

Struggles of Social Forces on the Verge of Constitutionalist Revolution in Iran¹

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Received 21 January 2012

Revised 18 February 2012

Accepted 28 March 2012

Abstract: *On the verge of the Constitutionalist Revolution in Iran, the three social forces existing in the socio-political arena were competing with each other and at the same time, struggling with the Monarchy to increase their share of power: independent intellectuals, traditional followers of religion, and merchants. This rivalry set the scene for a discursive battle in which, each social force was trying to load nodal points such as the nation, king, and monarchy with contents that were compatible with other features of their discourse to push forward its hegemonic project. The period under study in this paper, more or less coincides with the outbreak of protests and strikes under the leadership of Sayed Mohammad Tabatabaei and Sayed Abdoloh Behbahani against Nouze, the Belgian head of Iran Customs house in 1905 which paved the way for emergence of Tobacco Movement. In this era, three social forces were actively involved in the socio-political scene of Iran: independent intellectuals, traditional followers of religion, and merchants*

Keywords: *Social Forces, Revolution, Constitutionalism, Intellectuals, Religion.*

Introduction

On the verge of the Constitutionalist Revolution in Iran, the three social forces existing in the socio-political arena were competing with each other and at the same time, struggling with the Monarchy to increase their share of power: independent intellectuals, traditional followers of religion, and merchants. This rivalry set the scene for a discursive battle in which, each social force was trying to load nodal points such as the nation, king, and monarchy with contents that were compatible with other features of their discourse to push forward its hegemonic project. Finally, these forces formed a temporary coalition against Monarchy in Tobacco movement. In this paper, we describe and compare different contents loaded by these forces on nodal points and the social background conducive to their conflicts and struggles. At the end, through combining the theories of discourse and Culture production of Wuthnow, we present a model for explaining the struggles of social forces and use it as a framework for data obtained from other parts of the paper.

Historical Background

The gradual developments started from the era of Fathalishah Ghajar and appointment of Abbass Mirza as the Crown Prince in Iranian society, and the top-down changes in economic, political, and social structures of Iran in Mirza Taghi Khan and Sepahsalar era, were transferred to the society at the verge of Constitutionalist movement and created an atmosphere of rivalry among different active social forces, including intellectuals and traditional followers of religion. The organization of these two social forces which, at that era, had emerged as social forces independent from the government, was rooted in the reforms of Amir Kabir as the Chancellor of Naser-iddin Shah. In this era, a core of young, educated progressive reformists that was formed around Amir Kabir in the state, gained some power (Adamiyat, 2006 a: 211-212). The establishment of Daar-ol-fonoun (Center of science and knowledge) played a decisive role in expanding this core, and with the passage of time, the graduates of that center formed a new guild mainly composed of the children of government officials, army officers, courtiers, and some of the princes. This new class enjoyed intellectual tendencies, and served as a platform for progressive, modernist figures that influenced the intellectual developments of the next two generations (Adamiyat, 2006 a: 355).

¹ This article is obtained from Mr. Seddighi's Ph.D. dissertation and translated into English by the IJSS Director Dr. Mostafa Azkia.

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On the other hand, Amir Kabir's approach towards religion, strengthened the grip of the monarchy on power and made the collision of the State and the clergy powers inevitable (Adamiyat, 2006 a: 424 - 433). Amir did his best to curb the interventions of the clergy in government affairs; His confrontations with influential clergy figures and abrogation of taking sanctuary can be interpreted as an indication of this approach (Adamiyat, 2006 a: 424-433). As Adamiyat puts it (2006 a), from the end of Nader Shah's era until the advent of the contemporary history of Iran, only Amir could successfully harness the power of the the clergy (Adamiyat, 2006 a: 424).

The reform endeavors of Mirza Hossein Khan Sepahsalar, Chancellor of Naser-iddin Shah towards the end of his era, which was a continuation of Mirza Taghikhan reforms after an interruption that lasted for some years, strengthened the above-mentioned intellectual core and, at the same time, tightened the lines of the clergy against the state and this intellectual core. In this situation, the rival forces drew up their lines in the power struggle and tried to achieve hegemonic dominance.

One of the most important endeavors in the cultural arena in this era was the establishment of independent newspapers, removal of official censorship, and relative freedom of the press (Adamiyat, 2006 b: 394). These independent papers combined a simple style with relative freedom in criticizing.

Furthermore, we shall mention the gradual transformation in the status of people in government view. There are some evidence indicating that gradually, the "ideas of the people" and the "public opinion" gained some significance for the state in making decisions and issuing orders. For instance, Naser-iddin Shah wrote to his Foreign Minister, Mirza Saeid Khan regarding the concession of the monopoly for shipping in Karoon River: this is among internal affairs of a nation.... The public opinion shall be considered in this issue". He further emphasized: "I cannot decide on this matter without informing people and government officialsThe public opinion shall be considered in this regard"(Iran Daily, 1919: quoted from Adamiyat, 2006 b: 412-413).These signs indicate the earliest traces of inclusion of nation in power equations. Generally, the most significant developments in modernization in this era can be cited as follows:

- The expansion and promotion of awareness due to flourishing journalism, both in Iran and in other countries.
- Qualitative and quantitative progress in print industry in this period(Adamiyat, 2006 b: 392)
- Growth of educational institutions (Adamiyat, 2006 b: 455-457)
- Developments in administration system (Adamiyat, 2006 b:448-451)
- Expanding use of telegraph (Kerzon, 2001:731)
- Changes in public opinion (Adamiyat, 2006 b:411-416);
- Commitment of the State to laws (Adamiyat, 2006 b:170-227)
- Increasing access of more Iranians to travel to European countries and neighboring countries which had closer contacts with European countries (Tabatabaei, 2006:426)

On the Verge of Constitutionalism

This era , more or less coincides with the protests and strikes that were organized by Sayed Mohammad Tabatabaei and Sayed Abdollah Behbahani against Nooze, the Belgian head of Iran Customs in spring 1905 and paved the way for Tobacco movement.Although at the juncture of the time following the removal of Sepahsalar from chancellorship , Naser-iddin Shah" resisted against any fundamental reform that could somehow curb his capricious , whimsy actions"(Amanat, 2006 : 535), undoubtedly, it was impossible to wipe out the effects of developments in Mirza Taghi Khan and Sepahsalar era .The modernization process set the scene for organization and active participation of social forces including independent intellectuals, traditional followers of religion and merchants against the monarchy and on the other hand, prepared the social conditions for future changes and developments.

Intellectuals

The above developments created a very conducive and positive atmosphere for activities of intellectuals. These developments, which were at first fostered by government and the statesmen , specially set the ground for organization of those intellectuals who were not included in the state, and some of whom were even expelled from the governing system, both in Iran and abroad (Adamiyat, 2006 a) . But this group, while feigning power to their rival social forces, tried to attract them for increasing their share of power. Representation of the status of the King in the intellectual texts of this era indicates their effort to do so. Writers of such texts used every opportunity to compliment the King and at the same time, using the strategy of constructing otherness, tried to attract him through

detaching him from other agents of the monarchy. For instance, we can consider an extract of Melkom Khan's letter to Naser-iddin Shah in the fourth issue of Ghanoun Daily:

In these 40 years of ruling, all endeavors of His Majesty for reforming the state of the affairs in Iran were fruitless. With this vast opportunity and despite all efforts of His Highness, today the provinces of Iran are at ruin, our people are more miserable, our army is less disciplined, the state is less independent, the public are more dissatisfied, and destruction looms nearer. The Ministers, taking advantage of His Majesty's kind temperament, plundered the poor all over Iran and treated them as they wished. (Ghanoun Daily, No.4:1)

This text, in addition to its manifest flattery, tries to exonerate the King from Iran's regression in the past 40 years. For instance, referring to the regressions of Iran during the last 40 years, the cause for these problems is not mentioned. But immediately after this sentence, the ministers are blamed as the cause for all such miseries. In this way, the writer represents the King as a benevolent person who wishes good for Iran and his countrymen, and who is aware of ill intentions of the royal ministers. In sum, in this article, the writer considers the king as a noble man of "pure nature" with "sublime intentions" who is aware of enemies' conspiracies, and blames the royal Ministers for sabotaging his majesty's sublime intentions. Such flatteries and presenting such an image from the king, is justifiable by its social context (Curzon 2001:526; Nazim-ol-Eslam Kermani, 2005:163) and is understandable because of the status of the King in the power relations of the society. In this power structure, King is seen as the almighty whose monopoly of governing authorities enables his allies to harness such power in their own service (Katouzian, 1993 a; Katouzian, 1995:147). Curzon (2002) presents a clear illustration of the King status in Iranian governing structure in Naser-iddin Shah era. He writes:

Government in Iran is, more or less, the application of absolute power by elements ranking from the King to the headman of a tiny village. Thus, the only principle that can keep a rein on the behaviors of the lower classes is their fear from higher ranking authorities. And those authorities, in turn, fear the king, whose satisfaction has never been impossible. ... Indeed, the present King is a prime example of Despotism. Because... he is the despot with unlimited power that enjoys boundless rights to the properties and lives of his subjects and still is not held responsible. His children are not independent and may plunge in misery and indigence in the twinkling of an eye. The ministers are honored or degraded as the king wishes. The king is the almighty and he bestows officials all their authorities. There is no official authority that can limit or change his prerogatives. Therefore, such a figure that enjoys such an expanse of rights and authorities is of tremendous significance (Curzon 2002, 512:513). Therefore, we must say that it is the king who is considered as the source of all ruling power, and this justifies the efforts of intellectuals to win his favor. This makes the flatteries and positive images of the king in such texts understandable.

On the other hand, beside such flatteries, one can see signs that intellectuals saw themselves as equal, and in some instances, even superior to king and thus, has lined up against him. For instance, in the the above extract cited from the fourth issue of Ghanoun Daily, although the writer apparently ensures the king that this Daily poses no threat for him, this same assurance implies this hidden point that since it is a free newspaper, it can present everything, in whatever way it deems suitable, to "the whole intelligent nation of Iran". Undoubtedly, the existence of these multiple possibilities justifies emphasizing such assurances in the text. In addition, that is why the writer pleads with the king for his "heedful patience and forgiveness of mistakes". Principally, such requests demonstrate that the audacity and admonitory remarks of this daily may target the king as well.

Another force the intellectuals were trying to attract was the "Nation". At this juncture of time, Nation, as a social force was entering the political arena of Iran for the first time and therefore, as a free-floating force amid the struggles, different active forces were intending to win its support. It shall be noted that after the Safavid Dynasty and on the verge of Constitutionalist movement, there was a kind of relatively stable power division between the heads of government and the clergy. Based on this power division, "the judiciary, registration of properties and contracts, and settlement of legal disputes and passing verdicts on them", as well as the collection of religious taxes fell within the jurisdiction of the Clergy, and political governance was the realm of the king and other government authorities. Therefore, the Clergy were "heads of Nation", and King and government officials were considered as "heads of State" (Adjudani, 2004: 165).

In fact, it was this balance which was breaking on the verge of Constitutional movement. These conditions paved the way for giving rise to different interpretations of "nation", and in other words, turned the nation into a floating signifier that was therefore, prone to taking on different connotations so that different active social forces can load it with connotative meanings which best suits their own hegemonic projects. Therefore, the intellectuals who have become acquainted with modern concepts and interpretations due to ease of travelling and immigrating to

European countries and linkages between those intellectuals living abroad and their counterparts in internal intellectual forums (Tabatabaei, 2006:426), including connections established through expansion of communication systems such as telegraph (Curzon 2001:731-733 ; Amanat ,2006:528; isavi, 1990: 233-238) and technologies such as Print industry (for instance refer to Adamiat 2006 b:392) tried to load a new content on the signifier "Nation". Furthermore, the expansion of educational institutions (Adamiat, 2006b: 455-477), media such as newspapers (Curzon 2001; Adamiyat 2006b; Yazdani 2007) and secret and semi-secret associations drove these modern concepts into a path to hegemony.

One of the earliest interpretations of nation was proposed in Melkom Khan`s treatise, "Friend and Minister", which used nation as " all subjects", which, as Adjudani (2004) explains, was a new political interpretation at that time (Adjudani, 2004:173) .One of the discursive strategies used in intellectual texts of that era for defining and delineating the meaning of nation is construction of otherness. In these texts, the signifier "nation" is opposed to other signifiers such as "people". For instance, in the fourth issue of Ghanoun Daily, in the extract we cited before, the people are described as poor or ignorant, and of course as enjoying abundant intelligence and talent. Meranwhile, the "nation" in this text is saved for referring to a group that is emancipated from ignorance and can act. Such an interpretation of 'nation" is somehow close to some of the modern meanings of nation in the West. To attract this newly-found force of nation, the intellectuals were trying both to load this word with contents that were compatible with their hegemonic project, and ascribe themselves to nation and locate themselves as "the same" within nation`s camp. In this regard, one can easily note their use of "we" in their texts. For instance, in the text from the fourth issue of Ghanoun Daily we cited before, the writer who separates himself as a member of intellectual circles by using exclusive "we" uses the same pronoun inclusively to include this intellectual circle as insiders within the camp of Nation .

Traditional Followers of Religion

But in this era, the traditional followers of religion who, as explained before, have turned into an active force in the political-social scene of Iran due to the disturbance in the power balance between the clergy and the Royal Government (Adjudani, 2005:165), had entered this discursive battlefield to maintain their previous power, and were struggling to attract the emerging forces in Iranian power market to increase their share of power. As explained earlier, one of these emerging forces was the "nation", and religious forces were putting tremendous effort to fix the old meaning of nation as followers of religion. A case in point is the petition from " all Iranians ...living in Ottoman territories , away from homeland", addressed to "The Manifest Light, His excellency, the refuge of all Shiait muslims, His Highness, Mirza Mohammad Hassan Shirazi..." which was published in issue no. 20 of Ghanoun Daily at the time of the Fatwa for Prohibition of Tobacco use.

"Nation" in this text, explicitly or implicitly, connotes "Followers of Religion".In this text, the writer presents himself as the spokesman of "all Iranians" and in addition, declares that they are believers in Islam as well. In this text, the nation will rise for implementing the Fatwa of the religious scholars of Islam and destroys the kingdom of tyranny and therefore, paves the way for implementation of principles of Shari`a; in this way, the happiness and salvation in this world and in the hereafter can be realized, and out of the "grace of of Shari`a brilliant sun ", the nation can be transformed to the " noblest nation of the world". In this explanation, neither the awareness nor rights of nation, nor the status and condition of non-Muslim people are mentioned. The writer of this text appears as an obedient, submissive servant who is "ready to obey any command" that the Clergy issues. A point worth mentioning in this text is the elevated status it devotes to the clergy. For instance, we can find out this status through paying attention to the use of the pronoun "we" in this text. This pronoun in this text is always used in an exclusive sense which separates the main addressee of the petition and places him in a distinguished position. This distinguished and prominent status is evident from the qualities and titles that are granted to him in the texts: qualities such as "His great reverence", " noble presence", "sacred nature", "just King", "Leader of People", "Refuge of all Muslims", "Reviver of nation", "Reviver of the excellent Shari`a", "the shining sun of Shari`a sky", and "the throne to lights of guidance". Such attributes indicate a highly elevated position that the text tries to picture for the main addressee of the petition. But Mirza Shirazi deserves such titles and attributes only because he is among the clergy or "scholars of religion"; titles and attributes that are not confined to those explicitly mentioned above, but are embedded in the syntax of the text which employs the tone of a letter from a " servant" to his " master".

It is worth noting that the qualities and titles this text attributes to Mirza Shirazi are similar to the same qualities and titles that the intellectuals attributed to the King. Anyway, both types of texts are overflowed with flattering remarks to their main addressee, and this has given them a persuasive tone to entice and incite their audience. But

in this text, the king is not praised or admired at all and on the contrary, he is implicitly brought down through the bitter criticism of the whole government apparatus, and Mirza Shirazi, called "the Just king", has replaced him. The addressee of this text, Mirza Shirazi, is titled "Reviver of the Shari'a" and "reviver of nation", immediately followed by "The shining sun of Shari'a sky". In this way, a kind of interdependence is established between the two. In other words, the religious status of Mirza Shirazi is seen as a pre-requisite that enables him to act as the reviver, enlightener and fosterer of the "nation's salvation" as well.

Merchants

Another social force that was active in this era composed of merchants. The background for emergence of this active social force at this juncture of time was the recession of local economy which was due to integration in world economy. The chaotic economic situation in this period gave rise to some social and political unrest. One of the most important instances of such unrests that paved the way for Tobacco Movement and then Constitutionalist Movement and ultimately brought about a major transformation in the established political system in Iran was the efforts of market traders to form the "Assembly of Iranian Merchants representatives". This assembly which was established in 1885 was more than just an economic institution with legal qualifications, and was significant for its political status as well (Adamiyat, 1978: 299). Faced with reduction in exports, revenue cut, skyrocketing imports, and inaction and imprudence of the state, Iranian merchants were forced to overt protests. A massive flood of protests in the form of complaints and petitions were addressed to the government agents and the king himself. One of the merchants that played a crucial role in leading this movement was a distinguished merchant of Tehran, Hadj Mohammad Hassan Aminolzarb, who wrote some letters to Naser-iddin Shah and his agents, complaining the critical situation of merchants and trading in Iran.

The pressures of merchants forced King to pay attention to their requests. In July 1884, in a letter addressed to the Chancellor Mirza Yousef Mostoufi-ol-mamalek, Naser-iddin -Shah ordered: "the merchants shall consult and restore order in trade activities. Whether they want to select a chief or not, depends on them. They shall decide together and submit their recommendation" (Adamiyat, 1977:310). This paved the way for the establishment of "Assembly of Merchants Representatives", composed of a number of their leaders and elders in the Capital, with some branches all over the country, which was responsible for "regulating the trade affairs, settling legal disputes between merchants, and passing judgements on what is right or wrong" (Adamiyat, 1977:311-312). After the King approved Letter of Association for this assembly, the Chancellor issued two orders to governors of provinces and obligated them to enforce the orders issued by this assembly, and enhanced its legal authorities as well (Adamiyat, 1977:330). At the same time as the Merchants Assembly was established in Tehran, the King ousted the Minister of Commerce, Mirza Abdolvahab Khan Nasir-ol-douleh, whom the merchants blamed in their petitions, and appointed Aligholi Khan Mokhber-ol-douleh as the new Minister of Commerce. This new minister started his works by sending a telegraph to all provinces, and emphasized the implementation of Articles of Association of Merchants Assembly (Adamiyat, 1977:330). All these indicate the mounting power of merchants as one of the active social forces in the socio-political structure of that era.

Anyway, in July and August of 1884, the elections for Merchants Assembly was conducted in the majority of provinces and these assemblies, which worked under the jurisdiction of the central Assembly in Tehran, gradually started their activities. In case of ambiguities or executive problems, they would request the central Assembly in Tehran for direction and help (Adamiyat, 1977:335,341 and 342). But the status of this assembly in the political structure disrupted its activities and finally resulted in suspension of its activities. As Adamiyat (1977) puts it: The existence of this Assembly of Merchants Representatives within the governing system was an insoluble political puzzle. The vast responsibilities of Merchants Assembly and the tremendous authorities granted to it, inevitably collided with the authorities of two important agents of power: governors of provinces, and the clergy who ruled over the courts of religious law (Adamiyat, 1977:344).

It is worth mentioning that the governors gradually started sabotaging the efforts of this assembly. The reports for such sabotages spread to the central assembly and the assembly informed the king and complained about the sabotages of the governors, including the powerful Zel-ol-Soltan, the prince and ruler of Esfahan (Adamiyat, 1977:344-346, 348). The king, at the onset of activities of this assembly, wrote a letter to the chancellor, Mostoufi-ol-mamalek supporting the merchants and their assembly, and ordered him to send a telegraph to all governors of the provinces requiring them to "refrain completely from interfering with merchants affairs, not to appoint their own agents as the heads of Merchants Assemblies, and approach these assemblies with utmost support and respect" (Copy of Naser-iddin Shah order, August 1884, Merchants Assembly file, quoted from Adamiyat, 1977: 346). A separate telegraph that the king personally sent to the governor of Ghazvin, Moein -ol-Saltaneh, is worth mentioning. In this telegraph, the king bitterly reproached him and reiterated his support for the merchants

assembly. The significant point in this telegraph is that as indicated by its title, the king has sent it to Moein –ol-Saltaneh through the Merchant Assembly of Ghazvin . This, in itself, indicates the high status and credence of this assembly for the king, as compared with provincial governments (Adamiyat, 1977:347).

But finally, the conflict on Tabriz Merchants Assembly resulted in dismantling this assembly. The existing evidence indicates that unlike many governors, the ruling governor of Tabriz, The Crown Prince Mozafar-id-din-Mirza, cooperated with this assembly (Adamiyat, 1977:362-363). But some merchants who saw themselves as more qualified for being elected as representatives of this assembly, bankrupt merchants, and traders who were not satisfied with the new order and supervisory activities of this assembly allied with the the Clergy opposing this assembly.

What gave rise to this confrontation was the collaboration of Tabriz Mujtahid , Hadj Mirza Djavad and his students with these opponents. In this regard, representatives of Tabriz merchants wrote a petition to Mozafar-iddin-mirza, saying that "based on the orders of the state authorities, the merchants representatives are obligated to handle the commercial affairs of this country. But His Excellency, the Grand Ayatollah, complains and openly names and slanders your devotees, and has explicitly ordered his followers not to attend the assembly". If His Highness is really intending to oppose the assembly, he should clearly announce it so that we mind our own business and send our resignation to the Merchants Assembly of the Capital "(the petition of Tabriz representatives to Muzafar Mirza, 1922, Merchants Assembly File, quoted from Adamiyat, 1977: 357). They also wrote to the Central Assembly that since with the establishment of this assembly, "the profits they take out of this chaos" is curbed, he has "spread around some indecent words and has made some written statements to some of the representatives". They have then added:" we have not power to fight him back"(Telegraph of Tabriz representatives to Central Assembly of Merchants Representatives, October 1884, Merchants Assembly file, quoted from Adamiyat, 1977:357).

When some bankrupted merchants, frightened from their creditors, sought sanctuary in Mujtahid`s house, and after the seminarians provoked by him fought with some representatives of Merchants Assembly, the unrest intensified to such an extent that the government and Assembly sent telegraphs to the Hadj Mirza Djavad, requesting him to ban any support from the bankrupted merchants and punish the obstinate seminarians. But all these efforts were in vain. Finally, Nazim-ol-Todjar, the chief of Tabriz Merchant representatives was forced to resign and wrote to Amin-ol-Zarb, the head of Central Assembly, that " His Holiness , may God keep him safe from any harm, is not happy with the establishment of this assembly. Brfore any new trouble I resign and will not attend the assembly any more. I hope that you accept my resignation"(Nazim –al-Todjar telegraph to Hadj Mohammad Hassan Amin-ol-Zarb, 23rd December 1884, Merchants Assembly File, quoted from Adamiyat, 1977:361). Subsequently, the Central Assembly received similar news from other provinces, indicating the conspiracy of the clergy with province governors against the Merchant Assembly representatives .Meanwhile, Prince Kamran Mirza the Viceroy, son of the king, Minister of War and Ruler of Tehran, and Mokhber-ol-dauleh the Minister of Commerce, and finally the Chancellor joined the opponents of Merchants Assembly, and this forced the king to stop supporting the Assembly. Ultimately, Amin-ol –Zarb resigned from the Central Assembly and this was the end of Merchants Assembly (Adamiyat, 1977:368).

But Adamiyat`s description (1977) of this institution indicates that it has played a very crucial role in the emergence of the cracks in the established power structure of Iran, which paved the way for future political movements. He writes:

The Assembly of Merchants Representatives of Iran, was the first economic organization with some political characteristics which was established before the Constitutionalists era within the ruling system through its own effort and initiative .This assembly consisted of elected representatives of the main active classes of the society. Obviously, the merchants, before anything, were trying to secure their own business and benefits. However, the significant historical fact is that within this era, this organized council of merchants was one of the two main wings of opposition forces; and at that historical situation, the general direction of their movement was towards change and progress (the other group of opponents was the new educated class). Therefore, the very existence of Merchants Assembly essentially contradicted the existing system, and its confrontation with two outdated, ancient systems was inevitable: the political power of rulers manifested in the governance of Zel-ol –Soltan, and the religious authority of the the clergy. The fate of this assembly was clear from its very inception: either the governing system of Zel-ol-Sultan would topple, or the Assembly of Merchants should cease to exist. The simultaneous existence of the two was in violation of the logic of history, because the type of Zel-ol-Sultan governance was, by definition, incorrigible (Adamiyat, 1977: 369-370).

Tobacco Movement: the Fruit of temporary coalition among intellectuals, the clergy, and the merchants against Monarchy

As we move closer to Tobacco Movement which set the scene for Constitutionalist Revolution, the efforts of the above - mentioned active social forces to form a coalition against the Monarchy as their common enemy intensifies. In this period, one can point to essays and treatise on reconciling Islamic and modern ideas. One of the most significant instances of such endeavors of intellectuals to move closer to the clergy can be seen in Mirza Yousef Khan Mustashar-ol-dauleh Tabrizi treatise, "One Word". He was among the progressive figures of Naserid era, a close friend of Mirza Hossein Khan Sepahsalar and mirza Melkom Khan, and wrote this treatise in 1869 while serving as Iranian Councillor in Paris. In this treatise, he translated the Universal declaration of Human and Citizens` rights that was approved after the victory of French Revolution in 1789, and tried to show its compatibility with the Quranic verses and Traditions. At the beginning, he had chosen "The Spirit of Islam" as its title (Adamiyat, 1970:155). On the 5th of October 1869, in a letter to Mirza Fathali Akhound Zadeh on this treatise he wrote:

[In this treatise], I have presented some Quranic verses , Traditions and arguments for progress and civilization , so that nobody can claim that such things are against Islam or Islam prevents progress and civilization (quoted from Adamiyat, 1970: 155).

Furthermore, some indications of such efforts can be seen in the Freemason Society. The composition of the likely members of this society testifies this: In addition to some progressive intellectuals, and progressive figures such as Djalal-iddin Mirza, some men of letters including Mirza Abolhassan Djelveh and Mirza Djafar Hakim elahi, and also probably some high ranking clergy such as Sayed Muhammad Sadegh Tabatabaei and Sayed Zein-ol-din, Tehran Imam of Friday Prayers were among members of this society (Katiraei, 1976:70; Amanat, 2006:477). Also, in a treatise titled "Notebook of Freemason`s Lodge", attributed to Melkom Khan, which is a response to the criticisms targeted at this society, it is written:

Whenever there is a person who without any arrogancewithout taking any action against religious laws, and without any interference in religious affairs, changes the Muslims discord to harmony, enhances the zeal of the religion and the state, reduces the pride and arrogance of the mighty, and consoles the weak, removes the age-old disputes and turns enmity and vice to unity and sincerity in a single gathering..... And makes for strengthening the religion and the state through unity of the leaders and the wise, what punishment shall await him in your religion? (The Freemason`s notebook, quoted from Katiraei, 1976:17). He then continues:

I swear to the Holy nature of God of all worlds, to my religion, and to His Excellency the Last prophet, and to the holy Imams and all prophets of the world that our intention does not have the slightest incompatibility with the Islamic sharia, and all we have told or done, are for strengthening Islam and enhancing its glory and splendor. Also I swear and take 500 fair Muslims to testify that there have never been, and will never be any intention in this society, except moderation, piety, loyalty to government, and goodness for Muslims (Freemasons Notebook; quoted from Katiraei, 1977:174).

As can be seen, in this text, while referring to the goals of this society, Melkom emphasizes on its commitment to principles of Islam, as if this society was merely established to realize these ideals for Muslem society, and on top of that, one of the most important goals of this society has been to realize "Community". But the community in this text is translated into "the unity of all muslims". Therefore, one can feel the harmony between Melkom and Sayed Djamal-id-din Asadabadi, years before their probable cooperation in Ghanoun Daily, and recognize Melkom Khan`s efforts as one of the most prominent intellectual figures of that time, for unision with the clergy that was clearly realized in Tobacco crisis. In this relation, we cannot overlook the significant role played by Sayed Djamal-id-din Asadabadi, who due to familiarity with the ideas and prominent figures of both groups and his significant influence in their circles is considered as one of the important intermediaries for linking these two groups. The gradual changes in the contents of Ghanoun Daily, from issue 18 ti 34, were rooted in these linkages and went so far that in its 26th issue, "the spiritual leader of the nation" found a higher status than the King and the ruling government was considered as opposing Islam.

Therefore, despite all their conflicts, intellectuals and the religious men joined forces against the state, which had monopolized the power, and came to an agreement on fighting despotism for redistribution of power. From one hand, intellectuals tried to approach the clergy through accommodating Islamic thoughts with modern ideas, and from the other side, the clergy abandoned their disputes with intellectuals and supported them. In the reminder of this paper, we try to describe the Tobacco Movement that was the fruit of a coalition among these rival social

forces, whose outcome, according to some, became the first manifestation of emergence and rise of "nation" as an active social force (Nazem-ol-Eslam Kermani, 2005:13; Malek Zadeh, 2004:95).

Tobacco crisis was the outcome of sale of another monopoly right (this time to Major Talbot of England) by Naser-iddin Shah. In 1889, Talbot acquired the unique right to 50- year monopoly of distribution and export of Tobacco against payment of 25000 Pounds to the King, annual rental of 15000 Pounds, and payment of 25% of its profits to Iran" (Abrahamian, 1998:110).

As put by Ashraf (1980), "this monopoly seriously jeopardized the material gains of hundreds of merchants, dealers and traders involved in different stages of production, preparation, transaction, and exportation of this product..... the Tobacco merchants immediately rose to protest and seriously mobilized the forces of market in Tehran, Tabriz, Mashad, Esfahan, Yazd, Shiraz, and other cities" (Ashraf, 1980:111). The merchants in Tabriz prevented the operations of that company; Hadj Muhammad Hossein Tadjer in Esfahan torched his tobacco warehouse instead of selling its tobacco to that company; the market of Shiraz, which was one of the main areas for the cultivation of tobacco, was shut down (Ashraf, 1980:111). Such news was transmitted to other cities through telegraph and expanded the strike to other cities (Abrahamian, 1998:94). Gradually, the Clergy and even intellectuals like Melkom Khan and Sayed Djamal and also the Royal Harem joined the protests. These pressures ultimately forced Naser-iddin Shah to cancel this contract. However, there are different analyses regarding the social forces influential in this movement. For instance, although Kasravi and Nazem – ol-Eslam Kermani see the role of the clergy as more significant (Kasravi, 1997:16; Nazem –ol-Eslam Kermani, 2005:11-12), Yahya Doulat Abadi believes that the Russians who saw this contract against their interest, lured Kamran Mirza the Viceroy by bribery and he used Mirza Hassan Ashtyani as the middleman to obtain the Fatwa for sanctioning Tobacco use from Mirza Shirazi, and ultimately, by cancelling this privilage:

This causes Mirza Shirazi to obtain a higher status among the clergy. Any clergyn who supports disturbing Regie business and in this way stands against the state , no matter how insignificant in the eyes of the masses and within the ranks of the clergy, turns into a source of authority and enjoys benefits of full affiliation with Mirza Shirazi (Doulat Abadi, 1992:105-111).

Adamiyat, too, sees the movement as an indication of the active role of merchants' leadership and claims:

The merchants class took the protests initiative and without denying the participation of other classes, played a decisive role in this regard. This nullifies the conventional view of all foreign authors, especially American teachers that are more indigent than others, that consider this movement as an initiative of the clergy. (Adamiyat, 1977:371).

The intellectuals played a very significant role in this movement. Their leaflets, declarations, and papers were very instrumental in disclosing the goals of this contract and provoking the clergy and merchants to react. For instance, we can point to the article that Mirza Agha Khan Kermani published in Akhtar Daily, criticizing this contract (Torabi Farsani, 2005:101).In this relation, the decisive role played by Sayed Djamal in the success of this movement deserves special attention. The letter he wrote in this regard to Mirza Shirazi had a very decisive role in provoking him to take a firm position against this contract (Torabi Farsani, 2005: 102).This role was so significant that Etemad-ol-Saltaneh writes:" ... the Tobacco revolt and the Fatwa of Mirza were surely the result of this letter...."(Etemad-ol-Saltaneh, 2000:783).

However, in the last analysis, it seems that in fact none of the above-mentioned forces, neither the merchants, nor the clergy, nor the intellectuals can be credited as the unique pioneers of this movement. This victory was perhaps the result of activism and dynamic collaboration of these three social forces in provoking each other and bringing the " nation" into the scene. No doubt, this collaboration was neither steady nor comprehensive. For instance, at the beginning of the activities of Regie Company, some merchants, chief among them Hadj Amin- ol-Zarb, not only did not oppose it, but also cooperated with it (Torabi Farsani, 2005:103-104). Furthermore, some of the clergy and religious scholars, such as the Mujtahids of Mashad and some of the seminarians of Mirza Shirazi who were against his intervention in this problem, (Torabi Farsani, 2005:109) and Sayed Abdollah Behbahani (Doulat Abadi, 1992:109; Nazem-ol-Eslam Kermani, 2005:14) did not cooperate with protestors. Malek Zadeh believes that the Regie Company had lured Behbahani into silence (Malek Zadeh, 2004:95).There were also some intellectuals who supported this contract in their articles (Doulat Abadi, 1992:106-107). But generally, it can be said that this collaboration existed among the main body of these three social forces which have turned into active forces in these circumstances. As Abrahamian (1998) puts it:

This crisis, unveiled the fundamental developments that occurred in Iran during the 19th century, and indicated that now the local riots can expand into public upheavals. ... and the king, contrary to his claims, is only a boaster. Therefore, objections to Tobacco Monopoly was in fact an exercise for the upcoming constitutionalist Revolution (Abrahamian, 1998:95).

Looking directly into this collaboration among the above forces, it can be claimed that the modern intellectual ideals, were realized through the influence of the the clergy, who could directly mobilize the masses through the pulpit and sanction (Nadjafi, 1992) , and through the merchants and tradesmen who were interacting with a vast section of the masses. However, this collaboration was dynamic and dialectical, none of these forces were uni-functional, and the interactions among them were mutual rather than unilateral. In fact, that was how, as Mirza Saleh (2005) puts it, " all have understood that attaining their goals requires organization around the social elites, listening to them, and following their motos and guidelines, or in fact, their own detached brain"(Mirza Selaeh, 2005:20), and this, with the collaboration of intellectuals, the clergy and merchants, caused the nation to show its power in Iran. Torabi Farsani (2005) summarizes his evaluation of the movement:

The Regie event was the most significant social movement before Constitutionalism. Although it was apparently a social protest against an economic monopoly, in fact it was a political experience for intimacy and cooperation among different social strata... that appeared like imposition of public opinion on the government. Such a vivid, serious and vast opposition to the Ghajar Monarchy was unprecedented before Tobacco Sanction (Torabi Farsani, 2005:99).

Therefore, in the period studied in this research, the Tobacco movement shall be credited as the first maneuver of "nation "in Iran`s social and political arena made through the coalition of three active social forces , i.e, intellectuals, the clergy, and the merchants, and entered Iranian socio-political scene. This coalition was basically a temporary, tactical coalition against their common enemy, monarchy, which broke in the midst of Constitutionalist movement and resulted in the realization of hegemonic project of intellectuals.

In other words, it can be said that in this era, we witnessed some endeavor to form a coalition of social forces against the internal despotism. The focal point for this coalition was fighting with despotism, and its components were religion and modernity. The religious forces were standing at one end of this spectrum, the constitutionalist forces were standing at the other end and merchants worked as intermediaries. The outcome of this coalition, as Smith (1971) puts it, was the configuration of a kind of reformist force that was seeking to combine religion and modernity, which, of course, was a spectrum in itself, with intellectuals closer to constitutionalism at one end, and religiously minded intellectuals at the other.

In fact, in this situation, the intellectuals , with collaboration of the the clergy intended to change the power structure and were seeking redistribution of power in the society through calling the masses to stand up against internal monarchy: a coalition, which according to Brass (1985), was inevitable if the intellectuals were to enjoy a share in the power market, and based on Nairn theory(1981), it requires the presence of "nation " as well, because this force is the only reservoir for intellectuals to stand against the government, in a situation where the government has monopolized all sources of power. Nevertheless, Melkom Khan`s speech in 1891 for some English noblemen, clearly reveals the transitional nature of the above coalition between the clergy and intellectuals; the gap that appeared after they overcome their common enemy in the midst of Constitutionalist movement. In this speech, Melkom recommends that while acquiring civilization from the West, it shall be pretended that their principles are rooted in Islam (Ringer, 2006:239). In this speech he says:

... No doubt access to your civilization is among our goals as well .but instead of acquiring them from London or Paris, instead of announcing that it has come from this ambassador or that state(which will never be accepted) we can easily obtain them and claim that they are rooted in Islam....We have such an experience. We have noticed that ...such ideas are accepted wholeheartedly if it is proved that their origin lies in Islam.... Instead of telling that we have adopted these ideas from Europe, England, France or Germany, we can say: we have nothing to do with Europeans; these are the real values of our own religion, while they are, in reality, taken from Europeans. (Qouted from Azodnlou, 2001:137).

Presenting an Explanatory Model

It seems that we can take an extended discursive approach for explaining the struggles of rival social forces in social arena. This approach requires looking at this issue through a language perspective. Therefore, the contents of the linguistic signifiers which are the object of struggles of these social forces shall be extracted. But the linguistic text, as Zelic Harris puts it, is not confined to single words , phrases, clauses and sentences and includes

units larger than sentence(Harris, 1952).From this perspective, exploration of linguistic texts requires a discursive approach to language and linguistic texts. Through such an approach, we can move from sentence and its elements to text and from form to meaning, and at the same time, focus on situational context, motivation of the actors who create the text, and the normative rules governing it. Furthermore, through relying on Discourse theory and employing a contextual outlook, we can concentrate on factors such as power and ideology and resistance as well as linguistic factors. It is worth mentioning that such an approach basically contrasts with essentialist approaches (Calhoun, 1997:18-20). Therefore, by relying on recent interpretations, discourse can be seen as a collection of discourse /text fragments that are produced in the heart of a social context, are determined through the same context, and make survival of that social context possible. Thus, the social context plays a decisive role in the development, maintenance, and dissemination of discourses. Therefore, discourse means a "relational totality" composed of signifying threads which form a relatively coherent framework for what can be said and actions that may be performed"(Torfing, 1999:300).The following characteristics that are extracted from the ideas of scholars of discourse theory, are significant:

- Discourses are social in nature.
- Discourses are essentially dialogic (McDonnel, 2003:19; Mills, 2003:20-25; Fairclough, 2000).
- Discourses are vehicles for representing power relations and resistance (McDonnel, 2003:19; Mills, 2003:20-25; Fairclough, 2000).
- Discourses are formulated based on Naturalization and Exclusion approaches (McDonnel, 2003:19; Mills, 2003:20-25).
- Discourses are based on floating signifiers which exist in the intra-textual realm. (Torfing, 1999:301).

Relying on these features, every discourse shall be seen as a dynamic, fluid concept which is formulated during conflicts and struggles and through exertion of power and resisting against it, which are influenced by extra-textual social structures and at the same time, affect these structures. The methodological framework which , at the first sight, seems to be appropriate , is " Critical Discourse analysis" .but through examining this method, specially by focusing on Norman Fairclough ideas in "Critical Discourse Analysis in Practice: A Description "(Fairclough, 2000:167-212) and " Critical Discourse Analysis in Practice: Interpretation and Explanation" (Fairclough, 2000:213-252), we find out that although this approach aims at explaining the mechanisms for creation, proliferation and transformation of meaning , but it focuses on explanation of representations of Macro-social structures in linguistic texts, and cannot analyze the social structures in which such texts are created and transformed.

Therefore, one can refer to Robert Wuthnow`s theory of culture production in his "Communities of Discourse"(1989) (Meheain, 2007). Wuthnow intends to present an extra-textual analysis of meaning formation and transformation process through examining the social situations, explain the intra-textual space which results in plurality of meanings through exploring social processes, and analyze the contents of linguistic signifiers from an inter-textual perspective by investigating the social horizons , discursive fields and figural actions .However, what he describes in "communities of Discourse(1989)while examining religious reforms, renaissance and European Socialism are halted at inter and intra textual level and fail to produce a convincing inter-textual analysis. Nevertheless, the proposed model (Figure 1) for explaining the struggle between social forces may include the following:

1. Inter-textual investigation: this part consists of reviewing the linguistic texts produced by the competing social forces. Through such an investigation, the nodal points articulated in competing discourses can be extracted.
2. Intra-textual study: Since inter-textual study requires comparing texts that are produced in the ideological realms of competing social forces, it requires entering the realm of intra-textuality as well. It is through this study that discursive contrasts among rival forces are revealed. Such conflicts set in motion the processes of production, selection, and institutionalization of contents of nodal points of competing discourses and set the scene for their hegemony.
3. Extra-textual studies: this section consists of exploration of social structures that prepare the background for formulation of the above linguistic texts. In this study, we focus on historical, economic, political and cultural data, and describe the environmental conditions, institutional contexts, and action sequences.

Summary and Conclusion

The period under study in this paper, more or less coincides with the outbreak of protests and strikes under the leadership of Sayed Mohammad Tabatabaei and Sayed Abdolah Behbahani against Nouze, the Belgian head of

Iran Customs house in 1905 which paved the way for emergence of Tobacco Movement. In this era, three social forces were actively involved in the socio-political scene of Iran: independent intellectuals, traditional followers of religion, and merchants. Based on the explanatory model presented in this paper, the struggle among these forces can be summarized as follows:

Environmental conditions

Generally, the environmental conditions including economic, political and cultural conditions which were instrumental in activating competing social forces at the advent of the Constitutionalist movement can be summarized as below:

- Economic conditions: Integration of Iran to World Economy
- Recession of local economy due to integration in world economy, which was rooted in both international and internal developments and government decisions.
- Planning and execution of modern economic plans such as Assembly of Commerce, Assembly of Merchants Representatives, Rail road, Graveled roads and telegraph
- Political conditions: The cleavages in the Power Scene
- The mounting upheavals and movements by different social forces, and their transformation to active social forces. This gave rise to a political legitimacy crisis for the ruling system and ultimately, resulted in serious confrontation with it during Constitutionalist Revolution.
- Emergence of "Nation" as a floating social force.
- Cultural conditions: Plurality and Diversity
- Familiarity of different social groups with modern Western ideas.

Institutional Contexts

The above environmental conditions provided the resources conforming to institutional contexts which served as the background for rival social forces to formulate the above interpretations of nation. These contexts consisted of the following:

- Independent and critical newspapers inside Iran and abroad
- Print houses
- Telegraph
- Modern public schools
- Secret and semi-secret associations

These institutional contexts made internal and external communications among social forces possible and consequently, paved the way for their opposition, unity and conflicts.

Processes

In the environmental conditions we described above, the increase in newspapers, in terms of quantity, quality and genres, and establishment of modern schools resulted in the formation of a plurality of "ideological fields" which enabled competition between different forces. Such conditions enabled the actors to "select" "from among different alternatives. The supportive approach of government to publication of newspapers and books, establishment of schools, and expansion of postal service and telegraph, control of censorship and liberalization, and to some extent, the establishment of secret and semi-secret associations in some parts of the above period, that could be institutionalized through its continuation, made this selection possible. In this era, from among different competing ideas, the social actors supported religious ideas, and were inclined towards subjects that were an amalgamation of modern and religious subjects (such as those of Melkom Khan and Sayed Djamal) and thus, turned into active subjects. In this era, the genres, styles and forms that were easily understandable were in vogue.

The Chains of Actions

These communicative institutions marked the inception of chains of actions that culminated in efforts to replace the existing moral system with a new one; the rapid expansion of the riots and revolts and collaboration of social forces in this era can be explained on this basis. Such sequences of actions finally resulted in the mobilization of the masses which was made possible through the coalition of intellectuals, the clergy, and merchants for confronting the state forces.

But it shall be borne in mind that although the above environmental conditions and the resultant institutional contexts were linked to modern ideas and paved the way for their emergence, at the same time, they promoted resistance against them and finally resulted in departure from them. For instance, the modernization process that started in Sepahsalar era culminated in the organization of merchants in a modern institution (The Assembly of Merchants Representatives) to oppose this process.

Nodal points

The distinctive elements of intellectual discourse which are articulated in relevant texts can be summarized as follows:

- The nation as an awakened people
- Intellectualism
- Opposition to monarchy

The distinctive elements of religious discourse as articulated in relevant texts are summarized below:

- A submissive and obedient nation
- the pivotal role of the clergy
- opposition to monarchy

In the last analysis, it can be said that the common opposition of intellectual, religious, and market forces to government forces set the scene for coalition of these three forces in spite of the existence of fundamental conflicts between intellectuals and the clergy, and this same coalition, mobilized the nation and brought them to the socio-political scene. But it did not last for long, and on the verge of the victory of Constitutionalist Revolution and intellectuals endeavor to monopolize the power, resulted in serious struggles which, shortly, set in chaos in The Constitutionalist system and set the scene for establishment of another monarchy in a society that in return for security and peace, was ready to accept any tyrant. In this way, after a short while, the vicious circle of despotism/chaos/despotism was repeated again in Iranian history (Katouzian, 1993a, 1995)

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