



# **The Military in Post-Revolutionary Iran: The Evolution and Roles of the Revolutionary Guards (Durham Modern Middle East and Islamic World Series)**

*Hesam Forozan*

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Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, also known as the 'Sepah', has wielded considerable and increasing power in Iran in recent decades. Established in 1979 by Ayatollah Khomeini as a paramilitary organisation charged with protecting the nascent Islamic regime and countering the untrustworthy Imperial army (or 'Artesh'), the Sepah has evolved into one of the most powerful political, ideological, military and economic players in Iran over recent years. The Sepah is entrusted with a diverse set of indoctrination apparatus, training programmes and system welfare provisions intended to broaden support for the regime. Although established as a paramilitary organisation, the Sepah developed to have its own ministry, complex bureaucracy and diversified functions, alongside its own network and personnel. This book provides a comprehensive overview of the Sepah and its role. It examines the position of the Sepah in Iranian state and society, explores the nature of the Sepah's involvement in politics, and discusses the impact of the Sepah's political rise on Iran's economy and foreign policy. Contemporary Iran can only be fully understood by an awareness of the ongoing in-fighting among regime factions and increasing popular demands for social change – knowing about the Sepah is central to all this.

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