

MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT OF IRANIANS ABROAD SINCE THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT OF IRANIANS ABROAD SINCE THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION" submitted by me for the award of the degree of Masters of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any degree of this university or any other university.

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Dedicated

To My Loving Parents

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For any drawback in this dissertation if any, I alone responsible for it.

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CONTENTS

S.NO.	Particulars	Page No.
1.	Acknowledgement	si
2.	CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1-23
3.	CHAPTER 2: IRANIAN MIGRATION ABROAD: CONTEXT AND POLICY	24-43
4.	CHAPTER 3: IRANIAN EMIGRATION: CAUSES AND ESTIMATE	44-63
5.	CHAPTER 4: SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF IRANIAN EMIGRANTS	64-81
6.	CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	82-89
	Bibliography	90-97

LIST OF TABLES

S.No.	Table No.	Particulars	Page No.
1.	2.1	Iranian Migration Abroad During the Three Phases.	40
2.	3.1	Persian Diaspora Census 1996	48-49
3.	3.2	Geographical Distribution of the Total Iran-Born Population, by Non-Student/Student 16 years and Older, for Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SAMA) in United States, 1980.	51-52
4.	3.3	Iranian Migration to United States 1965-98	54
5.	3.4	Arrival of Iranians Immigrants and Refugees to Canada	57
5.	4.1	Educational Qualification of Iranians in United States	68
6.	4.2	Occupational Characteristics of the Iranians Population in the United States.	69
7.	4.3	Demographic and Socio-economic Characteristics of Iranians who immigrated in 1975-80 and those who immigrated before 1975, male and female, non-students, Los Angeles.	72-73
8.	4.4	Occupational Profile Iranian women in United States, 1990-96.	74

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses about the migration of Iranians abroad, and also briefly deals with the history of Iran in the 20th century in terms of pre-Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary periods. It also discusses the migration pattern, destination of Iranians and their status abroad.

Migration is a global phenomenon, which has a tremendous impact on the demography, culture, economy and politics of the state¹. Migration is human phenomenon as old as dating back to hunter and gathers stage of human civilization, but international migration is a relatively recent phenomenon. International migration means crossing the boundary of a political or administrative unit for a certain minimum period. It was only in the early 20th century that the system of nation-states, passports, and visas developed to regulate the flow of people across national borders. The volume and the flow of migration fluctuate depending on global events. In 1965, an estimated 75 million people were living outside their country. In the mid-1990s, about 125 million people lived outside their country of birth or citizenship. They account for about 2 percent of world population and are expanding by 2 million to 4 million annually².

People migrate from developing countries to develop countries in search for better economic prospect, educational opportunities and some time for political asylum. The volume and direction of these migrations depend on the political, cultural and economic factors in the sending and receiving areas.

¹ Eytan Meyers, *International Immigration Policy: A Theoretical and comparative analysis*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), P. 2.

² Ibid.

Today North America, Western Europe, and the Middle Eastern countries are world's major destinations for the migrants.

There are broadly two types of international migration, one is voluntary migration and another is forced migration. In the voluntary migration people migrate for better economic prospects, one such category of migrants' rather of temporary labourers who migrate for a limited period (from a few months to several years) in order to take up employment and send money back home or to take professional or technical training. Another category of migrants are highly skilled and business migrants and professionals who move within the internal labour markets of trans-national corporations and international organizations. Many countries welcome such migrants with skill and capital³.

The forced migration broadly includes refugees, asylum seekers and those who are affected from war, political unrest and ecological deterioration. According to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is a person residing outside his or her country of nationality, who is unable or unwilling to return because of a well founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Signatories to the Convention undertake to protect refugee by allowing them enter and granting temporary or permanent resident.

International migration is an integral part of globalization, which may be characterized as the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life⁴. The prime indicator of globalization is the rapid increment in the cross-border flows of all sorts: e.g. finance, trade, ideas, media products and the people. The flow of

³ Stephen Castles, "International Migration and the Beginning of the Twenty-first century: Global Trends and Issues", *International Social Science Journal*, vol. 165, September 2000, p. 270. See also, Alder Stephen, *International Migration and Dependency*, Cower Publication, Hampshire: 1981, and G. Zlotnik, "International Migration 1965-96: An Overview", *population and Development Review*, vol. 24, no. 3, 1998, pp. 429-68.

⁴ Ibid, p. 271.

capital and commodities are generally welcomed by the holders of economic and political powers with open arms, but the competition for the resources and the culture differences are viewed as potential threats to the national sovereignty and identity of the receiving countries, hence many governments and political movements seek to restrict immigration.

In the case of Iran as we are going to discuss later in detail, many Iranians left their homeland due the political unrest during the Islamic revolution. Many of them were forced to leave the country, because they were associated with the former regime or those who could not tolerate the implementation of strict Islamic policies. People are still migrating from Iran, but reasons now are rather economic. Before going into a brief Iranian history, a socio-economic profile of Iran is presented below.

Iran is the second largest country in the Middle East in terms of area, after Saudi Arabia⁵. It extends over a total area of 1,648,000 sq km (636,300 sq miles). There are five major cities in Iran, each with one million or more population Tehran, Mashad, Esfahan, Tabriz, and Shiraz. In 1990 Tehran was ranked as the 26th largest city in the world⁶. The country is roughly triangular in shape, with its longest side extending as a slight arc for 2,500 km (1,600 miles) from the border with Turkey in the northwest to the border with Pakistan in the southeast. The third point of the triangle lies in the northeast, about halfway along Iran's border with Turkmenistan. Iran's extent from north to south is 1,600 km (1,000 miles) and from east to west is 1,700 km (1,100 miles).

⁵ John W. Limbert, *Iran: At War With History*. (London, 1980), P. 5, The names "Iran" and "Persia", both are used to designate the same country, but are not true synonyms. "Persia" is derived from the classical "*Persis*," which signifies the province of Persa, in Arabian Known as Fars. The word Iran, on other hand is derived from "*Airiya*" of the Avesta and signifies the 'land of Aryans' or the "illustrious"⁵. In the Sassanian times, when the vast Iranian empire was at its Zenith, it was called Iranianshar; and in 1935 the government adopted Iran as the official name and requested all the foreign countries to use it henceforth for all purposes. On the other hand the language of the country is Persian, Farsi to the inhabitants, derived over centuries from the language of ancient "*Parsa*".

⁶ Prakash C. Jain, *Population and society in West Asia: Essay in Comparative Demography*. (New Delhi: National Publishing House, 2001), P. 136.

The topographic formation extends beyond the frontiers of Iran though this does not mean that it provides easy access, as its present boundaries are guarded by formidable natural barriers. The entire western frontier and the country inland from the Persian Gulf is protected by lofty ramparts of rock, where steep passes lead from sea level to a height of over 7,000 feet and down again to the plateau. Difficult passes isolate the Caspian littoral from the rest of Iran, and along the northern and eastern frontiers the approaches are either through hilly tract or across vast spaces and inhabitable.

In terms of population Iran with the total population of 69,018,924 in 2004 is the third largest country after Egypt (69,458,680) and Turkey (73,598,181) in Middle East⁷. This figure is more than double the 1975 population of 33,379,000 Iranians. During 1965 to 1980 Iran's population growth rate was 3.2 percent and in 1980-85 it was 2.8 percent⁸. This decline in population during 1980s is attributed to governments' major population policies. Iran's population policies changed dramatically in the last decades of the 20th century. After the 1979 revolution, Iran's new Islamic government adopted pronatalist policies and dismantled family planning programs started in previous decades. The government advocated higher fertility to produce more Muslims who could spread Iran's Islamic revolution throughout the region⁹. The minimum legal age at marriage of girls was reduced. As Iran began to rebuild its economy after the Iran-Iraq war ended in 1988, the massive population growth became an obstacle in economic development. The government reversed its policy, and advocated for the lower fertility rate. Since then the government has been distributing contraceptives free of cost and providing free sterilization services in government clinics. By 2004 the growth

⁷ World Bank: *World Development Report*, (2004).

⁸ Alan Richards and John Waterbury, *A political Economy of the Middle East: State, Class and Economic Development*. (Boulder: Westview press, 1990), P. 83.

⁹ Abdel R. Omran and Farzanal Roudi, "The Middle East Population Puzzle", *Population Bulletin*, Vol. 48, no. 1, July, 1993, p. 33.

rate had declined to 1.1 percent per year, with a birth rate of 17 per 1,000 persons and a death rate of 6 per 1,000. Nevertheless, Iran's population remains young: about 55 percent were 24 years of age or younger in 2003.

Overall population density in 2004 was 42 persons per sq km (109 per sq miles). In 2002, 66 percent of the population lived in urban areas, and 44 percent resided in rural areas. The problem of over urbanization in Iran caused tremendous problems. Northern and western Iran are more densely populated than the arid eastern half of the country, where population density in the interior desert region is only 1 percent of the national average.

Pre-Revolutionary Period

Iran's Islamic Revolution of 1979 was one of the most fascinating and surprising event of 20th century making the fall of Mohammad Raza Shah Pahlavi (1919-1980) the most powerful emperor of Iran. Reza Shah enjoyed the support of United States and other western powers. He established Pahlavi dynasty in 1925 by dethroning the Qajars. The then Iranian *Majlis* voted to support the creation of the new Pahlavi dynasty, the first ever which ascended to power without the assistance of any tribe. Reza Shah moved from strength to strength and centralized the state. He used the meagre oil revenue to modernize the armed forces and state finance institutions were formed. A relatively large state bureaucracy was created. Hundreds of modern schools were built and for the first time some of them became co-educational. The University of Tehran was founded in 1934 and the government sent hundreds of students to Europe for higher education.

Raza Shah sought to secularize Iranian politics. Towards this goal, he drastically reduced the *Ulamas* power and suppressed those who dared to challenge him. Raza Shah replaced Islamic law with European Civil and penal Laws. New regulation limited the power or control over the charitable lands. Equally significant was Reza Shah's forced unveiling of women in 1936

making Iran the first Islamic country to declare veiling “illegal”. Veiled women were harassed by the police, forcing many of them into exile, as they refused to appear unveiled in public.

The Shah wanted to create a national identity out of many ethnic ones, who often dramatized the dress. Out of this arose the uniformity of dress law of 1928. It required all males to wear western style dress and round peaked cap. Later to be called Pahlavi cap.¹⁰ Only genuine clerics and theological students were exempted. And just as in the case of military conscription the responsibility was on the applicant to prove his bonafide. In retrospect, this law proved to be the turning point in the Shah- Ulama relationship, with power shifting decidedly in the favour of the Shah. A government decree in January 1929 restricted the definition of a theological student or a teacher. This led to protest. The police took to harassing theological students of Qom. But the Shah ignored the protest. It was one of the many steps taken to reduce the number of religious students and teachers. During the next decade number and size of theologian schools in Tehran, Isfahan, Tabriz and Mashad declined considerably.¹¹

One of the most important aspect of Raza shah Pahlavi’s attack on the power of the clergy was his effort to establish a secular system of law codes and courts without *Ulamas*’ participation. The law of *Sharia* court of 1930 restricted them to marriage, divorce, guardianship and deciding only the innocence or guilt of the accused. The attorney general and state courts were given the authority to decide which cases were to be headed by the *Sharia* court, and what sentence to pass on those who had been found guilty. The law concerning to registration of documents and property of 1932 ended the right of the *Sharia* court to act as a registrar of documents: that was a major source for income to

¹⁰ Dilip Hiro, “*Iran under Ayatollahs*”, (London: Rutledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), p. 26.

¹¹ Ibid.

the *Ulamas*. Finally the law passed in December 1936 barred clerics from acting as judges in the state courts.

During World War II, Reza Shah and his development programs came to a sudden end and new problems appeared.¹² On 25 August 1941 Soviet and British troops marched into Iran at five different places. The Soviet forces occupied the northern part of Iran and British the southern part. During this turmoil Raza Shah left for Mauritius, then a British colony with the fear of deportation and placed his 23 year old son on the throne. Now the fortune of Peacock throne came in the hand of a young boy named Mohammed Raza Shah Pahlavi who had no experience. The successor of Raza Shah was too young to rule, and Iran came totally under the foreign power, and the army of Iran was reduced to internal security only, he could only reign not rule.

During the first decade of his rule, the inexperienced Shah faced the occupation and the abdication of Raza Shah and the new economic and social problems created by the war growing instability and unrest. After the war United States increased its interference in Iran for the oil and its important strategic location. In 1947 the United States firm of Morrison kundson proposed the first developmental plan for Iran and in 1950 US signed Mutual Defence Agreement with Iran, implementing its doctrine of containing Soviet expansionism

In 1949, Mossadeq a western educated Qajar aristocrat formed the National Front. Mossadeq National Front quickly gained popularity demanding for the nationalization of oil industry. During Mossadeq's twenty- eight month tenure (April 1951 to 1953), the oil industry was nationalized and the National Oil Company was subsequently formed, the Shah was forced to reign only and not to rule as per the 1906 constitution had stipulated, the democracy flourished. Mossadeq was the first Middle Eastern leader to nationalize a major

¹² Nikkei R. Keddie, *Roots of Revolution: An interpretative History of Iran*, (London: Yale University Press, 1981), P. 113.

West- controlled oil industry. That is why he was never supported by any major Western power. After Iran took over the oil installations, Britain threatened to use military force to recapture them. Britain boycotted Iranian oil, imposed Sanctions and took them to international court¹³.

Mossadeq faced immense economic difficulties. Because of the western boycott of Iranian oil and the economic sanctions imposed on the country. There was also some problem within the national front also, but the major threat came from outside. The Eisenhower Doctrine which United States advocated started covert activities against the Mossadeq movement. The Western powers were fully conscious of the fact that the Mossadeq's bold nationalized policy would affect their personal interests in oil- rich Persian Gulf. Mossadeq was arrested and Shah got his regime restored with help of western power, especially United States.

During the initial stage of the oil nationalization movement, Khomeini stood on the side lines. In its later phase, he became critical of Mossadeq for falling under the influence of the Tide party, which Khomeini himself had destroyed. He was equally opposed to the deal, which Shah made with western oil consortium. Later he openly condemned 'the plundering of the nation's wealth' by traitors in the government allied to imperialism. Shah further strengthened Iran's economic and cultural ties with the West. There occurred rapid developments in economy with six percent of annual growth rate. The regime further gave their consortium in mid January 1965. Between 1956 and 1972, the share of industry in the gross domestic product (GDP) rose from 13.6 percent to nearby 20 percent; where as that of agriculture fell from 30 percent to 16 percent. The 7.6 percent change the share of industry in the GDP, in the year 1956-1972 between took place due to the increase in the shares of services sector.

¹³ Parviz Daneshvar, *Revolution in Iran*, (London: St. Martin's Press, 1996), p. 31.

Public education and health services improved significantly. During the decade of 1963-72 the number of hospital beds increased by two folds and doctors threefold, to 12,750. Between 1963 and 1977 the education system expanded to three times of its previous. The enrolment of senior school was modest, but the rise in the student body of technical, vocational and teachers training colleges was staggering from 14,240 to 227,500. The expansion in the university population too was equally dramatic: from 24,885 to 154,215. There was also an impressive increase in the number of Iranian students at foreign, mainly western universities: from 18,000 to 80,000.¹⁴

With the launching of the White Revolution (*Engelab-e Safad*) in the early 1960s the temporary understanding between the Shah and the *Ulama* came to an end. The political upsurge that followed was significant in two aspects. First Khomeini emerged as a charismatic and an uncompromising leader of the opposition front. This was due to the fact that while the *Ulama* had begun the agitation mainly because of the introduction of the land reform bill, Khomeini rather kept silent on this issue, and focused his attention on the issues which had a wider appeal. His criticism was centred on subjects such as: the autocratic rule and the violation of the constitution; the proposal to grant capitulatory right to American advisors, the contract of a \$ 200- million deal with USA for the purchase of weapons: and above all, the new friend Israel¹⁵. Such a wide and diverse dimension of the attacks helped Khomeini to bring even the secular forces, especially the powerful student's wing, under his leadership¹⁶.

Secondly, the vibrant political upsurge was "a kind of dress rehearsal for the 1978-79 Revolution". The demonstrations that spread through out the main

¹⁴ Dilip Hiro, n. 10, p. 29.

¹⁵ Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between two Revolutions*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), p. 425.

¹⁶ Azhar Tabri, "The Role of the Clergy in Modern Iranian Politics", in Nikkei R. Keddie (ed.), *Religion and Politics in Iran: Shi'i Islam from Quietism and Revolution*, (New Havana: Conn., 1983), P. 49.

cities of Iran after the arrest of Khomeini were an expression of popular solidarity and readiness to fight with the dictatorial regime. In the tussle between the government forces and the *Ashura*¹⁷ marchers followed by riot where thousands were killed reportedly. Though Khomeini was deported temporarily from Iran to Turkey and then to Najaf in Iraq, there he proved to be much more dangerous than he was inside the country.¹⁸ He sharpened his attacks on Shah comparing him to *Yazid*, the most villainous character in the Shi'i history and urged people to overthrow the Shah regime. Henceforth, in a series of lectures to religious students, he set forth the new theory of '*Velayat-e faqih*'. In this process Khomeini developed the Shi'i traditionalist concept on the nature of the government in the occultation period. Denying any place for monarchy in Islam, Khomeini proposed that *faqihs* should be entrusted with the full responsibility of the business of government in an Islamic polity.

Khomeini condemned Reza Shah for unveiling of women and for forcing them to come to offices with out *Hijab*, and also for the spread of co-education. Khomeini was the first person who openly challenged a person like Shah. Khomeini had full confidence that *Ulama* can lead the nation and he was very critical of Shah for curtailing the power of *ulama*. Due to his criticism of Shah and for gaining enormous popularity in and out side Iran the regime under threat arrested Khomeini again on June 1963. After the arrest of Khomeini, thousands of people came on the streets protesting against this action. Khomeini also got the support of Grand Ayatollahs including Ayatollah Sharitmadari and Hussein Ali Montaziri. In Tehran after the arrest of Imam Khomeini the June Uprising took place. Thousands of supporters made an aborted attempt to take over Tehran's main radio station, but succeeded only in damaging some government buildings and some liquor shops owned by Bahais.

¹⁷ Tenth Day of Muharram, Shi'iet faith observe morn on this day in the memory of Hussain the grand son of Muhammad.

¹⁸ Malise Ruthven, *Islam in the World*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), P. 339-40.

Iran's fascinating revolutionary movement, which started in 1977 and culminated in the downfall of Shah on January 16, 1979, went through several stages. Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic leadership and umbrella of *Shi'ism* gradually became more united and revolutionary in 1978, and effectively manipulated all the resources available to it. To lower the pressure from the opposition, Shah started the programme of liberalization. He was prepared to award the opposition, a little room to breathe, but he was not ready to share power with anyone. A small group of pro-Khomeini followers held a demonstration in front of the Tehran bazaar and demanded the return of the exiled Ayatollah. Surprisingly, the police did not apply any force. Gradually, dozen of professional associations like the Association of Iranian Jurist and the Iranian Writers Association were reactivated, and some new ones, like the Iranian society for the Human Rights, were created.¹⁹ The students at the universities were allowed to have peaceful marches and gatherings. The liberalization policy provided the opposition the source for mobilizing their resources and strategies against the regime.

The United States welcomed the Shah's liberalization policies and encouraged him to continue with these. The visit of President Carter in 1978, praised the Shah for his stable government. But the situation reversed when the movement entered into a new phase. The grand *Ulamas* like Mohammad Raza Golpayegani, Sharimadiri all demanded the withdrawal of Shah and return of the Imam. The *Ulamas* in Qom organized a peaceful march in January 1978. The peaceful march became violent when police started interfering, dozen of people were killed, hundred were injured, and a few government buildings were set on fire. From the riot of January 1978 the regime became aware of the organizational network of the *Ulama*.

¹⁹ Mohsin M. M. *The making of Iran Islamic revolution: Form Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, (Boulder: Westview press, 1994), P. 111.

In August 1978, Shah appointed, Ja'far Imami as the new Prime Minister. Imami called for national reconciliation to save the fearful monarchy. He abolished the *Rastakhiz party*, the Shah's last organized source of civilian support. Imami made bulk of concessions and these concessions created division between the advisors of Shah, but these concessions were welcomed by the thousands of exiled Iranians, many of whom returned to Iran and joined the bandwagon of the revolutionary movement. As the popular movement grew stronger, the Carter administration became more confused and divided. And Shah was looking for someone to save his sinking regime. Khomeini for the first time began publicly elaborating on some general ideas about the future form of government in Iran, namely an Islamic Republic. In a declaration on November 5, 1978, he explicitly indicated that the "goal of our Islamic movement is to demolish the monarchical order" and to establish an 'Islamic Republic which will be a protector of Iran's independence and democracy'.²⁰

Imami was followed by Bakhtiar for the post of prime minister. But Bakhtiyar's resignation removed the last vestige of the Iranian monarchy. It was thought that fresh attempts might be made on behalf of the monarchy, especially by those who stood to lose by its demise. But with loyalist leadership in hopeless disarray, the imperial Guard and the Brigade of the immortals could not stand for long²¹. After 37 years on the peacock throne he was ignominiously driven out of Iran. The Shah's departure from Iran was the end of monarchy in a land ruled by the kings for more than 2,500 years. When the departure of Shah was announced on the radio, hundreds of thousands of people poured on the streets with photographs of Khomeini in their hand. There was also some clash between pro-Shah and anti Shah Protesters.

²⁰. Ibid, p. 125.

²¹. A. H. H. Abidi, *Iran at the Crossroads: The Dissent Movement*. (New Delhi: Patriot Publisher, 1989), p. 2.

Post-Revolutionary Period

The Post-Revolutionary period is generally considered as the period of Ayatollah Khomeini, but we are also considering reform period as post-Revolutionary. The era of Ayatollah Khomeini and Islamic revolution can be characterized by an attempt to attain two main goals. First, the new regime sought to consolidate, institutionalize and perpetuate its own control. Second, and more importantly it sought to implement Ayatollah Khomeini's revolutionary ideology, which offered to alleviate the general feeling of disillusionment in the country and to transform Iran into a prosperous country, thereby entrenching and legitimizing the rule of the clerics.

On the February 1st 1979 Khomeini returned to Tehran after 15 years in exile. Millions of Iranians through-out the country participated in the welcome ceremonies. But the government, which knew the arrival of Imam Khomeini, will be the beginning of its fall, decided to close down all the major airports. Major demonstrations were held throughout the country, people demanded to open the airport. Government realized that it could not prevent the revolutionary fervor of people²². He was welcomed by the millions who filled the streets to get a glimpse of him. After his arrival, in a speech in *Behesht-e Zahra* cemetery in south Tehran surrounded by 40 members of the air force armed with submachine guns he called the previous Bakhtiyar government illegal. On 5th February 1979, Khomeini finally named Mehdi Bazargan to lead the provisional government of a new Republic and warned that anyone who acted against it will violate sacred religious law and will be punished harshly. There ends the old order finally when the last vestiges of the Shah's regime i.e., the military establishment, was neutralized. With this the remnants of the Pahlavi state also disintegrated and paved the way for a new revolutionary force to establish itself on the ruins of the old.

²² Idris Ahmad, *Glimpses of Social and Cultural History of Iran*. (Delhi: Diamond press, 2003), p.195.

When Shah left, Iran was in turmoil. Governmental authority was practically nonexistent and what little was left was being challenged by the autonomy seeking ethnic minorities, the leftist, and the conservatives. The security forces were demoralized. The economy was in a shambles: thousands of managers and bureaucrats had fled the country, oil production was low, strikers were reluctant to resume work, major industries were idle, unemployment was high, and inflation was rampant.²³ The provisional government of Bazargan was trying to expand its popular base. The migration of thousands of middle-class Iranians to the west during the early days of the revolution had substantially diminished the size of the constituency from which the nationalist government could mobilize support. This situation made it more urgent to attract the lower classes, which by 1979 were the largest block of the urban population. The activists in the Iranian revolution were mainly urban.²⁴ Thousands of people were unemployed and the recent migrants from the rural areas were roaming in the streets of the cities. In such a context, the world recession and the changing development policy had disastrous effects; the economic growth stage was set for the Iranian revolution.

Less than a month after his arrival, Khomeini sanctioned the formation of the Islamic Republican Party. The party was founded by Ayatollah Mohammad Hosseini Behesti, Hojatlislam Syed Ali Khamenei, and Hojatolislam Hashimi Rafsanjani, among others. The Republican Party had become very famous in Iran. The main task of this party was to coordinate the activities of the revolutionaries. Khomeini took all the power of State and appointed his students and loyalist in the Secret Council of Islamic Revolution. The struggle for the constitution began, Khomeini wanted Islamic Republic but the *Feda'yun* groups wanted "People's Democratic Republic". On this crucial

²³ Mohsen M. M, n. 19, p. 143.

²⁴ Allan Richards and John Waterbury, *The Political Economy of Middle East: State, Class and Economic Development*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 427.

issue the provisional government organized a national referendum to determine the popular will on the change from a Pahlavi monarchy to an Islamic republic. All the parties were allowed to participate in the elections. Iranians over the age of 16 were asked the single question. "Do you want an Islamic republic to replace the monarchy²⁵? Although the leftist and other ethnic groups boycotted the referendum. As the government claims that 98.2 percent voters voted in the favour of the Islamic republic. On May 1, 1979 Khomeini declared the first day of the government of Allah on earth: the Islamic republic of Iran was born.

After the formation of Islamic republic the government and the orthodox *Ulamas* started interfering in state policies. The first move by the revolutionaries to monopolize the judiciary and to introduce the *Sharia* court instead of secular court. During the six months of the revolution, the Revolutionary Courts executed 248 officers of the former regime. In addition, thousands were imprisoned or forced into exile. The conservatives finally created a state within the state that remained outside the jurisdiction of the provisional government. Bazargan was too aware of Khomeini's direct interventions into the state affairs and growing powers of the mini state. The hostage crises led to the first major confrontation between US and the Islamic regime. Khomeini's early advisors said that one of Khomeini's main aim in prolonging the hostage crises was to shake the United States into accepting Iran's sovereignty and independence and to awaken Iranians to the limited power of the United States. The revolutionaries used anti-Americanism to solidify their position.

The first presidential election in Iran held in 1980, Bani Sadr won the first presidential election with huge margin. Bani Sadr presidency coincided with one of the most tumultuous period of Iran's recent history. Iran was simultaneously going through four profound crisis: the transition from an

²⁵. A. H. H. Abidi, n. 21, p. 7.

autocratic monarchy to an Islamic theocracy, the intense internal rivalry, war with Iraq, and the hostage crisis. In the period of turmoil the unity and development was the most needed in Iran, Bani Sadr presidency brought more and more division in Iran. The Bani Sadr's presidency lasted only for sixteen months which was not surprising however it was a surprise how that it lasted so long.

By the third year of the Islamic Revolution in 1982, Ayatollah Khomeini and his dedicated supporters were in total control of the state and the revolutionary institutions. For all reasons the opponents of the Islamic Republic had been silenced, killed, or exiled. In August 1982, all un-Islamic codes and laws adopted since 1907 were declared null by the Supreme Judicial Council. The same body ordered all judges to render their decisions based exclusively on the Islamic/Shi'i codified laws and the fatwa's by reputed Ayatollahs. Secular judges, who controlled the judiciary before the Islamic Revolution, were replaced by the Ulama, who were rigorously trained in the Islamic Laws.

The Family protection Law of 1967, which under some circumstances granted women the right to ask for divorce, was declared illegal. Polygamy was legalized. The impact of Islamization on the educational system had been equally momentous. The campaign to change the essence of the educational system began with the launching of the Cultural Revolution in the summer of 1980²⁶. The campaign to cleanse the universities was also designed to eliminate the leftist. In April 1980, the council of the Islamic revolution gave an ultimatum to the leftist to either evacuate the campus or be prepared to pay a heavy price. The wiser groups who had some financial support left the country and started operating from outside and others who remained in the country were persecuted. Khomeini also introduced a supervising committee to supervise the restructuring of the educational system. Consisting of seven members of

²⁶. Mohsen M. M, n. 19, p. 201.

Islamic Republican Party, the new council dismissed unIslamic elements and closed down the universities indefinitely. As the universities closed down, a number of students left Iran for higher education to the countries like United States and other European countries.

Like other aspects of Islamization, compulsory veiling was imposed gradually. There was heavy demonstration by the women activists who were against the Khomeini's statement that working women should wear Islamic form of modest dresses. In spite of all the protest by the women veiling became compulsory for women in 1980. Thus, what went up by force went down by force: in the 1930s, Reza Shah unveiled women to modernize Iran and in 1980s Khomeini veiled them to Islamize Iran. Due to forced veiling in Iran number of educated and modern women left country. Those who remained in the country took all the opportunities to publicly show their disapproval of veiling by wearing colourful scarves and by not completely hiding their hair under the scarf.

In June 1989, Ayatollah Khomeini died. As long as he was alive, Khomeini was the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Revolution was Khomeini²⁷. It took only eight hour to elect Khamenei as the new *faqih*. The Council of Experts announced that Khamenei was selected temporarily till the constitution is revised. The constitution of 1989 was totally different from the constitution of 1979, and it was revised under the leadership of Hashimi Rafsanjani. Under the new constitution the *Marjeyat* clause was removed. After the new revised constitution Khamenei became the new undisputed *Villayat Faqih*.

During the period of Rafsanjani regime (1989-1997) there occurred some changes in the policy of Islamic revolution. The enforcement of veiling was not as strict as it was before. The eight year long war with Iraq totally devastated

²⁷. Ibid, p. 219.

the Iranian economy. Hundreds of thousands of people lost their homes and livelihood and became displaced. To build war torn economy Rafsanjani made an attempt to centralize political and economic power, and tried to build good relationship with the Iranian expertise to rebuild the war-ruined economy. The country at that time needed expertise and physical capital to implement its Five Year Development plan.

The presidential election of 1997 was the victory of reformist over the conservatives. Muhammad Khatami won the election with huge margin. The victory of Khatami was full of promises to revive the ailing economy and promotion of civil society. The main plank of Khatami's platform was political reform, with its stress on the rule of law, respect of civil rights and greater openness in society, acceptance of political criticism, greater social justice, and reinforcement of the institutions of civil society. He also advocated administrative reform and fairer distribution of wealth. Khatami faced lots of problem during the early phase of his tenure such as confrontation with conservatives, and the problem of oil exporting, and shortage of social amenities.

On the eve of second year in President's office Khatami announced the long awaited economic recovery plan called economic rehabilitation plan. The plan listed many economic concerns, such as unemployment and urgent need of jobs, high inflation, the need to harness it in order to protect people's purchasing power and guarantee their minimum living standard. Due to all his policies Khatami was under the tremendous pressure from the orthodox group. Due to the control of conservatives on Islamic republic Khatami was unable to take any important decision regarding the welfare of the state. Instead of lots of obstacles, Khatami took some major steps. The major step which he took for women was that, he called to do away with the male supremacy. Men are not in charge of women, he admonished. The obstacle to women's progress should be eliminated, he said, and women should be present on all political, social and

religious form. For women too, therefore Khatami symbolized hope for change²⁸. Khatami was also optimistic towards good relationship with the West, and Iranian immigrants who residing abroad since revolution. The uncertainty in political system and the interference in people's life, large number of people still immigrate to other countries²⁹.

To sum up during the Islamic revolution a large number of Iranians left the country due to the strict surveillance on people's life. After the Islamic revolution as the conservatives totally captured the political system they introduced strict Islamic laws. Secular laws were replaced by the Islamic laws, all secular judges removed from their positions and replaced by orthodox judges. All of those who were connected to Shah Regime were forced to exile and liberal minded people did not tolerate with the Islamic regime left the country. Large number of Iranians migrated to developed countries such as Canada, France, Germany and United States. The Iranians also migrated to the neighbouring Arab countries as temporary immigrants legally as well as illegally. There is no exact data available for Iranian migration abroad, but according to some available data it was three to four million. It is against this background this study is planned to be carried out.

Objectives of the Study

Here are listed the major objectives of my study.

1. To estimate the number of Iranians who residing abroad since the Islamic revolution.
2. To find out the causes of Iranian migration abroad.
3. To find out the distribution pattern of Iranians abroad.

²⁸. David Manashri, *Post-Revolutionary Politics in Islam: Religion, Society and Power* (London: Frank Cass, 2001), P. 83.

²⁹. Akbar E. Tobrat, "Brain Drain from Iran to the United States", *Middle East Journal*, Vol.56, No.2, spring, 2002, p. 22.

4. To study the policies of Islamic republic towards Iranian migrants who left the country at the time of revolution.
5. To analyse the socio-economic status of Iranians migrants abroad.

Survey of literature

There are some works related to Iranian migration and Diaspora which are directly or indirectly related to this study these are.

International Migration Today, Trends and Prospect Vol.1, edited by Reginald T. Appleyard is a collection of studies by different authors that undertake general analysis of international population movement as they effect the different major regions of the world and focuses on the evolution of migratory flows over time in Africa, Asia pacific and Arab States, Latin America, the Caribbean and North America and Western Europe. This collection of studies will also provide valuable source material and suggestion for those who involved in policy-making as well as those who intend to undertake a comparative analysis of the historical and dynamics process of migratory movement on a global scale.

Post-Revolutionary Iran edited by Hoosang Amirahmadi and Manouchar parvin looks at the socio-economic political and ideological transformation in Iran since the revolution in 1979 present rich and varied perspective on the nature of Islamic Republic. The authors mainly focused on the relationship between the State's ideology and its pragmatic policies and the impact of the Iran-Iraq war. In the final section the socio-economic programmes adopted by the government are emphasis given to the dynamics of population growth, land reform, the domestics and international determinants of Iran's oil policies and Iran-US trade relation.

The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution, by Mohsen M. Milani. This book presents a comprehensive analysis of the internal (political, economic, and ideology) and external (U.S. policy) causes and consequence of Iran's Islamic


Revolution. It explains how and why an essential and popular movement overthrow Mohammad Reza Shah's apparently unconquerable regime in 1979 and built Islamic regime. After establishment of Islamic regime there is change in Iran's destiny and the political landscape of the Islamic world. This book also deals with the process of Islamization universities and other educational institutions, after the Islamic revolution.

"The Brain Drain from Iran to United States" by Akbar E. Torbat examines the underlying forces and the extent of brain drain from Iran to United States. Akbar Torbat argued that the political factors rather than the economic factors were the main cause of brain drain from Iran. The Islamic Republic suppression of democracy, hostility towards western education and inclusion of Islamic belief in the academic curriculum were the main reason for the emigration of Iranians. He further argued that the magnitude of brain drain from Iran to United States is very high, especially of physicians and university professors, whose training is very costly. To encourage the exiled Iranians to return home to prevent the further brain drain in the future, a genuine and outright democratization must take place in Iran. In addition the possibility of recovering brain drain and its impact on the Iranian economy has also been undertaken.

"High Status Immigrants: A Statistical Profile of Iranians in the United States" by Mehdi Bozargmehr and George Sabagh gives detail statistical data about Iranians in United States. First the paper gives the trends in Iranian immigrants to the US from 1950 to 1986 and places this in its relevant context. Secondly, this article gives an idea about the students and visitors in United States with a separate statistical profile. The main focus of this article is about the Iranian immigrants in United States since 1950.

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Hypotheses

Here are some hypotheses to be tested in view of the above objectives.

1. During and for a period after the revolution political rather than economic factors have been responsible for the migration of Iranians Abroad.
2. Large number of Iranians migrated to the industrialized countries like United States, United Kingdom, France and Canada etc.
3. The Iranians who migrated after the Revolution had higher socio-economic achievement than those who migrated earlier.
4. During the Khatami period the process of return migration got accelerated as a result of improvement in socio-political situation in Iran.

Methodology

In order to fulfil the research objectives, both primary and secondary sources have been used. In secondary sources number of relevant books and some related articles are discussed. Under the primary sources, numbers of official records of various host countries and available census Report which are relevant to the topic are consulted.

Organization of the Study

In order to carry out the research I have divided my dissertation in to following chapters which is listed below.

Chapter 1: Introduction: In the introductory part of the dissertation, I have discusses about migration, and also brief history of Iran in 20th century. This chapter also deals with the Iranian migration abroad and their destination.

Chapter 2: Iranian Migration Abroad: Context and Policy, deals with the context and policies of Iranian migration abroad. And also discussed the policies adopted by Islamic regime to establish Islamic Republic. Finally this

chapter also analyse the efforts made by Islamic republic for attracting the Iranians abroad.

Chapter 3: Iranian Emigrants: Causes and Estimates, discusses the causes of Iranian migration and their settlement. The chapter also deals with the estimate of Iranians abroad since Islamic revolution. Finally the chapter also discusses the religious migration from Iran during the revolution.

Chapter 4: Socio-Economic Status of Iranians Emigrants, Finally the forth chapter discusses the socio-economic condition of Iranians those who residing abroad during and after the Islamic revolution. The chapter also discusses the relation of Iranians with their home land.

Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion, the concluding part summarize the whole dissertation, and analyze the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 2

IRANIAN MIGRATION ABROAD: CONTEXT AND POLICY

This chapter deals with the overall Iranian context - economic, political and socio-economic as well as the governmental policy regarding migration of Iranians abroad. The introduction of new Islamic laws after the revolution and surveillance on people's lives forced a large number of people to migrate. Here we will also discuss the attempts made in recent years by the Iranian government to ask the migrants to come back and also to encourage them to send remittances.

Khomeini Period

After the establishment of Islamic regime, the government introduced a number of Islamic laws. Islam is viewed as a set of guidance encompassing all human activity from birth to death. The government worked hard to implement rigid Islamic social organization and values. According to Khomeini, revolution is not only liberty and freedom from oppression, but revolution is only for the propagation of Islam,

Our aim was not mere freedom. Our aim was not mere independence... we did not want to be free like Sweden; they may be free, they may be independent, but they have no Qurānic awareness... What do you suppose the Iranians wanted? Did they want Islam?... Did they die for the *Quran*?... We did not shed the blood of our youths for mere material gains. Our martyrs gave up their lives; they willingly espoused death, to make this the land of Islam.¹

¹ Homa Omid, *Islam and the Post-Revolutionary State in Iran*. (New York: St. Martin Press, 1994), P. 154.

As soon as Khomeini consolidated his power, he established new networks in both the state bureaucracy and the newly created revolutionary institutions. He appointed his supporters, many of them former students, as the Friday prayer leaders in thousands of mosques throughout the country. He alone appointed the members of the Secret Council of the Islamic Revolution and also appointed his own person as director of national television and radio to control the mass media wholly. He also appointed all his allies in important decision making-bodies.

Khomeini intended to build a thoroughly Islamic state, in which the process of Islamification would have long lasting impact; these were education, media, and social life. In these matters the post-Revolutionary state guided firmly by Khomeini, set about changing the parameters contents and the concepts; all challenging views and ideas were to be eradicated for being 'pro-western' and imperialist' and, in the name of Islam and unity, a bland conformity was to be forcibly imposed on intellectuals, authors, film-makers and educationalists².

Within six months after the Islamic revolution, the process of "purification" of the pressmen was initiated. The task was undertaken even before the presentation or adaptation of the new constitution. The new Press Bill was published on 3rd June 1979. It consisted of 39 Articles. In its preamble it was laid down that "publishing any articles slanderous to the clear tenets of Islam and harmful to the Islamic Republic of Iran is crime punishable with the imprisonment from one to three years. The Minister of National Guidance, Dr. Nasir Minachi, stated: "with the passage of the Press Bill the state have no powers whatsoever to interfere with the freedom of the press. The only

². Ibid, 169.

authority to interfere with the press activities would be the courts of law and then only in cases when a newspaper or magazine oversteps its legal rights".³

The new press law made for Ministry of National Guidance the overall authority and the arbiter of the destiny of the press. With the establishment of new law and guidance for the press the state started restricting the role of media. In the early 1980s the fundamentalists had closed down all opposition newspapers, and had established ideological units and Islamic societies, acting as a kind of thought police in work places, and throughout government agencies; these units were set up to maintain the Islamic line and report on dissident.

All educational material was revised to eliminate traces of un-Islamic attitudes. The Islamic state had launched its programme for the purification of the minds of its people. That these measures contravened the essence of freedom, liberty, and democracy did not concern the nation's leader. According to Khomeini the secularised education system produced, anti-Islamic intelligentsia for over fifty years. All intellectuals, authors, and educated people were suspected because they had been nurtured by this pro-western educational system, which lulled them into alcoholic and narcotic Western style exhaustion.

They fundamentalists introduced revolutionary court in order to quick trial of officials who were associated with the Shah Regime. The formation of revolutionary court was the first move by them to control the judiciary and to introduce the *Sharia*. All the judges were Khomeini's allies in the court and they were in a position to decide the severity of punishment meted out against the convicted and determined the fate of the massive amounts of confiscated wealth. Within the nine months, after the establishment of Revolutionary court, the court executed around 600 people, those who were connected with Shah and other minorities. During the same year the Revolutionary court executed

³. A. H. H. Abidi, *Iran at the Cross Roads: The Dissent Movement*. (New Delhi: Patriot Publishers, 1989), P. 48.

248 officers of the former regime. In addition, thousands were imprisoned or forced to exile.

The Islamist revolutionaries controlled all aspects of the state and introduced the Islamic Republican Party (IRP), was virtually used as its parliament, the *Komites* its local police, the *Pasdaran* its national army, and the Revolutionary court its judiciary. The killings began early in the revolution, gained momentum, and in a year became torrential. Revolutionary tribunals sprung up across the country; there was no right of representation for the defence, no clearly defined regulations about the process and no judiciary in evidence. Army officers, political leaders, including ex-prime Minister Amir Abas Hoveyda who had presided over the modernisation policies of the 1970s and individuals accused of moral turpitude were unceremoniously executed. The overall vigilance on people's life by these organisations forced people to migrate and settle in other countries.

In August 1982, all un-Islamic codes and laws adopted since 1907 were declared unacceptable by the supreme judicial council. The same body ordered all Judges to make their decisions based exclusively on Islamic/Shi'i codified laws and on the *fatwas*⁴ by reputable ayatollahs. Secular judges, who controlled the Judiciary before the Islamic Revolution, were replaced by the *Ulamas*, and the major seminaries not the laws department of the University of Tehran, became centres for the training of the Ulama as Judges and lawyers⁵. The new Islamic law replaced the old secular laws. During the same period *Majlis* passed the *Qesas* (Retribution) Bill, which was strongly opposed by the nationalist and leftists. The second bill reintroduced by the *Majlis* was the 194 Article under which swift punishment was given such as flogging, hand

⁴. Authoritative opinion pronounced by an ayatollahs on religious and other matters.

⁵. Mohsen M. Milani, *The Making of Islamic Revolution: From monarch to Islamic Republic*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), P. 201.

amputation, and stoning⁶. Iran became the first country in modern times to live under the legal system of the *qesas*.⁷ Ayatollah Khomeini, ruling “on Behalf of Allah”, abolished all courts and abolished all laws enacted by the previous *Majlises*. Some 1,200 Islamic judges, trained in three-week period at Qom, would tour the country in caravans of mobile courts deciding cases on the spot. Each judge was to act alone and his decision was final as no appeal procedure was allowed.

In the early post-revolutionary period Khomeini closed all the legal institutions including the Lawyers’ Association *Kanuneh Vokala* and eventually the Faculty of Law. As the revolutionary Court banned the Lawyers Association, many of the Law students left the country or remained silent due to the fear of persecution. In the absence of trained Muslims Lawyers, seminary students were to take over the court. Their decisions were enforced by the *Komitehs* and their guards. Friday prayer leaders used their platform to issue decrees and spread political doctrine. They issued ration card, mobilised recruits for the army and often headed the local IRP branches. Their power overshadowed the authority of the government, as Bani Sadre points out;

Where in the world, in which religion, where in Islam and in which Islamic country are there six types of imprisonment?... Why has a delegation not yet been formed to study these prisons and see if there is any torture? As soon as we ask questions a number of ignorant people step forward to call us ‘Liberals’, but the liberals are those who do not abuse their power when they are powerful and do not submit to the powerful when they are weak.⁸

The initial year of the Islamic regime saw swift Islamization of the society, law, culture, polity, and economy in areas where it was feasible without much interference. The Islamization programmes also affected the right and freedoms

⁶ Ibid, p. 200.

⁷ A. H. H. Abidi, n. 2, p. 75.

⁸ Homa Omid, n. 1, p. 87.

of women in a negative way in different walks of life. For the first time in the history of political struggle in Iran, women took part side by side with men in same numbers. The Iranian women played an active role during Iranian revolution to overthrow Shah and his policies. Though Mohammad Raza Shah Pahlavi had taken major steps for improving the conditions of women in Iran. He introduced Family protection Law in 1967, under which some circumstances granted women the right to ask for divorce, and polygamy was banned. Iran became the first Islamic country to ban Purdah system⁹. But all these things changed after the Islamic Revolution. Family protection Law was banned and polygamy was reintroduced. The obsession with moral purification was seen visible in the forced veiling of women. Just after the revolution, Khomeini dismissed all women Judges, as they considered women as less sensible and unable to have proper judgement. Men and women were both subject to the laws; women were not entitled to act as lawyers. As one of the Khomeini disciples Ayatollah Javadi Amoli has explained;

Women may reach the heights of learning, they may even be allowed to train Judges, but since being a judge is an active judicial role, women are not to become judges. It has like saying that when it comes to cutting a thief's hand, it is appropriate that women should not draw the dagger.¹⁰

During the revolution a large number of veiled women appeared in public demonstrations. As Azar Tabari explains that in the process of revolution, middle class women who did not veil in every day life took it up as a political protest in solidarity with women demonstrators of the traditional lower middle class who regularly veiled. In assuming the veil as a function of political struggle, however, women lost sight of its potential as an Islamic ideological

⁹ Asghar Fathi, *Women and the Family In Iran*. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985), p. 57.

¹⁰ Homa Omid, n. 1, p. 86.

symbol. With the triumph of the revolution, the veil became an important symbol of the new Islamic state and was soon imposed upon women.¹¹

Ayatollah Khomeini first praised women as the “pillars of Iranian society” and then attempted to Islamize their position by imposing *Hijab* (the Islamic Dress) and pronouncing motherhood as their primary duty, he tried to change women’s position, within his conception of the proper Islamic one¹². In the summer of 1980, veiling became compulsory for those working in government and public offices. During the hostage crises period, when the whole country was in turmoil, the revolutionary regime had launched a major offensive against the opponents, those who opposed the regime. The lack of a decisive response by women emboldened the revolutionaries, who in April 1983 made veiling mandatory for all women in Iran, including non-Muslims and tourists. In the 1930s, Reza Shah unveiled women to modernize Iran, and in the 1980s Khomeini veiled them to Islamize Iran¹³. From this forced veiling gender segregation took place, women were forced to sit back at home, co-education was banned in schools. Women athletes have been barred from participating in international competitions that do not abide by the Islamic dress code. Due to the restrictions on women’s lives large number of emancipated and empowered women left the country.

According to a sociological survey done by Ali Akbar Mehdi¹⁴ in United States on Iranian women, Iranian woman generally views Iran as an extremely restrictive society that demeans women’s abilities and limits their movement and life chances. Iranian women have more chance of becoming socially

¹¹ Azar Tabari, “The Enigma of the Veiled Iranian Women”. *Middle East Research and Information Project*, XII, 1982, p. 22-27.

¹² Azar Tabari and Nahid Yeganeh(ed). *In the Shadow of Islam: The Women's Movement in Iran*. (London: Zed-Press, 1982), P. 102.

¹³ Mohsen M. M, n. 3, P. 203.

¹⁴ Ali Akbar Mehdi, “Perceptions of Gender Roles Among Female Iranian in the United States”, in Sarah Ansari and Vanessa Martin (eds.) *Women, Religion and Culture in Iran*. (London: Curzon Press, 2001).

successful in Iran than in United States. A female Iranian immigrant agrees that women's work in Iran is not valued as men's work, but they endorse the fact that a man's work in the United States is also valued more than women's.

The revolutionaries anticipated some public defiance of their strict moral guidelines and dress code. Thus they created variety of groups to supervise the activities of the Iranians. The office for Propagation of Virtues and Prevention of Sins was formed to supervise Islamic morality and behaviour. Young zealots, organised in small groups, such as *Gasht-e Sarallah*, patrolled the streets and arrested those who did not abide by the Islamic dress code and who transgressed Islamic morality.¹⁵

In the wake of Islamic revolution all universities and educational institutions were closed indefinitely. The primary education system was also affected badly. All foreign-run schools were closed down and anyone suspected of un-Islamic tendencies was discharged. Initially an estimated 40,000 teachers were expelled or compulsorily retired. To ensure continuing ideological purity, every school like every factory and other work places, was obliged to establish an Islamic society which abide its members to Islamic world-view. But their powers to some extent were curtailed by the reality of the crisis in education. A decade after the Islamization process, the Education Minister Mohamed Ali Najafi had admitted that he was still looking for another 4000 qualified teachers of *Quran* and religious ideology capable of teaching the subjects in depth.

The reasons given for this decision were that these places had become the places of unrest and stronghold of the opposition force.¹⁶ The governments over all policy of "purification" of society started in 1980. The revolutionary

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ A. H. H. Abidi, n. 2, p. 53.

“spring of freedom” did not last long in the Iranian universities¹⁷. The revolutionary movement had turned the universities into centres of political activity, where crowds gathered and rival political groups clashed. Control over the Tehran University soccer field for mass rallies became a sign of political organization’s power, for the leftist, nationalist and others. At that time, Ayatollah Khomeini urged his followers to cleanse the universities of all elements “who are connected either with the West or the East...”¹⁸ In 1980, the council of revolutionary gave an ultimatum to leftist to either evacuate the campus or be prepared to pay a heavy price. The *Fedaiyan-e Khalq* saw closure of the universities under the label of Cultural Revolution as a negation of democratic rights and political liberties. In a statement the organisation argued that it recognised the Cultural Revolution in its true meaning as the annihilation of the rotten culture and belief which are the service of world imperialism.

Life was as disordered in the universities as it was outside. However, the difference was that while the Islamic Republic was gaining political hegemony in Iranian society, it was losing the ideological battle in the universities, where radical groups were recruiting and training student activist, many of whom were political organizers in factories, farms, and neighbourhoods. The student and faculty who support the Islamic regime constituted only small minority.

The attack on the universities began in April 1980, when the Islamic Students Association began issuing statement demanding that the universities to be closed in preparation for an “Islamic rejuvenation” *be sat-e Eslami*, a “cultural revolution”. Many non-academic Islamic groups such as the Guardian of the Revolution Corps and the Islamic Association of Machine and tool workers of Tabriz made a declaration in support of the demands of the Islamic students. On 16th April 1980, the Revolutionary Council ordered all the

¹⁷ Sohrab Behdad, “Islamization of Economics in Iranian Universities”, *International Journal of Middle East*, vol. 27, 1995, p. 193.

¹⁸ Ibid.

political organization to evacuate the campus in three days and the universities closed down by June in preparation for Islamization of the academic system. The campaign to cleanse the university was also designed to get rid of the leftist who had also turned the university campuses into their headquarters recruiting students.

The Association of Islamic students appealed to Ayatollah Khomeini, to close down all the universities, which was on the service of colonial rule for more than fifty years. Ayatollah Khomeini responded:

Our universities are foreign dependent. Our universities are the colonial type. Our university students are Westoxicated (*gharbzadeh*)..... Many of our university professors are at the service of the west. They brainwash our youth....Because of their simple-mindedness, the young have believed in the false education that they have received from some of our professors. Now that we want to set up an independent university and make fundamental changes, so that it would not be dependent on the West and Communism, dependent on Marxism, they confront us. This, in itself, shows that our universities are not Islamic and we do not have, and never have had, universities that would educate our youth. This, in itself, is a proof than our youth has not received proper education.... The university must become Islamic.¹⁹

Under the rubric of the Cultural Revolution, a new philosophy of teaching and a new code of conduct were introduced. Teachers, professors and administrators and even students were required to be the purveyors of the new state ideology or face dismissal. The Islamic Students Associations were created in schools and colleges to identify the disobedient teachers and authorities. Textbooks were revised to portray the monarchy as a decadent system, kings as criminals, and the Ulamas as the defenders of justice and national independence. Courses such as history of Islam and the Islamic revolution were required at all levels. By the first time the first national examination for the entrance to the universities was reinstated in December

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 194.

1983, admission requirements were changed. Academic excellence was no longer the only criterion for admission: also required were ideological commitments to the Islamic Revolution and favourable letters of recommendation from the local clergy. Overall the quality of education deteriorated as many veteran teachers were forced to retire from the post or leave the country. Large number of university professors and liberal students who could not tolerate this situation left the country. The migration of educated elite caused tremendous loss to the country.

For decades censorship had been part and parcel of intellectual life in Iran²⁰. Under Shah, all political parties and political criticism was banned and every newspaper had representatives of the secret service checking everything that was published. At that time Khomeini was himself against Shah's Policy of monitoring newspapers. But after the revolution, Khomeini changed his mind and views. As earlier the process of "Islamification" was in full attack by intellectuals and students mostly the liberal section of the society. Khomeini knew that people will not follow him as he had demanded. So finally he decided to impose censorship again to avoid the criticism and interpretation. From the censorship on all the sections, Khomeini felt himself safe as his policies were not open to all the public. The fundamentalists closed down all the newspapers, but those that remained open each had a representative of the Imam who was entrusted with the task of ensuring that newspaper remained true to Islamic culture and its values and defended the revolution against the Western values.

Censorship was codified by the 1985 Media Bill which listed ten major areas as out of bounds. In accordance with Islamic teachings which demand that Muslims do not slander or unjustly accuse any one, they banned the publication of anything that was in any way slanderous. Three years later, in

²⁰ Homa Omid, n. 1, p. 167.

August 1988, the Council of Cultural Revolution *Shorayeh Aaliyeh Engelab*, issued a further list of prohibitions. It reiterated the ban on the publication of any material that could be defined as anti-government or un-Islamic, or anything that denied religion or in any way supported irreligiosity or atheism. In addition anything that appeared to condone prostitution in other words advocating sexual freedom or feminist activity was strictly banned. The High Council of Cultural Revolution appointed a committee of five persons to ensure that the media obeyed these rulings.

After the death of Khomeini, there was nominal easing on imports of paper and printing materials and a slight relaxation of controls under Hashimi Rafsanjani. Khatami regime was under heavy pressure from the moderate side and from tremendous hopes of people to improve the condition of press. As Khatami permitted numbers of journals and magazines to continue such as women's magazines and statistical monthlies. This resulted in a rapid increase in the numbers of publications. Khatami proudly announced that the government had permitted a 47 percent increase in the numbers of magazines and journals. As a result ninety-four new publications were launched between 1989 and 1991 but with some censorship.

Post – Khomeini Period

The Islamic Republic's stance in the Khomeini era was that it does not need the westoxicated Iranians who fled the country at the time of revolution. According to Khomeini "Islam does not need these westernised corrupt brains. We shall create our own Islamic mankind with Islamic brains." The founder of Islamic republic told the nationalist, "let them go and rot in the rotten and corrupt Westland". Due to social and political upheaval in the wake of the revolution and the war, considerable number of Iranians had fled from the country thus creating the problem of brain drain. In the midst of this situation, pragmatic leaders were anxious to attract the émigrés in order to rebuild the

country. As Rafsanjani puts it: "If we improve our conditions, if we give up some of the shortcomings, some of our excesses and some of the crude aspects which were the requirement of the early stages of the revolution and that we do not need today, we will be able to attract them back." But Prime Minister Mousavi was vehemently opposed to the idea. He considered such Iranians as "traitors" who left the country in dire straits and wanted to partake the best of both the worlds. He was supported by some of the lower-thinking members of the government. However, majority of the leader and the people were inclined to the idea of the return. The hardliners had, thus cut the ground from under their feet and they were unable to assert themselves.

After Khomeini's death in June 1989, the attitude of the Islamic Republic towards Western-educated elite changed. When Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani became President in 1989, he called on the Iranian expatriates to help rebuild the war torn economy. The country needed expertise and physical capital to implement its First Five-year Development Plan, which had been launched in March 1989. In the post-cease-fire phase, reconstruction of national economy and relation with the western countries became the subject of debate. Rafsanjani aptly targeted the new decade as the "decade of reconstruction."²¹ Consequently, in April 1991, Rafsanjani dispatched to New York Mohsen Norbaksh, his economic and Finance Minister, along with Mohammad Hossein Adeli, the Governor of Central Bank, to invite the Iranian expatriates to return home. In a meeting with some 400 Iranian industrialists, the officials promised that expatriates would be safe and their properties would be protected upon returning home. They even promised to give back the factories and properties which had been confiscated from the owners at the onset of the revolution. In the due course, some expatriate industrialists went home to investigate business opportunities in Iran. They noticed that the

²¹ A. H. H. Abidi, n. 12, P. 294.

confiscated factories were in the state of ruin and the uncertain political and economic conditions did not prompt any new investment commitments.

The most significant problem in connection with reconstruction was the issue of capital investment. Revenue from the oil was limited due to strikes and other problems. There was tremendous friction between the ruling elites in Iran. One section of the ruling elite was in favour of closing links with foreign monopoly capital as the only solution, the other section considered this policy as detrimental to the interest of the Islamic Revolution. On the other hand, Khamenei the new faqih was in favour of private investment, but not dependence on the West.

The eight year Iran-Iraq war had inflicted enormous damage upon Iran. In the aftermath of the war, Iran's economic difficulties including widespread unemployment, the growing gap between rich and poor, high inflation and reduced economic growth underlined the significance and necessity of post-war reconstruction. The essential features of Iran's economic and political reconstructions were laid out in Iran's First Five Year Economic and political plan prepared by the Rafsanjani administration in 1989. In essence it represented the government's manifesto for resuscitating the national economy. It covered the period from 1989 to 1993, and provided an important framework within which the government could embark on a programme of economic reforms. The strategy for reform included policy initiatives such as: privatization of a large number of industries and mines, the revival of the Tehran Stock exchange, the abolition of the multiple exchange rate mechanism and its replacement by a single free market floating rate, the founding of a number of free trade zones, encouragement of direct foreign investment and easing of foreign investment regulations. Skilled Iranians residing abroad had been encouraged to return to their country in order to develop expert industries with high-tech content.

In 1992, the Head of Judiciary Muhammad Yazdi said “Iranians residing abroad specialist in particular who have no criminal record, can freely return home, and come under the protection of law and religion.”²² All individuals enjoy an equal status and legal protection as long as they do not act against the government and believe in the sanctity of the exalted Islamic values. The Islamic Republic needed the assistance of Iranian professionals from abroad, but wants them to comply with Islamic rules. Iranians who lived in the West were accustomed to the Western democratic rule of codified law, freedom of ideas, speech, and other right which are not honoured in the Islamic Republic

The Islamic republic is also interested in hiring high-level scientists to promote research in advance defence and nuclear technology. There are some highly trained Iranian scientists and engineers who are working in prestigious scientific research centres in the US such as the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Bell Labs, and some top university research centres. Some are very capable of advanced research in various scientific and engineering fields. They are highly trained and successful Iranian expatriates; however, they do not want to go home under the circumstances that the Islamic republic has created in Iran. For this purpose, the Islamic republic has hired a number of scientists from the former Soviet Unions Republic. In 1993, it was reported that only 2,600 Iranian Experts returned home since the government policy of absorbing experts from abroad was initiated. Overall the government’s effort to bring professionals back home does not seem to have been successful.

Some expatriates who worked in Iran after the Islamic revolution say they could not adapt themselves to the Islamic Republic’s way of social life. They feel like strangers in Iran because they have to act as dedicated Muslims who are devoted to the ideologies of the regime. They have to believe in Islamic values to be acceptable citizens; otherwise they are treated as second

²² Akbar E. Torbat, “Brain Drain from Iran to the United States”, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 2, Spring 2002, p. 22.

class citizens who have no place in the establishment. The regime has divided Iranian people into two groups: “ourselves” (*khodi*) and “not ourselves” (*Gheir-khodi*).²³ The separation of the two groups is not clearly defined. In his speeches, President Khatami calls *khodi* those who are loyal to Islamic Republic constitution and to the Supreme Leader, who is the pillar and path of the regime. The *Gheire kodi* are those who are critical to the Islamic constitution and demand separation of religion and state. Individuals from the *Gheire kodi* group are not welcome for employment in public institutions. The clerics who belong to the *khodi* group hold the key public Jobs.²⁴ They generally do not have the relevant training and qualification for the positions they occupy. In reality, they have occupied the positions that should have gone to the more qualified individuals from the large spectrum of Iranian society.

Due to political and religious constraint Iran lost most of their human capital. Large number of university professors, doctors, the technicians left the country for better prospects in other countries. Most of them moved towards Developed countries such as Canada, United States, France, Germany etc. Iranian government just after the revolution tried to control the brain drain which was on at an alarming rate after the revolution. The economic hardship faced by the Iranians due to eight year long war with Iraq also resulted in to migration.

President Khatami has tried to improve the Islamic Republic’s relations with Iranians abroad. In September 1998, during his first trip to the US, he spoke in front of an Iranian audience in New York. He posed himself as an authentic Iranian nationalist by reading a story from the Epic of Kings (*Shahnamah*) in order to appease the audience²⁵. He emphasised mutual respect and national pride and was delighted to receive the Iranian expatriates.

²³ Ibid, p. 293.

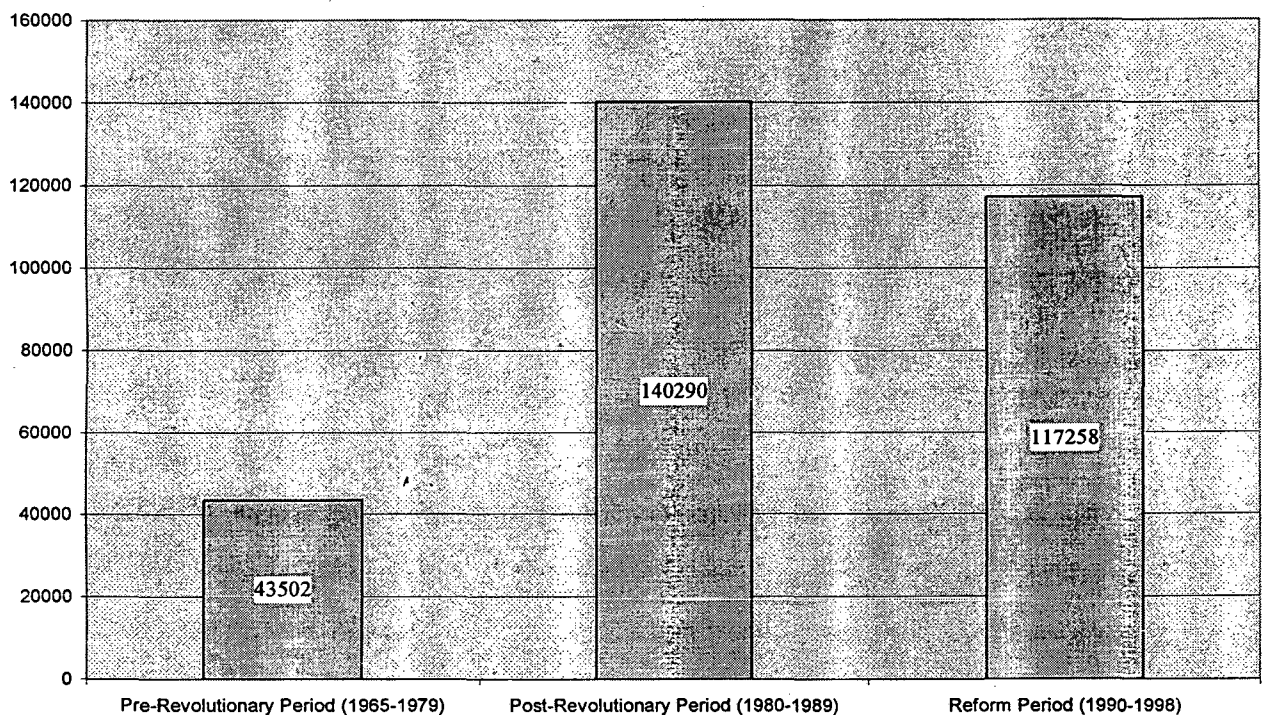
²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 294.

In his second trip to New York, he attended the UN Millennium Summit, on September 4, 2000. In that visit, Khatami expressed concern about the brain drain from Iran. He tried to initiate sound and constructive dialogue and said it would be possible if there existed mutual understanding and courage to face opposing view points, refusal to consider personal preferences as absolute, and recognising and accepting differences and diversity. He indirectly asked the expatriates community for tolerance of an intolerable political situation. He emphasised to Iranians living abroad to come back to Iran and work towards economic and technical development, based simply on good will and nationalistic sentiments, without overwhelmingly being tempted to address issues of political instability and freedom.

Table: 2.1

Migration of Iranians Abroad During the Three Phases



Source: Pyong Gap Min and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, 'Immigrants Entrepreneurship and Business Pattern: A Comparison of Koreans and Iranians in Los Angeles' *International Migration Review*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2002, p. 714.

There is no doubt that as a result of the changes that have taken place in Iran since the victory of Khatami, many Iranians are genuinely aspiring for the return of their exiled compatriots. President Khatami described the Iranians abroad as an important asset of Iran, observing that possessing huge capital of science, culture, expertise, and finance; these compatriots represent the most active foreign communities in the guest countries. He said it is the duty of the government to establish close contact with these communities, to help solve their problems, and create necessary condition for their return. Since he was re-elected for the second term on June 8, 2001, Khatami has not offered any specific policy to reverse or even lessen the brain drain.

There are about 165,000 Iranian professionals with university degrees who are working for industries and academic institutions in the US and in other developed countries. Most of them have several years of experience in high technology and or other technical fields that Iran badly needs. To encourage some of them to go home, suitable conditions have to emerge. First, the political environment in Iran has to change. Under the present power structure of the Islamic Republic, nobody can oppose the desires and wishes of the Supreme Leader. The educated class wants to take part in elections, and this is not possible due to lack of democracy in Iran. Their safety cannot be guaranteed if their views are not in agreement with those of the fundamentalists. Secondly, to absorb the highly skilled expatriates, favourable economic conditions have to emerge. Political reforms however are prerequisite to favourable economic conditions. The lack of political stability and uncertain future of the Islamic Republic does not prompt the Iranian expatriates to return.

Summary and Conclusion

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 was turning point in Iranian history, the conversion of secular state into Islamic state was most the important aspects.

After the revolution Khomeini and his associates establish Islamic state and implement their Godly edicts. Khomeini appoints all his allies on the top decision making posts, and control the whole state.

Earlier the revolutionaries closed down all the opposition newspapers and revised the educational matters to eliminate the un-Islamic attitudes. According to them the secular education produced anti-Islamic intelligentsia and replaced with orthodox one. They introduced Islamic revolutionary court for the quick trial of officials who associated the Shah regime. The revolutionary court executed thousands of people who suspected have to contact with Shah.

The Islamic court was established in 1982, and all un-Islamic codes and laws since 1907 were declared unacceptable. The new Islamic law replaced the older secular laws. The important decisions based exclusively on Shi'i codified laws and *fatwas* by reputed ayatollahs. Number of Islamic laws was reintroduced such as flogging, hand amputation and stoning etc.

The Islamization programme also effect on women life. During the Shah regime purdah system was banned and declared illegal, but after the Islamic revolution the fundamentalist reintroduce purdah system as well as polygamy was reintroduced. Women were barred to become a lawyer, and all law schools were banned. Women athletes have been barred from participating in international competitions that do not abide by the Islamic dress code. Due to the heavy restrictions in women's lives large number of emancipated and empowered women left the country.

The closure of universities and educational institutions was a major reason for the migrating people. The reason to close down all the educational institution was to curb the religious opposition. The purification of Iranian society started in 1980, with the launch of Cultural Revolution. All the universities were closed at least for three years or more. Large number of

students and university professors left Iran for better education and training. Those who remained were forced to leave the job or face persecution.

The post-Khomeini period governments were more reformists as well as relatively more liberal. The development policies and programmes required major investment for which they looked up to the Iranians abroad. The then President of Iran Muhammad Hashimi Rafsanjani called all Iranian expatriates to come back. But due to the unstable government in Iran the expatriates were hesitant to come back. The process of brain drain further accelerated in the era of Khatami, he tried to create good relations with Iranians abroad, and tries to encourage the Iranian expatriates to invest in the country in spite of all political differences.

CHAPTER 3

IRANIAN EMIGRATION: CAUSES AND ESTIMATES

This chapter discusses the causes of Iranian migration and their settlement abroad. It will also discuss the socio-economic and political conditions prevalent in Iran since the Islamic Revolution which was responsible for the migration. The chapter also deals with the religious migration from Iran.

Emigration of the highly educated elite from the developing countries to the developed countries is an important issue that deserves attention. The West Asian region with its vast oil resources needs educated professionals to enhance economic development and modernize the region. Educated and skilled workers are the scarcest resources of any developing countries. They comprise the core workforce for sustainable economic development programmes. Their education and training is time-consuming and expensive. The departure of a large number of highly educated elite from Iran has definitely caused a devastating social loss to the country. Educated people not only increase their own productivity but also contribute to the society's well being and knowledge; examples are the physician and educators. The developed countries and especially the United States and Canada have greatly benefited from the pool of the highly educated and experienced Iranian immigrants.

Iranian migration abroad is relatively a recent phenomenon. Most of the Iranians migrated during and after the Islamic revolution of 1979. There are substantial number of Iranians who migrated before the Islamic revolution. In March 1975, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, the then King of Iran had

dissolved all existing political parties in Iran and established a single party the Iranian People's Resurgence Party (*Hebz-e Rastakhiz-e Mellat-e Iran*)¹. He asked all the Iranians, including government and university employees, to become a member of this party. Those who did not want to join the party and its principles were asked to leave the country. As a result of this a number of political activists and academicians who could not tolerate Shah's repressive regime had left the country. The father of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khomeini himself was one of them.

Major wave of Iranian migration occurred during and after the Islamic revolution. Immediately after the establishment of Islamic regime the top officials in the Shah's government were arrested and tried by the revolutionary court and were executed. At the same time, the newly established Islamic regime began a large scale crackdown against its political opponents. The main opponents were two guerrilla organizations: the Marxist oriented *Feda'ien-e khalq* and the Islamic rooted *Mojahedin-e khalq*, which had both greatly contributed to the overthrow of the Shah's regime². The active members of these organizations fled the country to save their lives. Those who remained went into hiding, but were later arrested, imprisoned, and executed. The continuous political oppression and interference in daily life subsequently pushed a greater number of Iranians to migrate. The exact number of Iranians who left the country is not known, but some media stated that it to be 3 million³. They were mostly educated elites, political activists and emancipated women. Some young Iranians also fled the country because of the fear of being drafted in the military for the war with Iraq.

¹ Nikki R. Keddie, "*Roots of Revolution: An Interpretive History of Modern Iran*", (London: Yale University, 1981), p. 179.

² These two organizations were banned after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. They want to create Socialist Democratic Republic of Iran, but Khomeini's view was Islamic Republic.

³ Akbar E. Torbat, "Brain Drain from Iran to the United States" *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 2, 2002, p. 274.

After the revolution the Islamic government began a campaign called *Paksazi* (cleansing). Those who had important posts in the Shah regime were removed from their positions and were replaced by those who were committed to the Islamist ideology. The first target was the university administrative positions, which were given to those who were dedicated to Islamic thought. Some of them were not qualified for the post, but the Islamic republic preferred Islamic ideology rather than technical competence. Those who were dismissed from the job through *Paksazi* were permitted to leave the country, others who were left remained unemployed. Many of the faculty members of the universities were opposing the Islamization of universities in Iran, only a small fraction of faculty was in favour of the Islamic system.

Khomeini was hostile towards the western education and western-educated professors who were advocates of the modern-style higher education system in Iran. Khomeini articulated that “our university students are Westoxicated”⁴. Further he observes many of our professors are at the service of the west, they brain wash our youth.⁵ The universities were considered nest of intellectual corruption that must be rejuvenated. If the universities can produce only communist and atheists, and if they become centres for the dissemination of decadent western ideas and culture, they must be shut down indefinitely⁶. To de-Westernize the higher education system and make it compatible with Islamic fundamentals, in April 1980 Khomeini ordered the closure of all universities and found a Council of Islamic Revolution, whose task was to frame curricula and course for universities. To implement the Islamization plan and prevent dissent from professors and students, the universities were closed for about three years. The secular students and

⁴ Sohrab Behdad, “Islamization of Economics in Iranian University,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 27, 1995, p. 193.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Mohsen M. M, *The Making of Iran Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), p. 149.

professors who opposed Islamization were entirely purged. Consequently a good portion of Iran's highly qualified professors left the country. The Meili University in Tehran lost 59 percent of its faculty members within two years and this loss continued for years after ward.

On the other hand the economic conditions of Iran worsened after the revolution. The eight year long war with Iraq devastated Iranian economy. Many cities and towns were destroyed in the war and lots of internal migration took place. Hundreds of thousands lost their homes and livelihood and became displaced persons. After the end of the war in 1989, the Islamic republic began to rebuild its economy. It launched its First Five Year Development Plan in March 1989 which was financed mostly by borrowed funds from abroad. Implementation of the plan partly expanded the economy. The temporary economic expansion was finally stalled by a severe financial crisis due to the accumulation of some \$30 billion dollar short-term debt in 1993. The plan ended in March 1994 with mixed results. Consequently, huge debt forced Iran to attract foreign investment by offering some of its oil field to international oil companies in the form of oil buy back contracts. What is further interesting was very high rate of growth in the number of university students which was higher than the population as a whole. The unemployment rate was also high around 22 percent. This also helped in migration of Iranians abroad. In the following pages we furnish more detailed information about the Iranian migration to United States, Canada and some European countries.

Iranian Migration to the United States

Iranian migration to the United States is essentially a post-world war II phenomenon⁷. Iranian economy gradually recovered after the Second World War as its oil production and revenue resumed. The explosion of oil revenues

⁷ George Sabagh and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, "Are the characteristics of Exiles Different from Immigrants? The Case of Iranians in Los Angles". *Sociology and Social Research*, vol. 71, no. 2, January, 1987, p. 78.

enabled many Iranians particularly the students go to United States. After 1973, economic boom and explosion of oil revenues propelled emigration to the U.S

Migration was facilitated by the abundance of foreign exchange resources which enabled the Iranian regime to relax its restrictions on taking or sending money abroad. Iranian emigration however could not have been economically motivated,

Table: 3.1
Persian Diaspora Census 1996

Australia	60,000
Austria	15,000
Belgium	6,000
Canada	75,000
China	10,000
Cyprus	2,000
Denmark	10,000
Eastern European	50,000
Egypt and North Africa	20,000
Finland	2,000
France	62,000
Germany	110,000
Greece	20,000
India	60,000
Iraq	250,000
Israel	50,000
Kuwait	20,000
Lebanon	50,000
Norway	6,000
Pakistan	40,000
Philippines, Korea and Japan	50,000
Russia& other Former USSR Countries	50,000
South Africa	5,000
Spain& Portugal	15,000
Sweden	15,000
Switzerland	6,000
Syria	50,000
The Netherlands	6,000
Turkey	800,000
United Arab Emirate& Bahrain	560,000

Table contd...

United Kingdom	80,000
United States of America	1,560,000
Central & South America & Other parts of the world	100,000
Total	4,117,000

Source: www.iranica.com/article/sup/canada_Iran_Comm.html. Date: 25/08/2004

given the lucrative economic opportunities available in Iran, especially after the oil boom and before the revolution. Consequently, their emigration in the period (1973-1977) could have been mostly temporary with its substantial share of students. Many of these students, who originally planned to return to Iran, remained in the United States after the revolution.

The number of Iranian students abroad increased during the year 1977 to 227,497; earlier in 1963 it was only 18,000.⁸ There was a comparable increase in the number of Iranians already in the United States who obtained their permanent residency or Green cards (adjusted immigrants). The number of non-immigrant arrivals, visitors and students climbed sharply from an annual average of about 1,400 in the 1950s to 6,000 in the 1960s, and to 39,583 in the 1970-1977, were reached the highest figure of 98,018 in 1977. Despite an expansion in the higher education enrolment in Iran from 24,456 in 1962-63 to 208,000 in 1972-73, the demand for college education outstripped the domestic supply of available university space. Moreover, Iranian universities and institutions of higher learning were not set up to equip their students with the appropriate skills to operate and manage Iran's imported modern industry. Therefore, as an alternative students were sent abroad for study. The oil boom and rising incomes enabled some parents to pay the cost of education of their sons and daughters.⁹

⁸ Mehdi Bozorgmehr and George Sabagh; High Status Immigrants: A Statistical Profile of Iranians in the United States, *Iranian Studies*, vol. XXI, No. 3-4, 1978, p. 10.

⁹ Ibid.

The Iranian revolution of 1979 led to marked changes in the volume and pattern of Iranian migration to the U.S. In the academic year 1978-79, just on the verge of the revolution, the number of Iranian student enrolled in the United States was 45,340, and in 1979-80 it reached its peak of 51,310¹⁰. During 1979-80 Iran had the highest number of students in the United States compared to any other country. Iran had a shortage of high-level manpower at that time, a number of students were returning home after graduation to work. Some students received financial aid and some returned back due to dissatisfaction with the political condition in the Islamic regime. Therefore the educated elite who left Iran and new graduates abroad who chose not to return home created a large pool of highly educated and skilled Iranian professionals in the United States. After the revolution, Iranian migration consisted of Exiles political refugees, and asylees. These exiles were disproportionately members of religious minorities who experienced, or feared, persecution in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Among these, Armenians and Jews are examples of middle man minorities in Iran: thus their presence contributes to the preponderance of entrepreneur among Iranian migrants, especially in Los Angeles.

The Iranian population in United States estimated to be the 245,000 to 341,000 during 1986/87¹¹. Around 40.4 percent of Iranians resided in Los Angeles nick named *Tehrangelles*. The second largest concentration of Iranians was in New York/New Jersey with 10.1 percent and third largest was in the district of Columbia/Virginia/Maryland area with 6.1 percent of the total. Although these States and the District of Columbia contained 77.7 percent of the Iranians' population in the United States in 1980. The primacy of Los angels as an Iranian centre increased dramatically after the Islamic revolution

¹⁰ Alan Richards and John Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East: State, Class, and Economic Development*, (Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), p. 134.

¹¹ Bozorgmehr and George Sabagh, n. 7, p. 15.

of Iran (1978-1979)¹². After the revolution, the immigrants of families led to much greater concentration. By 1990s there were 285,000 Iranians (both native and foreign-born) in the United States. The non-student population of Iranians concentrated in Los Angeles, New York and New Jersey as shown in below table, (3.2). The proportion of students is high in Oklahoma City, San Diego, Washington D.C and Houston. Internal migration of Iranians from the East Coast of the United States to California may provide an explanation for the decreasing importance of New York as a centre of Iranian population. The table (3.2) shows the distribution of Iranian student and non-student population in United States in different metropolitan areas.

Table: 3.2
Geographical Distribution of the Total Iran-Born Population, by Non-Student/Student 16 years and Older, for Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SAMA) in United States, 1980.

SAMA	Numbers			Percentages			% in Student in SAMA
	Total	Non-Students	students	total	Non Student	Students	
Los Angeles/ Long Beach	21,380	13,800	7,580	21.1	26.5	15.5	34.4
New York/ New Jersey	6,140	4,380	1,750	6.1	3.6	3.6	28.7
San Francisco/ Oakland	5,460	3,320	2,140	5.4	6.3	4.4	39.2
Washington D.C.	5,300	2,780	2,520	5.2	5.3	5.2	47.6
San Jose	3,460	2,100	1,360	3.4	4.0	2.8	39.4
Anaheim/ Santa Ana	3,400	2,060	1,340	3.4	3.9	2.7	39.4

Table contd...

¹² Pyong Gap Min, "Immigrants Entrepreneurship and Business Patterns: A Comparison of Koreans and Iranians in Los Angeles", *International Migration Review*, Vol. 34, No. 13, 2002, p. 717.

Chicago	2,580	1,720	860	2.5	3.3	1.8	33.3
San Diego	2,460	1,100	1,360	2.4	2.1	2.8	55.3
Houston	2,300	1,300	1,000	2.3	2.6	2.1	43.5
Oklahoma City	2,060	620	1,440	2.0	1.2	3.0	69.9
All Other							
SAMAs	46,880	19,400	27,480	46.2	36.8	56.1	58.6
Total SAMA	101,420	52,580	48,840	100.0	100.0	100.0	..
Non-SAMA	7,060						
Total	108,480						

Source: Mehdi Bozorgmehr and George Sabagh, "High Status Immigrants: A Statistical Profile of Iranians in the United States", *Iranian Studies*, vol. xxi, no. 3-4, 1978, p. 18.

The Iranians who settled in southern California were quite a mixed enclave of several different religions from Iran. The different social and religions groups that came from Iran were Muslims, Jews, Bahais, Armenians, Assyrians and Zoroastrians. Because of the tremendous melting pot of Iranians that settled in Southern California, they often settled in areas where others from their same social and religious group had settled. But, the centre of the Iranian cultural activities, business, and housing were located in Westwood, in an area named little Tehran. The little Tehran Westwood is not only an area largely populated by Iranians but also many other ethnic groups such as; Arabs, Indonesians, Indians and Greeks. In Europe, UK is the main place for Iranians to settle, especially in London. While Sweden, France, Germany and Italy have their own communities of Iranians. Iranians in Iowa constitute only 0.35 percent of all Iranians immigrants in the United States¹³. A distinct characteristic of Iranian immigrants in the United States is their urban residency. Even in rural Iowa, of 787 Iranians only 44 individual 5.0 percent resides in rural areas. One of the two largest concentrations of Iranians

¹³ Mohammad A. Chaichian, "First Generation of Iranian Immigrants and the Question of Cultural Identity: The Case of Iowa", *International Migration Review*, vol. 31, Fall 1997, p. 615.

immigrants in Iowa is in Johnson County, with 167 Iranians residing in and around Iowa city¹⁴.

A comparative study has been made by Bozorgmehr and Pyong, between Iranians and Koreans in Los Angeles¹⁵. The study reveals the migration of pattern of both countries. While the Korean immigrants to United States have 90 year history, until 1970 the Korean population in United States was less than 70,000. However, Korean population in United States accelerated after 1965, with the enforcement of immigration act. During 1975-80 there was rapid increase in Korean population in United States. The Koreans migrated to United States for their economic and educational advancement. The Korean immigration to United States dropped heavily during 1990s, because there is great economic improvement in South Korea.

On the other hand Iranian immigration is relatively recent more than 50 years. Like Korea Iranian in United States were negligible before 1970. The Iranian oil boom in early to mid 1970s accelerated Iranian migration to the United States. Iranian migration to United States has come in back to back waves, before and after the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79. Before the revolution, it consisted primarily of university students and largely in technical field to meet the needs of the rapidly industrialised oil-based Iranian economy. As we seen in the table, (3.3) the sudden increase in the Iranian migration during 1980 to 1984 and it reached to 56,799. After the revolution Iranian immigrants consisted of exiles, political refugees, and asylees. Earlier the Iranians migrated for higher education but after revolution there is change in motives and large number of Iranians left the country due to fear of persecution.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Pyong Gap Min and Mehdi Bozargmehr, n. 7, p. 715.

Table: 3.3
Iranian Migration to United States 1965-1998

Year	Iranian Immigrants
1965-1969	5,935
1970-1974	12,901
1975-1989	24,666
1980-1984	56,799
1985-1989	83,491
1990-1994	79,448
1995-1998	37,810
Total	310,050

Source: Pyong Gap Min and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, "Immigrants Entrepreneurship and Business Pattern: A Comparison of Koreans and Iranians in Los Angeles" *International Migration Review*. Vol. 34, no. 13, Fall 20020, p. 714.

The significant reduction in the volume of migration from Iran is mainly due to the tightening of control on the travel abroad by the Iranian government and the difficulty of obtaining a U.S. visa for the Iranians after the hostage crises. Some 400 Iranian students took siege of Iranian embassy for a year or so. The episode of hostage crises affected on the Iranians who were residing abroad or were trying to leave the country. Around 24,401 Iranians left the U.S. and 19,369 entered; there were 4,696 permanent U.S. residents among the arrivals. In the United States large numbers of students were screened in order to make sure that they were in status and complied with the provisions of immigration laws. The screening was not only for the students. The documents of all Iranians entering the country were inspected a second time, entries and departure of all Iranians were recorded daily. In spite of the release of hostages on January 1981, the closure of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran has made it impossible to get a U.S. visa in Iran.

Since 1995, on an average the number of Iranians immigrants admitted to the United States has declined, see table, (3.3). This is attributed to the comprehensive U.S. sanctions that have been imposed on Iran, which prohibit granting temporary-work permits to Iranians who want to enter the U.S. According to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) figures of immigrants are 45,136 Iranian immigrants in 1971-1980, 116,172 in 1981-90, and 96,875 in 1991-1998.¹⁶ Since the revolution especially the siege of the American Embassy by the Iranian students in 1980, images of the Iranians as terrorists, anti-Americans and so on have come to dominate the minds of the American public. Although living in an environment with so much negativity is a difficult choice for most of the Iranians. Iranians accepted that their fate was sealed with that of America, so they adopted themselves with new social, economic, and political conditions.

From cultural point of view, however they preserved their Iranian identity, a unique aspect which had taken place in their homeland. They are no longer stranger in a strange land but inhabitant of a known territory, a land with double, or multiple identities, Iranians derived some elements from the US and some from Iran. For this purpose they took advantage of several ways and methods, such as reunions with members of their families, bringing books, magazines, arts, literature and all means of communication. The Iranian community population in the United States on an average is older than the population in Iran. In 1996, the median age of the 11,084 Iranians immigrants who were admitted to the U.S was 40 year. Higher age is normally an indication of a higher level of professional experience and education.

Iranians in Los Angeles consist of distinctive ethno-religious subgroup, whose history, background ethnicity, characteristics, and post-migration ethnicity in American society vary despite having much in common. While this may be obvious to some Iranians, it is not apparent to outsiders. The, informal

¹⁶ <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/publicaffairs/newsrels/98Legal.pdf> Date: 28-03-05.

and formal social ties in Los Angeles tend to reinforce internal ethnicity rather than an all-encompassing Iranian nationality. Armenians and Jews are more ethnic, however, than Bahais and Muslims.

Iranian Migration to Canada

After United States, Canada is the second most favourite destination for the Iranians. Since Australia is far away and West European countries cannot accommodate more Iranian immigrants and refugees, Canada is now second in desirability only to the United States. According to the Canadian Information Centre (CIC), the number of Iranians in Canada increased to about 5,000 by the mid-1980s¹⁷. During the period of 1991-1996 there has been a raise in Iranian population in Canada to 60,000. This dramatic change in the number of refugees/ immigrants is attributable to the political climate in Iran after the establishment of the Islamic republic. After the establishment of Islamic regime, the Iranians are still motivated by political and economic hardships to seek better prospects outside their country's borders. Canada organised immigration policy to take advantage of global migration movement as well as, Canada was also facing labour shortage problems. Currently Iran comes in the top ten countries sending labour force to Canada.

Large number of young Iranians who entered Canada as students would immediately apply for refugee status. By law, the federal government is required to hold a court-hearing and care for asylum seekers until a court decide the case. Fortunately for Iranians students, Canadian courts backlog of hearing is one or two years long. In the meantime Iranians students can enjoy the government's free hospitality. In order to stop this practice, Iranians going to Canada on student visas are now required to sign an affidavit promising not to seek asylum while in Canada. Despite these developments, Iranians still desire

¹⁷ Roxanne Valipur, *Iranian Migration to Canada*. (London, 1994).

to immigrate to Canada. During the Iran-Iraq war in 1980s around 2000 or more Iranians entered to Canada illegally, often bearing false passports and visas. Iranian authorities keep no record of emigration of the citizenry, but CIC issues reports on arrival of immigrants in Canada. Also the table (3.4) shows the arrival of Iranians in Canada during 1996-1998.

The population of Iranian immigrants in Canada is of comparatively low average age than Iranians in United States: the 1996 census revealed that about 12 percent were under the age of 10, while 22 percent were between the ages of 10 and 24. The largest age group was between 25 and 39, representing about 35 percent of Iranians in Canada. Only 6.5 percent of Iranians were over the age of 60. The population of Muslims is higher than the other ethnic groups in Canada. Most Iranians immigrants have settled in large urban centres in Canada. In the late 1980s the distribution of the Iranian immigrant population in Canada was estimated to be 50 percent in Ontario, 20 percent in Quebec and 20 percent in British Columbia. Some slight change in the settlement pattern can be observed. The vast majority of Iranian immigrants come from urban areas, particularly large and medium-sized cities, so they have chosen to settle in major urban centres of Canada. Toronto particularly has the largest concentration of Iranians. According to the 1996 census 56 percent Iranians had settled in Ontario, 15 percent in Quebec and 23 percent in British Columbia. In Toronto, the majority have settled in the city's North York suburb.

Table: 3.4
Arrival of Iranian Immigrants and Refugees in
To Canada (1996- 1998)

Years	Immigrants	Refugees	Total
1996	5,812	1,724	7,536
1997	7,442	1,660	9,100
1998	6,760	1,470	8,170
Total	20,014	4,854	24,806

Source: www.iranica.com/article/sup/canada_Iran_Comm.html

Date: 25-08-2004.

Iranian Migration to Europe

Most of the post-revolution emigrants were refugees who sought political asylum in Europe and North America, particularly in Germany, Netherlands, France, the UK, the US and the Canada¹⁸. Thus by 1992 there were 164,200 residents in the countries of European community consisting the Sixth largest non-European nationality¹⁹. Iran has consistently been one of the three most important source countries for spontaneous asylum seeker in Europe. The most significant movement have been in the form of labour migration, particularly to Germany during 1960s and 1970s.²⁰ Between 1992 and 1994, it is estimated that application for asylum by Iranians in Europe numbered some 18,000 and, partial data for 1995 suggest that the relatively high rate of application from this source continue. Some 30 percent of applications from this source over the period have been lodged in the Netherlands a portion only exceeds in the case of Germany. Most generally, by 1994 the Netherlands was numerically the second most important destination for asylum seeker in Europe behind Germany²¹.

During 1994 and 1995, the case of Iranian asylum seekers has been the subject of particular attention in the Netherlands. Prior to 1994, the Dutch government considered Iran an unsafe country and rejected Iranian asylum seekers were not repatriated but instead granted a tolerance status. Towards the end of 1994, however, the authorities started to repatriate rejected Iranian asylum seekers following a report from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the human rights situation in Iran.

¹⁸ Prakash. C. Jain, "West Asian Diaspora: Migration patterns, Population Size and Geographic Distribution". *Encounter*. Vol. 4, No. 4, July/August, 2001, p. 51.

¹⁹ Khalid Kosar, "Social Network and the asylum Cycle: The Case of Iranians in the Netherlands." *International Migration Review*. Vol. 31, no.3, Fall 1979, p. 596.

²⁰ Alan Richards and John Waterbury, n. 9, pp. 379-80.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 595.

Iranians are the largest immigrant group in Sweden, after Iraqis and Finns, and Yugoslavs. During 1970s there were only 998 Iranians in Sweden, but after twenty five years of Islamic revolution this number increased to 52,038²². The age structures of Iranians in Sweden are 25-30 year old. They are well educated and from big cities and they are ethnically Persians. The majority of them from Tehran and have graduated from the universities or were university students before immigration.

Iranians migrated to Japan also. Japan entered into a visa exempt agreement with Iran from 1974, shortly after the first oil crises²³. The oil crises forced many Iranians to sought work in the oil producing countries of the Middle East. However, with the outbreak of the gulf war in August 1990, most of these migrants' workers had to evacuate to neighbouring countries, and economic opportunities in the region quickly dried up. Around the same time, the number of Iranian illegal migrant workers were in Japan began to increase rapidly, and 7700 Iranians were working illegally in Japan in 1991, representing about 12 times the figure of 653 for 1990²⁴. But the number decrease sharply due to the Japanese government's suspension in April 1992 of its visa-exempt agreement with Iran for short-term visitors.

Ethnic and Religious Migration from Iran

Migration of religious minorities from Iran started during and after the Islamic revolution. In the early stage of migration people belonging to religious minorities like Jews, Bahais, Armenians, Christians and Muslim minorities (Sunnis) started migration. Iran was totally dominated by Shia sect of Islam. As the post-revolution Iran settled down and the Islamic clerics consolidated their power, political and religious persecution of opponents subsided. Economic refugees and immigrants gradually began to replace the religious and political

²² <http://www.iranianhouse.org/english/RFE-RL.htm>. Date: 23-5-2005.

²³ Sellek Yoko, "*Illegal Foreign Migrants Workers in Japan*", P. 174.

²⁴ Ibid.

exiles. Most of the exiles and immigrants migrated all over the World as we see considerable number of Bahais also migrating to India with an estimate of 60,000 in 1996.²⁵ But most of these ethnic and religious minorities settled in United States and Europe. Iranians are the largest immigrants group in Sweden, after Iraqis, Finns, and Yugoslavs. At the end of 2000, there were 52,038 Iranian born individuals residing in Sweden, before the Islamic revolution there were only 998 of them.

The Iranian Jewish community were mostly merchants and shopkeepers and mostly engaged in a variety of artisanal and handicraft jobs. The position of Jews in Iran deteriorated after the adoption of Shiite Islam as the state religion in 16th century. Jews were declared as nonbelievers and it restricted their economic life also. But the positions improved during the Pahlavi dynasty which granted them equal rights. Jews stopped paying the poll tax, could hold government's offices, open business in the bazaar, and send their children to the newly established public schools and universities.²⁶ Jews benefited from the economic boom during 1970s because of their concentration in business and their international business linkages.

The position of Jews after the Islamic revolution was not so good as earlier. But they got the minority position in Iran unlike the Bahais. The Bahai religion grew out of the Babi messianic revolutionary movement in the mid-19th century Iran. The Bab proclaimed himself the messianic *Mehdi*, or the hidden Imam and claimed to the fulfilment of the Twelve Shiite belief which declared that Twelfth Imam would eventually return to set up a just society.²⁷ The Bahais were not considered as the people of book, and they lost their minority status in Iran after the formation of the Islamic state. Consequently Bahais were

²⁵ www.iranica.org.com, Date: 23-5-2005

²⁶ Mehdi Bozorgmehr, "Internal Ethnicity: Iranians in Los Angeles" *Sociological perspectives*, vol. 40, no. 3, 1997, p. 392.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 393

subjected to persecution in Iran in 19th century and after 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Summary and Conclusion

Iranian migration abroad is relatively a recent phenomenon. The major wave of Iranian migration took place during and after the Islamic revolution. The major factors responsible for migration in most countries are search for better socio-economic opportunities, natural disaster, or ecological deterioration. But in the case of Iran political factors are found as the main push force particularly during the period of Islamic revolution. Thus during the Shah regime thousands of political activists and academicians who could not tolerate the Shah's repressive regime left the country.

In the early stages of revolution, there was much violence against those who were accused of being connected with the Shah's regime. The government officials, security agents (SAVAK), politicians, and capitalists were among such migrants. After the establishment of Islamic regime, the Iranians continued to experience political and religious constraints but of different kinds. There has been strict code of Islamic conduct and religious surveillance on all aspect of political, economic, and cultural life since the Islamic revolution. A Large number of Iranians who did not tolerate the oppressive environment and managed to keep lines of communication open with the outside world. This political and religious oppression served as a motivating factor for the emigration.

The continued political oppression and the interference of the Islamic Republic in people's affairs subsequently pushed a greater number of Iranians to migrate. The exact number of Iranians who left the country is not known, because there is no exact data available but some media has stated the rise of the Iranian Diaspora to about 3 million or more. They were mostly elites, political activists, emancipated women, and members of religious minorities

like Jews, Bahais, and Christians. In the 1981-1996 periods, Iran ranked fifth among countries with the highest number of refugees admitted to the US. Iranians also had a large number of asylum-seekers in Europe. According to Iranian Christian Report of 1996 the population of Iranians abroad was 4 million, who are mostly settled in North America and Europe.

Iranian migration to United States is essentially a post-Revolution phenomenon, although there was some Iranian migration to the U.S. since at least the Second World War. Iranian emigration could not have been economically motivated, given the lucrative economic opportunities available in Iran, especially after the oil boom and before the revolution. Consequently, their emigration in the period (1973-1977) could have been mostly temporary and consisted substantial share of students. Many of these students, who originally planned to return to Iran, remained in the United States after the revolution. A Large number of Iranian population residing in Los Angeles with 40 percent of population and rest of the population residing in other states of United States. Los Angeles become centre for attraction to the Iranians and become Iran Angeles. Iranians formed number of Literary and other Associations, such Iranian American Doctors Association, and Iranian teachers Association and many more such association are active in Los Angeles. Iranian also formed their own television and radio station and local dailies.

After United States Canada became the second favourite destination for Iranians. According to Canadian statistical records there has been a huge increase in Iranian population in Canada. During the year of 1991-96 there were about 60,000 Iranian populations residing in Canada. The increase in Iranian population in Canada is attributed to the establishment of Islamic regime. After the establishment of Islamic regime, the Iranians are still motivated by political and economical hardship to seek better prospects outside their country's border. Currently Iran comes in the top ten countries sending labour force to Canada.

Apart from Canada and United States, Iranians also migrated to Europe and particularly Germany, Netherlands, France and United Kingdom. Iran has consistently been one of the most important source countries for spontaneous asylum seeker in Europe. Iranians make up the largest non-European nationality in Europe.

Migration of religious minorities from Iran begins with the advent of Islamic revolution. Large number of religious minorities left the country due to the fear of persecutions. In the early stage of migration a number of people belonging to religious minorities like Jews, Bahais, Christians and Muslim minorities started migrating. After the full establishment of Islamic regime economic refugees and immigrants gradually began to replace the religious and political exiles.

CHAPTER 4

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF IRANIANS EMIGRANTS

This chapter deals with the socio-economic status of Iranians who reside abroad, the destination chosen by Iranians for migration and their socio-economic achievements. The chapter also deals with the process of return migration and their diasporic relations with their homeland.

The large post-Revolutionary Iranian immigrant population in different countries raise many interesting issues and questions, including as to what extent Iranian culture can be maintained abroad, and what are their socio-economic conditions, who resided abroad before and after the Islamic Revolution. Before the Islamic revolution the volume of migration was low, but after the Islamic revolution there was considerable change in the volume of migration. Large numbers of Iranian immigrants were generally attracted to major developed countries like United States, Canada, and European countries.

The majority of Iranians who migrated to United States were often highly educated and successful. Most of the immigrants from Iran went to United States to study, and the majority of Iranian male immigrants obtained at least a bachelors degree, while some even went on to obtain a graduate degree. Iranian immigrants in the United States are well educated, with 40 percent in the year 1980 holding a bachelors degree or an advance degree. Though the majority of Iranians are highly educated, when broken down into the different Iranian subgroups the difference is quite great. Most of the Iranian Muslims in Los Angeles have bachelor's degree because most of the Muslims went here originally to study, about 40 percent had graduate degrees. But in the case of Armenian, Bahai's, and Jewish groups from Iran only about one third of each

religious group held bachelors degrees. It is also found that the Armenian section tended to be the group with least amount of education.

The education level of the Iranians community in the U.S is available in detail from the 1990 US census. More than 50 percent of the Iranians in the United States had a bachelor's degree and higher, they were ranked third after Indian and Taiwanese. Among males, almost two thirds had completed a college or post-graduate degrees in 1990¹. Even 39 percent of Iranian females were college graduates, and another 24 percent had some college education. Although many Iranian females were not in the labour force, still almost half of the employed females held professional speciality and managerial jobs. In addition many Iranian females also were in clerical occupations². The education level of Iranians has allowed them to become a part of a very competitive workforce as well each level of education an individual had obtained helped to dictate what area of work he would be entering in, Iranian heads of household tended to be manager, executive and professionals (doctors, dentist, lawyers, teachers etc.) or to have technical, sales or support jobs. Only one in ten hold a blue collar job. Also, many Iranians tended to be self- employed. Iranian Jews had an 82 percent employment rate.

The earliest Iranian professional in the U.S before the revolution were the physicians. They were mostly young temporary trainees who were working as medical interns and residents. Some even established themselves to continue to practice beyond the residency stage. Their motives to stay in the US were more for professional, social, and political reason than from economic incentives. The total number of Iranian physicians in the US before the

¹ Pyong Gap Min and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, "Immigrants Entrepreneurship and Business Patterns: A comparison of Koreans and Iranians in Los Angeles". *International Migration Review*, vol. 34, no. 13, Fall 2002. p. 722.

² Ibid, p. 724.

revolution grew to 2,306 in 1978³. The physicians who migrated to the US after the revolution were mostly experienced and came with families for a permanent stay. At present, there are about 5,000 Iranian physicians working in the United States who have their own practice and work in medical institutions. About 4,000 of them obtained their primary medical education in Iran, and have gone through advanced training in the US⁴. There are also about 3,000 new generations of Iranian physicians who had received their entire training in some aspect of the field in the US. This puts total number of Iranian medical doctors in the US to about 8,000.⁵ This is quite a high magnitude of brain drain, especially in a field that has the most costly training.

The number of physicians abroad is substantial, compared to the total number of physicians who are now in Iran. Moreover the quality of their training and experience is generally better than that of those in Iran. Before the revolution, there were about 15,000 physicians and dentists in Iran. After the revolution about 5,000 of them left the country, reducing the total to about 10,000. This number started to increase when the newly graduated physician steadily joined the profession. In 1991, the total number of physicians in Iran including 2,862 from foreign countries, reached to 19,565. Adding about 4,470 dentists makes the total 26,770. In the year 2000 there were 24,770 physicians working in the public sector, including dentist, veterinarians, and pharmacists. In the private sector there were about 13,000 physicians.⁶

There is on an average 0.3 doctors for every 1,000 persons in Iran compared to international average of 1.4.⁷ Despite that the number of practicing

³ Akbar E. Torbat, "The Brain Drain of Iranians to United States", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 56, No.2, Spring 2002, p. 283.

⁴ www.ama.org.htm American Medical Association, 2001. Date: 04-03-2004.

⁵ www.irma.org/cme/index.ph. Iranian American Medical Association, New York, N.Y. 1999. Date: 04-03-2004.

⁶ Akbar E. Torbat, n. 3, p. 284.

⁷ The World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, (1999), pp. 91-92.

physicians in Iran is below the international average. There are over 8,000 recently graduate physicians who are unemployed. The government does not have enough funds to employ them and some are driving taxicabs in Tehran. The distribution of physicians in the country is uneven. Before the revolution, about 50 percent of the physicians were working in Tehran, and after the revolution this trend still continues. Due to unevenness in distribution there is a huge shortage of doctors in rural Iran.

Another major group of highly trained Iranian professionals in the US are university professors. Iranian immigrants with doctoral degrees in the US are 4.6 percent of the persons who are 25 years and older. According to National Science Foundation in 1998, 1,369 Iranian born professors were teaching engineering and science on a full-time basis in the United States.⁸ The total number of Iranian professors in the US is substantially higher if the Iranians, who teach in the other fields and part-time lecturers, are added. In 1990, 7,692 Iranians, or 4.6 percent of those 25 years and older in the US, had a doctoral degree. Since there are approximately 5,000 medical doctors, the remaining 5,672 persons have doctoral degrees in other areas.

In 1980 right before the university professors were purged, there were 16,222 professors teaching in Iran's higher education institutions. When the universities reopened in 1982, this figure declined to 9,042. The newly-hired professors gradually increased this figure to 17,447 in 1989. In the pre-revolutionary period a good portion of university professors had been educated in the United States and in Europe, especially in science and engineering. For example in Shiraz University there were about 400 out of 670 faculty members who had Ph.D degrees from the US or British universities. In the year 1999-2000, the total number of teaching staff, including part-time faculty in public universities reached 29,158 of who, only 13,464 were in the rank of assistant

⁸ Akbar E. Tobrat, n. 3, p. 285.

professors and higher, and the rest were instructors. The Islamic Azad University which is private university with various campuses throughout the nation had 16,164 teaching staff of which 3,948 were in the rank of assistant professor and higher, and the rest were instructors.

Table: 4.1

Educational Qualification of Iranians in the United States, 1999-2000

Educational Attainment	Number	Percent
Persons 18 to 24 years	20,332	100
High School Graduates	4,363	3.2
Some College or Assistant Degrees	10,016	
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	3,382	
Persons 25 Years and Over	167,611	
Less than 5 th grade	5,406	3.2
5 th to 8 th grade	5,396	3.2
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	11,418	6.8
High School Graduates	25,588	15.3
Some College, no Degree	23,403	14.0
Associate Degree, Occupational Programme	5,497	3.3
Associate Degree, Academic Programme	6,023	3.6
Bachelors Degree	46,266	27.6
Masters Degree	24,050	14.3
Professional School Degrees	6,972	4.2
Doctorate Degrees	7,692	4.6

Source: Akbar E. Tobrat, "The Brain Drain of Iranians to United States", *Middle East Journal*. Vol. 56, No.2, Spring 2002. p. 279

According to Mohammad Hafezi⁹ Iranian-American rank first among 67 immigrants groups with regard to educational attainment while the average family income of the community is 38 percent higher than the national average. As the table (4.1), shows the educational attainment of Iranians in United States, interestingly Iranians consists of the high school to doctorate degrees.

⁹ Mohammad Hafizi is member of Iranian Studies Group; they conducted a survey on Iranians in the United States.

Table: 4.2

**Occupational Characteristics of the Iranian Population in the
United States 1990.**

Persons in years and over	192,041	
Total In labour force	130,439	
Total Employed person 16 year and over	123,098	100.0%
Managerial and professional speciality occupations Professional specialty occupations	50,734 29,123	41.9%
Technical, Sales, and administrative support occupations Administrative Support occupation	42,378 8,774	35.0%
Service Occupation	11,287	9.3%
Farming, forestry and fishing occupation	332	0.3%
Precision production, craft and repair occupations	8,774	7.2%
Operators, fabricators, and labourers	7,593	6.3%
Machine operators, assembling, and inspectors	3,007	
Transportation and material moving occupation	3,073	
Handlers, equipment, Cleaners, helpers and labourers	1,513	

Source: Akbar E. Torbat, "The Brain Drain from Iran to the United States", *Middle East Journal*. Vol. 56, No.2, Spring 2002. p. 283

As we have seen in the table (4.2), 41.9 percent of the employed persons have managerial and professional occupation and 35.0 percent are engaged in technical and administrative work. And rest of the population is divided in service occupation, craft and machine operators. The occupational distribution

of Iranians in United States is different from one source to another because of the different estimates made by authors or sources.

Iranian immigrants have established various professional associations in the United States. In Southern California, which is the largest population centre of Iranians abroad, there are about a dozen of these associations. Including the network of Iranian professionals of Orange County, Society of Iranian Engineers and Architects, Iranian lawyers Associations, the Persian American society of certified Public Accountant, Iranian press club, society of Iranian Medical doctors, Associations of Iranian professors and Scholars , Iranian Nurses Associations, Iranian Dental Associations of California, and some other organisations. Similar organizations are found in a few other states in which Iranian are concentrated. For example the Iranian Academic Association in North America, and the Iranian American Medical Association, both located in New York City and also the society of Iranian Professionals in North Texas, Dallas, and Taxes.

From these organizations we can understand that large numbers of Iranians are engaged in highly professional jobs. For the first time Iranian immigrants' published "yellow page of Iranians" in 1981¹⁰, in which 177 cases of professional activities, mainly in the same area and particularly in Los Angeles, were registered. In the 1990 edition of the same guide book more than 1700 activities, were registered. This fast growth of economy of an ethnic group, points to the number of Iranians who obtained a major contribution in the market. In the telephone directory of Los Angeles region under the medicine related professions, the number of doctors rose from 40 in 1980 to more than 220 in 1990. Many professionals make use of the bilingual notices and dual names which are suitable both for Iranian and non-Iranian customers.

¹⁰ http://impressions-ba.com/features.php?_features=10259.

Iranian immigrants are highly entrepreneurial; they turn self-employed for different reasons and develop businesses using different kind of recourses. Iranian immigrant males in Los Angeles County had even a higher self-employment rate among the four religious groups. Jewish Iranian male had the highest self-employment rate 83 percent whereas Armenian Iranian males had the lowest rate 43 percent.¹¹

Historically, Jews and Armenians have played the role of trading minorities in different societies. Classic examples of these minorities, a large proportion of Jewish, and Armenian Iranians in Los Angles were engaged in business prior to emigration, and their previous business experience facilitated their establishment of business in terms of economic network. These Iranian subgroups drew heavily upon the “tool kit” or orthodox resources of entrepreneurship including how to do business and how to function as a minority group while limiting conflict with the hosts¹². They also have access to non-Iranian co-religionists (American Jews and Armenian) in the United States. The majority of Muslims and Bahais have completed college or graduate education in the United States and had no difficulty in finding professional occupation in this country. These Iranians turned to self-employment largely due to the benefit of independence and higher earnings. Although some Muslims chose self-employment to escape from discriminations, especially after the “Iranian Hostage Crisis.”

Comparative studies have been made by Bozorgmehr and Gap Min¹³ on Iranians in Los Angeles and according to them Iranians and Koreans are highly entrepreneurial, they turn to self-employment for different reason and develop business using different kinds of resources. Among all foreign-born groups,

¹¹ Pyong Gap Min and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, n. 1, p. 722.

¹² Ibid, p. 723.

¹³ Ibid, p. 729.

Koreans males had the highest self-employment rate 35 percent, and Iranian males had the second highest self-employment rate 28 percent.¹⁴

In terms of business size, for instance, both Korean and Iranian Immigrants in Los Angeles are highly represented in garment manufacturing and construction business work. However, Korean garment manufacturing and construction businesses are smaller than their Iranian counterparts. More than 90 percent of Koreans garments owners are in fact subcontractors, whereas most Iranians garments manufacturers are independent owners. The location of Iranian and Koreans businesses also dictates the ethnic composition and customers.

Table: 4.3

Demographic and Socio-economic Characteristics of Iranians who immigrated in 1975-80 and those who immigrated before 1975, male and female non-students, Los Angeles, 1980

Characteristics	Male non-student Immigrated		Female non-student Immigrated	
	1975-80	Before 1975	1975-80	Before-1979
Mean age	38.1	39.0	36.3	43.5
Standard deviation of age	18.0	11.0	15.4	14.0
Percent who Know English well	70.2	94.4	60.1	78.9
Means year of Education	14.3	18.1	12.9	14.9
Percent with Four or more years college	43.3	80.0	26.7	43.0
Percent in labour force	54.6	87.8	19.8	42.1
Percent in Administrative, Managerial and professional Occupation	28.5	53.7	9.1	18.7
Weeks worked in 1979	37	45	35	39

Table contd...

¹⁴ Ibid.

Percent self-employed Including unpaid family work	34.0	27.9	11.3	8.3
Mean income from all sources	\$ 17,264	\$ 25,629	\$7,627	\$ 9,442
Mean wage or salary income	\$ 15,604	\$ 23, 676	\$ 5,858	\$11, 299
Mean interest or net rental income	\$ 8, 940	\$ 2,892	\$7,212	\$1,638

Source: George Sabagh and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, "Are the characteristics of exiles different from immigrants? The case study of Iranians in Los Angeles". *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol.71, no. 2, January, 1987, p. 83.

Iranian associations serve mostly social function in the Iranian community. None of the few existing Iranian trade associations in Los Angeles have actively used collective strategies to protect their economic interests, in part because Iranians have not encountered any major business-related interethnic conflict. This is not to suggest that Iranians have been immune to prejudice and discrimination. Indeed, after the Iranian hostage crises,¹⁵ they have suffered intermittently from discrimination. The continued Anti-American rhetoric of the Iranian regime, and the incidents of terrorism generally attributed to this regime, have sensitized Iranians in the US to prejudice or the negative opinion of Americans. Although Iranians may not have experienced discrimination in occupation, housing, and education for children.

In 1990 for the first time in the history of Iranian community in the U.S. the numbers of women exceed that of men immigrants, which is continuing till today. Change in the gender composition marks a turning point and a fundamental transformation in the Iranian community in America. Among the Iranian women the number of holders of B.Sc degree rose from 30 percent to 39 percent and employment from 29 percent to 51 percent during 1990s. On the whole fewer Iranian women have been registered as housewives. Only 44 percent are not active, whereas this figure was 68 percent in 1980. As

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 725.

we seen in the table (4.4), below, this table shows the educational distribution of Iranian women in United States from 1990-1996. It is interesting to note that Iranians female population abroad are engaged in every field of work force. They occupy the post from manager to housewife. As the table shows 47.4 percent of them engaged in professional speciality work, and only 1.7 percent are engaged in blue collar Jobs.

Table: 4. 4

Occupational Profile of Iranian Women in the United States, 1990-96

Occupations	1990	1996
Managers	8.8	14.8
Professional speciality	47.4	27.8
Sales	6.9	16.8
Clerical	1.9	19.1
Service	20.2	14.7
Craft	6.1	3.2
Other blue collar works	1.7	3.6
Housewife	7.0	---
Total	100	100

Source: Sarah Ansari and Vanessa Martin (ed). *Women, Religion and Culture in Iran*, Curzon Press, 2001. p. 201.

Many Iranians in the United States like to think of themselves as a collectivity, better yet as a national collectivity. This is not hard to understand because Iranians come from a rich and strong culture in which the love of the mother land is seen as a moral requirement. The Iranian culture, however as we define it, is emotionally binding and the Iranian society, again in whatever from and shape we define it, is very nationalist. Once out of their country, Iranians like ethnic groups in similar situations, attempt to use their cultural heritage as an anchorage against increasing pressure of the host society for assimilation. However, the record of the Iranian immigrants in developing a sense of national identity and collectivity is mixed. The desire and sense of community has not

fully developed yet, though efforts in bringing about such a community are being made.

According to one study the Iranian immigrant's children who live in predominantly English speaking communities of dominant groups lose their native language much faster than those immigrant's children who reside in areas where there is large contingent of their co-nationals. The community feeling between the Iranian immigrants is very high despite some differences. They help each other in times of crises and celebrate special occasions of cultural and social importance. For these things to happen, more than individual and collectivity, wishes are needed. The group has to develop institutional mechanisms for relating to its members, demonstrating, reinforcing and reproducing its cultural and national values and practices and generating resources and support for its activities. Many Iranian communities have established local dailies national magazines, radio and TV stations, and electronic communications. But the communities have not been able to develop sustainable national institutions with the goals and objectives of reaching the majority of the Iranians. Traditionally Iranians have done well in business and academia, but in recent years there has been more of a flowering within the arts, too. Azhar Nafisi's literary memories, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, have helped in bringing out not just literature, but the recent history of Iran also to a mainstream audience¹⁶.

Canada was another important destination for Iranians after United States. Migration of Iranians to Canada started from early 20th century. During the years of 1960 and 1970 there around 660 immigrants admitted to Canada. There was a massive flow of students to North American universities that began after 1965, and the fact that many of these students chose to remain in Canada after having completed their studies and having obtained immigrants status. The

¹⁶ Azar Nafisi, "Reading Lolita in Tehran", *Middle East Quarterly*, 2003.
<http://www.meforum.org/php?id=542>. Date: 30-3-2005.

earliest immigrants from Iran quickly joined the professional rank as medical doctors, engineers, lawyers, nurses, and dentist.

Unlike the first wave of immigrants, these later arrivals have mostly joined the rank of entrepreneurs and owner of private businesses. It is estimated that approximately 12 percent of Iranians who came to Canada in the 1970s were entrepreneurs and investors. Although countless others left Iran with economic means, entering Canada as political refugees, they were able to find a niche for themselves in Canadian society. For instance, Iranian immigrants have been found to be involved in the creation of construction companies, restaurant, bakeries, dry cleaning shops, grocery stores, repair shops, and computer stores. The most notable examples of successful Iranian entrepreneurs in Canada are the Ghermenzian brothers who built the West Edmonton Mall, reputed to be the largest shopping mall in the world, and the Khosrowshahi family, who founded the Future shop chain of electronic and computer stores. These recent trends notwithstanding, after Germans, Iranians represent the second most educated group of immigrants to Canada.

The population of Iranian immigrants in Canada is marked by its relatively low average age: the 1996 censuses revealed that about 12 percent were under the age of 10, while 22 percent were between the age of 10 and 24. The largest age group was between 25 and 39, representing about 35 percent of Iranians in Canada. Only 6.5 percent of Iranians were over the age of 60. Although the majority of Iranians were Muslims, there are also members of other religious and ethnic groups among them. Iranians also established cultural institutions such as Persian-language journals, magazine, radio, and television programmes. The Iranian-Canadian business sector is also a leader in hosting a number of live cultural events including poetry reading and musical events.¹⁷

¹⁷ http://www.iranica.com/articles/sup/canada_v_Iran_Comm.html Date: 08-12-2004.

Iranian immigrant to Canada comes from the variety of cultural and social background from Iran. What they do have in common is the Persian language and great love for their homeland. The majority of Iranians have settled in metropolitan areas. They are well educated and motivated with a strong entrepreneurial drive, with the growing popularity of Persian carpets, many have become involved in the import/export market. The new Iranian Canadian can be found in every facet of Canadian life from dishwasher to taxi driver, from physician to professors.

Like United States Iranians have also formed professional, students, and cultural associations such as the Canadian Society of Iranians Engineers and Architect, the Iranian/Persian Students Associations and Organizations (ISAO) of Canada, and the Ferdowsi Association of Canada. The Iranian Writer's Association of Canada, the Persian Artists Association of Ontario, the Centre Culturelle et Communautaire des Persians in Montre, al and the Vancouver Pars National Ballet stand out as the most prominent Iranian writers residing in Canada Raza al Baraal hani and Mehri Yalfa al ni. Cultural and social cohesion is also maintained in smaller cities across Canada. Several women associations and magazines also exist in Canada especially for Iranian women. Persian language classes are also held in all of Canada's major urban centres primarily for the benefit of Iranian children. The objectives of these associations are to promote brotherhood, perseverance, integrity, charity and action.

Two Canadian universities, University of Toronto and McGill university have a tradition of teaching Persian language courses in addition to others devoted to various aspects of Iranian social, political and cultural history. As the Iranian population in Canada has grown, other major universities have begun to incorporate the study of the heritage of this relatively new immigrant community into their curriculum. Iranian-Canadian is also well represented in the Canadian post secondary educational system, both as students and university instructors. Iranians have not made their presence felt strongly yet on

the political map of Canada. However, many Iranians the majority of whom came to Canada as political refugees are still preoccupied with Iranian politics. In addition to political opposition groups and organizations, numerous human rights organizations dealing with the situation of political prisoners and political refugees have been established, such as the Organization for the Defence of Political Prisoners in Iran, the Society for the Defence of Refugees and the Council of Refugees.

Canada remains amongst the most popular destination for the Iranians seeking to emigrate, and Iranian immigrants to Canada are the 5th most numerous of any nationality. Citing reports from the Iranian Deputy Culture and Higher Education Minister in July 1999, this source also notes that among Iranian university-faculty it is their preferred destination. This pattern confirms the overall impression maintained by Canadian government sources that Iranian immigrants are among the most educated new arrivals.¹⁸

Many of the immigrants were highly educated, often they had upgraded their qualifications to make them comparable to Canadian standards. Many of the Iranians who came to Canada had lived in other countries after leaving Iran, and brought with them a cosmopolitan tradition which benefited Canada. The tendency of other ethnic groups who settled in Canadian cities was to gather in one specific area of the city. Their neighbourhood took on the feel and tone of that group. This was not the case with the Iranians. There is no "Little Iran" in Toronto. Since the immigrants come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, such as Fars (majority), Azanis, Kurds, Arabs, Armenians, Assyrians, Lons, Turkmens and Baluchis, they spread out across cities like Toronto where the majority of Iranian immigrants reside.

Currently the number of Iranians residing abroad has been roughly estimated to be more than three million and 50 percent of whom live in the

¹⁸ http://www.iranica.com/articles/sup/canada_v_Iran_Comm.html. Date: 08-12-2004.

United States. The estimate conducted on the wealth of Iranians abroad shows that the total of their wealth reaches to 400 dollars. This estimate was brought up once in 2002 in the meeting of Iran's ex-ministers of finance and economic affairs with the Iranian investors and industry owners abroad, that was approved by the association of Iranian graduates in the United States.

According to this report, Iranians residing in the United States are the founders of 280 important companies and in charge of over 400 major American companies, which are also among 1000 top fortune companies. At the same time there are other Iranians living in other countries who according to experts are said to have proper finance abilities. Iranians residing in Canada, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, France, and United Kingdom and even in Japan are among those groups whose assets reach tens of billions. In 1990, the Iranian-American community was in a quite good status from the point of views of academic as well as social and economic status. According to the census Bureau the average income of Iranians was \$ 36800 per year, which was considerably higher than the average income of Americans in the same year \$30000.

Iranians leave their country because of their distaste for the regime. Most of them, however, love their country and continue to carry an Iranian passport and record their marriage and birth of their children with the Iranian government. Though such practices are a matter of convenience and many of these Iranians do not anticipate their children going to Iran for a living, they still continue to view their children as Iranians. During 1990s more than any other period, Iranians accepted American citizenship. They accepted the new culture the new cultural behaviour gradually and adapted themselves to the surrounding social and economic structure. One cannot escape from being merged in a great society. Therefore the culture of Iranians residing in the United States has many features of the culture of the host country and this

matter, without wishing to pass judgment about its value or level, has led to creation of another Iranian culture different from that in the original homeland.

Summary and Conclusion

The exact data are not available for Iranians abroad, and the available data contradict each other. Still an average current estimate of Iranians abroad is about 3 to 4 millions. As from the available sources, majority of overseas Iranians reside in United States, Canada, and European countries. The bulk of Iranian immigrants' legal/illegal resides in neighbouring Arab countries like Turkey and Bahrain.

Those Iranians who reside in United States are highly educated with 40 percent of bachelors' degree and higher they are ranked third after Indian and Taiwanese. Due to high level of education they have become part of a very competitive work force. The Iranians are engaged in managerial and technical field. A large number of Iranian professors are residing abroad. The number of Iranian physicians in the United States before revolution grew to 2,306 in 1978. After the Islamic revolution, this number comes to around 8,000.

Another major group of Iranians in United States are university professors. After the closure of universities in Iran due to the Islamic revolution large number of professors fled to US. These immigrants formed large number of associations and organizations in United States. According to one research, Iranian-Americans are ranked first among the 67 immigrants groups with regard to educational attainment, while the average income of the community is 38 percent higher than the national income.

After United States Iranians also migrated to Canada, during the year of 1960 to 1970 there are around 660 immigrants admitted to Canada. The 1996 census counts 62,385 Persian-speaking Iranians living in Canada. This is a 28 percent increase from the previous census of 1991. The Iranian community in

Canada is young one, only 7 percent of Iranians-Canadians are over the age of 60. The largest age group is between 25 and 39.

The earliest immigrants from Iran quickly joined the professional rank as medical doctors, engineers, and lawyers. Most of the Iranians in Canada have their own businesses most of them are involved in construction companies, restaurant, grocery shops, computer stores, and dry cleaning shops. Like United States Iranians have also formed professional, students and cultural associations. Iranian women are very active in Canada and they have formed various associations and published their own magazines.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Humans have always been wanderers. In the ancient times people moved from one place to another in search of food and shelter. Massive population movements or displacements to escape natural disasters or political persecution are recorded in the histories of many ethnic groups. However, international migration is a relatively recent phenomenon. International migration occurs when a person crosses a national border to take up shelter in another country. It was only in the early 20th century that more than 190 nations-states issued their own passports and visas, regulated, and decided who can cross their borders and stay. At least 160 million people were living outside their country of birth or citizenship in 2000, a major increment up from an estimated 120 million in 1990.

Broadly, international migration are of two types, one is voluntary migration, and another is forced migration. In voluntary migration people usually migrated to another countries for economic reasons, like search for better job opportunities, and better education. Usually people migrated from developing countries to develop counties in the search of greener pasture. On the other hand, in forced migration, people are forced to leave their homeland due to natural disasters or hostile political conditions. In such situation people take refugee in other countries, and stay until the situation is not favorable for return. Globalization has made people more aware of conditions and opportunities outside their immediate surroundings.

The migration of Iranians abroad begins during the Shah regime. Shah introduced single party system, and abolish purdah system where women were forced to live without *purdah*, he also reduce the power of *Ulama*. Due to his

policies, large number of political activists, emancipated women and academicians left the country. Thousands of Iranians left the country at the time of revolution, which took place in 1979. They associated with Shah regime, such as the bureaucrats, politicians, and member of SAVAK. On the other hand, the religious minorities such as Jews, Bahais, and other Islamic minorities also left the country due to fear of persecution. Most of these immigrants migrated to United States, Canada and other European countries.

The Iranians left the country due to political and religious constraints on every day life. After the establishment of Islamic Republic, Khomeini and his associates started interfering in state policies. The first major policy, which they introduced, was the establishment of *Shria* court based on *Shia* guidelines. They abolished secular court, replaced all secular judges and replaced with the fundamentalist clerics. The establishment of Revolutionary court was major blow for the Iranians who associated with Shah regime or against the regime. Thousand of people were brutally killed by the Revolutionary court within the six month of revolution.

During the revolution, Khomeini declared women as the pillar of Islamic society, and encouraged them to participate in revolution. Women from all sections of societies took part in it and made considerable participation in overthrowing Shah and his regime. As Raza Shah had banned Hejab to modernize Iran, but the Iranian women demonstrated wearing *Hejab* to reject the Shah's modernization policy. But after the revolution Khomeini try to Islamize the women, and made *Hejab* compulsory for all the women. The legalization of polygamy, and reduction in the age of marriage was also the part of Islamization policy. All women judges were removed from their duties, and this was justified by saying that women's have very little sense *Naqis-sul-Aqal*, and they are unable to take proper decision. Due to the above mention, policies

and restriction imposed on women large section of educated and secular women left the country.

The process of Islamization also had major effect on the education system. The new Islamic regime revised all school texts, and changed the school curriculum. Apart from school education during the time of revolution, all universities were closed for at least three to four years. As the revolutionaries thought that universities are Westoxicated and un-Islamic. To cleanse the universities they start *Cultural Revolution*. Under the banner of Cultural Revolution, they started infiltrate to the university administration. The important academic posts were given to their alliance. The large numbers of university professors were forced to leave their post and replaced by orthodox *Ulamas*. Due to such strict observance in universities, thousands of university professors and students left the country. According to one report, all Iranian universities lost their half of population due to the Cultural Revolution.

The migration of religious minorities from Iran begins during the Islamic revolution. Thousands of them left the country due to fear of persecution. They were Jews, Bahais, Armenians, and Islamic minorities (Sunnis). After the revolution, the Bahais lost their minority Status, and thousands of Bahais were persecuted. People fled from Iran by both legal and illegal means, and as the Islamic regime's international image grew more and more negative, it become easier for Iranian asylum-seekers to be accepted by host government. North American and Western countries, with a policy of protecting political refugees, opened their doors to Iranian nationals who took full advantage of this opportunity. Religious minorities were well received, especially the Bahais, an Islamic sect, which suffered official persecution.

The Iranian migration to the United States consists of two waves or phase, with the Islamic revolution of 1978-79 as the major departure. The pre-

and post-revolution wave of Iranian migration are different quantitatively and qualitatively. In the first phase from roughly the 1950s until 1977, Iranian immigrant consisted mostly of students and visitors. In the second wave, from 1978 to present, they are mainly political refugees' or people in exiles. Although some Iranian migrated to the United States purely for economic reasons, both before and after the revolution.

The population of Iranians in United States was estimated to three to four million during 1986-87. The majority of Iranian concentrated in major cities of United States such as Los Angeles, New York, New Jersey and Southern California. Iranians constitute various ethnic groups such as Jews, Bahais, and Armenians. Due to distinct ethnic groups the settlement patterns also differ. For example, the Armenian constitutes their own enclave, and settled with their own ethnic group.

Certainly, it is no more easy as it was in the past, to immigrate, and the excuse for being political asylum is now less effective. In order to migrate one has to qualified, useful immigrants, which means having a good education, useful skills and good health. Alternatively, immigrants must have social network abroad, which can ease their entry, by the family-reunification policies or other means, into the host country. The social network played important role in the case of Iranians, large number of Iranians resides abroad before revolution and they were contacted by their relatives who wanted migrate.

Most of the Iranians trying to migrate to other countries tend to be young, well educated and disgusted with the Islamic system of governance. There are large number of professional families who moved abroad to safeguard the future of their children. With internal conditions not improving, there remains a strong aspiration to leave Iran among those who can afford,

including young, better-educated Iranians with professional skills who are looking for jobs and a more satisfying standard of life.

The combined presence of former college students and exiled elites accounts for the highly educated, entrepreneurial, and professional character of the Iranian community in the United States. One data suggests that Iranian were well educated and economically sound so they became part of active work force. Majority of them have bachelors and higher, and the ranked third after Indians and Taiwanese in terms of education. Iranians also engaged in technical works such as doctors, engineers and lawyers. The basic social and economic characteristic of Iranians in the labour force is between the age group 26 to 60 years. Among Iranian females, many of them were not in labor force, but still almost half of the employed females held clerical occupation. Iranians are also one of the most entrepreneurial immigrants in the United States, especially in Los Angeles, where they ranked second only to Koreans. Their self-employment rate for the United States as whole was 23.7 percent for males in 1990, hence the high concentration in sales and managerial occupation.

Iranians are very active in social network, they established number of associations, such as Iranian Doctors Association, Iranian Literary Association etc. Iranians also publish yellow page of their own. Iranian women also published their own journal and magazines.

Apart from United States, Iranians also migrated to Canada. The population of Iranians in Canada increased in early 1980a and reached to 5,000. However, the population of Iranians increased in 1991 to 1996, and reached to 62,385. This rapid increase in population was due to change in political condition in Iran after the Islamic revolution. The Iranian immigrants consist of political refugees, members and officials of older regime, religious minorities, like Jews, Bahais, and Armenians. Large number of Iranians migrated because

of the Canadian government's policy of absorbing immigrants with high skill and fortune. Most of the Iranian immigrants were well educated and with higher technical education, and some migrated from Iran with big fortune to Canada.

Most of Iranian immigrants settled in urban centre of Canada. Majority of them settled in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia. Toronto represents the higher concentration of Iranians. Iranians in Canada are engaged in private business, construction companies, restaurant, bakeries, dry-cleaning shops, grocery stores, repair shops and computer stores. The Iranian yellow page in Canada is full of entries and addresses for Computer services, Education, Entertainment, Finance, Sports, Health, Home and Garden, Personal Care, Real Estate, Restaurant, Shopping, sports and Recreation and Travel. There are two major and successful Iranians in Canada; one is Ghermezian brothers, and Khosrowshahi family. The Ghermezian brothers, who built the West Edmonton Mall, reputed to be the largest shopping mall in the world. The Khosrowshahi, who founded the Future Shop chain of electronic and computers stores.

The age structure of Iranians in Canada is relatively young. Only 6.5 percent of Iranians were over the age of 60. Majority of Iranians in Canada is Muslims and than followed by other ethnic groups. Iranians in Canada has also formed many associations such as cultural and students associations. These associations provide services to new immigrants organize class and maintain Persian libraries. Persian language classes are also held in all of Canada's major urban centers, primarily for the benefit of Iranian children.

Iranians are among the top asylum seekers in many countries, like France, Germany, Sweden and other countries. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, "when people flee their own country and seek shelter in a second state, they apply for 'asylum' or right to recognized as bona

fide refugees and the legal protection and material assistance that status implies. Iranians consists of sixth largest non- European nationality.

The Iranian migration abroad currently estimated to three to four millions. After the demise of Ayatollah Khomeini, the policies of Islamic republic change towards the immigrants. During the period of economic restructuring 1989-1990, it was described as *Khordad-The Second* (Second Revolution) by Rafsanjani. To implement the developmental programs Rafsanjani called all the Iranians abroad to contribute in developing the war torn economy. Rafsanjani was in favor to made good relationship with the Iranians who left the country at the time of revolution. He also promised safe return of all factories and wealth, which was confiscated during revolution.

Due to political and religious limitations Iran lost most of their human capital. Large number of university professors, doctors, the technicians left the country for better prospects in other countries. Most of them moved towards developed countries such as Canada, United States, France, Germany etc. Iranian government just after the revolution tried to control the brain drain which was on at an alarming rate after the revolution. The economic hardship also faced by the Iranians due to eight year long war with Iraq also added to migration.

President Khatami has tried to improve the Islamic Republic's relations with Iranians abroad. He tried to initiate sound and constructive dialogue with immigrants, and request them tolerate with the political situation in the country. During his foreign visits, he emphasis on reverse brain drain, that Iran lost after the revolution. There is no doubt that as a result of the changes that have taken place in Iran since the victory of Khatami, many Iranians are genuinely aspiring for the return of their exiled compatriots. President Khatami described the Iranians abroad as an important asset of Iran, observing that possessing huge

capital of science, culture, expertise, and finance; these fellow citizens represent the most active foreign communities in the guest countries. He said it is the duty of the government to establish close contact with these communities, to help solve their problems, and create necessary condition for their return.

Those Iranians, who reside abroad since revolution, know the value of freedom and they try to compare Islamic democracy with the western democracy. As such kind of democracy is not available in Iran. The interference of Guardian council in elections, such as choosing and allow people to contest elections create problem. Their safety cannot be guaranteed if their views are not in agreement with those of the revolutionaries. To absorb the highly skilled expatriates, good economic conditions have to emerge. Political reforms however are prerequisite to favourable economic conditions. The lack of political stability and uncertain future of the Islamic Republic does not prompt the Iranian expatriates to return.

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