

A Brief History of Iran 1925 – 1988

(source - <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14542438>)

1925

December

- The Qajar Emperor is overthrown by Reza Kahn with support from the British.

1926

April

- Reza Kahn is crowned Reza Shah Pahlavi. Mohammad Reza, the Shah's eldest son, is proclaimed Crown Prince.

1935

Formerly known as Persia, Iran is adopted as the country's official name.

1941

The Shah's pro-Axis allegiance in World War II leads to the Anglo-Russian occupation of Iran and the deposition of the Shah in favor of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

1963

January

- The Shah embarks on a campaign to modernize and westernize the country. He launches the "White Revolution," a reform that led to
 - Women's suffrage
 - Growing middle class
 - Literacy programs in rural areas
 - Free lunch to children in school
 - University students funded to study abroad
 - Financial support for technology and arts/culture
- The conservative Islamic population, led by Islamic fundamentalist Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, disapproved of the Shah's new ways of life. They believed he had become a "western puppet" who had alienated the clergy. The Shah's rule also caused
 - Brutality and oppression
 - A one-party system
 - Over-centralized royal power structure
 - The changing of the Islamic calendar to an Imperial calendar
 - The unintended consequence of a large population of educated unemployed
 - Untrained army
 - Large unnecessary spending

1978

September

- The Shah's authoritarian rule leads to riots, strikes and mass demonstrations. Martial law is imposed. Any hope for compromise is extinguished when security forces opened fire on demonstrators, killing an estimated 84 people. This day is known as "Black Friday."

1979

January

- The Shah and his family are forced into exile.

February

- Following 14 years of exile, Khomeini returns to Iran.

March

- 98% vote for replacing the monarchy with an Islamic government. 3,000 political prisoners are released.

April

- The Islamic Republic of Iran is proclaimed following the referendum. Khomeini appoints himself as supreme leader and says that disobedience against him or the prime minister is a “revolt against God.”

November

- Islamic militants, many of them students, take 52 Americans hostage at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. They demand that the Shah, who was welcomed to the United States for medical treatment, return to Iran for trial and execution.

Critics believe that Khomeini went back on his word to advise the country rather than rule it. Under his rule

- Women were required to cover their hair, and men were not allowed to wear shorts.
- Alcoholic drinks, most Western movies, the practice of men and women swimming or sunbathing together were banned.
- The broadcasting of any music other than martial or religious on Iranian radio and television was banned.
- The Iranian educational curriculum was Islamized at all levels.

1980

July

- The Shah dies of cancer in Egypt.

September

- The Iran-Iraq war begins and lasts for eight years. Poverty increases 45% and a large population of educated and skilled Iranian people emigrate to other countries.

1981

January

- The American hostages are released after 444 days in captivity.

1988

Iran and Iraq reach a ceasefire agreement following U.N. negotiations in Geneva.

