

## The Great Western Schism

A Major Crisis in the Catholic Church



The Great Western Schism, also known as the Papal Schism, was one of the most profound crises in the history of the Catholic Church. It lasted from 1378 to 1417 and involved multiple claimants to the papacy, dividing Christendom politically, spiritually, and geographically. The schism weakened the authority of the papacy and contributed to the conditions that later encouraged calls for church reform.

### Background: The Avignon Papacy

The roots of the schism lay in the Avignon Papacy (1309-1377), during which the popes resided in Avignon, France, rather than in Rome. This period, sometimes referred to as the 'Babylonian Captivity of the Church,' was marked by growing resentment across Europe, especially among Italians, who felt that the papacy had become subservient to French interests. When Pope Gregory XI finally returned the papal seat to Rome in 1377, his death the following year reignited tensions about where the papacy should reside and who should lead it.

### The Division Begins: Two Popes

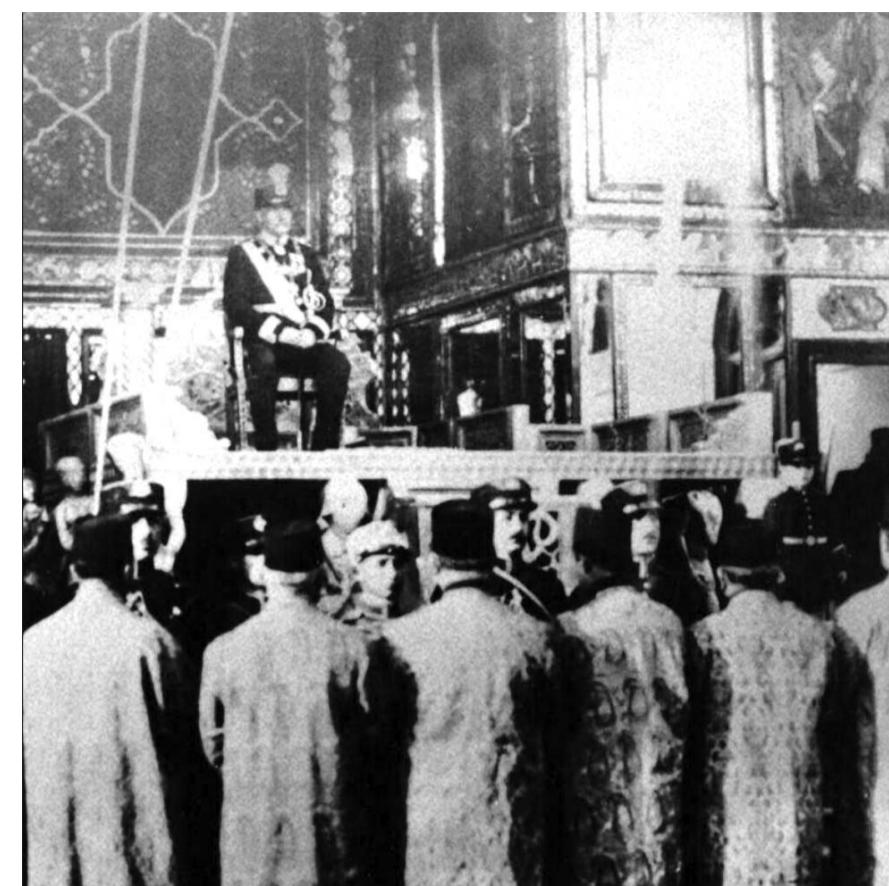
In 1378, after Gregory XI's death, the Roman populace demanded an Italian pope to ensure that the papacy remained in Rome. Under intense pressure, the cardinals elected Urban VI, an Italian. However, Urban's harsh and reform-minded leadership alienated many cardinals, who soon declared his election invalid, claiming it was made under duress.

They then elected Clement VII, who reestablished a papal court in Avignon. The result was two rival popes, each claiming to be the legitimate head of the Church, one in Rome and one in Avignon.

### Europe Divided

The schism split Europe along political and national lines:

- France, Scotland, Spain, and parts of southern Italy supported the Avignon papacy.
- England, the Holy Roman Empire, and northern Italy supported the Roman pope. This division was not only theological but also deeply political, as monarchs often aligned with the pope who best served their national interests.



Bulbul Joshi

Reza Khan sat at his desk, unmoving, lost in thought as the hours slipped by. The weight of his decision pressed down on him.

The decision was not one that would alter the fate of the nation or shift the tides of his regime. Yet, for him, it carried more weight... This was a personal issue for him. A choice that would reverberate through generations, carving its place into the legacy of his bloodline.

Reza Khan had to pick a name.

### Ancient Naming Traditions in Iran

Throughout the Qajar dynasty, Iranians, much like the ancient Arab world, had a peculiar naming system.

They identified themselves through traditional methods rooted in lineage, occupation, geography, religion, or tribal affiliations.

In the noble and elite community, awarded titles were a significant part of the traditional naming system. These titles, often granted by the monarchs, served not only as markers of social status but also as symbols of power and political privilege. Individuals from influential families or those who served in high-ranking administrative or military roles were awarded titles that reflected their rank, responsibilities, or favour with the ruling monarch.

For example, 'Qavam al-Saltaneh' meant 'Strength of the Monarchy.' It was a prestigious honorific given to one of Ahmad Shah's prime ministers. Or 'Sardar Sepah' which meant commander of the army and was awarded to Reza Khan himself.

Consequences and Legacy

The Great Western Schism gravely damaged the prestige and moral authority of the papacy. Many Christians grew disillusioned with the Church's political entanglements, leading to widespread calls for reform. The schism also strengthened the idea of conciliarism, the belief that Church councils held authority over the pope, a notion that would influence later church debates and reform movements. Ultimately, while the election of Martin V restored papal unity, the wounds left by nearly four decades of division never fully healed. The schism's legacy echoed into the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, as reformers challenged the Church's structure and authority.

The Great Western Schism (1378-1417) was more than a conflict over leadership; it was a profound spiritual and institutional crisis that reshaped the medieval Church. By exposing the vulnerability of papal authority to politics and human ambition, it marked a turning point in the history of Western Christianity and set the stage for the transformative religious movements that followed.



Portrait of Mohammad Ali Foroughi (1877-1942).

Titles like these were often hereditary or remained attached to influential individuals across generations, becoming informal family identifiers.

### Iran's Shift to Standardized Surnames

However, this patchwork of identification methods posed challenges for modern governance and record-keeping. The lack of standardized surnames became a barrier to implementing state institutions and reforms, which required more systematic control.

On May 5, 1925, the parliament approved a broad and important piece of legislation. Through this law, all titles, civilian, trade-related, religious and pseudo-military were revoked. All Iranians, old and young, were now required to select a family name. A surname that would continue through their generations could be used as their trade ID by the newly established registration offices.

In the past decade, the titles awarded to individuals for various reasons had become so many and so unnecessary that they have lost all their significance and meaning. Anyone could get an honorary title from the Qajar kings by donating some gold and doing a favour for the monarchy. Or simply delighting the kings in any way. The Law of 'Identity and Personal Status' aimed at curbing this unnecessary overuse of prestigious titles. It was about grounding the nation into a more structured system of recognition.

Reza Khan himself had decided to give up on the 'Sardar Sepah' title to set an example. But now, he had to pick a family name. One that would reverberate through generations, carving its place into the legacy of his bloodline.

The official order abolishing the Qajar dynasty - 1925.

As soon as these words were



### National Tempura Day: A Crispy Celebration of Japanese Cuisine

National Tempura Day honours the art of tempura, a beloved Japanese dish of lightly battered and deep-fried seafood, vegetables, and more. The day encourages food enthusiasts to explore the delicate balance of crispness and flavor that tempura offers, whether at home or in restaurants. Celebrations can include cooking tempura using fresh ingredients, pairing it with traditional dipping sauces, or enjoying it at local Japanese eateries. Beyond being a culinary treat, the day also highlights Japanese culture, culinary techniques, and the joy of sharing delicious, golden-battered creations with family and friends.

# Birth of the Pahlavi Dynasty

PART:1



"In the name of the welfare of the people of Iran, Parliament hereby declares the abolition of the Qajar Dynasty. It, within the bounds of the Constitution and other prevailing laws of Iran, entrusts the provisional government to Reza Khan." The official order abolishing the Qajar dynasty - 1925. As soon as these words were spoken, multiple protocols, put forth by the prime minister, got activated. Reza Khan, the soon-to-be king, resigned from his prime minister position. Mohammad Foroughi, the finance minister of his government, became the acting prime minister. The Minister of Interior informed all provinces and their governors of the new ruling of Majlis and the change in political systems. The foreign minister did the same but for all foreign allegations. While the government was busy with its bureaucracy, the army took over the royal palaces. They got rid of all relics of the Qajar rule and evicted all its residents. One of the residents was Mohammad Hassan Mirza, the brother of Ahmad Shah and Prince Regent.

### #RULE



Members of Iran's Fifth National Consultative Assembly (Majlis).

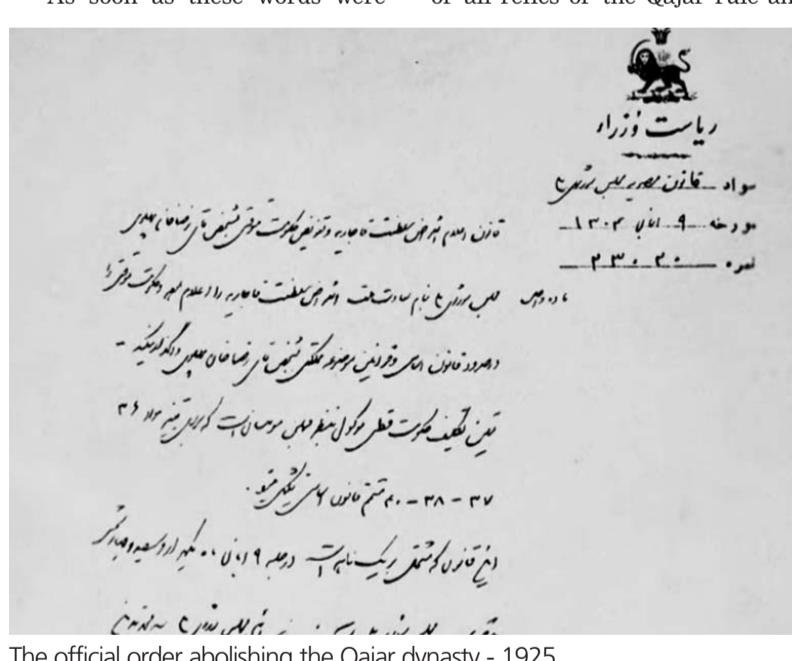
### The Aftermath: The Day After the Fall of the Qajar Dynasty

On October 31, 1925, Majlis with an overwhelming majority voted to abolish the Qajar dynasty.

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Golestan Palace, located in Tehran, was the official residence of the Qajar kings and a symbol of their authority. Originally built in the 16th century and expanded in the 19th, it served as the center of government and the royal court. Believing himself to be the rightful heir to the throne, Mohammad Hassan Mirza claimed the palace as his own. This belief was further reinforced when Ahmad Shah abandoned plans to return to Iran.

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