

EXAMINING THE WAY REVOLUTIONARY FORCES COOPERATED WITH THE ATTITUDES OF ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY DURING THE PROCESS OF CONSTITUTIONALIZATION IN IRAN

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18662057>

Abstract. *During the constitutionalization of Iran, revolutionary forces with different religious and intellectual tendencies played an effective role in the formation and advancement of the movement. The interaction between Islamic and Christian thought, especially through Iranian intellectuals influenced by Western civilization and reformist clerics, led to the formation of a kind of synergy in the path of legalism. Clerics such as Tabatabaei and Behbahani, along with elites educated abroad, were able to establish a bridge between the concepts of Sharia and civil freedom. On the other hand, the Christian worldview was reflected in the works of some exiled Iranian freedom fighters. Although this relative harmony later faced deep challenges, it provided a platform for the first experience of civilizational dialogue between Islam and the West during the historical period of the constitutionalization. Studying this interaction provides a more precise understanding of the intellectual foundations of modern Iran. This research aims to answer the following questions: 1- How did the cooperation and interaction of Islamic and Christian forces take shape in the process of constitutionalization of Iran? 2- What factors led to the continuation or weakening of this cooperation at different stages of the Constitutional Movement? The research findings indicate that the cooperation between forces with an Islamic and Christian perspective in the Iranian Constitutional Movement was formed based on the common goal of seeking justice and legality. The difference in the philosophical foundations of religion and the perception of freedom was the main factor limiting this cooperation in the continuation of the movement.*

Keywords: *Constitutional Movement of Iran, revolutionary forces, Islam and Christianity, interaction of religious ideas, seeking justice and legality.*

1. Introduction

The Constitutional Revolution is one of the turning points in the history of Iran in the last century. Constitutionalism in Iran, which sought to establish the rule of law, was formed on the one hand in response to the influence of modern European political ideas and on the other hand in response to the corruption and helplessness of the autocratic political system. Autocratic decadence, internal backwardness, and the widespread and all-out invasion of Western colonialism in the 19th century were two central issues that forced religious leaders, intellectuals, and some politicians to react intellectually and practically. In fact, Iranian society was, on the one hand, plagued by tyranny, ignorance, and intellectual stagnation, and on the other hand, exposed to the influence and invasion of the new Western civilization; Thus, “the chaotic internal situation as well as the influence of new Western philosophy, sciences and education in Islamic countries on the one hand, and the political influence of Western countries and their military dominance in the 19th and 20th centuries on the other, have caused Muslims to

reconsider their political views in order to confront new ideas and especially to combat the colonial and imperialist aims of the West” (Pourjavadi, 1982: 2).

From a political perspective, perhaps no other development in the history of Iran over the past two or three centuries has been as significant as the constitutional movement. The modernist thought of the elites, both religious and non-religious, along with the wave of people tired of Iranian tyranny, forced Mozaffar al-Din Shah Qajar to issue a decree on the constitutional monarchy in the summer of 1285 AH (Safarinejad, 1991: 25).

The Constitutional Revolution (Ajoudani, 2011: 16) is considered one of the most sensitive and decisive periods in the country's history, which had an important impact and consequences on the country's internal developments, especially in the field of political thought and action. Since the social, political, and cultural life of the Iranian nation has had an inextricable link with religion and religious leaders in its historical development, the Constitutional Revolution, as the most important socio-political movement of the Iranian nation, was no exception to this rule. The Constitutional Revolution was a movement and agitation in which various strata and groups played an active role. Although the contribution of each of them was not equal and their goals were also different, the most prominent and influential active group in this movement was clearly the revolutionary forces of Islam (clergy) of Iran. Therefore, in writing contemporary history, the role of these forces should be discussed as the first factor. The forces that were the standard-bearers of these movements and always played the most important role in inciting and mobilizing the people (Shiroudi, 2017: 22).

On the other hand, among the groups active in the establishment of constitutionalism, the revolutionary forces of Christianity (Armenians) played an important role. The role of the Armenians can be examined from both military and intellectual aspects. Although it seems that the military role is superior to their other aspects, in fact, the intellectual currents among the Armenians are very diverse and complex. The intellectual role of the Armenians began with Mirza Malkom Khan in the atmosphere of the first constitutionalism and then continued to the writers of the Iran No newspaper and, in fact, to the intellectual leaders of the Armenian parties who were active in Iran. The role of the military activities of the Armenian parties in the Constitutional Revolution of Iran is also tied more than anyone else to the name of Monsieur Yperm Khan the Armenian (Rafahi Taleghani, Heravi and Zargarinejad, 2017: 325).

As mentioned, the Constitutional Revolution is one of the turning points in the history of Iran in the last century, which has had different reflections among researchers and experts on Iranian issues; some have described this event in a historical perspective, some have evaluated it in the context of the conflict between tradition and modernity, and some have emphasized the role of social forces and classes in its emergence and victory (Tabatabai, 1992: 35). The present study seeks to examine the cooperation of revolutionary forces with Islamic and Christian perspectives in the process of constitutionalization in Iran. Therefore, in this topic, the background of the study is first addressed, then the Constitutional Revolution, the goals and contexts of the formation of the Constitutional Revolution in both domestic and foreign spheres are examined, then the role of religious forces with an Islamic perspective (clergy) in the formation of the Constitutional Revolution is addressed, and finally the intellectual and military role of revolutionary forces with a Christian perspective (Armenian) in the formation of the Constitutional Revolution is addressed.

Considering the research topic and the nature of the research, the method of library documentary research is a descriptive-analytical approach, and in the information gathering

stage, relying on primary sources as research and using references in this regard, it gives us very valuable information about this issue, a record is taken, and after explaining the historical aspects of the issue, the data is analyzed and interpreted in light of the research problem. Therefore, the main issue of the present research is to focus on the point of what effect the cooperation of revolutionary forces with the attitude of Islam and Christianity had on the process of constitutionalization of Iran.

2. Theoretical framework

2-1. Research Background

The conducted studies indicate that so far, no specific research has been conducted on the cooperation of revolutionary forces with the attitude of Islam and Christianity during the constitutionalization of Iran. However, some related research has been conducted in this field, some of the most important researches mentioned below. Rafahi Taleghani and colleagues (1400 AH) studied the role of Armenians in the peasant movement in Gilan during the Qajar era, emphasizing constitutionalist ideas. The hypothesis of the present research is: Marsad believes that Armenians played an effective role in the peasant movement in Gilan during the Qajar era, emphasizing constitutionalist ideas. The basic findings of the above research indicate that: During the different stages of the movement, the peasants took actions such as not paying the rent, clashing with the landlords, expelling them from the villages, and forming village associations. In this regard, the two Armenian parties, Hunchak and Dashnak, actively and significantly had an important impact on the Iranian constitutionalism in the wars of Tabriz and Rasht, mainly in two military and cultural forms. Izadi Odlu et al. (2017) studied the role of Shiite jurists in the formation and victory of the Constitutional Revolution. This research seeks to answer the question of what role Shiite scholars and authorities played in the emergence and victory of the Constitutional Revolution from an intellectual and practical perspective. Studies show that Shiite scholars and authorities from influential social forces had an influential intellectual and practical role in the Constitutional Revolution. From this research, it became clear that Shiite scholars played a leading role in creating revolutionary motivations and raising awareness among the masses of the people in the fight against domestic tyranny and foreign domination, and they demonstrated the most lasting and remarkable experience of intervening in the political affairs of that day. Borzaman, Partovi, and Lotfizadeh (1400 AH) conducted a comparative study of the position of the liberal-democratic intellectual movement and the political and jurisprudential Islam movement in the Constitutional Revolution and Islamic Revolution of Iran. In the study of contemporary Iranian history since the late Qajar period, influenced by intellectual movements and global developments, various movements such as Marxist, liberal, and Islamic (political Islam) groups and thinkers have entered the arena of life and have become the source of various developments. Among the most important developments in contemporary Iran under the influence of the aforementioned movements, which are the product of the current society, the Constitutional Revolution and the Islamic Revolution should be mentioned. In expressing the findings of the research, it can be said: In the Constitutional Revolution, the political Islam movement influenced by the thoughts of Shiite jurists such as Mirza Nayini, Akhund Khorasani, Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri, Ayatollah Tabatabaei, and Behbahani guided and led the people. The liberal movement, with intellectuals such as Seyyed Hassan Taghizadeh, Mirza Malik Khan, Akhundzadeh, Jahangir Khan Sur-Israfil, Ali Akbar Dehkhoda, and ..., had a significant impact on advancing the goals of the Constitutional Revolution. Salah (2016) examined the role of two Armenian parties (Monchak and Dashnak) in the Iranian

Constitutional Revolution (1324-1331 AH). Basically, Armenian parties had an important impact on the Iranian Constitutional Revolution in two ways: military and intellectual-cultural. From a military point of view, they played a decisive role in numerous wars against the enemies of the Constitutional Iran, including Mohammad Ali Shah and his brothers, as well as supporters of tyranny. From an intellectual point of view, they were effective by promoting the party ideas of "nationalism" and "social democracy" and helping to promote the ideology and ideas of the Democratic Party of Iran. Finally, from a cultural point of view, they played a role by publishing several Armenian newspapers, establishing schools, theaters, theaters, etc. in Iran. As can be seen, most of the similar researches have been carried out, although they have made minor references to the subject of this article, but some of the researches have been in the position of explaining the viewpoint of the clergy during the Constitutional period or have put the general viewpoints of political and religious figures into the spotlight. Therefore, the present article is innovative and innovative, firstly, in focusing on the revolutionary forces of Islam and Christianity (Armenians), and secondly, in presenting a clear picture of the role that the Armenian forces played in the Constitutional Revolution.

3. Constitutional Revolution: Goals and Backgrounds

From 1905 AD/1284 AH to 1911 AD/1290 AH, Iranian society experienced the turbulent crisis of the Constitutional Revolution. In this revolution, the masses of the people, especially the urban dwellers, participated extensively. They targeted the autocratic rule of the Qajar government and its weakness and helplessness against foreign powers. The Constitutional Revolution was not only against the autocratic methods of government, but also opposed foreign influence. Therefore, constitutionalism sought, on the one hand, to change the absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy, and on the other hand, to establish Iran's independence in the international arena and prevent foreign interference in Iran's internal affairs. In this regard, the Constitutional Revolution was very different from traditional uprisings such as the Tobacco Uprising, because for the first time, the goal of the uprising was to overthrow the autocratic government and end the domination of foreign powers.

The Iranian Constitutional Revolution was a popular and largely urban revolution. Numerous social forces with different and sometimes conflicting political motives participated in this revolution; therefore, this revolution, like other major revolutions, encompassed a wide range of beliefs, goals, and social forces. Therefore, it can be said that the Iranian Constitutional Revolution was a multicultural and multi-ideological event. In the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, numerous social forces, including clerics and religious authorities, and modernist intellectuals, participated. It seems that the tyranny of Nasser al-Din Shah's government and its continuation during the period of Mozaffar al-Din Shah, along with the transfer of privileges, various types of loans from foreigners, brought protest reactions in Iran. In fact, protests, movements, and movements against the Qajar tyranny and foreign domination were formed in three parts of Iranian society: "Society, clergy, and intellectuals. All three groups protested against the state of the country and opposed tyranny, foreign influence, chaos, lawlessness, instability, and political and administrative corruption in the country" (Sari' al-Qalam, 2011: 137).

The occurrence of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, like other revolutions, was based on a series of social, political, economic, and cultural conditions. In fact, the grounds and causes of the occurrence of the Constitutional Revolution can be examined in three intellectual, cultural, political, and economic dimensions.

In general, the legitimacy of the Qajar dynasty gradually came into question during the 19th century for the following reasons: Iran's defeat by Russia, which led to the bloody Griboyedov affair; the failure of the reforms from the 1830s (1210 AH) to the 1880s (1260 AH); And the surrender of various privileges, of which the Reuter privilege and the Tobacco Movement were prominent examples, and despite all this insufficiency, at the threshold of the twentieth century there was not much left of the legitimacy of the monarchy, which definitely led to state crises (political aspects (weakness against the West, repression and tyranny at home), economic (dependence on foreign commercial loans, lack of control over customs, etc.) and ideological (the masses' awareness that the government had been unable to preserve Islamic identity or national interests) (Foran, 2007: 269). Thus, numerous social classes and groups were dissatisfied with the status quo, but the reality is that these discontents and dissatisfactions were mostly reflected and led by scholars.

1-3. Background to the Formation of the Constitutional Revolution

A constitutional government is a government in which the authority of the king and the court is limited and the relations between the state and the nation are determined within a specific framework according to the Lascelles law. The Constitutional Movement of the Iranian People was a movement to limit the monarchy and Tyranny and the realization of the rule of law; because lawlessness and insecurity were rampant in the country, every order of the king, rulers, princes, etc. was considered law for the country. The lives, property, honor, and security of the country's people were at the mercy of the royal will and those close to the government, and there was no system to handle it. In short, the causes of the formation of the Constitutional Movement can be divided into two parts: internal and external causes.

1-1-3. Internal factors that led to the formation of the Constitutional Movement

1. The struggles and thoughts of Seyyed Jamal al-Din Asadabadi in creating a unity between the Islamic world and the fight against colonialism and tyranny and the awakening of Muslims to defend Islamic values, (Kermani, 2016: 192)

2. Inspiration from the anti-authoritarian and anti-colonialist thinking of Islam, whose banner was the clergy. The practical struggle of religion against colonialism began in the Qajar era under the leadership of "Seyyed Mohammad Mujahid" and reached its peak with the Tobacco Movement. The Tobacco Movement was the first general resistance of the Iranian people against foreigners and tyranny, which Mirza Shirazi outlined the political principles of the religious struggle against tyranny for several decades to come.

3. The threat of the increasing dominance and aggression of the British and Russian colonial governments to gain privileges and threaten Iran's independence; including the 1907/1286 AH agreement that divided Iran into areas under the influence of the two countries, Russia and England, and a neutral zone under Iranian control.

4. The publication of a photo of "Monsieur Noz the Belgian", the head of customs and the minister of finance, dressed in clerical attire, drunk and dancing. When people saw these photos, they attacked the Russian loan bank in Iran and destroyed it.

5. The sit-in of a number of clerics and people at the shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim on 19 Di' 1247 AH / Ramadan 1284 AH due to the lynching of several merchants and two Sadats on 26 Shawwal 1323 AH by "Ala' al-Dawlah", the ruler of Tehran, on the orders of the Prime Minister, for the crime of raising the price of sugar.

6. The shelling of the parliament by Mohammad Ali Shah with the help of the Russians

2-1-3. External factors that led to the formation of the Constitutional Movement

The connection of Iranian scholars and businessmen with European countries, sending students abroad, the Japanese constitutionalism, the defeat of Russia by Japan, the 1905 Revolution, Russia, the domination of foreigners over the country's economy, and the intellectual influences of the French Revolution were among the factors that influenced the creation of the movement.

The killing of Nasser al-Din Shah by Mirza Reza Kermani, who had clearly considered his motive to cut off the roots of oppression and the result of the words and writings of Seyyed Jamal al-Din, further accelerated the process of constitutionalism.

At the time of Muzaffar al-Din Shah's accession to the throne, corruption in the court, poverty, and injustice were still rampant in society. Although there had been rebellions and protests in Iranian cities against the oppression of the Qajar government for a long time, historians believe that the beginning of the Constitutional Movement was the incident of the increase in the price of sugar in Tehran.

Ala'ad-Dawlah, the governor of Tehran, had seven hundred merchants and two people hanged to the stake for raising the price of sugar. This action, which was approved by the then despotic Prime Minister "Ain al-Dawlah", provoked protests from the bazaars, clerics and intellectuals. They spoke against tyranny and supported the constitution and the establishment of the House of Justice, and distributed leaflets. The protesters demanded the dismissal of Ain al-Dawlah, the dismissal of the "Belgian Noge", and the dethronement of the ruler of Tehran. Strikes and disobedience to government orders and orders swept the capital, and a number of people, along with clerics, staged a "barricade" at the shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim and sat there in protest. Therefore, Mozaffar al-Din Shah was forced to promise on 22 Di' 1247 AH / 7 Ramadan 1284 AH to dismiss the prime minister and establish the House of Justice. When he did not keep his promise to dismiss the prime minister, a number of scholars, including Seyyed Mohammad Tabataba'i and Seyyed Abdullah Behbahani, went to Qom and threatened to leave the country if Muzaffar al-Din Shah's promise was not fulfilled.

Finally, after persistent and continuous struggles by the people, the clergy, intellectuals, and freedom-seekers, after more than seven months, on Mordad 4, 1248 AH / 1285 AH, Mozaffar al-Din Shah signed the first constitutional decree, which limited and conditioned the king's power for the first time in Iranian history. The new decree, which was issued a few days later, on Mordad 8, 1348 AH / 1285 AH, also included the phrase "elected by the nation," and thus gave the final order for constitutionalism and the formation of the National Consultative Assembly. After the news of the signing of this decree was broadcast, those who had gone to the shrines of Hazrat Abdul Azim and Qom returned to the capital. The first National Consultative Assembly was opened on October 5, 1348 AH / 1285 AH, in the presence of Mozaffar al-Din Shah at the Golestan Palace in Tehran. Most of the representatives of this assembly, which was the first assembly in Iranian history, were from the guilds of scholars and clergy. The first speaker of the parliament was Sani' al-Dawla, and after his resignation, Ehtesham al-Saltanah became the speaker of the first parliament (Tulu'i, 2005: 67).

3-1-3. Jurists and Constitutionalism

It was further mentioned that various political groups and forces were involved in the victory of the Constitutional Revolution, and one of the effective and influential forces from the very beginning of the constitutional movement in Iran was the jurists and religious leaders who strongly supported this movement.

In our opinion, if religious scholars had not intervened and participated in the Constitutional Revolution, this revolution would not have reached anywhere, meaning that neither a parliament would have been formed nor a constitution would have been approved.

There is a general agreement among researchers that religious scholars played a major role in many movements, uprisings of the Qajar era, especially the Constitutional Revolution, and they always acted as inspirers and leaders of public sentiment and defenders of national honor in the formation of political uprisings and public awakening against the Qajar government (Elgar, 1986: 143). Edward Brown, one of the leading Western Iranologists, while emphasizing the originality of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, believes that this revolution enjoyed the firm support of the clergy. In his opinion, the serious support of some of the most famous Iranian spiritual leaders for this national movement is one of the interesting phenomena of this revolution (Brown, 1917: 243).

Therefore, the Iranian Constitutional Revolution had a religious and national motivation; in other words, this revolution was both religious and nationalist. As Spring Rice, who was sent to Iran as the British Minister Plenipotentiary in 1906, noted in a private letter dated February 21, 1907, the Constitutional Movement was both national and religious. He wrote that the Constitutional Movement was “a kind of last desperate effort to get Iran back on its feet. The feeling is that foreign nations should not have Iran in their hands for even a moment” (Rice, 1375: 181-182). The reality is that the Constitutional Revolution was achieved through the sit-ins of great clerics, famous businessmen, and pulpit preachers, not through the actions of intellectuals, whose role was more in the field of ideas; therefore, it was the strong and decisive stance of Iranian Shiite scholars in defense of constitutionalism that led to the victory of the revolution of 1324 AH (1285 AH). Therefore, in many interpretations and interpretations of the Constitutional Revolution, the leadership of Shiite scholars has been emphasized. Of course, the leadership of the clergy in the Constitutional Revolution was also accepted by other social forces in the Constitutional Revolution, including intellectuals. Intellectuals, including scholars, secular politicians, and businessmen familiar with political issues, accepted the political leadership of the clergy in the revolution in the fight against the Qajar tyranny and in the direction of establishing a parliamentary system in Iran; because they recognized the influence of their words on our people. On the one hand, they adapted constitutionalism and its achievements to the standards of Sharia and reduced its basic concepts to Sharia concepts, and on the other hand, they stood behind the clergy to legitimize their political demands and struggles in order to advance the political struggle” (Ajoudani, 2003: 122).

4. Revolutionary forces with an Islamic perspective

With the spread of constitutionalist ideas, a major faction of Shiite scholars revised their traditional positions and turned to new ideas related to the rule of law and the limitation of the power of the ruler; therefore, the clerics' interests in domestic and international issues and their active presence on the scene of political developments since the late 19th century were a sign of change and evolution in their traditional positions. In particular, the intellectual atmosphere of the Constitutional Revolution led to the emergence of new political tendencies among the clerics, which had an undeniable impact on the victory of constitutionalism. At the end of the Qajar period and on the eve of the Constitutional Revolution, issues arose that led to a fundamental change in the thirteen hundred-year-old thinking of Shiite scholars on sovereignty. Thus, the clergy and religious scholars, along with other groups active in the Constitutional Revolution, wanted a new political order in which the power of the Shah and the domination of Europeans

over Iran would be limited. It can be said that jurists and authorities played an important role in the Constitutional Revolution, especially in the first stages of its formation, from a practical and theoretical perspective. It is clear to everyone that the participation and presence of Shiite jurists in the formation and victory of the revolution was very influential and they practically held the leadership of constitutionalism. In the words of Shahid Motahari, "The constitutional movement of Iran was primarily led by the late Akhund Khorasani and the late Agha Sheikh Abdullah Mazandarani, among the authorities of Najaf, and two great figures from the scholars of Tehran, the late Seyyed Abdullah Behbahani and the late Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabaei" (Motahari, 1995: 57).

Therefore, many prominent religious leaders and religious authorities supported the constitutionalist movement. Among the leading scholars of Tehran, Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabaei and Seyyed Abdullah Behbahani continued to support the constitutional revolution until the end. In other words, the two major clerics who were supporters of the constitutional revolution inside Iran were clearly different from each other. One was Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabaei and the other was Ayatollah Behbahani. In a way, these two religious figures, by supporting constitutionalism, became the vanguard of the popular movement in inciting rebellion against the government. The main contribution of these two mujtahids, apart from their role as leaders of a popular movement, was their support for political reforms and patriotism with a view to defending Islam" (Amanat, 2004: 39).

Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabaei was a well-known figure who mainly had liberal tendencies and had many contacts with other liberals. He believed that the constitution and the constitution were the best way to limit the power of the despotic Qajar kings who had effectively put Iran at the disposal of foreign powers. Ayatollah Tabatabaei was influenced by the ideas of Seyyed Jamal al-Din Asadabadi. While living and studying in Samarra, he corresponded with the Seyyed, and for this reason, among the courtiers and statesmen, he was accused of being friends and like-minded with Seyyed Jamal al-Din Asadabadi, and Iranian politicians warned people against getting close to him.

From the moment he arrived in Iran, Ayatollah Tabatabaei had been thinking about establishing a court of justice and a parliament to prevent the oppression of the government officials against the masses, which led to the beginning of the Constitutional Revolution led by him and other religious leaders. The constitutionalists first gathered at the home of this scholar-mujahid and from there they migrated to the shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim. Ayatollah Tabatabaei continued his struggle against the Qajar tyranny and foreign domination over the country, and he always emphasized his demands for the establishment of a parliament, the establishment of the rule of law, and the end of foreign influence in Tabatabaei's famous letter to the then Prime Minister "Ain al-Dawla" in 1323 AH/1905 AD. He criticized the opposition to the establishment of the National Assembly, which was "an alliance between the government and the nation and between scholars and government figures." He also stated that the Shiite government was unique to Iran and that the dignity and happiness of the Shiites depended on it. Why did you allow the destruction of Iran and the complete weakening of the Shiite government? ... You may say that the mullahs will not let Iran be safe. This is not true... I see a day when my homeland, my dignity and authority, and my services to Islam have all been destroyed and fallen into the hands of foreigners; therefore, as long as I have life in my body, I will try to protect the country, even if it costs me my life (Amanat, 2004: 39). Therefore, Tabatabaei had a decisive presence and role in the migration of scholars to Hazrat Abdul Azim and Qom to establish the House of Justice and

eliminate tyranny, and finally, he was considered one of the prominent and trusted leaders of the people in all constitutional issues and the formation of the Shura Council. As he himself says, from the very beginning of his arrival in Tehran, Tabatabaei had dreamed of constitutionalizing Iran and establishing a National Consultative Assembly. He spoke of these two things in Munir, and Nasser al-Din Shah often complained about him and sent him messages that Iran was not yet capable of becoming constitutional (Haeri, 1985: 105).

Finally, due to the insistence of Ayatollah Tabatabaei and his companions, the Shah deposed Ain al-Dawla and appointed Moshir al-Dawla in his place, thus paving the way for the pursuit of justice and the establishment of a constitutional system. Seyyed Abdullah Behbahani was also a staunch supporter of constitutionalism in collaboration with Ayatollah Tabatabaei. He was an influential mujtahid. Although Behbahani refused to endorse the fatwa banning tobacco during the incident, he later joined the ranks of pro-constitutional scholars and took steps towards constitutionalism and justice, and as history has shown, he fought on this path with unwavering determination and unparalleled courage.

Ayatollah Behbahani was elected to the parliament in the first round of elections. With the inauguration of the parliament and the establishment of the constitutional monarchy, Behbahani reached the peak of power and had an organization for himself. Many of the country's affairs were resolved in his house. Most of the representatives of the parliament were under the influence and influence of his rulers. His agreement or opposition was enough to establish or weaken the governments. With his help, the parliament dismissed Monsieur Noz, who was an agent of the Russians. This parliament also prevented foreign loans. In fact, the alliance of Ayatollah Tabatabaei and Ayatollah Behbahani in leading and guiding the movement in the victory of the constitutional revolution has played a decisive role. Also, outside of Iran, in Atbat, which was one of the main centers of Shiite clergy, renowned authorities such as "Akhund Mohammad Kazem Khorasani and Sheikh Abdullah Mazandarani" were with the two Tehran mujtahids - Ayatollah Tabatabaei and Ayat Behbahani - in supporting and defending constitutionalism. Therefore, prominent religious figures residing in Atbat, including Akhund Khorasani (d. 1911) and Sheikh Abdullah Mazandarani (d. 1912), continued to support and advocate the constitutionalist cause throughout the period known as the Minor Tyranny (June 1908, Khordad 1287 AH to July 1909, Tir 1288 AH) without any hesitation or wavering, and the reasons they have cited for adopting this position are typical of the reasons of constitutional scholars in general. According to one of the telegrams they sent to Iran, these reasons were: "Preserving the clear religion, the strength and glory of the state, the progress of the nation, the advancement of the state of the subjects, and the protection of the souls and the resistance of the Muslims." The relationship between constitutionalism and achieving these goals was so clear that they used the well-known Shiite license, namely jihad, to achieve it. Any effort to establish a constitutional system is equivalent to jihad under the leadership of the Imam of the Time (Legar, 1992: 268). The truth is that the fatwa of the scholars residing in the shrines on the necessity of jihad against the tyranny of Muhammad Ali Shahi played a major role in the weakening and defeat of the tyranny of the Minor. Ahmad Kasravi says about the role of the religious scholars residing in the shrines in the victory of the Constitutionalist Movement:

"What kept the Constitutionalist Movement alive was the manly insistence of the two Sayyids and Akhunds of Khorasani and Hajj Sheikh of Mazandarani. Despite the pressures they faced and the losses they suffered, they did not stop supporting the Majlis and the Constitutionalist Movement and maintained it" (Kasravi, 1340: 361).

During the Constitutionalist Movement, the support of the scholars of Najaf and Karbala was an important source of strengthening the Constitutionlists. In fact, the religious authorities residing in the shrines provided the greatest moral and social support for the Constitutionalist Revolution. For a long time, the most prominent Shiite leaders or religious authorities resided in Najaf and sometimes other holy cities of Iraq. During the Constitutional era, four religious authorities resided in Najaf: Hajj Mirza Hossein Tehrani (the senior religious authority of Akhund Mullah Mohammad Kazem Khorasani, the religious authority of A'lam Sheikh Abdullah Mazandarani, and Seyyed Kazem Yazdi. The first three supported the revolution at all stages of the revolution, and by issuing fatwas and statements, communicating with religious and secular leaders, and by sending sharp letters and telegrams to the Shah, they demonstrated their support for the revolution. Of course, Yazdi was the only religious authority who distanced himself from constitutionalism and turned to supporting the intellectual faction of Sheikh Fazlullah. However, the support of the other three religious authorities, especially Tehrani Khorasani, for the revolution continued. Therefore, some researchers say that this claim is not exaggerated that if it were not for the consistent support of these three religious authorities, the revolution would not have won in such a way and with such speed" (Katouzian, 1994: 9). Also from the same area of the shrines, Ayatollah Mirza Mohammad Hossein Na'ini and Sheikh Mohammad Ismail Gharavi wrote treatises in defense of constitutionalism and responding to criticism. Constitutionalist scholars tried. Those treatises had a remarkable effect on the political struggles of the time in favor of constitutionalism. During the Constitutionalist period, one of the prominent Shiite jurists who pondered about constitutionalism was Ayatollah Na'ini. He was a student of Mirza Shirazi and later a Khorasani cleric and an Usuli mujtahid. Inspired by the thoughts and struggles of Sayyid Jamal, and especially through Abd al-Rahman Kawakbi and his book "Taba'i' al-Istibad" which was translated into Persian during the Constitutionalist period, he wrote the most important Shiite jurisprudential and argumentative work on constitutionalism called "Tanbiyyah al-Ummah wa Tanziyyah al-Millah". Na'ini is remembered from this book as "the only systematic and known treatise in defense of parliamentary democracy" (Enayat, 1372: 233); that is, constitutional government. Abdul Hadi Ha'iri, the author of the famous book *Shiism and Constitutionalism*, introduced Ayatollah Na'ini as the most prominent religious scholar who favored constitutionalism. In his book, Ayatollah Naeini mentions positive ideological reasons for scholars' support of constitutionalism that are firmly rooted in the Quran and Sunnah. In this regard, Naeini's political view in defending constitutionalism is linked to his jurisprudential and fundamentalist view. One of the most important teachings of the Usuli school, after the guidance of the Quran, Sunnah, and consensus, is the authority of reason in distinguishing the rules and rulings of the Sharia, and in accordance with that, the necessity of *ijtihad*. With such a view, Ayatollah Naeini has considered the introduction to be the obligation to draft a constitution, the establishment of a National Consultative Assembly, and constitutionalism as a prerequisite and prerequisite for the welfare, security, and progress of Muslims; therefore, Naeini has tried to justify parliamentary democracy and constitutional government from a jurisprudential perspective by denying the authoritarian state. In other words, Naeini's book was written to prove the legitimacy of constitutionalism based on the teachings of Islamic Sharia.

Another jurist who, from the school of the scholars, defended constitutionalism and responded to the opponents of constitutionalism by writing a treatise, was Sheikh Muhammad Ismail Mahallati Gharavi. In his treatise, *Taali al-Marbu'ta fi wajoob al-mashrushta*, he paid attention to several other points in defense of constitutionalism, emphasizing the same meanings

of “punishing the nation.” He considered the achievement of constitutionalism to be “limiting the type of monarchy and its fringes on the people” and “preventing the gradual influence of infidels and their domination over the affairs of Muslims.” In response to the scholars of the legitimate government who called the Majlis a violation of the foundations of religion, he wrote, “These matters and the like are related to religious interests and have no bearing on religious matters. Knowledge and ignorance of the rules of Sharia have no bearing on them” (Zargarinejad, 1374: 516). In his opinion, constitutionalism and tyranny can both be characteristics of government. If the government is based on self-determination and tyranny or is beneficial to the laws of the nation and constitutional, this matter has nothing to do with religion or sect, because the religion of the people of the country becomes idolatry or theism, whether their monarchy is constitutional or tyrannical (ibid., 520). He also says about freedom of the press in constitutionalism that in Islamic law, backbiting is permissible in the case of grievances, and if by exposing the oppression and sin of an individual, he can be stopped from committing it, then announcing it... may be obligatory and one of the obligatory examples of removing evil” (ibid., 527). In general, the scholars who support the constitutionalism, by changing their traditional positions towards the government and emphasizing jurisprudential grounds, began to support and support the constitutionalism and the rule of law as an alternative to the rule of tyranny. The occurrence of the constitutional revolution and the support of Shiite scholars for this revolution clearly showed that a large part of the scholars and religious leaders, taking into account the requirements of society and emphasizing the principle of *ijtihad* as active members of society, accepted the rule of law and the constitutionalism within the framework of modernism and religion in Iran to free themselves from domestic tyranny and foreign domination, and they tried to interpret and explain the desire for constitutionalism based on Islamic teachings. In fact, the constitutionalist scholars’ understanding of the “rule of law” was a means of realizing the Sharia. None of the religious scholars during the constitutionalist period supported a secular and customary legislation. Most clerics considered the events of 1905-1906/1284-1285 AH as an attempt to implement the laws of Sharia. Therefore, the aim of the constitutionalist Shiite scholars in advocating constitutionalism was not to “accept Western civilization” but only its techniques to establish the supremacy of the law, which they considered to be the Sharia, and to prevent foreign influence (Al-Mabtoun, 1379: 231). Therefore, the activity of the constitutionalist Shiite scholars is important because it is an attempt to overcome and end the legacy of generations of intellectual apathy and inaction by affirming that “submission to base political practices or institutions is in no way approved by religion” (Enayat, 1372: 235).

The most important leaders and pioneers of Islam in the Constitutional Revolution can be considered Islamic clerics and scholars such as Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri, Akhund Khorasani, and Mirza Naini, who were among the most influential figures in the aforementioned transformation.

In the continuation of this topic, we will examine the opinions and thoughts of the aforementioned scholars who enjoyed a high and significant position in the Constitutional Revolution.

1- 4. Akhund Khorasani

Akhund Khorasani was a staunch supporter of constitutionalism and, while residing in Najaf, made a flawless effort to bring constitutionalism to fruition through correspondence and using letters and telegrams. In response to the letter from the people of Hamedan and in other ways, with a maximalist approach that seeks the answers to all issues and questions in religion and the rules of Sharia, he considers determining the type of government not the duty of religion

and religious scholars, but rather the duty of the nation's rational people (quoted in Pourzaman, Partovi, and Lotfizadeh, 1400: 179). He considers government and politics to be technical and should be implemented and managed by its experts; also, according to Akhund Khorasani, absolute sovereignty is exclusive to the divine essence; he does not tolerate absolute sovereignty of any human being and even considers the sovereignty of the infallibles to be limited to the conventional and general sphere; he denies any unconventional seizure of people's lives, property and honor by the infallibles through the conventional and generally recognized Sharia and considers everyone equal in the need to observe the laws of humanity (Mira Ahmadi and the Secretariat of the Congress in Honor of Akhund Khorasani, 2011: 150). In a letter to Mohammad Ali Shah, he criticized the belief in absolute authority for anyone other than the holder of the status of infallibility and wrote that anyone who considers the act of will and the absolute authority of non-infallibles to be among the laws of religion would be at least an innovator (Kermani 2011: 2/290).

2- 4. Mirza Naini

Muhammad Hossein Naini, known as Mirza Naini, the most important religious and jurisprudential figure of the constitutional era, presents the most eloquent religious perception of the situation in modern Iran in his famous book "Tanbiyyah al-Ummah wa Tanziyyah al-Mulla." In this book, he has actually theorized a new jurisprudential discourse on politics based on the relative legitimacy of the constitutional monarchy during the occultation period. In his opinion, tyranny is inherently contrary to Islamic principles and teachings and is inherently linked to decadence. The government in early Islam was based on the interests of the people and their freedom, and transforming tyranny into a constitutional one is a religious obligation. Tyranny has penetrated Iran and other parts of Islam since the time of Muawiyah (Rahmaniyan-Kushkaki, 2003: 210). Naini has listed seven factors for the emergence of tyranny: the ignorance and ignorance of the nation about its rights and the responsibility of the government; religious tyranny resulting from Muawiyah; the penetration of kingship; The differences and distinctions of the word Ummah; terrorism, intimidation and torture; committing the vice of tyranny and enslaving the people; the spread of oppression between social classes and the financial and military forces of the people are usurped by others and used to suppress them (Naini, 1378, 141). He criticizes traditional Shiite thought and thereby distances himself from it; because instead of emphasizing the individual, he emphasizes the new political thought.

3- 4. Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri (1224 AH -1297 AH)

Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri was one of the first-rate scholars of the Constitutional era who was different from Mirza Naini and other constitutionalist jurists in opposing the Constitutional era and supporting the legitimacy. According to Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri, the administration of the world during the period of the Great Occultation is carried out by "just jurists" and the rulers of Islam. He says that making laws is in whole or in part contrary to Islam, and this is the work of the Prophet Muhammad. It is not permissible for Muslims to make laws. Relying on the majority vote is wrong according to the Imamiyyah school of thought. What is the meaning of writing laws? The constitution and relying on the majority vote, even in matters that are permissible in principle, because it is committed to the face of the law, is a legislative haram and an innovation in religion. And all innovations and deviations are permissible if they are committed to it and consider it necessary and on. It is forbidden to oppose it, including the articles that divide the powers of the state into three branches, the first of which is the legislative branch, and this is pure innovation and misguidance, because in Islam it is not permissible for

anyone to invent or fabricate any ruling, and Islam does not have an incomplete one that someone can complete, and in the event of an incident, they should refer to the rulings that are the deputies of the Imam (AS), and he should infer from the Book and the Sunnah, not codify and fabricate” (Turkman, 1362: 1/58-56).

He stopped continuing to follow and accompany constitutionalism because of the conflict between the principles of constitutionalism and Sharia in his view. “Sheikh Fadlallah’s opposition arose from the fact that when the decree of constitutionalism was obtained and the time came to formulate the principles of fundamental rights, the incompatibility of democratic beliefs with the principles of Sharia became evident, and the idea of seeking legitimacy against constitutionalism began to emerge (Algar, 1360:78). Sheikh Fadlallah Nouri presented a specific interpretation of constitutionalism from the beginning. He thought that the meaning of constitutionalism was that the laws of Islam would be transformed into legal procedures and thus the standards of Islam would govern society. In other words, his other meaning of constitutionalism was the implementation of the laws of Islam in the form of a social system.

This type of understanding can be clearly seen in a letter he wrote to Agha Najafi Isfahani. In this letter, he considered the constitutional procedure based on the European perspective as the destruction of religion and the decline of Islam. Elsewhere, in response to the people's referendum on the duty of the parliament, he replied that there would be no change in the laws of Islam and that the limits were those government works and reforms of royal affairs that used to be carried out on the basis of independence and now should be carried out on the basis of the Soviet Union, and that it had no right to interfere in the affairs of Islam and the laws of the Twelver Islamic faith, whether they were religious or secular (Turkman, 1362: 1/58-56).

Far from any judgment regarding the political behavior of Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri during the constitutionalist movements, theoretically, he should be considered among the Shiite jurists who traditionally, in the field of Shiite political thought discourse, accepted the appointed guardianship of jurists in the Sharia (hasbiyyah) of affairs (hasbiyyah), which of course is considered a long-standing issue in Shiite jurisprudence in this sense, and also accepted the Muslim monarchy as competent and powerful in customary affairs, and thought in that discourse.

5. Newspapers and Islamist organizations during the constitutionalist movement

In 1325 AH / 1286 AH, 77 newspapers were published in the country, 48 in the capital, 8 in Isfahan, 7 in Rasht, and three in Hamedan and the cities of Mashhad, Shiraz, Yazd, Kermanshah, Urmia, and Anzali, each with one newspaper (Muhit Tabataba'i, 1375: 133). Since the parliament had allowed "journalists and spectators have the right to attend and listen in accordance with the internal regulations of the parliament, without having the right to speak... Therefore, as long as their contents do not fundamentally violate the fundamental principles of the state and the nation, all newspapers are authorized and free to publish useful and generally beneficial materials, as well as discussions..." (Zakir Hussein, 1991: 63).

One of the most important newspapers of this period that represented the Islamist movement was the newspaper *Nedaye Watan*, managed by Majd al-Islam Kermani. This newspaper had a moderate and moderate approach. Majd al-Islam believed that tyranny was against Islam and opposed the Quranic rulings, and that consultation and shura were in accordance with the "commandment" of Yazdan. He also called tyranny a destructive factor in religion and the state, and considered consultation to be the lifeblood of the country and the nation. (*Nedaye Watan Newspaper*, 1945: 2). In this newspaper, an attempt was made to present a definition of a constitutional government that was more in line with the law, so in the definition

of a constitutional government, a constitutional government is a legal government and the participation of the minds of the nation in creating laws to protect them through consultation and acting by the majority." He then continues that any nation that has freedom and protection of rights, in other words, has law, has a constitutional government. (Nedaye Watan Newspaper, 1945: 4). Therefore, in defining the constitutional government, this newspaper's main emphasis is on the law and it considers the law to be the same as freedom and protection of individual rights.

This is what can be seen in many other newspapers. Basically, the main concern of many journalists and constitutionalists is this issue, namely, acting on the basis of the law and freedom within the framework of the law, whether Islamic law or other legal and civil laws.

6. Compilation of the Constitutional Constitution

The Constitutional Constitution, which was ratified in Iran on January 8, 1285, consisted of 51 articles. The Constitutional Constitution, from Articles 1 to 14, deals with the formation of the Assembly, from Articles 15 to 31 with the duties of the Assembly, its limits and rights, and from Articles 32 to 38 with the submission of the materials to the National Consultative Assembly. Bills to the Assembly, from Articles 39 to 42, the title of the materials submitted by the Assembly, from Articles 43 to 47 with the conditions for the formation of the Senate, Articles 48 to 50 with the conditions for the formation and dissolution of the Assembly, and Article 51 with the duty of the monarchy, which considers it its duty to create the comfort and security of the nation. Simultaneously with the drafting of the Constitutional Amendment, the conflict between some Sharia-minded scholars led by Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri and the Constitutional-minded scholars front became more intense and obvious. In other words, despite the clerics' initial common position and cooperation in the need to limit the absolute despotic monarchy. Since the establishment of the constitutional system and the formation of the National Consultative Assembly, and especially at the time of drafting the constitutional amendment, there has been disagreement and separation among them. A group of constitutional scholars continued to support the constitutional system and the parliament due to the lack of inherent contradiction between the theoretical foundations and practical functioning of the constitutional system and the National Consultative Assembly and the theoretical foundations and provisions of Islamic Sharia law. However, another group, under the title of the clerical wing of the constitutionalist-legitimate faction led by Sheikh Fazlollah Nouri, opposed it while refusing to support constitutionalism. Sheikh Fazlollah Nouri reacted by believing that some of the principles of the constitutional amendment conflicted with Islamic laws and provisions, especially the principle of freedom of expression, the press, and religion, the principle of legal equality of all Iranians and different religions, and the principle of secularizing the country's judicial system and dealing with Sharia courts in Sharia and justice courts in secularism. He prepared a plan based on the need for first-class mujtahids to supervise the approvals of the parliament to ensure that those approvals were in accordance with Sharia laws. This was approved with a few changes as the second principle of the constitutional amendment. Not long after the approval of Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri's proposed plan, he and some other scholars once again held a social gathering under the pretext of opposing constitutionalism and the National Assembly, and in protest against constitutionalism, they staged a sit-in with their supporters at the shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim (AS).

The sit-in by Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri and his companions led to various reactions. Ayatollah Seyyed Kazem Yazdi, an Iranian religious authority residing in Najaf, and some

people and scholars in Tehran supported their positions, but the sit-ins published declarations explaining their positions and reasons for their opposition to constitutionalism and the National Assembly, and demanded that the Assembly be Islamic. They finally returned to Tehran after a while, but not long after their return, the discussions in the parliament about legal and judicial issues that placed special emphasis on reducing the power and judicial authority of the clergy forced Sheikh Fazlullah to continue opposing the current situation, but on the orders of King Mohammad Ali Shah, government forces attacked the Topkhalna Square gathering, and Sheikh Fazlullah and his companions went to the Marvi School and besieged it. The ruler of Tehran, Zafar al-Saltaneh, on the orders of the Shah, also suppressed the gathering of constitutionalists in the Marvi School and expelled them from the school. In any case, in response to such government actions, Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri, in his capacity as a mujtahid of religious laws, issued a fatwa on the sanctity of constitutionalism (Ajoudani, 2004: 85-80).

The constitution was entered into with the efforts of scholars and clerical authorities, but despite their efforts to achieve this goal during its implementation and after its ratification, the role of the clergy in the post-constitutional political arena gradually diminished, to the point that, apart from the monarchy and the absolute will of Reza Shah, nothing remained of the constitutional constitution. In the second term of the parliament, the clergy introduced people such as the Khorasani and Mazandarani clerics to supervise the implementation of the second principle of the constitutional amendment to the National Consultative Assembly, and finally, after electing the Taraz committee, the parliament invited the mujtahids to attend the parliament; but despite these efforts, each of the elected members made excuses under some pretext, and only two of them, namely the late Modarres and Imam Juma Khoei, accepted and participated in the parliament. After almost a year, the parliament ended. In the third term, both elected members were elected as representatives from Tehran and became members of the parliament, and there was no further news of the implementation of the Taraz principle (Imam Juma, Zadeh Shahram Nia, Nejatpour, 2012: 163).

Conclusion

During the constitutionalization of Iran, the cooperation between revolutionary forces with Islamic and Christian perspectives is one of the most important and least studied phenomena in the history of the country's intellectual and political developments. This cooperation was formed in a critical context of tyranny, inequality, and foreign influence, and its common goal was the transition from an absolute monarchy to the rule of law and national participation. Islamic forces, especially religious scholars and intellectuals, considered the House of Justice and the limitation of the Shah's power legitimate, citing the principles of Sharia; while intellectuals influenced by Christian thought and Western civilization had made civil liberties, modern education, and reform of the government structure the focus of their struggle. Although these two perspectives originated from different foundations, at a point in history they came together with a common goal and paved the way for a rare intellectual unity on the path to constitutionalism. The cooperation between these two currents in the first stage of the movement strengthened the popular legitimacy of the movement and the support of various social groups. The clergy, with their religious and popular status, ensured the religious legitimacy of the movement, and Western-oriented intellectuals, with their familiarity with Christian schools of thought and the experiences of European democracies, enriched its rational and modern dimension. However, differences in understanding concepts such as freedom, the rule of law, and the role of religion in politics gradually caused a gap between these two groups.

Some clergy, fearing the influence of Western culture, became suspicious of the intentions of the intellectuals, and a group of elites also considered religion to be an obstacle to social progress. As a result, the initial synergy gradually gave way to separation and competition. Nevertheless, the impact of this cooperation in engineering Iranian political thought is undeniable. From this interaction, a kind of middle discourse between tradition and modernity emerged that later influenced the reformist and justice-seeking movements of the twentieth century. The constitutional experience showed that unity of action between different worldviews, however temporary and fragile, can lay the foundations for social transformation. Ultimately, examining this issue indicates that Iran's political future lies not in the negation of one of these two strands, but rather in constructive dialogue and mutual understanding between indigenous Islamic values and human achievements.

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