Ideology and the Iranian Revolution\textsuperscript{1}

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Abstract

Some theories of revolution deny an independent role for ideology in the making of revolutions, whereas others grant it an indispensable role. I investigate the role of ideology in the Iranian Revolution by focusing on two periods of Iranian history that witnessed popular uprising: the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. While the former uprising was aborted, the latter led to the Iranian Revolution. Contrasting these periods, I argue that the structural and non-agency process factors underwent the same dynamic in both periods, and hence are not sufficient to explain the variation in outcome. I propose that the change in the opposition’s ideology accounts for this variation. To establish the causal link, I investigate this ideological change, tracing its role in the actors’ decision-making processes. I argue that: (1) Khomeini’s theory of Islamic state expanded the set of alternatives to the status quo theory of state, and changed the Islamic opposition’s “calculus of protest”; (2) an ideological change is an intellectual innovation/shock, the timing of which is intrinsically uncertain. Therefore, integrating ideology to the theory enhances its explanatory power; (3) an ideological change can serve as an observable intermediate variable that mediates the effect of unobservable cumulative and/or threshold processes.
“Every revolution was first a thought in one man’s mind.” (Essays, R. W. Emerson)

“How great an independent weight to attribute to ideological innovation is another recurrent puzzle in the analysis of revolution.” (From Mobilization to Revolution, C. Tilly)

1 Introduction

Theories of revolution vary in terms of the significance they give to ideology. A number of theories deny an independent role for ideology in the making of revolutions,\(^1\) whereas others consider ideology as an important factor alongside structure and process.\(^2\) I investigate the role of ideology in the Iranian Revolution by introducing a new approach, namely the qualitative time series (QTS) method, which is based on the application of the comparative method over time. Specifically, I focus on two periods of Iranian history that witnessed popular uprising: the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. While the former uprising was aborted, the latter led to the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Contrasting these periods using the QTS method, I argue that the structural and non-agency process factors underwent the same dynamic in both periods, and hence are not sufficient to explain the variation in outcome. I propose that the change in the ideology of opposition accounts for this variation. To establish the causality, I investigate the change in the ideology of opposition, and trace its role in the decision-making processes of the actors.

My argument consists of three main steps: (1) If we apply the comparative method, then the current structural and agency-free process theories are inadequate to explain the Iranian Revolution. Therefore, one has to draw from competing theories. (2) The role of ideology in the making of revolutions has long been emphasized and debated.\(^3\) Therefore, ideology is a natural candidate that potentially can bridge the gap between the agency-free theories and historical evidence in the case of the Iranian Revolution. (3) To establish the causal role of ideology, I propose a causal mechanism, and apply comparative method and process-tracing to support it.

The Shia political ideology underwent a significant transformation in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s as a result of scholarly efforts of Khomeini and his close circle of clerical followers, and the religious lay intellectuals. Khomeini reinterpreted the mainstream Shia political thought and proposed a novel Islamic theory of state: The Guardianship of the Jurist. He explicitly declared the inconsistency of the institution of monarchy with Islam and emphasized the necessity to establish an “Islamic state” as a religious duty. I will show that this ideological innovation changed the goals and strategies of the religious opposition.

However, structural and agent-free process theories contend that socioeconomic and po-

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\(^1\)Goldstone 1991, 2001; Goodwin 2001; Skocpol 1979, 1997a; Tilly 1996

\(^2\)Foran 2005; Parsa 2000

\(^3\)For example, see the debate between Sewell (1997) and Skocpol (1997a).
litical factors, as opposed to “cultural” factors, are sufficient to explain the occurrence of revolutions. They present two arguments to refute the role of ideology. One argument is that most “revolutions are not made, they come”, and hence there is no room for agency and ideology. The other argument is that ideology is merely the rationalization of actions that are determined by “structural” factors. I compare the relevant variables suggested by these theories in two periods of the Pahlavi regime that featured popular uprising: the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. I show that all these variables followed the same dynamics in these two periods. However, the outcomes were very different: the uprising of the early 1960’s was aborted, whereas that of the 1970’s led to the Iranian Revolution. Therefore, these theories cannot explain the variation in the outcome. This establishes the first step of the argument and constitutes the main bulk of the paper from section 4 to 7.

To choose the relevant variables I draw from three main types of theories: grievance-based theories, political process theories, and state-centered theories. Theories of the first type emphasize on grievance as the cause of revolution. “Class conflict” approach to study revolutions falls into this category, and inequality, economic hardship, and adverse economic policy are the main causes of revolution in these theories. Political process theories contend that revolutionary movements start when there is an opening in “political opportunities”, and follow a “dynamics of contention”. Among the main factors that shape this dynamics are the interaction between the state and dissidents, and the opposition’s organizational resources and networks. Micro-mobilization theories address the first factor by studying the repression-mobilization locus. Resource mobilization theories address the second, contending that grievances do not translate into sustained contentious actions without organizational resources. Therefore, according to political process theories, the structure of political opportunities, state response to dissent, opposition’s organizational resources, and coordination among the opposition groups are critical factors in social movements and revolutions. Finally, state-centered theories argue that the structure and resources of the state explain the occurrence of revolutions. According to these theories, state breakdown, state infrastructural power, and the exclusive nature of the state are among the variables that explain revolutions.

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4Skocpol 1979, quoted from Wendell Phillips.
5Roemer 1988
6For a more detailed review of the first two theories see Shadmehr (2010a), sections 1 and 2.
8Revolutionary movements are a subset of social movements which are the main subjects of political process theories; see, e.g., Goodwin (2001).
10Diani and McAdam 2003.
11Opp and Roehl 1990; Opp, Voss, and Gern 1995; There is a large body of literature on repression-dissent dynamics; see “Punishment Dilemma” in Davenport (2007a) for a review.
12Gamson 1975; McCarthy and Zald 1973, 1977; Zald and McCarthy 2003
13Skocpol 1979; Goodwin 2001; Parsa 2000; See also Wilkinson 2009.
In the light of these theories, I compare the dynamics of the following variables in the early 1960’s with their dynamics in the late 1970’s: the economic conditions and state economic policy, state liberalization and Iran-US relations,\textsuperscript{14} organizations and resources of the opposition as well as coordination among the opposition groups, the structure and resources of the state, and state response to opposition.

If the structural and agent-free process theories are correct, these variables together should explain the Iranian Revolution. In sections 4 through 7, I discuss each variable in detail, and show that all the variables followed the same pattern in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. Using the logic of the comparative method, this paper establishes the inadequacy of these theories to explain the Iranian Revolution.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 is devoted to methodology and research design, where I introduce the qualitative time series method (QTS) and compare it with other methods of social inquiry. In section 3, I analyze the role of ideology in the Iranian Revolution by tracing its role in the decision-making processes of the opposition. The rest of the paper compares the dynamics of relevant structural and process variables in the two periods under study: the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. In section 4, I investigate the organizations and resources of the opposition, as well as the coordination between opposition groups. Section 5 is devoted to the structure and resources of the Pahlavi state and the patterns of state response to opposition. In section 6, I discuss US-Iran relations. Section 7 analyzes the economy and the economic policy of the state. Section 8 concludes.

2 Methodology and Research Design

Social scientists from Brinton (1938) to Foran (2005) have employed different methods to study revolutions. Since Moore’s (1966) seminal work on the social origins of dictatorship and democracy, many researchers have adopted comparative historical analysis or its variants as the basis of their research design. In this method, the researcher compares and contrasts historical segments of different cases to “develop, test, and refine causal explanatory hypotheses”\textsuperscript{15} based on the Mill’s Method of Agreement and Method of Difference. However, Mill’s methods have a caveat: they “are well designed only for cases where we have single [my emphasis] conditions that are necessary and sufficient for the occurrence of the outcome.”\textsuperscript{16} Ragin (1987) further developed Mill’s methods to account for “multiple causality”, and formalized the problem of inferring necessary and/or sufficient conditions. In social science methodology, the comparative method is suggested as a legitimate method.

\textsuperscript{14}Iran-US relations is related to state liberalization and political opportunity theory. It has been argued that in the early 1960’s, the Kennedy’s administration forced the Shah’s regime to implement economic and sociopolitical reforms, which could potentially make the regime vulnerable to opposition. A similar argument is made about the Carter’s administration and his human rights campaign in the late 1970’s.

\textsuperscript{15}Skocpol 1979, 36

\textsuperscript{16}Little 1991, 37
to draw causal inferences, and has been widely applied to study revolutions.

One problem in applying the comparative method is the uncertainty involved in most social phenomena, which requires researchers to distinguish between the systematic and non-systematic elements of the events under inquiry. However, I contend that the detailed case studies allow the researcher to distinguish and filter the non-systematic components of the events. For instance, when Skocpol (1979) applies the comparative method to study social revolutions, it is implicitly implied that she does not believe that chance had any significant effect on the occurrence of revolutions. This view is particularly useful when the researcher believes that the underlying causal mode between the explanatory variable and the explanandum is a necessary and/or sufficient one.

Although the comparative method has been applied mostly across countries, it is not essential that the unit of analysis be a country. The “cases” to be compared could be different periods of history in one country. These two modes of application are qualitative counterparts of cross-section and time-series analysis accordingly. In fact, Skocpol (1979) briefly compares Russia in 1905 and 1917 to support her claim that state breakdown was a necessary condition for the 1917 Russian Revolution because the full-fledged engagement of the Russian government in WWI in 1917 had extensively weakened the state in 1917, whereas in 1905 the state engaged in a more limited war only with Japan, and was not at the brink of breakdown. McAdam’s (1999) political process could also be considered as an application of the comparative method, in which he explains the variations in the black social movement over time in the United States. However, Kurzman’s (2003) comparison of the Qum protests in Iran in 1975 and 1978 provides the best example as this is the only paper that consciously and explicitly applies the comparative method over time. Drawing from this tradition, I adopt the comparative method to investigate the Iranian Revolution by comparing two periods of the Iranian history. However, because “comparative” usually implies “between country variations”, it is fruitful to explicitly highlight how the comparative method can be adopted to explain “within country” variations. Because this method is the qualitative counterpart of time series analysis applied in quantitative method, I call it qualitative time series analysis (QTS).

Qualitative time series analysis is a method of drawing inferences from different “observations” within “one unit of analysis”/“case” based on the comparative method. In comparative literature, usually each “unit of analysis” is called a “case”. However, there could be several instances of a phenomenon in one case, happening over time, each of which would provide an observation. “An ‘observation’ is defined as one measure on one unit for one de-

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17Brady and Colliers, 2004; Gerring, 2001; King et al., 1994; Little, 1991; Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003; Ragin, 1987
18Skocpol’s 1979; Goldstone 1991; Parsa 2000; Goodwin 2001; Foran 2005
19King et al., 1994; Little, 1991
20Gerring, 2001
21Gerring (2001, p. 222) briefly discusses a similar method, which he calls diachronic comparison. See also Haydu (1998) and Clement (2005).
pendent variable and includes information on the values of the explanatory variables.”

For instance, Skocpol’s (1979) study of Russia, although involves one case, includes two distinctly clear observations: one for 1905 and another for 1917. Therefore, the comparative method, broadly defined, is either the application of Mill’s methods of agreement and difference or Ragin’s (1987) version of it to a set of observations over time or over cases/units.

Qualitative time series analysis assumes that the researcher can eliminate the “non-systematic” component of observations, and then applies this method to the “systematic” elements of observations. This can be done through detailed historical studies, reasonable speculations, or by increasing the number of observations. Applying Mill’s and Ragin’s methods to the systematic component of observations overcomes the criticisms of Little (1991) and King et al. (1994) concerning the role of uncertainty in social phenomena.

**Necessary and Sufficient Conditions:** “A condition C is said to be necessary for the occurrence of an event E if E would not have occurred in the absence of C.” “A sufficient condition C is one in which the presence of C guarantees the occurrence of E.”

Necessity and sufficiency are specific modes of causal relations. Other modes of causal relations such as “causal mechanism” and “causal effect” have been suggested in Little (1991) and King et al. (1994). Both of these definitions of causality differ from necessary and sufficient conditions (NSC) because they both can contain uncertainty, whereas NSC cannot. In Little’s words, “the most important defect of the analysis of causal relations in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions is tied to the fact that some causal relations are probabilistic rather than deterministic.” This makes NSC relations appropriate for some studies and not others. If we believe that uncertainty plays a significant role in the underlying mechanism that governs a phenomenon, then NSC is not an appropriate mode of causal relation. However, if we believe that the role of chance is negligible, or if we could filter non-systematic components, NSC should be considered.

The decision to choose NSC is related to a deeper problem that appears in the form of *model selection* in statistical methods. The problem is that we do not know the “true” underlying mechanism, all we do is to “model” a phenomenon. Which model serves us better depends on our goal and on how well it fits empirical facts. Therefore, it is not obvious *a priori* what type of model is “better” than others. The possibilities are ample. For instance, “cumulative causes” and “threshold effects” are two types of mechanisms that might best describe certain types of phenomena. In fact, these mechanisms, explicitly or implicitly, have been adapted in many case studies of revolution and social movements: Researchers contend that grievances accumulate over time, and/or organizational capacity

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22King et al., 1994, p.117
23Little, 1991, p.25
24Little, 1991, p.27
25Or possibly cannot know, or even it is not meaningful to talk about the “true” underlying mechanism.
26Lakatos, 2001
27Mahoney, 2003
28Pierson, 2003
of the opposition accumulates over time, awaiting an opportunity to flood the political arena and change the society when the time is “right”. Alternatively, grievances or opposition networks might intensify over time, and once they reach a “tipping point” (threshold), lead to certain sociopolitical outcomes. Although both of these mechanism are, indeed, plausible and theoretically appealing, I argue that they are hard to “test” and less useful for “prediction”. How much accumulation is necessary and how can we determine the thresholds for different factors and different countries? Practical problems of this sort might lead us to search for “intermediate variables” that can capture the effect of these underlying processes, and at the same time, are easier to conceptualize and/or measure.

In this paper, I do not challenge the hypothesis that grievances accumulate over time; I rather argue that once they reach a threshold, they might lead to the development of revolutionary ideologies that demand radical sociopolitical change. Focusing on the revolutionary ideology rather than cumulative processes gives us leverage to capture the effect of the “invisible” mechanism of grievance accumulation through its intermediate effect on an observable factor, i.e., revolutionary ideology, which in turn affects the outcome.

Facing the problem of selecting the appropriate model from an infinite number of possibilities, I turn to the scientific community for “heuristic” suggestions. A dominant trend in the literature on revolutions adopts the comparative method to investigate revolutions, pointing at the NCS as the mode of casual relation between the proposed causes, such as state breakdown, economic downturn, repressive states, etc., and the effect: the incident of revolution. Therefore, adopting a similar methodology is a legitimate exercise, at least, to study revolutions.

Qualitative time series analysis, as discussed above, is an application of comparative method over time. I contend that when we do not have a panel, qualitative time series analysis might give us some leverage that the comparative method over units cannot. This concerns the “unobservable” specific characteristics of each unit that might be causally related to both the explanandum and the explanatory variables. It might be the case that a change in some explanatory variables have a different effect on one unit than the other because of the specific characteristics of each country/unit that are unknown to the researcher or hard to measure and/or conceptualize. For instance, one might think that certain geographical characteristics of a country might affect the mechanisms through which economic downturn breeds oppositional activities; or some cultural traits, specific to a nation, might change the dynamic through which repression might prevent or provoke protests. If the researcher fails to incorporate such country-specific characteristics into the analysis, her conclusions might exaggerate or underestimate the effects of explanatory variables because of the omitted variable bias. Qualitative time series analysis is immune to this problem because the “unobservable” factors remain constant as the comparison is “within” the same unit. As Lebow (2001) suggests, “intra-case comparison confers a singular benefit [vis-a-vis “comparative” analysis]: it examines variation within a relatively unchanging political and

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29Lakatos, 1970; Kuhn, 1996 (1962)
cultural context, controlling better than inter-case comparison for many factors that may be important but unrecognized”.

This method brings the “text in context” and enjoys more “homogeneity” over observations/events that is consistently prescribed in the literature on qualitative methodology.

Moreover, qualitative time series approach can help researchers to increase the number of observations. In qualitative research, scholars usually study a few cases and apply the comparative method between them. Because of the complexity of social phenomena and the limited number of cases, it is not surprising that many times there is not enough variation in explanatory variable to draw inference. However, a detailed study of a country/unit often could provide more than one observation without much further effort if the researcher’s approach is not to equal each “case”, i.e. country/unit, with only one “observation”. The emphasis of qualitative time series method on the variations over time could provide an appropriate method to, in King et al. (1994) words, “make many [observations] from a few [cases]”. (See also Gerring (2001))

Finally, QTS approach might serve as a general guideline for historical accounts of revolutions, in which the researcher studies the history of one country over time, and usually starts from a few decade prior to the revolution. History is written in the light of a certain theory which determines what facts are important and should be addressed among an infinite number of facts. Therefore, a historical account implies a certain theory, which suggests addressing certain facts that in turn confirm the theory. This latter confirmation might be problematic if the researchers attribute a phenomenon to all the factors changed prior to it without further investigation. However, by taking a qualitative time series approach one might find that the same factors had changed in the same directions in the past and did not bring about the same phenomenon. This is not to imply that all historical accounts should provide a concrete theory; I rather suggest that keeping an eye on the logic of the qualitative time series analysis might help to limit and refine theories implied in a historical account without much further effort.

Research Design

In the light of the above arguments, I adopt qualitative time series method and apply it to the “case” of Iran to draw inferences on the causes of the Iranian Revolution. I apply the comparative method to two time periods in Iranian history prior to the revolution both of which witnessed popular uprising, but only one led to a revolution. Specifically, I compare the political and socioeconomic characteristics of Iran in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. Both of these periods witnessed widespread popular uprising that seriously challenged the stability of the regime. However, only the uprising of the late 1970’s led to the revolution.

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30 Lebow, 2001, p. 128
31 King et. al, 1994; Gerring, 2001
Drawing from the literature on revolutions in general, and the Iranian revolution in particular, I compare the “relevant” factors in these two periods using the comparative method. I show that the “structural factors” alone fail to explain the Iranian revolution because they undergo similar changes in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. However, one factor absent in the former period but present in the latter is a revolutionary ideology. I argue that ideology played a decisive role in the making of the Iranian revolution. This is not to say that other factors were irrelevant, or that ideology is a sufficient condition for revolution. I rather contend that ideology was a necessary condition for the Iranian Revolution, which along with other factors led to the Iranian Revolution.

Furthermore, because “any coherent account of causality needs to specify how its effects are exerted” I trace the causal effects of the new ideology in the decision-making processes of the relevant groups prior to the revolution. By incorporating process-tracing to qualitative time series analysis based on the comparative method, this research double-checks whether ideology played a causal role in the making of the Iranian Revolution. It includes Ragin’s (1987, 2004) approach by putting ideology among the “conjurcular causes” of the Iranian revolution. It is relatively robust to selection bias because it traces the causal mechanism through which ideology plays its role. It is consistent with King et al. (1994) approach to scientific inference in qualitative research, and it takes advantages of two main “tools for

In an interesting paper, Kurzman (2003) pursues a similar methodological approach to explain the variation in the spread of seminary students’ protests in Qum, Iran, in June 1975 and January 1978. The June 1975 protest remained limited to Qum seminary students and was repressed by the regime, whereas the January 1978 protest was spread despite repression, and ignited the unfolding of the Iranian Revolution. To explain this variation, Kurzman argues that the Islamist opposition “did not mobilize its forces in 1975 but did attempt to mobilize in late 1977 [and January 1978]” because “in mid–1975, leaders of the religious opposition did not believe that Iran was ready for revolution..., in the fall of 1977, by contrast, the religious revolutionaries decided that the country had ‘awakened’.”

Despite its refreshing novelty, Kurzman’s analysis has important methodological problems. (1) Even if Kurzman’s hypothesis is granted, what was the cause of the shift in the perception of the Islamist opposition? Was it because the opposition observed popular protests? If so, the causal direction between protest and the perception of the opposition goes both ways. (2) Kurzman dismisses alternative explanations that are based on threshold and cumulative mechanisms, but he takes up a similar type of mechanism and suggests that “Khomeini and his followers believed a threshold has been achieved that made it plausible to throw themselves into a revolutionary movement against an entrenched ruler”. Specially because Kurzman’s argument is based only on the “evidence of correlation between cause and outcome rather than evidence (not currently available) of the direct mechanism linking cause and outcome”, his argument does not seem to have any advantage vis-a-vis alternative explanations. (3) Kurzman’s evidence is the tone of opposition with special focus on the expression “awakened”. However, as Kurzman mentions himself, Khomeini used the expression “awakening” in 1975 too. The structure of “political opportunities” was very different in 1977-78 vis-a-vis 1974-75, as manifested in the lack of any serious mobilization on the side of nationalists, religious intellectuals, or Khomeini’s followers. There was virtually no US/international pressure or perception of such pressures in the early to mid 1970’s. (5) State started to implement aggressive policies toward bazaar in July 1975, after the June incident, which lasted through 1978. That “bazaaris made no move to protest the repression at Qum in 1975, while in early 1978 they mobilized quickly” may simply reflect the timing of events.

King et al., 1994, p. 85-6
See, e.g., Collier et al. 2004.
qualitative research”.

3 Ideology and the Making of the Iranian Revolution

“No ideology, no revolution.” (The Anatomy of Revolution, C. Brinton)

In this section, I show the causal role of ideology in the making of the Iranian Revolution. I compare the ideology of the opposition in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s with an emphasis on the development of a new Islamic ideology and its role in the making of the Iranian Revolution. I argue that a major ideological change occurred between the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s, and trace the causal role of the new ideology in determining the goals and strategies of the clerical opposition led by Khomieni.

The goals and ideas of nationalists represented by the National Front remained intact over this period, and there is no indication that the nationalists’ ideology underwent any major change. Leftist ideologies revived in the early 1970’s, but were restricted to militant revolutionaries who were brutally repressed and effectively neutralized by the time of the revolution. Therefore, I focus on the Islamic ideology and trace its evolution during this period. First, I clarify what I mean by ideology.

3.1 What Is Ideology?

The term ideology was first coined in 1796 by Destutt De Tracy to mean “the science of ideas”. Since then, its meaning has transformed vastly and its popularity grown enormously. “Having been appropriated for all manner of academic and political purposes over the past several centuries, ideology has become a victim of its own popularity” to the extent that it has been called “the most elusive concept in the whole social science”.

Following a critical survey of definitions of ideology, Sainsbury (1986) concludes that “various conceptions of ideology have focused on the linkage between political ideas and political behavior.” She suggests that ideology be defined in terms of its content or subject matter as “idea-elements concerned with (1) explaining and evaluating the existing social order, (2) describing the nature of good society and (3) designing the means or strategy of attaining a good society.” Similarly, in his definitional analysis of ideology, Gerring (1997)

43Munck, 2004
44The “Marxist coup” in the clandestine militant revolutionary organization of Mojahedin speaks to this revival. See Abrahamian (1989) and Jafarian (1386 [2007]).
45Kennedy, 1979.
46Gerring, 1997, p. 979
47McLellan, 1986, p.1; quoted in Jost et al., 2009, p. 308
48Sainsbury, 1986, p. 125
49Sainsbury, 1986, p. 125
argues that “it is indeed useful to limit the purview of ideology to explicitly political subject matter, for only in this way can its definition be distinguished from world view, belief-system, value system, cultural-system, and other like terms.”

Analyzing the concept of ideology in APSR articles from 1906 to 2006, Knight (2006) concludes that political scientists more or less agree on a “core definition” of ideology as a “coherent and relatively stable set of beliefs or values”. Students of revolution have also adopted different definitions of ideology. For example, in her analysis of the Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions, Farhi (1990), following Therborn (1980), defines ideology as “that aspect of human condition under which human beings live their lives as conscious actors in a world that makes sense to them in a varying degrees.... Ideology is conceived as a dynamic, ongoing social process through which objects are created”. Farhi further distinguishes ideology from other cultural features. “Ideologies,..., [unlike cultures] are highly articulated models aspiring to offer one unified answer to the question of how human beings should live and act.”

Skocpol (1997) defines ideology as “idea systems deployed as self-conscious political arguments by identifiable political actors. Ideologies in this sense are developed and deployed by particular groups or alliances engaged in temporary specific political conflicts or attempts to justify the use of state power.” In this paper, I adopt Skocpol’s (1997) definition, but put more emphasis on the coherency and stability requirement suggested in Knight’s (2006) analysis mentioned above. This definition is consistent with Sainsbury’s (1986) and Gerring’s (1997) suggestions, and as a “minimalist definition”, it leaves out many aspects of culture which might obscure the clarity of concept and make “measurements” highly imprecise. I also emphasize on the distinction between ideology and preference. Ideologies are belief systems that might inform preferences, but do not fully pin down preferences or be determined by preferences. In Butterfield’s words, “human beings are the carriers of ideas as well as the repositories of vested interests.” In this paper, a new ideology does not change individuals’ interests/preferences. Instead, I take interests/preferences as given, and argue that ideologies provide frameworks to achieve these interests/preferences.

Skocpol (1997) distinguishes ideologies from “cultural idioms”. “At any given time cultural idioms are drawn upon, by concretely situated actors as they seek to make sense of their activities and of themselves in relation to other actors.... it will make a difference which idiom or mixture of idioms is available to be drawn upon by given groups.... But the choice and uses of available idioms —and the particular potentials within them that are elaborated— will be influenced by the social and political situations of the acting groups, and

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50 Gerring, 1997, p. 982
51 Knight, 2006. See Minar (1961), Putnam (1971), and Sartori (1969) for some earlier analyses of the definition of ideology. See also Jost et al. (2009).
52 Farhi, 1990, p.83-4
53 Skocpol, 1997, p.204
54 Butterfield 1959
55 This resembles Slater’s (2009) distinction between material interests and collective identity.
the tasks they need to accomplish in relation to one another [my emphasis].” I argue that the set of “cultural idioms” is a “tool–kit box”/“repertoire”, which limits the set of options available to the political entrepreneurs, but leaves them with a wide range of possibilities for different and even contradictory interpretations/appropriations of a set of cultural idioms. This indeterminacy makes *ex ante* predictions extremely difficult. That is, to explain and predict social order, social scientists “are not well served by supposing that sets of ideas [not casted into an ideology narrowly defined]...are ‘constitutive of social order’.” This implies that the repertoire of cultural idioms *usually* does not increase our predictive power because actors selectively choose the idioms for their purposes which in turn are determined by structural factors.

The Martyrdom of Hossain, the third Shia emam and the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, is an example of a cultural idiom that was extensively employed during the periods of contention between the clerical opposition and the state. Hossain raised against the current *khaliph*, protesting his impiety and inobservance of the Prophet’s tradition and justice, and was brutally martyred together with many of his relatives and followers in an uneven, bloody battle. This “memory of suffering and resistance” has remained alive for centuries in the collective memory of the Shia, and played an observable role in the contemporary religious opposition against the state. The influence of this historical event was at least twofold. First, the ceremonies held to appreciate the suffering of the grandson of the Prophet and the third emam of Shia provided highly charged and emotional instances of religious demonstrations which potentially *could* be employed to target the state. In this sense, it would serve as a “repertoire of action”. Second, and more importantly, it could be used along with other evidence from the Islamic and Shi’i tradition to reinterpret Islam and Shia as a social and political religion that prescribe action, sacrifice, and martyrdom against injustice, illegitimate state, and unjust sociopolitical structure of the society.

However, Hossain martyrdom would not immediately translate into a world view prescribing active protest against injustice, and indeed it did not for centuries. The Shia thinkers could draw upon the quiescence of several other emams to prescribe quiescence, and they did. These two possible interpretations make it a hard task to *ex ante* predict whether the high potential of this “history of martyrdom” would be employed by the opposition against the state. Therefore, until the development of a new interpretation of Islam and Shia and the innovation of a new ideology (described below), Hossain martyrdom would not serve us to explain and predict social order and the course of political activities.

This is not to say that cultural idioms have no explanatory power in the study of revolutions and social change. As noted above, the “repertoire of cultural idioms” might restrict the choice of actors and favor one set of interpretations over the other. However, for a given

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56 Skocpol, 1997, p.204
57 Skocpol, 1997, p.204
58 Tilly 1986.
59 The dominant branch of Shia believes that there were 12 emams who were the only legitimate heirs of the Prophet to lead the Islamic society.
country this set remains the same for a long period of time that is usually longer than the span of a study. Cultural idioms might play a significant role to partly explain the differences between countries. Part of Sewell’s (1997) criticism of Skocpol speaks to this fact. The fact that communist ideas available prior to the Russian revolution were absent in the eighteenth century France might go a long way to explain the differences between the processes and outcomes of these two revolutions. However, I contend that this effect of culture in the making and outcome of revolutions can be captured by ideology. For example, communist ideology, which was present in Russia but absent in France, can capture the differences between these cases that can otherwise be attributed to culture.

### 3.2 The Etiology of Ideology: Ideological Innovations as Ideological Shocks

What factors cause the emergence of a new ideology? What is the dynamics of ideological change? Why Khomeini, Lenin, Marx, and Luther came up with fundamentally new ideas when they did, and not someone else a few decades before or after them? In this section, I argue that ideological change involves a form of intellectual innovation, and hence includes an unpredictable component. Therefore, I contend that deterministic models cannot explain/predict the emergence of a new ideology beyond *post hoc ergo proper hoc*, because they cannot capture the intrinsic uncertainty involved in an innovation. However, as far as we are interested to explain and predict revolutions (and not ideologies), integrating ideology as an *exogenous* explanatory variable into the model will do.

In the Marxist tradition that it is the individuals’ “social existence that determines their consciousness”\(^\text{60}\), Roemer (1988) claims that ideological change can be explained by socioeconomic and political factors and by taking into account the strategic environment. In his view, actions that seem to be stemmed from ideologies are merely best responses to a change in economic, social, or political structure of the society. This “rationalization of ideology” implies that structure can explain the outcome without taking into account ideology. Although I fully agree with Roemer that structural factors can explain many actions seemingly derived from ideology, this is not always the case as I show in this paper. Another type of explanations attribute ideological change to socioeconomic transformations,\(^\text{61}\) and yet other explanations introduce past struggles and political experience as underlying causes of ideological change.\(^\text{62}\)

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\(^{60}\)Marx 1904 (1859), p. 11-12.

\(^{61}\)For example, Moaddel (1993) contends that “Considering changes in the socioeconomic and political climate of the post-coup period, revolutionary Islam became the dominant discourse of the opposition.” (p.154) However, Moaddel also takes into account the state’s anti-Islamic ideological dispositions which “contributed to the shaping of Iran’s Islamic opposition.” (p.194)

\(^{62}\)Enayat (1983); Farhi (1990). Farhi adopts Enayat’s view (described later), but integrates the influence of the state ideology into her theory. However, the role of state ideology in Farhi’s analysis is more specified than in Moaddel’s. Farhi claims that once the state takes an specific ideological orientation, that ideology...
of the clergy that was developed prior to the revolution (see below) was the result of the learning experience of the clergy from several instances of clergy-state contention during the preceding decades. Tobacco Movement of 1890’s, Constitutional Revolution of the early twentieth century, the oil nationalization movement of the early 1950’s, and finally the 1963 uprising revised the clergy’s goals and strategies over time leading to a full-fledged ideological change. Although these theories might explain parts of ideological change,\textsuperscript{63} they suffer from the caveats of cumulative and threshold mechanisms discussed in previous sections.

Furthermore, I contend that an ideological change involves an irreducible uncertainty which makes its prediction unlikely. An ideological change requires novel interpretation and theorizing. These are forms of intellectual innovations, and innovations are unpredictable. How long does it take for scientists to come up with an explanation for a new experiment, or for a writer to come up with a new idea for his/her next novel, or until investment in research breeds a technological innovation? We do not know. Although R&D investments increase the likelihood of scientific and technological innovation, it has remained impossible to predict when a discovery occurs. This irreducible uncertainty can be captured by incorporating an \textit{exogenous shock} to the theories which involve innovation. This approach has been extensively employed in economics, and there are traces of its application in social movement theories. In economics, this approach is a foundation of the “Real Business Cycles” theories in macroeconomics which state that business cycles are the result of \textit{technological shocks}.\textsuperscript{64} In the literature on social movements, McAdam (1983) attributes short-term variations in the civil rights protests to \textit{tactical innovations} of the civil rights activists and “tactical adaptations” of their opponents.

I argue that an ideological change requires ideological innovations, and ideological innovations should be considered as ideological shocks. Therefore, ideology should be integrated into the theory as an exogenous explanatory variable. I acknowledge that this approach leaves out interesting dynamics underlying an ideological change. But as far as we are concerned with explaining and predicting revolutions and not ideological change, and until a more precise theory of ideological change is available, taking ideology itself as an explanatory variable gives us more leverage in explaining and predicting revolutions.

3.3 Khomeini’s Doctrine of The Guardianship of the Jurist

What was the content of Khomeini’s doctrine of The Guardianship of the Jurist?\textsuperscript{65} Its logic is incredibly simple, “meaning that whoever has understood the beliefs and laws of Islam, cannot be a viable ideology for the opposition.

\textsuperscript{63}I believe that Enayat’s (1983) theory goes a long way to explain the development of revolutionary ideologies. I conjecture that the role of “dress rehearsals”, to adopt Trotsky’s terminology, is to convince the opposition that there is “no other way out” but revolution, which in turn leads to the development of revolutionary ideologies.

\textsuperscript{64}Kydland and Prescott 1982; Blanchard 2005.

\textsuperscript{65}See Dabashi (2006) and Martin (2000) for analyses of the evolution of Khomeini’s political thought.
when [he] reaches [the doctrine of] velayat-e faqih, [he] immediately accepts it and considers it necessary and trivial”

1. Islam has laws for every aspect of private and public life.

2. These laws are for all times and places, and must not be abandoned.

3. The nature of many of Islamic laws requires enforcement by a state.
   - Therefore, the devout must struggle to establish an Islamic state.

4. Those at the top of the Islamic state hierarchy must know the Islamic law in order to enforce it. They also must be just and fair for otherwise they manipulate the law and lead to tyranny.

5. Those who know the Islamic laws are the jurists (foqaha: the plural of faqih).
   - Therefore, the Islamic state should be controlled by just jurists.

This argument was just to show that “reason/intellect” suggests, confirms, and in fact, necessitates the doctrine of The Guardianship of the Jurist. To infer the Islamic laws with regard to state, Khomeini, as a Shi’i jurist who was lecturing on Shia’ jurisprudence, also had to refer to Quran and Sunnah (the traditions and narrations concerning the words and deeds of prophet Mohammad and the twelve Shi’i Imams). He went in length to show that his doctrine is inferred directly from Quran and Sunnah. Then the question was: if this doctrine is so obvious, then why is it not already part of the mainstream Shia’ jurisprudence? Why does it come out as shocking and new to everyone? Khomeini argues that colonizers planned to present Islam as a non-political religion to dismantle the strongest force of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism in Islamic countries in order to increase and sustain their exploitations, which have kept Islamic countries in misery and poverty. “colonizers made us think that Islam does not have a [plan for] state; does not have state organizations. Suppose it [Islam] has some laws, it does not have an executive/implementer. And, in summary, Islam only legislates [and does not enforce]. It is obvious that these propaganda is part of the colonizers’ plan to prevent Muslims from politics and governance. This statement is in contrast with our fundamental beliefs.”

Khomeini was not just a theologian who was interested in theory, he was also a serious activist with a plan. Upon establishing his theory of the Islamic state, he goes on to offer a program of struggle to establish the Islamic state: “We are required [by the Islamic law] to struggle for establishing the Islamic state. Propaganda/education constitutes our first activity in this path [of establishing the Islamic state].... Now, you do not have a government or an army; but you can educate.... Our [religious] duty is that from right now work/struggle

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to establish a righteous Islamic state; spread the word; educate; make similar-minded people; create a propaganda and intellectual wave in order to create a social current, and slowly the knowledgeable and responsible and religious masses organize as an Islamic movement, rise and establish the Islamic state.... People do not know Islam. You should introduce yourselves, your Islam, examples of Islamic leadership and government, to the people of the world. Particularly, the university class and educated class. The eyes of university students are open. Be sure that if you introduce to universities these [Islamic] beliefs as they [really] are, university students will welcome it.... You should tell what kind of state we want; and who should be the ruler and [who should be] those in charge of the government [government officials], and what kind of behavior and policies they should conform to.... Build devotee [people willing for die for a cause] and fighters for Islam.... Build fighters from the people on the street and bazaar, from these workers and peasants and students.... Struggle for freedom and salvation needs religion. Make Islam...available to people so that they correct their beliefs and manners accordingly, and become a fighting force, topple this colonizing and tyrant political system and establish the Islamic state.”

“[Most of the clergy] constantly apologize that we are unable to take these duties [, managing the state]. These ideas are wrong. Education and sciences and expertise in technologies is necessary for administrative and executive duties, and of course, we use such people [with such knowledge and expertise]. What concerns supervision and higher administration and spreading justice among people and establishing just relations between the people, is what the jurist has learned. What is necessary for keeping the national freedom and independence, is what [the knowledge that] the jurist has. It is the jurist who is not influenced by foreigners, and gives his life to defend the people’s rights and freedom and independence and the boundaries of the country. It is the jurist who does not deviate to left and right. Surely, you will be able to govern and lead the masses. The program of the state and administration and its necessary laws are ready.... Now, it is our [religious] duty to implement and execute the Islam’s plan for the state.... [Don’t be scared, don’t be afraid,] there is no power but in God, the high the great.”

3.4 The Causal Role of the New Shia Ideology

“Ideology is thought.... The basic problem is the identification of the linkage between thought and action.” (Ideology and Political Behavior, Minar)

I suggest that a new ideology alters the set of alternatives, and hence changes the dissidents’ “calculus of protest”. It offers a new theory of state that serves as an alternative to the existing theory of state, and hence expands the set of alternatives. This expansion can change the calculus of protest by providing a new choice that individuals compare and contrast with the status quo. Sometimes, this alternative is not appealing vis-a-vis the status quo and the competing alternatives,
in which case the new ideology does not affect behavior. However, when it is appealing, it switches individuals’ goals and strategies to the implementation of the new ideology and its accompanying theory of state. Analogous to technological innovations that expand production possibilities, and to tactical innovations that expand the tool-kit/repertoire of actions, ideological innovations expand the set of alternatives to the status quo economic, social, and political structures of the society and the state.

However, a new ideology is not created in a vacuum. It is often built upon an existing belief system, and hence needs to be consistent with that belief system. That is, at any time, an existing belief system constitutes the main repertoires of raw material for a new ideology, and yet constrains how these material can be bundled together and what other material can be imported from outside the belief system. For example, an ideology that heavily draws from an Islamic belief system, trivially, needs to acknowledge the core elements of the Islamic thought. This view resonates with recent psychological research, indicating that “there are clear social psychological constraints on the types of attitudes, values, and beliefs that can be bundled together.”

Ideologies also serve other functions such as establishing identity and solidarity (relational function), reducing uncertainty and complexity (epistemic function), and providing self-esteem, security, and meaning in life (existential function). I abstract from these functions because I investigate the role of a new ideology vis-a-vis an old one, not an ideology to a “non-ideology”. In this context, without comprehensive survey data on public opinion, it seems impossible to compare the effectiveness of a new ideology with and old one along the relational, epistemic, and existential dimensions.

In our case, the Islamic opposition to the Pahlavi regime were consistently interested in the implementation of the Islamic law. Before Khomeini introduced his theory of Islamic state, the Islamic opposition had limited alternatives to achieve their interests: opposing specific state policies that were “non-Islamic”, replacing a ruler with another, or replacing the monarchy with some other political regime such as democracy. The first strategy was widely practiced, but is irrelevant to our case because it was not revolutionary. The other alternatives were not attractive to the Islamic opposition. As Shariat-Madari, a high-ranking marja’ in Qom, argued once, there was no guarantee that a new ruler would be better than the old one. If people go through the trouble of overthrowing a corrupt state, “won’t a ruler comes to power who is worse than the first?”

I argue that the Shia political ideology underwent a significant transformation in the late 1960’s and the early 1970’s as a result of scholarly efforts of Khomeini and his close circle of clerical followers in one camp, and religious lay intellectuals in another. I contend that this ideological innovation had a decisive effect on the making of the Iranian Revolution through at least two causal mechanisms. First, the new ideology reinterpreted Islam as a social and political ideology in which active participation in social and political matters became a religious obligation of the

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70 Jost et al., 2009, p.328
71 See Jost et al. (2009) for a recent review.
devout. Second, and more importantly, the new ideology offered an Islamic alternative to the existing sociopolitical structure of the society and the state, challenging the existing order as a viable Islamic alternative.

This new ideology prescribed conceptions of Islamic social and political structure around the axes of Islamic social justice and anti-imperialism, the two main popular issues of contention in the preceding few decades. As a result, it created a viable Islamic alternative to other oppositional ideologies, which in turn broadened recruitment opportunities of the Islamic opposition specially among the students and intellectuals. In other words, Islam was reinterpreted as a social religion and “Shia as a total political party” that provides fair and viable solutions to sociopolitical issues of contention. Moreover, this mutant ideology had important advantages over the competing ones. Above all, it was an Islamic and Shi’i ideology in a dominantly muslim and Shia country. It was advocated not only by many intellectual laymen, but more importantly, by a section, though small, of high-ranking clerical authorities that included a marj’a, namely, Khomeini. Not surprisingly, this ideological innovation effectively dismantled the nationalist and, to a lesser extent, leftist ideologies, leaving them with either an old generation of followers or militant leftists whose activities were restricted to clandestine cells and occasional violent activities against the state.

More importantly, this new ideology set a specific goal for the Islamic opposition: a religious duty to topple the illegitimate state and to replace it with a new state along the guidelines of Islam and Shia. The illegitimacy of the state among the Shi’i ulama was not new. However, “Imam [Khomeini] was the first Shi’i jurist who used the term ‘Islamic state’ in a book on Islamic jurisprudence (Ketab al-Bai’).” Khomeini’s theory was “an ideological revolution in that it directly challenged the legitimacy of monarchy and advocated rule by qualified Islamic jurists.” Illegitimacy of the state by itself does not call for action because the devout might simply wait for the Hidden Imam to arrive and spread justice, and/or to leave the matters of judgment and revenge to God. Nevertheless, if this illegitimacy is combined with a sociopolitical interpretation of Islam that requires action against injustice, and with a legitimate Islamic alternative, then illegitimacy calls for action, active opposition, holy sacrifice, martyrdom, and if necessary, revolution. The new ideology set a new goal with revolutionary implications: implementation of an Islamic society with an Islamic state.

In the rest of this section, I provide evidence for my claims. However, it is noteworthy to first examine how the existing theories of revolutions in general and explanations of the Iranian Revolution in particular argue about the role of ideology. According to Goldstone (2001) the literature points to three mechanisms through which ideology might influence revolution. Ideology could: (a) bridge the varied cultural frameworks of different groups and provide a basis for the multi-group and cross-class coalitions...(b) provide a sense of inevitability and destiny about its followers’ success, and (c) persuade people that the existing authorities are unjust and weak”. In her study of the Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions, Farhi (1990) argues that the new Islamic ideology had two roles in Iran. It incorporated nationalism to Islam and formed an Islamic nationalism. More

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74Kadivar, (1377) 1378 [(1998) 1999], p. 167-8
75Foran, 1993, p.368
76Gamson, 1988; Gamson and Meyer, 1996; Martin et al., 1990; Chong, 1993
77Goldstone, 2001, p.156
importantly, the new ideology provided an “ideological basis for the control of state”, calling for “attack on the state and its reshaping according to Islamic principles.”

Arjomand (1988) claims that the role of the new Islamic ideology was to bring different social groups under the banner of Islamic opposition. The new ideology calling for Islamic revolution could entertain the vigilance and attractions of the “myth of revolution”. The new ideology offered “a social myth of Islamic government as the restoration of the Golden Age: the reign of Prophet Mohammad and of the first Shi’ite Imam, ‘Ali. But it was not so much this utopia per se as its stark juxtaposition to the Shah’s regime that primarily accounted for its effectiveness.” Arjomand (1988) argues that the new Islamic ideology helped to build a wide coalition between social groups against the state because the “myth of revolution” was appealing to everyone. But different aspects of this new ideology attracted different groups. For example, the emphasis of the new ideology on national and Islamic identity appealed the middle class suffering from “persistent sense of malaise and anomie caused by rapid social change”, which was disorienting “their fundamental national and cultural identity”.

Parsa (2000) contends that certain groups, he specifically singles out students, are “relentless revolutionaries” for whom ideology plays a significant role. Their political goals and the means to achieve them are heavily drawn from their ideology. Furthermore, Parsa emphasizes the potentially deterring role of ideology in coalition formation against the state. For example, a radical left ideology with too much emphasis on redistribution might prevent the propertied class to join the revolution, and even might force them to coalesce with the state against the revolutionaries. That is, ideologies might facilitate or hinder coalition formation between different groups against the state.

Foran (1993, 1997, 2005) argues that to succeed against a repressive state, “broad segments of many groups and classes must be able to articulate the experiences they are living through into effective and flexible analysis capable of mobilizing their own forces and building coalition with others”. To capture the cultural and ideological dimensions of “this intervention of human agents onto the historical stage”, Foran introduces the concept of “political culture of opposition”. Political culture of opposition is “the diverse and complex value systems existing among various groups and classes which are drawn upon to make sense of the ‘structural’ changes going on around them.” “Such cultures tap everything from historical memories of past conflicts to inchoate sentiments about injustice, to long-standing religious idioms and practices, to more formally elaborated political ideologies transcends the Sewell-Skocpol debate by embracing all of what they pinpoint as relevant.”

Milani (1994) argues that a new interpretation of Shi’ism developed by two groups: lay religious intellectuals, specially Ali Sharia’ti, and Khomeini and his followers. “The most profound consequence of Khomeini’s new interpretation [i.e., ideology] was the explicit rejection of the com-

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78Farhi, 1990, p. 93
79Arjomand, 1988, p. 103
80Arjomand, 1988, p. 110
81Foran, 2005, p.21
82Foran, 2005, p.14
83Foran, 1997, p.208

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patibility of Shi’ism/Islam with monarchism”. Moreover, Ay. Khomeini’s new interpretation of Velayat-e Faqih “offered an alternative to the shah’s monarchy in Iran.” On the other hand, the effect of the ideological reveries of religious intellectuals were to present Shi’ism as a progressive ideology, attracting the educated and the young. It called for protest against the tyranny, and for building a society based on the principles of Islam and Shi’ism free from oppression and exploitation.

Skocpol (1997) asserts the role of Shia Islam in the Iranian revolution. “Shi’a Islam was both organizationally and culturally crucial to the making of the Iranian Revolution against the Shah. Radicalized clerics, loosely following the Ayatollah Khomeini, disseminated political ideas challenging the Shah. Then the networks, the social forms, and the central myth of the Shi’a Islam helped to coordinate urban mass resistance and to give it moral will to persist in the face of attempts at armed repression.” Interestingly, right after she admits that “in Iran, uniquely, the revolution was ‘made’ ”, Skocpol retains her state-centered agency-free framework and concludes that “if a historical conjuncture arises in which a vulnerable state [my emphasis] faces oppositionally inclined social groups possessing solidarity, autonomy, and independent economic resources, then the sort of moral symbols and forms of social communication [my emphasis] offered by Shi’a Islam in Iran can sustain self-conscious making of a revolution.”

Several other scholars including Algar (1983), Boroujerdi (1996), and Mirsepassi (2000) also provide original studies of the evolution of Shi’a ideology during this period. Overall, the literature confirms the two main mechanisms introduced above. But what evidence support such claims? The main type of evidence that is provided in the literature to confirm these claims about the role of ideology is the contents of the lectures, books, and declarations of the main ideologues of the revolution: Khomeini and Ali Shariati. Khomeini presented a social Islam, denounced monarchy as a form of government, and sketched the framework of an Islamic state. Shariati combined the terminology and methodology of social science to argue the same things but in modern language. For example, although Shariati does not explicitly talk about the Islamic state, his sketch of the ideal society in Ommat va Emamat is consistent with Khomeini’s Velayat-e-Faqih.

Khomeini takes for granted the holiness of the Prophet and Shia Imams as the ideals and embodiments of the complete human, then he invites the devout to follow their Imams in taking social actions against injustice and repressive states. Shariati, on the other hand, takes for granted the necessity to rebel against injustice, and justifies Shi’a and Islam by arguing that the Islamic and Shi’a figures were after setting up a classless, just society, and rebelled against injustice and the agents of repression and exploitation. Khomeini speaks to the devout, Shariati speaks to intellectuals.

84Milani, 1994, p.89
85Milani, 1994, p. 90
86Skocpol, 1994, p.249
87Skocpol, 1994, p. 250
88See Algar(1981, 1983). Almost any book written on the Iranian Revolution include a discussion of Khomeini’s political ideology. The works in Persian on his life and ideology are numerous. The most famous one is Sahifeh-ye Noor (30 volumes), the collected lectures, speeches, declaration, and writings of Khomeini.
But how do we know that the new ideology had a causal effect on the making of the Iranian Revolution? In other words, would it matter whether such ideology had not been developed? Would the revolution occur any way? One further evidence occasionally presented to support the critical role of Shariati in facilitating coalition formation between the clerical opposition and the intellectuals is his popularity among the university and high school students. His lectures in Hosseiniyeh-ye Ershad were unusually popular among the students, and his books were printed and reprinted for several years. In fact, there are claims that the formation and the spread of Mojahedin-e Khalq, the most famous militant revolutionary group before the revolution, were motivated by Shariati’s teachings. However, we know that the group split in 1975 when a “Marxist coup” divided the group into an Islamic faction and a Marxist faction. Did Shariati’s teachings influence the development of such Marxist ideology, or did it lead the Marxists to support the religious opposition (although we know that the religious groups refused to cooperate with the Marxists against the regime)? More importantly, from the early years of Khomeini’s exile the LMI-abroad and Students’ Islamic Association Abroad were in direct contact with Khomeini, and followed his lead more than the prominent figures of LMI such as Bazargan. So how do we know that Shariati’s teachings were essential to attract the young or even students to religious opposition? Further evidence is needed to trace the causal relationship between Shariati’s ideological innovations and the coalition formation between the religious opposition and the students.

What about Khomeini’s ideological innovation? There is one clear difference between the declarations of Khomeini in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. In the former period, he opposes specific policies of the state; whereas in the latter, in addition to such oppositions, he calls for overthrowing the regime and establishing an Islamic state. For example, in his declaration after the Qum protests in early January 1978, Khomeini says: “Muhammad-Reza is a traitor and yaghi and necessarily is dropped from the position of monarchy... I predict success for the Iranian nation, a success coming with...the destruction of the system of exploitation and the end of the siaah rooy Pahlavi dynasty.... Warn those who talk about the constitutional framework about confirming the existing corrupt monarchical regime with such words, because until this corrupt dynasty is governing the country, the Iranian nation does not enjoy Islam, nor is there any news about freedom and independence of the country, and nor people see happiness.” Similar declarations can be found before any signs of unrest was observed. For example, in his declaration to condemn the celebration of the 2500 years of monarchy, Khomeini says in October 1971: “...as for a regime founded on oppression and thievery whose only aim is to satisfy its own lustful desires-only when it is overthrown can the people celebrate and rejoice.... Tradition related that the Prophet (upon whom be peace) said that the title of King of Kings, which is borne by the monarchs of Iran, is the most hated of all titles in the sight of God. Islam is fundamentally opposed to the whole notion of monarchy[my emphasis]. Anyone who studies the manner in which the Prophet established the government of Islam will realize that Islam came in order to destroy these palaces of tyranny. Monarchy in one of the most shameful and disgraceful reactionary manifestation.” Did the ideological innovation of Khomeini represented in his book, Velayat-e Faqih, have a causal impact on this change?

90Abrahamian, 1982.
91Khomeini warned against forming any coalition with Marxist in his declarations in several occasions.
92Chehabi, 1990
93Nahzat-e Ruhanyun-e Iran, v. 7, p.50-52
Khomeini’s work on political theory of Shia was originally introduced in thirteen lectures as a part of his course on advanced Islamic jurisprudence in the January of 1970 in Najaf, Iraq. The lectures were edited and published in 1971, and smuggled into Iran. A comprehensive examination of Khomeini’s declarations, speeches and writings shows that Khomeini did not call for overthrowing the Pahlavi regime before 1970, however, he did make such calls from the early 1970’s on. This confirms that development of a new political philosophy of Shia, in which he calls for planning to overthrow the state and establish an Islamic state had immediate causal effect on the goals of Khomeini and his followers. In fact, the publication of Khomeini’s book can be considered as a natural experiment to show the causal impact of ideological change on the political goals and strategies of the clerical opposition.

Hamid Ruhani, a cleric who followed Khomeini in exile and attended his lectures on Islamic jurisprudence in Iraq, has a telling narrative about the effect of Khomeini’s lectures and their publication: “up to that day, the final goal of Imam [Khomeini] was not completely clear to them [Khomeini’s followers], and they didn’t know what Imam wanted. And, how far Imam wanted to go. Those who knew Imam closely and understood his way and thoughts, to some extent, had realized that Imam’s goal was to overthrow the Shah’s regime and to end the monarchical regime, however, what Imam had in mind to do after that step[,] after toppling the Shah’s regime[,] and what program he wanted to implement was not clear. Maybe some thought that if an Iranian general toppled the Shah’s regime via a coup and took power and governed according to the laws of Islam, Imam would stop his opposition, and would go back to his courses and discussions in the seminary schools of Qom.... Many essentially didn’t know that what goal Imam was seeking in his opposition, and what he had in mind, and essentially why he had started the movement. With the plan of the Islamic state, the final goal was determined; everyone realized what goal they should follow and how far they should go, how much they should expand the scope of the movement, and how much they should enhance the degree of resistance and persistence. [my emphasis].”

Jafarian (1386 [2007]) argues that “the presentation of the topic of velayat-e faghih in 1348 paved the way to draw the future orientation of the movement.” “In fact, the sketching of of this theory, when Imam was attacking the monarchical regime, presented some kind of alternative to the Pahlavi regime. This was what the fighters badly needed, because their did not know to seek what type of regime after the fall of the Pahlavi regime. Up to this point, there was some kind of vague pictures of the Islamic state, the most serious of which was the plan of the Fadaiyan-e Eslam that still had a Shah on the top [of the political hierarchy of state].”

The effect of Khomeini’s theory of Islamic state on the Islamic opposition has been best summarized in one of the reports of the Pahlavi regime’s intelligence agency, SAVAK: “The plan of the Islamic state: Ruhollah Khomeini, parallel to expressing his oppositions to Iran’s social reforms and the existing regime in the Iranian society, presented the plan of the so-called Islamic state... however, the naive people (gheshryun) who always consider the face-value of the his statements, employed these ideas/issues as a goal in their propaganda, and some of the religious groups that aim to topple [the regime], too, have made achieving it [,the Islamic state,] a priority. After a
few years, it is observed now that religious fanatics, in their books and notes that they publish,
compare a hypothetical Islamic state with different social systems and enumerate its characteristics
and advantages”.

To further confirm the causal effect of ideology, we can employ the variation in the attitude of
other prominent maraja’ with regard to their political goals and strategies. At the time, there were
a few prominent marja’s besides Khomeini: In Qum, Shariat-Madari, Goltayegani, and Mar’ashi-
Najaфи, and in Iraq, Kho’i and Hakim until his death in 1971. The clergy did not uniformly agree
with Khomeini. After all, the new political ideology was a radical departure from the tradition
of the Shia political thought. All the prominent figures of Shia ulama and maraja had lived and
even cooperated with monarchs for hundreds of years. Although conflicts appeared on occasion,
they were over specific policies rather than the whole institution of monarchy. As Motahhedeh
(1985) argues, “The great political acts of mullahs such as Mirza Shirazi were reactive, not ini-
tiative; steps—often steps against some measure of the government—were taken by the great
juriconsults[maraja] only when an emerging unity of opinion had identified a threat.” However,
Khomeini’s lectures in Najaf called for the establishment of an Islamic state that initiates and en-
force policies. “In Najaf, after nearly two centuries, Vahid Behbahani’s idea that the more learned
you were, the more correctly you could discover the law for others had reached its conclusion ‘the
most learned’[a’lam] was responsible not only for discovering the law for others, he was responsible
for controlling its application.” As expected, these maraja’ also had different attitude toward
the regime. They condemned the regimes’ policies both in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s,
but did not call for any revolutionary action. In particular, Shariat-Madari is famous for his “com-
promise” with Sharif Emami’s government giving him three months to show his competence and
goodwill. Even during the heyday of the revolution, Shariat-Madari’s political goal was to return to
the constitution, and also invite people to prevent bloodshed. This variation in the political goals
between Khomeini and the “moderate” section of the high-ranking ulama who did not believe in
Veleyat-e Faqih (as interpreted by Khomeini) further confirms the causal effect of ideology on the
goals and strategies of the opposition.

Shariat-Madari’s conversation, in the summer of 1967, with a group of Iraqi delegates who
were to discuss Palestine and Arab-Israeli war is telling about his view of the state. The head of
the delegate tells Shariat-Madari that “We don’t trust our rulers and governments, and recognize
them as our enemies... and in my opinion, it is better that ulama agree and communicate with
each other, and plan to overthrow the corrupt regimes and essentially create Islamic states in the
Islamic territories to defend the rights of muslims against the enemies.” Shariat-Madari responds:
“There is no doubt that some rulers oppose Islamic laws, but do you think you have such power
[to overthrow those rulers]? Can you create your desired government after overthrowing a corrupt
state? After the end of your job [overthrowing the state], won’t a ruler comes to power who is worse
than the first? and bother you even more?... In my opinion, its better that you educate people
who are pious and who know religious matters, and place them into the state system so that, God

100Algar 1969; Arjomand 1984; See also Mottahedeh (1985, Ch. Sixth)
101Mottahedeh 1985, p.223
102Mottahedeh 1985, p.247
103There is some evidence indicating that Golpayegani and Mar’ashi-Najafi did believe in Khomeini’s
theory, which can explain their more radical stand vis-à-vis Shariat-Madari and Khoi.
willing, good results follow in the future."\textsuperscript{104}

In summary, I have argued that a major ideological change occurred between the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. Khomeini reinterpreted the notion of \textit{Velayat-e Faqih}, declared the inconsistency of the institution of monarchy with Islam and the necessity of establishing an “Islamic state”, and called for action to achieve these ends. Ali Shariati reinterpreted Shia Islam as a revolutionary ideology based on social justice, highlighted the Shia tradition in fighting against unjust social order and oppressive states, and draw a framework for an ideal Islamic society based on social justice, in which a just leader(\textit{emam}) leads the people(\textit{Ommat}) toward material and spiritual ends. I argued that although it seems plausible that this ideological change have helped to make coalition between the clerical opposition and the students and intellectuals, there is not enough evidence to confirm this hypothesis. I highlighted two main causal mechanisms through which this ideological change affected the making of the revolution. In addition, I presented two separate types of evidence to trace the causal role of ideology in determining the goal and strategy of the clerical opposition led by Khomieni. This establishes that, at least in the Iranian Revolution, ideology did matter.

4 Opposition: Organization and Coordination

In this section, I compare organizations, resources, and coordination among opposition groups in the early 1960’s with the late 1970’s. There were three major opposition groups in the last two decades of the Pahlavi dynasty: the pro-Khomeini clergy, Liberation Movement of Iran (LMI), and National Front (NF). These were the opposition groups associated with religious and nationalist “communal elites” that have been said to play a critical role in mobilizing the masses against repressive regimes.\textsuperscript{105} They enjoyed the “symbolic power” associated with religious and nationalist sentiments of the community.\textsuperscript{106} In the case of the pro-Khomeini clergy, they also had potential access to a large network of mosques and other organizational resources across the country.\textsuperscript{107} The regime had effectively suppressed communists after the 1953 coup. Clandestine militant groups such as Mojahedin and Fadaian had not been formed in the early 1960’s, and did not play a significant role until the late stages of 1979 revolution.\textsuperscript{108} Therefore, I focus on these three major opposition groups.

\textsuperscript{104}Ruhani, (1363) 1381 [(1984) 2002], p. 359.
\textsuperscript{105}Slater, 2009
\textsuperscript{106}The term “communal elites” is from Slater (2009), and “symbolic power” is from Etzioni (1961).
\textsuperscript{107}In fact, their “symbolic power” also seem to be greater than other groups. As Kamrava suggests, “the ulama had social and cultural hegemony and the resources for political mobilization that the other groups lacked.” (Kamrava, 1990, p. 132)
\textsuperscript{108}Several other militant groups were active during this period including \textit{Hey’atha-ye Mo’ talefeh-ye Eslami}, \textit{Abuzar}, \textit{Hezb-i Melal-i Eslami}. However, they did not play a significant role in the revolution, and by the late 1970’s they all had been discovered and neutralized by the state. See Jafarian (1386 [2007]) for a comprehensive study.
4.1 The Clerical Opposition

The clergy in Iran were connected through the network of mosques and religious schools known as madrasah. The education system was not centralized before the revolution, although a high-ranking clergy was in charge of each madrasah. Curriculums varied, and examinations were decentralized and less frequent than in modern schools. The output of religious schools varied from low-ranking clergy to mujtahids who were authorized to infer the laws of Islam from Islamic sources. A typical student in these seminaries was called a talabeh, and could take different careers depending on his education, reputation, teachers, and personal connections. He could preach Islam in a religious place such as hosseinyehs and mosques, lead prayers in a mosque, become a marja’s representative to whom the devout would pay religious taxes, teach in a madrasah, and rarely, take an official job. In reality, these responsibility were interrelated. For instance, a marja would send his representative to a city to preach Islam, lead the prayers in a mosque, collect religious taxes, etc. Sometimes a mujtahid would sent a clergy on his own initiative, and sometimes people would ask for someone who could teach them religious law, preach them, and lead their prayers. There were many religious schools all over the country. Important cities contained several schools in vicinity of each other, and this collection of schools was called Hawzeh-ye Elmeyeh. Hawzeh of Qom emerged as the most prominent hawzeh in the mid-twentieth century, while other hawzehs in Mashhad, Isfahan, Tehran, Shiraz, Tabriz and other places were also important. Overall, the clergy were connected through a decentralized network of mosques and madrasahs.

Financial resources of this decentralized network were naturally decentralized. Usually, madrasahs were partly financed through awqaf. Awqaf are properties that are devoted by their owners for public purposes ranging from building public baths to financing madrasahs. Traditionally, the high-ranking clergyman who was responsible for the affairs of a masrasah was also in charge of spending the returns from vaqf properties that belonged to that madrasah. This also applied to many mosques, however, the person in charge of a mosque, known as motevalli, could be a layman. Alternatively, a mosque could be financed by people living in its vicinity. The most central source of religious finances was khoms, a religious duty which was payed to a marja or his representative by the followers of that marja. A marja collected khoms through his representatives, and usually allowed them to spend parts of it as they saw fit, and send the rest to him. He then reallocated these funds to different purposes from helping the poor, to building mosques and madrasahs, to paying scholarship to the tullab (plural of talabeh). A marja payed a monthly stipend, known as shahrieh, to all tullab. Usually, these shahryehs varied according to academic level of a talabeh, and constituted a major source of his income. The amount of shahryeh that a marja payed represented his financial resources, which in turn represented and reinforced his popularity among the devout.

Therefore, madrasahs, mosques, tullab, and clergymen built the underlying network of the clergy, and religious taxes and awqaf determined their financial resources. Available data on these figures is rare and should be treated with caution. However, these data suggest a downturn trend in the organizational infrastructure of the clergy. Abrahamian (1982) reports that in the 1960’s and 1970’s there were “some 50 Ayatollah, 5,000 Hojjat al-Islam, and 10,000 theology students, and an unknown number of low-ranking mullahs, mekateb teachers, madrasah lecturers, prayer leaders, and procession organizers”, and that “clergy had the control of some 5,600 town mosques”.109 Akhavi

109Abrahamian, 1982, p.433
(1980) presents the following data collected from different official sources. Official government figures showed that there were 100 mujtahids, 10,000 mulls, and 20,000 mosques in Iran in 1965, and 138 madrasah with some 7,500 tullab in 1968. However, the Endowment Organization reported 9,015 mosques in 1975. In Tehran, 9 out of 32 madrasahs closed down between 1960 and 1975 while only 1 new madrasah was opened.

Financially, the state took over the religious endowments (awqaf), and brought them under the control of the Endowment Organization in 1964, one year after the 1963 uprising. This organization was to manage awqaf and their returns and spendings. Although no data is available, several incidents in Mashahad and Tehran suggest that regime were systematically taking the financial resources of the madrasahs under the control of the central government. Naturally, Endowment Organization was responsible to pay stipend to students of madrasahs. The data shows that this organization was helping 3100 students in 111 madrasahs in 1973. Interestingly, there was a drop in monthly stipend from 1972 to 1973 from 331 rials to 228 rials. However, the monthly stipend of the Qom seminary students, financed through sahm-i imam, increased from an average of 300–400 rials to some 1460 rials between 1963 and 1975. But even this increase was not high enough to be considered an increase in real income. The financial abundance made available by Boroujerdi through building a network of representatives was counter-balanced by state encroachment as well as decentralized system of marjayat ensued after him. The devout turned to several marjas whom they found a’lam (most knowledgeable), and each payed their religious taxes to his or her own marja. However, the economic prosperity starting in the late 1960’s and the oil boom of 1974 might have increased the financial resources of the clergy. The net effect is dubious. Katouzian claims that “what the usurpation of charitable endowment (or awqafi’am) had taken away from the religious authorities was being returned to them, several hundred times over, through payments of annual religious dues and other financial contribution by merchants, traders and other religious practitioners, who...were increasing both in number and fortune!” However, Akhavi contends that “increasing dependence on the Sazman-i Awqaf plus rapid reduction of financial assistance by it could not immediately, nor perhaps even in the medium run, have adverse consequences for Qumm. But a region such as Isfahan, with its historical importance as a center of ulama influence might be vulnerable.” That Tehran bazaar financially supported Khomeini is most likely accurate. Moreover, the data on the income of the Hazrat-i Masuma Shrine indicates an upward trend in income with a significantly large boom in 1974. More than 70 per cent of the income in 1973 was gathered in shrine itself by pilgrims and in funeral fees. To the extent that this trend represents the religious expenditure of the devout, it shows that economic prosperity had been extended to religious organizations at least in Qom.

110 Akhavi, 1980, p. 129
111 Akhavi, 1980, p. 130
112 Akhavi, 1980, p. 130
113 Akhavi, 1980, p. 142-143
114 Algar, 1983
115 Katouzian, 1981, p. 333. However, Katouzian indicates that his assessment is based on speculations rather than data (personal communication).
116 Akhavi, 1980, p. 142
117 Shanehchi, tape 4, p.3; Lebaschi, tape 3, p.16
118 Fischer, 1980, p. 259
There is no available data on *khoms* and other financial resources of the *ulama*. However, *shahriehs* payed by them to seminary students are reasonable measures of their broader financial resources. In his memoirs, Montazeri\(^{119}\) mentions that Khomeini was hesitant to pay stipend after Boroujerdi’s death because he was not considered as a prominent *marja*, and did not receive religious taxes.\(^{120}\) However, after a few months, he published his *resaleh*, and people in Najaf-Abad, Rafsanjan, and parts of Tehran sent him money for religious purposes. He started to pay stipend, and more money came once he took a radical stand during the early protests in the 1960’s against state policies. Khomeini continued to pay stipend through Montazeri and other close followers even when Khomeini was in exile. Although no final conclusion can be made without further investigation, it is plausible to think that Khomeini’s financial resources increased from around 1962 to 1978 as his *marjaiyat* established and his followers increased. In fact, Khomeini and Khoi, who both resided in *Najaf*, were paying the highest stipend to *tullab* of Qum seminaries in 1975. Their stipend for the students at lower levels of study was twice as much as the prominent *maraj*s of Qom such as Shariat-Madari and Golpayegani.\(^{121}\) However, there were systematic negative sanctions against him and his followers even by the Endowment Organizations,\(^{122}\) aiming to discredit him and stop the activities of him and his followers. Overall, it seems unlikely, certainly far from obvious, that Khomeini’s financial resources had increased dramatically enough to play a significant role in the events of the late 1970’s.

### 4.2 National Front and Liberation Movement of Iran

National Front was an overarching organization formed in 1951 under Mosaddeq’s leadership from nationalist figures and parties. Their goal was to coordinate their opposition against the Shah to establish democracy, and against the British to nationalize the oil industry. These groups included “independent personalities” who did not belong to any party, Iran Party (IP), PIN, and several others. After the 1953 coup which overthrew Mossadeq’s government and reinstated the Shah, several nationalist figures, religious intellectuals such as Mehdi Bazargan, and some members of the clergy formed the National Resistance Movement (NMR) to continue their opposition against the Shah’s dictatorship. They had very limited success, and regime’s repression effectively ended their activities in 1957.

**The Early 1960’s.** In 1960, when Shah announced free election, nationalists reorganized, and announced the formation of the Second National Front (SNF) in July 1960. SNF participated in the Majles (parliament) election, however, the election was fraud and no member of the opposition was elected. Protests that ensued made Shah ask the “elected” deputies to resign, and schedule another election in the following January. The prime minister, Eqbal, resigned too, and was replaced by Sharif-Emami in August 1960. Meanwhile, there were strong tensions within the SNF between the moderates and the radical groups such as NMR, PIN, and the Student Organization of the SNF. Radicals advocated mass mobilization and bolder actions against the regime, whereas moderates

\(^{119}\) Montazeri, 1379 [2000]

\(^{120}\) However, the existing letters indicate that as soon as one week after Boroujerdi’s death, Khomeini were appointing representatives to collect religious taxes (Khomeini, *Sahifeh*, vol. 1, p. 45-76).

\(^{121}\) Fischer, 1980, P. 81.

\(^{122}\) Fischer, 1980, p. 135
were in favor of negotiations and political solutions. Despite the disapproval of the High Council of the SNF, which mostly included the old or middle-aged moderate politicians, the radical wing held several meetings and demonstrations in the Fall of 1960.

The second election that was held in January 1961 was also fraudulent. SNF organized protests in bazaar and Tehran University. In February, bazaar went on strike, and in his visit to the University, Eqbal’s car was put on fire by students. These tensions, US pressure, and the teachers' strike and demonstrations led to the replacement of Sharif-Emami by Ali Amini in May 1961. In the same month, the differences within the SNF over its ideology and strategies led some members of the National Front with religious tendencies to form a party based on Islamic ideology. The party was called the Liberation Movement of Iran (LMI), and the founders included Bazargan, Yadollah Sahabi, Taleqani, and a few others. LMI requested membership in SNF, and although its membership was never approved, practically remained part of the SNF.

Despite Amini’s signal of goodwill to the nationalists, they denounced him as the “American prime minister” in their meeting on May 18, where about 8,000 attended. There was another meeting in July 1961 that led to a demonstration and the arrest of several opposition figures. In January 1962, the security forces attacked Tehran University, where the students were demonstrating, and savagely beat students. Although Amini denied any role in the decision to attack, this event put an end to the possibility of collaboration between Amini’s government and the nationalist opposition. SNF called for a general strike, but the plan failed. “After that fiasco National Front was exposed as ineffective, and its most active members, the student leaders, were in prison.”

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Shah announced that he would put his 6 point “White Revolution”, including land redistribution, to referendum in January 26, 1963. National Front opposed the referendum and called a demonstration in January 25. The government banned the demonstration and arrested most leaders of SNF and LMI. The following months would witness the rise of the clergy leadership manifested in the June 1963 uprising. After the June uprising, in the late summer, the Student Organization of SNF started organizing for the next Majles election. They decided to hold a meeting on September 6, 1963, to advocate free election. Meanwhile, police did not respond to their request for official authorization, and instead freed some of the SNF leaders such as Saleh on the day right before the meeting. Saleh canceled the meeting, but it was too late to call it off. As a result, police prevented the meeting in the next day, but a demonstration ensued and about 100 demonstrators were arrested.

This broke the relation between the students and the leadership of SNF. Later on, in the Spring of 1964, the leadership resigned over a dispute with Mosaddeq who supported students' viewpoint about taking a more active opposition stand against the regime. SNF was finished, and the LMI leaders were still in prison. This effectively ended the nationalists activities in the early 1960’s. The resurgence of opposition activities would start again more than a decade later in 1977.

The Late 1970’s. Shah initiated limited liberalization in 1976. Inspired by the new opportunity, the opposition started to reorganize in 1977. However, the pattern of the early 1960’s repeated itself again. The nationalists and LMI started political activities. Meetings were convened, strikes

123Chehabi, 1990, p. 165
124Chehabi, 1990, p. 180
were called, and demonstrations were held, but at the end the internal ideological and tactical differences together with the regime repression ended the nationalists activities right before the rise of the clerical opposition. However, this time the LMI and religious intellectuals had the upper hand. Not much had left from the nationalists parties and organizations, and their popular base was very limited. In contrast, LMI and the clergy were active during the years since the early 1960’s, revising their ideologies, advocating Islamic opposition, and keeping and expanding their networks and organizations. They even kept contacts with militant opposition groups such as Mojahedin. Overall, although under severe repression and surveillance, they had remained active.

Among the first signs of opposition revival was the 200–pages open letter of Ali–Asghar Hajj–Seyyed–Javadi to Shah in the early 1977, in which he criticized the regime for corruption and the lack of freedom. In May 1977, fifty three lawyers sent another open letter. The nationalists started to reorganize, and attempted to build an umbrella organization to facilitate coordination between all nationalist opposition groups. They decided to write an open letter to Shah and criticize the regime. The plan was to get the signature of all the party leaders, however, after a dispute with Bazargan and his friends, the letter was signed only by Foruhar, Sanjabi, and Bakhtyar. As described later in this section, this was the first signal of tensions between the nationalists and the religious intellectuals. The Writer’s Association sent its own open letter, signaling their revival.125

Several intellectual groups formed in the Summer and Fall of 1977, including the Group for Free Books and Free Thought, the Writers’ Associations, the Iranian Committee for the Defense of Freedom and Human Rights, the Association of Iranian Jurists, the National Organization of Iranian Teachers, the Society of Merchants, Traders, and Craftsmen, etc., aiming to criticize the regime for issues ranging from human rights to economic policies. There were several relatively small protest meetings in the late Summer and the Fall of 1977. For instance, in October 1977, students held poetry–reading nights, where political poems were recited. In the tenth night, police intervened, which led to a street demonstration.126 As discussed later, the Iranian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (ICDHR) was the major organization through which the nationalists organized their activities. However, ICDHR was dominated by LMI and religious intellectuals, and overall, it seems that the activities of the nationalists during 1978 was negligible relative to LMI and the clerical opposition. That is not to say that nationalists were totally inactive, but that their relative role in the revolution was insignificant.

4.3 Collaboration and Coordination

In his analysis of June 1963 uprising, Parsa (1994) argues that “two major factors contributed to the uprising’s failure. One was the weakening of all opposition organizations in the aftermath of the coup d’etat against Prime Minister Mosaddiq in 1953.... The other factor was the absence of a coalition among major segments of the population.”127 Therefore, one might think that the opposition’s ability to overcome these problems decisively contributed to the success of the late 1970’s uprising that led to the revolution. I contend that this is not the case because both

126Milani and Kurzman say that it was October, but Abrahamian dates the incident to November.
127Parsa, 1994, p. 151
problems existed in the late 1970’s as well. I have already argued that the state took an increasingly repressive policy against the dissidents in the 1960’s and, specially from the early 1970’s, concerted a full-fledged encroachment against the religious establishments which presumably had the most extended organizational resources among opposition groups. The National Front, representing the secular dissidents, started an early mobilization well before the clergy, but they were unable to sustain their movement both in the early 1960’s and in the late 1970’s. The Liberation Movement of Iran, representing the religious liberals, were more successful in the late 1970’s than in the early 1960’s, but not because their organizational strength had improved dramatically. In fact, they were under constant repression and surveillance of the regime. Their relative success should be understood in terms of their Islamic ideology and their closeness to the clergy.

The coalition between different segments of the society was, indeed, critical for the success of the Iranian Revolution. Surely, the absence of industrial workers, white-collar employees, and the peasantry largely contributed to the failure of the June 1963 uprising. However, these groups were also absent in the protests in the first 6 months of 1978 when the revolution was unfolding. Workers and white-collar employees’ strikes slowly started in the August 1978, and became visible by the following October. These groups were almost completely absent in 1977, and more importantly, during the repeated bloody demonstrations of the first months of 1978. State repression effectively stopped the June uprising, but it failed to stop the uprising of January 1978. Demonstrations continued despite sever repression for months without any meaningful participation of industrial workers or white-collar employees. Therefore, it is too much an “extrapolation” to claim that the early 1960’s uprising failed because of the minor participation of the industrial workers and white-collar employees, whereas the late 1970’s uprising succeeded because these groups participated in the revolution.

The peasantry were absent almost until the end of the revolution, and did not contributed to it. However, the role of peasantry becomes more complicated if we take into account their vast immigration to the urban areas where they lived in shanty towns in miserable conditions with minimum public services. It has been argued that the poor slum dwellers provided an important base of recruitment for the revolutionaries, and contributed to the success of the revolution. As in the case of the workers and white-collar employees, although their role might have been critical, they did not join the revolution until the late 1978, when the regime was already deeply destabilized and the revolution was already on its way.

Another factor which might be argued to account for the revolution is the development of coordination within the ranks of each opposition group as well as between different opposition groups. For instance, it might be argued that in the early 1960’s, the clergy could not activate their organizational resources because of the lack of coordination. However, historical accounts of the clerical activities and mobilization in the early 1960’s indicate that strong networks and communications already existed. Or the opposition failed partly because there was no communication between, say, students and clerical opposition, or the Liberation Movement of Iran and the clerical estab-

128 For example, describing the social composition of protestors in the demonstrations of December 1978, Bazargan mentions that workers and farmers constituted a very small fraction of the crowd. (Bazargan, 1363 [1984/1985], p. 39)
129 See Kazemi (1980) for an study of the poor slum dwellers, and note their relatively apolitical attitude.
130 Davani, 1358 [1979/1980]
lishment. I show that, although these features mostly likely improved from the early 1960’s to the late 1970’s, all the elements of a meaningful communication already existed in the 1960’s. National Front did not have close relations with the clerical opposition in the early 1960’s except through LMI. And, their contacts with Khomeini was formed late in 1978 well through the revolution. The connection between students and LMI is well-known in both periods. I show that students, LMI, and clerical opposition were also in contact with each other in both periods of the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s.

4.4 Students’ relations with SNF, LMI, and the clergy

The relations between students and SNF and LMI are well-known. SNF had its Student Organization that was formed in the fall of 1960. In the first congress of the Second National Front, out of more than 100 delegates, 25 were students from Tehran, and 7 more seats reserved for students abroad who could not attend, fearing that the government prevent them from leaving the country afterwards. The relations between students and LMI and clergy were partly mediated through Muslim Student Associations (MSA). MSA was originally formed by the medical student of Tehran University in the early 1940’s to counteract the activities of communists, and soon spread to other faculties. Both Bazargan and Taleqani gave talks in the association, and Bazargan and Sahabi, who were teaching at Tehran University, had close contacts with the association. In fact, Ezzatollah Sahabi, Yadollah Sahabi’s son, was a member of MSA. Once the LMI was formed, its “rank and file consisted mostly of members of the Muslim Student Associations who generally came from lower middle-class background”. However, the relations between LMI and student were not limited to muslim students, and “on several occasions members of the Student Organization of the NF would visit and exchange views with LMI members”. Students, dissatisfied with the conservative standpoint of the moderate wing of SNF, were inclined toward the more radical wing and the LMI. Therefore, the students’ connection with the clergy would be mediated through LMI connections with the clergy to which I return soon.

However, there were also direct contacts between the students and the clerical establishments. From the early times of their formation in the 1940’s, “the MSAs organized regular trips to Qum, where members could come together with young tullab for discussion and exchange of ideas”. This connection still existed in the early 1960’s as both Shariat-Madari and Milani sent their delegate to a large congress in Tehran that had brought together MSAs and several other Islamic associations in May 1961. Karimian (1381 [2002]) mentions three incidents that shows direct communication of the students of Tehran University and Khomeini, and their support for the clerical opposition: (1) In Azar 1341 (December 1962/January 1963), a group of students went to Qom and visited Khomeini and other maraja. (2) Following the Feizyeh incident, a group of about 1500 students demonstrated in Tehran University. Although most of them left shortly after the meeting, 13 student went on hunger strike. (3) In 10 Ordibehesht, 1342 (April 30, 1963), a group of students mainly consisting of the members of the Students’ Islamic Association of Tehran University,

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131 Chehabi, 1990, p. 147
132 Chehabi, 1990, p. 160
133 Chehabi, 1990, p. 161
134 Chehabi, 1990, p. 123
visited Khomeini in Qom. Khomeini made a speech, where he clarified his standpoint with respect to the white revolution, and criticized the regime for the lack of freedom and corruption.

Students also participated in the June 6 (15 Khordad) uprising of 1963. Parsa (1994) claims that the students “remained on campus”. However, more recent research indicates otherwise. Students participated in the demonstration of Ashura on June 4 (13 Khordad). On June 5 (14 Khordad), another demonstration was held. People started to gather around a mosque, and moved toward Tehran University, and invited students to join them. Many classes were closed, and students joined the demonstrators. Security forces prevented the protestors from entering the campus, however, demonstrators remained in front of the Tehran University and held speeches. In fact, one of the speakers was a medical student. Associated Press estimated the number of demonstrators between 15,000 to 20,000. From the early morning of June 6, students gathered in front of the faculty of fine arts. After a few hours, they joined demonstrators outside the university. Tanks surrounded the university at around 5 P.M. and prevented those who had stayed on campus from joining demonstrators. However, the students kept their protest on campus. The number of arrested students relative to other groups is another indication of their participation in the 1963 uprising. Interestingly, the protest continued on June 7 (16 Khordad), when about 1000 students demonstrated on campus while the security forces stopped them from moving to the streets. Similar incidents repeated in the following two days, and finally, led to the cancellation of final exams and the closing of the university until the situation returned to normal.

4.5 SNF and LMI relations with the clergy

SNF and clergy never had close relations whether in the early 1960’s or in the late 1970’s. However, this was due to ideological differences. As Saleh told a US embassy official in 1964, “under no circumstances would the National Front support the religious movement, since the latter’s aims were the opposite of what the National Front stood for”. Lebaschi, an active member of the National Front in bazaar, recalls his conversation with Saleh after June 6, 1963, uprising. Saleh told him: “Lebaschi, our file was closed. [They] made this 15 Khordad [June 6] to get the political leadership from the people, from the nationalist groups, [and] give it to the clergy.” The evidence shows that direct and indirect ties and interpersonal networks were available, had these groups wanted to collaborate further. After the death of Boroujerdi in 1961, Sanjabi, a prominent member of the National Front, sent Shanehchi, an active member of the National Front in bazaar, to Qum to investigate different existing marjas to see which one would best serve the political and religious aspirations of the Iranian people so that they can support and advocate him. Shanehchi suggested Khomeini with hesitation. But they dropped the issue later because they did not find Khomeini worthy of support because of his ideologies and traditionalism. Several members of the National Front were in charge of publishing announcements and pamphlets of ulama from the

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135 Arya-Bakhshayesh, 1384 [2005]; Ghasempour
136 Arya-Bakhshayesh, 1384 [2005]; Ghasempour
137 Chehabi, 1990, p. 179
138 Lebaschi, tape 2, p. 12
139 Shanehchi, tape 2, p. 10
Furthermore, the Nationalists could always reach the clergy through LMI. However, even LMI was ideologically far from Nationalist. “The LMI’s emphasis on religion was a major controversy between the LMI and the NF”, which later on effectively separated LMI from SNF as the LMI leaders walked out of the first Congress of the National Front in 1962. When the ideological differences between the nationalists and the LMI could cause serious friction, it is not surprising the SNF and the clerical opposition could not collaborate effectively.

The same pattern repeated itself in 1977. Nationalists and LMI could not agree on strategies, which led to the revival of the National Front without LMI. Finally, they decided to form the committee for the defense of freedom and human rights through which they expose the repressive nature of the regime and the lack of freedom under Shah’s dictatorship. Interestingly, the Founding Council of the committee were mostly LMI figures, and did not include nationalist figures such as Bakhtyar and Dariush Foruhar. The relation between NF and LMI broke down in 1978, and “there was very little cooperation between the two”. In summary, although there were some connections and collaboration between the nationalists and the clergy, e.g., distributing Khomeini’s speeches, organizing strike in bazaar to support the movement, collecting money for strikers, and the like, the connections and collaboration were not strong.

The connections between the clergy and “religious intellectuals” in general, and LMI in particular, were well-established by the early 1960’s. Unlike other non-clerical oppositions, LMI had adapted Islam as its ideology from its formation. In Bazargan’s words: “Some may be motivated by nationalism, others by humanitarian feelings, race consciousness, or socialism.... However, for us, for many of our friends, and perhaps for a majority of the Iranian population, there could be no motivation other than the principles and religious tenets of Islam.” This religious tendencies and the religious background of its founders naturally led to close contacts and communications with the clerical establishment. In fact, Taleqani, who was among the main founders of the LMI, was himself a high-ranking clergy. He had close contacts with both intellectuals and the clergy. He was among Boroujerdi’s delegate sent to Cairo to deliver his message for muslim unity to Shaykh Shaltut. Since the early 1940’s, he worked as a bridge between intellectuals, specially religious layman intellectuals, and the clergy. During the second period of Mosaddeq premiership when Mosaddeq’s relations with Kashani cooled down, Taleqani tried to “create understanding between the two”.

Taleqani was in charge of the Hedayat Mosque, where he was emam-e jama’at, and he was organizing religious meetings to discuss current problems. During the 1950’s, Taleqani’s Hedayat Mosque was “a center of political opposition against the Shah”, where many people were attending the lectures held there. When SAVAK closed down the lectures series held in Hedayat Mosque in the summer of 1960, organizers held a series of monthly talks somewhere else, which lasted until March 1963. Among the prominent speakers were Taleqani and Motahhari, a close student of Khomeini who was known as the main theoretician of the Islamic Republic during the revolution.

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140 Lebaschi, tape 2, p. 9
141 Chehabi, 1990, p. 161
142 Chehabi, 1990, p. 229
143 Lebaschi, tape 2, p. 14, and tape 4
144 Chehabi, 1990, p. 153
145 Chehabi, 1990, p. 127
“The talks dealt with the interfaces of religion and socioeconomic matters”, and “many Nationalist statesmen put in an appearance”.146 Bazargan and Yadollah Sahabi did not participate “so as not to make the society suspect in the eyes of the regime”.147

After Boroujerdi’s death in 1961, there were a few possible successors, but no one was clearly a’lam, meaning to be the supreme marja. The question of succession attracted a group of reformers consisting of several clergymen and intellectuals who coordinated to write and collect papers on the “succession problem”, which was published in December 1962.148 Motahhari, Beheshti, Taleqani, and Bazargan were among the contributors. The proceedings were published in a book titled Bahsi dar bareh-ye marja’iyat va ruhaniyyat (A discussion on the principle of emulation and the religious establishment).”149. The importance of this book were such that in his 1980 book, Akhavi (1980) describes it as “the most important work to have been published in Iran in the last fifty years.”

After the arrest of LMI leaders, Bazargan, Taleqani, and Yadollah Sahabi in January 1963, “the party’s outlook became markedly more Islamic” as Ezzatollah Sahabi was put in charge of the party.150 With the leadership in prison, the rank and file members “began to look forward to Qum for guidance”.151 They “established closer relations with clerical circle. All major maraj’ [including Khomeini] were approached and asked to issue declarations in favor of the imprisoned leadership of the LMI”.152 LMI issued a statement in March, denouncing the regime attacking of Feiziyeh Madrasah in Qom. During the June uprising, the party “issued a statement in support of the movement, and party activists participated in the demonstrations.”153

The collaboration between the LMI and the clergy continued over time. From the late 1960’s to the early 1970’s, Hosseiniyeh Ershad was the center of religious modernization and opposition against the regime, where members of the religious intellectuals and clergy collaborated for years in giving lectures on the socioeconomic aspects of Islam. In 1974–75, LMI leaders and some of Khomeini’s close students came together to establish the main features of the Islamic ideology. They included figures such as Taleqani, Bazargan, Y. Sahabi, as well as Khamenehyi, the current supreme leader of the Islamic Republic, and Motahhari.154 In 1978, “The LMI participated in all demonstrations, and its members were active in the mass movement.”155 Parsa claims that the clergy on their own were too weak to mobilize. To mobilize people, the clergy had to rely on the organization and network of LMI and its collaborator as well as the reputation and popularity of Taleqani as an important driving force. Whether or not this assessment is true,156 it shows a close collaboration and coordination between the clergy and religious intellectuals/modernists and LMI. Furthermore, the abroad branch of LMI were in direct contact with Khomeini. In fact they were

146Chehabi, 1990, p. 171
147Chehabi, 1990, p. 172
148Chehabi, 1990, p. 172
149Boroujerdi, 1996, p. 81
150Chehabi, 1990, p. 176
151Chehabi, 1990, p.177
152Chehabi, 1990: p. 177
153Chehabi, 1990; p. 179
154Chehabi, 1990, p. 215
155Chehabi, 1990, p. 238
156See Chehabi(1990) who contends that “by the mid–1970’s religious modernists ‘a la Bazargan had become a minority component of the rising Islamic movement in Iran.” (Chehabi, 1990, p. 215)
closer to Khomeini than to Bazargan and other LMI members inside Iran. Ebrahim Yazdi, a main figure in LMI abroad, was Khomeini’s representative in US, and played a critical role in Khomeini’s relocation from Iraq to France and during Khomeini’s residence in France.  

In summary, the facts presented here show close interactions between religious intellectuals and the clergy in the early 1960’s. Bazargan and Taleqani were the two main leaders of the LMI, and Beheshti and Motahhari were close students of Khomeini. Therefore, there was an active interaction between these groups for social and political purposes well before the 1963 uprising. Of course, these relations developed further over time to the extent that Khomeini appointed Bazargan as the prime minister of the provisional government after the revolution. However, it should be emphasized that these relations and interactions between religious intellectuals and the clerical opposition existed in the early 1960’s as well. And in both periods, Taleqani belonged to the both camps, and had close relations with both Khomeini and Bazargan.

5 State Response to Opposition

State has been a central element in the theories of revolution since Skocpol’s seminal book, *States and Social Revolutions*. Goodwin’s (2001) work is the most state–centered analysis in recent years, whereas Parsa (2000) and Foran (2005) integrate agency and culture into state–centered theories. Comparing Iran, Nicaragua, and the Philippines, Parsa (2000) argues that extensive state interventions in the economy together with exclusive rule results in economic development accompanying with high inequality. More importantly, when a state plays a comprehensive role in economy, it becomes the target of grievances in the instances of economic downturn because citizens blame the state for economic hardship. Goodwin (2001) argues that the exclusive/repressive states with weak infrastructural power are vulnerable to revolutionary movements, and if they are patrimonial/clientelist, they are more likely to be overthrown by revolution. Finally, Foran (2005) contends that “exclusionary personalist or colonial state or open polity” are vulnerable to revolution. These theories attempt to explain variations across the countries that they have examined. But can these theories explain the variation in the outcome of movements in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s in Iran?

There is no doubt that the Iranian state were more powerful in the 1970’s than the 1960’s by all measures introduced by Goodwin. And in both periods, the state was personalistic and exclusive. Therefore, Goodwin’s theory cannot explain our observed variation over time in the case of Iran. Indeed, the Iranian state’s intervention in economy increased from the 1960’s to the 1970’s as the oil revenue of the state increased dramatically, and the state implemented comprehensive development plans. However, how much intervention in too much intervention? It seems that Parsa’s theory assumes certain threshold for the intensity of the state intervention above

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158 Parsa, 2000; Goodwin, 2001; Foran, 2005; See also Wilkinson (2009) for a review of the role of state in riots.
159 A critical review of these theories is beyond the scope of this paper. For criticisms of Parsa’s theory, see the book reviews by Goodwin in *AJS* and Ghamari–Tabrizi in *Social Forces*, 81(2): 671–673.
160 Goodwin, 2001, p. 250–253

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which people attribute their economic hardship to the state. This in turn leads to the problems of threshold models discussed in the section on methodology. Parsa agrees that intervention is a matter of degree. He argues that in Nicaragua, state intervention was not as comprehensive as it was in Iran, but comprehensive enough to provoke revolution. Whereas, in the Philippines, although there was state intervention, its level was not high enough to lead to revolution. If Parsa’s argument is deterministic, it is not clear how much intervention is too much, and if it is probabilistic, three cases are not enough to draw any inference, nor can qualitative method without proper modifications be applied to study probabilistic mechanisms. Furthermore, the opposition targeted the state both in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. In both instances, the opposition held the state responsible for the undesirable outcomes and policies as we discussed in the section on state economic policy.

Some scholars attribute the occurrence of the Iranian Revolution partly to the indecisive state response to the opposition. They claim that the state did not take sufficiently repressive measures to deter revolution, while reforms came “too little, too late” to allow for a peaceful settlement. They contend that the regime’s vacillation between repression and concession during the course of revolution facilitates the collapse of the Pahlavi monarchy. However, it is important to realize that different scholars notice this indecisiveness in different “phases of revolution”. For example, Milani (1994) believes that such “detrimental indecision” existed from the early months of 1978, and others like Arjomand (1988) notice these “contradictory impulses” in the Fall of 1978.

Milani (1994) argues that “what proved most detrimental to the government was the Shah’s indecision. On the one hand, he continued with his liberalization.... On the other hand, he took strong action to suppress the growing revolutionary movement.” As the revolution were unfolding “the Shah’s indecision and confusion became even more visible.” Milani contends that “To weather the storm, the Shah had to act decisively. He either had to crush the growing movement or to relinquish some of his power and strike a deal with the moderate faction of the popular movement. He opted to do neither.” Arjomand (1988) claims that “The Shah’s contradictory impulses and policies did much to wreck the state apparatus and sever its bureaucratic and military wings.” “Had it not been for the Shah’s mistakes, his debilitating dejection, bungling, and indecisiveness, the collapse of the monarchical regime would not have happened so soon”.

However, Kurzman (2004) disagrees with these views. He argues that “to call this strategy ‘vacillating’ or ‘week’—as opposed to ‘coherent’ and ‘subtle’—suggests that some other strategy would have been more effective.... [However], there is no generic optimal strategy for state response to protest. Repression sometimes works and sometimes backfires; the same in true for concession.” My view is close to Kurzman’s. In fact, the literature on “repression–protest nexus” does not

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161 Milani, 1994, p. 114
162 Milani, 1994, p. 115
163 Milani, 1994, p. 116
164 Arjomand, 1988, p. 114
165 Arjomand, 1988, p. 117
166 Kurzman, 2004, p. 111
suggest a clear answer to when repression works and when it provokes further protests. In her analysis of weekly protests from December 1977 to February 1979, Rasler (1996) illustrates that repression provoked further protests in the case of the Iranian Revolution. Moreover, the mere fact that different scholars have different views on when during the course of revolution such indecisiveness appeared means that it is not clear what such “optimal response” was. In other words, Milani might find the state response in the first few months of 1978 contradictory and vacillating, indicating the Shah’s indecisiveness, whereas Arjomand finds it plausible response from the state’s standpoint.

Interestingly, some “concessions” that are assumed to be inconsistent with the “iron feast” of repression were not really concessions. One such “concessions” is the “removal of censorship”, something over which the state had no control by the time Sharif-Emami came into power as I will show. However, Arjomand contends that “the friction between the prime minister [Sharif-Emami] and general [Oveisi] became especially intense after October 17, when the prime minister won the battle over the removal of censorship.... Day after day following the end of censorship, the newspapers came out with harrowing reports of the SAVAK’s torture chambers as related by released political prisoners. These tales of terror intensified the moral indignation of the new middle class group”. According to Milani, among the Sharif-Emami’s concessions that “polarized the division between the hawks and the doves within the Shah’s small circle of advisors” was that he “lifted censorship of media; allowed parliamentary debated to be televised”. Among other facts that are usually assumed in the literature is that the regime pushed the Iraqi government to further restrain Khomeini’s activities to force him out of Iraq. However, the documents from the discussions of the National Security Council in September 1978 goes against these speculations.

The Center for the Documents of the Islamic Revolution has published the notes of two important sessions of the National Security Council of Iran in September 1978 that concern Khomeini’s decision to leave Iraq. These discussions are both illuminating and surprising. The National Security Council included prime minister, Sharif-Emami, Chief of SAVAK, General Moqaddam, Military Governor of Tehran, General Oveisi, Chief of General Staff, General Azhari, and Minister of Interior, General Gharehbaghi. A large proportion of these meetings was spent on discussing the press issue and TV programs. Contrary to what literature suggest, the members were extremely concerned about the flow of the news of protests and were looking for ways to impose a more strict censorship. These notes reveal that the state was not able to deploy coercive power to subdue newspapers. The council carefully examined several strategies to solve the “press problem”, including co-optation and repression. The owners and editors of Ittila’at and Kayhan were approached directly by the prime minister, but responded that they had no control over their employees. There were groups among the employees who refused to cooperate with the regime. The council considered removing these groups from work, closed down the papers, publish a new paper, etc. The first solution was dropped, fearing that if the non-cooperative anti-regime groups were arrested, then the rest would go on strike or take destructive measures to impede the publication process. Closing the papers would result in the spread of underground papers over which the state would

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167 Davenport, 2007
168 Arjomand, 1988, p. 115
169 Milani, 1994, p. 117
170 e.g., Kamrava (1990, p. 132)
171 Aya U Tasmin Darad Biyayad be Iran, 1997
have even less control. A new pro–regime newspaper would need new staff and committed writers none of which were available. The council could not reach a conclusive strategy to deal with the press as manifested in the prime minister’s final words to the council on the press problem: “Be disappointed from the newspapers.”

The council was more optimistic about the TV. As much as it seems unbelievable, the problems with the state-run TV were very similar to those of the newspapers. The tone of the prime minister’s concluding remarks with regard to the mass media problem is very telling: “We considered a person for TV, did not accept. We are working to find someone to run the TV. Don’t expect cooperation from the newspapers, but TV is in our hands.” This valuable document reveals that the regime had much less control over the media by the early Fall of 1978 than it is usually assumed. The regime did not care about the Freedom of press, the problem was how to enforce censorship. Finally, regarding Khomeini’s decision to leave Iraq, all members would strictly prefer that Khomeini stays in Iraq, and they were extremely concerned whether he decides to come to Iran. None wanted him to leave Iraq.

More generally, I contend that state response in the early 1960’s was similar to state response in the late 1970’s, at least, if we focus on the period up to October 1978. After the massacre of the Black Friday, specially since October 1978, protests and discontent were so widespread that it is not obvious to me whether there was any way to avoid revolution and/or civil war without giving up monarchy. Most likely, the regime made some mistakes during the course of revolution, but state response to dissent in the early 1960’s was not flawless either. Maybe Shah could employ the army to bombard the cities at the risk of a civil war, but he did not. Maybe his psychological and mental state had become unstable as suggested by some, or maybe he did not want to have “a monarchy based on the blood of the people” as he conveyed to General Huyser in Tehran.172 Perhaps Shah simply was not decisive enough. The key is that similar arguments can be made about his character in the early 1960’s too.173 Every state has certain capacities and procedures to cope with conflict, which are never perfect.174 As I argue below, in fact, the capacity of the Pahlavi regime to cope with conflict had increased dramatically since the early 1960’s, and it is simply implausible to assume that the state response was less “efficient” in the later 1970’s than in the early 1960’s.

State bureaucracy, military, and intelligence were incomparably more efficient and organized in the late 1970’s than in the early 1960’s. There is hardly any need to present evidence for this fact. As Fardust (1999) explains in length in his memoirs, regime took dramatic steps to reorganized its intelligence agencies and to enhance coordination among them. In fact, it was this efficiency that made SAVAK a notorious organization in the 1970’s.

It is also instructive to compare the number of those killed and wounded in the uprisings of 1963 and 1978. Not surprisingly, the number of the dead in each incident varies according to different sources.175 In this paper, I refer only to more recent researches where the researchers . Despite the claims made by the opposition that estimates the number of June 1963 massacre up to several

172 Huyser, 1986
173 e.g., see Milani (2000).
174 The literature on bureaucracy and organizational behavior attest to this assessment, e.g., see Essence of Decision by Allison and Zelikow (1999).
175 Davenport and Ball, 2002
thousands, the 15-Khordad (June 6) Foundation which publishes 15 Khordad Quarterly, a history journal specialized to investigate the contemporary history of Iran, could only come up with about 130 names.\footnote{Ruhami, 1385 [2006]; see also Asami–ye Shomary az Shahidan–i Khordad–i Khoonin 42 [The names of a number of the martyrs of the Bloody June of 1963]} The authors mention that their lists are most likely not complete as the regime probably did not document the names of all the victims. However, because no more name has been discovered after about 30 years, and there is no indication of collective graves, it seems plausible to assume that the number of the dead were at most a few hundred.

In January 1978 uprising in Qum, “more than a dozen people were killed, hundreds were injured”\footnote{Milani, 1994, p. 113} according to Milani (1994). Abrahamian (1982) states that “according to the government, two were killed in the clash; according to the opposition, seventy were killed and over five hundred were injured.”\footnote{Abrahamina, 1982, p. 505} In the February uprising in Tabriz, also more than a dozen people were killed,\footnote{Bakhshayesh, 1385 [2006]} although “the total dead were estimated as 6 by the government, as over 300 by the opposition, and as nearly 100 by the European witnesses.”\footnote{Abrahamian, 1982, p. 507} The next demonstrations were held on March 29 and “according to the opposition, over one hundred were killed”\footnote{Abrahamina, 1982, p. 507} in Yazd. In May 10 protests in Qum, security forces entered the house of Shariat-Madari by force and killed two theology students in his home. This trend continued during the summer, and more people were killed in Isfahan and Shiraz. In mid-August, Amuzegar’s government was replaced by Sharif–Emami’s “reconciliation government”. By now, some signs of unrest could be detected in the working class as sporadic strikes were visible. The major blow came in September 8, when security forces opened fire on demonstrators in Tehran. European press called it the Black Friday, and revolutionaries called it the Red Friday, red for blood. Authorities estimated the number of the dead as about 87, while the opposition estimate was about 4,000. The number of demonstrators were unprecedented, hundreds of thousands of people protested just in Tehran, carried Khomeini’s pictures, and in their slogans, requested the establishment of the Islamic government.\footnote{Abrahamian, 1982} The leadership of Khomeini had been established before the killings, and Khomeini was uncompromising from the very start no matter what the government do.\footnote{Khomeini denounced any compromise in his declarations from the early days of 1978. See Algar (1981) for the English translation of some of his declarations. See Khomeini’s Sahifeh-ye Noor for a comprehensive collection.} This indicate that the state was willing to kill if necessary as they did in the Black Friday. And, regarding the popularity of Khomeini by the early September and his uncompromising character, it seems unlikely that anything short of the collapse of monarchy would stop the revolution.

Furthermore, in 1963, government and security forces panicked, they did not expect an uprising and they had no clue how to deal with it. The regime was at the verge of collapse as the demonstrators in Tehran were to attack the government buildings and Shah’s palace. The memoirs of Fardust (1999) and Mobasser (1984) clearly illustrates the frustration of security forces, their inefficiencies, and lack of planning. If they killed more in the June uprising than in the early months of 1978,
it was not because the regime was more decisive in repressing the dissidents, nor was it because security forces were restrained in 1978, but not in 1963. The reason was that in 1963, they did not know how to deal with an internal uprising of such magnitude. To fire on a popular demonstration might seem an easy response, but it is not always an optimal response. Such harsh reactions might indicate state strength, but they are also indicate the failure of the state in managing discontent.

In summary, state response to unrest was similar in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. That the state killed less people in the early months of 1978 than in June 1963 uprising cannot be considered as a sign of indecision. The regime applied a combination of repression and concession policies to punish radicals and reward moderates. To claim that such combinations were “vacillating” and detrimental to the regime stability is based on a hidden assumption that there existed an optimal state response in 1978 which could preserve the monarchy. If such a response was available, no one knows what it was, and hence the claims that suggest otherwise are based on speculations. That said, for the purpose of this paper, it suffices to show that state response followed the same pattern in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. State was dramatically more efficient and the security forces were visibly more trained and equipped in the 1970’s than in the 1960’s. State did not break down, nor was Shah visibly more indecisive in 1978 than in the early 1960’s. Therefore, the structure and behavior of state cannot explain why revolution occurred in the late 1970’s, but not in the early 1960’s.

6 Iran-US Relations

I compare the US policy toward Iran in the early 1960’s with the second half of the 1970’s. The general theme in the literature is that the Pahlavi regime liberalized in response to the pressure from the Carter administration. This “window of opportunity” caused by “world-systemic opening” made it possible for Iran to breathe again. However, there are certain variations in this common assessment. Milani (1994), Parsa (2000), and Abrahamian (1982) attribute Shah’s liberalization to foreign pressures that started in the mid-1970’s with denouncements of the regime’s human rights records by international human rights organizations and further intensified by Carter’s human rights campaign. Foran (1994) focuses on the role of the US without mentioning earlier criticisms of international human rights organizations. Parsa (2000) contends that “although the Carter administration did not really press the Shah to introduce major political change, the Shah, having been dependent on the United State for so long, decided it was necessary to improve his records on human rights.” Parsa’s view is shared by Milani (1994) and Foran (1994) who argues that such a perception was indeed strong as shown in the Shah’s own remark that “it looks as if we are not going to be around much longer”. However, Abrahamian (1982) seems to believe that foreign pressure was real and not just a perception. Zabih (1979) contends that it was the opposition who perceived that with Carter in power Shah cannot take harsh repressive measures. Finally, Kurzman (2004) contends that state liberalization was not important in the revolution as by the late 1977

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184 Foran’s terminology, 2006
185 Abrahamian, 1982, p. 500
186 Parsa, 2000, p. 90
187 Foran, 1994, p. 171

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state had already closed down again.

Since the 1953 coup, when US reinstalled Shah into power, US played a critical role in Pahlavi Iran’s internal affairs. US economic and military support was pivotal to the survival of the Zahedi’s government. As Iran’s economic conditions improved and the regime was firmly established, this relation transformed to close military, economic, and political ties, in which Iran had more and more saying over time. By the early 1970’s, Iran was the major US ally in the Middle East, and after the oil boom of the 1970’s, the major buyer of the American arms.

The literature has argued that the intensive US–Iran relations put the US in a position to pressure Iran, had Iran not complied to US guidelines. This view has some merits if not exaggerated too much. It seems that the Americans’ support was important for Shah, and the US could impose difficulties on Iran, but only to a certain extent. For example, the Iranian state did not sacrifice its interests in oil price negotiations of the the early 1970’s in favor of US interests. US–Iran relations can be analyzed along economic, political, and military dimensions. By threatening to cut back on economic or military aids, trade, and arm sales to Iran, the US could pressure Iran to implement economic and political reforms.

From the early 1970’s a publicized series of criticisms against repression in Iran was concerted by the student opposition abroad and few international human rights organizations. In 1974, the secretary general of Amnesty International stated that “no country in the world has a worse record in human rights than Iran.” International Commission of Jurists, an apolitical human rights watch organization, sent observers to Iran in 1975 to investigate human rights. The report, published in 1976, reads: “there can be no doubt that torture has been systematically practiced over a number of years.” U.N. Human Rights Commission reviewed the violation of human rights in Iran following the documents presented by the Iranian students abroad. International Red Cross, Amnesty International, and International Commission of Jurists visited Iran in 1977 upon the invitation of the regime to investigate human rights conditions.

The US House subcommittee on International Organizations held hearings on Iran in August and September 1976, which was followed by a state department report regarding human rights in Iran, in December 1976, to the House committee on International Relations. The testimonies and state department reports seemed sympathetic to the Iranian regime, however, Bills claims that “these sessions produced alarming evidence of torture and repression.” Carter’s campaign of human rights seemed to have certain implications for US–Iran relationship. US ambassador Helms was recalled in December 1976, and the new ambassador did not arrive until June 1977. However, the new ambassador was William Sullivan, a military man with intelligence background. The appointment was certainly not a signal that US would pressure Iran to watch human rights. State Secretary Vance visited Iran in May 1977, and in his meeting with the Shah, “Vance only mentioned the issue of human rights to the Shah; there were many more important issues to be discussed.”

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188 Bill, 1988, p. 187
189 Bill, 1988, p. 187
190 Alexander and Nanes, 1980, p. 431
191 Alexander and Nanes, 1980, p. 222
192 Bill, 1988, p. 211
193 Bill, 1988, p. 227
human rights issues came up briefly, and “Carter did not push for his argument.” Finally, any illusion that US would pressure Shah to retreat from repression disappeared during Carter’s visit to Iran in December 1977, when he stated that “Iran under the great leadership of the Shah is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world. This is a great tribute to you, Your Majesty, and to your leadership, and to the respect, admiration and love which your people give to you.”

As for the flow of US arms to Iran, there were a few congressmen in the House Committee on International Relations, rather than Carter’s administration, who disputed the volume of arm sales to Iran. It was mostly based on strategic and security concerns rather than human rights concerns. It had been started in 1976 well before Carter was elected. In fact, the Carter administration relentlessly pushed to pass arm sales requested by Iran, and succeeded in September 1977.

Arms sales to Iran took off after Nixon gave Shah a carte blanche to purchase any conventional weapon he wanted. Nixon’s order proclaimed “decisions on the acquisition of military equipments should be left primarily to the government of Iran.” This implicitly gave Iran a blank cheque that “effectively exempted Iran from arms sales review processes in the State and Defense Departments.” This trend continued in the Ford presidency with Kissinger as a main supporter of the plan. Fueled by the unexpected increase in oil prices, Iran’s defense budget increased almost seven fold from $ 1.4 billion in 1972 to $ 9.4 billion in 1977, and with it Shah’s arms purchase. The volume of arms sales to Iran troubled some representatives in both House and Senate, leading to a comprehensive staff report in July 1976 to “the subcommittee on foreign assistance of the committee of foreign relations of US Senate”. The report highlighted strategic precautions on advanced arm sales to developing countries such as Iran whose lack of necessary infrastructure requires the US to provide training, procurement, and assistance for several years following those purchases in order to keep the arms operational. This would mean employment of thousands of American civilians as well as military personnel in Iran for several years risking the possibility of their engagement in internal and international conflicts of Iran. However, the arms sales continued, and in the following August, Iran announced that it would purchase another 10 billion dollars worth of American arms.

Shah was interested in purchasing 300 F–16 planes and several sophisticated airborne warning and control systems (AWACS). Despite Carter’s mandate to cut back on the sales of arms, Vance, in his May visit, promised Shah that the US could sell 160 F–16 to Iran and will seek congressional approval for AWACS purchases. After several hearings in June and July 1977 Carter’s administration withdrew the proposal because of the disapproval vote of the House International Relations Committee. On July 31, 1977, Shah sent an “angry message” to Carter, threatening to withdraw his arms purchase implying that he would take his business elsewhere. “In Iran, Ambassador Sullivan hurriedly flew to the Shah’s small marble palace at Ramsar on the Caspian, where he reassured

194Bill, 1988, p. 233
195Bill, 1988, p. 233
196Bill, 1988, p. 201
197Bill, 1988, p. 200
199Bills, 1988, p. 208
the king that the AWACS sale would be approved with only very minor modifications.” Indeed, the sales were approved in early September. During the Shah’s visit to US, he asked Carter for 140 more F–16’s and 70 F–14’s, and Carter indicated that “he would do his best to carry these requests to Congress.”

In summary, there is no indication that Carter forcefully pressured Iran to relax repression in the late 1970’s. In fact, the relentless efforts of the Carter administration to get the Congress and Senate approval for the arm sales to Iran was, in Vance’s words, “a major test in convincing the shah that the president was serious about continuing special security relationship with him.” Carter did not give a blank cheque to the Shah the same way that Nixon did, and Vance was not as sympathetic to Iran as was Kissinger. However, there was not a significant change in US policy toward Iran either. Overall, the pattern resembled the early 1960’s when Kennedy became president.

Following the 1953 coup, US gave large amounts of economic and military aid to Iran. Despite extensive appropriation of the fund by the Iranian officials, which led to some investigations by the US legislature, the aid continued without much interruption. However, this pattern of “unconditional aid” was to change in the early 1960’s. The first signal was Eisenhower’s public statement to the Iran’s Majles in his visit to Iran in December 1959, when he stated that: “military strength alone will not bring about peace and justice.” In early 1960, Shah promised a free election for the next Majles, in which individual candidates could run for election. However, the election was rigged, and followed by demonstrations that protested fraud election. Deputies resigned upon Shah’s request, prime minister Eqbal was replaced by Sharif–Emami, and the new election was scheduled for January 1961. The second election was also fraudulent, and led to protests and strikes. It was in this politically chaotic context that the Kennedy administration set their policy toward Iran.

At the Department of State, the deputy director of the Office of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs, John W. Bowling, wrote two reports to the president on February and March, 1961, in which he suggested 14-point reforms to prevent further political unrest. Shah sent Bakhtyar to meet Kennedy and request further economic and military aid. In their meeting on March 1, Kennedy was “courteous but noncommittal”. He sent Ambassador W. A. Harriman to meet with Shah. Harriman’s words in his meeting with Shah on March 13 were not more committal than Kennedy’s words earlier. Ardeshir Zahedi, Iran’s ambassador to the US, bitterly indicated to an American official that “Mr. Harriman had avoided making any commitments to support Iran, while only a few days later in New Delhi he publicly states that the United States would continue to support Pakistan’s army.” Shah was indeed concerned whether he had the support of the new administration. In his interview with U.S. News and World Report, he warned against the communist threat and expressed that: “I am somewhat worried about that the new United States

\[^{200}\]Bill, 1988, p. 231–2
\[^{201}\]Bill, 1988, p. 233
\[^{202}\]Bill, 1988 p. 229
\[^{203}\]Bill, 1988, p. 120
\[^{204}\]Alexander and Nanes, 1980, p.315–29
\[^{205}\]Bill, 1988, p. 138
\[^{206}\]Bill, 1988, p. 138
administration may not have a proper appreciation of this fact... We hope you in the United States don’t forget who your friends are.”

A discussion between Walter Lippmann and Khrushchev about Iran in their meeting in April 1961 further concerned Kennedy about the stability of Iran. Khrushchev stated to Lippmann: “You will assert that the Shah has been overthrown by the communists, and we shall be very glad to have it thought in the world that all the progressive people in Iran recognize that we are the leaders of the progress of mankind”. As further protests erupted in Iran, “President Kennedy and some of his advisors made no secret of their belief that Amini would be the ideal individual to carry out a meaningful and badly needed reform program”. Gratian Yatsevitch confirms this view. An inter-agency Task Force had been established to analyze the situation in Iran and inform the president. According to the former US Ambassador Armin Meyer, “the result of that task force activity was to instruct our ambassador that we would provide $ 35 million in aid to Iran in return for which we would expect from the Iranians various steps which we considered necessary for progress, including even a suggestion as to the prime ministerial candidate we considered best qualified to administer the proposed reforms”. The decision to make the aid conditional on the Amini’s appointment was because “the committee was faced with the knowledge that the ‘Shah’d de facto dictatorship’ had inexorably moved Iran toward a ‘growing chance of domestic strife leading to chaos or coup by rightist or leftist cliques, or Soviet–managed subversion’ ”.

Finally, the teachers’ strikes and demonstrations together with US pressure made the Shah replace Sharif–Emami by Amini who had the support of the Americans. Years later Shah stated that “he regarded Kennedy’s message as more or less an American coup directed against him.” Shah’s concerns were well–based. In fact, the Task Force committee was divided between those who advocated removing Shah, and others who suggested a more conciliatory approach. The final report to the president suggested policy outlines including “withdrawal of the shah from an exposed position of public responsibility” and “progressive delegation, by the shah to a capable prime minister, of authority formerly yielded directly by him”. In essence, they suggested that the Shah should reign rather than rule, the very fact that had been the axis of contention between the monarchy and opposition from the early years of the Constitutional Revolution in the early twentieth century. The idea of Shah’s abdication came up again even after Shah’s visit to US in April 1962. As Justice William O. Douglas, Kennedy’s confident on whom he relied heavily to push for reform in Iran, has indicated: “regency had already been selected.”

Dissatisfaction with Shah’s rule was not limited to the Kennedy administration. This issue came up in the Senate as well. The Senate Committee on International Relations expressed their immediate and deep concerns with the Shah’s way of rule. The committee met on June 15, 1961,

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207 Bill, 1988, p. 137
208 Bill, 1988, p. 132
209 Sick, 1986, p. 11
210 Bill, 1988, p.143
211 Milani, 2000, p. 147
212 Abrahamian, 1982, p. 422
213 Bill, 1988, p. 137
214 Milani, 2000, p. 148
215 Bill, 1988, p. 133
216 Milani, 2000, p. 150

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to discuss the political situation in Iran. Referring to the Shah and his ruling circle, Senator Huber Humphrey stated that “they are dead...I don’t care what revolution it is. They are out.... There is a limit to the amount of money that this country can give to those people who are unwilling to do what they ought to do.... They ought to just get out before it is too late.... The same thing happened in Cuba.... Now we have Castro.... That is what we are going to get in Iran. And all that military aid is never going to save him, not one bit.”

With the new American–approved Amini’s government and major reforms underway, Shah visited US in April 1962. The tension was still there as the “shah pressed hard for military assistance while Kennedy and his advisors recommended economic and social reform instead.” Kennedy’s stand was further confirmed during Vice President Lyndon Johnson’s visit to Iran in the following August. In his departure speech, Johnson stated that “we all have seen that the status quo alone provide no safeguard for freedom”, and quoted from Kennedy: “If a free society cannot help the many who are poor it cannot save the few who are rich.” As stated by the executive secretary of state in a memorandum in January 1963, US policy toward Iran had changed “to encourage the Shah to move back into a more constitutional role, to reduce the size of Iran’s military forces and improve its efficiency and public image, to work toward a moderate political synthesis, and to rely on a program of carefully planned social reform and economic development”.

In summary, the historical facts show a similar pattern of interaction between the US and Iran in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s prior to the revolution. However, there were important differences. The course of events strongly suggest that the Kennedy administration uncompromisingly pressured the Iranian regime to implement reforms. The US government implied to Shah that US support was contingent upon a new government pre–approved by the United States. The possibility of Shah’s abdication, although was not followed, was seriously considered both by the administration and Kennedy himself. The pressure in the early 1960’s was high enough to force Shah to approach the Russians as a signal to the Americans to cool down. Iran’s pledge in September 1962 to forbid any foreign missile base on the Iranian soil was a sign of this rapprochement. The Carter’s era was much more in favor of Shah than the Kennedy’s era. Although the Carter’s administration was not as friendly to Iran as was Nixon’s and Ford’s, there was no serious pressure of the sort exercised during the Kennedy’s period. To Carter, “Iran under the great leadership of the Shah” was “as island of stability”. To Lyndon Johnson, Kennedy’s Vice President, Iran’s “status quo alone provide[d] no safeguard for freedom.”

7 The Economy and Economic Policy

In this section, I compare Iran economic conditions in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. I also investigate state economic policies toward bazaar during these periods, which have been considered as a factor that antagonized the bazaaris and led them to join the revolution in the late 1970’s.

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217 Bill, 1988, p. 136–7
218 Bill, 1988, p. 139
219 Bill, 1988, p. 141
220 Bill, 1988, p. 149
221 Bill, 1988, p. 150
The data in this section is from the Central Bank of Iran and the Statistical Center of Iran. Although several other sources such as IMF, World Bank, Penn World Tables, etc. provide data for some variables, Central Bank and Statistical Center seem to be the most reliable sources, and their data is generally consistent with the other sources despite occasional disparities that does not affect my analysis. Moreover, the Central Bank comprehensive data allows to refer to one source for most variables, which enhance the consistency.

I do not thoroughly discuss 1978 in my analysis of the late 1970’s because, in 1978, Iran witnessed widespread strikes and demonstrations; and specially in the second half of 1978, the chaos of the unfolding revolution succumbed economic activities. That is, it seems impossible to disentangle the cause-effect role of economic conditions in 1978 in the making of the Iranian Revolution. In fact, it seems more reasonable to consider the economic condition of 1978 as the effect of widespread protests and strikes rather than their cause. In contrast, Iran was stable in 1977, and protracted political protests did not change the normal flow of economy.

Many students of the Iranian Revolution have argued that an economic downturn prior to 1979, in one way or another, contributed to the revolution. However, researchers have identified different mechanisms through which economic recession played its role. Abrahamian (1982) argues that “an economic crisis in the form of acute inflation” led the state to take an anti-profiteering campaign against the economic elite, specially against bazaar. Then Bazaaris, antagonized by the adverse state policy, played a crucial role in the revolution. Parsa (2000) claims that “combined with mounting economic inequalities, the recession adversely affected the interests of broad segments of the population and contributed to setting the stage for the emergence of social conflict.” Milani (1994) takes the “relative deprivation” approach, and contends that “the economic expansion, which increased expectations, followed by a period of economic contraction, intensified discontent among many groups.” State policies further antagonized bazaaris and economic elite. This “crisis of wealth” together with the “looming political crisis” led to revolution. Foran (1993, 1994, 2005), Katouzian (1981), Bashiriyeh (1984), Halliday (1979), Pesaran (1982), and several other scholars have similar views.

However, Zabih (1979) argues that even as late as the summer of 1978 “economic grievances were not among the major reasons causing the dissidents’ espousal of radical political goals”, a manifestation of the view that “‘man does not live by bread alone’”. Finally, Kurzman (2004) contends that economic downturn did not contribute to the revolution because the recession of 1977 was not worse than 1975 downturn which had not led to any major protest.

I contend that the living conditions of an average Iranian did not deteriorate in 1977. Although

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\(^{222}\)For instance, GDP in constant price from World Bank and Central Bank are almost identical, and only mildly different from the Penn World Tables. However, IMF data is somewhat different. IMF reports a positive growth rate in real GDP for 1977 while the other three sources report a negative growth.

\(^{223}\)Abrahamian, 1982, p. 497

\(^{224}\)Parsa, 2000, p. 80

\(^{225}\)e.g., Davies (1962) and Gurr (1970)

\(^{226}\)Milani, 1994, p. 100

\(^{227}\)Zabih, 1979, p. 38

\(^{228}\)See also Kamrava (1990).
real GDP per capita most likely decreased from 1976 to 1977, real private consumption per capita increased. And, despite government cut back on public spending and redistribution programs, inequality decreased too. I intend to rule out the claim that there was an economic downturn that deteriorated the living conditions of people, and contributed to the unfolding of revolution through increasing people’s economic grievances.

However, state economic policies taken in response to high inflation in the mid–1970’s did antagonized the bazaaris. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile emphasizing that the state had several other options to cope with high inflation. It is instructive to compare aggressive economic policies of the Iranian state in the late 1970’s with state economic policies prior to the French Revolution discussed in Skocpol (1979). In the French case, facing international military competition, the state had to raise revenues, and to do so, the state had no choice but to raise taxes, which antagonized the French economic elite. However, in the Iranian case, the state deliberately took an overtly aggressive policy toward the bazaaris, while it could further cut back on government development projects, military expenditure, or at least take a less encroaching policy. Because state policies were not dictated by the economic conditions, it seems implausible to attribute the revolution to economic downturn. That is, it is unlikely that economic downturn is analytically useful to explain the Iranian Revolution as the state’s aggressive policies toward bazaaris seem to have stemmed from political considerations rather than economic constraints. That said, these policies were similar in both the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s, which is what is needed for the argument of this paper. In the rest of this section I support my claims with data, and then compare the economic trend prior to 1979 revolution with that of the early 1960’s, and argue that the trends are qualitatively similar.

The drop in GDP in 1977 was mostly derived by a significant decrease in oil revenues caused by a drop in oil price. However, the real private consumption in urban areas increased by 4.6 per cent from 1976 to 1977, even higher than the real urban consumption growth rate of 1976 which was 4.4. Possibly the savings of the preceding huge oil boom helped to smooth consumption. However, one tempts to think that the lower class could not afford to save enough during the oil boom partly because of their low income and partly because the high inequality indicates that they did not receive a proportionate share of the extra oil income. Thus, one might argue that, the observed increase in private consumption is due to the middle and upper class consumption smoothing. Moreover, state welfare expenditures which helped these groups might have decreased, and deteriorated their economic conditions. In fact, the total government expenditure decreased by about 2.6 percent from 1976 to 1977. However, after the oil boom the state embarked upon a full–fledged development program which involved numerous development projects and investments that were still incomplete in 1977. Therefore, although I could not find data which distinguishes between state expenditure on these projects and direct welfare programs, most likely the state cut back on the budget of development projects rather than direct welfare programs. In fact, inequality, that had been increasing in the early 1970’s, marginally decreased in 1976 and significantly decreased

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229I added the qualification “most likely” because although the data from the Central Bank of Iran, the World Bank, and the Penn World Tables shows a clear negative growth rate of real GDP per capita in 1977, the IMF data shows a small positive growth rate for the same year.

230The corresponding per capita growth rates are 1.28 per cent in 1976 and 1.46 per cent in 1977, indicating the same trend.
Graph 5 shows the Gini index and the income ratio of the top 10 per cent to bottom 10 per cent rich groups of the society. Therefore, it is far from obvious that the lower class income decreased in 1977. Whether by consumption smoothing or by state welfare programs the poor managed to keep up their consumption level.

Recession was mostly obvious in investment rates. Real investment indeed significantly decreased from 1976 to 1977. However, the investment rate was extraordinarily high after the huge oil boom of mid–1970’s, and it did not affect the economic conditions of the population at least in the short–run. Finally, the literature mentions a dramatic recession in construction industry and a dramatic increase in the rent rates in the capital. Both observations are correct, nevertheless, the conclusion that they put a significant burden on the poor or middle class is most likely not accurate.

Moreover, the pattern of inflation rates is not as extreme as it is usually assumed. Indeed, the yearly data shows a sharp increase in inflation rate in 1977 as is depicted in figure 6. However, if we scrutinize the inflation pattern further at a monthly level, it is clear that in the second half of the 1977 inflation was not high at all. Even the relatively sharp increase at the beginning of 1978 was a normal pattern. As illustrated in figure 6, the average monthly inflation rate in the second half of 1977 was 0.53 per cent, and lower than the same value for 1973, 1974, 1976, and 1978. The average monthly inflation rate for the first three months of 1978 was 1.74 per cent, and lower that the same value for 1972, 1975, 1976, and 1977. The unusual high inflation rate assigned to 1977 is related to high inflation in the first half of that year. Indeed, months before the protests break out in January of 1978, the inflation was tamed and remained low throughout 1978 during the early cycles of protests. It is also worthwhile emphasizing that in the first half of 1977, state had already started political opening and liberalization. But no major protest took place during this period despite an unusually high rate of inflation.

It is also illuminating to compare wages with prices, and their rates of change. The industrial wage index increased by 28.1 per cent in 1977 and 27.2 per cent in 1978, while the inflation were 25.1 and 10 percent accordingly. This indicates that the wage rate did keep up with inflation even in 1977 when the inflation was unusually high. The seasonal growth rate of industrial wages from the summer of 1976 to the winter of 1978 are depicted in figure 7. In any case, data do not support that the recession prior to revolution affected the economic wellbeing of the population. “Thus, 1977 would [not] prove to be a hard year.”

Next, I turn to the early 1960’s.

The general trend of the real GDP per capita growth rate indicates a decrease from 1960 to 1964 (Figure 1). Inflation was very low. And, although the growth remained positive, it seems that the economy was going through a mild recession. This recession has been mentioned in the literature although scholars have different opinion about its intensity. Katouzian (1981) believes that “the economy was depressed but not stagnant”, whereas Parsa (2004) calls it a “complete...

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231 The data are from Central Bank of Iran. There are small discrepancies between these data and the data provided by Pesaran and Gahvari (1978). However, these discrepancies are most likely due to updated data because Pesaran and Gahvari also used the Central Bank data. In any case, both datasets confirm a consistent increase in inequality from the early 1960’s to the mid-1970’s. Pesaran and Gahvari provide data until 1975.

232 Foran, 1994, p. 172

233 Katouzian, 1981, p. 229
stagnation.” Real per capita private urban consumption growth rate decreased in 1961, increased mildly in 1962 and 1963, and dropped sharply in 1964 and 1965 (Figure 2). Real per capita private rural consumption growth rate was negative from 1960 to 1964 (Figure 3). Real public consumption growth rate decreased in 1961, but increased from 1962 to 1965 (Figure 4). Real per capita government public consumption decreased from 2.5 percent in 1960 to -5.6 percent in 1961, then slightly increased at the rates of 1 and 4.4 percent in 1962 and 1963 respectively. Of course, the income per capita in the early 1960’s was not nearly as much as the late 1970’s, and the government real consumption per capita was 8 times bigger in the late 1970’s than in the early 1960’s. Therefore, a decrease in income or government expenditure would have more serious consequences in the economic wellbeing of people in the early 60’s than in the late 70’s.

My argument so far has been mostly based on the growth rates of different variables. It is fruitful to look at the absolute values of these variables as well. Government real consumption per capita indeed decreased from 1619.13 billion Rials (1996 cost. prices) in 1976 to 1529.05 in 1977. But in 1977 it was even higher than its value of 1504.34 in 1975, and dramatically higher than all preceding years of 1975. In other words, 1976 was an exception. In the early 1960’s this value in 1961 and 1962 were 179.86 and 180.82 billion rials (1996 const. prices), lower than 190.12 billion Rials of 1960. In 1963 it was 190.73 billion Rials, only slightly higher than 3 year before. Real GDP per capita shows similar patterns.

In summary, it seems that in the mid-1970’s, the economy showed some symptoms of a mild recession, but there was no “crisis”. The recession was not serious enough to significantly upset the patterns of consumption, or impose any significant economic hardship on the population, at least in the short-run. Prices increased at a high pace, but wages did keep up as well. Indeed, investment dropped significantly but this would not be visible in the everyday life of the Iranians in the short-run. In the early 1960’s the economy went into a recession as well. Prices did not increase, but neither did wages. Finally, state economic policy toward Bazaar followed qualitatively similar patterns during these two periods to which I turn now.

7.1 State Economic Policy Toward Bazaar

The literature has consistently identified the anti-bazaar economic policy of the state in the late 1970’s as a deriving force which antagonized the bazaaris, and pushed them to form an alliance with the opposition against the regime. However, the literature, with a few exceptions, has overlooked similar policies in the early 1960’s that antagonized bazaaris in this period too.

In the late 1950’s, half way through the seven year development plan, “the government deficit grew to immense proportions, balance-of-payment situation deteriorated, and inflation became rampant.” The conditions were most likely not as bad as Milani describes, but it was bad enough that the government embarked upon an economic stabilization program prescribed by IMF. The government tightened credit, which reduced loans to bazaaris, and imposed import surcharges with stiff restrictions on certain imports. “The recession and government policies lead to growing

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236 Milani, 1994
bankruptcies among bazaaris."\textsuperscript{237} In 1961, the government imposed a new tax rate on bazaaris despite the protest of the low income segments of the bazaaris. When many refused to pay taxes, government announced a campaign against those who had not paid their taxes in May 1963. “Three hundred thousand cases of refusal to pay taxes were uncovered in Tehran alone, most of which involved merchants, small shopkeepers, and artisans.”\textsuperscript{238} Furthermore, in April 1963, the government threatened to start an anti-profiteering campaign and, in fact, imposed price control on bakers and butchers.\textsuperscript{239}

From the mid-1970’s state followed similar policies, but maybe more forcefully. Parsa (2000) states that “as lower oil revenues reduced the state’s resources, the government imposed higher taxes on bazaaris while cutting back on bank loans to shopkeepers.”\textsuperscript{240} State also imposed a minimum wage for workers. But most importantly, state embarked upon a widespread anti-profiteering campaign from mid-1975 on. In fact, Shah added two new articles to his provisions of White Revolution one of which was price stabilization and anti-profiteering campaign.\textsuperscript{241} Abrahamian (1982) states that during this campaign, which lasted well through 1978, government issued “some 250,000 fines, banned 23,000 traders from their hometowns, handed out some 8,000 shopkeepers prison sentences ranging from two months to three years, and brought charges to against another 180,000 small businessmen.”\textsuperscript{242} The campaign was quite aggressive. But, overall, the pattern of state economic policy in the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s was qualitatively the same.

\textsuperscript{237} Parsa, 1989, p. 98
\textsuperscript{238} Parsa, 1989, p. 99
\textsuperscript{239} Parsa, 1989
\textsuperscript{240} Parsa, 2000, p. 206
\textsuperscript{241} Milani, 2004, p. 97
\textsuperscript{242} Abrahamian, 1982, p.498
Figure 1: GNP per capita growth rate in 1997 const. price
Figure 2: urban per capita consumption growth rate in 1997 const price

Figure 3: rural per capita consumption growth rate in 1997 const price
Figure 4: growth rate of total per capita government expenditure(left) in 1997 const. price; and growth rate of per capita government expenditure in health(right, red) and social welfare(right, blue) in 1997 const. price

Figure 5: Gini index(left); and the income ratio of the top 10 percent rich to the bottom 10 percent poor(right)
8 Conclusion

In this paper, I study the role of ideology in the Iranian Revolution. I show that the change in the Shia political ideology between the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s causally affected the goals and strategies of the religious opposition. Because of this ideological innovation, Khomeini and his followers aimed to overthrow the monarchical regime and to establish an Islamic state. To defend these claims against structural and agent-free process theories, I “test” whether economic, social, and political factors can explain the occurrence of the Iranian Revolution.

First, I exclude cumulative and threshold models as inappropriate causal modes to explain and predict revolutions. I argue that their prediction power is relatively weak due to the type of data that they require to predict the outcome. Instead, I suggest the necessary and sufficient conditions (NSC) as the mode of causal relation. NSC is not demanding in terms of data as it only requires categorical data, and it has been widely applied in the literature. Second, I highlight a qualitative method, namely the qualitative time series (QTS) method, which is based on the application of the comparative method over time.

Adopting NCS as the causal mode and applying the QTS method, I compare two periods of the Iranian contemporary history that witnessed popular uprising: the early 1960’s and the late 1970’s. These periods were selected because both witnessed widespread popular uprisings, but only the latter led to a revolution. I show that structural and agent-free process factors suggested in the literature, are (qualitatively) the same for both periods, and cannot explain the variation in outcome. To bridge the gap between these historical observations and existing theories, I integrate ideology to the theories of revolutions to explain the making of the Iranian revolution.

I argue that an ideological change involves intellectual innovation, and like any other type of innovation, features intrinsic uncertainty. I view ideological innovations as ideological shocks that expand the set of alternatives to the status quo, and hence can change the goals and strategies of individuals. Because ideological innovations are human innovations, human agency exercises “a significant degree of ‘freedom and creativity’ ” that cannot be captured by structure, and hence ideology should be integrated as an exogenous explanatory variable for more accurate predictions.

Methodologically, this paper contributes to the qualitative methodology by extending the logic of the comparative method from “between” case studies to “within” case studies. It introduces the Qualitative Time Series (QTS) analysis to draw inference from the study of one unit/country over time. It also demonstrates the power of this method by applying it to study the role of ideology in the Iranian Revolution. Moreover, this paper highlights the problems of cumulative and threshold models, and emphasizes the advantages of necessary and sufficient conditions (NSC) as a mode of causal relation. Finally, it connects the underlying causal modes of analysis in qualitative method to specification problems in statistical method.

Substantively, it contributes to the literature on the Iranian Revolution by establishing the irreducible causal role of ideology in the making of the Iranian Revolution. I emphasize that this paper establishes that the causal effect of ideology in the Iranian revolution is “significant” even after “controlling” for all the variables suggested by dominant structural and agency-free process

\[243\] Tholfsen 1984, p. 11
theories. More broadly, this paper contributes to the theories of revolution by establishing that ideology, even in the narrowest sense defined by Skocpol (1997a), can have a decisive causal effect on the making of social revolutions. The revolutionary goals of the opposition cannot be taken for granted. And, ideology might play a decisive role to form those goals as well as the strategies to achieve them.

Finally, although any generalization should be considered with caution, the results might have important implications for our understanding of other revolutions and social movements. For example, Skocpol (1979) contends that the Russian revolution occurred in 1917, and not in 1905, because the state resources were exhausted in the WWI in 1917, whereas in 1905 the state was only engaged in the moderately demanding Russo-Japanese War. However, in the uprising of 1905 people managed to paralyze the state, and yet did not demand to overthrow the monarchy. It is plausible to think that in the period between 1905 to 1917, the goals of opposition switched from reforming the monarchy or establishing a bourgeois democracy to establishing a communist state as a result of some ideological innovation. If both ideology and state resources have varied from 1905 to 1917, the causal effect of ideology in the 1917 Russian revolution cannot easily be rejected.

More substantially, these results might have implications to explain 1989 uprising in China, recent Monks revolt in Burma, and democracy movements in Islamic countries. The development of an Islamic ideology that establishes the consistency of Islam and democracy might encourage many devoted muslims to join democratic oppositions in favor of democracy. In particular, as I have argued elsewhere244, the failure of the Green Movement in Iran was at least partly because the opposition elite lacked an Islamic alternative to the thesis of velayat-e faghih upon which the status quo relies.

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