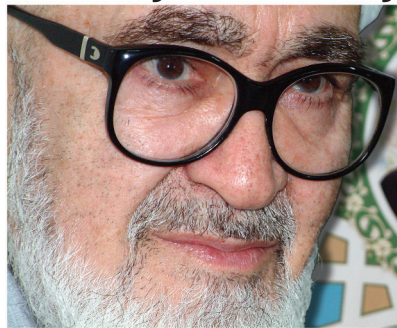


Grand Ayatollah Hoseyn Ali Montazeri



■ **1922:** Hoseyn Ali Montazeri born into farming family in central Iran

■ **1934-52:** Educated at seminary in Isfahan and then in Shi'ite holy city of Qom where he becomes student of **Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini**, future leader of Islamic Revolution

■ **1964:** Montazeri becomes key figure – supporting uprising against U.S.- and British-backed **Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi** – after Khomeini flees to Turkey, then France

■ **1964-78:** Montazeri repeatedly arrested and tortured by **SAVAK** – Shah's secret police. On release from prison Montazeri travels to Paris where Khomeini makes him his official representative in Iran

■ **1979:** Following Iranian Revolution that topples Shah, deep ideological rift develops with Khomeini. Montazeri envisions clerics as spiritual advisers to government, not rulers themselves

■ **1985:** Assembly of Experts, council of senior mullahs, appoints Montazeri as successor to Ayatollah Khomeini

Grand Ayatollah

Hoseyn Ali Montazeri (left), Ayatollah Khomeini (centre), Shah of Iran (above), President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (below)

■ **1988:** Montazeri sacked by Khomeini over his public opposition to show trials, torture, and execution of thousands of political prisoners

■ **1989:** Following death of Khomeini, **Ayatollah Ali Khamenei** is appointed Supreme Leader

■ **1998-2003:** Placed under house arrest in Qom after speech criticising Khamenei as unqualified for position

■ **Jun 2009:** Denounces disputed re-election of **President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad** – in which more than 100 people are killed and nearly 4,000 arrested – as fraudulent

■ **Aug:** Warns that authorities' handling of unrest **"could lead to the fall of the regime"**. Denounces clerical leadership as a dictatorship

■ **December 19:** Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri dies in his sleep, aged 87