

A close-up portrait of a middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing a dark blue pinstriped suit jacket, a white dress shirt, and a blue patterned tie. A small pin of the map of Italy is attached to his lapel. The background is a dark, solid color.

Only the Shah can.

**Custodian of
the Nation's
Power:
Prince Reza
Pahlavi's
Role in
Modern
Iranian
Politics**

Featuring articles by:

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Custodian of the Nation's Power: Prince Reza Pahlavi's Role in Modern Iranian Politics

| Nama Jafari |

In the modern world, power no longer descends from the “heavens” nor rises solely from the “tip of the sword.” Today, political legitimacy is the product of the interplay between history, popular will, and legal frameworks. Within this context, Prince Reza Pahlavi's position in Iran's political landscape should be understood not as a source of power, but as a bearer and custodian of the nation's power—drawing from multiple distinct yet complementary sources and functioning within defined limits in a constitutional monarchy.

1. Historical Continuity and Symbolic Capital

The first dimension of this position stems from historical continuity and symbolic legacy. In a country with millennia of history, the “Pahlavi name” evokes for a segment of

society a period of modernization, security, and national strength. This symbolic capital—recognized in political psychology as a marker of cohesion and stability—allows Prince Reza Pahlavi to appear as a recognized authority on the international stage without holding an official office. Such authority derives not from executive power but from meaning and collective memory, reinforcing a sense of stability during critical crises.

2. Mandate and Popular Will

The second dimension relates to mandate and popular will. In Prince Reza Pahlavi's political philosophy, legitimacy derives not from "divine right" but from the "vote and will of the people." Recent public support and protest activities can be interpreted as a form of political mandate; a bottom-up power rooted in moral influence and credibility. In this framework, his role is not to "govern" but to "facilitate the transition to democracy"—a role defined by persuasion, arbitration, and consensus-building rather than command.

3. Legal Legitimacy within Constitutional Frameworks

The third dimension, oriented toward the future, is legal legitimacy within the constitution. Should Iran move toward a constitutional monarchy, Prince Reza Pahlavi's position would be fully codified legally: confirmed and constrained by a constitution derived from popular vote and parliamentary oversight. In this structure, the monarch's authority is symbolic, adjudicative, and diplomatic—a limited authority capable of preventing the reproduction of despotism but inherently incapable of imposing it.

4. Soft Power Derived from Alternative Leadership

In addition to these three dimensions, another important source exists: power derived from being an alternative. In a fragmented opposition, the ability to create consensus is

itself a form of soft power. By virtue of his nonpartisan position, Prince Reza Pahlavi can bring diverse forces—from left to right—together around the table of dialogue; a capacity that many party leaders lack and which is crucial during moments of political transition.

Conclusion

Historical legitimacy and popular support are today the main assets of this position. Yet, a democratic future is only assured when these assets are placed within the “container of the constitution.” Prince Reza Pahlavi sees himself not as the source of power but as its custodian; a trust held by the Iranian people with the ultimate goal of freedom, rule of law, and sustainable stability.

**“This Is the Final Battle—
Pahlavi Will Return”: Beyond
a Slogan, a Political Strategy**



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“This Is the Final Battle— Pahlavi Will Return”: Beyond a Slogan, a Political Strategy

| Pandar Matin Daftari |

Amid street chants, mass protests, and viral hashtags, one phrase has crossed generational boundaries more than any other: “This is the final battle—Pahlavi will return.” Closely intertwined with music and a heroic rhythm, this slogan is far more than a simple declaration of loyalty. It reflects a meaningful convergence of nostalgia for the past and hope for the future in the mindset of a generation that, in the midst of a political and social uprising, is searching for a way out of Iran’s current historical deadlock.

1. The Meaning of the “Final Battle”

The first part of the slogan conveys a sense of historical decisiveness. The term “final battle” signals that Iranian society has moved beyond reformism, incremental change,

and attempts at accommodation, and has entered a stage of ultimate resolution. It reframes the political landscape from shades of gray into a stark binary between the continuation of the status quo and fundamental transformation, endowing the uprising with an epic and destiny-defining character.

2. “Pahlavi Will Return”: The Return of a Person or the Return of Values?

In my view, when the hashtag “Pahlavi will return” becomes a widespread trend, it must be understood on at least two distinct levels:

The first layer (political-personal): the return of Prince Reza Pahlavi as a political actor and potential leader capable of managing the transitional period away from the Islamic Republic.

The second layer (civilizational-historical): a return to the set of values and trajectories commonly associated with the Pahlavi era—modernization, secularism, national state authority, and economic prosperity.

In this sense, the slogan effectively states: “We seek a return to a normal place in the world, a modern state, and an ordinary, dignified life.”

3. Why Did This Hashtag Become Politically Pivotal?

Three main factors have turned this slogan into a driving force for a segment of the opposition and the ongoing political-social uprising:

The unifying function of the Pahlavi name: In a fragmented and atomized opposition landscape, the name Pahlavi operates as a familiar reference point capable of bringing together diverse social and political groups around a shared axis.

A response to a crisis of national identity: After decades of ideological saturation and rupture from a cohesive national narrative, Iranian society is seeking to reclaim its historical identity. For many, the Pahlavi name remains closely associated with Iranian nationalism and the modern state.

The failure of alternative models: Disillusionment with temporary figures, short-lived projects, and rootless movements has redirected attention toward an institution that possesses historical depth and a governing legacy in the collective memory.

4. Challenges and Future Horizons

While energizing and mobilizing, this slogan simultaneously places a heavy responsibility on the institution of monarchy and on Prince Reza Pahlavi himself. “Return” in the twenty-first century cannot mean a revival of political models from half a century ago. It can only be meaningful within the framework of a parliamentary constitutional monarchy, secular democracy, and the rule of law.

Crucially, the power of this hashtag does not stem from calls for revenge, but from its articulation of a “final battle to reclaim the homeland”—a struggle that seeks to minimize violence and to channel the uprising into a rational, institutionalized path of political transition.

Ultimately, “This is the final battle—Pahlavi will return” can be read as an unofficial manifesto for moving beyond authoritarianism toward a recognizable political order. It signals that a significant segment of Iranian society sees salvation in reconnecting with a path that was severed by the uprising of 1979—a path that this time aims, armed with historical experience, to arrive at the destination of freedom, stability, and the rule of law.

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**"I Have Written
with My Blood:
Long Live the
Shah"**





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"I Have Written with My Blood: Long Live the Shah"

| Bardia Majd |

The widespread support for Prince Reza Pahlavi in recent years is not merely an emotional wave or a temporary reaction to daily crises. Rather, it represents a deeper phenomenon rooted in a combination of bitter lived experiences, historical comparison, and the search for a safe and trustworthy alternative. To understand this popularity, one must move beyond slogans and examine the social and psychological realities of Iranian society.

1. Historical Contrast

The first factor is the stark contrast between the Pahlavi era and the current situation. Much of Iranian society, especially generations that did not experience the 1979 uprising, has drawn clear conclusions by comparing economic indicators, public welfare, and Iran's international standing during the Pahlavi period with present conditions. Economic stability, national currency value, purchasing power, and social advancement

opportunities then stand in sharp contrast to today's rampant inflation and structural poverty. Moreover, memories of a passport that once carried global recognition, compared to today's international isolation, intensify the longing for a lost order—an order closely associated with the Pahlavi name in the minds of many.

2. Prince Pahlavi's Personality and Political Consistency

The second factor is Prince Reza Pahlavi's personality and political continuity. Over more than four decades, unlike many opposition figures, he has followed a relatively steady course. His consistent emphasis on Iran's territorial integrity, secular democracy, and human rights—without engaging in factional games or temporary compromises—has demonstrated a form of political integrity that earns the trust of a significant portion of society. His discourse is largely pacifist and rooted in national consensus; he presents himself not as a claimant to power, but as a facilitator aiming to restore the people's right to choose through the ballot box.

3. A Focal Point for the Opposition

The third factor is society's need for a unifying point amid opposition fragmentation. In a space where various anti-government factions are often divided and engaged in exhausting internal conflicts, Prince Reza Pahlavi serves as a nonpartisan figure. His name can bring together a diverse spectrum of forces—from nationalists and liberals to segments of traditional religious groups and even portions of the armed forces—around a shared axis. In a society lacking strong parties and deeply rooted political institutions, “family name” and “historical legacy” function as a credential for political leadership.

4. Alignment with the New Generation

The fourth factor is the alignment of this trend with emerging social movements, particularly among Generation Z. One notable phenomenon in recent years is the connection of young people under 25 with the Pahlavi name. This generation looks to the name not out of personal nostalgia, but with a forward-looking perspective. For them, Pahlavi symbolizes a modern Iran, a commitment to progress, and individual freedoms. This generation has entirely moved beyond reformist games and the choice between “bad and worse,” seeking fundamental change—a change that sees Prince Reza Pahlavi as its most serious representative.

5. National Security and a Deterrent Factor

The fifth and perhaps most critical factor is Iran’s national security and territorial integrity. Amid rising concerns of collapse, fragmentation, or civil war, many view Prince Reza Pahlavi as the only figure capable of serving as a deterrent. His approach of addressing the army and law enforcement with respectful, nationalistic language—and inviting them to join the people—has reduced fears of a power vacuum and chaos following a regime change.

Constitutional Monarchy: Iran's Best Option After the National Revolution



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Constitutional Monarchy: Iran's Best Option After the National Revolution

| **Darian Ghavami** |

Iran stands at one of the most critical historical junctures of its modern history. More than four decades of ideological rule, unchecked concentration of power, the dismantling of accountability mechanisms, and the systematic erosion of social capital have confronted Iranian society with a fundamental question: after a transition from the Islamic Republic, which political system can guarantee both freedom and stability?

Among the various options under discussion, constitutional monarchy has returned to the center of national debate—not out of nostalgia or a desire to revert to the past, but as a tested political model grounded in historical experience. This article argues that constitutional monarchy may represent one of the most rational and least costly options for Iran in the aftermath of a national revolution.

In a constitutional monarchy, the monarch does not govern. Instead, the monarch serves as a symbol of historical continuity, national unity, and political stability. Executive power rests with a government elected by the people, the constitution constitutes the ultimate source of authority, and no individual or institution stands above the law. In practice, this model has demonstrated its capacity to combine democratic governance with long-term stability. A look at successful examples in countries such as Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Japan, and Spain shows that constitutional monarchy is not only compatible with democracy but, in many cases, has functioned as one of its key guarantors.

Post-revolutionary periods are typically marked by three major risks: power vacuums, destructive elite competition, and the reproduction of authoritarianism under a new guise. Contemporary history makes clear that many revolutions have led not to freedom, but to renewed cycles of autocracy.

At this critical stage, constitutional monarchy can play a decisive role. The presence of a nonpartisan, supra-political symbolic authority can help prevent the personalization of power, reduce political polarization, and facilitate national consensus around a constitution, free elections, and democratic institution-building. Within this framework, the monarch is not a ruler, but a neutral arbiter of the political order—a role that newly established republics often lack.

Prince Reza Pahlavi: A Symbolic Asset in the Transition

Prince Reza Pahlavi stands out as one of the most prominent national figures in Iran's political landscape. His significance lies not in any claim to power, but in his symbolic and political position. His consistent emphasis on democracy, human rights, and the people's right to self-

determination; his rejection of violence and revenge; and his ability to communicate effectively with global public opinion have turned him into a meaningful asset in the process of democratic transition.

He has repeatedly stated that the form of Iran's future political system must be determined solely through the free vote of the people—a position fully aligned with the spirit of constitutionalism and the rule of law. From this perspective, his role is less that of a contender for power and more that of a symbol of national unity and a facilitator of democratic transition.

Responding to Common Critiques

One common criticism is that monarchy implies a return to the past. This view conflates the form of power with its substance. Constitutional monarchy is not a return to autocracy; rather, it represents a rational use of historical experience to build a better future. The core issue is not the name of the political system, but the degree to which power is constrained, monitored, and held accountable.

Another critique holds that republics are inherently more democratic. The experience of Iran and many other countries demonstrates that republics can be deeply authoritarian, and even totalitarian. Democracy is not realized through labels, but through robust institutions, an effective constitution, and a democratic political culture.

Some also argue that constitutional monarchy lacks the capacity to generate consensus. Historical experience, however, suggests that the existence of a symbolic, non-elected yet non-governing institution can help prevent political competition from devolving into a struggle for absolute power, while increasing the prospects for peaceful coexistence among diverse political forces.

In my view, constitutional monarchy is not a magical solution, but it does rank among the lowest-risk, most thoroughly tested, and most stable models available to Iran after a national revolution. It offers a framework capable of reconciling freedom with stability, facilitating democratic transition, and preventing the reemergence of authoritarian rule.

Ultimately, the decision rests with the Iranian people. Constitutional monarchy can be considered one of the most serious options for building a free, stable, and humane future for Iran.

The Lion and Sun Revolution



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The Lion and Sun Revolution

| Mehrosa Karami |

Writing about the connection between the “street

fighters” and the guidance of Prince Reza Pahlavi narrates a new chapter in Iran’s political history—a chapter in which individual courage on the streets merges with historical legitimacy at higher levels to give meaning to the “National Revolution.” In this narrative, revolution is not merely an explosion of anger, but a conscious synergy between grassroots action and political wisdom.

In Iran’s political struggle landscape, an unprecedented phenomenon is taking shape. The Iranian National Revolution, unlike many classic movements, is a combination of “fearless courage in the streets” and “solid legitimacy within the constitutional monarchy.” Women and men who put their lives on the line do not see themselves as soldiers of a party or ideology, but as comrades in a path that Prince Reza Pahlavi calls a return to the “era of reason, law, and patriotism.”

In Prince Reza Pahlavi's political discourse, the concept of "command" has moved away from its authoritarian past and has been redefined as a "national call." This call is not top-down but forms through reciprocal dialogue with society.

When he speaks of resilience, civil disobedience, and civic responsibility, his audience is the woman removing compulsory hijab and the man participating in nationwide strikes. His core message is to invite "national unity" and "avoid blind violence"; guidance that has enabled grassroots forces to maintain ethical discipline and purposeful action under intense pressure.

During recent nationwide uprisings, especially following Prince Reza Pahlavi's calls, protests spread to hundreds of Iranian cities, with women at the forefront. They were not just protesters but practical leaders on the ground.

Women inspired by his messages on legal equality and human dignity have become symbols of resistance, aware that in the future constitutional monarchy, their status will be guaranteed by law. Prince Reza Pahlavi's consistent praise of women's leadership has legitimized this civil army, rooted both in ancient Iranian values—from women's roles in mythology to goddesses—and aligned with the demands of modern society.

In today's National Revolution, men have also redefined courage. Bravery is no longer about dominance or eliminating the other, but manifests in "supporting equal rights," "protecting protesters' lives," and "conscious defense of national integrity." This cultural shift signals political maturity in the course of Iran's democratic transition.

The positive response of grassroots fighters to Prince Reza Pahlavi's calls can be summarized in three key concepts:

credibility, security, and continuity. Credibility, because he does not compromise on principles in a world full of political deception; security, because he repeatedly emphasizes avoiding revenge, the necessity of transitional justice, and national reconstruction; and continuity, because for many, the Pahlavi name guarantees that post-despotic Iran will not face chaos, a power vacuum, or fragmentation.

The Iranian National Revolution is the product of a synergy between the pure blood spilled in the streets and the political wisdom inherent in the constitutional institution. Today, Prince Reza Pahlavi is not merely a name, but a “compass” for women leading the way and men supporting them; people who, amid the turmoil of battle, seek the shore of law, freedom, and peace.

This struggle has been called the Last Battle, because for the first time, “the street” and “diplomacy,” and “the passion of the streets” and “political consciousness,” have been united under one name and one flag.



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