

The Young Man

Home & Education

Civil war had just broken out between constitutionalists and Royalists when Mehdi Bazargan was born (1908) to a wealthy and religious family living in the capital. Although ethnically an Azarbaijani Turk it seems the family was not keen on its Turkish origin as Mehdi did not learn to speak his mother tongue¹ and there were to be no references to his ethnic roots in his later writings. Bazargan's childhood and boyhood coincided with a period of increasing tension and social disintegration which led to armed provincial rebellions and the near collapse of central government. His education was privileged in the sense that he attended, not a traditional Islamic Maktab, but a European style school of which only several hundred existed in the country². His days at secondary school coincide with the coming to power of Reza Khan (later Reza Shah).

His father, Haj Abbasgholi Agha Tabrizi, apparently acknowledged himself as an active religious believer, and modernist. He held, in his private house, open debates where Muslim scholars and their opponents argued over

¹ Private conversation in London with Dr. Shabestari, professor of languages at the University of Edinburgh, 1989.

² Soltani Elimentary & Dar Al-Alamin Secondary in Tehran. Bazargan, M. *Masa'el va Moshkelate Avalin Sale Enghelab*, "Issues and problems of the first Year of the Revolution", central office of the Freedom Movement of Iran, Tehran 1982, Inside cover.

matters of religion and philosophy. Such an open attitudes and tolerance remains rare amongst the Muslim pious. With regards to his political attitudes (while his son was growing up) Reza Shah's heavy handedness with the religious minded classes could not have been taken lightly. The philosophical debate meetings were closed after the government (suspicious of social activity) tightened the screws on all associations.^۱ Furthermore during the reign of Reza Shah the traditional merchant classes suffered on the account of heavy tax burdens, state monopolies over foreign trade and government interference in the matters of their guilds.^۲ The independent Guild of Merchants which Bazargan senior headed for a term was also shut down at government orders. Yet it is unclear where Bazargan senior stood on social issues and how far were his political involvements.

As a student Bazargan must have shown significant ability for at the age of 19 he was sent to Europe with one of the first groups supported by government grants. The students were chosen through exams. Bazargan came fifth and chose to read engineering.^۳The conflict of the modern

^۱ According to one analyst Reza Shah's religious persecutions had two aims; the destruction of Iranian Shiism as a symbol of backwardness and removal of an independent social institution as an autonomous channel of public association and communication. For a study of Shah's absolutism see Katouzian, H. *The Political Economy of Iran*, Macmillan press Ltd. London, 1981

^۲ Abrahamian, E. *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, Princeton University press, New Jersey, 1982, p. 151

^۳ The other choices were education, natural sciences, medicine and law. Bazargan, M. *Defaeyat Dar Dadgahe Bisalaheyate Tajdidnazare Neazmi*, "Defenses in the Incompetent Military Review Court", Modares publications, Bellville, Ill, 1978, p. 39

‡ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

with the traditional which was to haunt Bazargan throughout his life, surfaced before his departure for paris. The parents expressed concern that the modern world might rob their son of morality and religious standards. But the last minute grief gave way to high hopes and the young man left for France via Russia (1927).¹

In his seven year stay in France, where he attended two schools,[‡] Bazargan stayed true to his religious upbringing and resisted full acceptance of the European way of life. One writer reports that he embarrassed his more secular compatriots by performing his daily prayer rituals.[‡] In his first public speech[‡] he spoke against the European culture that was popular amongst his friends. In reply to a magazine's criticism of Islam wrote a defensive article. Nevertheless the impact of the western civilization on the young man was significant. His first impression, he later recalled, was of the civilized and well behaved manner in which people gathered in places of worship. He was furthermore impressed by the European Moral strength, social planning. Co-operation, righteousness, selflessness, hard work as well as freedoms of association and expression.^Δ Bazargan came to believe that the motivation for such qualities could not be material pleasures or self interests, for that would be a contradiction

¹Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 41

[‡]First Lycee Clemenceu at the city of Nantes and then University Central, Paris.

[‡]Abrahamian, Iran ... , p. 458

[‡]At Iran's Paris Embassy.

^ΔBazargan, Defenses ... , p. 45-49

in terms. Rather the primary motive could only be that of religion and the worship of god.^۱ While in Paris the Bazargan started frequenting the Association of Catholic students. In his later writings Bazargan said by the time he returned home it was with greater religious faith than when he had left, but it was no longer "the deviated Islam of superstition, ritualism, and individualism, but the original, vital, social and creative Islam" that he was keen to follow. It is questionable how he could have discovered the original Islamic faith in Paris but clearly European civilization had left its mark on the young man and had altered his beliefs. He saw in Europe a more civilized way of life but instead of abandoning his original identity and accepting the west he translated the modern concepts into his own language. He was experiencing a mixture of traditional Muslim faith and modern European concepts and wished to reconcile the two. His insistence on Islam could be also termed defensive and a later comment could be understood in this light; "what ever we studied in European schools of philosophy or observed in the society, could be found in more complete forms in the teachings of Islam and Quran"^۲

Return to Iran

The return home has tinged with bitterness for the sensitive graduate. Humiliating treatment at the hands of the customs officers and payment of bribes to the highway gendarme "was

^۱Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 63

^۲Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 63

◦ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

enough to make one regret his return"¹). He later said that he had found the establishment hiding behind a veil of cosmetic modernization and wrote "reforms did not go further than white washing the walls and changing people's clothes. It was a shallow and childish imitation of foreigners. Rarely was any attention paid to the foundations"². After his two-year national military service, which he did not find rewarding, Bazargan was employed by a state owned engineering organization and then by Tehran's College of Technology as a lecturer in thermodynamics. Feeling dissatisfied and seeking greater activity he started an engineering company³ with six European- educated friends.

Political Attitudes

We have no reason to believe Bazargan was ..? against the regime, It is true that his return home was somewhat bitter and that he felt his military service was a waste. But despite his later heavy handed criticisms of the period, there is no indication that he was experiencing difficulty with was happening around him. In fact things point in the other direction. As a Young man he seems to have been quite impressed by Reza Shah whom he was privileged to meet before departure for France. The impression of the king addressing the selected students at the Royal Palace was strong enough that Bazargan was to remember some of

¹Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 69

²Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 69

³Etehad Mohandes in Iran, A.M.A. Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 71.

∨ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

government organizations and educationl [establishments]. But all things came under the directives of the person of the Shah. When he fell [later] all things came down with him"¹. Indeed Raza Shah's fall disturbed Bazargan. He viewed it as a "humiliation, and a cause of disaster". But it was "a shock that awakened" the nation to its sensibilities for "it allowed the nation to breathe a little" and "soon the results of [the new] freedoms impressed upon peoples minds; the level of journalism went up, books were published, plays came on the stage, gatherings were formed"².

Socio- political activity

Bazargan was 32- years- old when the allied invasion and the fall of the dictatorship ushered in an age of open debate and political association. Between 1941 and 1953 Bazargan became involved, directly or indirectly in five organizations; a Tehran Islamic centre, an Islamic student's association, an engineer's union, the Iran party, and (through the party) the National Front. The first two were predominantly religious bodies while the latter were secular. The degree of affiliation and organizational commitment to these bodies must not be over estimated. In most prats they were loose associations and even when organization did exist, as in case of Iran

¹Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 98

²Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 76

party, it seems Bazargan fought against party discipline. In the same period he published over ten pamphlets.^۱

Islamic Centre

Bazargan had joined the Islamic Centre (kanoon Islam)^۲ a year prior to Shah's departure and had started working with two other individuals who shared similar ways of thinking. One was Mahmood Taleqani, a 30- year- old cleric who was to become the maverick of the Islamic movement.^۳ Taleqani's father, also a cleric, had been the person upon whose suggestion the philosophical meetings were held at the house of Bazargan senior. The new association however was not a result of the old times. The other, Dr. Yadollah Sahabi was a geology professor at Theran University. Both men were to stay with Bazargan throughout their political struggles and their friendship was to influence the course of Iranian politics almost forty years later. Bazargan's reports indicate that participants in the Islamic centre were from the educated and modern middle classes, (eg. University students, military personnel, civil servants, academicians) as well as the more traditional classes of shopkeepers and

^۱ In most cases the pamphlets are revised versions of speeches given to the associations that Bazargan worked with. Most were published within a year of the speech. In later editions, it seems, modifications were made to the original without indicating the change.

^۲ The centre was at Tehran's Amiriyeh street, an affluent traditional neighborhood at the time?

^۳ Taleqani, was born in 1912. His father was a Mulla and a watchmaker. Studied at traditional seminaries in Qom and Najaf (Iraq). First arrest in 1939. After the fall of Reza Shah started religious meetings "opposed by religious reactionaries". Founder of kanoon Islam. See Afrasiyabi, B. & Dehghan, S. *Taleqani A Tarikh*, "Taleqani and History" Nilofar Publications, Tehran, 1951, p.25- 61

^۹ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

students from the provinces.^۱ However the number of participants and the type of activities (beside the lectures given by Bazargan and Taleqani and the publication of a magazine) is unknown.

Western Religion

Bazargan initiated his socio- religious activity by writing a piece on "Religion in Europe"^۲ for the Cente's magazine. In it he attacked vulgar interpretations of western progress and said his most important mission in life would be to make his compatriots understand the realities of the western civilization. The progress of Europe, he argued existed not due to its "culture of cinema and fashion but because of its spiritual values, hard work, individual sacrifices and social awareness". Generally speaking, Bazargan wrote, "religion has always been and indeed is alive and well in Europe. It is well organized and has spread wide. It's based on pure hearts and enlightened minds"^۳.

As before Bazargan's efforts are in portraying, not a secular Europe, but a continent where faith still played a role in social life. At the same time the opportunity was not lost in criticizing christiannity as an incomplete religion for contemporary times, implicitly indicating the superiority of Islam.

Rationalization of Islam

^۱Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 77

^۲Published in Danesh Amouz "Seeker of Truth" Tehran ?, 1942 ?

^۳Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 73

Bazargan's first speech ^۱ at the Islamic centre illustrates the method of rationalization that he was to adopt and develop with regards to Islam. In the speech he tackled a theological issue which states that a pool of water more than ۳.۵ metres deep is not pure. This issue is one of obsession with religious rituals constitute extensive debates among Shiite theologians. Bazargan said the theologians and their traditional followers simply accepted the issue and saw no reason for questioning the matter as "they saw it rooted in the heavens". But Bazargan tried to prove the correctness of the case through modern scientific rational, in this case biochemical filtration. He had noticed similarities between the 3.5 span case and arguments in a book (In stallation Santinair) that he was reviewing for his class. Thus he adopted laws of physics, chemistry and mathematical formulas to study religious laws of ablution. The method was later said to be "in line with the needs and spirit of the day and could have been welcomed by the educated believers". The comment brings up the question whether Bazargan's foremost intention was the proof of the case or the introduction of a new method of research. In reaction to the speech a student had expressed the hope that all laws of Islam would be studied through similar methods and Bazargan later said that it was to become "my inspiration and work to study Islamic issues from the view

^۱The speech was later published with several similar articles in Bazargan's first book.

Motaharat Dar Islam, purities in Islam, Tehran, 1943. See Bazargan, *Defenses ...* , p.

۱۱ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

point of modern thought and sciences"^{۱)}. The method which was to become typical of Bazargan's writing labors to prove that the truth of religious faith does not contradict rational sciences and indeed is compatible with it, to the point of having scientific rationales for details of its rituals.

Islamic Association of students

In 1942 several muslim students, including some of those attending Taleqani's lectures, established the Islamic Associations of students. Although IAS was to develop fundamentally as a reaction to the communist and Bahaie^{۲)} activities on the campuses, the association's initial establishment was in fact a year before the pro-soviet Tudeh party started its own organization in universities.^{۳)} According to Bazargan IAS had no direct affiliations to any political organization, but some of its members were individually active in various establishments. Bazargan was not involved in the establishment of the group but soon started giving his support by attending IAS meetings. He became found of the group whom he called well intentioned and compassionate

^{۱)}Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 78

^{۲)} Bahaism is a 19th century socio- religious movement and and offshoot of Islam. In ۱۸۴۴ □□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□□□, □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□ coming Messiah (Bab) and started preaching the need for social reforms. His message soon became popular and fearing its rapid expansion, the government executed the Bab. The persecution cauxed a split in the movement into the rival branches of Behaism and Azalism. The former gradually lost inrerest in radical reform while the latter remained true to its radical origin and continued as an underground organization. Abrahamian, Iran, p. 17

^{۳)} IAS started in 1942 while according to Abrahamian Tudeh established its student chapter in April 1943.

young men familiar with contemporary ideas and excited by modern concepts.^۱ Bazargan was to address their meetings on a regular basis and as we shall see later the associations were to be the main recruiting ground for Bazargan's political organisation. IAS's constitution called for the pursuit of Islamic reforms (although their concept of reform is not known), published a magazine, held regular meetings and did some charity work.^۲ According to IAS constitution :

The association is being established at a time when [our] educators, standard-bearers, and leaders have disavowed themselves of responsibility towards social education and implementation of Islamic laws. At the same time another group of individuals continue to hold, unjustly and undeservingly, the official positions [in government] through which they impose their oppression. As the result of these conditions Muslims and the members of Iranian society have been led astray. Corruption has reached such dimension that the enlightened and intellectual class [including this] group of Muslim students have become greatly disturbed. Now they have reached the conclusion that the only solution would be the establishment of an association which aims at educating the people specially students, through regular meetings, about the principles of Islam as well as responsibilities of each individual and [social] class.

^۱ Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 80

^۲ The magazine was *Ganj Shayegan* "The worthy Treasure". The charity work included, on one occasion, the construction of homes for the victims of an earthquake.

۱۳ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

Through this effort the association will not allow the selfish and the ignorant to portray superstitions as the fundamentals of Islam which gives the (opportunists) the chance to disgust the simple minded people with religion.^۱

The statement is clear enough. The traditional leaders of the Islamic community are criticized for their failure in leading the pious, the political elite are criticized for their corrupt rule, and the secular and/or leftists for taking the opportunity to mislead the simple folk from religion. They call for the formation of associations which would promote social action in the light of Islamic law, supposedly yet to be interpreted. For the next ten years several other Islamic Associations were to be formed by Muslim engineers, doctors and teachers but non became politically significant.

Anti Communism

The Islamic centre and the Islamic Association of students were basically anti- communist bodies. In the words of the founder of the Islamic Centre Taleqani, subsequent to the fall of Reza Shah "the big problem facing Islam and the nation was the establishment of the [pro-soviet] Tudeh party and growing popularity of the principles of materialism and Marxism".^۲ Bazargan later wrote that Tudeh party constituted not only a threat to the government of the day but to all social institutions, including the family, religion

^۱Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 81

^۲Afrasiyabi, Taleqani ... , p. 64

and the very nation itself. As we shall see many his pamphlets up until the 1953 coup responded to the Tudeh phenomenon and addressed secular leftist arguments. Writing under the title of "the Battle Against Tudeh" Bazargan later remembered bitterly the stand against the communists at the College of Technology where he had been appointed as the head;^۱

"running the university was no easy task. More difficult than the educational and personal aspects of the work was the battle against Tudeh. The party had turned the university to its central base and exerted its utmost pressure there. Tudeh students had taken over the university club and were ordering the staff to go on strike. They wanted a part in the process of decision making by the university council. There was no discipline, only abuse. The Ministry of education was in despair. Those were dark days."^۲

Bazargan left no comments on the ongoing political situation (all ..? from later periods) and the 1964 Soviet-Azerbaijani crisis was no exception either. However we know that when government troops moved to invade the northwestern province where a soviet style autonomous republic had been established, Bazargan's associate at the Islamic centre, Taleqani, was to accompany the soldiers as

^۱ Bazargan was appointed the head of the college of Technology in 1945 and kept the position till 1950.

^۲ Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 116

١٥ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

the representative of Tehran's clergy. Taleqani later recalled how on the night before the final attack he addressed the troops on martyrdom for the liberation of motherland and how on the next day he said the prayers for departing troops.^١

The Islamic Current and Bazrgan

Putting Bazrgan in the context of the larger Islamic and secular currents highlights his political position and peculiarities. Within the Islamic current of the period three trends can be identified; The first was led by Ayatollah Sayyed Abulqasim Kashani, a cleric with long record of anti-British activities in Iraq and political Involvement in Iran. He has been termed too pragmatic a politician to be a fanatic or fundamentalist despite his commitment to Shiite traditionalism.^٢ Initially he was support Dr. Mossadeq but fell out with him in the later period. Soviet Marxists have labeled Kashani as a right wing element in the N.F and a supporter of the anti-British, pro-American feudal and bourgeoisie who were active against the (Azarbaijani) democrats and communists.^٣

The second but smaller trend was that of Fadayan Islam, a fundamentalist group responsible for the assassination of several political and intellectual figures. With roots in the working classes and the bazaar the group has been termed as

^١Afrasiyabi, Taleqani ... , p. 73

^٢Katouzian, The Political Economy ... , p. 148

^٣ Ivanove, M.S. *Tarikh Novin Iran*, "The modern history of Iran" Teezabi, H. & Qaempaneh, H. (trans.) Tudeh party Publication, nd. np. p. 172

a violent reaction to the failure of the intellectual leaders to provide the nation with an ideological framework. In other words the failure of liberalism and secularism to come to grip with an increasingly difficult and complex world led the Fadayan to target Shiism, as a bulwark of Iranian nationalism, in rejecting all that is foreign as symbol of imperialism.^۱ They initially worked with Kashani but abandoned him in later stages. The group was not, however, a supporter of the clergy and they were not sympathetic to it.

The third current was less politically active but led by more senior clerics, including Ayatollahs Behbahani and Chelsutuni, residents of the religious city of Qom. they as the authoritative elements and with supposedly largest share of the followers kept silent towards the political development in tacit acknowledgment of the position of the ruling establishment.^۲ The traditional clergy had made several advances in ... after the abdication of Reza Shah, including the lifting of the ban of religious gatherings, observance of fasting in government offices and the freedom to wear the veil. The British also encouraged the resurgence of the clerics as a guarantee against the communists.^۳ Their quietist interpretation of religion was

^۱ Ferdows, A.K. *Religion in Iranian Nationalism: The Study of the Fadayan-I Islam*, Indiana University Ph.D. 1967, pp. 90-100

^۲ Katouzian, *The political Economy ...* , p. 170

^۳ Momen, M. *An introduction to Shiism*, Yale University press, New Haven, 1985, p.

۱۷ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

dominant after the 1946 withdrawal of allied troops from Iran and continued to be until 1960's.^۱

Bazargan's position falls in neither of these currents although possibly closer to the first. Although there is no evidence that Bazargan was personally in contact with Kashani, his associate, Taleqani was.^۲ Much like Kashani, Bazargan supported the N.F. from its initial stages but unlike him Bazargan continued to do so even when pressure began to build up from the court and from abroad. Furthermore Bazargan's activities were channeled not through the Islamic groups but through the secular Iran party. However there are irritating indications that he might have been wavering and having second thoughts at the time when Kashani was moving away. (See *Youthful Games or Political Illusions?*). However with the coup he was back in the front line of the National front. Whatever the case may be we can positively identify Bazargan on the fringe rather than the centre of the Islamic political currents. He belonged to neither of the main trends and as we shall see later his main arguments were addressed as much to the secular modernists as they were to religious traditionalists.

Engineers Guild

Bazargan's religious orientation did not restrain him from becoming involved in secular organizations. While the

^۱ Zonis, M. & Brumberg, D. *Khomeini, The Islamic Republic of Iran And The Arab World*, Harvard University, Massachusetts, 1987

^۲ Afrasiyabi, Taleqani ... , p. 140

Islamic students were busy setting up their associations. Bazargan became active (1942) in the creation of an engineering guild (Kanoon Mohandesin) which unlike the earlier associations was not an Islamic but a professional body. For many years to come Bazargan was to be elected a member of guild's central council and head of the council for two terms. Within two years the guild was strong enough to call its members on strike with the demand for greater role for the professional personnel in government administrations in place of traditional bureaucrats who monopolized the posts. The strike impressed Bazargan to the extent that he later referred to it as a revolution without masses. In 1944 the guild entered parliamentary elections by sponsoring two candidates. Although neither won a seat the process again encouraged Bazargan towards socio-political activity.^۱ A year later the guild split into nationalist and leftist factions with the nationalists acting as the core of the secular Iran Party. The left joined the Tudeh.

Iran Party

Bazargan states that he never became an Iran Party card holder^۲ although he stayed close to the organization. On the other hand Abrahamian claims Bazargan was one of the founders of Iran party and that his deep anti communist convictions promoted him to resign in 1946 to protest against the party's alliance with the Tudeh. Similar charges were made against him by the military prosecutor in the

^۱Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 102

^۲Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 108

^{۱۹} □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

۱۹۶۰□□ □□□□□.)^۱ Whatever the case documents indicate Bazargan participated in some party activity. In the first two years of the party he intensified his pamphleteering and delivered five papers of which two were addressed to party members. His later high level appointments in government were also through party connections. Iran party participated in two coalition governments. The first (1946) was with the Democrat and Tudeh parties in Qavam's cabinet and the second (1951) as a member of the National front in the cabinet of Mossadeq. When the leader of the Iran party, Karim Sanjabi became the minister of culture (in Mossadeq's government) it was Bazargan who became his deputy. Again at the height of Iran's nationalist movement against the British ownership of the oil industry it was Bazargan who was responsible for the take over of the nationalized oil industry. The position was a highly publicized one and it was followed by his appointment as the first director of the Nationalized Iranian oil Company (June 1951). In southern Iran Bazargan spent nine months supervising the departure of the British technicians and managers while ensuring the continuation of production. [was any oil produced? See Nejati] Bazargan's resigned his post apparently due to meddling in oil affairs by Makki.^۲ Upon returning to the capital (March 1953) Bazargan went back to his post at the university and was

^۱See Abrahamian, Iran ... , p. 190 & Bazargan, Defenses ... , p. 109

^۲*Asnad-e Lanehe Jasosi*, "Documents of the Den of Espionage (US Embassy) " V.18, Daneshjuyan-e Mosalman, Tehran, nd. item.2

later appointed, again through Iran Party connections, as the head of the water Authority of Tehran which was implementing the project for the first piped-water-system.^۱ Bazargan was at this position when the August 1953 coup against prime Minister Mossadeq place.

Secular Currents and Bazargan

The Iran party was to become one of the few organization to form and run the national front. The party has been termed the middle current of the national bourgeoisie.^۲ Although the most important of the smaller political groups, it was not, however, so much a political party but an elitist collectivity of mainly European educated younger technocrats with European style liberal and social democratic leanings.^۳ Avery too agrees on their common educational background but calls them a group of professional men of the middle classes significant for their opposition to the Tudeh and support for Mossadeq.^۴ Abrahamian covers their case in greatest detail;

Iran party was the country's main secular nationalist organization. Its leaders came from the rank of the young generation of the western educated intelligentsia residing

^۱ Years later addressing a military court Bazargan broke the tiresome length of his 350 page defence by amusing comments. Speaking about his activities in the water Authority he asked the Colonel prosecutor if he was aware that for every glass of water "the gentleman is drinking at least several galup fulls are due to my good management." See Bazargan, Defenses, p. 145

^۲ Ivanove, The modern history ... , p. 171

^۳ Katouzian, The Political Economy ... , p. 239

^۴ Avery, P. *Modern Iran*, Ernest Benn Ltd . London, 1965 , p. 432

۲۱ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

in Tehran and influential through their families. The party supported Mossadeq's general policies, advocated a diluted form of French socialism. It called for a national revolution against the feudal landlords to complete the reforms initiated by the constitutional movement. It argued that the main Social conflict in Iran was between the exploited people and the exploiting rulers, not between the middle and lower classes. It encouraged the state to implement a program for rapid industrialization, and claimed that agricultural countries, being "dumping grounds" for developed countries could not be truly independent. It added that the state should own all the major industries since laissez-faire capitalism concentrated economic and political power in the hands of a few illiterate robber-barons who not only exploited the masses but have little respect for skilled professionals and technicians. Moreover, it waged a propaganda campaign against both the old and the new wealthy families. As one party pamphlet on the Iranian aristocracy declared, "the main obstacle to national progress is the privileged class".*

[Jazani ?]

The treatment of the National front has been more complex. At the height of its power the front was constituted of several political groups and a few distinguished politicians. In a classic Marxist analysis the front has been

* Abrahamian, *Iran Between ...* , pp. 188-182

sketched as the representative of the national bourgeoisie holding a combination of classes, including that of social reformists, petite bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie, the right wing bourgeoisie and the anti British (religious) elements.^۱ Painting a background of a re-emerging absolutist and arbitrary despotic state, Katouzian pictures the front as a democratic, popular and revolutionary movement with its leadership aiming at uprooting despotism and carrying out social reconstruction.^۲ Abrahamian portrays the front as a coalition of the traditional and middle classes that stayed together as long as Britain and shah seemed dangerous. Bazargan's governmental appointments are said to be due to his position as a western educated leader of Islamic associations and his leverage on both the modern and traditional factions of the front. Apparently his appointments were an effort by Mohammad Mossadeq, the prime minister and the leader of the national front, to please the traditional and religious wing.^۳ Nevertheless Mossadeq did keep the traditionalists at a distance and later claims could be true that he ruled out the appointment of Bazargan as a cabinet minister in charge of educational affairs on the grounds that he would first make all the school girls wear Islamic head

^۱ Ivanove blames the Tudeh for failing to distinguish between national bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie comprador and thus evaluating Mossadeq as a comprador elements and pursuing a radically leftist attitude towards him.

^۲ Katouzian, *The Political Economy ...* , p. 165- 187

^۳ Abrahamian, *Iran ...* , p. 275

۲۳ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

scarves.^۱For Avery the front poses as "an odd combination" of traditional and modern classes which included the landed owners, merchants, tribal leaders, Liberals and political extremists coming around a common anti-shah, anti-foreign, nationalist, liberal, and religious flag. Frustrated at having failed to insure a part of the political power and fearful of a communist takeover, they rallied around uncontrollable nationalist passions and xenophobia.^۲

[Jazani]

Commenting on Bazargan's role in this period, Jazani^۳ wrote "although Bazargan headed the take-over committee his personal characteristics, including his [religious] beliefs, did not give him the chance to find [political] influence. He had relatively set religious ideas and tride to keep away from parliamentary tactice, political games and sensationalism"^۴.

The above analysis makes it clear that Bazargan and his friends were a front minority although a faithtul one. Similar to his marginal postion in the religious current Bazargan was a marginal element in the front. His position as a representative of the traditional as well as modern middle classes (but increasingly the latter rather than the former)

^۱ See Adameyat, F. *Ashoftegi Dar Fekr Tarikhi*, "Disorders in Historical Thinking" ? , Tehran , 1981

^۲ Avery, *Modern Iran*, pp. 331-440

^۳ Jazani was a Tudeh activist in his youth. He later organized one of the first guerrilla organization against Shah's regime and was subsequently killed in prison.

^۴ Jazani, B. *Tarh Jameshenani Va Mabani Esteratejhi Jonbesh Enghelabi Khalgh Iran*. "Sociological Sketch and Strategic Principles of the Revolutionary Movement of the Iranian Masses" p. 83.

was further isolated when the ruling elite and the traditional middle classes cooperated in search of greater power and against the potential threat of a radicalized modern middle class.

Opposed to the front two other political currents of significance; ie. the pro-establishment movement and the Tudeh communist trend. Since relations between the front, the establishment and the Tudeh party has been documented they shall not be repeated here. However contrasts between their ideological currents will come in ideological analysis.

Political Thinking

Between 1945 and 1953 Bazargan prepared nine papers that were either presented to social gatherings, mostly to students, or were published in magazines. Later they were all published as pamphlets. This is the period when Bazargan was close to the Iran party and later to the national front. The communists having suffered severe political setbacks were still strong on the streets. However it was ruling establishment that was making the strongest moves forward to insure an ultimate comeback to total power.

Utility of Religion

In a 1945 speech¹ delivered to a meeting at the Iran party Bazargan calls for greater moral consciousness in social life. His argument seems to have already accepted progress and

¹ Bazargan, M. Zaribe Tabadole Miyane Madiyat Va Manaveyat "Coefficient of Conversion Between the Material and the Spiritual" *Binahayat Koochek,ha* Book Distribution Centre, Houston, Texas, 1976 Originally a 1945 speech at Iran party. Hence forth known as coefficient.

۲۰ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

development as a social aim and as a remedy for poverty and backwardness. And it is in his concern for development that Bazargan expresses criticism of the apparently accepted methods. At the same time a form of epistemology is established.

Bazargan's criticism is directed to what is termed as modernists and progressive schools, however a closer study reveals that this position is not necessarily meant to mean a support for the anti modern and anti progressive, ie. the traditional and the conservative (although the potential is there). What is in fact being criticized in Bazargan's belief is the failure of secularism to take into account the role of morality as the final accumulation of human experience in the process. To remedy this short coming Bazargan implicitly proposes the propagation of a creative and productive moral ideology. The main body of Bazargan's argument is addressed at secularists who are said to possess a dominant social position while there is hardly any criticism of the traditionalists except for the renunciation of (the powerful tradition of Iranian) quietism. It is not clear from the text, however, whether this minimal criticism of traditionalism is tactical or strategic. In other words although Bazargan's requirements of the secularists are clear enough he does not make any explicit demands for change from the traditionalists. Whether that is meant to be an acceptance of the traditionalist stance, or Bazargan's concern to avoid collision with them is unclear.

Bazargan's main argument is based on the necessity of spirituality for any creative and efficient social productivity.

Productivity, it is hoped, would remedy national poverty and backwardness. Thus what Bazargan calls spirituality and what may be interpreted as either religion or simply moral consciousness is given a function and utility. It is upon this ground that an invitation is made to spirituality. However in this speech Bazargan never goes as far as explicit categorization of spirituality as religion. Taking into account that he is addressing a secular association and modern professionals it is undressing a secular association and modern professionals it is understandable that he is being discreet, not straight forward. The Islamic concept of charity, zakat, too is utilized in a functional manner, ie. the accumulated wealth is said not to be for consumption through luxury goods but for being put back into the production process.

What ever the logic of the argument the political implication is closer cooperation with traditionalist religious classes. No immediate political reasons are put forward in this regard but the immediate implications (particularly when Bazargan's own position of more than five years of cooperation with religious groups are taken into account) are quiet clear; religion and religious forces have to be taken into account.

One epistemology, Bazargan distinguishes, rather sharply, the material from the spiritual in the following manner; the action guided by the rational mind and towards the contribution of provisions of food, shelter and reproduction are of the material (physical) realm, while that which is concerned with the emotions and values is that of

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the spirit (consciousness). The two worlds are not, however, separate for the material (physical) is a function of the spiritual. The Spiritual is said to be an accumulation and the final outcome of the physical experience of the human race. In the same sense wealth is the condensed form of spirituality while poverty is equated to spiritual underdevelopment. Within such a context too the necessity of cultural continuation (which includes the religious) becomes apparent.^۱

Bazargan's line of argument seems to be promotion of spirituality through rational conclusivity, ie. his desire of studying Islam through the modern scientific method. Whether his methods are scientific or not is not the case. What is significant is his perception that the position of morality (and ultimately religion) can be at least socially acknowledged through logic.

Prinsipality of Motivation (1945)

In another speech also addressed to the secular Iran Party meeting and under the title of "Complimentary and Abusive Language in Iran" Bazargan spoke against the emphasis being laid on political organization rather than the motives of the activists. The speech ridicules the upper classes for their excessive use of compliments and says the same habit exists in the lower classes except that they use abusive language against each other. In fact, Bazargan states, there is little relation between what is believed and what is said. The dichotomy of thought and speech is so deep that to

^۱For the argument and/or body of text look under Texts, Coefficient.

express a true feeling greater exaggeration in language is needed. No one is able to persuade his listeners of his true intentions because there is no trust. The logic of the case is used to demonstrate that more attention should be paid to honesty and truthfulness in the political activists rather than formalities, rituals and organization.^۱

Critique of the tradition

Bazargan's launches his first attack on traditional Islam (1945) in a provocative and agitative move aimed at activating the Muslim masses who are believed to be following the quietist tradition.^۲The discourse is an effort in mobilizing the masses through re-defining their basic and simple faith of internal illumination to positive external expressionism. However the attack on traditionalism is also an effort to defend the faith from leftist criticisms on the opiumed nature of religion. Although only the Sufis are mentioned by name the attack, without doubt, is intended to include the even more powerful theological tradition. [why a conservative attitude towards theologians?]

Bazargan's aim of re-structuring the faith is to save the nation from suffering a dark age. It is intended to be achieved with a practical faith that is organised in thought and action, effective in deploying simple and effective methods, concentrating its energies in one direction and

^۱ *Fohsh va Taarouf Dar Iran*, "Complimentary and Abusive Language in Iran", Speech at Iran Party-Tehran, 1945 See Bazargan, *Defenses ...* , p. 102

^۲ Bazargan, M. *Pragmatism Dar Islam*, "Pragmatism in Islam" *Binahayat Kouchakha*, Book Distribution Centre, Houston, Texas. 1976. The Speech was first made in 1945.

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seeking knowledge for the sake of improving the environment. Translating this into Islamic terms this would mean having 1. Singularity of faith, 2. piety in seeking the simple and straight path 3. and action ie. good deeds upon these convictions. 'This Islam would not tolerate a thing as pure if it failes to be useful, positive and practical.

From this vantage point quietist are attacked for their loss of the true faith by concentrating on prayers, recitation of the holy book and seeking of the divine without being practical. The intellectualism of romantic theoreticians who lack set social goals and who look down on work and labour as something for the less privileged are also criticized.

In viewing Bazargan's methodology it should be noted that he feels no contradiction to his Islamic beliefs and the princeples of a non-Islamic conceptual system, ie. pragmatism, as valid enough to measure and compare Islam with. ۲

Reformism and Individualism

Bazargan's political strategy is outlined in his 1945 pamphlet *Infinitely small*. ۳ Although immediate political implications can be read from this text the long term consequences are possibly of greater significance. Reading the text with regards to the developments of the period it is a

۱) The three elements of faith, piety and good deeds are said to be the basic requirements for acquiring the good/heaven.

۲) For arguments and/or body of text look under text, pragmatism in Islam.

۳) Bazargan, M. *Binahayat Koochakha* "The infinitely Small", Book Distribution Center, Houston, Texas 1976, First delivered in 1945.

critique of the radical left and pro-establishment conservatives in support of a moderate but popular democratic trend. It argues against radicals calls for rapid and vast transformations and ridicules them for impatience and simple mindedness; "after a single visit to London they decide on creating the four hundred year old parliament and after watching American movies they dream of building GM car plants". The conservatives who form the bulwark of the pro-establishment lobby are also accused of despotism. Their impatient pessimism that argues against collective work and disregards the significance of the individual increasing social change is said to be rooted in the ruthless nature of the despotic system which encourages the need of joining centres of power for protection.

Arguing that no single individual or institution (ie. political leader or government) is capable of solving social problems Bazargan suggests the concept of the government of a free people through consensus, it is argued that the desired change can be achieved on reliance on the masses of individuals since the state of every nation is the synthesis and accumulation of the activities of generations of individuals.

The method of achieving the desired regime is through holding the individual responsible to his conscience. This is done through the power of religion which is capable of providing popular codes of behaviour and holding the individual responsible for his action. In changing the seemingly mundane behaviour of the individual great social changes can take place. But what is also needed here is the

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element of time and work on a massive scale. For it is only through the passage of time and application on a mass rather than an elite scale that finite changes of behaviour can create significant social changes.

Here lies Bazargan's vision of the nature of social relations and its subsequent strategic implications. The argument is put forward that the finite social unit (ie.individual) although insignificant in itself becomes of great importance when multiplied by an infinite number (society) and seem through the passage of time. This principle not only holds true for social relations but is also evident (and indeed derived from) nature. Reference is given to the role of integrals in dealing with finite numbers in mathematics or the movements of particles in physics and engineering. References are also made to microbes and bacteria in biology and medicine. The state of the natural world is said to be the result of continuous minute changes rather than rapid and vast transformations. Several infinities are seen at work; the infinte small movement of an infinite number of particles in an infinite passage of time.

Politically speaking the strategic implication of such a vision is the necessity of the mobilization of the masses through an evolutionary process of change. Bazargan thus speaks in defence of individualism, moderate social action and in criticism of despotism and radicalism^۱

On colonialism

^۱For arguments and/or body of text look under text, The Infinitely Small.

On the issue of the anti-colonial national struggle for independence. Bazargan suggests (1949) the association of discontented professionals turning against the established foreign inspired social practices and a return to indigenous traditions and needs.¹ Tapping this inner source is said to lead to greater creativity and thus an increased national productivity to a level where exchanges (ie. supply and demand) with the outside world reaches a balance placing the country in an interdependent rather than a dependent position.

Internally the communists are in their lowest point for the past nine years, and in their place the establishment is gaining grounds. However democratic elements are also active and with the 16th Majlis elections on the way, popular momentum is to pickup in the form of a national movement of the middle classes. The main slogan of the movement is to be anti colonialism and its main aim the nationalization of the British owned oil industry.

Bazargan explains colonialism as a condition where the incompetence of a nation in meeting its own demands as well as in creating a surplus that could be exchanged for other commodities (industrial as well as cultural) leads to dependence on foreign nations. The emphasis is laid not on the strength of foreign power as the determining factor but on the indigenous weakness and incapability to deal with the foreign element. No effort is made by Bazargan to

¹ Bazargan, M. Sercheshmehe Esteghlal, "Source of Independence" in *Serre Aghab Oftadegi Melale Mosalman*, Book Distribution Centre, Houston, Texas, 1977. pp. 57-100. □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□.

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explain on what grounds colonialism is necessary a negative historical phenomenon except a few references that colonized nations are weak.

The main body of the text is directed against the political point of view that colonialism is either a political, military, economic or cultural issue that could be solved within these contexts. Although as in most cases, Bazargan makes no references to particular political groups, it seems he is addressing the left which in the case of the Tudeh party or other socialist groups. [the general arguments of the time must have been heavily influenced by the cold war, the position of the three superpowers in Iran, and on the theoretical level by Lenin's Imperialism Highest state of capitalism. See references on Maleki, Keshavarz]. Bazargan's use of the term colonialism is probably due to the fact that the term was more popularly used and understood than the more modern term of imperialism. Bazargan's attack finds a sharper edge, when he goes to say that those seeking national independence yet imitating foreign practices in their personal life are incapable of achieving their aim. The implication being that the indigenous element has to be taken into account as a determining factor. Criticism is also extended to the traditionalists who propose the impractical solution of dressing up old ways of life as a means of defence against foreign domination without realising that the new will inevitably undermine the old.

In the effort to emphasize the indigenous element or activate the internal dynamics as to face the external threat

Bazargan suggests social criticism (discontent) as the first necessary factor. It is said that social criticism constitutes the vital element towards independence for it is through rebellion against the status quo (a basic characteristic of man) which progress is made.

The second element is organization by various classes and groups since only through collective work the independence of the individual be protected and allowed to progress. Furthermore the complexities of the modern life make co-operation and coordination necessary. It is proposed that free associations in all fields should be created (be it in trade, religion, culture, technology, sports, cooperatives of charity).

The third element is the launching of a national struggle against the treason of imitation in all aspects of life (be it social thought or behaviour) and a call for return to local needs and local traditions. The return is designed to eradicate obstacles on the path of creativity that is needed for indigenous productivity, trade and thus the ability to maintain an independent position in international relations^۱.

Political Stands

In the 1950 Heart & Mind pamphlet^۲ Bazargan further develops his addresses to two social groups, the anti-religious modernists and the religious traditionalists, criticizing their stand vis-a-vis each other's perspectives.

^۱For arguments and/or body of text look under text, the Source of Independence.

^۲ Bazargan, M, *Del Va Damagh*, "Mind & Heart" Enteshar Co. Tehran, 1965 First published in 1950, Foroughe Elm Magazine, No. 7, 8, 9.

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Bazargan then proposes a religious revival after a form of fusion between the modified ideas of the two groups. In this sense he is a reformist, both in the religious and social sense of the word. Furthermore Bazargan takes an ideological and necessarily a political stand against the "outside world" by expressing opposition to the imitation of their way of life.

A review of the line up of political forces in 1950 would make things more clear. The new Majlis opened in February with a small National Front delegation (to which Bazargan extended his support) and large aristocratic and pro-establishment factions.^۱ At the time National Front enjoyed the support of two religious factions, one pragmatic, the other fundamentalist. But the majority of the religious community had a quietist approach and was generally pro-establishment. It favoured the maintenance of the status quo rather than social reform. The secular and modernist elements were particularly strong in the Tudeh party. Tudeh was also critical of what it called national front's bourgeois comprador leadership.

Bazargan's social criticisms are made in a spirit of rebellion against the status quo which he finds unsatisfactory. Change is sought towards progress. A progress that has been achieved by developed nations and is desirable. Bazargan's appeal is made upon rational and functional utility of religion. Worship of god should be encouraged not because the divine has wished it so, but because it will metamorphosis the community into a

^۱ However the small N;F. was able to dominate the political scene for up to three years, before the military coup ended its activities.

productive entity and thus bring progress. Thus religion has a utility in curing individual and social ills. No contradiction is foreseen between the religion Iranians should turn to and the progress that been achieved by the developed world. Indeed the former is said to be an element in achieving the latter. However criticism of imitation of the west necessarily implies a break, if not an opposition, to the way that currents of the developed world flow.

Epistemology

Bazargan's references to epistemology and the nature of man's rational and intuitional capacities upon which lay argumantive foundations for subsequent conclusions is most evident in his *Hearts and Mind* pamphlet.^۱ Here Bazargan structures a picture where "Mind" represents the means of recognition (be it in the brain or senses) as well as the activities of sensing, recognizing, thinking, and technology. On the other hand the "Heart" represents feelings, emotions, inclinations, wishes, morals, spirituality and all that which concerns fascination and worship. Its final expression is religion. The two represent different function and operate under different laws and have separate sources. (Hereafter all matters regarding the "Heart" will be referred to as intuition.) only the intuition, emanating from man's original nature (no more explanations given) is capable of ideals regarding existence, survival and perfection. Furthermore the intuition controls the mind and directs it towards its own

^۱ Bazargan, M. *Del Va Damagh*, "Mind & Heart" Enteshar Co. Tehran, 1965 First published in 1950 .

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ideal, be it survival, (eg. Securing food or satisfying sexual desires) or matters of existence (eg. Enjoying the fruits of sexuality in parenthood or extending the sense of parenthood to philanthropic sentiments that go as far as patriotism.) The mind has no ideals of its own because its tool of logic is incapable of making definitive value judgements due to the fact that in realm of reason al things are relative to original postulates. But once an order has emanated from the intuition the mind is capable of mobilizing its rational capacities towards obtaining the ideal.) On the social base the lack of an ideal causes aimlessness, faithlessness and unprincipledness and thus the encouragement of the individual to pursue meager private interests. However once a common social ideal is projected from intuition, rational capacities are mobilized, standards and principles created, work and effort exerted and social progress achieved. Pointing to history it is argued that the ideal which has inspired the greatest works of genius, in art or human behaviour has been the worship of the divine. Here Bazargan brings the process into a full circle for it is said that the divine can only be discovered through and within the intuition. Thus in the process of worshiping the divine not only is social progress achieved but the real self discovered.*

World View & Programme

) The appearance of modern science is said to owe as much to the rational mind as to human intuition since love for the beauties of nature and curiosity in solving its secrets have been significant motives in the pursuit of sciences.

* For an abstuet. The original see Texts (section three), Mind & Heart.

Various elements in Bazargan's thinking up to 1950 tend to come together in the 1950 pamphlet on "Causes of Backwardness of Muslim Nations"^۱. In it he refers to issues he has already discussed on colonialism, traditionalism, modernism, and an Islamic revival in an interrelated approach.

The audience of the "secrets" is intended to the modern educated classes. Muslim as well as secular, and those involved in the "sacred" struggle against the "curse" of colonialism. The appeal is made in the name of Islam, although the functional rationale given for it, ie. muslim nations suffer backwardness on the account of the misguided application of the faith, is open to test. But the fact that the appeal is made to Muslim nations is significant enough. For already the fundamental traditional Islamic concept of separation of the world into the house of Islam and the house of war has been implied. The tone of the address is clearly more agitative than before. We hear of treachery of the governments that ride on the back of the Muslim nations, or of the pure heart and hot blood of the children of the afflicted and of the rising of sparks into high flames.

The fall from the utopia of the problems of the Muslim nations suffering at the hands of colonialists and corrupt rulers is said to lie in the usurpation of power by corrupt leaders. The rule of the corrupt brings indulgence and

^۱ Bazargan, M. *Sere Aghab Oftadeghi Melale Moslman* "Causes of Backwardness of Muslim Nations" Book Distribution Center, Houston, Texas 1977, Speech in 1329.

۳۹ □ Biographer Ingenaine Bazrgan

tyranny in place of education and progress.^۱ The most significant outcome of the usurpation and corruption is the separation of the religious from the political; for it means good men and indeed "god left the market place and the battle field for the mosque and the monastery, swords gave way to prayer beads, the believers became good-for-nothings. The key to paradise, held by the worrier, was now obtained by the price of a ritual. "The united community of the early day muslims was now suffering from a division into a political aristocracy and the masses. This position is again a fundamental issue in Islamic thinking.^۲

Bazargan then attacks the clerical classes for they too an unhealthy growth in the true Islamic community. A class engaged only in religious rituals and exempt from productive work can not be acceptable, for creation of this class has resulted from the initial separation of the worldly from the spiritual. As the result of this deviation the masses suffer a state of dualism in leading a worldly life (of external productivity) and a spiritual life (of internal worship). The situation becomes even worse when clerics limit their activity to the (existing) lethally imbalanced

^۱ Although Bazargan explains the creation of the tyrannical state in time of the early Muslim empires but his portrayal of the past is in terms of present references and indeed this is what he intends it to be.

^۲ The split in the early Muslim community between Sunni and Shitie was a religious-political dispute. The split pitted the Sunni who claimed that Abu Bakr by virtue of consensus of the community was to become caliph upon the death of prophet Mohammad against those who claimed that Ali, by virtue of his being the son-in-law of the prophet could legitimately claim the caliphate. The partisans, or Shiite of Ali argued that meaning of the Quran could only be divined by those in the prophet's family who meaning. Zonis, Khomeini ... , p. 4

jurisprudence.^۱ Bazargan's treatment of the powerful tradition of quietists mysticism is even more heavy handed. Mysticism is said to be caused by the flight of the intellectual mind from cleric's superficial obsession with trivialities or failure in social and political struggle. It is the ultimate divorce between the religious and the political and can only lead to pessimism and isolationism of the worst kind. While the clerics are willing to allow a degree of worldly engagement for the provisions of life the mystics wish for total disengagement. However the clerics are furthermore blamed for their reaction against colonialism. They have either been totally passive or at best isolationist in boycotting all aspects of foreign life, be it in commodity or ideas. They are thus responsible for the passivity of the masses against the advance of colonialism. Bazargan criticism of the clerics is not a common position within the traditional religious current. However up to this point a degree of criticism had been made on the clerics by non-clerical religious thinkers such as Jamal al-din and Eqbal. In political terms the traditionally conservative clerics, who led the majority in the religious community, are being asked to enter the political battle ground.

Earlier on we had seen Bazargan criticizing both the traditional clerics and the secular modernists for a variety of reasons but it is in the "secrets" that while criticizing both of the intellectual/political currents Bazargan goes to lay the heavier blame on the modernists. The modernists

^۱ Explain the limits of the current jurisprudence

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intellectuals¹ are blamed for total surrender in the face of colonialism and accused of imitation and servitude under the modernist slogan. They are portrayed in more critical light than the clerics for at least the latter show a degree of resistance through their passive boycott of all that is foreign. Skepticism is expressed about the advance of secular ideologies on the ground that Islam is already capable of putting forward the contents of such ideas. Functional treatment of Islam, as with a socialist hue in post WWII national liberation movements is also disregarded as a modernist approach.

Putting forward a programme in combating the curses of backwardness and colonialism Bazargan points the finger within the nation and calls for a rejuvenation of the spirit that brought about the initial Islamic utopia. Such a spirit, ideology, religion would make no distinction between the material and the spiritual in the sense that it would welcome an outgoing attitude towards the exploitation of natural wealth to the point of waging war while retaining principles of divine worship. The process would turn the believer from an individualist to a social and global element. It would also initiate a rapid and powerful social movement of progress. The revived religion would also pay due attention to understanding the true causes of the undeniable advance of the west while retaining its own principles (as already put forward by Eqbal and Jamal al-din). Such an attitude would

¹ The term modernist intellectual is a common phrase referring to the secular and modern educated individuals as opposed to the traditional and the religious. However it is even more common to refer to them as simply intellectuals.

inject creativity into the community and free it from the bounds of imitation. Bazargan warns that austerity might become necessary in the process but takes heart in the example Gandhi.

Youthful Games or Disillusion?

Bazargan's brief holding of a politically sensitive position, as deputy minister and then as the head of NIOC seems to have backfired in the sense of creating political disillusion. Upon his return to the capital he turned down suggestions of establishing a political party with a moderate orientation^۱ and even went as far as to write a pamphlet on "The Games Youth Play With Politics"^۲. His later claims in the military court that he had wished for no part in politics, that his great concern was the moral education of the people,^۳ and that he was a no-one in the National Front would only fit within such context.

Bazargan's disillusion with the politics of the time finds parallel with the disillusion of the traditional middle class and religious wings of the National Front. It was exactly in the same period that the traditional leaders of the Front started to abandon Mossadeq and moved towards the young king. Nevertheless we must not forget that Bazargan and Taleqani were to be one of the few religious factions who were to stay loyal to Mossadeq and his ideas and were to

^۱ See *Asnade Nehzate Azade Iran*. "Documents of the Freedom Movement of Iran" V.I, freedom Movement of Iran, Tehran, 1982, p. 4

^۲ This pamphlet was one of the few that was not to be reprinted by Bazargan's publisher's.

^۳ Defenses , p. 110

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criticize clerics such as Ayatollah Kashani who betrayed Mossadeq and gave tacit approval to the coming coup.

On Mossadeq

There is no doubt that in Mossadeq Bazargan saw a leader but since he wrote no pamphlets at the time of the activities of the Front his views at the time are not known. His ideas on the Front were written 20 years later when he portrayed the National Front, as the representation of libertarianism, fight against corruption, defence of constitutionalism, bulwark against communism and last but not least anti colonialist. He said the oil industry was the pillar of British colonialism through which despotism was enforced and it was Mossadeq who brought it down. Further more National Front was the sole force capable of checking the growth of communist movement.^١

^١Bazargan, Defenses , pp. 125-140