

The descriptions of the posters below are provided by Hamid Dabashi, Ph.D., Columbia University. They are included in *In Search of Lost Causes: Fragmented Allegories of an Iranian Revolution*, also by Hamid Dabashi, published by the Black Mountain Press. <http://www.theblackmountainpress.com/catalogue.html>  
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1. All that matters today is the world that they represented and the world they wished to project. Here is one poignant poster celebrating the freedom of expression, all promised and connected to the gun and the pen and the sword from which the red rose of freedom will one day flourish.



2. Here is the People's Mujahedin of Iran/Mojahedin-e-Khalq (MEK), celebrating its founding fathers. That the MEK later degenerated into a cult no longer matters now. This is from Tabriz, and from their dead bodies, freedom rises like a tree that looks like a gun, but flowers like a rose.



3. This is a picture of Khosrow Golsorkhi, yet another beloved revolutionary, executed along with his comrades just a few years before the revolution. His face subsequently became a towering icon of revolutionary commitment.



4. Here is Majid Sharif Vaghefi, a founding figure of the MEK and other revolutionaries. One must by all means avoid nostalgia and allow these posters to exude the hope, the heroism, the determination, and the commitment they promised at the time, and wonder in what way they still matter.



5. Before you can fix your lenses entirely on any ideological affiliations, suddenly you see a picture of Gholamreza Takhti (1930-1968), a national hero who defies all and every political affiliation. He was a world wrestling champion, the beloved of an entire nation, over and above all ideological affinities. His subsequent suicide was subject of much conspiratorial speculation.



6. Our eyes glide over to Hamid Ashraf (1946-1976), a founding figure of Cherek-ha-ye Fada'i Khalq Iran/The Iranian People's Fada'i Guerrillas, the transmutation of one kind of hero into another. Soon after his death, Ashraf's face became iconic to a generation of revolutionary militants.



7. This poster celebrates yet another MEK revolutionary hero martyred for the cause. Young and hopeful and gallant, young men and women dream of ideals too distant to materialize, too immediate to ignore. These figures are now slowly being forgotten, except for the official roster of the MEK, the historians, and the academics—the very ink with which histories are written and forgotten, before they blossom back in other causes.



8. This one is quite rare—a painting attributed to Bizhan Jazani (1938-1975), called “Zendege/Life,” dated 1350/1971 in Eshratabad Prison. We see a colorful depiction of two gazelles and their children. Bizhan Jazani was a valiant revolutionary activist, a committed Marxist, who was executed by the Shah's security forces when he became a legendary and iconic figure in the pantheon of Iranian revolutionaries.





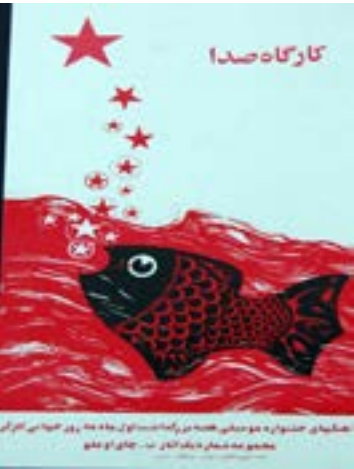
9. Here is another commemoration of the founding figures of MEK against the backdrop of the newspaper that had announced their execution. In the years leading to the 1977–1979 revolution, the MEK was among the leading guerrilla organizations engaged in armed struggle against the Shah's regime. Their subsequent degeneration into a cult in cahoots with the US Neocons should not detract from their earlier ideals and aspirations.



10. This poster commemorates the death of Mehrnoush Ebrahimi, a Fada'i-ye Khalq guerrilla, on the occasion of 8 March, International Women's Day. What we see here is how international occasions such as Women's Day inform and enrich the Iranian political scene.



11. Celebration of the freedom of the press during and after the 1979 revolution. Ideals and aspirations of a liberal democracy informed much of the revolutionary iconography of the 1977–1979 uprising, objectives that were instantly crushed by the totalitarian project of the militant Islamists. This poster is also by Kourosh Shishehgaran.



12. Celebration of May Day with music and folklore—commemorating Samad Behrangi and his “Little Black Fish.” Samad Behrangi (1939–1968) was a dedicated teacher, folklorist, and storyteller, whose children's story “Little Black Fish” (1967) became an overnight sensation and was read as an allegory of steadfast revolutionary determination. He died when he drowned in a river in northern Iran. The politically agitated imaginations of his admirers refused to accept that fact and made tall tales of his assassination by the Shah's secret police.



17. Celebrating Lenin. The figure of Vladimir Lenin was categorically iconic for generations of revolutionary activists who looked up to him as the model of a single-minded determination to bring down a tyrannical regime and establish a globalized cause for socialism.



18. Here is another painting by Bizhan Jazani called “Khaneh-ye Ma/ Our Home” and dated 1348/1969 in Qom Prison. The inclusion of these paintings in this collection of revolutionary posters endears the young and towering figure of Bizhan Jazani as the iconic template of a new aesthetic imagination.



19. A work of Isma'il Shishehgaran for “Black Friday”—a turning point in the course of the 1977–1979 revolution, when the Shah's army opened fire on demonstrators on Friday, 8 September 1978 (17 Shahrivar 1357 in the Iranian calendar).



20. This poster encourages veiling by women as battle armor of the revolution. It is one of the earliest records of the attempt by militant Islamists to project a veiled revolutionary figure as the new model of the post-revolutionary Iran. This eventually led to the imposition of mandatory veiling in Iran, a violent measure that to this day is steadfastly resisted by those among women who do not wish to wear the veil.



13. Samad Behrangi's poster. Figures like Behrangi became iconic almost overnight, and their physiognomy exuded a certain sense of revolutionary iconography best captured in this poster.



14. Iranian students in Stockholm (Sweden) celebrating revolutionary worker Houshang Targol—a typical example of political activism in Europe, where Iranian students were the major source of revolutionary activism against the Shah's regime, actively contesting the propaganda machinery of the Pahlavi state.



15. “Long Live the Struggle of Black People for Emancipation!” Iranian students in New York expressing solidarity with the Civil Rights Movement. Here is a perfect example of how Iranian students' concern with the revolutionary cause of their homeland had given them a far reaching and embracing perspective on not just global events, but with major social issues in their host countries. Most of these posters are not signed by the artist. But through personal contacts I know that this the work of my own dear friend Nikzad Nodjourni, who is now a prominent artist based in New York.



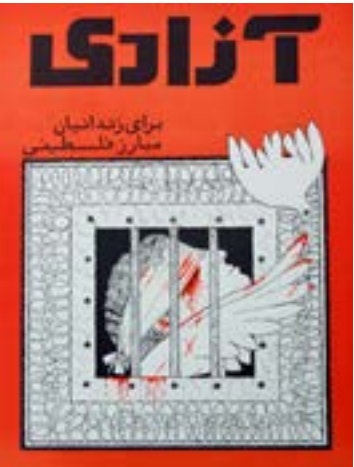
16. Here is a poster expressing solidarity with the Kurdish uprising, through a celebration of Molla Avareh, a Kurdish poet. Support for the democratic aspirations of racialized minorities like the Kurds, the Baluchs, the Azaris and the Arabs in Iran was a solid component of revolutionary agenda in this era. This poster is also the work of Nikzad Nodjourni.



21. A poster celebrating the Mojahe-din-e Khalq revolutionaries having endured torture and executions to fortify their struggle for freedom.



22. Here is a poster celebrating Mas'ud Ahmadzadeh—a founding figure of the Iranian Cherek-ha-ye Fada'i-e Khalq/The People's Fada'is Guerillas.



23. A poster to express solidarity with Palestinian political prisoners. We see a number of quite prominent pro-Palestinian posters in this collection, a clear sign of the centrality of the Palestinian cause to the Iranian revolutionary project in the 1960's and 1970's. Almost all these posters are by militant Marxist organizations, a fact that was later categorically appropriated by the militant Islamists for their own post-revolutionary political purposes. This is not to suggest that militant Islamists were not pro-Palestinians. They were. All revolutionary forces were decidedly and purposefully pro-Palestinian. But in the aftermath of the murderous crackdown of militant Marxists by the victorious Islamists, these posters have become a critical historical evidence.



24. On the occasion of May Day, this poster turns the revolutionary anger against the US. At this point, the US is seen as the central location of global capitalism.





یار دهم ارشد است (اول عاده)  
عید چه ای عزیز  
را هر چه داشت و هر روز از نسیم

فرزبان ایران میماند

[illegible]

کازگو، خلقمیزه سن ابدی سوماستان!  
 بهشت چو باغی که در آن جانی از آن نمانده بود



جیریک مہادی خان  
شہید شہرین فاضلہ کلاں عباسی

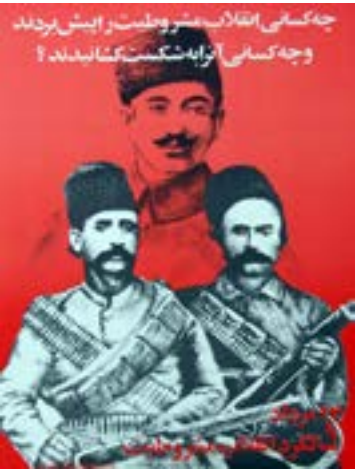


40. This is an undated and unsigned picture of an unidentified revolutionary figure, which sums up the iconography of a male revolutionary icon.





41. Anjoman-e Hojjiatiyeh posters with Shamshir-e Mehdi to put an end to historical darkness and deliver humanity at large.



42. Cherik-ha-ye Fada'i-e Khalq celebrate the anniversary of the constitutional revolution and ask the poignant question of who brought it to success and who was responsible for its defeat.



43. Iranian Student Association calls for unity and struggle until victory.



44. Association of Democratic Students celebrates Keramatollah Daneshian, Houshang Tizabi, and Khosrow Golsorkhi's revolutionary legacies.



49. A picture of two young Kurds with their guns and the promise of victory for Iranian masses.



50. The English translation of a poem by Marziyeh Ahmadi Oskooi, a member of the Mojahedin Khalq Organization who was killed in an armed confrontation with the Pahlavi security forces in 1974.



51. The Iranian Student Association celebrates 8 March—International Women's Day.



52. A poster celebrating the heroic resistance of Iranian people to tyranny. The poster reflects a clear influence from Picasso's “Guernica” (1937). The inclusion of the figures of women (veiled and unveiled), the peasantry, and the working class reflects the universal claims of the revolutionary cause.



45. Another painting attributed to Bi-zhan Jazani, the revolutionary activist and committed Marxist executed by the Shah's security forces. Dated Mordad 1349/July 1970, and reportedly done in prison in Qom. The painting is called “Asir/Prisoner.”



46. A work of Kourosh Shishegaran, a prominent graphic artist, dated Bahman 1357/February 1978, marking the past, present, and perhaps the potential future of Imperialism.



47. Poster celebrating the fourth anniversary of the martyrdom of Fatemeh Amini, a woman revolutionary activist.



48. The Cherik-ha-ye Fada'i Khalq celebrate May Day and the cause of laborers.



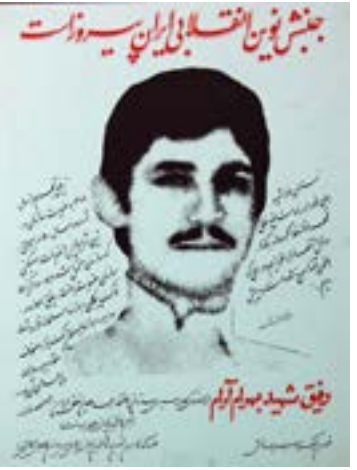
53. Celebrating the heroic Kurdish people's struggle for liberty. Support for the democratic aspirations of racialized minorities like the Kurds was a solid component of the Iranian Revolution.



54. Mazyar Publishing House—a piece by Zia'oddin Javid—marking the execution of Khosrow Golsorkhi, a beloved revolutionary who, along with his comrades, was executed just a few years before the revolution.



55. Poster celebrating the Tabriz uprising in Bahman 1356/February 1978, prepared by the Iranians Student Association.



56. This poster is dated Farvardin 1356/March 1977, and was prepared by the Iranian Student Association in Lamar, Beaumont, Texas. It celebrates the martyred comrade Bahram Aram, a member of the Central Committee of Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization. The poster cites a quotation by Mao as well, celebrating armed struggle.





57. A poster prepared in 14 May 1976 in Baltimore, in support of political prisoners in Iran. The poster was prepared by an organization calling itself, “Joint session of American communities to support political prisoners in Iran.”



58. The poster made of a famous design for the cover of LP Sheyda Ensemble, featuring revolutionary songs.



59. A typical poster celebrating May Day in honor of the working class.



60. A Shi'i celebration of imprisonment and martyrdom for justice.



65. Celebration of MEK guerillas. The Mujahadin-e-Khalq (MEK), former guerrilla movement, has recently been removed from the US State Department's list of terrorist organizations.



66. Marking Black Friday, 8 September 1978 (17 Shahrivar 1357), when the Shah's army fired on demonstrators.



67. Commemorating a massacre of the Kurdish demonstrators on 14 Azar 1357/5 December 1978, during the late Pahlavi period. Iranian Kurds have always been integral to the Iranian revolutionary uprisings, and paid a much heavier price than others.



68. Another pictorial celebration of Black Friday, the 17 Shahrivar massacre, when the Shah's army opened fire on demonstrators.



61. Celebrating Bizhan Jazani, a valiant revolutionary activist and a committed Marxist, who was executed by the Shah's security forces when he became a legendary and iconic figure in the pantheon of Iranian revolutionaries.



62. Shahid Fada'i Hamid Ashraf—signed by the Progressive Students of Mashhad, in Northeastern Iran.



63. Celebrating more martyred comrades of Fada'ian-e Khalq.



64. Another celebration of May Day—arguing that capital is made of the blood and sweat of laborers.



69. A student organization from Ahvaz celebrates the 23 Tir (in 1946), when the Shah's army put down labor unrest.



70. Teachers celebrating the bond between teachers and student—the teacher looks like Samad Behrangi, who was a dedicated teacher, folklorist, and storyteller.



71. A sketch celebrating comrade Hodayun Katira'i, a revolutionary activist who was a member of an organization called Arman-e Khalq.



72. The Progressive Students of Mashhad commemorate the anniversary of the martyrdom of a number of revolutionary leaders belonging to the Cherek-ha-ye Fada'i Khalq.





73. A poster celebrating the legendary teacher, folklorist, and storyteller, Samad Behrangi, with his students continuing his path.



74. Iranian students in Puma, India celebrate Noruz by promising that when Iranians are liberated from Imperialism and reactionary forces, that will be the true New Year.



75. Iranian student members of the Confederation celebrate 8 March, International Women's Day, by declaring that no revolution is complete without the participation of women.



76. Cherek-ha-ye Fada'i Khalq celebrates the eighth anniversary of its foundation in particular solidarity with the Palestinian national liberation movement.



81. Another celebration of Labor Day and the dignity of revolutionary workers affiliated with the oil industry.



82. This poster is signed by the Islamic Republic Party, which means it is from after the success and the immediate violent Islamization of the 1977–1979 revolution, as it celebrates the cause of the peasantry.



83. A poster in celebration of the martyrs of the revolution, paving the way towards God.



84. A poster celebrating three members of the Cherek-ya-ye Fada'i-ye Khalq.



77. The Tudeh Party of Iran celebrates workers and their cause.



78. Celebration of Sattar Khan (1866–1914)—a prominent revolutionary leader of the Constitutional period. The poster was prepared in Tabriz.



79. From Washington DC to Oakland, California, revolutionaries side with a global uprising from the US to Iran and elsewhere. A striking and provocative graphics distinguishes this poster from others.



80. An unnamed revolutionary is celebrated on this poster—invokes the physiognomy of any young revolutionary figure from the 1950's through the 1970's.



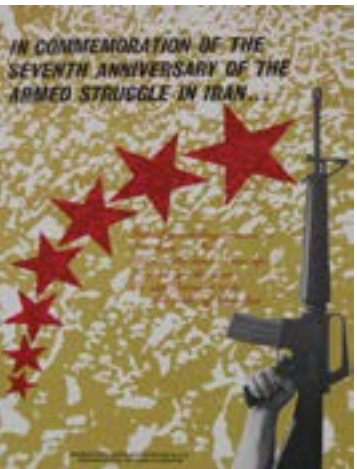
85. An excellent and rare poster in which we see a call for solidarity among all revolutionary organizations, including the two most prominent ones—Cherek-ha-ye Fada'i-ye Khalq and Mojahedin-e Khalq. The poster is signed by students in Washington DC and Baltimore. The poster in effect looks like a hall of fame of revolutionary leaders, public intellectuals, and others.



86. A revolutionary poster signed by Arab and Iranian student organizations in support and solidarity with the Palestinian national liberation movement. The poster is dated January 1977 on the occasion of the twelfth anniversary of armed struggle for the liberation of Palestine.



87. This poster is signed by a student of West Virginia Tech, and celebrates the revolutionary struggles of Hamid Ashraf, a founding member of Cherkha-ye Fada'i-ye Khalq.



88. Another poster co-signed by Iranian and Arab student organizations, in celebration and solidarity with Armed Struggle in Iran.

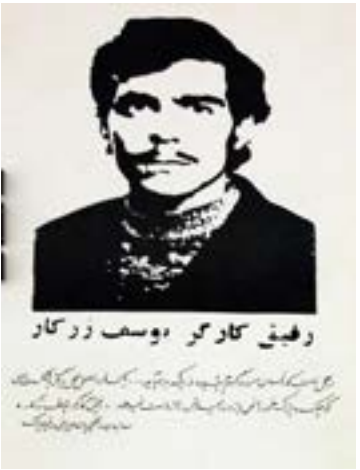




89. A poster celebrating three iconic revolutionary figures: Hamid Ashraf (founding member of Cherkiha-ye Fada'i-ye Khalq), Bizhan Jazani (revolutionary activist and committed Marxist, executed by the Shah's forces), and their comrade Ezzat Gharavi (aka Comrade Mother).



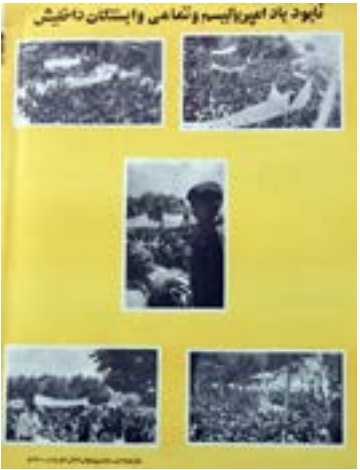
90. Poster signed by Iranian students in New York celebrating Mehdi Reza'i, a founding member of the Sazeman Mojahedin-e Khalq Iran.



91. Iranian students in New York commemorate a revolutionary laborer, comrade Yusuf Zarkar.



92. Iranian students in New York celebrate the life and work of Samad Behrangi, the author of "The Little Black Fish."



97. A poster prepared by the supporters of Cherikha ye Fada'i Khalq in Sanandaj in Kurdistan, Iran. The slogan calls for the destruction of imperialism and its local lackeys.



98. A poster by Isma'il Shishehgaran dated May 1978, illustrating the loss of freedom through the iconography of a dove and olive branch, a universal symbol of peace.



99. A Poster from Mojahedin supporters in Mashhad, declaring that land belongs to those who cultivate it, namely against the landed gentry.



100. A poster by Cherik-ha ye Fada'i Khalq, denouncing Shah's army, as being chiefly responsible for the CIA-sponsored coup of 1953.



93. Iranian students in New York celebrate the life of national hero, world champion wrestler, Gholamreza Takhti—a man who defies all political affiliation, beloved across ideological affinities.



94. Another poster of Gholamreza Takhti, beloved national hero and international wrestling champion.



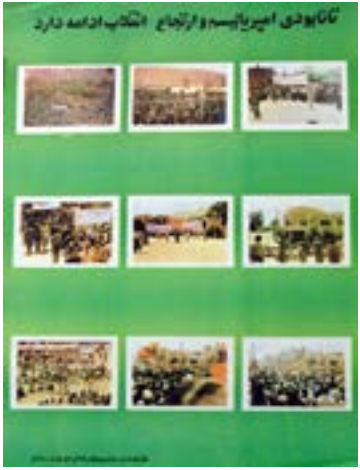
95. Poster dated October 1978, commemorating the execution of revolutionary leaders.



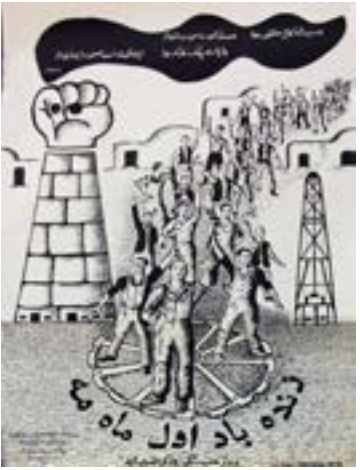
96. A poster celebrating the eighth anniversary of the Shiahkal uprising. The poster is in Persian, English, and German, so it may have been produced in Germany.



101. Another poster by Kourosh Shishegaran dated May 1979, depicting militarism with a Persian influence.



102. Another poster from the supporters of Cherik-ha-ye Fada'i Khalq in Sanandaj in Kurdistan, calling for revolution until the defeat of imperialism and reactionary forces.



103. Quoting Abolqasem Lahuti (1987–1957), a revolutionary poet, this poster celebrates May Day 1974. It was prepared by Iranian students in Northern California.



104. A Poster prepared by Sazeman Peykar dar Rah-e Azadi Tabagheh Kargar/The Organization for Struggle for the Liberation of Labor Class, celebrating a Kurdish revolutionary Comrade Najm al-Din Sheikh, and citing the Vietnamese communist revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969).





105. The Tudeh Party prepared this poster, influenced by Soviet iconography, which celebrates May Day and the workers' cause.



106. A Poster by Kourosh Shisheh-garan commemorating Mohammad Mosaddegh and dated Bahman 1357/ February 1979, the year of the revolution.



107. A poster celebrating Molla Avareh, a Kurdish revolutionary poet, expressing solidarity with the Kurdish uprising. Support for the democratic aspirations of racialized minorities like the Kurds, the Baluchs, the Azaris and the Arabs in Iran was a solid component of revolutionary agenda in this era. This poster is the work of Nikzad Nodjoumi.



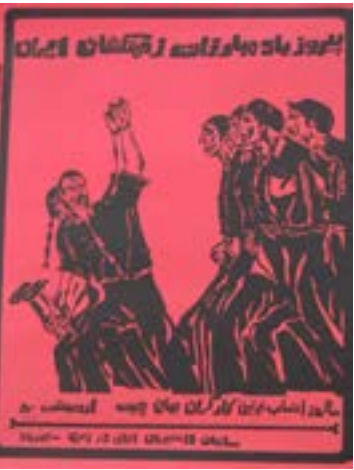
108. A poster celebrating the Palestinian Fatah organization, in solidarity with the Palestinian national liberation movement.



113. A poster celebrating the heroic figure of Ayatollah Taleqani (1911–1979), a leading Muslim revolutionary, in the anniversary of his passing.



114. Iranian supporters of Al-Fatah express their solidarity with the Palestinian national liberation movement.



115. Iranian students in Urbana express their solidarity with the workers of Iran on the occasion of labor strike in a textile-manufacturing factory, in April 1971.



116. Celebrating the heroes of the Constitutional Revolution of 1906–1911: Sattar Khan, Sheykh Mohammad Kheyabani, Heydar Khan Amu Oghli, Mirza Kuchak Khan, Colonel Mohammad Taghi Khan Pesyan.



109. Dated May 1979, this poster represents the revolutionary momentum of the 1977–1979, in terms entirely alien to its subsequent radical Islamization.



110. A poster prepared by Iranian students in Northern California (St. Jose) calls for the unification of all nations in their struggle against both US and Soviet imperialism.



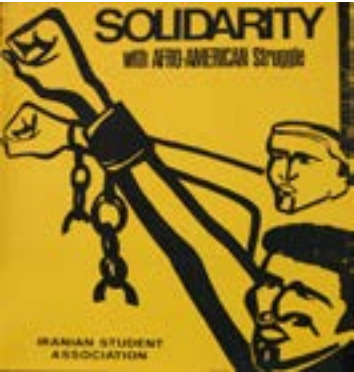
111. Iranian Students Association in the US calls for the release of political prisoners in their homeland.



112. Iranian students call for struggle against dictatorship, against the Pahlavi regime, and the victory of the wretched the earth.



117. An Iranian Students Association in the US calls for solidarity among the many Iranian student movements.



118. Iranian students express their solidarity with the Civil Rights Movement of African-Americans in the US.



119. Iranian supporters of the Palestinian Fatah express their solidarity with the Palestinian national liberation movement: “Death to Imperialism, death to Zionism, Long Live the Heroic Masses of Palestine!”



120. Muslim Student Association of North America exposes the false modernization of the Pahlavi monarchy by this poster which depicts the less visible parts of their homeland.





121. Citing a verse of the Qur'an, the Muslim Students Association of Canada and the US draws attention to the Black Friday incident—on Friday, 8 September 1978—when the Shah's army opened fire on demonstrators.



122. With pictures of martyred revolutionaries in the background, the poster celebrates the Persian New Year of 1356/March 1977, as the revolution is unfolding in Iran. A handwritten note on the poster suggests the phrase must also be said in English.



123. Another painting by Bizhan Jazani, the revolutionary activist and committed Marxist who was executed by the Shah's security forces when he became a legendary and iconic figure in the pantheon of Iranian revolutionaries. This painting celebrates the armed uprising in Siahkal—it is signed from Eshratbad prison and dated 1350/1971.



124. Signed by the Confederation of Iranian Students, this posters calls for the arrest of the late Shah.



129. A poster celebrating Heydar Khan Amu Oghli, a prominent revolutionary encouraging struggle against capitalism.



130. Bringing the cherished memories of three iconic revolutionaries together to encourage armed struggle against tyranny.



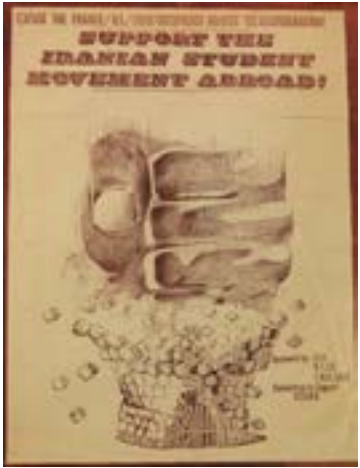
131. Poster celebrating 15 Khordad 1342/June 1963, an uprising led by Ayatollah Khomeini that was instantly crushed by the Shah—a threshold event that would be subsequently remembered, as in this case by the Islamic Republic Party from Mashhad.



132. A poster in solidarity with Cherik-ha-ye Fada'i-ye Khalq celebrating the memory of Samad Behrangi. The picture shows Samad Behrangi and his students, and it is dedicated to Gowhar Morad, the penname of Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi (1936–1985), a prominent playwright.



125. Dated 30 Khordad 1358/June 1979, this poster marks the Muslim Students Association's call to listen to a talk by Sadegh Ghorbzadeh, a prominent revolutionary who was subsequently executed by Khomeini charged for having plotted to overthrow his regime.



126. This poster is asking for support for Iranian students' struggle to oppose tyranny in their homeland.



127. A poster for a famous play by Said Soltanpour (1940–1981), a revolutionary poet and playwright who was subsequently executed by the Islamist regime. “Abbas Agha Kargar Iran National/Abbas Agha the Laborer at Iran National” is the name of the play.



128. A poster celebrating 8 March, International Women's Day, and commemorating the women who fought for a freer government alongside men during the Iranian Revolution.



133. Self-explanatory. The poster reflects the deep and combined influences of Russian and French revolutions. The iconography is so powerful that it evidently needed no caption.



134. Another poster by the Islamic Republic Party promising revolutionary struggle until the defeat of imperialism.



135. A sketch of Samad Behrangi (a beloved teacher, folklorist, and author) and the landscape of his activities.



136. A poster in solidarity with the revolutionary uprising in Oman and larger Persian Gulf area, during the Dhofar Rebellion against the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman, (1962–1976), signed by the Confederation of Iranian Students.





137. Demanding the freedom of political prisoners in Israeli jails.



138. Confederation of Iranian Students is celebrating the Noruz of 1352/March 1973, promising to continue with their struggles until victory.



139. Confederation of Iranian Students in the US calls for its 25th Congress, celebrating the unity of all evolutionary forces in New York, 17–21 August, but no year is given (probably mid 1970's).



140. The cover of a book on Heydar Khan Amu Oghli, the iconic figure of Iranian communists.



145. Poster announcing an exhibition sponsored by Cherek-ha-ye Fada'i Khalq, featuring Soviet iconography in support of revolution as well as industrial and agricultural workers.



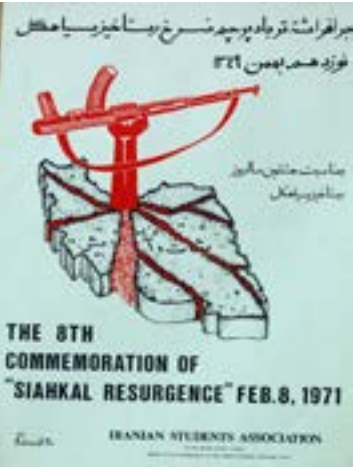
146. Poster in solidarity with the Palestinian cause, signed by Confederation of Iranian Students.



141. “Let us Rise in solidarity with the heroic Palestine!” A poster in solidarity with the Palestinian national liberation movement, signed by the Iranians Student Association. Notice co-sponsorship by Eritrean, Ethiopian, Palestinian and other Arab students.



142. Solidarity with the revolutionary uprising in Dhofar.



143. 19 Bahman 1349/8 February 1971, the date of the Siahkal uprising, which the poster celebrates, on its eighth anniversary (February 1979).



144. Poster calling for protest against Shah's pending visit to Washington DC at the wake of the Iranian Revolution of 1977–1979.