

ful global power.<sup>54</sup>

Nevertheless, China's claim of a partnership with Africa would be weakened if China allows its resource needs to dominate the relationship. If China is really committed to a relationship of mutual benefits and equality, then the current competition with the sectors in a weak or fetal stage in Africa needs to be controlled. China's trade policy of using Africa as a market for export goods like textiles contradicts its development policies because it leads to deindustrialization and dependence. It also increases the potential of future conflict with local populations. In the timber industry, it would be much more beneficial if China promoted transparency. In that way, the relationship will be sustainable. African states also have a role to play in stemming the illegal timber trade by tightening the criteria for the registration of foreign logging companies, enforcing tariffs on timber exports and promoting development of local timber industries. African economies need to diversify from exporting primary resources to producing secondary products in order to truly be equal with China economically. This will be possible only if there is considerable investment in research and development. Research must be done on how the diversification of African economies will benefit both China and Africa in the long run. Sino-African interactions driven by capitalism and globalization is still at an early stage. Therefore, Africa and China still have a great deal to learn about the costs, benefits and implications of close relations. Specifically, Africa must understand China and develop a general policy towards China and protect its interests.<sup>55</sup>

For a sustainable relationship with the African continent, China has to forgo short-run benefits by investing in the improvement of human capital and technology and by supporting stability in the continent. Only when African economies are truly developing and succeeding, will there be true mutualism. The mutualism of the five principles of peaceful coexistence, the core of Sino-African relations, cannot exist when there is one-sided benefit only for China.

PEAR

54 Alden and Alves, "China's Africa Policy," 1.

55 Foerstel, "China in Africa," 21.

## THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER: THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN AND FOUCAULT

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### Introduction

Religious movements in the modern era claim to bear a superior social order as opposed to that presented by the secular nation-state system.<sup>1</sup> They claim to be searching for a new social order, which begs the following questions: what is the alternative social order and how has it been implemented? How have people reacted to this forced social order? In order to address these issues, this essay will analyze the social order created by one of these religious movements which have obtained power: the Islamic State of Iran. The essay will utilize Foucault's three fundamental modes of control in order to examine the different apparatuses employed by the Iranian government to bring about a new social order of control as well as explore the character of Iranian popular resistance to this Islamist social order.

### "Modes of Control:" Disciplinary Power and Biopower

Since the Muslims' rise to power, the Islamic Republic of Iran instituted a new social order by applying the three modes of power described by Michel Foucault.<sup>2</sup> In order to solidify their power, the Islamist government employed various apparatuses of control based on Foucault's three fundamental modes of power: disciplinary power, biopower and sovereign power.

Disciplinary power is a form of surveillance and control over the individuals' behavior and comportments.<sup>3</sup> It is disseminated and constantly operated throughout the day in order to produce and diffuse an array of social practices. It is even presented during basic daily interactions. This kind of power func-

1 Mark Juergensmeyer, *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to al Qaeda* (University of California Press, 2008), 3.

2 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Vol. 1: The Will to Knowledge* (London: Penguin, 1998), 92-102; see also Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979), 140.

3 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 195-228.

tions from below by imposing homogeneity on each individual's thoughts and conduct,<sup>4</sup> seeking to make people docile in order to manage them more easily. Furthermore, it attempts to individualize each citizen so as to make it possible to detect differences among members of society with regards to specialties, personal abilities or abnormal activities.<sup>5</sup> Biopower, on the other hand, is defined as the control of a group as opposed to the individual. In other words, biopower is "massifying" while disciplinary power is individualizing. This form of control is imposed through institutions which manage and regulate social interaction, the economy, medical care and welfare while simultaneously normalizing a body of knowledge and configuring and circumscribing a political sphere.<sup>6</sup>

These two modes of power can operate concurrently and may even overlap.<sup>7</sup> Disciplinary modes of power emphasize the individual while biopower administers the individual insofar as he or she is a member of a larger group. However, it integrates and modifies the biopower on a different scale through an array of distinct instruments. The Islamist regimes' objective of employing various forms of control is to regulate the population through the process of incorporation into the new social order. One prominent example of exercising biopower is the unprecedented level of control over the body, defined by Foucault as "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations."<sup>8</sup> He adds, "by this I mean a number of phenomena that seem to me to be quite significant, namely, the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power."<sup>9</sup>

The Islamist regime regulated public bodily functions. The new social order expanded to include policies that regulated dress, including compulsory wear of the hijab or the recommended chador. The chador and hijab became symbols of the ideological and political hegemony of the Islamist state. Women who worked for the state were required to wear black chador; other women were required to wear the hijab. The state also prescribed the manteu, a long and very loose overcoat, a large scarf (usually in dark colors like black, gray, and

navy) that covers the hair and neck, and loose pants. Women who wore makeup, showed strands of their hair or showed a modern aesthetic of the body were considered to be violating the law. Several sports were banned because they exposed the body. Female vigilantes would monitor the dress of other women and were given the authority to drag anyone who was not following the required dress code to the Amre Be Maroof va Nahi az Monkar office of the Center for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, where the arrested women might be lashed or jailed;<sup>10</sup> 40,000 female teachers were dismissed or resigned because of these restrictions.<sup>11</sup> Alcohol was punished by public whipping. The Islamist state imposed and prescribed specific hairstyles and dress codes for men as well; the Ministry of Culture issued a list of appropriate hairstyles for men.<sup>12</sup> Young men were also arrested for violating these laws and taken to the offices of the Center for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice where their hair was cut or they were jailed. Thick beards became signs of piety and loyalty to the Islamist state.<sup>13</sup> Almost every official person had to meet these criteria in order to keep his job or to be promoted. Moreover, using excessive hair gel and/or growing goatees were considered to signify a "lack of virtue."

Disciplinary power was emphasized more than biopower after the Iranian regime took control in 1979. Under the new regime, citizens found themselves under the constant gaze of the Islamist state. The state strongly encouraged participation in Friday prayers, mourning during the month of Muharram and fasting during the month of Ramadan. Issues that before were considered personal such as ablution, fasting and daily prayers suddenly became legal requirements which were sometimes enforced.<sup>14</sup> The morality police and Basij were given the right to spy on the general population in order to enforce new regulations. If people refused to follow the new laws, they were jailed, beaten, tortured or executed. The state encouraged polygamy, reproduction, temporary marriages and motherhood.<sup>15</sup> The testimony of a woman in court became worth half that of a man. A woman could inherit half of the share of her brothers and would need her husband's permission to leave the country or to work.

In order to manage and administrate individuals, disciplinary power

4 Neve Gordon, *Israeli Occupation* (University of California Press, 2008), 13.

5 Neve Gordon, "On Power and Visibility: An Arendtian Corrective of Foucault," *Human Studies* 25, no. 2 (2002): 125-145.

6 Foucault, *History of Sexuality*.

7 Gordon, *Israeli Occupation*, 16.

8 Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 140.

9 Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1.

10 Janet Afary, *Sexual Politics in Modern Iran* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

11 Ibid., 279.

12 "Iran issues list of acceptable haircuts for men," BBC World, July 6, 2010, [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/news/2010/07/100706\\_iran\\_hair\\_nh\\_sl.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/news/2010/07/100706_iran_hair_nh_sl.shtml) (accessed August 1, 2010).

13 Nasser Karimi, "Culturally appropriate haircuts guidelines issued," Sunday Times, July 7, 2010, <http://www.timeslive.co.za/world/article538476.ece/Iran--Culturally-appropriate-haircuts-guidelines-issued> (accessed August 1, 2010).

14 Afary, *Sexual Politics*, 175-9.

15 Ibid., 182-203.

also utilizes statistical and scientific methods of surveillance, to intervene in birth rates, the distribution of labor with regard to age, gender, unemployment age and so on.<sup>16</sup> The Islamist state attempted to exercise this power by allocating or preventing specific jobs from being taken by women. For instance, women were prohibited from serving as judges.<sup>17</sup> Males and females were also segregated, sometimes partially in places such as movie theaters, parks, and restaurants. In other places such as buses, where women sat in the back and men in front, the segregation was more absolute. Mixed schools and beaches were also banned. Another form of disciplinary power was control over citizenship. According to Article 976 of Iran's Civil Code, citizenship was granted to children whose fathers were Iranian. If the mother is an Iranian citizen and the father is not, the children were not granted Iranian citizenship. In other words, women cannot pass their citizenship on to anyone.<sup>18</sup>

### Sovereign Power

The third form of control is through sovereign power: imposing a legal system and rule of law to legitimize the exercise of the previous forms of power, then enforcing or suspending it by the use of the military. Unlike disciplinary power, sovereign power is top-down. It can also be enforced via judicial or executive institutions. It is utilized when a member of society breaches Islamic Law or the regimes' law.<sup>19</sup> Deployment of sovereign power was emphasized more than the other two types of powers following the revolution. After the consolidation of cleric rule, disciplinary and biopower were ingrained more deeply into the system.

After the Islamist party took control, they set up a new hierarchical order. This can be identified as an example of the application of this type of power. They introduced Jurisprudent Leadership (Vilayat-e Faqih), which gave absolute and divine power to the Supreme Leader (Vali), whose legitimacy lies in his supposedly unmatched knowledge of Islam and his piety. Article 56 of the constitution states that [Divine Right of Sovereignty]:

Absolute sovereignty over the world and man belongs to God, and it is He

Who has made man master of his own social destiny. No one can deprive man of this divine right, nor subordinate it to the vested interests of a particular individual or group. The people are to exercise this divine right in the manner specified in the following articles.<sup>20</sup>

Article 57 [Separation of Powers] states:

The powers of government in the Islamist Republic are vested in the legislature, the judiciary, and the executive powers, functioning under the supervision of the absolute religious Leader and the Leadership of the Ummah, in accordance with the forthcoming articles of this Constitution. These powers are independent of each other.<sup>21</sup>

This claims that the Supreme Leader has the power to enact any law, eliminate or suspend any existing law, or make any changes in the judicial, legislative or executive laws when he feels is necessary to defend Islam and/or the Islamist state. This gives the sovereign power the most powerful means to suppress any protest or opposition group which is viewed as anti-Islamist.

Furthermore, this power became more instrumental when every article in the constitution became subject to Article 4:

All civil, penal, financial, economic, administrative, cultural, military, political, and other laws and regulations must be based on Islamist criteria. This principle applies absolutely and generally to all articles of the Constitution as well as to all other laws and regulations, and the wise persons of the Guardian Council are judges in this matter.<sup>22</sup>

This law gave the Islamist state the sovereign power and institutional mechanisms to implement and ensure compliance with Islam, as defined by the ruling clerics. Since the Islamist Republic of Iran has taken power, Iran's state judiciary institutions have effectively paralyzed any reform movements by shutting down hundreds of so-called "anti-Islamist" publications.<sup>23</sup> According to a United Nations report, since 2002 eighteen newspapers have been banned by a

16 Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 242-7.

17 Afary, *Sexual Politics*, 279.

18 Fred B. Rothman & Company, *The Civil Code of the Islamist Republic of Iran* (December 1994)

19 Carl Schmit, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); see also Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, ed., Colin Gordon (New York: Vintage, 1980).

20 "Iranian constitution," <http://www.iranonline.com/iran/iran-info/government/constitution.html> (accessed March 1, 2011).

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

23 Ari Friedman and Maxine Kaye, "Human Rights in Iran," American Jewish Committee, 2007.

court that claimed that they are against Islamist principles.<sup>24</sup> These actions were legitimized by the government because of the enforcement of Article 24 which states: “Publications and the press have freedom of expression, except when it is detrimental to the fundamental principles of Islam or the rights of the public. The details of this exception will be specified by law.”<sup>25</sup>

Another example is the restriction of blogging and the Internet by the youth, who claimed that print media would no longer allow freedom of speech. The Persian language became the fourth most frequently used language for sustaining online journals.<sup>26</sup> Blogging provided a space for people to bypass strict state censorship in order to write freely. When the government noticed this threat to their power in 2004, the head of judiciary announced a new law expressly restricting “cyber crimes.”<sup>27</sup> The law states, “Anyone propagating against the regime, acting against national security, disturbing the public mind and insulting religious sanctities through computer systems or telecommunications would be punished.”<sup>28</sup> This law, like Article 4 of the Constitution, subjects all kinds of new technology usage to punishment if they are detrimental to Islam and the regime. Through this law, freedom of speech could be controlled and curtailed in cyberspace as well. In 2004, several Internet journalists and bloggers were arrested and imprisoned. They were the first bloggers in the world to be imprisoned for the content of their blogs.<sup>29</sup> The government took direct action to crack down on the bloggers through accusations such as having sex or engaging in adultery via the Internet. Also, television media was no longer allowed to show anything that contradicts Islamist principles. Many television networks such as the Tehran bureau of Al Jazeera were shut down.<sup>30</sup>

The new social order enforced by this religious movement incorporates modern technology into its state apparatus and sovereign power.<sup>31</sup> After obtaining power, the Islamic Republic of Iran did not abolish and eliminate all the previous apparatuses. In the new social order they utilized modern institutions that were established by the previous regime and continued the literacy and health campaigns of the previous Pahlavi period.<sup>32</sup> They adopted the nation-state system and utilized the constitution, although this was revised significantly. Not

only did they utilize previous military organizations and structures, they institutionalized two other military organizations in order to consolidate their power and exert surveillance and repression over the population. These new vigilant organizations were the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (Pasdarans) and the Besij (People’s Militia). They were equipped with modern weapons for an array of sophisticated activities. They cooperated with the secret police to eliminate dissident groups and brutally suppress opposition parties.

All of the aforementioned three modes of power are significant in the sense that they do not only concern religious, governmental and financial practices but also attempt to regulate individual behavior. The Islamists’ form of governance in Iran and the new social order are shaped by the configuration of the three modes of power. Michel Foucault, in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* as well as in the courses given at the College de France in 1976, emphasizes the transformation in exercising one mode of power to another.<sup>33</sup> Different forms of governance in Iran will put more emphasis on one of these modes of power over another. Moreover, this emphasis might also change based on the situation and circumstances. For instance, one month before an election, sovereign power is emphasized less than other modes of power in order to encourage people to vote and thus increase the voting rate. During this time, young boys and girls are less likely to be arrested for their hairstyles or minor violations of the dress code. People listening to music in their cars are also less likely to be stopped during election times.

On the other hand, the Islamist regime took sovereign power to an unprecedented level during some events such as the controversial presidential election of 2009. All kinds of rallies were banned, there were a series of SMS blackouts and Internet disruptions and cyber-strikes were frequent. The police, the Revolutionary Guard, the army and the Besij were permitted to utilize any measures to stop the rallies. Protesters were beaten, jailed and shot by the riot police. Besij militiamen and soldiers employed various apparatuses such as rifles, tear gas and water cannons.<sup>34</sup>

### “Modes of Control:” Contradictions, Interactions and Excesses

Various forms of power are not coherent; they can counteract one another, over-

24 Ibid.  
 25 “Iranian Constitution.”  
 26 Alavi Nasrin, *We Are Iran* (Soft Skull Press, 2005), 2.  
 27 Ibid.  
 28 Ibid., 4.  
 29 Ibid., 5.  
 30 Fridman and Kaye, “Human Rights.”  
 31 Juergensmeyer, *Global Rebellion*, 178.  
 32 Afary, *Sexual Politics*, 34.

33 Foucault, *History of Sexuality*.  
 34 “Violence on the streets of Tehran as police beat back protesters,” *The Guardian*, June 20, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jun/20/iran-protest-elections-supreme-leader> (accessed March 1, 2011).

reach or breakdown. They also create spaces for resistance and counter-hegemonic prospects.<sup>35</sup> The nature of the Islamist state and the social order in Iran is not only characterized by the shift of emphasis on one mode of power over another but also by the contradictions, excesses and interactions engendered by mechanisms, practices and apparatuses of control. These contradictions modify the Islamist states' policies, the configuration of the modes of power as well as the new social order. The excesses and the interactions created by the controlling apparatuses shape Iran's policy choices as well as the ordinary people's resistance. Excesses refer to the effects that are not part of the initial objective of the means of control.<sup>36</sup> For instance, utilizing sovereign power to impose a dress code may lead to homogenization, which makes management of populations easier. However, it also produces antagonism towards the state.

When viewed through the prism of the (largely western) social movement theory, many analysts have concluded that there is no such thing as resistance or movement in Iran produced by the interactions of Foucauldian modes of power.<sup>37</sup> However, it is essential to note that the character of this resistance in Iran is unique because of the political and ideological structure of the new social order. Because the government employs a repressive apparatus, people cannot organize coordinated, conscious and freely-expressed social movements as do those in democratic countries. There are three main characteristics of the ordinary people's resistance, which is created by the interactions, contradictions and excesses between the modes of control: first, a tendency to be action-oriented and quiet. Their demands are made on an individual basis as opposed to ideologically driven, audible and in unified groups. Second, in this kind of resistance, people, despite government sanctions, practice their claims directly rather than being organized and mobilized under leaders to put pressure on authorities. Third, the resistance takes place during ordinary practices of everyday life rather than through getting involved in extraordinary deeds of mobilization, such as attending meetings, lobbying, petitioning and so on.<sup>38</sup> For instance, women strive to play sports, go to college, do "men's work," work in public or choose their own marriage partners. Young people struggle to wear what they like and listen to the music they wish.<sup>39</sup>

35 Timothy Mitchell, "The limits of the state: Beyond statist approaches and their critics," *American Political Science Review* 85, no. 1 (1991): 77–96.

36 Gordon, "Power and Visibility."

37 Asef Bayat, *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010).

38 *Ibid.*, 20.

39 *Ibid.*, 19–20.

Ordinary resistance produced by the new social order can be analyzed and viewed through what is called "quiet encroachment." Asef Bayat defines "quiet encroachment" as "the silent, protracted, but pervasive advancement of the ordinary people on the propertied, powerful, or the public, in order to survive and improve their lives."<sup>40</sup> It can lead to the collective action of non-collective actors. It is without leadership, ideology or structured organization. The power of this type of resistance rests on the "power of big numbers."<sup>41</sup>

This resistance, which can be seen in the ordinary activities of day-to-day life, challenges the sovereignty of the state and bring about sociopolitical change to religion and government, albeit slow. The reaction of each person to the various modes of power has created a collective resistance of non-collective actors. This is a logical collective reaction of single individuals within a group when they are confronted by the same threat. Every individual, in spite of all odds, discovers new spaces within which he or she can make herself realized, heard, felt and seen.<sup>42</sup> This resistance is not organized. However, all those resisting can identify the collective position through, for example, young people recognizing similar hairstyles, fashions and social tastes in the streets, shopping malls and universities. The contradictions among the modes of power and the produced resistance have managed to force the government to adjust its policies even, however slow the adjustment may be. Those excesses and interactions have created a collective reaction by non-collective actors. Furthermore, since the government could not and does not have the capacity to imprison, torture or lash millions of people, and since it desires to maintain its power, it has been forced to adjust its policies.

Young people in their 20s and 30s are increasingly using their bodies to speak a language of resistance: to lobby for a new type of regime. For instance, at the beginning of the revolution, women could not even show a strand of their hair and they were supposed to wear full scarf. Each woman pushed her scarf back as far as she could as a symbol of resistance. After thirty years, the ordinary people have forced the state to accept half-covered hair and tight jeans as norms. Furthermore, at the beginning of the Islamist state, any woman who did not wear a manteu according to state principles (wide and long) was in danger of being arrested. Currently, wearing colorful, tight and short manteu has become the norm. When the ordinary people decide to stand against the government by using their bodies or what Pardis Mahdavi calls "revolutionary behavior," the

40 *Ibid.*

41 *Ibid.*, 20.

42 Bayat, *Life as Politics*.

state no longer has a defined platform on which to stand. It is very challenging for the government to arrest millions of young people who defy the government individually. The interactions, contradictions and excesses within these modes of power have resulted in the creation of antagonism and resistance which is characterized as the collective action of millions of non-collective actors, which is conducted during ordinary, daily practices that have forced the state to adjust.

### Conclusion

Religious movements and activism of this era of globalization criticize the existing social order and claim to bear a superior social structure. In order to explore this claim, the Islamist state of Iran was analyzed by drawing on Foucauldian fundamental principles of modes of control. The Islamist movement of Iran came to power thirty years ago and it has implemented its prescribed social order. The Islamist state of Iran has shown to be exerting the three modes of power, to an unprecedented level, in order to create the current social order and better incorporate the individuals and population into its structure.

Disciplinary power is utilized in order to maintain surveillance and control over individual behavior and comportments. Biopower is employed to control the group rather than individuals through regulatory institutions. Sovereign power is practiced through the imposition of a legal system which is enforced or suspended by military institutions. Furthermore, not only has the Islamist state not rejected modern technology but also it has incorporated it into its sovereign power. However, various forms of power are not coherent. They can counteract one another, overreach or breakdown, and they create spaces for resistance and counter-hegemonic prospects. The nature of the Islamist state and the social order in Iran is not only characterized by the shift of emphasis on one mode of power over another but also by the contradictions, excesses and interactions engendered by mechanisms, practices and apparatuses of control.

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## REVIEWS

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### **DISASTERS AND DEVELOPMENT: SAME MISTAKES ALL OVER AGAIN?**

*Lizette Serna*

### **THE LAND OF THE RISING INSTITUTIONS: HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM AS AN EXPLANATION OF THE RISE AND FALL OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF JAPAN**

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