and by 1920 the Provisional Revolutionary movement of Kuchik Khan pledged to ensure republicanism , personal freedom , the dismantling of unilateral foreign agreements, sexual and ethnic equality , and the defence of Islam .” 31 “ To safeguard Iranian strength, the Jangalis originally announced their intention to fight the Russian British and even German – Turkish “ 32 “forces as well as internal bands of tribesmen and robbers , in 1918 , although the British invasion overcame resistance in Anzali , Soviet – Iranian friendship societies were formed in

Rasht and Anzali upon Russo – British fighting , Kuchik had four option : fight everyone , no-one , the Russians or the British .”³³ “ The extreme communist Ihsan Allah Khan persuaded him to support the Russian forces , although he was not very enthusiastic .

On 4th June 1920 , Kuchik Khan and his 2,000 men took Rasht , proclaiming Gilan a Republic . As promised earlier that year . The Soviets landed at Anzali , putting the British to flight , and inspired strength in a national liberation movement .

Ivanov divides the existence of the Republic into three stages . From May to July , 1920 , Kuchik ‘s government localized the movement , ending with the withdrawal of his troops to a forest . From July to October the coalition between Kuchik Khan and Ihsan Allah Khan disintegrated and on July 31st , a new government came into existence in Gilan led by Ihsan Allah Khan . His followers and those of Sultan – Zada constituted the National Committee for the Liberation of Persia , but the failure of that Revolutionary movement ultimately passed the leadership of the movement to the Persian Communist Party in October 1920 . Its leader , Haydar Khan , decided to unite all revolutionary feeling “ ³⁴ “ gradually and therefore limited action to agrarian reform . By the 8th May , 1921 , an agreement was reached between Haydar Khan , Kuchak and the Gilan government leader and the Communists , so that on 4th August , 1921 . Gilan was declared a Soviet Republic . The weakness of the movement was such that independence was never actually demanded , the state calling itself the “Persian Soviet Socialist Republic ” ³⁵ “ . Kuchik capitulated to the Tehran government of Vusuq al –Dowle in January , 1922 , but rebellion re-appeared in May , 1922.

Ivanov explains the failure of this movement as being due to the repressive measures of the Tehran government and British aid ; and to the lack of a country –wide front – a factor caused by the impossibility of communication with the National Liberation movements of Azerbaijan and Khurassan . Also ideological and personal differences amongst leader overshadowed the principle aim of establishing an anti – British movement , and the compromise sought between Ihsan Allah Khan and Kuchik Khan “³⁶ “ was fraught with difficulties . Tehran and Britain further discredited the movement by implying Soviet dependence , and indeed actual Soviet support failed to appear . With these in mind , we should look deeper for the reasons for the internal disunity allowing the above factors to take their toll.

Shaykh Khazal of Muhammara

In early 1920s, the southern part of Khuzestan, with its large Arab population, was semi-autonomous under the rule of Sheikh Khaz'al .An ambitious local Arab leader, Khaz'al was nominally under the jurisdiction of the Qajar king. In reality, he was protected and controlled by the British, whose 10,000-man army, the South Persia Rifles, operated with immunity in southern Iran. The British, without notifying Iran, were also providing Khaz'al with meager shares of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.They even considered Khazal as a possible king for Iraq or for an independent principality in southern Persia. Khaz'al was also the darling of many Sunnite Iraqi nationalists, who sought to foment dissent among Iran’s Arab population by referring to Khuzestan as Arabestān and glorifying Khaz'al as its independent “Sultan “.

The tribal leaders of the Bani Kaab, an Arab tribe which had originally come from the area of what is now Kuwait in the 16th century, had often been the Imperial-appointed tax farmers for the entire Of these factions, the Muhaisin clan, led by Jabir al-Kaabi, became the strongest and under his leadership the Bani Kaab were reunified under a single authority province for many years. The Bani Kaab were the largest and most powerful tribe in the province. Jabir maintained law and order, and established Mohammerah as a free port and sheikhdom, of which he was Sheikh. Jabir also became Imperial-appointed governor-general of the province.

Before the days of Reza Shah , Khuzestan , an important oil province , caused problems to the central government despite its position as the main centre of foreign trade . Bad communications meant that little control could be kept over the Shaykh of Muhammara who resented paying taxes to the central government and who was eventually in direct confrontation with it . He had , early in the century ,” 37 “ Sold land , including Abadan island , to the Anglo-Persian oil Company , in return for scanty assurances of his own safe position . But his autonomy was not safeguarded against Reza Shah in 1924 , who , despite popular suspicion , had British support . However there was no sign at first of Arab nationalist ,”38 “ despite the Arabic tongue of the area , although embryonic nationalism did appear with an increasing awareness by the people of their position , and the feeling grew with the arrival of Persian – speaking oil workers . “39”

However from the very beginning of the rise to power of Reza Khan , Shaykh Khazal recognized the threat to his position from him and thence proceeded to protect himself , firstly by recruiting support from the tribal chiefs of the Lur , Bakhtiari and Khamsa tribes , in opposition to Reza Khan ,”40 “ and secondly by strengthening his relationship with Ahmad Shah .”41 “ Finally he allied himself to the Majlis opposition but all these ploys ended in failure . Also he sought to enlist British support and styled himself the defender of Islam against Reza Shah ‘s secularism . However as central government began to consolidate Britain withdrew her support from the Shaykh and transferred it to Reza Shah , Thus destroying Khazal ‘s separatist ambitions Khuzestan .

Sheikh Khazal rebellion refers to the 1924 Arab nationalist uprising by the Sheikh of Mohammerah Khaz'al al-Ka'bi in Iranian Khuzestan. The rebellion was quickly and efficiently suppressed by Reza Khan with minimal casualties, subduing the Bakhtiari tribes allied with Sheikh Khazal and resulting in his surrender.

Khaz'al spent the rest of his life under virtual house arrest, unable to travel beyond Tehran's city limits. He was able to retain ownership of his properties in Kuwait and Iraq, where he was exempted from taxation. He died in May 1936 while alone in his house, as earlier in the day his servants had been taken to court by the police. It is said that he did not die of natural causes, but that he was murdered by one of the guards stationed outside his house under direct orders from Reza Shah.

Abed Al – Masih Al Antagi described him as “ jovial , bright –faced , attractive , eloquent , hospital , noble , kind , patient , compassionate , righteous , pious , Muslim , honest , sincere , prayer of five daily prayers , and a courageous hero during wars . “ 42 “

Shaykh Khazal ‘s lengthy rule was due to a combination of an ignorant local populace , a weak central government , geographic isolation and foreign , that British , interference . As soon as the British withdrew their support for the Shaykh , Reza Khan launched a three – pronged military attack , and Khuzestan was subdued in a matter of hours , with almost no loss of life . “ 43 “ The integration of Khuzestan into Iran together with further development of oil fields and the growth in size and importance of port and refinery centres such as Khurramshahr and Abadan , developed political awareness and a sense of national identity among the inhabitants of Khuzestan , although there was a further rising there in 1946 . “44”

CONCLUSION

For Iran , the growth of a virile Arab nationalism has proved problematic . Due to this predominance of Arabic – speaking Khuzestanis and also on account of the huge oil reserves .

All revolutionary movements which had formed throughout Iran between 1918 and 1922 were more anti – Imperialist than pro – proletarian by nature . Their major weakness however was their geographical dispersion and a lack of communication with each other . Hence the reactionary central government was able to suppress these outbursts one at a time . The movements may not have destroyed the feudal system and halted Imperialism in the short term , but they did prepare the ground for the defeat of the Qajar dynasty and , together with the Bolshevik Revolution in the Soviet Union , proved a serious setback to British interests in Iran “ 45 “. However Reza Shah ‘s rise to power re-established Britain’s Iranian interests and suppressed revolutionary movements . After his abdication in 1941 , several such movements re – appeared , for example the Fiqā – yi Democrat and Kumālā-yi Kurdestān

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