Covert: An insight on the politically marginalized Armenian minority in Iran during the 1979 Iranian revolution

Arika Anastasia Khajetoorians

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COVERT: AN INSIGHT ON THE POLITICALLY MARGINALIZED ARMENIAN MINORITY IN IRAN DURING THE 1979 IRANIAN REVOLUTION

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Interdisciplinary Studies:
Middle Eastern Studies

by
Arika Anastasia Khajetoorians

June 2013
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Approved by:

David Yaghoubian, Chair, History

Kevin E. Grisham, Geography

Dany Boueiri, World Language and Literature
ABSTRACT

Since 70 B.C., the Armenian population has established a nation within the country of Iran. They played a pivotal role in the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911), building a new political structure to lead Iran into the twentieth century. However, the Armenian minority role in the 1979 Iranian Revolution is rarely documented, regardless of their historically contribution to the development of Iran. Due to the gap in literature, this thesis provides an insight of the politically marginalized Armenian minority in Iran during the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The study uses content analysis to examine the Tehran based ARF-Dashnaktsutyun newspaper, Alik, and demonstrates how a portion of the Armenian minority population was primed to support the revolution. Alik was used as a mobilization tool to unify the Armenians support for the revolution. It framed the revolution to the Armenian minority as a progressive political strategy to improve their political status in Iran. Further research may implicate the significant or insignificant effects of the charismatic leader theory argued by Weber (2008).
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I would like to thank my Father, Aram, my Mother, Aida, and my Sister, Adriana for allowing me to grow as a person and scholar with undying support. They inspired me and provided me with pride of my ethnic background.

To those who helped translate and gather Alik articles, to you I am forever indebted. I would like to thank Dr. Martin Doyle for the encouraging words, endless support, and time to ensure the completion of my thesis. To Associate Dean Jean Peacock, Dean Jamal Nassar, President Albert Karnig, and Dr. Anne Bennett thank you for the continuous support. I would like to thank my committee members for their support and guidance throughout this process: Dr. David Yaghoubian, Dr. Kevin Grisham, and Dr. Dany Doueiri.

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I dedicate this thesis to my late grandfather, Arakel "Ako" Khajetoorians for his encouragements and unwavering faith in me. I know that with the completion of this work he would be proud of my hard work and effort.

To the Armenians of Iran, this work is dedicated to you for keeping a rich culture alive in the most unusual place.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .................................................. iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ................................. iv
LIST OF TABLES ........................................ vi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION ................. 1
   Organization of the Study ...................... 2
CHAPTER TWO: AN HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ... 6
   Armenians in Iran ............................. 6
   Historical Background .......................... 7
   The 1979 Iranian Revolution .................. 13
   Historical Background .......................... 13
   Study ........................................... 27
CHAPTER THREE: ALIK ......................... 30
   Askandarian ..................................... 31
   The Collection .................................. 37
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYTICAL APPROACH ...... 44
   Alik ........................................... 45
   Content Analysis .............................. 47
   Countermobilization ......................... 49
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION ................... 55
   Further Research .............................. 56
REFERENCES ........................................... 60
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Alik Translations .......................... 37
For like all modes of communication, television, radio, and newspapers observe certain rules and conventions to get things across intelligibly. Said, Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How we see the Rest of the World.

Anderson (1991) argues that a nation does not define a state, but rather a nation can be the collection of individuals who are bounded by culture, language, territory, or history. The imagined community that Anderson discusses has direct correlation with the sense of national belonging of an individual. The Armenian population of Iran had a sense of community amongst the Iranian population. It is this sense of community that allowed the Armenian population to participate in the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

During the mobilization of the Iranian population, the Armenians population played a peculiar role in the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The Armenian minority group is the largest Christian minority group in Iran. Why did a Christian minority support a Muslim leader in this revolution? What resources did this minority population offer to the success of the revolution?
Huntington (1968) defined revolutions as aspects of modernity and the evolution of civilization. Revolutions are successful rebellions; they are changes in the political structure of a polity. The 1979 Iranian Revolution was an example of the mobilization of the masses to overthrow the royal family within the state. Individuals from different ethnic, social, political, and economic backgrounds rose together in the support of the movement.

With the literature presented in this study, it is evident that there is a gap in understanding the role the Armenian minority played in the 1979 revolution. To have a greater understanding of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, it is crucial to uncover the voices that contributed to its mobilization. The ARF-Dashnaktsutyun political party primed a targeted portion of the Armenians population in Iran to counter-mobilize against the rule of the Shah. ARF-Dashnaktsutyun used the Tehran-based newspaper, Alik, to frame the 1979 Iranian Revolution as an opportunity to progress the Armenian political representation in Iran.

Organization Of The Study

CHAPTER TWO provides a historical overview of the Armenian community within Iran prior to the 1979 Iranian
Revolution. In addition, literature from Gregorian (1998), Sanasarian (2000), and Chaqueri (1998) examines the influential role Armenians have played in Iranian society since the seventeenth century. This chapter then extends a brief history lesson on the 1979 Iranian Revolution, by examining events from 1977-1979, the key turning points, leading to the climax of the revolution.

CHAPTER THREE presents the data utilized to address the topic. The Tehran based Armenian newspaper, Alik, increases the in-depth understanding of the role of the Armenian minority group in the 1979 Iranian Revolution. First, Askandarian (2006) provides information regarding direct accounts of Armenians in the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Second, this chapter examines translated headings and subheadings of Alik from the time of the revolution to timeline how the Armenians countermobilized against the Shah.

CHAPTER FOUR analyzes the data in CHAPTER THREE. Content analysis is used to explore the role of the Armenian minority population during the 1979 Iranian Revolution. This chapter provides a perspective on revolution and mobilization to account for the actions of the Armenian minority population in Iran. Green (1982) and
Tilly (1979) provide theoretical arguments that are used to explain the actions of the Armenian minority during the revolution. Tilly (1979) provides an argument for mobilization on a macroscopic level, whereas, Green (1982) argues the countermobilization stages of the revolution. Alik is then used to demonstrate the actions of the Armenian minority during revolution. Furthermore, this chapter focuses on Tilly’s (1979) argument of priming Alik as an informational resource in the countermobilization movement.

CHAPTER FIVE summarizes how Alik primed the Armenian minority population into supporting the 1979 Iranian Revolution. This chapter elaborates on the immense influence Alik had on the Armenian minority mobilization in support of the revolution. To further this study in the future, other variables are implied and presented that may change the outcome of this thesis’ conclusion. Such variables explore the impact of field research that would allow the researcher to gather personal accounts of the Armenian population in Iran during the revolution. The charismatic leader argument presented by Weber (2008) and Selbin (1993) is another variable that can offer answers
about the psyche of the Armenian minority during the revolution.

Having acknowledged that Alik is not the only source that documents the Armenian minority groups activities in the 1979 Iranian Revolution, this study will only focus on Alik. Alik represents a powerful mobilization tool that the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun used to broadcast solidarity of the Armenian minority group with Khomeini and the Iranian revolutionaries in 1979. The purpose of this thesis is to provide an insight of the politically marginalized Armenian minority in Iran based on the reporting of Alik.
CHAPTER TWO
AN HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Armenian involvement in the 1979 Iranian Revolution is under documented. To shed light on the complexity of the Armenian population involvement in the revolution, a brief history of how the Armenian minority established a nation within Iran is necessary. This chapter will provide precedent to why a portion of the Armenian minority population joined a countermobilization movement against the Shah. This movement was an attempt to progress their political status in Iran. This chapter will outline the history of Armenians in Iran and their placement within Iranian culture; demonstrating their level of involvement and contribution to the progression of Iran. It will also provide a short narrative of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, exposing a gap in literature about the Armenian minority’s involvement in the revolution.

Armenians in Iran

The literature regarding Armenians within Iran is substantial. Many scholars have addressed the issue of the migration of Armenians into Iran and the role that the
Armenian population has played within the country. A few scholars have reputable work in the field. Sanasarian (2000), Gregorian (1998), and Chaqueri (1998) have provided seminal work on the Armenian minority living within Iran. The travels of Armenians to Iran under Shah Abbas (1587-1629) to the role of Armenians during the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911) is addressed in the works of these authors. Within this section, it is important to address the history of the Armenian population within Iran because it is within this realm that one is able to grasp the impact the Armenian population has had in Iran. This also will allow for the understanding of the role of the Armenian population in the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

**Historical Background**

Armenians living within Iran predates back to prehistoric time during the Armenian Empire in 70 BC. A power and territorial struggle between the Ottoman and Persian Empires led to the division of the Armenian population between the two empires (Sanasarian, 2000). The Armenian population living within Iran does predate the Safavid era (1501-1722); however, credit for the transport of Armenians from their "ancestral lands" to Iran is credited to Shah Abbas (Sanasarian, 2000, p. 35).
This move of Armenians from their ancestral lands occurred during the Safavid dynasty, when religious minorities faced "forced conversions to Islam, discriminatory measures, high taxation, and instances of clerical agitation against the Christian population..." (Sanasarian, 2000, p. 35), shaping the relation between the Persians and the Armenians. Armenians in Isfahan became successful merchants and the New Julfa. Armenians held relations with the Shah through the patriarchs of the church (Sanasarian, 2000, p. 38). In 1604, during the rule of the Safavid dynasty, the Armenian population was moved into the inner cities of Iran because of the threat from the Ottoman Empire (Chaqueri, 1998). The fifty thousand Armenians that were relocated moved to Isfahan, Tabriz, and the Caspian Littoral. The city of New Julfa was established in Isfahan by Shah Abbas Safavid (Chaqueri, 1998). New Julfa was of personal interest to Shah Abbas; therefore, protection of the Armenians in this area of Isfahan was of great importance to him.

In order to thrive as a minority in Iran, the Armenian's were granted special treatment by Shah Abbas in New Julfa. Religious rights, free citizenship, election of their own mayor (kalantar), construction of churches,
public religious processions, Armenian courts, and non restriction of clothing are all personal freedoms that Shah Abbas provided to the Armenians (Gregorian, 1998). According to Gregorian (1998), the elected Armenian kalantar (mayor) was able to have full jurisdiction over all Armenians in Isfahan (Gregorian, 1998). Furthermore, collection of taxes in New Julfa was administered by the kalantar. In order to help the Armenian population, the Shah provided interest free loans in hopes that Armenians would establish their own businesses and industries (Gregorian, 1998). The Catholicostate of Etchmiadzin had jurisdiction over Armenians within other areas of the country including Shiraz, Rasht, Anzali, Kashan, Tehran, and Basra. This was considered the New Julfa See, which had jurisdiction over seventy-four Armenian Churches (Gregorian, 1998).

Within the city of Isfahan, Armenian artisans helped improve the city in many public work sectors (Chaqueri, 1998). Shah Abbas provided the Armenian population with the skills necessary to become skilled tradesmen. According to Chaqueri (1998), “the Armenians were at some advantage compared with their Persian predecessors, as they were both good linguists and in a trading position with fellow-
Christians” (Chaqueri, 1998, p. 3). The Armenian population prospered in Isfahan under Shah Abbas; however, this was not the case for the successors of Shah Abbas, were the threat from the Russians and the Ottoman Empire outweighed the concern of the Armenians in Iran. However, the life for the Armenian population in Iran changed under the rule of the Qajar dynasty.

The establishment of the Qajar dynasty did change the dynamics for the Armenian minority group within the country. Under the protection of the state, the Armenian population was able to worship freely. Furthermore, Iran provided Armenians, suffering under Turkish oppression, protection within its borders (Chaqueri, 1994). In 1904, the British Foreign Office reported that the Shah would not take any action against the revolutionary Armenians fighting against the Ottomans (Chaqueri, 1998). Armenians became involved in many different aspects of life in Iran, including but not limited to professional trade, merchant, as well as members of the Cossack Brigade (Chaqueri, 1998). After the Armenian massacre at the hands of the Young Turks in the Ottoman Empire (1915-1918), many Armenians sought refuge in Iran. In support of this, the Armenian Apostolic Church and the patriarch of Etchmiadzin supplied
schoolteachers that helped provide social abilities for the Armenian population (Chaqueri, 1998, p. 13). During the Qajar dynasty, the Armenian minority in Iran aided in the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911).

Armenians played a pivotal role in the development of political institutions within the country after the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911). There were five Armenian political parties exhibiting great influence within Iran, the Tabriz Social-Democratic Group, the Gilan Social-Democratic Group, The Democratic Party of Iran, the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun, and the Hnchaks (Chaqueri, 1998). The Tabriz Social-Democratic Group, the Gilan Social-Democratic Group, The Democratic Party of Iran, and the Hnchaks provided the intellectual framing for the political structure of the nation, while the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun contributed militarily to the government (Chaqueri, 1998). These political parties contributing intellectually to the political structure of the nation, according to Chaqueri (1998), “Armenian-Iranian intellectuals seeking radical political change and comprehensive development in Iran not only introduced new ideas, institutions, and methods into the political life of the country, but also demonstrated profound knowledge of socioeconomic issues...” (p. 105).
The rule of the Qajar dynasty lasting from 1785 to 1925. The end of this dynasty led to the last monarch rule in the country, the Pahlavi regime. In studying the Armenians of Iran during the Pahlavi Regime, it is essential to divide the regime into two parts: Reza Shah Pahlavi (1926-1941) and Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (1941-1979). During the reign of Reza Shah Pahlavi, nationalization and limits on westernization in Iran were essential in order to limit foreign powers’ role in the country. For this reason, Armenian schools were shuttered, government jobs to Armenians denied, villages/streets/towns renamed, and criticisms of the Christian Armenian minorities were evident (Sanasarian, 2000). During this period, two political rivals existed within the Armenian community. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation or Dashnak party was a nationalist political party, whereas the Tudeh party was a pro-communist party that the Armenian community was associated with (Abrahamian, 1982).

The successor to Reza Shah Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, restored the rights of minorities living in Iran (Sanasarian, 2000). Sanasarian (2000) goes on to further state that “the general policy of economic development, modernization, and Westernization furthered the communal
life and socioeconomic conditions of religious minorities...minority deputies to the Majlis\textsuperscript{1} were mere figureheads" (Sanasarian, 2000, p. 39). Under the rule of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Armenians had cultural autonomy, which made the likelihood of rebellion unrealistic (Sanasarian, 2000). The new circumstances were possible due to the political conditions of the country.

The 1979 Iranian Revolution

The literature on the 1979 Iranian Revolution spans volumes and many scholars tried to address the issues surrounding the cause of the revolution. To understand the complex subject matter, a brief history of the 1979 Iranian Revolution is essential to address.

Historical Background

The historical background of the 1979 Iranian Revolution is important because it allows for an understanding of key events during the timeframe of 1977-1979. Moreover, this understanding of the revolution will allow for more clarity of the case study. Other authors have contributed tremendously to the literature on the

\textsuperscript{1} Majlis is the Iranian term for the Iranian Parliament that was established in Iran and first convened in 1906 after the establishment of an Iranian Constitution.
revolution. Abrahamian (1982) and Keddie (1981) have both written on different elements of the revolution.

Abrahamian's book, *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (1982), is divided into three parts. Historical Background, Politics and Social Conflict, and Contemporary Iran are the three sections that Abrahamian (1982) discusses in the book. Abrahamian (1982) does provide insight into key events of the Revolution as a guide to the sequence of events as well as to comprehend the history of Iran since the nineteenth century. More importantly, Abrahamian (1982) does provide information about the Armenian population in Iran. The information of Armenians prior to the 1979 Iranian Revolution provides an insight to the contribution of this minority group to Iranian society.

Milani (1988) provides literature on the "anatomy of Iran's revolutionary movement" (p. 188). The anatomy of the revolution is broken down into eight different phases that help in the understanding of the revolutionary movement. It is important to the understanding of the events of the revolution to examine the different phases Milani discusses within his book.

According to Milani (1988), phases one to four of the revolutionary movement spans from January 1977 to October
1978 (Milani, 1988). Phase One, Testing the Water and Defensive Mobilization by the Opposition, addresses the failed liberalization movement from the Shah and the sudden negative effect this brought the regime (Milani, 1988). It was evident during the liberalization that the Shah was willing to give some political leeway to his opposition; however, it was clear that the Shah was not willing to release his control over Iran. In March of 1977 the first of few open letters were written by Ali Asghar Haj Seyyed Javadi to the Shah about the horrific conditions within the country (Milani, 1988). Moreover, in June of 1977, three leaders of the National Front, Karim Sanjabi, Shahpour Bakhtuar, and Daryush Foruhar, signed a two-page open letter to the Shah. Within this open letter, the men criticized the Shah’s reform, failure and blatant disregard for human rights as addressed in the Declaration of Human Rights and Iranian Constitution and inflation (Keddie, 2006, p. 216). According to an Amnesty International report in 1975, Iran had the “world’s most terrifying human rights records” (Milani, 1988, p. 181). This focus on the human rights violations committed by the Shah fueled the movement for public disagreement towards the regime included but not limited to petitions and open letters (Keddie, 1981, p.
231). Furthermore, the open letter called for the release of political prisoners, freedom of the press, fulfillment of the constitution, and free elections (Keddie, 1981, p. 233). With this new found strength for opposition, many political groups reemerged and provided a growth for mobilization in opposition of the regime since 1963 (Milani, 1988, p. 189). Amongst the opposition, however, was the Rastakhiz party, which provided support for the Shah. Towards the end of 1977, opposition forces gained more power and support within the country as the Shahs suppression of the country had lessoned.

According to Abrahamian (1982), prior to November 1977, the revolutionary movement was based on forming new groups, reviving old groups, drafting manifestos, publishing newspapers, and writing letters (p. 510). On November 19, 1977, an organized peaceful poetry reading by Writer's Association in the Iranian-German Cultural Society at the Aryamehr University, turned into an altercation between an estimated 10,000 students and the police (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 505). The attempted police dismantling of the poetry reading resulted in the outrage of participants, leading to street protests and ant-regime slogans chanted by the students. This altercation between
the police and demonstrators resulted in the death of one and injury of seventy others (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 505).

The beginning of 1978 started the second phase of Iran’s revolutionary movement. According to Milani (1988), the second phase is entitled: Offensive Mobilization and Manipulation of the Shi’I Rituals and Symbols. Prior to President Carter’s visit to Tehran, the protests and reformists were poorly organized and nonviolent; however, after the visit the movement turned more radical, coordinated, and spread throughout major urban centers (Milani, 1988).

On January 7, 1978, Ittila’at, a Tehran based daily newspapers, published an article that called the anti-regime clergy “black reactionaries” and “accused them of secretly working with international communists to undo the achievement s of the White Revolution” (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 505). Moreover, the newspaper depicted Ayatollah Khomeini in a derogatory manner, which indicated a lack of religious respect towards the leader (Milani, 1988, p. 191). Three constitutionalist ayatollahs, Kazem Shariatmadari, Mohammad Reza Golpayegani, and Majafi Mar’ashi, requested the article be withdrawn from the daily newspaper. The failure to address the concerns of the ulama
ultimately united the constitutional and fundamentalist ulama (Milani, 1988). The unification of the ulama sparked what was supposed to be a peaceful demonstration on January 9, 1978 (Milani, 1988); however, the bazaar in Qom turned into a violent altercation with Iranian police as 4,000 theology students and sympathizers clashed with police in the streets (Abrahamian, 1982). Shopkeepers and merchants supported the protest of the ulama leading to the unification of the ulama and merchants towards the mobilization of the revolutionary movement (Milani, 1988). What had been an attempt to "vilify Khomeini, backfired and elevated the Ayatollah as the symbol of the opposition to the Shah's regime...Shi'ism became the umbrella under which divergent groups came together and destabilized the government" (Milani, 1988, p. 192).

Ayatollah Khomeini's declarations on such issues as national independence, freedom, and democracy was designed to appease the middle classes and the nationalists and to portray the movement as democratic, hoping to increase its acceptance both at home and abroad. It is only during the last three phases of the movement that the idea of creating an
Islamic Republic was publicly expressed by Ayatollah Khomeini. (Milani, 1988, p. 192).

According to Milani (1988), the main development within this phase was the indecisive and confusion of the Shah (p. 196). He wanted to establish a democratic autocrat; however, the lean towards democratic laws confused supports of the Shah, especially his security forces (p. 196). Moreover, this sense of confusion and indecision by the Shah and his regime allowed for the treatment of the opposition to the Shah as a "homogeneous entity"; unfortunately, the moderates and radicals did differ weakening the defense of the regime (p. 197).

Phase three was categorized as a phase where the Shah "was in retreat". With the Shah still at a so-called confused state, this phase was a catastrophic one for the "Pahlavi dynasty" (Milani, 1988, p. 197). Prior to June 1978, protesters were drawn dominantly from the traditional and modern middle classes ranging in the tens of thousands (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 510). This number significantly changed with economic recession causing the urban poor to join the demonstrations (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 511). Numbers of demonstrators eventually rose from hundreds of thousands to millions (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 511).
In August of 1978, the protest/uprisings reached an all time high, resulting in the establishment of martial law in the cities of Shiraz, Ahvaz, Tabriz, and Esfahan (Milani, 1988, p. 197). Following the establishment of martial law, on August 19, 1978, the local Rex Cinema in Abadan was set on fire. Keddie (1981), Milani (1988), and Abrahamian (1982) addressed the Rex Cinema fire where four hundred innocent men, women, and children were killed by the fire. Moreover, Abrahamian (1982) is the one to further address the Rex Cinema fire. Abrahamian (1982), states that the government blamed the opposition due to the recent mob attacks of local movie houses; whereas the opposition accused SAVAK because of the locked cinema doors and the sabotage of the local fire department (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 513). It was noted by Abrahamian (1982) that the opposition attacked cinemas that were empty and showed foreign sex films and the Rex Theater was showing a film regarding veiled criticisms (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 513). This incident was viewed as a major event outraging the revolutionaries creating a new atmosphere within the movement. Mourners of the victims marched the city of Abadan blaming SAVAK for the incident shouting, "Burn the shah. End the Pahlevis. Soldiers, you are guiltless, the
shah is the guilty one" (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 513). It had been made clear by this point in the revolutionary movement that it was time for the Shah to leave power (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 513). This event was classified as bringing Iran to the brink of revolution (Milani, 1988, p. 198).

According to Milani,

Riots showed no signs of abating and the opposition became more bellicose after having proven its remarkable mobilization capability. The opposition was divided into two camps. The constitutionalists, which included the National Front, the Freedom Movement, and a considerable number of ulama under the leadership of Ayatollah Shariatmadari, favored peaceful reform. The revolutionary camp, consisting of the pro-Khomeini forces and the guerilla organizations, demanded a comprehensive overhaul of the political and economic systems by revolution. (p. 198).

During this time, not only was the opposition divided but also the advisors to the Shah were split. Foreign advisors of the Shah, the American and British Ambassadors differed in opinion then the General and Iranian Ambassador to the United States (Milani, 1988, p. 199). William Sullivan (US Ambassador) and Anthony Parsons (British
Ambassador) urged the Shah to resolve the issue at hand through peaceful means; however, General Gholam Ali Oveyssi and Ardeshir Zahedi (Iranian Ambassador to the US) urged the Shah to impose mass arrests of opposition members. The Shah decided to follow a more peaceful approach to ending the revolutionary movement (Milani, 1988, p. 199).

One step the Shah took during this time was to appoint Ja'far Sharif Emami as Prime Minister in August 27, 1978 (Milani, 1988, p. 199). According to Abrahamian (1982), Emami was the best suited for this position for a few reasons: "from a clerical family, maintained friendly ties with some of the high-ranking ayatollahs, and for years had served as host to visiting religious dignitaries from Arab countries," (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 514). In order to appease the ulama who at this point were dissatisfied with the government, Emami changed different aspects of the westernized dictatorship the Shah had established. He created a ministry for religious endowments, closed nightclubs and some casinos, lifted censorship of media, allowed parliamentary debates to be televised, and dissolved the Shah's source of civilian support, the Rastakhiz party (p. 200). These reforms were still not sufficient for some, National Front leader, Karim Sanjab,
led to a public prayer in the Qeytariye region in Tehran, calling for the dismantling of SAVAK, release of political prisoners, and the ability for exiled political figures to be able to return to Iran (p. 201). These events were intended to celebrate the end of Ramadan (Milani, 1988, p. 201). Due to the size of the gathering, Tehran and eleven cities were placed under curfew. This led to the events the following day on Black Friday.

On September 8, 1978, a massive demonstration took place at Jaleh Square in Tehran, ignoring the curfew placed upon Tehran (Milani, 1988, p. 201). The nearly five thousand participants staged a sit-down demonstration (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 515). The inability for the police to disperse the crowd of demonstrators led to the police firing into the crowd with the intent killing protesters (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 515). According to the protesters, the police force killed three thousand protesters; however, according to the government 86 protesters were killed (Milani, 1988, p. 201). This incident was detrimental to the Shah’s government and is viewed as one of the significant moments of the revolutionary movement.

Phase four, National Strikes and Unification of the Opposition, began in October of 1978. Within the two months
of October and November, workers and private and public employees joined the revolutionary movement (Milani, 1988, p. 204). Teachers went on strike making students available for street demonstrations. Moreover, electrical and oil workers also followed in demonstrations. These demonstrators began joining the conservative ulama creating a powerful force against the Shah’s regime. (Milani, 1988, p. 205).

During the unification of the opposition, Khomeini was becoming a prominent revolutionary leader. He had a clear strategy at this point to overthrow the show and become the leader of the newly formed government. According the Milani (1988), Khomeini had a “three-pronged strategy” to emerge as the leading alternative to the Shah (p. 206). The three-pronged strategy included the calling of continued nationwide strikes, continued messages to ranked Iranian armed forces to join in the revolutionary movement, and emphasize on the political objectives of the movement of national independence, freedom, and democracy (p. 206).

Phases five through eight lasted from November 1978 to February 1979. Phase five, happened in November of 1978, when the Shah appointed a military government, appointing General Gholam Reza Azhari as Prime Minister (Milani, 1988,
p. 212). The Shah, falling ill to his battle with leukemia, went on national television and stated:

The Revolution of the Iranian people cannot be disapproved by me, as the padeshah of Iran and as an Iranian....Once again before the Iranian people I swear that I will not repeat the past mistakes and I assure you that previous mistakes, lawlessness, oppression, and corruption will not happen again....I, too, have hear the voice of the Revolution. (Milani, 1988, p. 212).

This speech by the Shah only made Khomeini more vocal of his disagreement with the Shah and criticized him for being weak and unable to rule. Furthermore, on November 5, 1978, Khomeini declared, “the goal of our Islamic movement is to demolish the monarchical order and the Pahlavi dynasty... to establish an Islamic Republic which is the protector of Iran’s independence and democracy” (Milani, 1988, p. 214).

Walking referendum on the monarchy was the sixth phase of the revolutionary movement. This stage in the revolutionary movement spanned the holy month of Moharram. In 1978, on December 10 and 11, Khomeini declared this month as “the month of epic heroism and self-sacrifice, the month in which blood triumphed over the sword...and urged the
ulama to expose the atrocities committed by the Shah" (Milani, 1988, p. 215). These two days were filed with peaceful rallies where millions of anti-Shah protestors marched through Tehran and other cities. The demonstrations that took place called for the end to the Shah’s rule, the creation of a government based on Islamic precepts, and the recognition of Khomeini as a leader in the movement (Milani, 1988, p. 216). Men and women from all walks of life: rich, poor, educated, illiterate, teachers, professionals, government employees, and bazaaries\(^2\) all rallied together in demonstration against the Shah’s rule (Milani, 1988, p. 216). It was evident at this time that the Shah was losing his ability to regain control over his country and the Iranian people.

Phase seven, Neutralization of the Army and the Shah’s Exile, and phase eight, Dual Sovereignty, marked the last phases of the revolutionary movement. Within this phase, January 16, 1979 and February 1, 1979 became significant days in the revolution. First, January 16, 1979 was the day the Shah left Iran for an “extended vacation” to Egypt

\(^2\) Bazaar is a term used throughout the Middle East as a market place consisting of different shops and stalls. Miscellaneous merchandise is sold at a Bazaar. Bazaaries are the entrepreneurs who operated the local markets and owned the shops.
(Milani, 1988, p. 222); however, it was inevitable and known by the population once the Shah left Iran should the failure of the Pahlavi dynasty. Moreover, on February 1, 1979, Khomeini returned to Iran marking a monumental moment from his prior exile from the country. With this being said, the struggle for power did pursue after the arrival of Khomeini amongst different revolutionary leaders; however, with the ability of Khomeini and his followers, the end result was the creation of an Islamic Republic where he became the leader of the Velayat-e Faqih\(^3\), the new government.

Study

As evident within this chapter, the Armenian population has had a presence within Iran since 70 BC (Sanasarian, 2000). Shah Abbas Safavid created New Julfa in Isfahan as a protected city for the Armenian population to be able to thrive (Chaqueri, 1998). With the creation of New Julfa, Shah Abbas provided the Armenian minority personal freedoms like religious rights, free citizenship, election of own major (kalantar), construction of own

\(^3\) Velayat-e Faqih translates to the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurists
churches, hold public religious processions, Armenian courts, and non restriction of clothing (Gregorian, 1998).

According to Cosroe Chaqueri (1998), the Armenians played a pivotal role in the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911). Not only did Armenian-Iranians aid in the revolution, the group also helped in the establishment of the political institutions within the country (p. 101). Chaqueri (1998) stated that new ideas, institutions, knowledge of socioeconomic issues, and methods of political life were introduced by the Armenians to help aid the Iranians during the Constitutional Revolution (p. 105).

Unfortunately, literature by Chaqueri and other Armenian scholars like Sanasarian (2000) and Gregorian (1998) show a lack of information regarding this minority group during the 1979 Iranian Revolution. With the strong relationship the Armenian minority has had historically in Iran, the role of the Armenian minority in Iranian during the 1979 Iranian Revolution has not been addressed. Due to this gap in literature, it is important to address the role that the Armenian minority played in the 1979 Iranian Revolution for future understanding of Armenian Iranian relations. This will be done by analyzing how Alik primed
the marginalized Armenian-Iranian population during the revolution.
CHAPTER THREE

ALIK

To understand the complexity of the Armenian level of involvement in the 1979 Iranian Revolution, it is necessary to examine the Tehran-based Armenian newspaper, Alik. Moreover, to obtain a clearer understanding of the participation of Armenians in the 1979 Iranian Revolution, Eskandar Askandarian's book, *Eight years of forced fighting: Armenian of Iran* (2006), will be closely examined. The information within Askandarian's book, *Eight years of forced fighting: Armenian of Iran* (2006) and the Alik articles will be reviewed together as the sources both providing insightful information about the role of the Armenian minority population in Iran during the revolution. The Alik articles that are reviewed within this chapter are presented in Askandarian's work; however, the author, Askandarian (2006), does not analyze the Alik articles but rather provides them as copies to support the work presented in his book. Furthermore, this chapter will examine different headlines from Alik as a collection of material to support the thesis statement.
Askandarian provides insight into the 1979 Iranian Revolution that other literature neglect to cover. According to Askandarian (2006),

Iranian Armenians with recognition of the political ideas of their society and under the leadership of their religious leaders started their cautious movement based on their understanding of the situation at the time and joined the progressing flow towards the forming revolution, (p. 37).

During the demonstrations in 1978-1979, Armenian students did participate in the student strikes (Askandarian, 2006, p. 37). These strikes and demonstrations were organized under the superior leadership of the school. Moreover, Alik did “step in the line for the combatant press and published revolutionary messages, anti-imperialistic articles, and democratic tutorials” (Askandarian, 2006, p. 37). When the wide spread strike on Iranian press occurred towards the end of 1978, Alik was one newspaper that did join the strike, uniting with other media outlets in Iran against the Shah (Askandarian, 2006).

After a two month strike on Iranian press, on January 8, 1979, Alik published an editorial that depicted their
views on the 1979 Iranian Revolution. It is in this editorial that one is able to see the viewpoint of the paper. The first statement that Alik makes in this document is that Alik is happy to be able to write and start publication of the paper since the strike of the press (Askandarian, 2006, p. 37). Moreover, Alik goes on to state, “we are glad that the wide-spread movement of the people and with the price of the life of the thousands of martyrs paved the way for publication of the press again” (Askandarian, 2006, p. 37). Alik stated that weapons (bayonets) could not stop the pens from writing. With this being said, Alik did applaud the people of Iran for standing for a government worthy of the people even in 'pressure of oppression' (Askandarian, 2006, p. 37). Within this editorial, Alik did address the capture of journalist and the confiscation of the offices of Kayhan, Etelaat, and Ayandegan by the armed forces on November 6, 1978, which was the reason for the initial strike of the press (Askandarian, 2006).

Once the editorial is addressed in Askandarian’s book (2006), the author provides information regarding the role of Armenians during the Revolution. On December 19, 1978, a considerable number of Armenians in Tehran and Esfahan
participated in the people’s demonstration against the Shah. Armenian political protesters, supported by the Armenian Prelacy Council, marched along Fisherabad Avenue holding placards and signs (Askandarian, 2006). "They also marched in large groups from Ferdowsi Square to the present Imam Hossein Square and joined the millions of marchers moving towards the present Azadi Square" (Askandarian, 2006, p. 37). During these protests, Armenians had different slogans that read, "We demand freedom, independence and the country’s and national integrity" and "long live unity of Iranian people against the Western and Eastern imperialism" (Askandarian, 2006, p. 37).

These Armenian protesters were supported by the Iranian people from different political beliefs and ideas. "Iranian press, Moslem clergies, various political leaders and revolutionaries have expressed their utmost appreciations towards their Armenian fellow citizens in this respect" (Askandarian, 2006, p. 40). Moreover, on January 19, 1979, an Armenian Reception Delegate, who was assigned by the Armenian Prelacy Council was positioned
amongst millions of greeters who were gathered to welcome Imam⁴ Khomeini (Askandarian, 2006, p. 40).

Within his book, Askandarian, provides another Alik article from February 25, 1979. This article is “Statements and Analysis by Dr. Harmik Davidian on behalf of Armenian Prelacy Council of Tehran and the Dependent Institutions regarding Dr. Mehdi Bazargan’s Announcement” (Askandarian, 2006, p. 41). Alik released this statement once Mehdi Bazargan became the Islamic Republic of Iran’s first Prime Minister. On behalf of the Armenian Prelacy Council of Tehran, Alik states that they wish Mehdi Bazargan “greater achievements in your tough job” (Askandarian, 2006, p. 41), and congratulate him on the success. It is the hopes of Alik, that being appointed Prime Minister would help the people’s revolution of Iran towards the final victory needed. Moreover, the article states that this revolution was one of the people; were gender, religion, age or any other aspect was not important. The people of Iran were

⁴ RUHOLLAH Musavi Khomeini: is referred to as Imam Khomeini in Alik thus this chapter will use the same language as Alik. Although it should be noted that Khomeini gained the title of Ayatollah in 1961 (Keddie, 2006).
able to fight together against the Pahlavi regime and be successful (Askandarian, 2006).

Armenians probably feel and understand this revolution better than other communities. This is because everything has stood and shall stand on the will of the nation and on a strong faith within [the] Armenian community. (Askandarian, 2006, p. 41).

Alik goes on to further state that the Armenian communities within Iran joined the revolution for their own motivation and faith and were not influenced by others. Anxieties in regards to the fact that the Armenians were a religious minority in the country did not exist amongst the Armenian community. Moreover, the Armenian Prelacy, the Prelacy Council and the Dependent Institutions, were directed by the community and all Armenians participated in one form or another (Askandarian, 2006).

The Alik editor was dealing with the day to day events of the movement based on his own decisions and judgments; he was publishing all the articles, interpretations, news, reports and whatever that was to the benefit of the movement and he joined the press and journalists’ strike in the course of the movement.
up to the victory of the people and the revolution and we obtained freedom (Askandarian, 2006, p. 41).

According to Alik (Askandarian, 2006), the role of Armenians within the revolution was small; however, Armenians were glad to be participating next to their "Moslem" brothers. Furthermore, the Alik article stated that the Shiite faith of the Muslims combined with national and social existence and the Armenian nation being Christian understand the importance of religious superiority of the revolutionary movement (Askandarian, 2006, p. 42). With this understanding, Armenians have believed,

as long as the nation and religion are bound together in one piece, the revolution will definitely prevail...our being Christians and not being in the same faith with you cannot prevent us from being with the Iranian people's movement (Askandarian, 2006, p. 42).

The Alik article from February 25, 1979 finishes by stating that the hopes for Armenian's rights will be more righteous than the previous constitution established in Iran (Askandarian, 2006). Armenians, according to Alik, understand the difficulty in doing this; however, Armenians hope that the victory of the "people's revolution shall
help in successfully resolving such problems” (Askandarian, 2006, p. 42). Finally, Askandarian (2006) stated in his book Armenians “managed to stay in the right position and together with their political and religious leaders they protected their national and social values in the course of the revolution” (Askandarian, 2006, p. 42).

The Collection

This section provides Alik headlines and subtitles that discuss different topics and events of the 1979 Iranian Revolution (See Table 1). The headlines and subtitles of the articles were primarily used to illustrate how Alik framed the 1979 Iranian Revolution by priming the Armenian population. Due to the poor quality of images of the Alik articles, the translator coded the information based on the image number rather than based on the date. However, the images are in chronological order.

Table 1. Alik Translations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alik Article</th>
<th>Translations of Article (Headlines and Subheadings)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>811</td>
<td>- Police Authorization is required for mass gatherings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 814  | - Marshall law in Tehran and 11 other cities  
                    - Picture: A view of demonstration |
| 895  | - The strike of Bank Melli executives ended. |
| 911  | - Demonstrations in some cities. |
| 918  | - The "Press" outlook in strike |
| 919  | - Assurance for freedom ended the press strike.  
                    - Picture - President Carter and Shah of Iran shaking hands: Discussions in Washington continue. |
| 921  | - Hooshang Nahavandí (Minister of Higher Education) resigned last week.  
                    - Picture - Truck: Strikes still continue in some organizations. |
| 926  | - Discussions in Washington |
| 935 | facing difficulties  
- Salaries of governmental employees increased  
- Minister of Labour reached agreement with the workers in press industry.  |
| 938 | 1160 political prisoners were released.  |
| 940 | Iran's stability is worrying.  |
| 941 | 3 pictures: Demonstrations and martyrs in Hamadan.  
- Dr. Sanjabi and Khomeini  
- The Leader of "National Front" party is to meet Ayatollah-ol-Ozma Khomeini in Paris.  |
<p>| 948 | Bloody clashes and vast demonstrations took place in Qom, Gorgan and Hamadan cities.  |
| 953 | Vast demonstrations in Zanjan. Many institutes were |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>959</td>
<td>- 12 dead - Government bodies involved in Kerman incidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>977</td>
<td>- Ayatollah Shariatmadari: Religious minorities are respectable and destroying them is not permitted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 999  | - Carter and First Lady left Tehran  
- Carter is satisfied with discussions in Tehran |
| 1213 | - Unstable and disturbing situation in Iran - Everything depends on discussions between Khomeini, Bakhtiar and the National Front Party. |
| 1217 | - Ayatollah Khomeini's return to Iran postponed.  
- Bakhtiar and Khomeini's direct discussions in Paris. |
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1220</strong></td>
<td>- Bloody clashes in Iran yesterday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1223</strong></td>
<td>- Iran's regime can be republic, but that has its own rules and regulations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **1227** | - Ayatollah Khomeini will be coming to Tehran tomorrow.  
- The Government authorized the Air France flight which will bring Khomeini to Iran.  
- All American subjects are ordered to leave Iran |
<p>| <strong>1236</strong> | - The new government members and the Revolutionary Council will soon be announced. |
| <strong>1239</strong> | - Ayatollah Khomeini must first clarify the situation with the army first and then introduce the new government because the army's position towards the new government is extremely important. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1244</td>
<td>Bakhtiar: I must execute those who will create internal war in the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1247</td>
<td>In order to avoid internal clashes, political discussions started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1254</td>
<td>Eng. Bazargan was ordered to form his temporary government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1264</td>
<td>Today's demonstration was in support of Eng. Bazargan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The two are in the same front or confronting each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bakhtiar resigned to the benefit of Bazarghan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parliament was cancelled and all members resigned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Army announced that it will take commands from Bazargan's government. Radio and Television became under control of those in power of.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1266</td>
<td>Congratulations for the Historical victory of the people's movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1273</td>
<td>- Today, a major part of strikes will end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Schools will open with few days delay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The Revolutionary Guards started to wipe out Shah's associates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1275</td>
<td>- Iranian Government requests for the Shah to be returned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYTICAL APPROACH

The data presented explores the perception of a minority within a state. The data is based on primary and secondary sources such as historical documents and scholarly observation of the perception of the Armenian population's activities during the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The involvement of Armenians during the revolution is rarely documented, mainly due to the insignificant size of the Armenian population in Iran. During the time of the revolution, the U.S. Library of Congress estimated the Armenian population at 300,000 out of 19 million total Iranian citizens (0.016% of the population).

This chapter will present a brief history of Alik's political affiliation. Then explore the advantages and disadvantages of content analysis when examining the priming and framing methods of Alik. Furthermore, the data from CHAPTER THREE is used to present how Alik was used to counter mobilize the Armenian minority population against the Shah.
Alik

Alik is published by the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun, an Armenian political party beginning in 1931 (Melikean, 2007). It was first a biweekly newspaper, yet, due to its popularity, it expanded to a daily newspaper (Melikean, 2007). It is a significant source of information, for it was and still is one of the original Armenian based newspapers in Tehran, Iran. The Armenian community relied on Alik to be informed on political, cultural, social, and other events (Melikean, 2007). Alik is used to address and represents viewpoints of the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun rather than the Armenian population as a whole. With this in mind, the information that is presented on the role of the Armenian minority in the 1979 Iranian Revolution in Alik can be considered bias. The political party used this media resource to frame the revolution based on their political views to prime a targeted Armenian population towards the party’s political agenda.

If bias is shown by the newspaper, then the overall outcome of the study can be in the perception of the political viewpoints of the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun. This is due to the fact that the data collected comes from this specific viewpoint.
The creation and establishment of Hay Hegapokhakan Dashnaktsutyun (Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF)) has a direct relationship to the Armenian community. Founded in 1880 by Christapor Mikaelian, Stepan Zorian, and Simon Zavarian (Federation, 2010), the foundation of this organization was to progress the social justice, self-determination, and democracy of the Armenian people (Federation, 2010). ARF-Dashnaktsutyun strives to be a nationalist, socialist, democratic, and revolutionary party (Association, 2010). The ARF-Dashnaktsutyun played a significant role in the Armenian Diaspora community in Iran and attempted to nationalize the community to seek de facto political representation.

While the researcher has a native level of speaking fluency in Armenian language and a beginning speaking level in Farsi, Alik was translated by a third party. The third party is an Armenian-Iranian who was born and raised in Tehran, Iran. This person's level of proficiency in Armenian and Farsi is of fluent native understanding. This translator did not analyze any of the data but merely

This individual was in their mid-twenties during the 1979 Iranian Revolution.
translated the newspaper text for the researcher from the original text in Armenian to English.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is the use of text, speeches, newspapers, etc. to replicate context to use in research (Krippendorff, 2004.) This method aids the researcher to examine archived articles of Alik and categorize the language of the newspaper. Moreover, this will illustrate how Alik primed the Armenian population and framed the 1979 Iranian Revolution in favor of Imam Khomeini’s rule. The researcher is able to establish new conclusions based on Alik’s politically driven reporting of the revolution (Cargan, 2007). Alik is used to frame pro-revolutionary language to counter mobilize the Armenian minority population against the Shah. Content analysis allows the coding of the material—analyzing a particular occurrence in language—to illustrate specific revolutionary words that Alik used to prime the Armenians in Iran during the revolution.

RUHOLLAH Musavi Khomeini: is referred to as Imam Khomeini in Alik thus this chapter will use the same language as Alik. Although it should be noted that Khomeini gained the title of Ayatollah in 1961 (Keddie, 2006).
Berger (2000) states the advantages of content analysis are the availability and accessibility of data. The availability of the data refers to the readiness of the information. The Alik articles were written during the time of the revolution from 1977-1979. This trait of availability designates content analysis a favorable type of method of analysis for researchers because the researcher is able to collect the necessary data. Content analysis has an unobtrusive nature that "unlike research methods such as interviewing and participant observations, the researcher does not 'intrude' on what is being studied and thus does not affect the outcome of the research" (Berger, 2000, p. 181). Alik provides one Armenian perspective on the Revolution. Content analysis allows for the examination of that perspective.

All research methods have limitations; the disadvantages of content analysis are biases and perception of the coder, or researcher (Cargan, 2007). The original text of Alik was written in a distinct Armenian dialect found in Northern Iran (Melikean, 2007). The text was later translated to English by a third party other than the researcher; therefore, some parts of the message from the Alik articles may have been lost in translation. The issue
of internal validity in regards to the content analysis of the data that is retrieved for this study is a matter of concern. Within the internal validity of this study, it is important to address face validity of the measured data which means, the information received should be used for its face value. The translator may not accurately translate the newspaper articles, therefore, there is a potential to alter the data when using this method.

Limited accessibility of the resources and data is another disadvantage of content analysis (Cargan, 2007). The restrictive nature of the Iranian government made the accessibility of Alik difficult. Furthermore, individuals that aided with the access and interpretation of Alik asked for anonymity of their identity. They feared retaliation if the Iranian government misinterpreted their views and statements.

**Countermobilization**

Countermobilization is the "mass mobilization against a prevailing political order under the leadership of counterelites" (Green, 1982, p. 236). Green's (1982) argument of countermobilization aid in analyzing Alik's impact and influence on the Armenian population in Iran
during the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Green (1982) illustrates six countermobilization conditions that led to the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The first is the declining coercive will or capacity of the state, which refers to the mobilizing discontent of the population towards the Shah’s rule. Alik reported in 1978, “Iran’s stability is worrying” (Table 1, 919). This is evident that Alik is effectively noting the loose of the Shah’s hold on the government and the beginning stages of countermobilization. The second condition is a simplification of politics and mass polarization (3), referring to the priming and framing of the revolution into a unifying factor. In 1978, Alik reported, “Unstable and disturbing situation in Iran - Everything depends on discussions between Khomeini, Bakhtiar and the National Front Party” (Table 1, 1213). The reporting implies that the only hope for stability in Iran relies on the efforts of Khomeini and his supporters. This method of political polarization is used to prime the Armenian population into a mobilized front against the Shah.

Green remaining conditions for countermobilization are the politicization of traditionally non-political social sectors (4) and crisis-initiating event(s) (5), such as
social media involvement in pro-revolutionary rhetoric. Alik reported in late 1978, "Bloody clashes and vast demonstrations took place in Qom, Gorgan and Hamadan cities.... Ayatollah Shariatmadari: Religious minorities are respectable and destroying them is not permitted" (Table 1, 953-977). Alik is glorifying the efforts of the Ayatollah Shariatmadari; the media source intended to humanize the rhetoric and actions of and dehumanizing the actions of the Iranian government. Finally, exacerbating responses by the regime, addresses the Shah’s responses to the mobilizing force against his regime. The Shah’s response to the countermobilization of populations was reported in Alik in 1979, “Bloody clashes in Iran yesterday” (Table 1, 1220).

The Armenian minority population sought the opportunity to gain political power in the revolution and progress their political status within Iran (Alik, 1979). Tilly (1979) argues that polity is a "set of contenders which routinely and successfully lay claims on that government" (Goldstone, 2008, p. 49). He continues to argue that a group can gain the capacity to mobilize by gaining control over resources, whether it is arms, land, information or financial resources, and are able to use the
resources to influence the government. The ARF-Dashnaktsutyun used Alik to prime and frame the countermobilization movement by the Armenians against the government of the Shah (Askandarian, 2006; Alik, 1979). This can be perceived as an example of Green’s second, third, and fourth condition that leads to countermobilization.

Tilly furthers his argument and explains that the ability of a group to mobilize can be restricted depending on the control or lack of control of the resources. Alik was seen as an information resource to broadcast revolutionary ideas to the public during the time of the revolution. This paper argues that Alik was one of the main revolutionary tools and resource that maintained the Armenians’ strive for political representation. ARF-Dashnaktsutyun used Alik to counter-mobilize the Armenian population into action and keep them informed of their contribution to the revolution. Alik further promoted Imam Khomeini’s rise to power, and framed the revolution as a countermobilization movement (Alik, 1979).

As a countermobilization method, Alik was used to rebel against the Shah. Askandarian (2006) argues that ARF-Dashnaktsutyun, the political pragmatists, used Alik to
progress their political status in Iran (Askandarian, 2006). The ARF-Dashnaktsutyun only represents a portion of the Armenian minority in Iran. Another portion of the minority did not mind what the newspaper advertised about the revolution. This portion of the population joined the revolutionary movement because they supported what Imam Khomeini articulated in his speeches. During the demonstrations, it is reported that Armenians chanted, "Our religion is Christian; our leader is Khomeini" (Khomeini, 1981, p. 314). Although these groups had different political ideologies and views, they shared a common notion: that Imam Khomeini saved Iran from the backward ways of the Shah (Khomeini, 1981).

However, the support for Imam Khomeini was not absolute, when the revolution took on a religious position; supporter to democratize Iran turned against the counter mobilization movement and rebelled against the new government. Milani (1998) illustrated that the political arena within Iran prior to the 1979 Iranian Revolution did not allow for any leeway for any political freedom. Thus, the mobilization of the revolution was an opportunity to test the new regime's political change that was promised to the masses. Green (1982) argues that the new government, or
the vanguards of legitimate rule of Iran, was no different from the rule the Shah (Goldstone, 2008). Some Armenians viewed the "religiousation" of the revolution as a power group filling the vacant space that the Shah left, and had no interest in democratizing Iran.

It is evident that Alik was used by the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun to prime the Armenian minority population to join the countermobilization movement against the Shah in the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Content analysis was used to illustrate how the Armenian minority population was primed to support Imam Khomeini. The revolutionary theories by Green (1982) and Tilly (1979), provide clear analysis of how Alik counter mobilized its targeted population. Green (1982) addresses how Alik was used to counter mobilize the Armenian minority, while Tilly (1979) addresses how the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun used Alik as a revolutionary resource to gain supporters.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Minority group by definition refers to a subordinate group in political power or low numerical population size. The Armenian population in Iran had both characteristic of a minority group. Therefore, ARF-Dashnaktsutyun was effective in priming the targeted population to join the 1979 Iranian Revolution by using Alik. Alik portrayed a solidified Armenian front against the Shah, by framing the revolution as a step towards progress and better political representation. Therefore, Alik was able to establish a countermobilization movement in support of Imam Khomeini and his rhetoric.

As a politically marginalized nation within a revolting population, the Armenian population played a role in the 1979 Iranian Revolution. However, the impact of that role is not significantly known nor is it documented. Alik was utilized as a mobilization tool to unite the minority group into a revolutionary force against the Shah. To restate Edward Said impression on the media, where he said,

Despite the variety and the differences, and however much we proclaim the contrary, what the media produce
is neither spontaneous nor completely “free:” “news” does not just happen, pictures and ideas do not merely spring from reality into our eyes and minds, truth is not directly available, we do not have unrestrained variety at our disposal. For like all modes of communication, television, radio, and newspapers observe certain rules and conventions to get things across intelligibly, and it is these, often more than the reality being conveyed, that shape the material delivered by the media. (Said, 1981, p. 44-45)

This quote is an imprint of this entire thesis. It illustrates the power of the press and its immense impact on individuals. Only a portion of the Armenian population was for the revolution; however, Alik broadcasted solidarity with Khomeini. Further research indicates that there were other portions of the population that were against or indifferent towards the revolution.

Further Research

Alik provides one perception and viewpoint towards the Armenian minority in Iran during the 1979 Iranian Revolution. This research explores the Armenian involvement in the revolution on a microscopic level via Alik, and from
a controlled data set. Which raises the question of the possibility of a different outcome if the Armenian involvement was explored from different data sets, other resources or from a macroscopic level?

Field research may clarify such uncertainty. Traveling to Iran to interview Armenians that participated in the 1979 Iranian Revolution or were alive during the revolution may strengthen (or weaken) the present conclusion. These interviews account for personal experience within the revolution can provide an understanding of the mentality and nature of individuals during a time of conflict. However, the researcher may fall victim to dishonesty, bias or subjectivity from interviewees. The unwillingness of individuals to discuss this particular subject matter due to the oppressive nature of the Iranian government may hinder the data collection and the findings.

Evidence was present that demonstrates the Armenian population was divided towards the revolution. From those who supported the revolution, to those who supported the Shah, to those who were indifferent to the events of 1979. However, including such findings was irrelevant to the trajectory of this thesis. The research can be extended to answer numerous hypotheses that explore the dynamics of the
entire Armenian minority relationship with each other. The extended research can address if the Armenian minority group feared greater political, economic, social, or religious marginalization due to this revolution.

Further research can explore the charismatic leader argument. Weber (2008) argued that a charismatic leader is "an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least...exceptional power or qualities" (Weber, 2008, p. 33). Imam Khomeini was able to be the charismatic leader that gathered the greater portion of the Iranian population, including a portion of the Armenian population, to overthrow the Shah. This type of leadership has the ability to challenge authority, while gaining support and followers, eventually leading to a change in leadership within the country.

Selbin (1993) furthers the charismatic leader argument by stating that such revolutionary leader can tap into the culture, "a system of shared meanings, attitudes, and values and the symbolic forms in which they are expressed or embodies" of a population and gain popular support (Selbin, 1993, p. 81). This collective memory and symbolic politics are vital to his argument. It is up to a
revolutionary leader to establish the framework of the movement in hopes of gaining support for their cause.

The media may be used to influence the perception of a targeted population. Alik was used to prime the Armenian minority in Iran to join the counter mobilization movement against the Shah. In 1979, the press was one of few media outlets that could be used to broadcast certain views to a population. Now, social media outlets like Twitter and Facebook are popular repertoires that are used to mobilize a targeted population. For example, after the reelection of President Ahmadinejad in 2009, the Green Revolution sparked the use of social media to counter mobilize against the Ahmadinejad's government. Said words personify how the media impacts a targeted population, and plays a significant role in priming and framing a population into mobilization and revolutions.
REFERENCES


62


