

could potentially achieve gradually. Surprisingly household savings already seem to have begun rising in the past year.

In the present crisis atmosphere, many nations may over-regulate and impose excessive restrictions on financial activities that would be detrimental to future growth. There is also the danger that the large injection of liquidity in the United States and in other advanced countries to jump-start their economies will lead to hyperinflation in two to three years' time, which would then require a sharp tightening of monetary policy.

CONCLUSION

Eventually this crisis will end as all crises do. The important question then becomes: will growth in advanced countries, especially in the United States, be rapid or slow? In short, will there be growth or stagnation after recession? Of course, no one can know for sure, but it is likely that some of the growth factors of the last decade will be weaker during this new decade. Specifically, the deregulation process is going into reverse and there will certainly be less financial innovation as drivers of growth during this decade compared to the last decade. The United States may also learning to live within its means by saving more and spending less; by so doing it would remove about \$500 billion of U.S. imports from global demand.

On the other hand, the continued rapid application of information technology is likely to continue to provide as important a stimulus to growth as it did during the past decade. Some emerging markets, especially China and India, are likely to continue to grow very rapidly and provide a strong stimulus to growth. These positive growth factors may be sufficient to overcome the negative growth factors, but we will have to wait and see to determine if they will be sufficient to propel the world economy toward high and sustained growth in the future.

The Peter and Katherine Tomassi Essay THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION: ASSESSING THE POWER, INFLUENCE AND SOCIAL POSITION OF SHIITE ULAMA IN IRAN, 1890–1979

José Ciro Martinez

It was an oft-unrecognized assumption of modernization theory, the dominant social science paradigm of the 1960s and 1970s, that the character and trajectory of historical change was both universal and unilinear. Drawing mainly on the work of Max Weber,¹ scholars such as David Apter, Seymour Martin Lipset, and Middle East expert Daniel Lerner argued that economic growth, capitalism, urbanization, and the impact of Western cultural forms were essential factors for democratic development and would result in the eradication of primitive or traditional forms of societal organization and everyday life. In response to this historical advance, religious piety and conviction (both on a personal and societal level) in places like the Middle East would be radically reduced if not eliminated, all as part of a teleological process of disenchantment. Then, Weber's "traditional forms of authority" would slowly erode and full-blown rationalization of government and society would follow. It is thus not surprising that the events of 1978–79 and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran stunned many of the scholars who, in the period following Muhammad Reza Shah's "White Revolution," predicted a decline in the *ulama's* power and the inevitable triumph of secularism and means-end rationality.²

¹ Although most modernization theorists draw much of their theoretical arguments from the work of Weber, I argue that their usage of his texts in explaining historical change relies on a fundamental misreading of his work. Although the rationalization of economic forms and daily activities does erode and eventually eliminate many of the time-honored forms of life and authority seen in 'traditional' society, this process is not inevitable. Indeed I argue that Weber's entire book aims to explain how odd this transition is and why it has, until 1905, mostly confined itself to Britain and the United States.

² Nikki Keddie, a close and careful scholar of Iranian history, was as swayed by José Martinez is a senior at Williams College majoring in Political Science and History. He will pursue a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship for independent study outside of the United States after graduation.

Modernization theory proved ill-equipped to explain the reemergence of religious actors and Islamist political forms in the public arena during what these theorists often described as the modern age. Certain schools of thought, most prominently represented by the work of historian Bernard Lewis, saw the Middle East as an exceptional region, due primarily to the nature of Islam, unique in its rejection of modernity and rationality (Lewis 2002). In making sense of the Iranian Revolution, many of these authors decided not to grapple with the historical roots of the actors that helped bring about this seemingly inconceivable event. Instead, they described it as “mystifying,” and especially hard to understand as Iranians had apparently decided to “demand less freedom and fewer material things” (Wright 1988). Other, more perceptive and well-read critics have resorted to describing the innovative political strategies and theological justifications used by Ayatollah Khomeini and his allies as representing some kind of return to a Shiite fundamentalism more reminiscent of the Middle Ages than the late twentieth century.

Following the theoretical framework employed by Ervand Abrahamian, this work aims to elucidate the diverse and distinctive populist, nationalist, and Islamist tendencies and strategies employed by the nominal leader of the Iranian Revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini (Abrahamian 1982). It does this by exploring the historical role of the clerical class in Iran, a country with a large Shiite majority.³ By utilizing the theories of political development and state building employed by Barrington Moore and Charles Tilly, we have the tools to better examine and comprehend the influence and power of the Shiite *mujtahids* (Shiite religious scholars who are empowered to interpret legal issues

modernization theory as her Eurocentric counterparts: “The position of the *ulama* seems bound to continue in general decline as literacy, secular schools and scientific education spread.” Nikki Keddie, “The Iranian Power Structure and Social Change 1800-1969: An Overview,” in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2, vol.1 (January 1971), 3-20; Nikki R. Keddie, “The Roots of the *Ulama’s* Power in Modern Iran” in *Studia Islamica* 29 (1969), 31-53.

³ According to the CIA World Factbook, Iran’s population has a Shiite supermajority of 89 percent.

not explicitly addressed in Quran), a topic that has confounded many analysts and policymakers. Through an examination of the position of Shiite clerics in relation to both the dominant mode of production and the processes of state-making, the *ulama* are unmasked and revealed as to be a social category or occupational group⁴ defined by its distinctive religious and occupational functions that has proven to be ideologically malleable, intellectually flexible, and concretely responsive to the political, economic, and social milieu that surrounds it.⁵

Although our task is limited to explaining the variation in *mujtahid* influence over the past century, this work will contribute to the literature on Twelver Shiite forms, the role of Iranian *ulama* in Iran’s politics and foreign policy. It informs U.S. and Western foreign policy-makers who are interested in the power structure of a country that may be pursuing a nuclear weapons capability. My findings directly challenge the popular narrative that portrays Islamic revolutionaries and overtly Shiite political actors as ideologically-driven, religious fanatics.

METHODOLOGY

I employ macro-historical analysis to evaluate the role and social position of clerical elites in relation to political formations, class actors, and state institutions in the prelude to the Iranian Revolution of 1978–79. In doing so, I focus on two major historical events: the Tobacco Revolt of 1891–92 and the Iranian Revolution of 1978–79. I seek to “frame the analytical problem and suggest causal ideas that are evaluated and explored through a within-case analysis.”

⁴ Some prefer the latter term because it helps capture the notion of craft consciousness. I will employ the former throughout the essay as I feel it is more attuned to relations of production and consumption.

⁵ My definition of a social category (and its application to the Shiite *ulama*) relies on the work of Mansoor Moadell for its empirical grounding and on Nico Poulantzas’s conceptualization of the term, for its theoretical underpinnings. Poulantzas defines social categories as “social ensembles with ‘pertinent effects,’ which may become social forces whose distinguishing feature is based on their specific and over-determining relation to the structures other than economic ones.”

Shiism will be theorized as one among a number of constructed identities that need to be equally generated, adopted and used for mobilization by every new generation (Cole 2005, 2–3). When analyzing Shiite religious elites, this account will examine the role played by material, political, and coercive structures and circumstances on the social position of Shiite religious elites.⁶

This investigation begins by defining the universe of cases to clarify the scope of its empirical categories while refining the concepts—social categories, social position, coercion, capital, and state-making—in usage. I then use the critical juncture technique,⁷ close knowledge of cases, and within-case analysis to establish scope restrictions on my findings, limiting possible causal mechanisms and links to the case-studies themselves while positing a broader theory for analyzing religious actors in Shiite societies. I employ “contextualized comparison” (Locke and Thelen 1995, 337–367) and qualitative content analysis to collect data and increase measurement validity. Next, I re-employ within-case analysis (mainly to evaluate hypothesis by revealing intervening processes and other observable implications of arguments) and the critical juncture framework to assess historical causation (Munch 2004, 111–119). After iterated refinement to modify my hypotheses, I find that the substantial amount of explanatory variables necessitated a detailed, case-oriented analysis. I argue that chronology and the use of narrative is crucial to contextually-based judgment and for establishing plausible causal links in a comparative macro-historical research.

Through this multi-faceted methodological approach, I explain the emergence of Shiite religious actors in Iran during two particular historical events or political conjunctures. I do this through the use of general concepts and approaches, thus refuting the predominant literature concerning political development in the Middle East that takes the region’s religion and culture as its start-

6 In this respect, the work relies on the insights of Talal Asad, who describes religious tradition and theology as a set of arguments and debates that are a product of a dynamic social construction instead of a static and unchanging object of transmission.

7 My use of the framework leans more towards its usage by R. Collier and D. Collier (2002) than Capoccia and Kelemen (2007) who focus on individual agency and selection versus structural antecedents in institutional choice.

ing point of analysis. By focusing on a group of the most explicitly religious social actors in a majority-Muslim country, this essay will disprove flawed understandings of the nature of political authority in Shiism and Islam while undermining the common theological or culturalist explanations that are often cited as explaining the lack of democracy, secularism, or ‘modernity’ in the Islamic world (Berman 2003, 257–272). Ultimately, I argue for the failure of Islamic-based exceptionalism or a religious or ethnically based essentialism as an explanatory variable in the Middle East by consciously employing canonical works in comparative politics to the analysis of the region, an area of the world that is often neglected and wholly under-theorized in this literature.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE ULAMA’S POWER IN THE QAJAR PERIOD (1794–1925)

After the eighteenth century, the *ulama* that dominated Twelver Shiite approaches to Islamic jurisprudence and participate in historically significant roles in Iraqi and Iranian politics were followers of a particular brand of Shiism. Labeled as Usulism, this school of thought stresses the use of independent legal judgment, or *ijtihad*, by a group of competent Shiite religious scholars, or *mujtahids*. Usulis believed that *mujtahids* could serve as the surrogates deputies of the hidden Imam during the *ghayba*, or occultation.⁸ It

8 The Akhbari-Usuli debate represents a long-existing schism between the two main legal schools of thought in Twelver Shiism. During the Imamate (660-871), Shiites placed all spiritual authority in the hands of the divine Imam. When the Imamate ended as a worldly institution (this occurred when the twelfth Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, goes into hiding), Shiites experienced what numerous analysts have called a crisis of authority. Twelver Shiism left no explicit designation for temporal or spiritual power after the disappearance of the Imam; in response, Shiite theologians put forward two chief responses. The Akhbaris, also known as traditionalists or literalists, were willing to see certain crucial Muslim customs (authorization of Friday prayers, collection of taxes, designation of religious leaders, etc.) lapse in the absence of the spiritual figure of the Imam. They rejected any use of *ijtihad* and promoted the *Quran* and the hadith as the only legitimate sources of law (hence their neglect for rituals not explicitly contained in these two works). They claimed that the Imams were the only true *Ayatollahs*, rejecting and even cursing the historically novel position of *mujtahid*. In contrast, the ‘rationalist’ Usulis believed that a group of Shiite religious scholars could stand as the surrogate or deputy of the Imam during the *ghayba* or Occultation. Nevertheless, Usulis differ in terms of their position on the clerics’

promotes *taqlid* or imitation, the worshippers' practice of following rulings on religious and personal matters made by their *mujtahids*.

While I disagree with most interpretations that trace the triumph of Usulim to the beginning of the Qajar dynasty, it is undeniable that processes of historical development and state-building were crucial in consolidating the triumph of Usulism towards the end of the eighteenth century.⁹ Usulism's emphasis on a hierarchical, legalistic form of Shiism along with its legitimization of state-related functions (including but not limited to tax collection, juridical functions, and defensive holy war) made it far more amenable to the needs or rising rulers in places as varied as Iran and North India (Cole 1986, 461–480; Nakash 1994, 443–463; Satia 2007, 211–255). Consequently, this theological and philosophical approach allowed the Shiite clergy to ally with local rulers and monarchs on favorable terms, often resulting in expansion of their landholdings and close ties to the royal court and aristocracy.

Mostly of nomadic descent, the Qajar dynasty lacked both the bureaucratic apparatus and the necessary legitimacy to rule the expansive Persian plateau. Much like their European counterparts, the Qajars decided to rely on religious groups (in this case, the Usuli *ulama*) to perform educational, judicial, and legitimating functions that were crucial to the statebuilding process (Algar 1980, 33–43; Moaddel 1986, 519–524). It is thus not surprising that as the Qajars began to consolidate their power at the end of the eighteenth century, the Usuli *ulama* began to establish, in conjunction with the state, their own exclusive spheres of religious

relationship to authority, although the dominant position since the beginning of the Qajar period has been to legitimize non-sharia based states while attempting to maintain certain levels of clerical autonomy.

9 In dating the triumph of Usuli approaches to Islamic jurisprudence in both Iran and Iraq, I mostly agree with Juan Cole (2005, 58–77), who traces this historical development to the end of the Zand era in Iran (1760–1780). Interestingly, the triumph of Usulism in the shrine cities of what is known today as Iraq was intimately tied to the decentralization and autonomy gained during the late Ottoman Empire. In contrast, Usulism in Iran was intimately tied to the state-building process under both the Zand and Qajar dynasty. This is not surprising given the historical role played by Usuli scholars in the Persian plateau, especially in legitimizing the temporal and religious position of Iran's first Shiite dynasty, the Safavids (1501–1722).

domination,¹⁰ making their joint emergence a “mutually reinforcing historical process” (Moaddel 1986, 522).

As a result of this complex historical process, the *ulama* of Iran cemented links to a variety of institutions and social classes. Negotiations between the *ulama* and the Qajars were made inevitable due to the Qajar's well-known inability to centralize power (as in Weber's modern state¹¹) and the *ulama*'s relatively high level of capital accumulation compared to other Iranian social classes. This makes the institutionalization of certain forms of *ulama* power hardly a shocking development.¹² The need for financial and juridical autonomy and patronage resulted in the creation of a functional tie between the Shiite religious elites and the newly created Qajar state. Structurally, the *ulama*'s societal position as large landholders and owners (especially in the case of the high ranking *mujtahids*)¹³ created a host of shared interests between them and 'feudal' or landholding elites.¹⁴ Finally, a substantial portion of

10 Throughout most of the Qajar period, Usuli *ulama* held firm control of the educational and juridical apparatus.

11 Defined by Weber as a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory (Weber 1997).

12 Indeed, Tilly would find the *ulama*'s power during the Qajar period to be a classic example of why, despite obvious interests to the contrary, rulers would accept the establishment of certain institutions representing or claiming to represent important social classes within their jurisdiction. The Qajars' lackluster tax collection, lack of substantial coercive means, and constant battles with the Ottomans and Russians made their dependence on the *ulama*? all the more acute.

13 High-ranking *mujtahids* were often privy to ties with the *bazaar* (usually through family connections) and highly dependent on the taxes and donations of merchants, the petty bourgeoisie and the Qajar dynasty. In contrast, lower ranking *ulama* were usually bereft of access to wealth or sources of patronage with little landowning privileges. They were generally more attuned to the needs and wants of the lower classes and were more willing than their senior counterparts to incite rebellions and local uprisings. As Moaddel points out, “the intense struggle between landlord and peasant that occurred in the mid-nineteenth century had an integrating effect on the *ulama*-state relationship while it created a somewhat horizontal division between the high- and low- ranking *ulama*. A considerable portion of the low ranking *ulama* supported the cause of the peasants and the urban poor” (Moaddel 1986, 524).

14 The increase in *ulama* landownership is, to a certain extent, a legacy of the Safavid Empire, during which the composition of the landowning class saw a great increase in the amount held by religious elites. Pro-*ulama* policies of the Qajar rulers, especially after the suppression of the Babi movement in the mid-nineteenth century, saw an even greater

the *ulama's* revenues came from religious taxes (*khums* and *zakat*), donations and payments for juridical rulings, and intermediations made largely by the merchants of the *bazaar* and the traditional petty bourgeoisie. As a result, the *ulama* had an instrumental relationship to these two classes. Akin to developments in Europe during the state-building process, religious elites' ties to a diverse group of interests and social classes were the chief determinants of their political (and, to a certain extent, theological) positions and provided the main reason for agreements and disagreements among this heterogeneous group.¹⁵

As Barrington Moore points out, the English bourgeoisie had an economic base largely independent of the Tudor monarchy. The gentry and the nobility increasingly adopted capitalist tendencies and, after the end of the enclosure movement, did not have the same need for political power or influence as their European counterparts (Moore 1993, 3–39). Therefore, the bourgeoisie were able to gradually gain control of the state's institutions and began to direct government policies towards protecting domestic markets or to promote free trade in accordance with their shifting socio-economic interests. In contrast, the Qajar dynasty is a classic example of a weak state (with little coercive power or means of fiscal extraction) that came to rely on foreign interests and a heavy dose of patronage to perpetuate its rule (Eliash 1979; Keddie 1966; Hairi 1988; Moaddel 1986, 523–534). The Shah's court bore something of a resemblance to that of Louis XVI, where landholders and budding capitalists could only gain favor and economic privileges with the assistance of the sovereign. As a result, both the merchants and the petty bourgeoisie became increasingly marginalized, both politically and economically. Their common cause against the state

increase in the amount of land owned by a significant group of *ulama* (Lambton 1991, 129–50; Floor 2001, 1–36; Floor 1998, 522–24).

¹⁵ This is crucial to explaining the different political positions taken by *ulama* throughout Iranian history and seen clearly in events such as the 1906 Constitutional Revolution, the 1953 overthrow of Prime Minister Muhammad Mossadeq and during debates over the constitution of the Islamic Republic in 1979. The *ulama* have never been a homogenous group in terms of their political, economic or social outlook. Their varied interaction with a variety of class actors and coercive apparatuses ensures the heterogeneity of this social group.

and foreign interests—a recurring theme in Iranian history—came to the fore at the end of the nineteenth century in an event that is often remembered as the first major assertion of the *ulama's* temporal power.

RELIGION AND REBELLION IN QAJAR IRAN: THE TOBACCO PROTEST OF 1891–1892

The union of the merchant class and the traditional petty bourgeoisie against a common enemy was sparked by Nasir al-Din Shah's granting of a concession to Major G.F. Talbot in March of 1890 (Kazemzadeh 1968; Keddie 1966). The agreement gave Talbot a full monopoly over the sale, export, and production of tobacco in Iran for fifty years in exchange for an annual payment of fifteen thousand British pounds and 25 percent of annual profits (Keddie 1966, 34; Moaddel 1986, 528–530). The concession proved particularly damaging to the merchant class, a group that stood to lose a significant amount of income and prestige if the concession came into force. As major retailers of tobacco, the small-scale vendors and retailers were also wounded. Excluding the ruling elite, Iranian society was generally opposed to monopolies that were granted to foreigners.¹⁶ Slowly, a conflict began to crystallize between the court and British capitalists on the one hand and the tobacco merchants and dealers on the other. This helps to explain why the strongest provincial anti-Qajar movements broke out in the regions where the tobacco crop was most prevalent (Abrahamian 1982, 19–49; Keddie 1966, 65–66; Moaddel 1986, 529–530). The extent and intensity of the *ulama's* role in favor of the movement has been exaggerated in many scholarly accounts for numerous reasons (Keddie 1966; Algar 1980). Interestingly, the *ulama* were by no means

¹⁶ The tobacco crop was valuable not only for sale in domestic markets but because of its export to numerous foreign markets. Persian tobacco was highly valued in much of Western Europe. Peasants and members of the proletariat also mobilized at certain moments of the Protest due to their large presence in the tobacco industry (The industry employed around 200,000 people at the time of the Protest). (Mottahedeh 1985, 215–18; Keddie 1966, 65–6).

united over this issue.¹⁷ Although the Islamic Republic has gone to great pains to alter historical accounts of this crucial event, a closer examination of Shiite religious elites will prove their responsiveness to political and economic calculations.

Ayatollah Behbahani, one of the prominent jurists of Tehran, was a leading clerical opponent of the tobacco protests. Behbahani had well-known links to the Shah's prime minister, Amin us-Sultan, and is widely thought to have been bribed by the British (Moaddel 1986, 530). In addition, his reliance on court patronage, a product of his lack of a significant independent economic base and his residence in the imperial capital, provided him with little reason to participate in the movement.¹⁸ The clergy of Mashad had a history of intimate ties with the Qajar court (especially since its role in the suppression of the Babism in the 1850s) and was supported mostly by export merchants who largely depended on British markets and access to trade with India.¹⁹ This caused ayatollahs who had ties to Mashad, such as Shaykh Muhammad Rahim and Habibullah Hosseini, to become intolerant toward the "ruffians and rogues" once societal chaos threatened their economic position (Moaddel 1986, 528–532). The faction of the *ulama* that supported the concession were almost always those who had close ties with either the Qajar court, the British government, or both.

Although the *ulama* played a disproportionate role in the leadership of the Tobacco Protest, it is increasingly clear that those who participated were often financially dependent on the classes

¹⁷ Moaddel posits that, "the presence of diverse factions among the *ulama* over the tobacco concession is a matter of historical fact" (Moaddel 1986, 530).

¹⁸ The Behbahani family has a long history of supporting British goals in Iran. The Ayatollah Behbahani mentioned in this essay had a son who followed in his footsteps as a cleric and played a crucial role in opposing the oil nationalization objectives of Prime Minister Mossadegh. He is remembered fondly by royalists for his role in organizing hooligans and looting National Front headquarters on the eve of Operation Ajax, the 1953 coup d'état, organized by the American CIA and British MI6, which deposed the democratically elected government of Iran.

¹⁹ The opening of the Suez Canal allowed for the extensive import of cheap European goods into certain parts of Iran while providing the means for an unprecedented amount of exports of the region's main cash crops (cotton, opium, grapes, etc.) to the Persian Gulf region and India.

that comprised the backbone of the movement: merchants, the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry (Amanat 1988: 114–122). This is evidently the case with the author of the initial fatwa that banned the usage of tobacco, Grand Ayatollah Mirza Shirazi. Pressured by numerous clerical allies (most famously by Islamic modernist and philosopher Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani) who were vulnerable to the impact of the concession,²⁰ Shirazi also had crucial links to classes that would be affected by the concession such as the vibrant merchants and dealers of tobacco in Shiraz, the petty bourgeoisie of Samarra, and the financiers of Fars and Isfahan (Gilbar 1977, 282–288). Though initially uninvolved, there was eventually a considerable amount of pressure by merchants, peasants, and sympathetic *ulama* to increase the grand ayatollah's involvement. In due course, the lobbying worked. Its traces can be seen in Shirazi's letters to Nasir al-Din Shah, which reflected a clever combination of religious and merchant concerns.²¹ Bereft of real political power, the merchants and the petty bourgeoisie cleverly resorted to exerting pressure on the *ulama* class—an avenue that, if pressured enough, could lead to a confrontation with the Shah. It is hard to conceive of a successful Tobacco Protest without the pressure exerted by the *ulama* and their *bazaari*-linked supporters. In this case, a combination of societal pressure (exerted mostly through religious channels)²² and Nasir al-Din Shah's perception of British vacillation led to the cancellation of the concession in January of 1892.²³

²⁰ This is especially true of those *ulama* of Najaf and Karbala who had financial links with the tobacco producers of Lar and surrounding Iraqi regions.

²¹ Grand Ayatollah Shirazi's letter is quoted by Amanat as saying, "...why is it that today, for the sake of trifling profits and regardless of its corrupt consequences, they allow the infidels to dominate the livelihood and commerce of the Muslims? It was uncharacteristic of your royal prudence to permit your subjects, who indeed are abundant treasures of the state, to be deprived of controlling their own trade and business, and instead to bow to the subjugation of foreign pressures" (Amanat 1988, 120).

²² Iranian merchants are said to have shut down numerous *bazaars* in response to Shirazi's fatwa. Only following the Shirazi's legal ruling did the boycott receive broad-based support from the population. A popular myth claims that even the women of the Shah's harem quit smoking and refused to prepare him his water pipe (Nasr 2007, 122).

²³ In a matter of days, Shirazi issued a fatwa repealing his initial one and permitting the

COERCION, CAPITAL AND SOCIETY: CLERICAL ELITES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Iranian *ulama* had consolidated their position in society and had forcefully demonstrated their capacity to influence political debates and policies (Keddie 1966; Moaddel 1985, 529-552). Economic ties often led them to alliances with urban merchants, the petty bourgeoisie, and, far less frequently, the peasants. The *ulama* and the merchants each possessed substantial power bases that were largely independent from the Qajar monarchy with “religious direction and economic enterprise tending to complement each other” (Algar 1980, 236).²⁴ Due mainly to their social position and relative levels of capital accumulation, both the *ulama* and the merchants could periodically challenge a monarchy that had little coercive power and an even larger need for the tax revenues to which both groups contributed.

By employing Tilly’s conceptual framework regarding the state-building process, it becomes apparent why both the *ulama* and the merchants were hostile to both a centralized state apparatus that would tax them or a less intrusive apparatus that would grant generous concessions to foreigners. Clerical elites feared encroachments on their judicial power, educational functions, and economic position while the merchants were in the business of avoiding further taxation and regulation of their commercial affairs. For numerous reasons, both groups also saw European interference in Iran as inimical to their interests (Algar 1980, 234–237).²⁵ Much in the same way as the bourgeoisie and landed gentry joined forces in England to contest the power of the monarchy, the dan-

use of tobacco among the Shiite population (Mottahedeh 1985, 215–18).

24 This occurred in Iran for numerous reasons. The two most important factors are the *ulama*’s control of the educational and juridical apparatus. The former infused many merchants and *bazaaris* with Shiite religious values. Control over the judiciary meant that commercial practices were regulated by ordinances of the sharia that were, in effect, formulated and interpreted by the *mujtahids*.

25 The *ulama* feared the impact of European cultural norms on Iran’s religious values and the societal esteem in which the *ulama* were held. Merchants feared the typical repercussions that came with opening trade and granting concessions to wealthier, more economically developed states.

gers presented by increased tyranny in league with foreign powers prompted the *ulama* and the merchants to provide each other with support, assistance, and refuge. As Algar points out, “the sanctuary provided by the mosques was an ultimate refuge for the tyranny of the state, while the closure of the *bazaar* gave the *ulama* a powerful instrument of pressure on the government” (Algar 1980, 236). The *ulama-bazaari* alliance in Iran is a long-standing feature of the country’s social dynamic and its reemergence throughout the twentieth century should take no analyst by surprise. This partnership, not nearly as prevalent in post-Ottoman Iraq, is one of the most salient factors in explaining the divergence between clerical power in Iraq and Iran during the twentieth century.

KHOMEINI’S ‘GUARDIANSHIP OF THE JURISPRUDENT’ (VILAYAT-I FAQIH): THE ROOTS AND REASONS FOR THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION OF 1978–1979

In questioning both the historical emergence and the territorial location of the broad alliance that supported the Iranian Revolution, it is important to remember Iran’s status as the country with the largest proportion of Shiite Muslims. The Iranian *ulama* were able to gain the upper hand in both the prelude to and aftermath of the Revolution because they could draw on a super-majority of Iranians citizens (in contrast to Iraq’s sixty to sixty-five percent or Lebanon’s thirty to forty percent) to disseminate their political goals. Still, it is important to theorize why exactly Khomeini’s radically innovative theological position came to the fore at the time it did in the Iranian socio-political milieu and not, as a counter-factual, in nearby Iraq.²⁶ By relying on a close historical examination of *mujtahid* power and influence in Iran, we can better comprehend both the social origins, theological and political motivations, and goals of the opposition movement that emerged in the late 1970s

26 Ironically, Khomeini’s theory of the rule of the jurispudent is said to have developed during his time in exile (1965–1978) in the Iraqi holy city of Najaf. Given my analysis of the *mujtahids* position in this country, it is by no means surprising that Khomeini’s doctrine had little if any purchase in the country in which it was developed intellectually.

and eventually succeeded in dethroning the Shah.²⁷

After the ouster of Prime Minister Mossadeq in 1953, the newly restored Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi initiated social and economic programs substantially different from those pursued by his father. Like many developing countries in Latin America at the time, the Shah's policies consisted of a combination of import substitution industrialization—mostly making consumer durable goods—with a strong bias towards the large industrial and commercial classes (Moaddel 1986, 539–540). This move towards large-scale industry increased the economic marginalization of the traditional *bazaar* and undermined the small-scale industry of the petty bourgeois. Mounting state involvement in economic affairs, particularly in the agrarian sector, caused the emergence of a state-dependent bourgeoisie that was heavily tied to foreign capital. By 1963, land reform, along with the expansion in state credit institutions and the growth of a modern financial sector, further alienated the *bazaar* and landed elites (Graham 1979, 221).²⁸ Some accounts even trace the reemergence of the senior *mujtahids* on the political scene to their unyielding opposition to a land reform bill that had little real bite to it (Lambton 1969, 58; Moaddel 1986, 541–546).²⁹

This resistance is exemplified in the declarations of Grand Ayatollah Burujirdi at the time, and, ultimately, his successful efforts to block implementation of the effort until 1961. Under Reza Shah, the petty bourgeoisie was the class most antagonized by governmental policies. Under Muhammad Reza Shah and his post-1953 policies, it was not only the petty bourgeois but also the whole *bazaar*, especially consumers, and many landowning elites

²⁷ Muariqq al-Karaki (d. 1534), an 'Amili cleric of the early Safavid Empire, is the only other Shiite scholar said to have had anything remotely similar to Khomieni's position on the clerical role in governance. Recent findings make even this association highly doubtful as al-Karaki is now said to have wanted only a beefed up legislative function for the *ulama*.

²⁸ Interestingly, the Shah went so far as to endorse the physical demolition of the traditional *bazaar* in an attempt to establish newer, more 'modern' shopping centers modeled on those in the United States.

²⁹ Ann Lambton called the land reform bill little more than a "window dressing." We must remember that the senior *ulama* comprised a significant portion of the Iranian landowning class.

who felt increasingly disempowered (Pesaran 1982, 501–522). The marginalization of these social classes should be seen as a decisive factor in the growth of the motivational power and influence of the Shiite *mujtahids*, especially in the period following the White Revolution.³⁰ Many proto-Weberians, Seymour Martin Lipset chief among them, would have predicted a substantial decline in the power of traditional institutions and leaders, such as Shiite religious elites. However, in the aftermath of considerable economic development, it is increasingly clear that so-called "traditional" forms of authority may persist in situations where they are supported and linked to an array of social classes and interests.

Following the explosion in state revenues after the 1973 oil crisis, Muhammad Reza Shah further repressed his most fervent enemies while incorporating possible opponents in the growing professional classes into the state apparatus. For example, the Shah, along with his Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda, created the Rastakhiz party in early 1975 as the single political organization to which all Iranians had to belong. The party's compulsory dues and aggressive interference in the socio-economic spheres of many Iranians antagonized a number of social groups, especially Iranian *bazaaris* (Abrahamian 1982).³¹ The only two social spheres that can be said to have retained a certain, although minimal, degree of organizational and mobilization-related autonomy during this autocratic period were Shiite religious institutions and the local markets or *bazaars*. Following further repression and corrosion of their social position, the *bazaaris* and Shiite clergy responded to the grudging measures of political liberalization the Shah was pressured to adopt in early 1977 (Zubaida 2009, 64–81). In addition, the economic austerity measures taken to fight inflation and the flight of foreign investment by the Shah in mid-1977 disproportionately affected the lower classes of Iranian society, providing oppositional groups with a core of citizens which it could easily

³⁰ The White Revolution is the name given to an extensive series of 'modernizing' reforms launched in 1963 by Muhammad Reza Shah.

³¹ Iranian merchants were especially repulsed by the state's interference in the market and the anti-profiteering campaigns led by *Rastakhiz* officials.

mobilize against the regime. In light of a common assault on their combined societal supporters, the *ulama*, for the first time in Iranian history, turned almost unanimously against the state.³² The consequences of this novel opposition for the Shah and his cohort would be disastrous.

A number of events further eroded the Shah's position. The death of Ali Shariati, which was blamed by many of his followers on the Iranian secret service (Savak), further undermined the ruling elite while removing a popular figure who could have possibly counter-balanced Khomeini's influence in the oppositional movement. The subsequent death of Khomeini's son, Mustafa, put the clerical leader back in the political spotlight while fueling the first truly militant anti-Shah demonstrations (Taheri 1986). By the summer of 1978, continuing protests, bolstered by the government's cut in spending and resulting increases in unemployment, had further weakened the Shah, undercutting the value of his appeals to the citizenry and moderate members of the clergy like Ayatollah Shariatmadari (Kurzman 2004). A general strike in early October succeeded in destabilizing the country's economy and the regime, leading the Shah to establish a military government that would have little hope of restoring order. Events climaxed during the month of December's Shiite celebrations of Ashura³³ when at least two million protesters came out onto the streets to commemorate Imam Husayn's martyrdom and call for the end of the Pahlavi monarchy. Many clerics participated openly in the protests, successfully mobilizing large swaths of the Iranian population through the potent use of Shiite religious symbols and discourse. Following a number of futile attempts to incorporate liberal opponents into a new government, and rejections of any compromise by opposition leaders,

³² As proof of their heterogeneous ties to different social actors, the unity of the numerous *ulama* became fragile almost exactly following the downfall of the Shah and Khomeini's monopolization of power. Key issues over which the *ulama* clashed included: land reform, labor laws, nationalization of foreign companies and the roles of the public and private sector (Akhavi 1980, 96–103; Moaddel 1986, 542–546).

³³ Celebrated during the Islamic month of Muharram, Ashura is commemorated by Shiite Muslims as a day of mourning for the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad.

the Shah and the Empress left Iran on January 16, 1979, never to return. Thus, the stage was set for the triumphal return of Ayatollah Khomeini on February 1st, in front of a welcoming crowd composed of over one million Iranians.

Khomeini and his cleric-led movement had achieved hegemony over the vast array of oppositional factions. Indeed, some scholars go so far as to claim that he had, by this point, already become the undisputed leader of the revolution (Taheri 1986: 144–146). This is by no means to say that I underestimate the contributions of secular intellectuals, student organizations, traditional left-wing political parties, and non-religious actors more generally to the oppositional movement. Yet, as some scholars have done, it is important to recognize and emphasize the ways in which these marginalized groups lacked organizational cohesion, a coherent political program, and charismatic leaders who could mobilize large swaths of the Iranian population (Abrahamian 1982; Moaddel 1986; Zubaida 2009). Consequently, by early 1978, the Shiite religious clergy had taken the reigns of large swaths of the movement hostile to the Shah. They employed and appropriated an innovative and dynamic blend of ideological tendencies—nationalism, populism, republicanism, and Shiite religious discourse, among others—in an attempt to monopolize the leadership of what were undoubtedly diverse oppositional factions. Supported by well-calibrated populism and radicalism, Khomeini and his followers were able to dominate the wide array of forces eager to overthrow the Shah. As Zubaida reminds us, “it was that political conjuncture which raised Khomeinist Islam to the leading position in the revolution, providing common symbols and slogans for diverse forces” (2009, 81).

In total contrast, and as an interesting counter-factual, Iraqi *mujtahids* had been largely bereft of power, both social and coercive, since the inception of the Sharifian monarchy in 1920. They were even more suppressed under the Ba'athist regimes beginning in 1968. With little independent economic base or intimate ties to important social classes, the Iraqi religious elites were either co-opted by the state (resulting in a position of political quietism, the route most often taken), sent into exile, or killed (as in the case of

Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and Muhammad Sadeq al-Sadr, among others). Iraqi governments accumulated the coercive means necessary to crush numerous independent social actors, such as non-Sunni merchants, on whom they did not need to depend for tax revenues.

The shah of Iran was by no means bereft of coercive power. Alliances with the United States and Israel along with increasing oil revenues provided him with ample space to purchase the most novel weaponry of the time. Indeed, it could be convincingly argued that the shah's accumulation of coercive means prolonged his rule for at least an extra two to five years. Nevertheless, the social position of the *ulama*, their alliance with other important class actors, and the political conjuncture that furthered their emergence at the head of the oppositional movement made any reliance on pure coercion all but impossible as a long-term strategy of survival for the tyrant.

After a careful historical examination, it is increasingly clear why, as a result of a distinct set of government policies and social conditions, the Iranian *ulama* had the ability to assert themselves in the political arena at a particular historical moment in the late 1970s. The Islamic character of the Iranian Revolution did not arise solely from the inherent religious outlook or opinions of particular social classes but rather from the "peculiar historical position of the religious institutions in Iran," which were themselves a product of social structures and the state's use of coercion and capital (Za-ubaida 2009: 64–81). Khomeini's whole notion of governance, embodied in the Shiite theological-political doctrine of *vilayat-i faqih*, is indeed a result of conditions particular to Iranian history. After a disillusioning attempt to institutionalize a role for the *ulama* in the legislative process during the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1911, Khomeini had historical and political reasons to be suspicious of both constitutional guarantees for oversight and the real weight of legislative power (Keddie 1983, 579–598).³⁴ He thus

34 The constitution of 1906–07 of Iran was modeled closely on the Belgian constitution with one glaring exception. Iranian parliamentarians provided for a committee of at least five *mujtahids* who would oversee the passage of all laws with the aim of assuring their

introduced a theory of government that would for the first time provide for *ulama* control of the executive branch while acknowledging, albeit hypocritically, the long-standing democratic pretensions of the Iranian population (hence the title Islamic Republic). While repressed by the Shah and engaged in competition with secular nationalists and radical leftists for public support, Khomeini initially decided to promote a notion of government ambiguous enough to engender cross-cutting societal support against the Shah and popular enough to succeed in a referendum on the establishment of an Islamic Republic. On March 30, 1979, the referendum successfully secured the support of 98.2 percent of the people.

While most popular accounts portray Khomeini as a religious fanatic, the theory of governance underlying the Islamic Republic and its practical application over the past thirty years contradict this myth. It is true that *vilayat-i faqih* was revolutionary as a religious doctrine in Shiism. Yet Khomeini followed a long tradition of Shiite scholars who had proven to be ideologically malleable, intellectually flexible, and concretely responsive to the political, economic, and social milieu that surround them. Contra Hegelian-inspired notions of ideological and historical development, it is increasingly clear that Shiite religious doctrines were far from emerging or operating in a historical, social, or economic vacuum. Weber's "disenchantment" was neither followed the onset of 'modernity' nor eroded the power of so-called "traditional" forms of authority.

RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY IN RELATION TO COERCION, CAPITAL, AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

In focusing on the *ulama's* role in society, I have attempted to challenge those theorists who view theological or ideological developments as independent of political, economic and social realities. I have also tried to push against the cultural essentialism that has recently reemerged to explain the persistence of religious actors

compatibility with Islamic law. Indeed, the provision was never put into practice and, even though the original framers of the constitution designed for real power to reside in the parliament, the legislative branch was never quite able to wrest power from the Shah.

and ideologies in Muslim countries. This study argues that Moore and Tilly's theoretical frameworks are relevant to the Middle East and challenges those who identify religious exceptionalism as a viable explanatory variable in events such as the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79.

Although the *ulama* defended their divergent political positions through rich interpretations of Islamic law, it would be unfair to claim that they consciously interpreted these religious texts with the interests of certain class actors in mind. Although values, even religious ones, may be strongly influenced by material interests, individuals and groups may ultimately come to believe in the righteousness, internal logic, and specific discourse inherent in their value systems. For this reason, Shiite theological interpretations must be based on a shared set of ideological premises that place several limits on the range of positions that *ulama* may consciously defend.³⁵ Eschewing approaches to comparative history that privilege uniform or universal paths to 'modernization,' this work shines light on the importance of studying the position of intellectuals or class representatives in relation to coercion, capital, and the social structure, especially during the state-building process. Relative economic independence and freedom from the costs of coercion of alienated social classes permitted the stridency of members in a heterogeneous clerical class, in which each *mujtahid* and his influence was disparately affected by these factors. The Iranian Revolution should be seen as an attempt by a variety of domestic social actors to institutionalize their power and to develop an equitable society consistent with Iranian nationalism, Shiite religious identity, and democratic aspirations.

35 Moaddel (1986, 546–547) asserts that the nature of Shiite religious discourse precludes any meaningful, long-lasting alliance between the *ulama* and the proletariat or the peasants. The hadiths and Qur'anic verses supporting private property and the right to profit make alliances with these classes difficult and extremely rare although not impossible.

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EXAMINING EDUCATIONAL AID DISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED STATES

Bill DeBaun

The rise of the American education finance reform movement began after a series of state supreme court cases challenged the constitutionality of school funding systems and the inter-district inequalities they propagated. Since its inception, the reform movement has focused on improving educational quality for needy students across the United States—a movement that eventually led to the practice of targeting state educational aid to individual school districts on the basis of demonstrated need. Aid-targeting policies have been met with controversy, however, since financial redistribution tends to face opposition in parts of the country with greater financial and political capital.

Outside of arguments for and against targeting policies, literature related to the education reform movement rarely explores the extent to which states truly target their aid to school districts and under what conditions (either at the local or state level) they do so. The study aims to reveal patterns by which states distribute funds to school districts. While results from this study address a number of related questions, its central focus is to assess the extent to which U.S. states—relative to how they have in the past—distribute their education aid on the basis of school district enrollment and district poverty. Other queries are addressed in this study. If states are not targeting their funds on the basis of school district enrollment, on what basis are they doing so? Do certain conditions or characteristics determine the amount of aid school districts receive? Can the presence or absence of some statewide characteristics—like which political party controls the state or whether the state supreme court has issued a ruling on the state’s education system—make a state

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