

A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran

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Mon, January 26
2:00-3:30pm
402 Barrows Hall

Kevan Harris

The Martyrs Welfare State: Politics and social policy in post-revolutionary Iran



Is social policy a mechanism of state control and bargaining, or does it empower social actors and give force to new demands? Are commodity-exporting states in the global South exempt from the politics of making and unmaking social welfare compacts? Using the case of post-revolutionary Iran, an oil-fueled state has repeatedly faced powerful mobilization from below, I argue that examining the politics of distribution can be both corrective and complement to the politics of production. Iran's government managed to transform

society after the 1979 revolution through a "martyrs welfare state." Borne out of the longest conventional

war of the 20th century — the Iran-Iraq War — and its aftermath, this warfare-welfare system targeted segments of the population formerly excluded from the pre-revolutionary social compact. Newly assembled social policy organizations created political bases from which to recruit new state cadres and supporters. This process of welfare making, however, also enlarged and empowered social constituencies with new demands. In response, the Islamic Republic commenced a postwar effort to deliver the material goods promised during the period of revolutionary élan and postponed during wartime sacrifice. The martyrs welfare state, consequently, was retooled into a developmental state. Yet this push, familiar in many middle-income countries, generated expectations among the population for upward mobility, improved livelihoods, and an alternative cultural-political order. The electoral surprises, street protests, and social vibrancy witnessed in Iran since the 1990s are not the consequence of an ossified, backward-

of various and responses by newly



This research draws on ethnographic work from 2008-11 in

primary sources, structured interviews, and observation during sixteen months of field-several Iranian provinces. This talk will spotlight two key sites of welfare politics amidst Iran's complex welfare system: rural health clinics and higher education.

awakened civil society set against an looking state. Instead, they are an outcome conflicting state-building efforts and empowered social classes.



Kevan Harris (Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University) is a postdoctoral research associate at Department for Near Eastern Studies and the acting Associate Director of the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies at Princeton University. He will begin a position as assistant professor of sociology at UCLA in Fall 2015.

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system. Obama's efforts to avoid an Iran war may therefore have been particularly compelling to many lawmakers, including those, who deeply regretted their. This empirically rich study draws on Harris' extensive fieldwork in Iran and uses welfare policy as a prism through which to view the country's. This focus on the social policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran opens a new line of inquiry into the study of welfare states in countries where. For decades, political observers and pundits have characterized the Islamic Republic of Iran as an ideologically rigid state on the verge of collapse, exclusively. For decades, political observers and pundits have characterized the Islamic Republic of Iran as an ideologically rigid state on the verge of collapse, exclusive. Kevan Harris is the author of *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran* (University of California Press,). Harris is assistant. *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran*. Oakland, CA: All the Sepah's Men: Iran's Revolutionary Guards in Theory and Practice. Pp. The Paperback of the *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran* by Kevan Harris at Barnes & Noble. FREE Shipping on \$25 or. As the Trump administration formulates a new policy toward Iran, it is in depth in a new book entitled *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran*. I'm a historical sociologist studying development and social change in the global South. My first book, *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran*. Citation: H-Net Book Channel. New Book - *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran*. The H-Net Book Channel. On this week's POMEPS Podcast, Marc Lynch speaks with Kevan Harris about his new book, *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare*. *Precarity, Politics, and Social Protection Before and Beyond the Neoliberal Era*" (with *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran* (University of. "This impressive book pushes Iranian studies from the cloisters of area studies to the wider precincts of global political economy." --Charles Kurzman, author of. *The Rise of the Subcontractor State: Politics of Pseudo-Privatization in the Islamic Republic of Iran* *A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran*. In *A Social Revolution*, Kevan Harris convincingly demonstrates how they are of Iran opens a new line of inquiry into the study of welfare states in countries.

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