

#PAPACY

# 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.

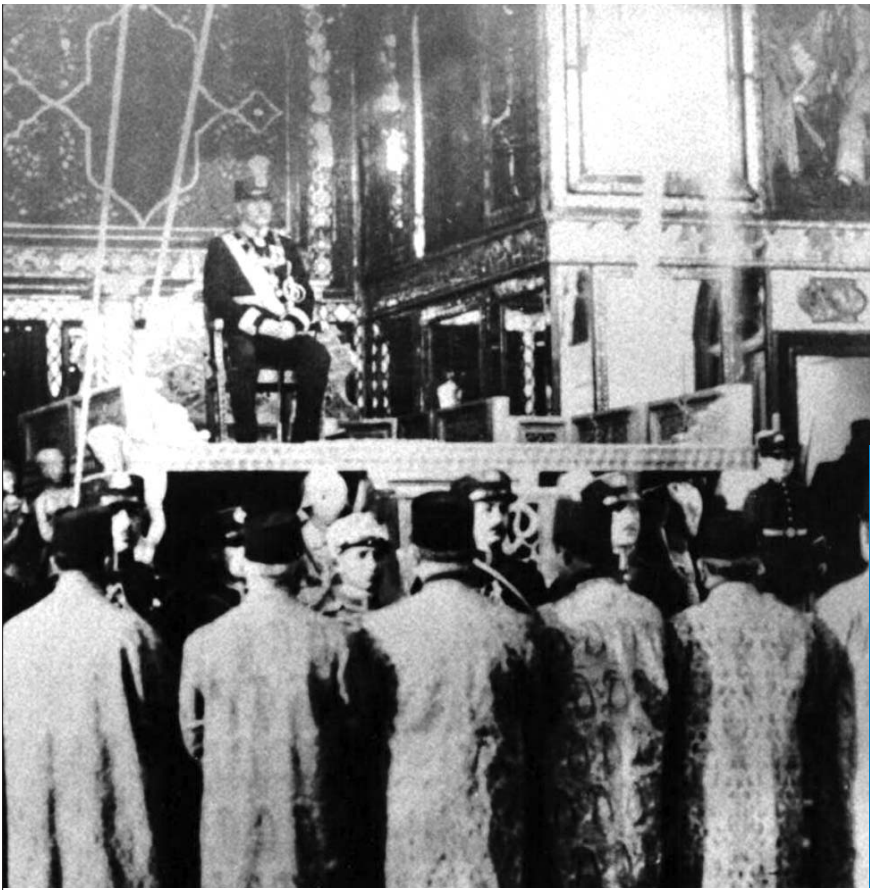
They then elected Clement VII, who reestablished a papal court in Avignon. The result was two rival popes, each claiming to be the legitimate head of the Church, one in Rome and one in Avignon.

**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 a largely oral culture with decentralised governance, people did not require fixed family names for identification. Instead, they relied on patronymic customs, referring to someone by their father's or ancestor's name. In other cases, a person's profession shapes their identity. Individuals were commonly known by their trade or craft, like 'Najjar' (carpenter) or 'Attar' (herbalist). Religious titles also played a significant role in naming conventions. For example, those who completed the pilgrimage to Mecca earned the honorific 'Hajji'. Or alleged descendants of the Prophet Muhammad were given the revered title 'Sayyed'. Among tribal communities, particularly in rural areas, individuals identified themselves by their tribal affiliation. Such as belonging to the Bakhtiari, Qashqai or Qajar tribes. These systems were deeply embedded in Iran's pre-modern social fabric.

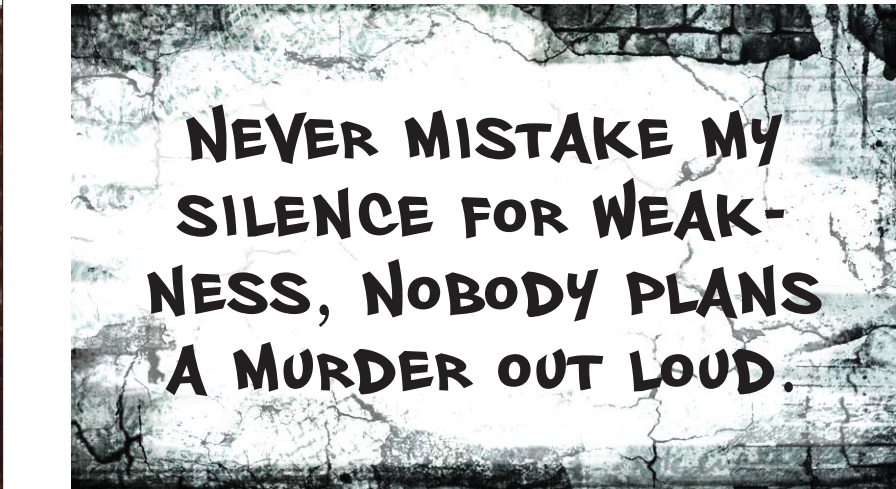
Within the noble and elite community, awarded titles were a significant part of the traditional naming system. These titles, often granted by the monarchy, served not only as markers of social status but also as symbols of power and political privilege. Individuals from influential families or those 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.



Iranians in the Qajar dynasty.

## THE WALL



# Birth of the Pahlavi Dynasty

"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.

**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 5th, 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 and be used as their tracking ID by the newly established registrar officers.

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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.

**Reza Khan Chooses His Legacy**

After hours of deliberation, he settled on a name.

The name embodied centuries of history, tradition and prestige. It was an ancient language that the old kings of Persia spoke. The name aligned with Reza's nationalistic vision and his goal to revert his country to its past golden glory.

It was a name that Reza hoped one day would rule the country. This time not based on tribal affiliation, religious beliefs or ethnic belongings, but on pure personal ambition. One that would reflect the rise of a simple soldier who had united a shattered country out of chaos.

The prime minister signed the papers with his new name.

He glanced at the drying ink that reflected his new identity.

*Reza of the House Pahlavi.*

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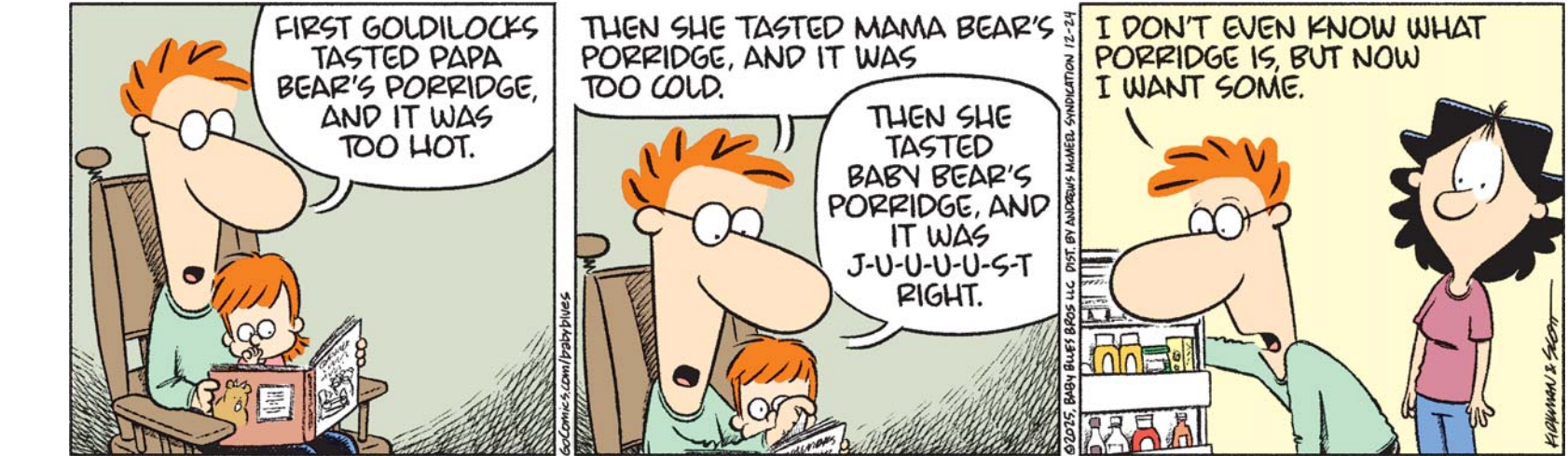
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## BABY BLUES



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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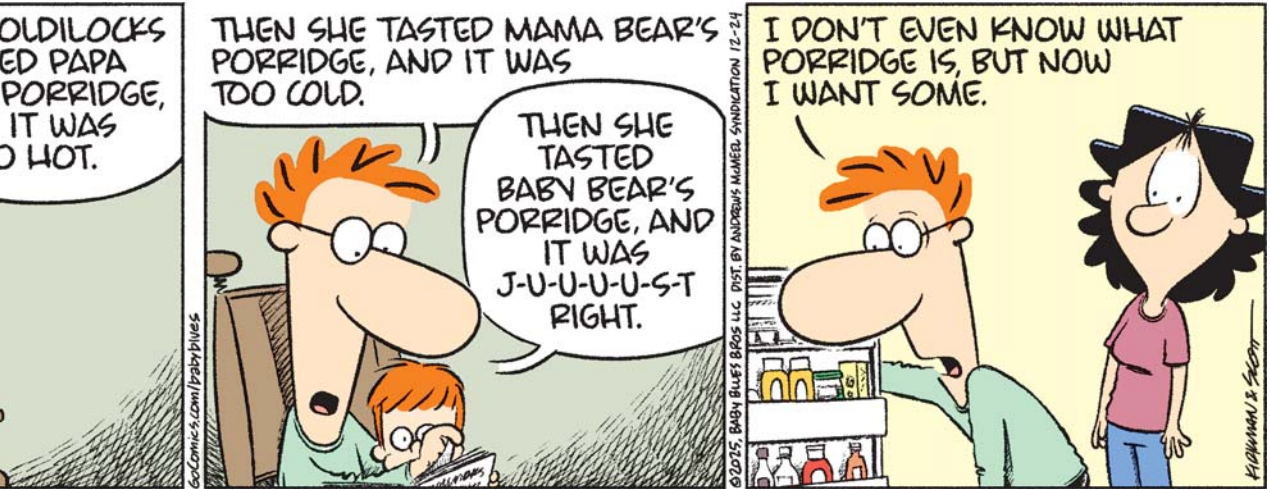
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The official order abolishing the Qajar dynasty - 1925.

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



## 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 crispiness 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.



Members of the Constituent Assembly - December 1925.

## #RULE



evicted all its residents. One of the residents was Mohammad Hassan Mirza, the brother of Ahmad Shah and Prince Regent.

**The Exile of the Crown Prince: Mohammad Hassan Mirza's Fate**

After Ahmad Shah's departure from Iran, Mohammad Hassan Mirza, the prince regent, took residence in Golestan Palace and began calling it his home.

Golestan Palace, located in Tehran, was the official residence of the Qajar kings and a symbol of their authority. Originally built in



Members of the Constituent Assembly - December 1925.

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Reza Khan refused.

The Crown Prince was escorted by guards into a car. He was taken to the border of Iran. He pleaded that the government owed him 20 thousand toman, around \$450,000 in today's money. Reza Khan settled on giving him 5 thousand toman, a quarter of that amount.

His forces shortly deported Mohammad Hassan Mirza to Iraq, where he travelled to Paris to meet his brother.

**The Public's Indifference to Monarchy Change**

With that last Qajar prince gone, it was time to switch gears. A three-day official holiday was announced; with streets lit up and fireworks shows on full display at night. The country was finally rid of the Qajars and there was nothing but great things on the horizon. These holidays were announced as a measure to excite the general populous.

Despite Qajar's unpopularity among the people, the masses didn't have great excitement for the change. Some weren't even aware that a change of monarchy was happening!

The everyday Iranians weren't aware of the political games each side played, the constant changes in the government or what the politicians were up to. They respected Reza Khan for his achievements but Reza Khan's strict personality and his stern military appearance made it harder for people to have enthusiasm for him. He wasn't a typical politician, he was older, and thus, the people had to be pursued into liking him.

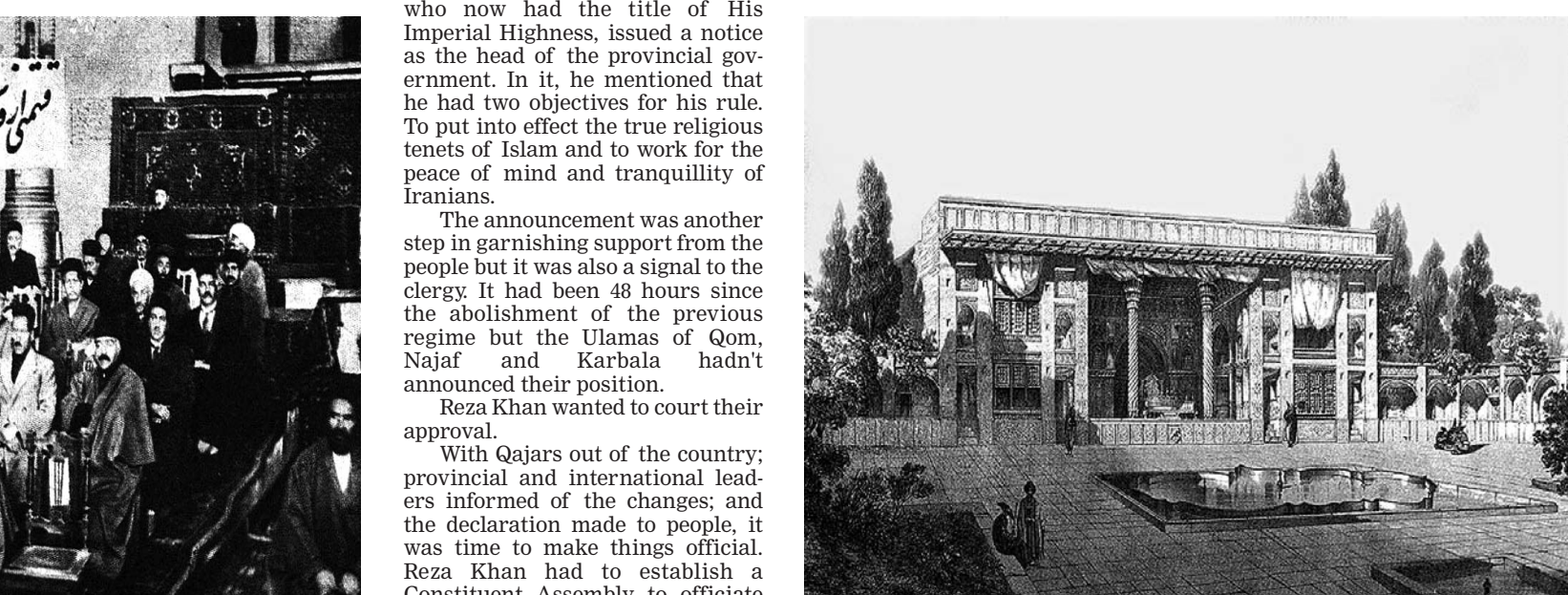
**Reza Khan Sets Out His Vision: Islam and the Welfare of Iranians**

On November 2nd, Reza Khan, who now had the title of His Imperial Highness, issued a notice as the head of the provincial government. In it, he mentioned that he had two objectives for his rule. To put into effect the true religious tenets of Islam and to work for the peace of mind and tranquillity of Iranians.

The announcement was another step in garnishing support from the people but it was also a signal to the clergy. It had been 48 hours since the abolishment of the previous regime but the Ulamas of Qom, Najaf and Karbala hadn't announced their position.

Reza Khan wanted to court their approval.

With Qajars out of the country; provincial and international leaders informed of the changes; and the declaration made to people, it was time to make things official. Reza Khan had to establish a Constituent Assembly to officiate his ascent to the throne.



Outside of the Golestan Palace - Qajar Era.

## ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman