

Historicizing Revolutions: Constitutional Revolutions in the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and Russia, 1905–1908¹

Nader Sohrabi
University of Chicago

The Young Turk Revolution of 1908, the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906, and the Russian Revolution of 1905 unfolded under the impact of the constitutional revolutionary paradigm. This article places these revolutions in a common historical context, arguing that their shared ideology and their method of capturing state power differentiate them from revolutions of later periods. After establishing that these revolutions belonged to the same class of events, this article also explores the differences between the successful Ottoman and Iranian revolutions and the failed Russian revolution. The conclusion is that the Ottoman and Iranian legal assemblies, which were buttressed by extraparliamentary and extralegal resources, were far more powerful and effective. Furthermore, the intrastate cleavages in the Ottoman Empire and Iran were essential for winning military support in the battle to restore the constitutional regimes in the aftermath of counterrevolutionary backlash.

INTRODUCTION

Revolutionary Paradigms, Stages, and Transitions

At the beginning of the 20th century, constitutionalism was the dominant revolutionary model. The actors in the Young Turk Revolution of 1908

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in the Ottoman Empire, the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906, and the Russian Revolution of 1905 justified their claim to power by advocating constitutional systems of rule. Surprisingly, around the same time, actors in other revolutionary upheavals around the globe such as in China (1911) and Mexico (1910) made similar demands. The differing social structures of Russia, Iran, the Ottoman Empire, China, and Mexico strongly suggest that the ideology of constitutionalism could not have emanated from their social structures. Rather, the actors demanded constitutional systems of rule because they operated under the constraints of the “world time” that brought forth constitutionalism—the legacy of the French Revolution of 1789—as the dominant “revolutionary paradigm.”²

In this article I argue that different paradigms, like Max Weber’s “switchmen,” set revolutions upon dissimilar trajectories (Weber 1946, p. 280). In each historical epoch, paradigms shape the conception of politics, orient the actors toward certain goals, and set limits upon the methods that may be utilized for realizing those goals. Thus, constitutional revolutions, influenced by the French paradigm, followed a trajectory quite different than the communist revolutions shaped by the Russian paradigm of 1917. By showing that communist and constitutional revolutions had entirely different dynamics and processes, the concept of revolutionary paradigm historicizes revolutions.

It is important here to clarify the relation between the French Revolution and the constitutional revolutionary paradigm and to define the latter against constitutionalism in general. The institutional history of constitutionalism is a complicated one, with origins long predating the French Revolution (see Downing 1988). Here I am not concerned with the institutional history of constitutionalism, nor am I particularly concerned with the history of the French Revolution. Instead, I am interested in constitutionalism as an ideological framework for revolutionary action. The French Revolution itself was ideologically informed by the history of British political institutions and the American Revolution, both of which were important for the formation of the French constitutional model. Yet rather than calling the paradigm British or American I call it French because it was the revolution in France that canonized the model, and the actors abroad referred more frequently to the revolution in France than to other upheavals with similar results. Furet expresses this idea concisely when he writes that until the French revolutionary model was cast aside by the 1917 Russian Revolution, France remained the “vanguard of history” (Furet 1981, p. 6).

² For arguments about “world time” see Fernand Braudel (1980).

For constitutional revolutionaries, assemblies and constitutions were models without history. The actors considered the French model a “blueprint” and did not conceive it to be a historical product of particular and unique circumstances. They did not approach French history as historians but as politicians, manipulating and molding the French Revolution to their own ends. Reinhard Bendix (1984, pp. 114–16) pointed to this idea when he wrote that the French Revolution is one of the best examples of a timeless event with “demonstration effect.” Bendix argued that, regardless of the prehistory of the French Revolution and the unique combination of factors in France that led to its outbreak, “once the French Revolution had occurred, other countries could not and did not recapitulate that prehistory; they reacted to the revolution itself instead” (p. 116).³ Similar to Furet, he held that after the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Russian model superseded the French one by becoming the new “reference society” (p. 116). Arjomand’s study of constitutionalism also points to the timelessness and autonomy of models and reaffirms this claim when he notes that “the institutional structures and normative patterns generated in the formative experience of one nation become blueprints autonomous of the particular circumstances of their birth, and acquire fixity and rigidity” (1992, p. 39; see also p. 73).

Constitutional and communist revolutions differ; constitutionalists did not demand a sudden and complete overthrow of the institutions of the old regime but instead called for the creation of an elective representative body through which they attempted to indirectly dominate the state. They desired to gradually reform the political structures of rule—the state and social institutions—while also changing the locus of sovereignty and state power. They attempted to create legal-rational administrations and to put in operation a written constitution that outlined new authority structures and a separation of judicial, executive, and legislative powers. One may, perhaps less satisfactorily, label these events as parliamentary revolutions. In short, the constitutional ideological structures, rather than advocating a sudden and total takeover of state institutions, defined the goal of the movement to be creation of a strong representative, legislative assembly that dominated the executive. It is this distinct organizational and incremental aspect of the constitutional revolutions that sets them apart from the initially more violent communist or socialist revolutions and gives them an altogether different dynamic.

Though some have acknowledged the significant differences and the historical supersession of the Russian with the French model, the ways that revolutionary models or paradigms organize conflicts have not been

³ On the effect of the French Revolution see also Arendt (1977, p. 55).

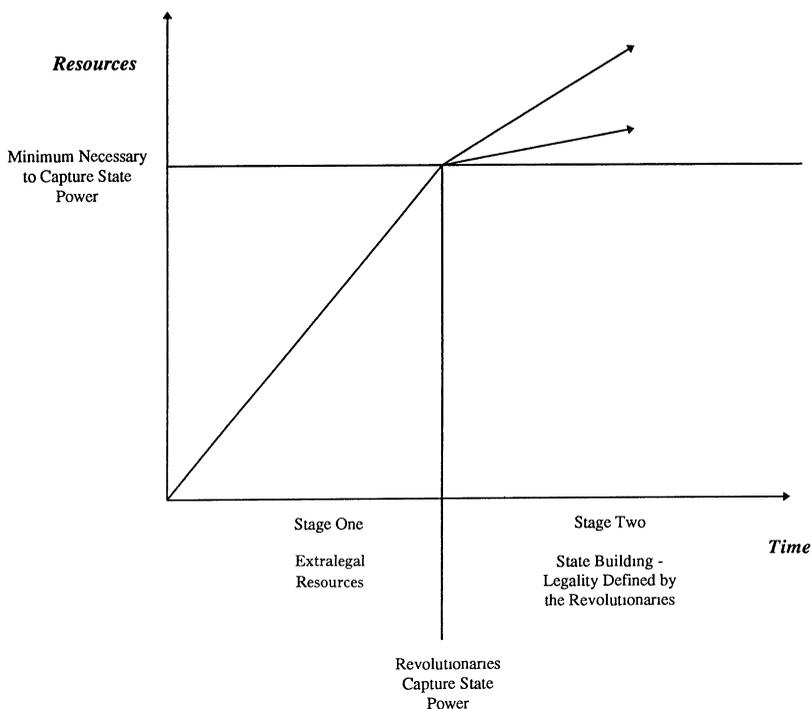


FIG. 1.—Communist/socialist revolutionary processes

demonstrated in an empirical and systematic manner. This study's empirical demonstration of this paradigm effect is aimed at filling the void. The ideal-type of a socialist or communist revolution is demonstrated in figure 1. Broadly speaking, this type of revolution is divided into two stages and one transition period. In the first stage, the contenders create power blocs to wage a fight for state capture by mobilizing extralegal resources. In the successful case, transition occurs when the revolutionaries muster enough resources to capture state power and dismantle the old regime, at which point the battle concludes and the revolutionaries begin to introduce radical reforms and impose their own definition of legality. Radical reforms are introduced only in the second stage, when the revolutionaries, at least formally, are in state command and the old regimes have been deposed. Having full control of the coercive state organs, and imposing their own definition of legality, the communist or socialist revolutionaries are much less vulnerable to a counterrevolutionary backlash.

In contrast, as figure 2 suggests, constitutional revolutions are divided into four distinct stages and three transition points. In the first period, the

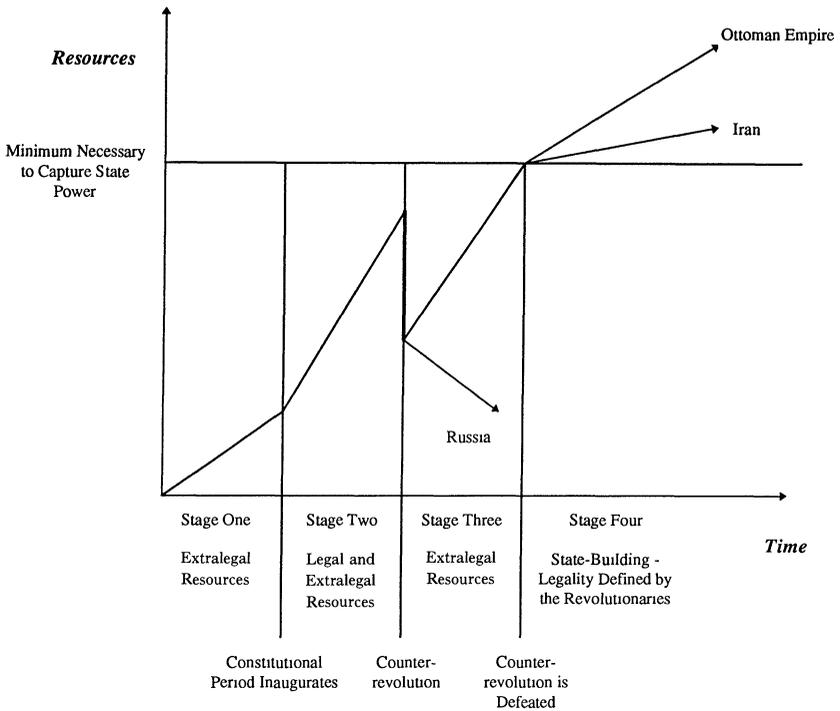


FIG. 2.—Constitutional revolutionary processes

constitutional revolutionaries create power blocs by mobilizing extralegal resources, but rather than aiming for complete overthrow of the state, they demand creation of legislative assemblies. Once the threatened old regimes agree to this demand, a period of legal activity ensues. What is distinct is that the compromise between the old regimes and the assemblies is reached long before the constitutionalists gather enough strength to take over the state. But, once the compromise is forged, the second stage provides ample opportunity for further consolidating more resources for the power blocs; not only does the cost of mobilizing previously extralegal resources decrease, but constitutionalists are also given a greater chance to increase their support from within the state ranks and to construct quasi-governmental institutions in support of legally sanctioned assemblies. The assemblies, once established, begin to implement or demand radical reforms that gravely disturb the old regimes and a wide range of social groups, all at a time when the constitutionalists lack total state control. The old regimes, which still hold the upper hand in state control, in cooperation with the adversely affected social groups, respond by un-

leasing a counterrevolution that forces the assemblies out of power and creates an atmosphere of illegality resembling the preconstitutional period.

The above contrasts demonstrate in broad terms the major differences of the constitutional and socialist revolutions. My aim in this article, however, is not only to establish that constitutional revolutions have similar processes distinct from socialist revolutions, but also to compare instances of two successful constitutional revolutions with a failed instance of constitutional revolution to causally account for the observed difference. Contrasting the two successful Ottoman and Iranian revolutions with the failed attempt in Russia, I conclude that, ironically, the degree of legislative success of the legal assemblies and their ability to implement their programs depended upon the extraparliamentary, and in many instances extralegal, support they received from within the state or from the quasi-governmental institutions created during the second stage. Furthermore, the Ottoman and Iranian constitutionalists recovered from the counterrevolutionary backlash because they enjoyed the support of quasi-governmental institutions, which were strengthened during the period of legal activity, and even more critically, because they enjoyed the support of a sector of the armed forces. With this assistance the constitutionalists advanced to the fourth stage by capturing state power, deposing monarchs, and restoring the constitutional regimes. The Russians who commanded neither of these resources were left with a constitution only in name and an assembly that, after various old regime-sponsored legal modifications, was transformed to an utterly powerless institution.

Ideologies, Revolutionary Processes, and Outcomes

Theories of revolution make a useful distinction between processes and long-range outcomes, yet these theories differ in the importance they attach to the impact of ideologies upon processes or outcomes. Some argue against the impact of ideologies. For example, insisting on a "structuralist" approach, Skocpol dismisses theories that give critical importance to ideologies by pointing to an exaggerated emphasis on agency and voluntarism (see Skocpol 1979, pp. 14–18, 164–71; 1976, pp. 209–10). Others such as Sewell emphasize the impact of ideologies on both outcomes and processes. For Sewell, fundamental divergences in the outcomes of "bourgeois" and "socialist" revolutions are explained by differences in the actors' ideologies (Sewell 1985, p. 59; for a rejoinder, see Skocpol [1985]). In agreement with Sewell, and with an added emphasis on ideological transformation throughout the revolutionary process, Goldstone emphasizes the effect of ideologies on postrevolutionary recon-

struction (Goldstone 1991*a*, 1991*b*). The debate on processes has for the most part been concerned with ideologies' causal impact on the downfall of old regimes. Sewell (1985), for example, argues that the ideological contradictions under the old regime in France contributed immensely to its downfall. Similarly, Kimmel (1990, pp. 185–87) is concerned with how ideologies have a direct causal impact on the downfall of old regimes.

In this article, I am not concerned with long-range outcomes but with the impact of ideologies upon processes. Like Sewell, I side against those theories that discount the impact of ideologies, but my approach differs from Sewell's in that I do not discuss the causal impact of ideologies upon the collapse of old regimes. Instead, I am concerned with how ideologies pattern the stages that revolutions pass through from their inception to the final capture of state power by contenders. I argue that ideologies have a definite and visible impact on processes, and I maintain that if revolutionary actors operate under the influence of the same revolutionary paradigm, processes become divided into stages that are analogous and also quite distinct from the stages under other, alternate revolutionary paradigms. Investigation of causality in the comparative study of revolutions may begin only after various stages of revolutions have been delineated, stages that are largely shaped by revolutionary ideologies.

Although Skocpol's "nonvoluntarist" account is also sensitive to the concept of "world time" and demonstration effect, her empirical discussion reduces their significance to institutional borrowing, such as the adoption of Leninist party structure during the Chinese revolution (Skocpol 1979, pp. 23–24). In contrast, the concept of revolutionary paradigm not only highlights the importance of institutional borrowing from one revolution to another but has a significance that goes far beyond mere institutional borrowing.⁴ It shows that revolutions that operate under different paradigms are dissimilar events.

Methodology

Two instances of success and one instance of failure make Mill's method of agreement and indirect method of difference an appropriate methodology for this discussion (see Skocpol and Somers 1980; Ragin 1987, pp. 34–52). Yet, as Ragin has argued, within the framework of Mill's indirect method of difference, it is logically very difficult to define proper negative instances of phenomena such as social revolutions (Ragin 1987, pp. 41–42). For a meaningful comparison, what one should be able to demonstrate here, therefore, is that the events in the Ottoman Empire, Iran,

⁴ For arguments that give greater weight to revolutionary models, in addition to the above, see Sewell (in press) and Hermasi (1976).

and Russia constituted similar instances of constitutional revolutions. I demonstrate this by emphasizing their largely similar initial processes and the similar dynamics of unfolding. Once it is demonstrated that they all shared similar stages, but that the Russian revolutionaries failed to advance to the final stage and capture state power, then we can claim, with comfort, that Russia constituted a negative instance of constitutional revolution. The challenge is therefore twofold: to argue that all three revolutions were similar enough to be considered one class of phenomenon, namely constitutional revolutions, and then to show that Russia represents the failed instance while Iran and the Ottoman Empire exemplify the successful cases. This strategy allows comparison in order to causally account for similarities and differences.

To demonstrate their similarities, I adopt a formal narrative approach to argue that in all three events the revolutionary dynamics were analogous: they all passed through parallel stages, they experienced comparable turning points, and the causal forces propelling the transition from one stage to another were largely similar (for more on the narrative approach, see Sewell [in press] and Abbott [1983, 1990, 1991]). Emphasis on the processes, stages, and narratives in the study of revolutions has been traditionally associated with the natural historians (see Edwards [1927] 1970; Brinton [1938] 1952; Pettee 1938). Despite their sophisticated methodological assumptions (see Abbott 1983, 1992), these "stage" theories fail to provide analytical reasoning as to why revolutions are divided into various stages, what marks the boundaries of various stages, and more important, why and how transition from one stage to the next takes place. Instead, they confine themselves to a descriptive analysis of each stage (for a review, see Goldstone [1982, pp. 189–92]). In contrast to the natural historians, I am centrally concerned with the logic behind the division into various stages, the boundaries that mark the stages, and the comparative analysis of causal forces that propel the transition from one stage to another. Thus, while my approach stresses narrative, it is distinct in its explicit causal-analytic emphasis.

In the following, I present a selective historical narrative account of the revolutionary politics under stages 1, 2, and 3. But before doing so, I highlight the revolutionary context by describing the ambitious prerevolutionary undertakings of (autonomous) states within the military, administrative, and social structures.

PREREVOLUTIONARY REFORMS OF THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

The manner in which prerevolutionary reforms in the 18th and 19th centuries affected state and social structures helps explain why large

sectors of the Ottoman army and bureaucracy, and a sector of the Iranian army, sided with the opposition against the old regimes. It also sheds light on why the Russian bureaucracy and army remained loyal to the Tsar. Here I argue that preexisting structural cleavages within the military and state institutions were good indicators of whether their members sided with the opposition.

In this analysis, the prerevolutionary state reforms are considered to be a failure in Iran, only a partial success in the Ottoman Empire, and a complete success in Russia. It is interesting that armies were the locus of the first waves of modernization in all three societies. Defeat in war at the hands of superior armies was a potent impetus for the reformers to modernize their armed forces and, gradually, their civil bureaucracies. It should also be noted that the degree of the general success of prerevolutionary modernizing reforms did not have a simple linear impact on the vulnerability of these societies to revolution. In other words, more success at reforms did not simply translate into less vulnerability to revolution. Furthermore, to assess the impact of prerevolutionary reforms on revolution their effect on state and social structures must be evaluated individually.

By the time of the state financial crisis and foreign political pressures of the early 20th century, the Ottoman reformers had managed to transform the civil and military administrations, but only partially. The era of modern reforms began after the Ottoman defeat in the Russian War of 1787–92 and continued until 1908. The reforms of the early 19th century, particularly those under Mahmud II (1808–39), paved the way for the creation of a weak civil society. By first suppressing the Janissaries and later their close allies, the popular *Bektashi* religious order, Mahmud II initiated a process of weakening various popular institutions with ties to guilds, artisans, and other social sectors, a process that continued to the end of the reform era. Mahmud II also managed to quash the provincial notables and, with them, the provincial autonomy of almost all regions with the exception of Egypt. Weakened networks of social actors and the destruction of some of their key institutions left the Ottoman civil society vulnerable to state encroachment and made the state much less susceptible to a popular mass uprising from below (see Lewis 1961, pp. 78–83; Shaw and Shaw 1977, pp. 19–24, 41–45; Brown [1867] 1927, pp. 163–64; Birge [1937] 1965, pp. 16, 77; Heyd 1961, pp. 64–69; Kissling 1954).

Most significantly, the later reforms of 1839–1908 managed to create major modernized sectors within the Ottoman military and bureaucracy, sectors that began to operate on the basis of legal/rational rules of conduct. Yet, at the beginning of the 20th century, large areas of the patrimonial structure remained intact and the Ottoman state functioned under

two differing administrative regulations and rules of promotion.⁵ The severe structural division within the Ottoman army and bureaucracy nurtured strong grievances among the rationalized sectors of these institutions, thus prompting them to take revolutionary action against members of the traditional/patrimonial bureaucracy who were deemed to have blocked the mobility of the younger, military and civil bureaucrats with modern educations. The formation of a “critical mass” of civil and military officers who desired a rational administration, together with the presence of a “reference group” of patrimonial officials who operated alongside these officials, created strong grievance-generating mechanisms within the Ottoman administration, turning modernized sectors into members of opposition. With the financial and political weakening of the state in the early 20th century, these sectors became revolutionary.

In Russia, on the other hand, similar structural divisions did not exist within the army or the bureaucracy. The reforms that Peter the Great (1682–1725) had initiated in the aftermath of Russia’s defeat by Sweden were succeeded by a new series of reforms under Alexander II following the Crimean War. The most significant of Peter the Great’s reforms was the introduction of tables of ranks, which despite its slow beginning, gradually affected the entire administration. At the beginning of the 20th century, when Russia entered a period of political instability marked by state financial crisis and foreign threat, the reforms had managed to turn the state administration into a uniform and modern institution. Although the autocracy was anachronistic by Western European standards of the time, roughly similar legal rational rules prevalent in other European administrations predominated in the Russian bureaucracy and the army. At the end of the 18th century, the importance of family connections, training on the job, and mixed military and civilian careers had given way to objective criteria such as formal education.⁶ Thus, unlike the Ottoman military and civil bureaucracy, the corresponding institutions in Russia were not riddled with structural divisions between modernized and patrimonial officials who operated on the basis of conflicting rules of conduct.⁷

The reforms in Iran, like those in the Ottoman Empire and Russia, had their roots in martial defeat and first concerned the military. More-

⁵ For history of administrative reforms within the Ottoman state see Findley (1980, 1989), Lewis (1961), Shaw and Shaw (1977), Berkes (1964), and Davison (1963).

⁶ For an extended treatment of the Russian bureaucracy and its rules of conduct see Pintner and Rowney (1980), Fainsod (1963), Yaney (1973), and Raeff (1984).

⁷ Even the most skeptical observers of Russian administration do not attribute the divisions within the autocratic, and what is portrayed as a nonrational bureaucracy, to the conflict between “modernized” and “traditional” bureaucrats (see Verner 1990, pp. 44–69, 167–74).

over, the reforms in Iran were initiated under the direct influence of reforms in Russia and especially the Ottoman Empire, but even compared to the latter they were far less successful. Two attempts to organize a modern standing army after two Russian defeats in 1813 and 1827 bore only limited success and were disbanded shortly after. The administrative reforms did not fare any better. Although European forms of administration were introduced, they failed to fundamentally transform the state's decentralized structure or to change the essence of the central state's traditional structure into a modern state with distinct ministries and a well-defined division of duties. Thus unlike the Ottoman bureaucracy, the Iranian bureaucracy was not rife with divisions of rational and patrimonial offices but remained largely a uniformly patrimonial entity (Arjomand 1988, pp. 24–26). As a result, in contrast to the Ottoman state, where the modernized staff constituted a weighty discontented force, the few modernized officials that found their way into the state in Iran did not constitute a critical mass with similar grievances against the patrimonial officials. The lack of clear and fundamental divisions within the state meant the absence of grievances on the part of large numbers of officials within it; this in turn translated to the loyalty of officeholders to the monarchy at the time of serious political crisis. Thus, ironically, the undivided nature of the Iranian patrimonial bureaucracy made it the “functional equivalent” of the rational, but similarly undivided, Russian bureaucracy.

On the other hand, if the failure of reforms left the administrative structure at the center intact, the same failure left the Iranian army a structurally divided entity. The reforms failed to destroy the tribal nomadic contingents and replace them with a strong standing army at the center, a situation that remained true even under the best of reformers in the 1870s.⁸ Between 1880 and 1907, other than drastic deterioration of its material and training conditions, the structural characteristics of the army did not undergo any major transformation and it continued to be composed of “(i) the regular infantry; (ii) the tribal levies, chiefly mounted; and (iii) the artillery, or rather men enlisted as gunners.” The only major change was the addition of the Russian-trained and controlled Cossack Brigade that, although better organized, trained, and equipped than the rest of the Persian army, was a small group (1,500 in 1899) suitable only for guarding and policing Tehran (Ra'iss Tousi 1988,

⁸ As Bakhsh (1978, pp. 98–100, quote at p. 100) has noted, “The army continued to be composed, as it had traditionally been under the Qajars, of a permanent royal guard, an irregular cavalry based on tribal levies, an irregular infantry militia raised and supported locally by each district and a semi-regular army of infantry, cavalry and artillery which constituted the bulk of the defense forces.”

p. 209). Thus, the loose alliance of small divisions of the standing army in the capital and provinces with the semiautonomous tribal nomadic contingents in the periphery remained a feature of the Iranian army that lasted into the revolutionary era of the early 20th century. Such loose alliances, at any point and for a variety of reasons, could be severed and overturned. This was especially true during the Qajar period, as the state attempted to break the military power of tribal groups and replace them with a standing army (Arjomand 1988, p. 23).⁹ The Qajar reformers also left the institutions of civil society, most significantly that of religion, intact. This gave the social actors in Iran a powerful channel of protest, a significant factor that was absent in the Ottoman Empire, for the reformers there had succeeded in destroying vital institutions within civil society.¹⁰

It is important to describe in broad terms the history of reforms prior to the revolutions; it highlights the structural cleavages within the administrative and military institutions, divisions that became salient during the revolution. I now turn to an analytical history of various stages of these revolutions. Contrary to expectation, I will not begin this analysis with the discussion of the uprisings that forced the old regimes to make concessions. These uprisings involved many actors with disparate grievances and interests. Recounting them in detail, though important for some purposes, diverts from the essential focus of this article. Instead, I concentrate on the transition point between stages 1 and 2 to answer the following: First, why did actors with diverging interests agree to the same principle of constitutionalism and, second, why did the old regimes enter a compromise at such an early time, long before confronting the threat of a total takeover of their administrations? The answer, I suggest in the following, lies in the ambiguities of the concept of constitutionalism.

STAGES 1–2: IDEOLOGICAL AMBIGUITY INTENDED AND UNINTENDED

Constitutional ideologies had ambiguous and unambiguous features that were responsible for permitting the transition from stage 1 to stage 2 and

⁹ Note that Arjomand and Ra'iss Tousi present widely varying pictures of the military power of the tribes at this period. Ra'iss Tousi holds that between 1880 and 1907 the tribes were very well equipped and owned over twice as many arms as the Persian infantry, which "clearly reveals the superiority of tribes over the infantry" (1988, p. 215). Arjomand, on the other hand, holds that the tribal power was effectively broken in this period, even though it was not replaced with a standing army at the center.

¹⁰ For reforms in Iran see Bakhsh (1978, 1983), Arjomand (1988), Adamiyat (1969, 1972), Nashat (1982), and Floor (1983).

opening up the path of action that gave constitutional revolutions their characteristic trajectory. What was clearly unambiguous about the constitutionalists' goal was that, unlike socialist or communist revolutionaries of later eras, they did not strive for a sudden takeover and complete overthrow of the traditional structures of rule. Instead, they demanded the establishment of assemblies with power over the executive branch, the transference of the locus of sovereignty, the reform of the state structures, and the implementation of radical political and social programs. These measures were sweeping and drastic and were resisted by the old regimes. Yet, once confronted with serious uprisings demanding constitutional systems of rule, the old regimes did agree to them, and did so surprisingly early.

The old regimes' strategy, however, was to agree to a set of ambiguous principles that promised the establishment of institutions resembling, but not entirely equivalent to, parliamentary systems. By entering into a compromise over ambiguous principles, the old regimes hoped to end the various forms of protest, such as the military uprising in the Ottoman Empire, the large-scale and pervasive sanctuaries in Iran, and the massive waves of strikes in Russia. The promise to allow some form of an assembly allowed them to buy more time at a critical juncture and to abate the tide of revolution. In fact these compromises accomplished both goals, but old regimes were then forced to spend great effort during the second revolutionary period to regain what they had lost as a result of their ambiguous promises. On the other hand, during stage 2 the opposition attempted to impose its own definition on the terms of the compromise and to offer its own version of the agreement.

Such ambiguity is evinced in the issued decrees that supposedly commenced the constitutional systems of rule. For example, in the Ottoman Empire, in reaction to the soldiers' uprising in the Western provinces, the sultan's decree issued on July 23, 1908, promised the establishment of the Chamber of Deputies in accordance with the constitution of 1876.¹¹ Yet the decree left many issues unresolved as the constitution of 1876 (as will become clear below) had left many issues with regard to the power of the assembly ambiguous. Furthermore, the revolutionaries were not provided with any convincing guarantees that the constitution would be put into effect. The Ottoman state, when confronted with a constitutional movement in 1876, had agreed to a compromise by granting a constitution and a chamber of deputies. However, after the accession of Sultan Abdülhamid II and the renewed restoration of imperial authority in the

¹¹ *Düstur*2, I, July 23, 1908 (24 Cemaziyelahir 1326), pp. 1–2.

same year, the new sultan reneged on the latter promise (Mardin 1962, pp. 56–78). In addition, despite violating the central tenet of constitutionalism, the sultan never annulled the constitution, consistently conveying that the Ottoman state was indeed a constitutional state (beginning in 1877, *Salname*, the official yearbook of the state, had unflinchingly published the text of the 1876 constitution). Without doubt, by agreeing to an early compromise in the summer of 1908, the Ottoman sultan was intending to imitate the delaying tactics used in 1876.

In Iran, the shah's decree that came to be interpreted as the order for the commencement of the constitutional system of rule was perhaps the most ambiguous document of its kind. The wording of the decree dated August 5, 1906, likened the National Consultative Assembly to an advisory panel of reform rather than a legislative assembly. Furthermore, it failed to mention the word "constitution."¹²

Similarly in Russia, the decree issued by the Tsar Nicholas II on October 17, 1905, known as the October Manifesto, intentionally avoided using the word "constitution" (Ascher 1988, pp. 228–29, 231; Healy 1976, pp. 108, 275–76). While not as ambiguous as the shah's decree, it was notoriously vague on the governing powers of the assembly, its legislative duties, and its representative character. Even though the announcement of the October Manifesto was followed by large-scale outpourings celebrating the grant of a constitutional system of rule, as it was done in the Ottoman Empire and in Iran, many leaders of the Russian opposition felt that the manifesto left many critical issues unreasonably ambiguous; it had taken away with one hand what it had given with the other. The Fundamental Laws, issued on April 23, 1906, weary of the European word "constitution," also rejected this vocabulary and, like the manifesto, remained vague on many critical issues (Ascher 1988, pp. 231–32, 242; 1992, pp. 12, 16, 60–61, 63–71, 190–91; Healy 1976, pp. 15–22, 58–62, 81–82, 106, 108, 264–65; Harcave 1964, pp. 130, 161–62, 195–96, 199–202; Hosking 1973, pp. 10–13, 54–55.)

Furthermore, in all instances, the old regimes made it known that the constitutional systems were granted out of the free will of the monarch.¹³ This line of argument, of course, had ominous implications for the oppo-

¹² The decree was dated August 5, 1906 (14 Jumada II 1324) to make it correspond to the shah's birthday. It was in fact issued four days later (Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, 1:561–64).

¹³ For the Ottoman Empire see *Fikir Hareketleri*, no. 100, September 21, 1935, p. 343; *İkdam*, no. 5320, March 16, 1909 (23 Safer 1327), p. 1; Ahmad (1969, p. 13). For Iran see Nazim al-Islam Kirmani (1983, 1:561–64, 628–30); *Majlis* 1 September 27, 1906 (8 Sha'ban 1324), p. 8. For Russia see Ascher (1992, pp. 12, 60–61).

sition: if the constitutions were granted out of the monarchs' pure benevolence, they may just as easily be removed.

In part the old regimes were able to issue ambiguous decrees because members of the opposition had themselves built coalitions based on ambiguous principles. All were united on the basis of their opposition to the old regimes, but their interpretation of the political system they desired and their degree of antagonism toward the institutions of the old regime varied widely. Thus, the "particular" grievances of a diverse array of actors toward the old regime, actors who had varying and often conflicting interests, were expressed in terms of the "general" demand for constitutional systems. The ambiguities that remained within such a general demand were essential for building broad-based coalitions among groups with incompatible interests and varied interpretations of the new political system.¹⁴ The range of revolutionary actors in Iran was diverse: the guilds and tradesmen, merchants, clergy, landlords, some sectors of the peasantry, and a small section of the statesmen of the old regime. In the Ottoman Empire oppositionists were professionals, university students, various nationalist minority groups, some sectors of the peasantry, and, most significantly, large sectors of the modernized military and civil bureaucrats. In Russia, the opposition was composed of the working class, peasants, professionals, university students, and the landowning gentry.¹⁵

While in all settings constitutionalism was introduced and understood by many actors as a European political system and ideology, it was also "translated" and adapted to existing local traditions or presented as the solution to many particular problems in each setting. In the Ottoman Empire and in Iran, for example, where economic, social, and institutional "backwardness" were major concerns, the ideology of constitutionalism was introduced with strong overtones of progress that among other things meant economic advancement, a modern state, and a legal-rational order. Furthermore, as an example of adaptation of constitutionalism to local traditions, in Iran the guild members and the clergy equated the establishment of the assembly with the rejuvenation of the "House of Justice."¹⁶ In the Ottoman Empire, where ethnic strife and nationalist movements were some of the most pressing issues, constitutionalism was

¹⁴ Gene Burns (1991) has advanced a similar argument for the 1979 revolution in Iran. For a similar argument about progression of ideologies from "particular" to "general" prior to revolutionary outbreaks see Goldstone (1982, p. 203).

¹⁵ The broad-based coalitions and contradictory interests of actors in 1905 Russia have been acknowledged by many scholars (see, e.g., Ascher 1988, p. 244; Harcave 1964, p. 12; Hosking 1973, p. 3; Verner 1990, p. 3).

¹⁶ Nazim al-Islam Kirmani (1983, 1:358–66); Adamiyat (1976).

presented as an ideological companion to, or even a substitute for, the failing Ottomanism—an ideology that professed peace and harmony among the subject populations of the empire.¹⁷ In Iran and the Ottoman Empire as in Russia, the peasants interpreted “liberty,” a central slogan of the constitutional movement, to mean freedom from many traditional obligations, which in some cases even meant paying taxes (Ascher 1988, p. 233).

Thus, calls for constitutional systems of rule, even when the actors insisted on constitutional monarchies, left the field open to more radical suggestions. By granting assemblies, the monarchs opened themselves to the danger that the assemblies might be turned into fully legislative and representative bodies, and that such powers could then be used to depose the reigning monarch or, worse yet, to abolish the monarchical systems in general. On the other hand, the ambiguous compromise left the old regimes sufficient room to deny the new assemblies substantive powers. After the compromise, the fight opened itself to extreme possibilities, and debates raged around whether the assemblies should be confined to purely consultative bodies or full-fledged parliaments. Stage 2 of the revolution was devoted to working out these ambiguities. Revolutions were formally announced after relatively bloodless confrontations, but the real battle was yet to be fought—a struggle that was to reach its fiercest moments in the second and third revolutionary stages.

THE LEGAL PHASE: RISE IN RESOURCES AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ASSEMBLIES

The existence of a legal period of revolutionary activity distinguishes the constitutional from the socialist (or communist) revolutionary processes. For Charles Tilly, the “revolutionary situation” begins with the emergence of two or more centers of power (multiple sovereignty) and it ends when only one center of power gains control over the government (Tilly 1978, pp. 191–208). Tilly, however, fails to make a qualitative distinction between power blocs during constitutional and socialist revolutions. The power blocs that arose during constitutional revolutions became legally recognized by the old regimes and were regarded as legitimate not only by a significant portion of the population (Tilly 1978, pp. 191, 200) but by the old regimes as well (see fig. 2 above). Power blocs that emerged

¹⁷ See the resolution of the Second Young Turk Congress in Kuran (1945, pp. 238–43, esp. 239–240). For similar views in one of the earliest resolutions and that of the First Young Turk Congress see Tunaya (1952, pp. 117–18, 123–27). See also *Şura-yi Ümmet*, no. 18, December 16, 1902 (15 Ramazan 1320), p. 4.

during socialist or communist revolutions certainly did not enjoy legal status during revolutionary situations.

With such compromise, the revolution entered its second legal phase, during which assemblies were established. The power of legal assemblies in their infancy, ironically, rested upon the extraparliamentary resources they could muster, which in many cases included extralegal resources as well. After the compromise, the old regimes were not simply willing to abide by the assemblies' legal orders; their respect for these institutions rested instead upon their balance of power with the assemblies. The state power, allowing for variations in each case, was to a large degree still in the hands of the incumbent governments, and they each obeyed the assemblies' orders only when they felt sufficiently threatened.

Entering the second stage affected the challengers' resources in a strikingly positive way. In this stage, many previously illegal activities became sanctioned by law, and the constitutionalists used this period to augment the extraparliamentary resources of the assemblies. Yet, because of the particular structural characteristics of Russia, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire, not all revolutionaries benefited equally from the opportunities of stage 2. In one extreme stood the Young Turks, revolutionaries who bolstered their power to the greatest extent when they used their newly won rights to establish a firmer foothold within the state and to gain a significant share of state power. In the other extreme stood the Russian revolutionaries, whose institution-building activities at this stage, though impressive, were far from sufficient to seriously challenge the state. The Iranians could not penetrate the state ranks, yet they had great success in building quasi-governmental institutions and organizing an extensive militia.

In the Ottoman Empire, because of internal state support for the Young Turks, the Chamber of Deputies' threat was real enough and was obeyed to a greater extent than those of the Iranian National Assembly or the Russian Duma. In Iran, even though internal state support for the constitutionalists was meager, the quasi-governmental forces were intimidating enough for the weak government to take the assembly seriously, to act upon some of its demands, and to negotiate with it on various issues. In contrast to both, the Russian Duma was established after the government imposed greater restrictions on the opposition's legal activities and crushed the quasi-governmental forces that supported the Duma. As will be discussed below, these differences proved to be major reasons for the comparative weakness of the Russian Duma. In Russia, because the Duma enjoyed little extralegal support, the government could afford to ignore its demands almost entirely and tamper with its institutional structure to reduce its legal power.

The Powerful Ottoman Chamber

After the Ottoman sultan granted a constitutional system of rule on July 23, 1908, the center of subversive activities shifted from the western provinces and European capitals to Istanbul. The opposition no longer had to fight the government clandestinely but could do so openly and legally using their newly won rights. This task was facilitated by the unleashed opposition press that, already in place in foreign capitals, now began to legally operate in Istanbul.

The powerful Ottoman Chamber of Deputies was also established in this period. To understand the chamber's sources of strength, we have to look at the composition of the Young Turk opposition. The Young Turks were composed of a variety of groups opposed to the sultan, the most powerful of which operated under the Committee of Union and Progress (hereafter CUP). The constitutionalist CUP was composed predominantly of large numbers of young military officers and civil administrative employees with modern education who opposed the traditional/patrimonial army and bureaucratic staff. The Ottoman Chamber of Deputies drew the majority of its members from the CUP, and this situation allowed the chamber to tap into the strength of an organization that had a firm foothold within the state. The chamber increased this support through a legal campaign of administrative reorganization and purges within the army and the civil administration, a campaign that proportionally increased and advanced the CUP ranks within these institutions, giving them the upper hand. A further addition to the chamber's strength was when the CUP, using the reduced mobilization cost of stage 2, infiltrated more deeply in the provincial administration and expanded its semiclandestine clubs.

Yet, even before the opening of the Chamber of Deputies, the CUP proved its presence within the state and its influence upon the old regime in many different ways. On August 6, 1908, two weeks after the proclamation of the constitutional system, the CUP forced the resignation of the "old style" grand vizier, Said Pasha, and pressured the government to appoint Kamil Pasha, who was thought to be in conflict with the palace and in agreement with the CUP's political programs.¹⁸ When the CUP found itself in strong disagreement with Kamil Pasha as

¹⁸ For disagreements with Said Pasha's government see *Fikir Hareketleri*, no. 76, April 4, 1935, "Meşrutiyet Hatıraları," pp. 374–75 (since all articles bear the same title, future references will be to the publication only); *Tanin*, no. 3, August 4, 1908 (6 Recep 1326) pp. 1–2; no. 5, August 6, 1908 (8 Recep 1326), p. 3, and pp. 3–4. These latter two *Tanin* articles also contain initial statements of support for Kamil Pasha (esp. p. 3). See also *Tanin*, no. 15, August 16, 1908 (18 Recep 1326), p. 1. For statements of support that appeared in *Sabah*, see Ahmad (1969, p. 21).

well,¹⁹ by means of its palace associates, the CUP applied direct pressure on the sultan to dismiss him. The sultan succumbed to the pressure. The only matter that kept Kamil Pasha, the influential Ottoman grand vizier, from being dismissed immediately was that the CUP awaited the opening of the Chamber of Deputies to give an appearance of legality to its illicit activities. After the opening of the chamber on December 17, 1908, the grand vizier's minor request to postpone for four days a response to the chambers' interpellation served as a pretext to dismiss him by a broad voting margin on February 13, 1909. This action was a clear show of force, for the CUP had proved its influence even without the assistance of the chamber.²⁰ Another show of strength came in the early days of the constitutional government when the CUP ordered the anchoring of a navy ship in front of the palace with its guns trained on the sultan's residence; no one had the authority to order the ship's removal.²¹

The Chamber of Deputies began its operations on December 17, 1908, and one of the earliest pieces of legislation it approved was the law on purges. The legal, CUP-directed purging campaigns within civil officialdom and the army enabled the CUP to penetrate deeper into the state and to create an even more secure foothold. After purging the officials and army officers who had risen through ranks by means of connection to the patrimonial household of the sultan or a grandee, the CUP opened room for its supporters within the state and the army. By advancing officials and officers with modern training, the CUP further consolidated its position within the state.

After the granting of the constitution, the CUP expanded its prerevolutionary network to establish an organizational structure that resembled and competed with that of the state. Taking advantage of its legal status, the CUP organized more extensively around the empire and expanded the semiclandestine activities of its clubs and party branches and took a more active role in provincial administration. The CUP operated not

¹⁹ For the CUP's later disenchanted view of Kamil Pasha see *Tanin*, no. 128, December 8, 1908 (14 Zilkade 1326), pp. 1–2; no. 129, December 9, 1908 (15 Zilkade 1326), pp. 1–2; no. 145, December 25, 1908 (1 Zilhicce 1326), p. 1; no. 157, January 8, 1909 (15 Zilhicce 1326), p. 1; no. 160, January 11, 1909 (18 Zilhicce 1326), p. 1; no. 192, February 11, 1909 (20 Muharrem 1327), p. 1; no. 193, February 12, 1909 (21 Muharrem 1327), p. 1.

²⁰ *Tanin*, no. 160, p. 1. For statements about the pressure on the sultan see *Fikir Hareketleri*, no. 100, p. 343 (see n. 13 above). For affirmation of visits by the CUP to the sultan, see also Abbott (1909, p. 135).

²¹ The anchoring of a warship in front of Yıldız Palace is a topic that appears recurrently in reports of early stages of the revolution. For one of a variety of descriptions see Buxton (1909, p. 128).

only in larger cities, but in the lower administrative levels (*nahiye*) as well, assuming many state functions, such as levying taxes and administering the affairs of civilians. Of course, at the time the CUP denied all such charges, but foreign eyewitnesses and the Liberals, the CUP's most ardent critics and one-time allies, presented a rather detailed picture of the CUP presence within the state and their quasi-governmental organization and activities. In a famous and oft-repeated criticism of the Liberals, the CUP had become a "government inside the government."²² In a few rare instances during the early days, even the CUP's main revolutionary organ alluded to the committee's strong presence within the administration, but only to complain that their control of the state institutions was not complete.²³ The later Young Turk accounts were more forthcoming in confirming the Liberals' claims, as they openly confess to the CUP's extensive presence within the state and to their party's organizing activities in the remotest locations from the earliest days.²⁴

Having a firm footing within the administration and the army, the CUP did not feel the need to establish a militia. The Chamber of Deputies, dominated overwhelmingly by CUP members,²⁵ could rely on the CUP's clout to intimidate the government and to pressure it to carry out the proposed reforms. As we will see, however, the CUP's control over the state organs was still far from complete.

The National Assembly in Iran

In contrast to the Ottoman constitutionalists, who initially had a strong presence within the state and who used the legal period following stage 2 to further consolidate their position, the Iranians initially lacked any substantial support from within the state and could not make much headway into the state during the period of legal activity. Instead, Iranian society, in comparison to the Ottoman Empire, was characterized by a stronger civil sphere and a far less powerful state. Here, the revolutionaries' most glaring area of success was with the committees, the quasi-governmental institutions they organized in competition with the state.

²² *İkdam*, no. 5314, March 12, 1909 (19 Safer 1327), p. 1; no. 5324, March 22, 1909 (29 Safer 1327), p. 1; no. 5326, March 24, 1909 (2 Rebiyülevvel 1327), p. 1. See also C. R. Buxton (1909, p. 20) and N. Buxton (1909, pp. 23–24).

²³ *Tanin*, no. 108, November 19, 1908 (24 Şevval 1326), p. 1.

²⁴ *Tanin*, March 3, 1912 (14 Rebiyülevvel 1330), p. 1; *Fikir Hareketleri*, no. 77, April 11, 1935, pp. 389–91, esp. p. 390; no. 99, September 14, 1935, pp. 325–27, esp. p. 326.

²⁵ On the CUP's influence over the chamber and its success at blocking the effort to form opposition parties inside the parliament see *BDFA* (1909, p. 105; 1910, pp. 109–14).

In the absence of backing inside the state, these institutions became the most important extraparliamentary source of support for the Iranian National Assembly.

With the beginning of legal activity in stage 2, the Iranian revolutionaries could now form open political associations and publish previously prohibited political newspapers and journals. If Cairo, Istanbul, London, and Calcutta were hotbeds of reformist journalistic activity in the preconstitutional era, now Tehran, the seat of the central government, was the center of new radical newspapers. This period also witnessed the formation of two kinds of revolutionary organizations: official committees and popular committees.²⁶

The official committees, in theory if not in practice, were under the command of the National Assembly. To compensate for its lack of support inside the state, the assembly approved ambitious legislation that conferred many critical rights and duties to the official committees on May/June 1907 (Rabi' II 1325). This law allowed the assembly to use the official committees for bolstering its power over the local rulers, the provincial administrative offices, and the governors. For example, the official committees were bestowed with the legal authority to supervise the government's administrative offices, monitor law enforcement, issue warnings, propose reforms for the security and progress of the provinces, investigate complaints concerning the governors and subprovincial heads, inspect the collection of taxes and settle complaints about taxes, investigate requests for tax reduction, and discern damages caused by natural calamities. Furthermore, in certain localities, the official committees could levy new taxes to raise revenue for public works.²⁷

The newspaper of the official committee in Tabriz, the provincial capital of Azarbaijan and a hotbed of committee activities, indicated that the committees had established an organizational network that was national

²⁶ References to the operations of official committees in *Anjuman* and the minutes of parliament clearly demonstrate that many official committees were well established prior to the laws that made their operations legal. For the laws with regard to provincial (*iyalati*), subprovincial (*vilayati*), and municipal committees see *Musavvat I-II*, pp. 64–84, 85–97; see also Browne (1910, pp. 244–45). The distinction between the official and nonofficial committees, however, was not always clear; in many places this distinction broke down almost completely. In Tabriz, e.g., the official and popular committees were composed predominantly of the guilds and trades, and the various popular committees reported to the official committee as their central body (Lambton 1963, p. 46). Thus, many newspapers adopted and referred to them as one unit. See, e.g., *Habl al-Matin*, no. 222, February 4, 1908 (1 Muharram 1326), p. 1.

²⁷ These legislations are collected in *Musavvat I-II*, pp. 73–77 (see n. 26 above). The law with regard to provincial and subprovincial committees has 122 articles. These are just a few examples selected from articles 67, 68, 87, 89, 91, and 92 to demonstrate the newly acquired power of official committees, and by extension of the assembly, against the provincial governments.

in scope. As required by law, the Tabriz committee had regular exchanges with committees in other cities and with lower administrative districts of Azarbaijan. But, in addition, it kept abreast of developments in other provinces and maintained regular contact with official committees in provincial centers and in large cities; the committee assisted them in time of need and received help when needed.²⁸

The official committees stepped beyond the extensive responsibilities legally assigned to them and took many more administrative functions of the provinces into their own hands. They not only kept track of local government administrators and carried out a variety of public works projects, but they also actively responded to the public's grievances. With their strong sense of "popular justice," they interfered in many local governmental functions to restore to the public "rights" violated by the old regime. The inhabitants of the city and of the province at large brought their grievances to the local official committee meetings, which in some locations—like Tabriz—convened in a public space. Typical among these were complaints about government officials, local magnates, or commodity prices, especially that of bread. The members, after deliberation, but always in sympathy with the aggrieved party, reached decisions on how to deal with particular grievances.²⁹

In the capital, where by definition official committees could not exist, the popular committees set up among themselves central bodies that gave them cohesiveness and organization that helped make their actions consistent across groups (Kirmani 1972, pp. 47–48). Estimates of the actual number of Tehran popular committees during the first assembly range from 100 to 180.³⁰ The largest of these, the radical committee of Azarbaijan, had over 2,900 members (Lambton 1963, p. 47). Various sources suggest that despite variation in the makeup of members in different cities and in different committees, a great majority of the popular

²⁸ The Tabriz committee was in touch with the committees in Tehran, Rasht, Anzali, Isfahan, Shiraz, Qum, Mashhad, Qazvin, and Kirman, among other major cities. As the provincial center of Azarbaijan, it was in regular contact with other subprovincial committees such as those in Maku, Khuy, Salmas, and Urumiyah.

²⁹ For these and the committee's severe action against the magnates and government officials see *Anjuman*, no. 42, February 13, 1907 (29 Dhu al-Hijja 1324), p. 4; no. 46, February 19, 1907 (6 Muharram 1325), p. 1; no. 53, p. 3; no. 69, pp. 11–14; no. 74, p. 3. For prices see *Anjuman*, no. 38, February 2, 1907 (18 Dhu al-Hijja 1324), pp. 1–2; no. 39, February 4, 1907 (20 Dhu al-Hijja 1324), pp. 3–4; no. 41, February 9, 1907 (25 Dhu al-Hijja 1324), p. 2; no. 42, February 13, 1907 (29 Dhu al-Hijja 1324), p. 4; no. 47, February 26, 1907 (13 Muharram 1325), p. 2; no. 62, April 4, 1907, (20 Safar 1325), p. 4.

³⁰ The largest estimate is that of Kasravi (1951, p. 569) and the lowest, Lambton (1963, p. 47). Hidayat (1982, pp. 151, 159) and Taqizadah (1957, p. 44) put their numbers at 130 and 140.

and perhaps also the official committees was drawn from various guilds.³¹

Even though never permitted by law, the committees throughout this period were openly armed. From an early date, in the winter of 1906–7, the provincial committee of Tabriz began organizing a popular militia. The Tabriz committee used the increased disorder in the city and the province as a legitimate excuse to patrol the city neighborhoods, muster more resources, build stronger organizations, and gradually to dominate the city (Kasravi 1951, pp. 394–99). The highly visible rituals and military drills of provincial committees had greatly worried the old regime, and they complained about it to the assembly.³² Equally worrisome for the government were the popular committees in Tehran that followed the lead of committees in Tabriz, Rasht, and Anzali. The difference was that the Tehran committees, no doubt under the influence of the young revolutionary intelligentsia, self-consciously modeled their militia after the French National Guard, and, much to the distaste of moderate constitutionalists who despised the idea, used the French appellation or various Persian translations of it.³³ Initially, the committees advocated the formation of the National Guard under the pretext of national defense.³⁴ With increased counterrevolutionary activities,³⁵ however, they openly professed that the real purpose of the National Guard was to defend the constitutional system against internal enemies.³⁶

³¹ This is a conclusion that is also shared by Lambton (1963, p. 50). An indication was that the popular committees of Tehran, in addition to names that indicated the regional affiliation of their members, bore names such as the Committee of Shoemakers, the Committee of Hatters, of carriage drivers, of booksellers, etc. (Kirmani 1972, pp. 47–48). For another indication of the close relation between guilds and popular committees see *Majlis*1, August 17, 1907 (8 Rajab 1325), p. 250; August 21, 1907 (12 Rajab 1325), pp. 256–57. For some of the many examples of guilds' presence in official committees see *Anjuman*, no. 72, May 1, 1907 (18 Rabi' I 1325), p. 2; no. 75, May 6, 1907 (23 Rabi' I 1325), pp. 1–2.

³² *Majlis*1, May 10, 1907 (27 Rabi' I 1325), p. 163; *Anjuman*, no. 67, 19 April 1907 (6 Rabi' I 1325), p. 3; no. 75, May 6, 1907 (23 Rabi' I 1325), pp. 1–2; Kasravi (1951, pp. 234–37).

³³ They variously called themselves Garde Nationale, Gard-i Milli, Quva-yi Milli, or Nizam-i Milli. For one of many examples see *Habl al-Matin*, no. 101, August 26, 1907 (17 Rajab 1325), pp. 4–5. For the opposition of some constitutionalists see Kirmani (1972, pp. 81–82). See also Dawlatabadi (1983, 2:202–3).

³⁴ *Habl al-Matin*, no. 157, November 9, 1907 (3 Shawwal 1325), p. 1.

³⁵ In the face of disorders that signaled the coming of counterrevolution, the committees pressured the assembly to create an official National Guard. Some assembly members openly threatened the inciters of disorder by appealing to the National Guard, in spite of its quasi-legal nature. See *Majlis*1, November 16, 1907 (10 Shawwal 1325), pp. 385–86; November 18, 1907 (12 Shawwal 1325), pp. 389–90; November 20, 1907 (14 Shawwal 1325), pp. 390–91.

³⁶ *Habl al-Matin*, no. 222, February 4, 1908 (1 Muharram 1326), pp. 1, 3; no. 223, February 5, 1908 (2 Muharram 1326), pp. 1–2; no. 236, February 25, 1908 (22 Muhar-

That the assembly never legally approved the National Guard did not prevent the committees from forming it. Dressed in special uniforms and using the expertise of a few army officers, they began to drill and organize. And in part to cover the expenses for obtaining arms and setting up the neighborhood militia, they extorted money from the wealthy (Kirmani 1972, pp. 84–86). Estimates of the number of armed committee men, even those made by the contemporaneous observers, vary fantastically, ranging from 2,000 to 100,000.³⁷ Yet, despite the discrepancy in the reported numbers, all eyewitnesses agreed that the shah, his court, and the government all feared the committees, an institution that was a serious threat to the small and badly equipped Iranian army.

The Russian Duma's Struggle

The Russian constitutionalists proved to be the weakest of the three groups. Unlike their Ottoman counterparts, they did not command the loyalty of a large section of the armed forces or the bureaucrats. On the other hand, the Russian opposition's impressive ability to form organizations of various kinds during the first few weeks after the October Manifesto proved that Russia's capability for organized opposition surpassed that of Iran. Yet, the Russian constitutionalists' misfortune was that, unlike the Iranians, they confronted a powerful state with the backing of a modernized army. The autocracy, alarmed at the disturbances and the growth of organized opposition following the partial removal of legal restrictions, soon clamped down on these organizations. They also moved to eliminate newly won legal freedoms before the elections could be held for the Duma. These events marked a critical moment for Russian constitutionalism and was its main source of weakness. Once the Duma was established, it was left without extraparliamentary means to coerce the autocracy into accepting its programs for political and social reform.

In Russia the October Manifesto began a crucial period of six weeks (the Days of Freedom) that lasted until early December. An immediate result of the newly won civil freedoms was a proliferation of revolutionary newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, brochures—in short, all types of publications. Although the government officially retained, at least until late November, the right to censor prepublication material, the St. Petersburg soviet on the day following the issuance of the October Manifesto, declared the end of censorship and ordered the workers to refuse

ram 1326), pp. 2–3. These pages are replete with references to the French Revolution. See also Dawlatabadi (1983, 2:201–3).

³⁷ The larger estimate is that of Kirmani (1972, p. 84). Dawlatabadi (1983, 2:203) puts the figure at 2,000.

to print material that had passed through the censors' hands. Thus, the Russian press underwent a spectacular transformation when what had only appeared underground could now be published in abundance and without restriction, making possible the ruthless assailing of government officials by a hostile, public press (Ascher 1988, pp. 231, 276; Harcave 1964, pp. 212–15; Healy 1976, pp. 20, 57–58).

The newly won freedoms also allowed the population to convene, to organize meetings, and to establish legal political parties. As a result, both the number of general meetings, the range of activities, and the membership of political parties of various creeds increased as they found a far more hospitable environment. In the first four weeks following the October Manifesto, more than 400 meetings took place. The liberals were no longer forced to act within the government-imposed restraints and even the socialist parties were provided with a better opportunity to operate; their leaders could now return from Europe with a reduced risk of arrest (Ascher 1988, pp. 276–77; Harcave 1964, pp. 224–25; Healy 1976, p. 59). The Constitutional Democrats (Kadets), the liberal party, was the most important party of this period and occupied a centrist position that leaned to the left. To the left of the Kadets were various socialist parties, the most important of which were the Social Democrats and the Socialist Revolutionaries; slightly to the right of the Kadets was the Union of October 17 or the Octobrists. The largest and most influential of the right-wing parties was the Union of Russian People (Ascher 1988, pp. 234–42; 1992, pp. 31–47; Levin [1940] 1966, pp. 29–34).

The most impressive gains with respect to the revolutionaries' resources were made by labor organizations. It was during the Days of Freedom that unionization gained momentum and labor was provided with an opportunity unmatched in its history. This period saw the beginning of widespread expansion of unions in cities and towns previously untouched by unions and among occupations formerly not unionized. In Moscow alone 67 were established; in St. Petersburg, 58, the great majority of which were founded during November 1905 alone. These unions were united under the leadership of the Central Bureau of Trade Unions (Bonnell 1983, pp. 122–27; Ascher 1988, pp. 242, 276–77; Harcave 1964, p. 215). The most significant strides were made by the soviets, with nearly 50 of them operating under the leadership of the influential and imposing St. Petersburg soviet. The Moscow soviet, which was next in importance to the St. Petersburg soviet, had 80,000 workers as members. In addition to the ties that soviets established among themselves, they extended their network to the labor unions and factory committees to create a form of national organization of labor. Their gains in power were impressive and they were even able to create their own militia. By mid-November, the St. Petersburg soviet claimed 6,000 militia armed

with some type of weapon for the avowed purpose of protecting their meeting places (Bonnell 1983, pp. 125–26, 171–80; Ascher 1988, pp. 219–22, 276–78; Harcave 1964, pp. 212–15, 224–26). Reflecting the conservatives' fear of the growing power of the soviets, Ascher notes that a like-minded newspaper complained that "there were really two governments, one led by Count Witte [the prime minister] and one by Khrustalev Nosar (chairman of the Petersburg soviet), and that no one knew who would arrest whom first" (1988, p. 278).

The waning authority of the autocracy also gave way to defiance by the peasantry. The Days of Freedom saw the first large-scale agrarian revolts since the 18th century with an added ingredient that set it apart from previous uprisings of peasants. For the first time in the history of the empire, peasant uprisings had a political organization that acted in concert with disturbances in the urban areas (Harcave 1964, pp. 216–20; Verner 1990, pp. 105–6; Ascher 1988, pp. 267–69).

The labor radicalism and militancy reached a peak during the Days of Freedom. Blinded by their recent success in winning the October Manifesto, the leaders of the labor movements viewed their victory as a sign of government weakness and engaged in a variety of provocative activities, ranging from a call for a general strike in support of an eight-hour working day, to the soviets' interference with governmental authority in large cities and even its replacement of local governments in some of the outlying regions of the empire. In November, the soviets and various socialist parties were calling for "armed struggle against the tsarist regime." These actions greatly alarmed the government, united the employers against labor, and placed the liberals who did not want to defend the government in a precarious position (Ascher 1988, pp. 275–98).

On November 26 the government took decisive action by arresting the leader and several deputies of the St. Petersburg soviet. In retaliation, on December 2, the newly elected leadership of the St. Petersburg soviet published the provocative Financial Manifesto, a declaration that asked the people to stop making payments to the treasury, to demand payments in gold, to withdraw all deposits from banks in gold and other similar measures, to "cut the government from the last source of its existence: financial revenue." When members of the soviet's executive committee were arrested in retaliation for publication of the Financial Manifesto, the Moscow soviet assumed leadership. But, deprived of the leadership of the central soviet, the Moscow soviet could not lead a successful wave of strikes such as those that had led to the granting of the October Manifesto. In the bloodiest confrontation of the entire movement, the small numbers of inadequately trained and scantily equipped militia of labor proved to be a poor match for the modern Russian army (Ascher 1988,

pp. 279, 298–301, 304–23; Harcave 1964, pp. 232–39; Bonnell 1983, pp. 195–97). Following the suppression of the workers, the government set out on a punitive campaign in the countryside to suppress the peasant uprisings that were spreading with rapid speed (Manning 1982, pp. 141–76; Ascher 1988, 267–68, 330–35; Harcave 1964, pp. 228–30, 240–42). Within four weeks, the government's authority had been restored to levels it had enjoyed before Bloody Sunday. Thus came the first wave of counterrevolutionary backlash that ended the Days of Freedom before the establishment of the Duma, a critical event that severely diminished the extraparliamentary support the Duma could have enjoyed from the organizations of labor.

Before the Russian Duma was established, the soviets were suppressed, their militia crushed, various organizations of labor banned, and civic freedoms curtailed. While the CUP-dominated Ottoman Chamber of Deputies relied on the CUP's supporters inside the state and its semi-clandestine party branches and clubs to intimidate the state, and the Iranian National Assembly drew power from the committees—all in an atmosphere of relaxed legal restrictions—the Russian Duma was deprived of crucial extraparliamentary support to confront its government while the rigid legal restrictions previous to the issuing of the October Manifesto were reimposed. The Russian Duma was thus, from inception, a weaker institution than its counterparts in the Ottoman Empire and Iran.

CONSTITUTIONAL BATTLES, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REFORMS, AND COUNTERREVOLUTION

A notable change during stage 2 was that now a large part of the battle over state power was fought within the legal framework of the Russian, Ottoman, and Iranian representative assemblies. These radical assemblies were not merely another legal resource in the hands of the challengers; they qualitatively transformed the dynamics of the fight for the capture of state power.

Constitutional revolutionaries entered battles with the old regimes on two fronts. First, they strove to transform the political structure of the old regimes and to make the assemblies the dominant force in government. In a language that bore striking similarity in all three settings, the elected representatives debated central issues such as who or which institution had legislative powers, the right to override assemblies' decisions, the authority to introduce new bills, the right to appoint the head of the cabinet and individual cabinet ministers, the extent of the cabinet's and each minister's responsibility toward the assembly, and the locus of sovereignty (whether it belonged to the nation or the monarch). This period

saw a profusion of interpellation, the dismissals of individual ministers, and the fall of entire cabinets. The second aspect of this fight was over the assemblies' intention to radically intervene with sweeping social programs. In the Ottoman Empire and in Iran, the constitutionalists' program included a complete revamping of the states' administrative structures as well.

What determined whether the legal parliaments had the ability to enforce their decisions was the support they received from extraparliamentary and illegal sources. In the Ottoman Empire, these included the support of military officers and administrative bureaucrats as well as the CUP party structure and clubs; in Iran these sources consisted of the official and popular committees. In Russia, the soviets and the zemstvos (elected local committees introduced in 1864) could have played an equivalent role by lending support to the Duma and pressuring the government to abide its orders. Yet, the soviets were suppressed at an early phase and the zemstvos, which had initially supported the constitutionalists' cause, drastically changed their stance in favor of the government. Such support was essential for the assemblies to win constitutional battles with their governments, to modify the constitution to their own advantage or impose their own interpretation of it, to force the appointment of sympathetic ministers and prime ministers, and to not only suggest radical reforms but to begin implementing them. On all of these counts, the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies, which had greatest access to extraparliamentary sources of support, was the most successful in winning constitutional battles and implementing reforms. The Iranians came next, and the Russians, who at an early date were deprived of all extraparliamentary sources of support, came to have the most feeble of all assemblies and could not implement any of their central reform programs.

While the exact content of these programs varied in each setting, their effect was highly destabilizing in all. And if compromises with the old regimes were forged and revolutionary coalitions were formed over ambiguous goals, the assemblies left no room for ambiguity in their intentions. On the one hand the monarchs and governments realized the constitutionalists strove to make them subservient to the assemblies, while a wide array of social classes understood that if the demanded reforms were implemented they would fall victim to the very assemblies they helped establish. These developments led to more intensified fights with the old regimes and to the breakdown of prerevolutionary coalitions, prompting many to actively side with the old regimes they had previously opposed.

There is nothing surprising about introducing radical reforms after the revolution. Nor is there anything surprising about the negative reaction

reforms stir among the previously apathetic or sympathetic social classes. What should be highlighted are the different settings within which the socialists and constitutionalists introduced their programs and the comparative disadvantage of the constitutionalists in this context. In contrast to the socialists, who introduced radical programs after capturing state power in a situation where they were, formally at least, in absolute command of the state, the constitutionalists introduced their programs while still struggling with the old regimes over state power. Consequently, constitutionalists, unlike socialists, could not rely on inherited state power to check the negative reaction to their reforms. The constitutionalists began their reforms with, at best, an unstable power base, which allowed the negatively affected social groups to find ready allies with the old regimes still in command. Not being in full control of the state administration and its coercive organs when they began to introduce their programs, the constitutionalists faced a counterrevolutionary backlash that forced all of them out of power.

The Sultan's Sovereignty Challenged

The conflict over the constitution in the aftermath of the Young Turk Revolution occurred almost immediately and well before the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies had convened, for in the Ottoman Empire a constitution had existed since 1876.³⁸ The sultan used the opportunity brought about by the commotion of the early days of stage 2 to issue an imperial decree (August 2, 1908) and constitutionally transfer the right to appoint the ministers of the army and the navy to himself. The constitution of 1876 had left open whether these ministers were to be chosen by the sultan or the grand vizier, and the newly issued decree made this the sultan's prerogative. In response, the CUP challenged the sultan, arguing that changing the constitution was a right of the chamber, and since it had not yet convened, it was up to the grand vizier to appoint the ministers.³⁹ On the other hand, the CUP used this occasion to force the complaisant Grand Vizier Said Pasha out of power after criticizing him and his cabinet for their old-fashioned style and their incompatibility with

³⁸ For the granting of the constitution and the Young Ottoman movement, see Mardin (1962) and Davison (1963).

³⁹ For the sultan's decree see *Düstur* 2, I, no. 8, August 2, 1908 (4 Recep 1326), pp. 11–14. For CUP's criticism see *Tanin*, no. 2, August 3, 1908 (5 Recep 1326), p. 3; no. 3, August 4, 1908 (6 Recep 1326), p. 1; no. 4, August 5, 1908 (7 Recep 1326), pp. 1–2, esp. p. 1. See also Ahmad (1969, p. 19).

a modern constitutional government, which required responsibility and accountability.⁴⁰ With pressure on the government, the CUP was not only able to dismiss the Grand Vizier Said Pasha within two weeks after the establishment of the constitutional system, but it was also promised that ministers of the army and the navy, like all other ministers, would be appointed by the new grand vizier rather than the sultan.⁴¹

When the CUP became disgruntled with the subsequently appointed Grand Vizier Kamil Pasha, he and individual ministers were also criticized for their old-fashioned behavior and ignorance of the constitutional system. In its new round of attacks against the government during Kamil Pasha's reign, the CUP began to challenge even the explicit clauses of the constitution of 1876 that bestowed upon the sultan the right to choose the grand vizier, arguing that this right belonged to the chamber and, by extension, the "nation," or the locus of sovereignty.⁴² Tensions reached a new height when the grand vizier changed three cabinet ministers, including those of the army and navy, without receiving a vote of confirmation from the chamber. This act was interpreted as an encroachment upon the rights of the chamber and brought accusations that likened Kamil Pasha to the whimsical grand viziers of the old regime.⁴³ As discussed above, the CUP, through its internal machinations, had already secured guarantees for Kamil Pasha's dismissal, even though he was finally dismissed by the chamber through constitutional procedures. For the third grand vizier, the CUP was able to impose the choice of Hilmi Pasha—a candidate it found to be in agreement with its views—on February 14, 1909. Yet, despite accusations by their critics to the contrary, the CUP was still far from controlling the cabinet and continued to have disagreements with the last grand vizier as well.⁴⁴

The battles between the Ottoman government and the Chamber of Deputies were not confined to their respective constitutional rights and

⁴⁰ *Tanin*, no. 5, p. 3 and pp. 3–4 (see n. 18 above).

⁴¹ *Fikir Hareketleri*, no. 96, August 24, 1935, p. 277. For announcement of Said Pasha's resignation see *Tanin*, no. 6, August 6, 1908 (9 Recep 1326), p. 1; and Ahmad (1969, p. 20).

⁴² *Tanin*, no. 55, September 25, 1908 (28 Şaban 1326), p. 1; no. 57, September 27, 1908 (30 Şaban 1326), p. 1; no. 128, pp. 1–2; no. 129, pp. 1–2; no. 145, p. 1; no. 157, p. 1; no. 160, p. 1 (see n. 19 above).

⁴³ *Tanin*, no. 192, p. 1; no. 193, p. 1 (see n. 19 above).

⁴⁴ *Tanin*, no. 194, February 13, 1909 (22 Muharrem 1327), p. 1; no. 216, March 8, 1909 (15 Safer 1327). For the Liberals' accusation that the CUP had created a government according to its will, see *İkdam*, no. 5322, March 20, 1909 (27 Safer 1327), p. 1. For rather minor disagreements between the CUP and the new government, see *Tanin*, no. 235, March 27, 1909 (4 Rebiyülevvel 1327), p. 1.

political power. They also involved the sensitive issue of administrative reform. In fact, the counterrevolution that occurred 10 months into the second stage was a direct reaction to the rationalization of staff policies and purges.⁴⁵ The groups that coalesced and staged the short-lived counterrevolutionary movement, especially the purged, demoted, displaced, or threatened members of the civil and military bureaucracy, attempted to reverse the tide of the CUP's staff reforms.

During the four months that the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies was in session (December 17, 1908–April 12, 1909), it approved an impressive amount of legislation. The most important bills concerned the staff reorganizations within the civil bureaucracy and the army. The CUP commanded many followers among civil bureaucrats and military personnel, and, after the revolution, the military and civil bureaucracy became the site of extensive rationalizing transformations aimed at ending the bureaucratic dichotomy between the modern and patrimonial soldiers and officers. In the eyes of the CUP, a major problem the army faced was the inflated number of high-ranking officers and the extremely young age of many high-ranking military commanders who had gained their promotion through connection to a patron or the sultan. To correct this situation, the CUP recommended purges, demotions, and early retirement for many officers to replace them with educated ones.⁴⁶ The same solution was suggested for the civil bureaucracy, which was plagued with similar conflicting rules of operation. The CUP-dominated Chamber of Deputies, by approving legislation to purge officials within civil bureaucracy and the military, gave the upper hand to officials who had modern training and were advocates of rational administrative procedures.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ In discussions so far, this aspect of the counterrevolutionary has always been underemphasized at the expense of the superficially religious form that it took. For a contrasting view of this incident that describes it as essentially motivated by soldiers' interests in a religious guise see Akşin (1971, pp. 309, 336).

⁴⁶ *Tanin*, no. 18, August 19, 1908 (21 Recep 1326), pp. 1–3. A British official was struck by the large number of officers in the Ottoman navy, an organization that was, in his opinion, "virtually nonexistent." In his report he indicated that there were 7,500 officers in the navy's active list, compared to Britain's 5,000 (*BDFR* 1908, p. 22).

⁴⁷ The major legislation concerning purges came during the fourth revolutionary stage and after the CUP dominated the state entirely. For the central legislation on purges within civil officialdom during stage 2, see *Düstur2, I*, August 15, 1908 (17 Recep 1326), pp. 55–56. Other purge legislation prior to the counterrevolution was as follows: *Düstur2, I*, no. 10, August 12, 1908 (14 Recep 1326), pp. 39–40; no. 20, August 22, 1908 (24 Recep 1326), pp. 61–62; no. 21, August 22, 1908 (24 Recep 1326), pp. 62–63; no. 26, September 3, 1908 (6 Şaban 1326), pp. 71–72; no. 34, October 3, 1908 (7 Ramazan 1326), pp. 85–88. For the army, see *Düstur2, I*, no. 87, June 27, 1909 (8 Cemaziyelahir 1327), pp. 324–25.

The extensive staff reorganization and purges were clearly disruptive for the displaced members of the traditional bureaucracy and the army. Their negative reactions to the reforms culminated in a sudden and unexpected counterrevolutionary uprising that began within the army, where the reforms had hit the hardest. In the early morning of April 13, 1909, soldiers of the light infantry battalions of the Third Army Corps (*avcı taburlar*), after congregating in large numbers at the square of Sultan Ahmed and Ayasofya without their officers, chose a sergeant as their leader—an action with clear symbolic significance—and presented the *şeyhülislam* (the highest religious authority) with five demands.⁴⁸

Whereas the soldiers' third demand was the restoration of shari'a (*şeriat*, religious law) requested under the influence of the religious groups with whom they cooperated,⁴⁹ the most significant of the soldiers' demands was the fourth, which called for "banishing and replacing their superior educated officers [*mektepli*] and reappointing the officers who had risen through ranks [*alaylı*, or old troopers] and were wrongfully harmed by being fired."⁵⁰ The fourth demand clearly revealed that the old troopers (*alaylı*) were reacting to the CUP's policy of privileging the officers with modern education (*mektepli*), that is, the CUP's supporters.

The old trooper officers of the First Army Corps who joined the rebelling infantry soldiers also protested against the staff policies of the CUP. In its efforts to reduce the influence, significance, and numbers of the old trooper officers, the CUP had fired 1,400 officers from the First Army Corps.⁵¹ The numerically and politically more significant soldiers of the First Army Corps, whose officers had mostly risen through the ranks, were favored by the sultan: they served as his personal military guards and enjoyed excellent material conditions (Farhi 1971, p. 281). The soldiers of the First Army, after arresting their educated superiors and killing several of them, joined the rebelling infantry soldiers of the Third

⁴⁸ See Nadi (1909, pp. 33–34, 39), Cevat (1960, pp. 88–89), and *İkdam*, no. 5347, April 14, 1909 (23 Rebiyülevvel 1327), p. 1.

⁴⁹ For a competent description of the counterrevolution and its demands—though one that gives overwhelming import to the third demand—see Farhi (1971). For views that give greater importance to the religious aspect of the movement see Shaw and Shaw (1977, pp. 279–80) and *BDFA* (1908, pp. 22–23). For one that underplays religion, but without making central the issue of bureaucratic dichotomy, see Ahmad (1969, pp. 40–45).

⁵⁰ See Nadi (1909, p. 36). For a full set of demands see Nadi (1909, pp. 35–36) and Farhi (1971, pp. 275–76).

⁵¹ Akşin (1971, pp. 46–47). Knight (1909, pp. 329–30) perceptively reports on the grievances of the First Army Corps and the division between the *alaylı* and *mektepli* officers. He further distinguishes the demands of the latter from the students of religion and their teachers, who preached in the barracks that the committee was endangering the Muslim faith.

Army and, in a threatening letter addressed to the ministers and carrying the requests of more than 7,500 officers of the various army corps, they demanded the reassignment of purged officers and a halt to such reforms (Nadi 1909, pp. 55–57).

In their gathering, the rebellious soldiers were joined by a variety of groups, most significantly by thousands of teachers of religion (*hocas*), students of religion (*softas*), lower-ranking religious clergy (*imams*), and preachers. Having started their counterrevolutionary activities earlier, the lower-ranking religious groups had officially announced their existence as a political group, the Society of Muhammad (*İttihad-i Muhammedi*). They joined the soldiers to protest the secular policies of the CUP, such as its stance on minorities and the state's encroachment into the domain of religion through various reforms.⁵² Paradoxically, the upper-ranking clergy did not join forces with anti-Unionist lower clergy, for the former had developed a strong animosity for Abdülhamid II during his reign and, perhaps more significantly, because they had not yet realized the extent of the CUP's secularist policies and the gravity of the threat it posed to the religious institutions of the empire.⁵³

The counterrevolutionary movement was not confined to the old troopers and lower-ranking religious orders. Other groups, such as the Sublime Porte and the Liberals, took active interest in it. The Sublime Porte was represented by the deposed Grand Vizier Kamil Pasha, around whom gathered similar high-ranking officials of the Porte and scores of lower-ranking officials. The latter, like the old troopers, had either fallen victim to the CUP purges or felt imminently threatened (*BDFÄ* 1910, p. 110; Danişmend 1961, p. 22; Farhi 1977, p. 280–81; Knight 1909, p. 328). The Liberal opposition was represented by Prince Sabahaddin who, as a staunch opponent of Abdülhamid, had cooperated with the CUP in Europe under the broad-based coalition of the Young Turks but was now opposing the CUP over its centralizing policies. Sabahaddin was the champion of Anglo-Saxon laissez-faire ideology and was steadfastly opposed to the French centralization model the CUP espoused; in his view, this model had led to the replacement of the Hamidian dictatorship

⁵² The secular policies of the committee were directed at reducing the power of the clergy, especially the clergy's influence over judicial matters. For the participants and the minority question, see Farhi (1971, pp. 275, 281), Shaw and Shaw (1977, pp. 279–80), and Ahmad (1969). For the political manifesto and organizational framework and the speech by Derviş Vahdeti in which he announced the formation of the group, see Tunaya (1984, pp. 199–205) and Danişmend (1961, p. 22).

⁵³ During the counterrevolution, the orthodox ulema condemned the sultan for persecution of religion during his rule and declared their support for the CUP (Nadi 1909, pp. 62–64). When they did realize the extent of the threat and withdrew their support it was already too late to stop the further encroachment of the CUP.

with that of the CUP (see Sabahaddin 1908*a*, 1908*b*, esp. pp. 28–29, 41–43; Kuran 1945, 1948). In order to further their own ends against the CUP, the various opposition groups, in spite of clearly conflicting goals, cooperated with one another and especially with the religious group headed by Derviş Vahdeti. Some even claim that, in the political vacuum created by the CUP's retreat to Salonika, the Liberals stepped in to assume political power (see Shaw and Shaw 1977, p. 280; Tunaya 1984, pp. 145–53; Ahmad 1969, p. 43; Halid 1909, pp. 758–60; Knight 1909, pp. 323, 328).

The extent of the palace's participation in the counterrevolution is not altogether clear. High-ranking politicians close to the sultan denied his involvement at any point during the 10 days or so that this event was underway (Danışmend, 1961, pp. 18–21, 25–33; Cevat 1960, p. 58; Akşin, 1971, pp. 364–65). On the other hand, while scholars may be divided over the question of the extent of the sultan's initial support, they agree that eventually he supported it and used this opportunity to restore his lost power (Tunaya 1984, pp. 196–97; Shaw and Shaw, 1977, p. 281). A less contested issue, however, was the palace's active participation through the heir apparent (Tunaya 1984, p. 197).

Thus, in reaction to the short-lived counterrevolutionary movement in Istanbul, the CUP temporarily retreated to Macedonia, where the revolution had originated and where the CUP had its strongest organizational basis. The Chamber of Deputies, symbolically, was not officially disbanded and a newly elected Liberal deputy replaced the ousted CUP president.

The Balance of Power in Iran

The first Iranian National Assembly functioned for a little more than 20 months (October 7, 1906–June 23, 1908). Yet in this short period, cabinets changed not less than nine times.⁵⁴ From the early days, the representatives were engaged in a debate over the assembly's power and attempted to endow it with the right to dismiss cabinet members.⁵⁵ With assistance from the radical newspapers, the representatives exerted a great effort to construct a constitutional concept of politics and to break away from the traditional notions of statecraft and kingship in the Iranian scene. Particularly suitable occasions for explicating the meaning and functions of a modern state were the interpellations, during which the representatives severely criticized the ministers for their legal infractions,

⁵⁴ For a list of the members of these cabinets see Burujini (1971, pp. 1–28).

⁵⁵ For the first episode of this fight, see *Anjuman*, no. 48, February 28, 1907 (15 Muharram 1325), p. 2; Kasravi (1951, pp. 215–17).

pointed out that they were responsible to the assembly, and demanded accountability for their actions.⁵⁶ The constitutional battles prompted the representatives to draft a supplement to the Fundamental Laws to expand greatly the powers of the National Assembly against the government, an action that created intense friction. The government's resistance to the supplement cost it the prominent Grand Vizier Atabak, whose assassination on August 31, 1907, was backed by the committees, almost all of which considered him an ardent anticonstitutionalist and opposed to the supplement.⁵⁷ The supplement that was finally approved on October 7, 1907, marked a victory for the constitutionalists. In contrast to the earlier-ratified constitution, the ministers were now considered responsible to the assembly rather than the shah, and the assembly was given full powers to dismiss individual ministers or to discharge entire cabinets without having to prove legal infractions on their part and, significantly, without having to gain the shah's approval.⁵⁸ Despite gaining the right to dismiss the cabinet, however, the assembly could not simply rely on its constitutional powers when confronting the government. To assure that the legal orders of the assembly were followed, the committees pressured the opposition by harassing the ministers and issuing threats against their opponents. The committees even attempted—but failed—to assassinate the shah. Throughout the period of its operation, the first Iranian National Assembly found merely one grand vizier that was to its liking and one cabinet of which it almost entirely ap-

⁵⁶ *Majlis*1, January 6, 1907 (21 Dhu al-Qa'da 1324), pp. 46–47; January 13, 1907 (28 Dhu al-Qa'da 1324), p. 50; January 22, 1907 (7 Dhu al-Hijja 1324), pp. 59–60; January 24, 1907 (9 Dhu al-Hijja 1324), pp. 63–64; January 31, 1907 (16 Dhu al-Hijja 1324), pp. 70–72; March 14, 1907 (29 Muharram 1325), pp. 107–9; March 27, 1908 (23 Safar 1326), p. 492. *Habl al-Matin*, no. 1, April 28, 1907 (15 Rabi' I 1325), pp. 3–4. For criticism of newspaper see, e.g., *Habl al-Matin*, no. 53, June 28, 1907 (17 Jumada I 1325), pp. 1–3; *Anjuman*, no. 44, February 14, 1907 (1 Muharram 1325), pp. 1–4; no. 45, February 17, 1907 (4 Muharram 1325), pp. 1–4.

⁵⁷ *Majlis*1, August 30, 1907 (21 Rajab 1325), p. 267; August 31, 1907 (22 Rajab 1325), p. 269; Kasravi (1951, pp. 445–50), Browne (1910, pp. 150–51), and Dawlatbadi (1983, 2:140–43); *Habl al-Matin*, October 5, 1907 (26 Sha'ban 1325), p. 2. For mourning ceremonies by the committees commemorating Atabak's assassin, see *Habl al-Matin*, no. 135, October 7, 1907 (29 Sha'ban 1325), pp. 5–6; see also Browne (1910, pp. 151–54) and Kasravi (1951, pp. 464–65).

⁵⁸ Even prior to approval of the supplement, the assembly took votes that overwhelmingly approved of dismissing the entire cabinets. See *Majlis*1, April 24, 1907 (11 Rabi' I 1325), pp. 151–53; April 29, 1907 (16 Rabi' I 1325), pp. 153–54. For articles on the powers of the assembly in the original constitution and for changes in the supplement, see *Musavvat I-II*, pp. 8–9, 27–28 (see n. 26 above).

proved.⁵⁹ Even this government was soon removed from power by the shah and its prime minister exiled.⁶⁰ Yet, thanks to the agitations of the committees, the assembly repeatedly confronted the government with a cabinet crisis and forced the constant circulation or removal of ministers and prime ministers—though they rarely approved of the replacements. The Iranian National Assembly and the government had reached some form of balance of power where severe actions by one were responded to with similar actions from the other.

Even more so than the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies, the Iranian National Assembly commenced reforms at a time when it did not yet dominate the state; it lacked sufficient coercive power to suppress the disturbances the reforms generated. On the one hand, the assembly's financial reforms fomented strong reaction from a wide array of social actors. On the other, the shah and his government considered the constitutional system a threat to the shah's sovereignty. They regarded the assembly's quest for dominating the state a disturbing encroachment upon their age-old prerogatives. Furthermore, the assembly's legislative undertakings together with its judicial and educational reforms contested the authority of the traditional religious institutions. Thus, the constitutionalists in Iran witnessed a daily swelling of the opposition's ranks and found themselves incapable to stem its growth.

The assembly proposed financial reforms to balance the budget by raising taxes for the deficit-ridden treasury of the old regime. These marginally implemented reforms consisted broadly of rationalized budgetary allocation and taxation. Rationalized budgetary allocations included salary reduction for state employees, extensive cutbacks in court and palace budgets, ministerial allocations according to detailed expenditure records, and abolition of a traditional compensatory method called *tuyul*. The rational taxation plan included the replacement of a traditional category paid by landowners as a portion of their taxes and the reorganization of the provincial tax structure to bring it under greater central control.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Majlis was more than ready to use its right. A vote of no confidence was given nine days after the signing of the supplement. See *Majlis* 1, 16 October 1907 (9 Ramadan 1325), p. 349; Burujini (1971, p. 16). For pressure over the signing of the supplement and the shah's anger over the introduction of a pro-National Assembly cabinet, see Dawlatabadi (1983, 2:151–53) and Hidayat (1982, pp. 159–60). For statements of support for the new cabinet see *Habl al-Matin*, no. 152, November 4, 1907 (28 Ramadan 1325), pp. 2–3.

⁶⁰ *Habl al-Matin*, no. 199, January 6, 1908 (1 Dhu al-Hijja 1325); no. 202, January 8, 1908 (4 Dhu al-Hijja 1325), pp. 1–2; Browne (1910, pp. 162–63, 165); Hidayat (1982, p. 160).

⁶¹ The rationalized taxation plan was based on auditing, which was in turn dependent upon precise information obtained through a nationwide cadastre. The latter was never carried out. Yet, pressured to solve the chronic financial problems of the old regime, the assembly haphazardly set out to implement extensive financial reforms.

The abolition of the *tuyul* was one of the most critical decisions of the first National Assembly. The category *tuyul* constituted the income from land assigned in lieu of salary from the state.⁶² Its abolition, together with other financial undertakings, brought about a strong reaction in the capital and provinces.⁶³ The response of *tuyul* holders was indeed strong, particularly in view of the fact that, much to the representatives' chagrin, the majority of the assignments continued to remain in the hands of *tuyul* recipients.⁶⁴

The financial reforms also included another sensitive area: salary reforms. The opposition soon exploited this issue. In a representative's words, "malicious individuals" were spreading the rumor about the assembly's intention to reduce the salaries of government officials and dependents, rich or poor. The assembly and the revolutionary newspapers vehemently denied this rumor, arguing that salary reforms were not in-

For a discussion of the provincial tax structure and *tafavut-i 'amal*, see *MajlisI*, January 6, 1907 (21 Dhu al-Qa'da 1324), p. 45. Later discussions clearly demonstrated that a consensus on precise working of provincial tax structure did not exist. For *tuyul* and traditional cash payments in place of taxes in kind (*tas'ir*) see Adamiyat (1976, pp. 448–50), Kasravi (1951, pp. 228–29), and Browne (1910, pp. 238–39). The resulting problems prompted the assembly to approve a bill that required all money collected in the name of *tafavut-i 'amal* to come first to the center and from there to be allocated to the provincial centers. See *MajlisI*, April 6, 1907 (22 Safar 1325), pp. 125–26; Adamiyat (1976, pp. 447–48).

⁶² As Arjomand (1988, p. 22) and Lambton (1953) have noted, *tuyul* could constitute income from a variety of sources, but the constitutionalists' central concern was with the land assignments. The centralizing constitutionalists intended to reclaim the *tuyul* and to assign to the deserving owners a regular salary from the state. From the assembly's view, not only were such assignments ill-suited to a modern state, but more important, the actual value of many such assignments had much surpassed their nominal value at the time of their grant. For a description of *tuyul* from the assembly's view see *MajlisI*, January 6, 1907 (21 Dhu al-Qa'da 1324), p. 45; March 19, 1907 (4 Safar 1325), pp. 111–12. Furthermore, the land or taxes assigned as *tuyul* tended to become the private property of the assignees, especially in the second half of the 19th century.

⁶³ In Tehran, the first large-scale meeting against the abolition of the *tuyul* was held by a prominent holder who organized a gathering attended by similarly disgruntled holders. See *MajlisI*, June 6, 1907 (24 Rabi' II 1325), pp. 183–84; *Habl al-Matin*, no. 38, June 11, 1907 (29 Rabi' II 1325), p. 2; no. 49, June 23, 1907 (12 Jumada I 1325), p. 1; *Sur-i Israfil*, no. 5, June 26, 1907 (15 Jumada I 1325), p. 3. In addition to Tehran, the assembly's financial decisions—first with regard to *tuyul* and then with regard to *tafavut-i 'amal* and *tas'ir*—created quite a commotion in provincial regions and in every major city, many times in collaboration with provincial governors and rulers. See, e.g., *MajlisI*, August 12, 1907 (3 Rajab 1325), p. 242. The newspapers also reported the disorders caused by landowners and the wealthy in general; see *Musavat*, no. 23, May 11, 1908 (9 Rabi' II 1326), p. 7; *Anjuman*, no. 69, April 24, 1907 (11 Rabi' I 1325), p. 4; no. 70, April 26, 1907 (13 Rabi' I 1325), p. 4.

⁶⁴ For indications of the assembly's lack of success see *Anjuman*, nos. 77–78, May 4, 1907 (21 Rabi' I 1325), p. 3; *MajlisI*, August 26, 1907 (17 Rajab 1325), pp. 263–64.

tended to affect the poor, the middle class, or the ordinary state employees but the princes, court members, and individuals with "salaries larger than some foreign presidents."⁶⁵ Overall, only 2,000 individuals were directly affected, yet the salary reductions managed to spark widespread disorders. The palace's budget was also reduced, and the assembly chose not to respond to the shah's protest about the insufficiency of the assigned funds.⁶⁶

To organize the counterrevolution, the government supported various groups with money and labor. It was no secret that the shah, his court, and high-ranking government members organized clandestine meetings to unite the opposition, that they were attempting to attract the support of the cities' poor, the holders of *tuyul*, and those threatened by salary cuts, and that they even prepared the army for a military attack on the assembly.⁶⁷ In addition, the shah and his government funneled large financial sums to the conservative clergy who, in the third week of June 1907, took sanctuary in protest to the assembly and gathered a large crowd of supporters.⁶⁸

As a lawmaking body, the National Assembly posed a serious threat to traditional religious authority. The late 19th-century legal sphere was already a contested scene as the Qajar state attempted to extend the jurisdiction of the secular customary law (*'urf*) over that of the religious law (*shari'a*; see Algar 1969, pp. 11–13, 128, 169–71, 223–24; Nashat 1982, pp. 43–54). When the assembly began operation in 1906, it entered this contested scene without specifying the limits of its lawmaking activities; its presence carried the threat that it could encroach on the territory of both the traditional secular and religious law and ultimately direct both. The assembly's impact on the religious law, however, was of greater consequence. The assembly intended to legislate new laws, some

⁶⁵ *Majlis1*, August 16, 1907 (7 Rajab 1325), pp. 249, 252; *Habl al-Matin*, no. 166, November 19, 1907 (13 Shawwal 1325), pp. 1–3.

⁶⁶ *Majlis1*, October 30, 1907 (23 Ramadan 1325), p. 363; November 2, 1907 (26 Ramadan 1325), p. 365; November 9, 1907 (3 Shawwal 1325), p. 376; November 16, 1907 (10 Shawwal 1325), pp. 385–86; November 18, 1907 (12 Shawwal 1325), p. 389; Dawlatabadi (1983, 2:114).

⁶⁷ *Majlis1*, April 29, 1907 (16 Rabi' I 1325), pp. 154–55; Kasravi (1951, p. 499); *Musavat*, no. 6, November 23, 1907 (17 Shawwal 1325); no. 9, January 11, 1908 (7 Dhu al-Hijja 1325). In its sixth issue, the newspaper *Musavat* appealed directly to the poor to ignore the instigation of the powerful and the court elements who had found their traditional vested interests threatened by the assembly. For instances when the shah, the government, and the court were directly implicated for organizing the counterrevolution see *Majlis1*, June 6, 1907 (24 Rabi' II 1325), pp. 183–85; June 26, 1907 (15 Jumada I 1325), p. 196; *Sur-i Israfil*, no. 5, June 26, 1907 (15 Jumada I 1325), p. 3; see also Kasravi (1951, pp. 364, 366, 374–75).

⁶⁸ Dawlatabadi (1983, 2:129–30); *Sur-i Israfil*, no. 5, p. 3.

directly of European origin. Most significantly, the Supplement to the Fundamental Laws was influenced greatly by the Belgian constitution. As the early unpublished drafts of the supplement clearly indicate, by failing to mention religious courts, the National Assembly intended to end the clerical judicial functions and replace them entirely with secular, state courts (Afshar 1989, doc. 67, pp. 91–100). The assembly and its reforms weighed heavily on the conservative clergy, who considered the shari‘a to be a complete code of law interpretable by them alone. The clergy proclaimed itself the sole administrator of justice, and in practice, was bestowed with almost complete judicial responsibility.

Before the final passage of the supplement, the conservative clergy opposed the legislative undertakings of the assembly and the translation of the Belgian constitution after citing the latter’s opposition to the laws of religion. It organized an extensive campaign to bring these activities to a halt.⁶⁹ It now demanded the creation of a five-member clerical council that was to supervise legislation in order to ensure consistency with religion. The council was to be given the power to revoke legislative bills in cases of deviation (Kasravi 1951, pp. 370–72; Dawlatabadi 1983, 2:108–9).

Despite the assembly’s strong resistance to the conservative clergy’s proposition, it was finally forced to depart from the radically secular and statist version of the originally intended supplement. As a compromise, the newly added Article 2 conceded to the clergy the right to nominate 20 clerics for the council from whom the deputies would elect at least five members to supervise legislation and to prevent the passage of any law that contradicted religious laws. Thus, even though the assembly agreed to a five-member clerical council, it gave itself some control over the election of its members. Another compromise occurred over the courts of law since the approved version of the supplement, by mentioning the religious courts, sanctioned their continued existence. Yet the supplement left the distinction between the religious and secular courts intentionally vague without substantiating the duties of each in any detail.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ *Majlis*1, May 16, 1907 (3 Rabi‘ II 1325), p. 167; May 21, 1907 (8 Rabi‘ II 1325), p. 171; June 8, 1907 (26 Rabi‘ II 1325), p. 183.

⁷⁰ For the complete text of the supplement see *Musavvabat I-II*, pp. 15–33; see esp. pp. 15–16 (see n. 26 above). See also *Habl al-Matin*, no. 138, October 10, 1907 (3 Ramadan 1325), pp. 2–6. The early, unapproved drafts of the supplement described in much greater detail the duties of secular state courts and unambiguously denied any role for the religious courts. For two critical and early handwritten drafts of the supplement—which did not include many of the later compromises of the assembly, including Article 2—see Afshar (1989, doc. 67, pp. 91–100). For the clergy’s initial and later objections to the supplement and the assembly’s compromise see also Arjomand (1993).

Even with these compromise offerings, the conservative clerics continued to oppose the supplement on grounds of its threat to clerical institutions. For one, Article 19 made education compulsory and brought all schools (state and private) under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.⁷¹ Traditionally, with the exception of some newly established modern schools, education was the domain of the religious establishment. Furthermore, the clerics were aware of the constitutionalists' intention to abolish the religious courts; the imprecise wording of the final draft of the supplement did not do much to assure the clerics of a secure continued role in judicial affairs. Finally, the conservative clergy rejected the compromise in Article 2 of the supplement on the grounds that no one other than the clergy was eligible to choose the council members.⁷²

The opposition of the conservative clergy eventually polarized the clergy as a gradual division developed between the lower and upper ranks of the clerical establishment. Clerical support for the constitutionalists was substantially weakened, for now only a few higher-ranking clerics, some lower-ranking ones who had intimate ties to the guilds, and some religious students remained in support of the constitutionalists.⁷³ Even the two high-ranking clerics who lent a semblance of religious legitimacy to the assembly were under constant pressure from the newspapers and committees to end the quietist stance they were accused of adopting and to be more impassioned in defending the assembly and the supplement.⁷⁴

Similar to the revolution and counterrevolution in the Ottoman Empire, and in a manner akin to the initial revolutionary movement in Iran, the actors who joined the counterrevolution were not motivated by a single cause. Yet, once again, the counterrevolutionary coalition formulated its opposition to the assembly around a single cause and successfully made the leap from the "particular" to the "general." Almost all the groups in the final coalition had begun their opposition activities independently of the others, but all had eventually adopted the conservative clergy's oppositionist view, the main tenet of which was the defense of Islam against the heathen constitutionalists (Turkaman 1983, pp. 149–51, 240–41, 260–69, 287–88, 296–97, 331). In its final stage, the

⁷¹ *Musavvat I-II*, p. 18 (n. 26 above).

⁷² The clergy announced its opposition in a newspaper it published in Shah Abdul'azim (see Turkaman 1983, p. 231).

⁷³ See Kasravi (1951, pp. 263, 358–60, 375–76, 415–23, 628–29); *Habl al-Matin*, no. 184, December 11, 1907 (5 Dhu al-Qa'da 1325), p. 3.

⁷⁴ *Musavat*, no. 4, November 11, 1907 (5 Shawwal 1325), p. 2; no. 9, January 11, 1908 (7 Dhu al-Hijja 1325), pp. 6–7. For the inactivity of Behbahani and Tabatabai in face of counterrevolutionary activities see also Kasravi (1951, p. 263) and Arjomand (1981, pp. 174–90).

oppositionist coalition was composed of members of the court, government employees, palace household employees, major landowners and recipients of *tuyul*, provincial magnates and governors, some small section of the cities' guilds (Dawlatabadi 1983, 2:131), and a large sector of the divided clergy. Like the Ottoman counterrevolutionaries who could not articulate an oppositionist language of their own, the counterrevolutionary coalition in Iran strategically chose the clerics' language to combat the constitutionalists, for it was a ready-made and sophisticated criticism of the constitutionalists that, for the moment, served the opposition well.

The first serious physical confrontation between the constitutionalists and the counterrevolutionaries happened on December 15, 1907, when protestors began a procession that ended at Tupkhanah Square. Here they raised tents and began harassing, robbing, beating, and even hanging bystanders who were suspected of being constitutionalists. Meanwhile, the shah arrested several members of the now proconstitutionalist cabinet and, after the intervention of the British, sent the grand vizier and two other ministers into exile after changing his mind about their execution. This event, which lasted for four days, ended when the shah backed away from a full-fledged attack on the assembly. The crowds dispersed but the assembly was left with a new cabinet handpicked by the shah.⁷⁵ When the actual attack came some six months later (June 23, 1908), the armed committees proved to be no match for the modern, Russian-trained Cossack brigade that bombarded the assembly compounds. The assembly fell easily and the constitutional movement seemed to have been defeated (Kasravi 1951, 577–640). In fact, had it not been for the institution-building activities during stage 2, the constitutional movement might have been completely crushed. With the destruction of the National Assembly, the sacking of the constitutional press, and the dispersing of the committees in Tehran, the center of activities moved to Tabriz and the northern Gilan province, where the surviving committees were strongest.

The Legal Counterrevolution against the Duma

In Russia, the dynamics of counterrevolution differed from those in Iran and the Ottoman Empire in one crucial respect. The Duma was estab-

⁷⁵ For a description of events during the Tuupkhanah incident see *Habl al-Matin*, no. 189, December 24, 1907 (19 Dhu al-Qa'da 1325), pp. 1–2, 7; no. 190, December 25, 1907 (20 Dhu al-Qa'da 1325), pp. 1–2; *Musavat*, no. 9, January 12, 1908 (7 Dhu al-Hijja 1325), pp. 4–5; see also Kasravi 1951, pp. 505–12, 521–22; Browne 1910, p. 163; Hidayat 1982, pp. 160–61).

lished after the violent counterrevolutionary backlash that brought a martial end to the Days of Freedom. After the suppression of the soviets, the Duma was left without support from quasi-governmental institutions; thus it was unable to create an effective power bloc for countering the government. In the face of its enfeebled opponent, the government had a free hand to tamper with the terms of its ambiguous compromise and to impose its own definition and render ineffective what the constitution-*alists* had hoped would be a legislative assembly. Thus began the legal, nonviolent phase of the counterrevolution directed by the bureaucracy and supported by various social classes and institutions. Through a series of legal and electoral interventions, the government significantly reduced the Duma's legislative powers and undermined its representative character by disenfranchising large sectors of the population.

The impotence of the Russian Duma should be compared to the more effective Ottoman Chamber of Deputies. The CUP's extensive presence within the administration and the army provided the Ottoman chamber with the power to dismiss the grand vizier using a minor legal excuse, and the Ottoman revolutionaries proved that they could do so even without employing legal channels. Even the Iranian National Assembly wielded more power than the Russian Duma. Although the Iranian assembly's constitutional authority to dismiss cabinets or ministers was not always respected, the government feared the assembly, for its radical faction enjoyed the strong support of the armed committees. Thus, the government occasionally abided by its orders, and in a few instances it dismissed ministers or even entire cabinets. It was the balance of power between the government and the assembly that permitted the latter to continue its existence in face of many serious legal violations, even after a prominent prime minister was assassinated by members of the committees. In Russia, in striking similarity to the altercations in the Ottoman Empire and Iran, the Duma demanded the subservience of the executive to the legislature; once the executive refused to abide, the Duma asked for the resignation of the cabinet. The similarities, however, end there. As Healy (1976, p. 202) has remarked, the Russian "assembly had no means of compelling an official to answer a query, much less to resign; of course it could not put aside his orders."

The legal machinations of the government for reducing the Duma's powers began with the electoral laws. In July 1905, the government had offered the Bulygin Duma to the opposition, the terms of which reduced the Duma to an essentially consultative body. This offer placed severe limitations on the franchise by proposing a complicated multistage voting system that, combined with a high property qualification (especially in the cities), excluded many, and the industrial workers were disenfranchised almost entirely. Both the opposition and the right had denounced

the Bulygin Duma—the latter because it viewed the Bulygin Duma as a stepping stone to a dangerous Duma with legislative powers, the former because the Bulygin Duma fell far short of a legislative Duma based on four-tailed (universal, equal, direct, and secret) male suffrage. While a few ministers looked upon the idea of universal suffrage positively, the tsar and the majority of his advisors did not. After a series of meetings in October, the government approved an electoral law that was heavily influenced by that proposed earlier by Bulygin, yet it allowed a wider franchise. The complicated electoral law that was promulgated on December 11, 1905, while greatly increasing the number of voters, was not universal or equal or direct: it excluded women and accorded eligibility to those owning property or paying taxes (Ascher 1988, pp. 178–79; 1992, pp. 42–43, 79; Healy 1976, pp. 90–94, 100–104; Harcave 1964, pp. 246–47). Yet the government's efforts to create a conservative Duma bore results far from expected; in spite of the obstacles, the electorate voted for a Duma that was far more radical than imagined, with the Kadets the clear winners. Out of a total of 524 elected members, only 5% belonged to the ultraconservatives (Ascher 1992, pp. 50–52; Kochan 1966, p. 109).

Another legal attempt to reduce the Duma's powers was the decree issued on February 20, 1906, that transformed the State Council, a purely advisory body established in 1810, to a second chamber with legislative powers equal to those of the Duma. In a clear breach of the October Manifesto, which had not mentioned any legislative body other than the Duma, the newly transformed State Council (later incorporated into the Fundamental Laws) assured that no bill would be sent to the tsar for ratification unless it was approved by both houses. To guard the State Council's conservatism, the tsar not only appointed half of its 198 members, but he did so on a yearly basis, allowing quick removal of dissenters. The bulk of the rest of its members were elected from the established institutions such as the Orthodox church, and the provincial zemstvo assemblies, as well as the major landowners not represented in the zemstvos and the nobility or gentry. The State Council was thus transformed into a powerful conservative institution to greatly moderate, or even hamper, the Duma's attempts at social transformation and to act as a buffer between the tsar and the Duma (Ascher 1992, pp. 59–60, 70; Harcave 1964, pp. 13–14, 246–47; Healy 1976, pp. 109–10; Hosking 1973, pp. 11–12; Manning 1982, 212–13).

The Fundamental Laws, written entirely by the government and published on April 24, 1906, three days before the Duma's first session, exposed the Russian opposition's lack of input in the constitution-making process—further proof of their weakness. Given a free hand to draft the Fundamental Laws, the senior officials, in addition to the State Council,

incorporated many conservative features into the constitution. The Fundamental Laws preserved the powers of the executive branch with the tsar remaining as its absolute commander. Although the Duma achieved the right to interpellate ministers, the right to appoint or dismiss them was solely the tsar's and he could do so without the Duma's approval. Thus, the ministers remained responsible to the tsar rather than the Duma. Furthermore, the tsar had total command over the armed forces, summoned the sessions, and had the right to dissolve the Duma at will simply by indicating the election and convocation date of a new Duma. For a legislative proposal to become law, it had to pass both houses and gain the tsar's approval. In addition, the tsar reserved the right to veto all legislation, to determine foreign policy, to accept the views of either house in case of a budgetary disagreement, and—contrary to both houses' views—to retain the previous year's budget. He also had the right to issue emergency laws when houses were not in session. Furthermore, only the tsar could initiate revision of the Fundamental Laws. The only change in this period was a slight curbing of the tsar's power in the area of legislature (Ascher 1992, pp. 63–71; Harcave 1964, pp. 246–50; Healy 1976, pp. 118–20). The announcement came during the April congress of the Kadets, prompting their moderate leaders to make a severe condemnation of the government and the Fundamental Laws. "Like thieves in the dead of night, all the specialists on state law organized, [and] these people staged a conspiracy against the people (applause). . . . That which we read in the newspapers today is a fraud, a fraud against the people, and we must immediately answer this fraud," protested Miliukov, the Kadet leader (Ascher 1992, p. 79). On the same day of April 24, 1906, the government adopted its last precautionary measure against the yet unconvoked Duma by appointing the hostile Prime Minister Goremykin and a few archconservatives to his cabinet (Ascher 1992, pp. 73–76; Healy 1976, pp. 142–48).

During the short 72 days of its existence (April 27–July 9, 1906), the Duma endured a contentious constitutional battle with the government. The representatives' first action was to ask for sweeping changes designed to transform the Duma into a full-fledged parliament with absolute authority over the executive branch, such as that prevailing in the British constitutional monarchy. Among the representatives' requests submitted on May 2, 1906, in their "Answer to the Throne" were a cabinet responsible to the Duma, changes in the authority of or the elimination of the State Council, guarantee of civil liberties, the institution of universal male suffrage, the abolition of capital punishment, and amnesty for all political prisoners. Included was also the sensitive demand for agrarian reform, a topic discussed further below. Many of these demands violated the Fundamental Laws, and the government in its rejection of them

pointed this out. In response, on May 13 the Duma deputies cast a vote of no confidence by an overwhelming majority and asked for the resignation of the cabinet. The next day, the cabinet decided to dissolve the Duma, a decision that was withheld for some eight weeks. In the stormy days of the First Duma, the government approved only two of the Duma's legislative proposals and implemented a single one, while the representatives interpellated the ministers 400 times regarding their illegal actions and abuse of power (Ascher 1992, pp. 81–110, 162–71; Healy 1976, pp. 179–220).

What finally brought the Duma and the government to an impasse was the land question, the most pressing problem of the empire. In the Answer to the Throne, the Duma proposed alleviating the problems of the land-hungry peasantry by distributing treasury, monastic, and imperial lands, as well as through the “compulsory confiscation of private estates.” These were followed by three particular proposals of various parties for solving the problem of the land-hungry peasants, all of which included compulsory confiscation of private land of major owners as an essential component. The government found compulsory expropriation of privately owned land “absolutely inadmissible” and instead proposed other solutions for raising agricultural productivity to improve peasants' conditions (Healy 1976, pp. 185–91, 221–38; Ascher 1992, pp. 171–77; Manning 1982, pp. 205–8).

The proposed reforms of the Russian Duma played the same role as they had in the Ottoman Empire and in Iran: they caused the breakdown of the previously constitutionalist coalitions and threw many among their ranks into the counterrevolutionary camp. Nowhere was this demonstrated more clearly than in the reaction of the landowning nobility. Greatly alarmed by the Duma's stance on the land question and by peasant unrest in the countryside, a majority of the landowning gentry turned sharply against the Duma and sided with the government that it had previously opposed.

The most dramatic and consequential of the coalition breakdowns was that of the landowning gentry that found its political preserve in the *zemstvos*, the local elective institutions of self-government established in the wake of Emancipation to fill the void left by the gentry as serf owners. Classless and representative in intent, these provincial institutions were, in reality, dominated by the landowning gentry. The landowning gentry contained a small emerging liberal minority that, with its urban residence, better education, professional orientation, and close ties to the nonnoble urban intelligentsia, constituted a faction distinguishable from the provincial gentry. Significantly, this liberal minority of the gentry intelligentsia occupied the leadership of the *zemstvos* and became an important advocate of the constitutional movement, joining the liberal Kadet party in large numbers. The *zemstvo* leadership was able to rally

zemstvo rank and file and other institutions of nobility behind the constitutionalist movement by exploiting their animosity toward the central government. This animosity was fueled by the government's neglect of agriculture in favor of its extensive industrialization policies and its intent to encroach upon the autonomy of zemstvos and turn them into instruments of central administration (Manning 1979, pp. 32–37; 1982, pp. 38–39, 43–49, 61–62; Verner 1990, pp. 105–6; Yaney 1973, pp. 235–38). In the words of Manning (1982, p. 49), “a cadre of gentry leaders within the zemstvos and other local elective institutions were able to translate the vague, often anti-bureaucratic sentiment of the provincial gentry into concrete political programs and demands.”

In a series of zemstvo congresses, first in November 1904 and then in April and autumn of 1905, the zemstvo leadership, along with broad ranging reforms, asked for a national legislative assembly, four-tailed male suffrage, and compulsory expropriation of private landholdings to alleviate land hunger among the peasantry. The provincial zemstvos followed the lead of congresses and became increasingly radicalized up to the winter of 1905–6. Yet at this time, notwithstanding its recent liberal voting, the provincial gentry became greatly alarmed by the recent peasant disorders and reacted by changing political position almost overnight. In face of government suppression of these revolts, they adopted silence, purged the left-wing “third element” zemstvo employees, and increasingly came to view their left-leaning Kadet leadership—with its program for expropriation of land—as traitors to the noble estate and unrepresentative of the local zemstvos (Manning 1979; 1982, pp. 67–137, 177–202; Harcave 1964, pp. 54–58, 132, 142–43, 171; Ascher 1988, pp. 60–65, 115–16).

When the First Duma convened, the debates on the agrarian reform sparked the second great wave of peasant uprisings in mid-May, during which close to 1,600 instances of peasant unrest were reported (Ascher 1992, pp. 111–28; Manning 1982, pp. 229–59). In face of the second wave of peasant disorders and the Duma's demand for compulsory expropriation, the formal split between the zemstvo leadership and the provincial gentry, or zemstvo rank and file, became solidified. Subsequently, the provincial gentry reacted by organizing congresses that mobilized the local zemstvos and noble societies behind a conservative political program, established the conservative United Nobility, and, in its 1906–7 elections, ousted the liberal leadership (Manning 1979; 1982, pp. 212–28).

Drawing its members from various conservative political landowning groups, the United Nobility was established during the Duma's agrarian debates as an alliance between the absentee magnates from St. Petersburg and the larger provincial landowners from regions hardest hit by peasant rebellions. A staunchly conservative institution, it acted as a counter-

weight to the power of the Duma by mobilizing the local zemstvos and noble associations, by exerting influence through legal channels of the State Council, and by its behind-the-scenes influence on the tsar and senior officials. It fiercely opposed compulsory expropriation of the gentry's lands and instead suggested abolition of the commune as the solution to the land problem, a program later adopted by the government. Furthermore, its political machinations played an influential role in convincing the government to abolish the First Duma. Until its demise in 1915, it increased its presence in formal-legal institutions, such as the State Council, and continued to influence the government through informal machinations, steering its policy in a more conservative direction (Hosking and Manning 1979; Manning 1982, pp. 229–59; Ascher 1992, pp. 4–5, 178–80, 196; Harcave 1964, pp. 256–57; Levin 1966, pp. 237–38).

The ease with which the government moved to abolish the First Duma was a clear indication of the Duma's lack of power; despite the various appeals the Duma issued, it failed to mobilize popular support or to incite widespread disturbances in opposition to the government's decision. In Iran and in the Ottoman Empire, the assemblies were abrogated forcefully after armed confrontations with their supporters, for they constituted genuine power blocs against the government. In Russia the Duma was annulled by decree without causing any major disturbances.

Deadlocked on the question of expropriation of land, the Duma issued its famous "Appeal to the People," indirectly threatening the government with future public disturbances if its proposed land program was not approved. The appeal prompted the government to issue a decree and to dissolve the Duma on July 9, 1906. In response, in an emergency meeting that convened outside St. Petersburg on the same day, the deputies issued the Vyborg Manifesto, calling the public to massive revolutionary disturbances in response to the dissolution. Even though the revolutionary manifesto was eventually signed by a surprisingly large number of deputies, it failed to incite any large-scale response on the part of the workers or the peasants, a situation that was not unexpected; the Duma had not indulged in active organization of the opposition at the time of its operation, while the public, and in particular the workers, had not only received severe blows to their political associations but after a year and a half of revolutionary struggle had exhausted their resources and could not bear the threat of unemployment (Ascher 1988, pp. 192–209; Healy 1976, pp. 238–61; Manning 1982, pp. 241–43, 260–61).

With the dissolution of the First Duma, the government set on the task of further limiting the franchise to create an "acceptable" Duma. With this intent, "all the resources of the bureaucracy, physical, legal, and spiritual, were brought into play in an attempt to create a duma

with a majority to the right of the center, a *duma* 'acceptable' to the administration" (Levin 1966, p. 60). Under the new electoral law, as the result of combined class, property, and territory requirements, it became possible for a single individual to vote several times (Levin 1966, pp. 60–62). But even this electoral law failed the bureaucracy and only gave birth to a more radical *Duma* harboring greater hostility toward the government, though with a larger concentration of the extreme right-wing faction (Levin 1966, pp. 60–69; Ascher 1992, pp. 284–85; Kochan 1966, p. 117).

During the 103 days of its existence and its 53 meetings between February 20 and June 1907, the Second *Duma*'s legislative activities did not fare any better than the First's. The *Duma* continued to press the government with its interpellations, asking for responsible ministries and questioning the government's illegal activities, while it entered major disagreements with the government over the budget. Yet, the agrarian issue, as with the First *Duma*, continued to be the most contentious issue, and it finally brought the Second *Duma*'s demise as well. In response to the *Duma*'s program of extensive compulsory expropriation of land, the government reacted with a *coup d'état* that dissolved the *Duma* and promised new electoral laws. With this act, the government set out to regain what it had lost to the opposition during the last two years, violating the principles stated in the October Manifesto and the constitution on its way to full restoration of its own powers (Levin 1966, pp. 156, 186, 198–99, 202, 222, 227, 242–60, 307–8; Ascher 1992, pp. 318–20, 349–58; Manning 1982, pp. 328–29; Bonnell 1983, pp. 319–21). It was only during the Third *Duma* that the government, with its modified electoral laws, could give the majority representation to the landowners and drastically decrease the number of workers' and peasants' representatives inside the chamber (Levin 1966, pp. 340–41; Manning 1982, pp. 325–30, 357–59; Ascher 1992, pp. 353–55; Hosking 1973). Nevertheless, even this moderated *Duma* was not deemed acceptable to the conservative bureaucracy.

It would be an exaggeration to conclude that the Russian bureaucracy, in its entirety, resisted all change. Most notably, the prime ministers Witte and Stolypin attempted to reach some form of accord with the opposition. Yet, the predicament of the reform-minded bureaucrats was that they were part of an administrative organ that was overwhelmingly dominated by conservatives who frustrated their efforts at change. As Ascher has pointed out, "Devotees of the old order held the vast majority of posts in all branches of the bureaucracy" (Ascher 1988, pp. 245–48, quote from 245; Harcave 1964, p. 245; Healy 1976, p. 134). The conservatives, aside from their legal interventions, did not hesitate to use illegal means to achieve desired results. During the elections for the First *Duma*

they cooperated with both the rightist gangs, who attacked the revolutionaries, and the police, who frequently shut down election meetings (Ascher 1992, pp. 44–45; Healy 1976, p. 127). These illegal activities continued during the Second and Third Dumas. As Levin in his investigation of the Second Duma has noted, anti-Duma activities were not confined to the highest ranks of the bureaucracy, but ranged from the governors and city police chiefs to the lower ranks of bureaucracy and local officials responsible to the center (Levin 1966, p. 64). Notable was the moral and financial support the administration granted the extreme-right Union of Russian People, an act that enabled the union to wield an influence far greater than its actual numbers.⁷⁶ During the Third Duma, it was the bureaucracy's resistance to even the slightest change that led St. Petersburg's high-ranking chief of police and other cabinet ministers to assassinate Prime Minister Stolypin (Hosking 1973, pp. 148–49).

Unlike the landowning gentry, who only gradually came to realize the threat of the constitutional movement, the church was opposed to the October Manifesto from the very beginning and remained so by backing the government during its election campaigns and resisting the Duma's proposed reforms (Ascher 1988, p. 244; Levin 1966, p. 64). On the other hand, at least at the beginning, some industrialists tenaciously supported the constitutional movement; a substantial number of the business class had participated in the general strike that led to the October Manifesto. Yet, even then, their position was not unanimously favorable, and many industrialists demanded stern measures against the labor strikes. The opinion of the opposing faction prevailed in the aftermath of the general strike and the growing labor militancy during the Days of Freedom. On October 24, 1905, the Association of Manufacturers and Factory Owners, representing 150 companies, formed to implement a uniform strike policy among the employers. With the legalization of trade union activity after the March 1906 laws, employers were also presented with a more favorable legal framework to organize in various societies and associations to defend their interests and oppose the demands of labor and the reforms of the Duma (Ascher 1988, pp. 121–22, 216–17, 222, 279–80; Bonnell 1983, pp. 274–318; Hosking 1973, pp. 179–80).

Resistance across Constitutional Revolutions

To sum up, the dynamics of counterrevolution were broadly the same in all three revolutions. The highly destabilizing programs of the assemblies

⁷⁶ The tsar supported their newspaper financially from 1906 to 1909 (Levin 1966, pp. 238–39).

were initiated at a time when the revolutionaries lacked sufficient state control. The assemblies' undertakings not only disturbed the old regimes and their bureaucrats, they managed to antagonize even some of the social sectors that had avidly supported the constitutional system. The old regimes, still largely in state command, allied with the negatively affected groups to overturn the tide of revolution and force the assemblies out of power. In Russia, the Duma was first weakened by the violent destruction of a potential ally—the soviets—and then it was gradually weakened through a series of legal, constitutional procedures until it was left without any real powers. While the Russian Duma never recovered from the counterrevolutionary backlash, the Ottoman and Iranian constitutionalists did. The following section is devoted to explaining this difference.

DEFEATING THE COUNTERREVOLUTION

After being forced out of power, the Ottoman and Iranian revolutionaries were able to defeat the counterrevolution and restore the constitutional regimes. The support of a major sector of the armed forces proved to be crucial in this task. The role of the military, the most crucial factor for success, has been the subject of extensive commentary in theories of revolution from a variety of perspectives (Brinton 1952, pp. 98, 280; Pettee 1938, pp. 102–106; Tilly 1978, p. 200; Skocpol 1979, p. 32; Russel 1974, pp. 9, 79–82; Gurr 1970, pp. 244–48, 251–56, 272; Stone 1966, p. 166; Eckstein 1965, p. 157). However, many have discussed the military in terms of its ability or inability to repress the contenders rather than as a potential and indeed crucial ally of the opposition. Only a few have taken the further step of paying attention to the fact that if the opposition is to succeed, it should command at least a faction of the armed forces (Brinton 1952, pp. 98, 280; Russel 1974, pp. 9, 79–82). Brinton has remarked (p. 98) that “no government has fallen before revolutionists until it has lost control over its armed forces or lost the ability to use them effectively; and conversely that no revolutionists have ever succeeded until they have got a predominance of effective armed forces on their side.”

Second in importance were the quasi-governmental institutions established and further consolidated when the revolutionaries' activities were legally sanctioned. The presence of such support was decisive in dealing with the counterrevolution when it was gathering momentum and once it was in full swing. Naturally, the role of such institutions was most crucial in Iran and Russia, where the constitutionalists had the least amount of support from within the state. Yet, the Iranians fared better

because the committees, in the period of legal activity, gathered sufficient momentum to be able to continue their operations even with the onset of the counterrevolution. In Russia, the soviets were crushed and banned and the zemstvos turned against the constitution, thus leaving the Duma and the constitutionalists without support to stave off or to recover from the counterrevolution.

Restoring Power in the Ottoman Empire

After the CUP was unexpectedly forced out of power on April 13, 1909, it retreated to its stronghold in Salonika. From there, within a mere 10 days, it organized the Action Army (*Hareket Ordusu*) and easily captured Istanbul.⁷⁷ Subsequently, the Chamber of Deputies was restored and its unionist members reappointed. Furthermore, after the CUP accused Abdülhamid II of leading the movement, he was deposed and replaced with his brother Mehmet V.⁷⁸ Some 200 participants, predominantly soldiers but also members of religious societies such as the leader of the Society of Muhammad, were publicly hanged, and 10,000 soldiers were punished, many of them by banishment to the CUP-dominated provinces as simple laborers for public works projects.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ See Nadi (1909, pp. 145–51). Some historians, by relying extensively on the rhetoric of the CUP, have underplayed the CUP's connection to the Action Army. My claim is that such disassociation was a later development, motivated by political expediency on the part of the CUP. Attempts at distancing, e.g., may be found in the statements of Mahmud Şevket Pasha, the commander of the Action Army (Danişmend, 1961, pp. 134–35). Likewise, when the Action Army captured Istanbul, strikingly, their public announcements did not make any mention of the CUP (see *İkdam*, no. 5360, April 29, 1909 (9 Rebiyülahır 1327), p. 1; no. 5363, May 2, 1909 (12 Rebiyülahır 1327), p. 1. It seems certain however, that the Action Army was organized by the CUP because it originated in Macedonia, the center for the CUP activities and the original cite of mutinies and disorders. In addition, the CUP had earlier telegraphed the sultan, grand vizier, and other high-ranking officials with a warning: CUP was organizing an army to retake power and to restore the chamber with Ahmed Rıza, the former head of the chamber and a highly prominent CUP member, as its president (Danişmend 1961, pp. 99–108). In light of the above it is reasonable to agree with Danişmend that Mahmud Şevket Pasha, the commander of the Action Army, was appointed by the unionists.

⁷⁸ An announcement by the Action Army condemned Abdülhamid II for the entire counterrevolutionary incident; see *İkdam*, no. 5360, April 30, 1909 (9 Rebiyülahır 1327), p. 1. In contrast to the public declarations of the CUP, the *fetva* issued by *şeyhülislam* mentioned other matters as the main reasons for dethronement; *Düstur2*, I, no. 57, April 27, 1909 (7 Rebiyülahır 1327), p. 166.

⁷⁹ See *BDFa* (1910, p. 112), Tunaya (1984, p. 190), and *Düstur2*, I, no. 64, May 30, 1909 (10 Cemaziyelevvel 1327), p. 191.

Defeating the Monarchy in Iran

The Iranian revolutionaries did not recover as easily and remained out of power from June 23, 1908, to July 16, 1909. By the time the National Assembly was sacked in Tehran, the committees had built strong organizations in the provinces. This was especially true in the north and northwest. Tabriz, the city where the committees were strongest, resisted the government's onslaught and remained a major actor in the national resistance movement. The reinstatement of the constitutional government, however, was made possible only after the Bakhtiari tribes in the south joined forces with the committees. Persuaded by the Isfahan committees in early January 1909 to join the national resistance movement, the Bakhtiaris took possession of Isfahan and deposed the government representatives. This was followed by a series of victories for the committees in the north, including the takeover of Rasht and the defeat of government forces in Tabriz. The joint cooperation of the committees—predominantly from the north with a faction of the Iranian armed forces (the Bakhtiaris) from the south—resulted in a four-day battle for Tehran, which ended on July 16, 1909. The shah, who had played a central role in the counterrevolution, was deposed on the same day and two days later his young son, a minor, was proclaimed shah and placed under the supervision of a regent. The National Assembly no longer had to contend with the government of the old regime (Browne 1910, pp. 266–327; Kasravi 1951, pp. 640–906; Lambton 1963, pp. 67–76).

As the discussion on prerevolutionary reforms pointed out earlier, the Iranian army was rife with major structural divisions, the most notable of which was that between the standing army and the tribal factions. It was precisely the existence of this structural division that proved crucial during the revolutionary upheavals. The tribal faction's decision to collaborate with the constitutionalists was both in reaction to the old regime's reform policy of weakening the tribal forces and a response to an opportunity to bolster their own power by cooperating with a challenger to the centralizing state, a path well trodden by nomadic tribes throughout Iranian history. The revolutionaries exploited this structural cleavage within the military to their own advantage when they persuaded the Bakhtiaris to unite with them.

The Apathetic Army in Russia

In Russia, despite the army's low pay and the dismal state of its rank and file, it remained apathetic toward the revolutionaries.⁸⁰ While a state

⁸⁰ For an extensive treatment of the army during the Revolution of 1905 see Bushnell (1985); see also Ascher (1988, p. 168).

financial crisis has never been sufficient to throw an army into the revolutionary camp, the losing war that Russia continued to fight against Japan could have placed Russia's military on the side of revolution. A crucial contingency that kept the Russian army from developing deeper and more fundamental grievances and ultimately saved the autocracy from soldiers' defection was that the Russian statesmen, alarmed by the internal disturbances, concluded the war with Japan quickly, before the soldiers at the front were affected by the disturbances at home. Domestic conditions forced the Russian leaders to accept defeat at the hands of Japan, humiliating as it was, and concentrate their energy and resources on the home front without further antagonizing the defeated army. If the revolutionaries had been able to win the cooperation of a major sector of the army and navy, they could have used the military as an essential resource to orchestrate a full-fledged revolution (Ascher 1988, pp. 167–68).

There were many scattered mutinies in the army, but few were connected to the urban revolts. The soldiers and sailors did not identify with the general demands of the movement and failed to join workers and revolutionaries in the uprisings against the autocracy. When they did revolt, it was inward looking: they demanded only the improvement of their conditions. In short, with rare exceptions, such as the mutiny on the battleship *Potemkin* and at the Kronstadt naval base, the soldiers' uprisings did not echo the broader political demands of the movement. The Social Democrats had made only a marginal penetration into their ranks, but even at the front, the soldiers remained unaffected by the revolutionary propaganda. The elite forces, and the Cossacks in particular—the most effective instrument in fighting the revolution—were untouched by the general revolutionary fervor and remained absolutely loyal to the tsar (Ascher 1988, pp. 170–74, 269–73, 311–12, 325; Bushnell 1985, pp. 226–28; Harcave 1964, pp. 42–43, 140–41, 156–57, 220–22; Healy 1976, p. 70).

Dire financial conditions and a losing war were strong enough negative stimuli to make the Russian military an unreliable instrument of repression and an unpredictable force for both the autocracy and the revolutionaries. It was precisely this unpredictability after Bloody Sunday but before the granting of the October Manifesto that had forced the autocracy to accept the demands of the opposition (Ascher 1988, p. 168; Verner 1990, pp. 161–62; Bushnell 1985). Yet, after the announcement of the October Manifesto, the military proved to be a reliable ally of the autocracy at the onset of the serious outbreaks of labor and peasant unrest (Ascher 1988, p. 168). Prompt acceptance of the defeat against Japan, proved to be the right course of action for the Russian statesmen, but after entering the First World War, the timely conclusion of the war was a luxury they could no longer afford.

Advancing to the Fourth Stage

The argument presented so far may be summarized in table 1. During stage 2, the assemblies' effectiveness in approving legislation, implementing legislation, dismissing and replacing individual ministers, prime ministers, or entire cabinets with sympathizers, and finally, modifying the constitution or interpreting it to their own advantage all depended upon the support they received from the revolutionary power bloc formed in their support. The most important elements of these power blocs were the military officers and civilian bureaucrats; next in importance were the quasi-governmental institutions and their civilian militia. It should be noted that the second stage of constitutional revolutions provides a crucial period of legal activity for the contenders, enabling them to increase their influence within the state administration and the armed forces and to expand considerably their numbers, their scope of activity, and the powers of quasi-governmental institutions and their militia.

With the exception of organizing a militia, these activities were successfully pursued by the Young Turks during stage 2, a fact that explains the success of the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies during its constitutional battles with the government and the ease with which the chamber defeated the counterrevolution within 10 days. The extensive support the CUP enjoyed within the armed forces had rendered the formation of a militia unnecessary. The period of legal activity proved to be most crucial for the Iranian revolutionaries. The Iranian constitutionalists lacked support from either the military or the bureaucracy and enjoyed only the backing of the committees and the militia they organized during the legal period. With the help of these institutions, the constitutionalists were able to intimidate the government and to withhold the abrogation of the constitutional system and the destruction of the assembly even in the face of grave legal violations for more than 20 months. They even empowered the assembly to the degree that it could win a few legal battles against the government. On the other hand, after the onset of the counterrevolution and the fall of the National Assembly, the committees sustained the revolutionary movement in the provinces for more than a year until a major faction of the military forces decided to assist them in defeating the counterrevolution and restoring the assembly. The Russian Duma, on the other hand, was not an effective institution because it did not have access to any extra-parliamentary sources of support: the soviets were suppressed early, the zemstvos rescinded their support, and it had hardly any allies within the bureaucracy or among the mutinous soldiers. The constitutionalists were therefore unable to forestall the legal counterrevolution that, piece by piece, changed the Duma's representation and abolished its powers.

TABLE 1
OUTLINE OF CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTIONS

ENTITY	SUPPORT FROM INSIDE THE STATE		QUASI-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE REVOLUTIONARIES			RESULTS	
	Bureaucracy	Army	Institutions with Civil Duties	Militia	Assembly's Performance and Power	Defeated Counter- revolution	
Ottoman Empire	Yes (extensive)	Yes (extensive)	Yes	NA*	Impressive	Yes	
Iran	No	Yes (no initially but yes finally)	Yes	Yes	Moderate	Yes	
Russia	No	No	No (yes initially but no finally)	No (yes initially but no finally)	Poor	No	

*The CUP had a strong presence within the military and did not see a need to create paramilitary organizations by arming its clubs and branches.

DISCUSSION: STATE BREAKDOWN

At the beginning of this article I explained that the modernizing Ottoman reforms that began in the late 18th century and lasted until the revolution in the early 20th century created pronounced divisions within the state. Furthermore, throughout this discussion I have held that the Ottoman bureaucracy and military became revolutionary because of internal divisions within the state and the relative deprivation that the modern-trained bureaucrats and military officers experienced against the less educated, traditionally educated, military and civil bureaucrats who had patrimonial connections to the grandees or to the sultan himself. Despite my consistent emphasis on the role of resources and resource mobilization theory, these assertions may appear more familiar to theories of relative deprivation and at odds with resource mobilization theory, which attributes the outbreak of revolts and revolutions not to a change in the actors' grievances, but to the type and amount of resources available to actors.⁸¹ Yet, it becomes much harder to uphold resource mobilization's claim when it comes to the analysis of resourceful actors—actors who have routine and regular access to resources, such as members of the civil bureaucracy and military (members of “polity” in Tilly's [1978] classification). For this set of actors, the level of access to resources is constant; the variability of their actions may be better explained by the level of variability in their grievances.

The above explanation should by no means be taken as a rejection of resource mobilization or state-centered theories, according to which revolutionary outbreaks occur only when states are incapable of performing their routine tasks (Brinton 1952, pp. 30–32, 37, 41, 279–80; Pettee 1938, pp. 100–101; Skocpol 1979, p. 32; Goldstone 1991*b*). As George Pettee remarked, “[Revolution begins] simply with a sudden recognition by almost all the active and passive membership that the state no longer exists” (p. 100). A weaker state has a lower capacity to suppress the challengers, a condition that translates into lower costs of mobilization for the contenders. In agreement with state-centered theories, I found that three states that faced revolutionary situations were financially troubled (Skocpol 1979; Goldstone 1991*b*).

Yet, fiscal crisis alone, without the existence of internal divisions

⁸¹ Resource mobilization theory has certainly done away with some simplified assumptions of the relative deprivation theory and has convincingly shown that, no matter how aggrieved, without the existence of resources, revolutionary actors are not able to protest and contest authority. For a view opposed to relative deprivation theory see Tilly, Tilly, and Tilly (1975) and McCarthy and Zald (1977). For one of the most convincing empirical demonstrations of this claim see Aminzade (1984). For the classic presentation of relative deprivation theory see Davis (1962, esp. p. 6). See also Gurr (1970, pp. 22–154).

within the civil and military administrations, would not lead to state breakdowns. After all, often when a state is fiscally challenged, the pay for the army and the bureaucracy is in arrears, a situation that particularly affects the lower ranks. This source of grievance, however, has never been sufficient to prompt internal actors to side against the old regimes. Instead, the strongest impetus for dissolving the bonds of loyalty with the old regime comes from pronounced structural divisions within the state. A good counterexample may be found in the reaction of the Russian army to the revolutionary outbreaks. Because of the modernizing reforms that had created administrations devoid of pronounced structural divisions, the Russian army, despite its dire conditions, refused to join the ranks of revolutionaries. Although it rebelled against its own destitute conditions, its actions remained internal and did not compromise its loyalty toward the old regime. Thus, I hold that the analysis of the state structures before the revolution may lead the way for constructing a more precise definition of state breakdown, a definition that could differentiate between (1) mere internationally challenged and financially troubled states, (2) states that, because of fiscal crisis, have lost control over large territories and are incapable of enforcing the rule of law, and (3) states that, in addition to all of the above, witness the cooperation of large sectors of their military and bureaucracy with revolutionaries. If the military and bureaucracy are torn by structural divisions, they may, at times of financial and international difficulties, readily break off from the state and side with the opposition in hope of future gains from other sectors. Greater attention to the internal structuring of states may serve as a corrective to more recent theories that, unlike earlier theories' emphasis on the bureaucratic and military staff (Brinton 1952; Pettie 1938), have descended into a more abstract and less precise definition of breakdown.

Early 20th-century Iran is another instance in which internal state divisions came to the constitutionalists' rescue. As discussed above, despite the attempts of Qajar reformers, the Iranian army continued to include important semiautonomous divisions of tribal cavalry. A faction of these tribal cavalries joined the constitutional militia to end the counterrevolutionary backlash and restore the constitutional regime. These divisions had repeatedly been put to use by rival claimants to the throne, and now the constitutionalists exploited this division with the promise of a greater future role in politics for the cooperating tribal faction.

Although I have claimed that prerevolutionary divisions within the state are the most probable cause of state breakdowns, this claim does not rule out other possible conjunctural causes for breakdown. Chief among these conjunctural causes is severe defeat in a long war, prompting the soldiers to blame their governments for the suffered rout (Gurr

1970, p. 254; Stone 1966, p. 166). Considering the financial crisis of the state and widespread disturbances as a constant, my claim is that soldiers defect and states breakdown sooner if there are already preexisting structural divisions within administrations and armies. The structural divisions that prevailed in the Ottoman state and in the Iranian army acted as a potent impetus for dissolving the loyalty of their staffs, without the necessity of immediate international setbacks.

CONCLUSION

The radical Iranian newspaper *Musavat* (Equality) in the heat of the revolutionary struggles stated, "One cannot read a single page of a newspaper without coming across the word liberty at least ten times and one cannot walk twenty steps in the alleys of Tehran without coming across one or two committee banners, adorned in bold characters with the three holy phrases of liberty, fraternity and equality."⁸² On the last day of the soldiers' mutiny in the western regions of the Ottoman Empire, the British Vice Consul reported a typical instance of the proclamation of the constitution by a staff officer addressing soldiers and officers under his command. In his speech "he laid great stress on the absolute necessity of establishing a constitutional Government if the Turkish Empire was to be saved from utter ruin, on the abolition of distinction between race and creed under the Ottoman Government and gave the words 'la patrie, liberté, égalité, fraternité' as their motto" (as quoted in Ahmed 1969, p. 12). In the aftermath of the Young Turk Revolution and in the heat of the day-to-day power struggles with the old regime, *Tanin*, the official organ of the CUP, published regular columns on the history and analysis of the great French Revolution, a conflict whose lessons were thought to be a guiding light for the current situation. The profusion of translations and analyses of the history of the French Revolution in the postrevolutionary setting was a grave contrast to the situation under Hamidian censorship, during which a passing reference to the "regime of 1789" in a journal brought its suppression for a few weeks in 1901. (See Lewis 1961, pp. 192–193; see also pp. 195–96. For the earlier impact of the French Revolution see Lewis [1953, pp. 105–25].) The relevance of the French Revolution was nowhere sensed more clearly than in Russia in 1905, where liberals, moderate radicals, the Social Democrats, and the anarchists drew on it for their own uses, while the monarchists also exhibited an intense interest in French history and reacted to the opposi-

⁸² *Musavat*, no. 25, May 31, 1908 (29 Rabi' II, 1326), p. 7. For a description and analysis of the French Revolution see *Musavat*, no. 7, December 3, 1907 (27 Shawwal 1325), p. 1.

tion having in mind the fate of the aristocracy under Louis XVI (Shlapentokh 1988, pp. 254–401; Verner 1990, pp. 116, 219–20; Keep 1968). And unlike Iran and the Ottoman Empire, where the lessons of the French Revolution seemed mostly to interest the young intellectuals, in Russia the singing of “La Marseillaise” by the ordinary participants during various instances of the conflict throughout the empire indicated greater familiarity at a popular level (Ascher 1992, pp. 54, 133, 158, 208–9; 1988, p. 230; Harcave 1964, pp. 199–200; Bonnell 1983, p. 168; Shlapentokh 1988, p. 257). According to Shlapentokh (1988, p. 257), in Russia between 1905 and 1917, “the French Revolution became more popular than any other period of world history, even including Russian history.”

Reference could be made to many other instances to prove that the French Revolution loomed large, at least in the minds of some participants. The contribution of the French Revolution, however, was more subtle than the above may suggest, for it is impossible to imagine that all actors were aware of the French Revolution and that they attempted to emulate that revolution at every step. Historical evidence does not support such an argument. Nor was the revolutionaries’ major demand, a call for a constitutional system, seen to be peculiar to France alone. By the early 20th century, constitutionalism had taken a strong hold in all of Western Europe, and the constitutionalists idealized the system of rule throughout Europe rather than the one particular to France. Yet, in all three settings, France occupied a privileged position in the constitutionalist consciousness, because France was deemed to be the first constitutional model, the rest of Europe was considered to have followed in its footsteps, and in France constitutionalism was acquired through revolutionary means.

The crucial contribution of the French Revolution was that it made available the revolutionary paradigm of constitutionalism, a paradigm that structured the relationship of the challengers with the old regimes. The revolutionaries, instead of demanding the complete and sudden overthrow of the old regimes, asked for the creation of an assembly by means of which they intended to render the traditional structures of rule ineffective. This path to power gave the constitutional revolutions an altogether different dynamic than revolutions that took place after the Russian Revolution of 1917. By placing the revolutions on a distinctly different trajectory, the ideology of constitutionalism had a profound impact upon the manner in which the struggle for power unfolded.

As I have argued in this article, once the ideology of constitutionalism placed the revolutions on a similar trajectory, it was the support of extra-parliamentary resources, including the military, that determined (1) the level of success of the assemblies and (2) whether the revolutionaries could defeat the counterrevolution and advance to the final stage to cap-

ture total state power. It was during the second stage, the period of legal activity after the issuing of decrees that a crucial time factor entered into the constitutional revolutionary processes. This time factor allowed the revolutionaries to build quasi-governmental institutions and to penetrate deeper into the state. This was, it should be noted, a critical period that is missing from the socialist revolutionary processes. As I demonstrated above, the Young Turks used this opportunity to the greatest extent by reorganizing and purging officials of the old regime and by increasing their illicit party activities around the Ottoman Empire, the Iranians by building and legalizing committees, and the Russians by consolidating labor organizations. Yet, because the period of legal activity ended in Russia at an early stage, the Russian assembly enjoyed little success in its legislative activities.

For a more complete typology of revolutions, further research may take three major directions. First, comparisons to other constitutional revolutions, such as those in China and Mexico, should help confirm, reject, or qualify the conclusions reached here. Second, investigation of the processes of the socialist revolutions should bear out in greater detail their differences from constitutional revolutions. Last, research may greatly benefit by concentrating on what I would call transition paradigms. The 1789 French and 1917 Russian revolutions belong to this category. The French Revolution started out as a revolt that only at the end became a constitutional revolution (for a concise history see Lefebvre [1947]). Similarly, the 1917 Russian Revolution was heavily influenced by the French Revolution, started out as a constitutional revolution, and followed closely the dynamics of the 1905 revolution (for a brief history see Fitzpatrick [1982]). Yet, its difference in some crucial respects in its later periods set it apart from the previous generation of constitutional revolutions. Acting as a transition paradigm, it stood between the constitutional revolutions of the 19th and early 20th centuries and the later generation of socialist revolutions, which, in contrast to constitutional revolutions, demanded a sudden and violent overthrow of the old regimes from their inception. Future research should address the conditions under which these transitions take place.

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