

Doctoral Thesis

**A Study of Shi'i Islam and Democracy:
The Political Stance of Ideologues and Iranian Revolution of 1979**

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INTRODUCTION

Iran, a regional power in the Middle East, which is at focus in this dissertation, has gone through several chaotic situations. Particularly, it has experienced some significant movements toward democracy. Although it may be quite hard to have a comprehensive definition for democracy, it is still possible to find some evidence that proves those movements were pursuing democratic goals. Moreover, democracy does not always have a single and unique framework. It can appear in various forms, as Dahl stipulates:

I assume democracy can be independently invented and reinvented whenever the appropriate conditions exist.¹

Thus, it can be inferred that democracy itself is not the goal, but an arbitrary implement for achieving desirable life through ideal governance. Therefore, it can be simply said that in a democratic system, the more people are allowed to participate freely in political decision making, the more desirable life can be guaranteed. In this regard, H.B. Mayo also argues:

In short, a political system is democratic to the extent that the decision makers are under effective popular control.²

However, the crucial matter which should not be neglected is that achieving a desirable life through people's participation in decision making will be rather impossible without proper education.

The first democratic movement in Iran was the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911). Iranians went through chaotic situations during the revolution, and the movement remained barren after all. For that reason they were obliged to organize movements again and again for having a democratic government. In fact, people in Iran experienced other democratic movements in its modern form after the Constitutional Revolution such as Oil Nationalization Movement. It, in turn, played an important role in revitalizing democracy in Iran, to a great extent. Although Chehabi in *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism* states:

The longer a nondemocratic regime has been in power, and the more distant the memory of democracy is, the less likely it becomes that a crisis of participation will result in democratization.³

He might have considered Constitutional Revolution as the only experience of democratic movement in Iran.

However, he seems to have overlooked two important factors: 1) It was not only during the Constitutional Revolution that Iranians experienced democratic system. They did experience it, even more effectively, during the Premiership of Mosaddeq; and 2) Propagation about democracy in Iran was so much, particularly in the decades prior to the 1979 Revolution. It is explicitly mentioned by Ervand Abrahamian. He said:

Although Tudeh's political clout was short lived, its intellectual and cultural influence endured. The party introduced into Iran the notion of mass politics, mass participation, and mass organizations with party cells and branches, party conferences and congresses, and party newspapers, politburos, and central

committees. Others readily borrowed such terms as 'democratic centralism' and 'mass democracy'.⁴

Probably, because of Tudeh's clout, not only the intellectuals, but also the commoners must have paid a great deal of attention to democracy.

Although democracy does not have one clear definition, modern democratic systems seem to have several shared characteristics. The major characteristics of contemporary democratic systems, as Dahl argues are: 1) elected officials, 2) free, fair and frequent elections, 3) freedom of expression, 4) access to alternative sources of information, 5) associational autonomy, and 6) inclusive citizenship.⁵

The controversial issue of democracy in Iran, particularly the so-called Islamic democracy⁶ in recent years, has aroused public interest. And it has caused some to recollect the process of the revolution of 1979. It might be due to the fact that quite a few political activists and intellectuals, particularly religious intellectuals who played a crucial role in mass mobilization, proposed a democratic type of government as a replacement for the dictatorial regime of Pahlavi. Thus, one of the main aims of this research is to reconsider the characteristics of relations between Islam and democracy.

In order to grasp a clear understanding of some intellectuals' attitude toward democracy, and due to the broad scope of democracy itself, this research attempts to focus on the democratic ideologies of three prominent intellectuals whose role was outstanding in the process of 1979 Revolution. They are Mehdi Bazargan, Mahmoud Taleqani, and Morteza Motahhari. These three intellectuals were selected for two significant reasons.

Briefly speaking, the first reason is that, for example, each could be regarded as a representative of a certain group of democratic intellectuals. Mehdi Bazargan is a lay man who has been referred to as the pioneer of religious intellectualism in Iran. Such a characteristic is quite unusual for a non-cleric figure. It is evident that most of the prominent ideologues in the revolution of 1979 were in one way or another influenced by him, though they did disagree with him on some important issues. For instance, regarding the efficacy of democracy in non-developed societies, Shariati⁷ seems to have a rather skeptical opinion compared to that of Bazargan. In this relation, Chehabi states:

Only two years after Bazargan had stated that democracy with universal suffrage is the best form of government even for under developed nations, Shariati said in 1968 that democracy is at best appropriate for societies that must be administered but is totally dysfunctional for societies that need to be reformed and improved.⁸

Ayatollah S. Mahmoud Taleqani, known as the most liberal religious figure who took a firm stand for secular political groups and individuals played a remarkable role as a link between the religious and secular political leading figures and activists. Although there is an evidence that Taleqani was against power centralization, and consistently advocated shura (consultation), his stance toward democracy cannot be easily grasped. For instance, in *Theology of Discontent*, Dabashi also states:

Having established de jure legitimacy for the clerics, Taleqani proceeds to give this religiously defined authority a democratic posture.⁹

He adds:

The revolutionary mobilization of the mass sentiments necessarily demands a quintessential reinterpretation of Islam. Taleqani's radical re-politicization of Islam reaches a point where he categorically states that 'every school of thought, every social program and platform that controls the tyrants and circumscribes their will is a step closer to the prophets and Islam.' Although he is quick to add that 'yet ultimately they are not Islam.' He has already gone as far as to include constitutionalism, democracy, and socialism as 'successive steps' towards an Islamic ideal.¹⁰

Ayatollah Morteza Motahhari, who was a disciple of Khomeini, unlike Taleqani and Bazargan, had no reconciliation with secular groups. Regarding his approach toward democracy, Vanessa Martin stipulates:

Here we see a totalistic vision of Islam, more so in fact than the one propounded by Motahhari, who allowed for individual privacy and placed less emphasis on the letter of the Shari'a.¹¹

Motahhari has an inductive approach toward democracy. He attempts to extract Islamic principles such as qest (justice), and shura (consultation) from Quran, so as to prove Islam is comprehensive, thus it includes democratic concepts.¹²

The second reason is related to the analytical angle of this research which makes it different from the previous works, by focusing on their different interpretation of Islam. Not all Muslims accept the compatibility between democracy and Islam. Therefore, in order to realize whether their interpretation of Islam would allow them to consider the modern concept of democracy compatible to Islam, one must precisely examine their Islamic ideology. In this regard, Soroush Dabbagh¹³ maintains:

There are three different interpretations of Islam: a) fundamentalist interpretation, in which every single concept or word of the holy text or Sharia is taken literally. And since democracy is a product of reason alone, it is not reconcilable with the fundamentalist reading of Islam; b) traditionalist interpretation, which tries to focus on esoteric and mystic aspects and elements of the Islamic heritage. Although the traditionalists are content with the practical modernization such as technology, they are not pleased with the theoretical modernization. They highly emphasize on intellect rather than reason, and also try to revitalize the pre-modern concept of Islam. Compared to the fundamentalists' reading of Islam, their interpretation is rather indistinct; c) reformist interpretation, which believes in essentials as well as accidentals of Islam. They focus on localities and try to distinguish them from universalities. They accept human rights and approve Western ideas, and they do believe in political secularism.¹⁴

Accordingly, this research explicitly reexamines the ideologies of the above-mentioned ideologues not only by analytical reading of secondary works, but mainly, by the intellectuals' original works as well. For instance, regarding Motahhari, Dabashi argues:

Those who oppose Shariati have tried to turn Motahhari into a "traditionalist" who opposed Shariati and detected the leftist, or "westoxicated," underpinning of his ideas. On the other hand, they seek to portray an essentially "traditionalist" picture of Motahhari, closer to the Holy Text and the Prophetic tradition.¹⁵

But as a matter of fact, in most of Motahhari's works including *Nezam-e Hoquq-e Zan dar Islam* (Rules of Women's Rights in Islam), in which he appears to be of a modern ideology, there is at least an indication¹⁶ that he was a traditionalist and/or somewhat a fundamentalist.

At this very point, there are still some unanswered questions: 1) What exactly did they mean by Islamic democracy? 2) What was their true political stance? 3) Why were they fixating on democracy? 4) Was democracy the only option they had? It is essential to discover what their true stance was, because they (Bazargan, Taleqani, Motahhari) unanimously condemned blind emulation of the people. As Abdolkarim Soroush argues:

There shouldn't be contradiction between Intellectuals' theory and practice. They cannot think in one way and act in another.¹⁷

On the one hand, they, particularly Bazargan and Motahhari, were ideologizing Islam. Regarding that, Ramin Jahanbeglu in *Democracy in Iran* argues:

In every case that oppositions moved toward an ideology or ideologized a certain thing, for instance a religion, it has always been accompanied by violence which is a poison to democracy.¹⁸

Then, he goes as far to say:

Democracy is not just a political regime. It is a social order, a political management and above all, an institutional agreement between differences.¹⁹

On the other hand, they strived to show compatibility between Islam and democracy, which in turn can cause one to think, their case was similar to some clerics who found themselves behind modernity in Constitutional Revolution era, and therefore tried to prove the existence of secular democracy concepts in Islam. Regarding their effort, Behzad Keshavarzi says:

A group of clergies, due to believing in omnipotent feature of Islam and irreversibility of its principles, hurriedly began to extract modern concepts of the West from Quran.²⁰

Although renowned researchers such as Abrahamian, Dabashi, Chehabi, and Bakhash have profoundly examined the ideology and in several cases political activities of the aforementioned prominent ideologues, they have paid less attention to some significant points: a) the reason those ideologues, in spite of having different interpretations of Islam, unanimously advocated Islamic democracy; b) the difference, if any, between their recommended Islamic democracy and the current system of Iran, so-called velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist). Thus, this research tries to focus on the above points which have been overlooked so far.

This research consists of the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Historical Background and Ideological Motivation of 1979 Revolution

Chapter 2: Religious Movements before 1979 Revolution

Chapter 3: Bazargan and His Attempt for an Islamic Democracy

Chapter 4: Ayatollah Taleqani and the 1979 Revolution

Chapter 5: Motahhari's Ideology, Democracy and Velayat-e Faqih

Chapter 6: Post-revolutionary Intellectuals and the Notion of Democracy

Conclusion:

In the First Chapter several democratic movements will be examined, and similarities and differences among them will be analyzed in particular.

The goals they were seeking for will be expounded, and finally their success, for instance decentralization of power, and their failure factors such as foreign intervention and insufficient solidarity among revolutionary groups will be precisely explained. The emergence and the crucial role of the religious groups in the process of the democratic movements, Islamic Revolution in particular, will be explained. It is necessary to show the relevance of religious groups' participation in the process of the revolution and the solidarity of the masses.

In Chapter Two, not only the role of ulama in relation to the democratic movements in modern history of Iran will be explained, it will be also compared to the changing role of secular intellectuals. The linkage between the former and the latter, as well as their reciprocal influences on one another will be examined. It goes without saying that ulama and secular intellectuals utilized each other's power and popularity to mobilize the mass so as to achieve their goal, namely democracy. As a result, the reason and the method of their mutual utilization will be considered.

Chapter Three will focus on the significance of Bazargan's ideology and political activities. Bazargan's role will be explained before that of Taleqani and Motahhari, the other two prominent ideologues in the process of 1979 revolution, for the following reasons: First, it is because he is said to be the father of Islamic modernism²¹ in Iran. Second, his ideology has evidently influenced almost all the ideologues in the process of 1979 revolution. Third, it is believed that the other ideologues borrowed the idea of Islamic democracy from him. Therefore, it is necessary to expound his role explicitly, particularly in promoting the concept of modern Islam in Iran.

It is necessary to realize how the secular groups with their own ideal type of government eventually gave in to the idea of an Islamic government. They, not only accepted the idea, but also cooperated to a great extent with the religious groups. Particularly, because they accepted Khomeini as the leader of the revolution, in Chapter Four, Taleqani, as a linkage between secular and religious groups will be at focus. His ideology will be examined, and the development of his ideology will be analyzed. In the meantime his political activities and unique liberal characteristics along with his ideal type of government will be argued.

Then, in Chapter Five, Motahhari's perception of the revolution and its outcome will be analyzed and compared to that of Bazargan and Taleqani as well as to Khomeini's. In order to obtain a clear understanding of his recommended Islamic government, its specific features will be analytically examined. The importance of his role in effectuating the concept of velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist), that led to the revision of the Draft Constitution of 1979 drawn by Bazargan will be made intelligible.

In Chapter Six, since Islamic democracy is still controversial but receives a lot of attention among religious intellectuals, the ideology of three prominent intellectuals will be examined. They are Abdolkarim Soroush, Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari, and Mohsen Kadivar who have been highly influenced by above-mentioned ideologues. Their stance toward Islamic democracy will be analyzed. And eventually, their ideological development, in comparison to each other as well as to the above-mentioned pre-revolutionary ideologues will be considered.

In the Final Chapter, after summarizing the contents of the previous chapters, relations between Islam and democracy is to be examined again in

the historical process of the movements toward democracy. Also the relation between democracy and the velayat-e faqih system as a result of the 1979 revolution should be considered. In particular, the analysis focuses on the continuity and change between them. The differences of Islamic democracy between pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary ideologues will be examined. Through the above analyses, this research aims to reconsider the characteristics of relations between Shi'i Islam and democracy as a whole.

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND IDEOLOGICAL MOTIVATION OF 1979 REVOLUTION

Introduction

Before examining the political stance of revolutionary ideologues, it is crucial to consider the Iranian revolution of 1979 from various angles. In this regard, the direct causes, process, leadership and result of the revolution must be analyzed. However, in relation to the basic purpose of this dissertation, we should never forget that the 1979 revolution, frequently called “Islamic Revolution”, was not the first or the only revolution in the modern history of Iran. In other words, the revolution can be said to be one of the historical products having piled up the lessons from the socio-political movements.

Therefore, the 1979 revolution must be compared to other movements and revolutions that had taken place before in Iran. The comparison would be helpful to find out whether they were all triggered by the same democratic motivation and whether they were following similar democratic goals. In case we find positive answers to both or either one of the above questions, we will have to ponder upon the reason why those movements or revolutions took place one after another. Did the failure of the preceding movements cause the succeeding ones to happen? Did the social, political or economic changes and their consequential circumstances cause the revolution to take place? If the failure was the cause, the reason why those movements failed must be investigated in the first place. Was that due to lack of understanding of the impetus and the goals of the revolution? Was there something wrong with the leadership or organizing of the

movements? Did other factors such as foreign power intervention cause them to fail?

Although a lot of questions about the revolution have already been answered, there still remain some unanswered questions. Since the 1979 revolution is considered to be a democratic and an anti-tyrannical movement, it is essential to compare it with other movements with the same characteristics such as Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911, Oil Nationalization Movement of 1951-53, and the Uprising of 1963 known as 15 Khordad in Iran.

1.1 Constitutional Revolution

The Constitutional Revolution of Iran, which is said to be the first revolution of its kind in the Islamic world, went through four distinctive ideological phases. At first it started with public protests and secret gathering in 1905. Then it succeeded in establishing the First Majles in Iran in 1906. Throughout this second phase, power struggle among competing revolutionary groups can be seen. In the third phase of the revolution, law and order was relatively stable and Majles continued to its robust mission until the coup of June 1908. The whole Iranian society faced a chaos in this period and intense debates were the result, particularly in the Majles, and eventually caused excessive division. Estebdad-e Saghir (Lesser Tyranny) followed the chaos and continued until July 1909, the period of armed struggle of radical group. The final phase of the revolution lasted up to the December of 1911, referred to as the period of party politics.²²

The Constitutional Revolution is basically believed to be an anti-tyrannical movement formed to bring law into the country of Iran. In this regard Katouzian says:

There was no law, and the movement's central aim was precisely to overthrow arbitrary rule and establish a state bound by an independent legal code, and run by a responsible, answerable, government.²³

It was because before the revolution there was neither a written law nor was there an oral agreement, upon which the ruler would be kept viable for his decisions or actions. Except the ruler who was Shah, all the other Iranians were considered as his subjects. As Amini states:

All social classes and groups were under pressure of tyranny and unlawfulness was intolerable.²⁴

Nevertheless, it was not only by the tyrannies of Shah that people were frustrated by but also by the domination of foreign countries that had weakened Iran drastically. Iran did not have as much national power as it once had to stand against Russia and Britain in particular. Therefore, it was seeking to find a solution. Since, in terms of technology, Iran was far behind those countries, it decided to bring knowledge and technique. But it was only possible in a systematic and lawful framework. As a result of the struggle to bring technique and knowledge with a systematic framework, Constitutional Revolution eventually took place.

Of course, it should not be neglected that other factors had significant roles in igniting the Constitutional Movement. As Kamran Matin also points out:

Constitutional Revolution was indeed generated by the impact of capitalist socio-economic relation, which were objectively absent from Qajar Iran but existed at the international level and affected it geopolitically.²⁵

As mentioned earlier, there was a vast discontent among Iranians against the tyranny of the Qajar monarchy. But a more important matter which should be taken into consideration is how the Constitutional Movement's leaders managed to expound the motivations and goals to mobilize the masses in the process of the Constitutional Movement. In particular, a lot of new concepts such as constitution and parliament which many Iranians of those days seldom heard were needed to be explained to them precisely. In this sense, the flag bearers of this movement who could lead and convince the masses to participate in the movement were indispensable for its success.

In this relation, we need to notice that the Constitutional Revolution was not merely a political but rather a cultural revolution as well. Therefore, Mashallah Ajoodani also points out that:

Constitutional Movement was indeed more of a cultural movement than a political one. Nonetheless, there is no doubt people were tired of unlawful action of Shah.²⁶

In fact, it can be considered logical and quite rational. It is because having a systematic and lawful framework for having a more developed country, as was suggested in '*Yek Kalame*'²⁷, indicates cultural development. Accordingly, most of the active intellectuals during the Constitutional Movement were in favor of a more civilized and modern culture for which law was inevitable.²⁸

In relation to the moving forces of the Constitutional Movement, they can be better analyzed if examined alongside with the role of the leading figures. There is no doubt the movement received extreme mass support, but it was led by three prominent elements: bazar, rouhaniyyat (religious scholars) and intellectuals. Although every one of them had a great role in the success of the movement, they were not capable of doing such an outstanding task without the other group's help and cooperation. When it comes to the influence and role of religion and the religious figures in the process of the revolution, several factors must be mentioned. 1) when and how they achieved the power; 2) how they got involved in the politics; and 3) what was their intention?

The Shiite ulama were given an unprecedented power in Safavid era, particularly during the reign of Shah Tahmasb.²⁹ As they got more power they turned into a very strong force in the society. People from different classes came to them to complain about the cruelty and oppression of the government. Therefore, they gradually became more politically active as they opposed the government. Among the high rank religious figures of the movement, Akhund Khorasani, Behbahani, Tabatabai, Na'ini and Noori are said to have played the most remarkable roles in the Constitutional Movement.

All the above-mentioned groups involved in the Constitutional Movement were definitely frustrated and devastated by the oppression and incapability of the Qajar. However, in the process of the movement it is their demands that clarified their stance to some degree. By and large, rouhaniyyat and bazar supported each other mutually against the pressure of the government. When the movement began with vast protests and sitting in (strike), they wrote a letter to the ruling authorities to make their

own demands. Nonetheless, it is very important to know that among their initial demands there were not such concepts as Adalat Khane (House of Justice), Majles (Parliament) or Democracy.³⁰ They apparently had no idea what they were good for or how they would function. Tabatabai's statements about the constitution, in proceedings of the first Parliament might be considered as a clear evidence. "We had not seen countries with constitutional governments ourselves. But what we had heard about them and those who had seen such countries told us that constitution had brought them security and prosperity. We also were desirous to make such a thing happen in our own country."³¹

As a matter of fact, the people Tabatabai mentioned are the intellectuals who led the movement toward a democratic current. They explained the benefits of having Ministry of Justice, law and democracy to the religious leaders. They knew that rouhaniyyat was powerful enough to force the government to accept their demands. Thus, they did their best to convince them. There are several major reasons rouhaniyyat was not in favor of democracy, or at least it can be said that they were not content with its results, particularly after the establishment of parliament.³²

For rouhaniyyat played several different roles in the movement and had a different view from what the intellectuals were pursuing. It is evident that this group was not of a fair solidarity to confront constitutionalism or the intellectuals. It should also be mentioned that what mattered to them more than national interest was their own class' interest.³³ It is needless to say that some of them preserving their own views joined the movement and were of a great help. Some of them left the class of rouhaniyyat and joined the intellectuals. It can be inferred that the

most undeniable reason rouhaniyyat took part in the movement was opposition against the tyranny of the Qajar dynasty.

Before the Constitutional Movement rouhaniyyat had a great power. In fact, legitimacy of the Shah was to be approved by the high rank religious figures (Marja'). But after the revolution it was people's vote that determined the Shah's legitimacy. As a result, while the idea of mashru'iyat (Islamic legitimacy) versus mashrut'iyat (constitution) was brought up by high rank ulama such as Sheikh Fazlollah Noori, a supplementary fundamental law was written. Noori believed that legislators should not be free from mistakes. He also said that they were not familiar with Islamic principles, and that was the reason they imitated Western, particularly French laws and legislation.³⁴ Noori suggested that many articles of the constitution were in contradiction with Islamic laws, for instance article 171 indicated that Grand Court of Justice and the Court of Justice were run by official authorities to investigate and judge cruelty and crimes, and mojtaheds (clerics with independent reasoning for Islamic law interpretation) were only to judge religious affairs.³⁵

In addition, Article 27 of the supplementary fundamental law insisted on the secularism and absolute separation of religious law and ulama's powers from social and political affairs. Noori like some other ulama who made a great effort in the process of the Constitutional Movement believed that many of the new concepts were not compatible with Islamic principles. For example, he wrote:

One of the articles of this supplementary is that the people of Iran are entitled to the equal right before the state law. While there are many differences in Islamic law such as the subjects of worship, trade and politics among mature and non-mature, wise

and insane, healthy and sick, father and son, husband and wife, rich and poor, moqallad (source of emulation) and moqalled (emulator).³⁶

He believed many of the new democratic concepts had already been expressed in Sharia and they just needed to be extracted from jurisprudence texts. On the one hand, ulama were against government's decisions in several matters, particularly foreign influence in society, because in their opinion it was a big threat to Islam and Iran. On the other hand, they found the constitution weak and in contradictions with Islam in several cases. Consequently, some ulama like Noori led to the acceptance of legislation supervision of religious scholars under the title of Abadiyeh.³⁷

In relation to the discontent of the rouhaniyyat toward constitutionalism and the intellectuals, Seyyed Ahmad Tabatabai³⁸ expresses his worries as follow:

You do not know how this 'Majles-e Shora-ye Melli (legislative assembly) is destructive to people's religion and life, and how its affect is associated with the leaders. The assembly, in which Babi are the members in charge, legislate law for Muslims. You do not know how powerful these unbelievers have become.³⁹

These views toward the movement might give one sufficient insight about the intention of rouhaniyyat in asking for mashru'iyat (Islamic law-first policy).

However, Na'ini's approach toward the constitution was different, absolutely prominent, and of high value. He talks about legitimacy of the governments and eligibility of them. He believes governments not only need to be legitimate but also they must be eligible. Although he did not consider

the constitutional government as the best form of government in the absence of the hidden Imam, he strongly supported that. It was much better than the tyrannical government.

The fact of the matter is that the intellectuals in Iran were not as powerful as the rouhaniyyat and the period they were around was much shorter. Looking at the history of intellectualism in Iran, one can see it is rather new and it does not go back more than two centuries. Among the very first groups of intellectuals in Iran, Mirza Malkam Khan, Talebof Tabrizi, Akhundzadeh, Aghakhan Kermani were the flag bearers of constitutionalism. They introduced new concepts such as freedom, equality, democracy etc. and made a great effort in convincing other social classes to rise for them.

On the one hand, they were opposed by the government and on the other hand by the rouhaniyyat. The reason they were opposed by the government is quite clear, for intellectuals vehemently criticized the wrong actions and decisions made by the government. For that reason, they were secretly active in underground communities, such as Faramushkhane (Place of Forgetfulness), Bidari-ye Iran (Awakening of Iran), Anjoman-e Adamiyat (Society of Humanity) and Anjoman-e Taraqqi (Society of Progress). But the reason they were opposed by rouhaniyyat is that since they were mostly influenced by French Ideologues, they were strongly against religious superstitions. They believed that rouhaniyyat was not willing to let go of those superstitions, because it was the way they could mobilize illiterate and low educated class of the society as well as very pious believers. Some of the intellectuals had prominent roles in post Constitutional Movement particularly in socio-political development of Iran. Among those intellectuals, Taqizade, Qazvini, Bahar, Tarbiyat, Eshqi,

Foroughi and Teimurtash's role in bringing Reza Khan (later the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty, Reza Shah) to power was also crucial.

Considering the fact that the Constitutional Movement had several motivations, it is essential to see what kind of obstacles it confronted with and how far those obstacles and difficulties caused the movement to be stifled. One of the most critical difficulties in the process of Constitutional Movement was various inferences of new concepts such as freedom among different classes of the society. The constitutional problem was not limited to the opposition of the constitutionalist ulama (mashrooteh khah) and legitimate-constitutionalist ulama (mashru'e khah). Soon the difference between constitutionalist ulama and secular intellectuals was unveiled. And this time the real conflict on the true concepts of the constitution was between constitutionalists themselves, both ulama and intellectuals.⁴⁰ In relation to differences of concepts and the perception of various groups and individuals from the psychological point of view, Nehzat Farnoodi argues:

Everybody likes the idea of freedom but, 1) Does everybody understand freedom equally? 2) Those who seek freedom as an ideal, would they have same inference of freedom if they were in power instead of those who are now? This is one thing that can turn an individual cultural crisis into a social and historical crisis.⁴¹

The other problem is partially caused by the previous one, namely chaos. According to Katouzian:

Immediately after the movement, chaos started and it was even seen in the parliament. Newspapers also wrote and published whatever pleased them. They cursed Shah and the ministers.⁴²

The reason why it was said chaos was derived from the previous problem which might be more comprehensibly observed in Khalaji's expression:

Cultural Equalization is one of the factors which hinder democratic formation in a society. And because Iranians were ruled and exploited by tyrannical governments for a long time, people's perception of freedom was an absolute and unconditional freedom which followed no order. Thus, it was the other side of chaos coin.⁴³

As a matter of fact, a very big obstacle for the success of the Constitutional Movement which must not be missed is the foreign power intervention. When the Constitutional Movement was going on in Iran, Mohammad Ali Shah who ascended the throne after his father's death stood against it. He decided to end the movement by any means. Therefore, by the support of foreign powers, particularly Britain and Russia, he accomplished his plan. On 23 June 1908 with the help of Cossack forces commanded by Colonel Liakhov, he shelled the Majles and executed several leaders of the movement. However, in about one year pro-constitution forces from Azerbaijan province and other cities of Iran marched to Tehran and seized the city successfully and managed to re-establish the constitutional regime.

At this point, it is necessary to say all the above-mentioned factors with their grave significance did not play as severe and serious role as the lack of political development in the failure of Constitutional Movement. Milani also argues:

Democracy is not having a democratic constitution. It requires social fabric, social habits, middle-class, and recognition of equality before the law.⁴⁴

And all these things definitely require political development.

Now that the motivations and failure factors of the movement have been talked about, it is time to point out its achievements as well, so that one can see how successful it was during its short run. Considering the fact that the Constitutional Movement was to bring the law and modernize the culture of the society, it should be admitted that in both cases it was rather successful. In the first case i.e. bringing law, parliament was formed; constitution was written and endorsed by Mozaffar-al-Din Shah. In accordance with the written constitution, the movement achieved another goal it was seeking for. Shah's power was reduced particularly in socio-political decision-making of the government.

From the latter cultural point, there was an outstanding change. Its effects can be seen in literature especially in poetry, prose, and drama. Literary texts were more comprehensible than ever for every social class. It was in turn an important gain in introducing modern concepts such as democracy and liberty. Considering the movement's achievements, perhaps it can be said that in those days the lack of people's participation was a big failure but desire for freedom and some other modern concepts such as democracy and independence grew and developed in people's mind more and more. Amini expresses its success and failure in two clear steps:

1. The first case is law and making a modern national society in which the movement was successful to a great extent, for a modern national society does not necessarily need to have

democracy. 2. People participation; in this case Constitutional Movement experienced an awful failure.⁴⁵

Its positive effect can be seen in the movements after the Constitutional Revolution.

1.2 Oil Nationalization Movement

Oil nationalization movement of Iran in the early 1950s, led by Mohammad Mosaddeq (1882-1967), was a movement in the Majles (parliament). Its goal was to nationalize the oil industry. As a matter of fact, in Fourteenth Majles Mosaddeq began his strife over the oil concession.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, the struggle between Mosaddeq and Mohammad Reza Shah (1919-1980) and the crisis over the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC)⁴⁷ dominated the opening of the Sixteenth Majles.⁴⁸ The struggle between Mosaddeq and the Shah was not only over the oil issue. In a protest against ballot-rigging, Mosaddeq led a group of politicians, university students, and bazaar traders into the palace grounds on 15 October 1949.⁴⁹ They stayed there for four days before the Shah eventually gave in and promised fair and honest election.⁵⁰ While they were inside the garden of the palace, the demonstrators elected a committee of twenty, and Mosaddeq was elected as its chairman. This committee soon became the core of Mosaddeq's *Jebhe-ye Melli* (the National Front).

The National Front was established with the aim of strengthening democracy. In its first public declaration, the National Front put forward three specific demands: honest election, lifting of martial law, and freedom of the press.⁵¹ In the process of the oil nationalization movement, the

National Front was attacked by the Tudeh Party of Iran which was a pro-Soviet Communist party. They propagated against the National Front in their newspaper named *Besuye Ayandeh*. The Tudeh Party regarded the National Front as the last chance of the colonialism and Mosaddeq as its representative. When the Iranians were at their most sensitive historical stages, the Tudeh Party kept opposing the National Front by all possible means.⁵²

The bill for the nationalization of oil industry in Iran was passed on March 15, 1951, and verified on March 17, 1951 by Majles. The movement was a reaction to the revised agreement between Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the Iranian government in 1933 and the D'Arcy concession of 1901. It is said that the establishment of a democratic government in Iran and the pursuit of Iranian national sovereignty were the two fundamental consequences of the oil nationalization movement.⁵³

Before studying other researchers' views about the oil nationalization movement in order to have a better judgment on its democratic aspects, it seems more logical to examine the motivation, prospective and the aims of the oil nationalization movement from its leaders' point of view. They are precisely explained in Mosaddeq's words:

Oil nationalization movement took place for two reasons. First: To put an end to the influence of foreign powers and their agents so that Iranians can determine their own destiny and to achieve political independence of the country. It will accordingly help Iranians to move along with other liberal nations and cooperate with them in protecting the world peace. Second: the other reason of our nation for this movement is to improve the economic situation of Iran.⁵⁴

He adds:

Because, during the time, previous companies were using our resources, they were never willing to respect the rights of Iranians. They did not even pay in accordance with their agreements of D'Arcy and the 1933 expired agreement. In addition, the tax which this company was paying to the British government including Iran's share was many folds of the income real owners of oil, namely Iranians earned.⁵⁵

The above were the main motives of Mosaddeq who initiated and led the movement.

Regarding the negotiation with the AIOC, some of the parliament members believed instead of sparking controversies it would be better to keep quiet in order not to downgrade of the issue. In this relation, Hossein Makki, a member of parliament of Iran for three consecutive terms from 1947 to 1953, asked Mosaddeq's opinion. And Mosaddeq answered as follows:

One of the merits of democracy is that people should have the opportunity to peacefully express their opinions. Unfortunately, every social group or community in Iran is advised to keep quiet for some reasons. For example, students are asked only to study, farmers are asked only to do the farming, and Majles representatives to not spark controversies.⁵⁶

For these reasons to achieve the prominent goals of the movement, Mosaddeq with "movazene-ye manfi" (the negative balance) theory led Iranians movement to regain its lost rights. It is the theory that no concession should be given to the West or to Russia. As a matter of fact, it was thought by him that no foreign power should govern or dominate the

destiny or fate of Iranians. Mosaddeq argued that the traditional politicians had jeopardized Iran's very existence with their misguided policy of "positive equilibrium" and "capitulating" to the great powers. He warned that such a policy would cause other powers to demand equivalent concessions, endangering national sovereignty.⁵⁷ All national assets belong to all people of Iran and must be utilized by the government to benefit them. It should be mentioned that even though Mohammad Mosaddeq is considered as the leader of the movement, the idea of nationalizing oil was suggested by Hossein Fatemi, Foreign Affairs Minister of Iran from 1951 to 1953. According to Mosaddeq himself:

If the oil nationalization movement is a remarkable service to our country, we have to be grateful to one who suggested that, and he for sure is the Martyr of the country, Dr. Hossein Fatemi.⁵⁸

Oil nationalization movement has been intelligently described by Abbas Milani. He says:

This liberal and anti-exploitation movement and the period of Mosaddeq as a prime minister, was in fact an occasion toward which all political parties, and individuals with their actions and stances were tested. It also revealed their true identities. Political parties such as Tudeh and religious figures like Kashani and those who left Mosaddeq in the mid-way in his struggles, found their place on the side of the tyrannical regime of the Shah and stood against Mosaddeq.⁵⁹

In the process of the oil nationalization movement, rouhaniyyat played a significant role. Ayatollah Kashani was not the only prominent religious figure. In fact, Ayatollah Khonsari alongside with Ayatollah Sadr,

Ayatollah Hojjat, and Ayatollah Feiz made a great effort in solidarity of people in order to get their support. Although Ayatollah Borujerdi, the Great Marja of the time, did not get much involved, he also wished the success saying:

In strengthening Islam and improving Muslims on Muslims' affair, I will humbly ask God to be with you.⁶⁰

Among rouhaniyyat, those who kept supporting Mosaddeq were Ayatollah Abolfazl and Reza Zanjani. The withdrawal of Ayatollah Kashani and ulama of Isfahan from supporting Mosaddeq caused his government to come to its end and the Shah to return to power.

Now, it should be found out what exactly caused Ayatollah Kashani to withdraw from supporting Mosaddeq at such a critical situation. Was it because they were not sharing commonalities in their goals? If they were, what caused them to separate? Were they all deceived by Britain and America which are believed to have engineered the coup?

There is almost no doubt that in the coup of 1953 that ended Mosaddeq's government Britain and America played a crucial role. But did Mosaddeq not make the situation ready for the coup by not giving in to the demands of groups and parties? Did he not, according to Abrahamian, make a tactical mistake by not asking his followers to come to streets in order to protect him and his government? It might seem to be true, but drastically changing situation in Mosaddeq's period shows that external and internal pressures were making it quite hard for his government to go through. Even if the coup of 28 Mordad (Aug, 19, 1953) had not ended his government, it can be safely said that before long it would come to its end

by another scheme. However, there would certainly be a big difference. The oil nationalization movement would not gain as much success as it did. And it can be definitely said that Mosaddeq's democratic decision, avoiding violence, was another outstanding step in political awakening of Iranians toward freedom and the development of democracy.

The end of Mosaddeq's government was not a failure at all. In fact, it was only a high cost he voluntarily accepted to pay for the greater goal of independence and democracy. It might be of significance to refer to the notes of Hossein Ala to grasp a better understanding of how the oil nationalization movement and Mosaddeq's period ended with a coup.

On 4 Aban, as we returned to Sa'd abad, we found the palace very cold. Due to the difficulties Mosaddeq had made for us I told his majesty (the Shah) you might as well end his government with a coup, what in fact eight months later happened, but his majesty said it's not a proper time yet.⁶¹

1.3 Uprising of 15 Khordad

The uprising of 15 Khordad (June 5th 1963) is an outstanding incident in the Contemporary Iran. It can be considered as a remarkable turning point in relationship between Shah (monarch) and rouhaniyyat (clergy). As it was mentioned on page twenty in this chapter, rouhaniyyat had such a great power that could approve the legitimacy of the Shah. In spite of all the distrust between them, Shah and rouhaniyyat mutually supported one another for quite a long time since Safavi dynasty period. Rouhaniyyat not only supported Shah while he was still in power, but also

helped him to regain the power in some occasions. For they believed Shah would support them against their potential enemies. Dabashi states:

When the CIA-engineered coup of 1953 brought the Shah back to power, Kashani led the clerical sentiment in welcoming the Monarch back to power. Thus twice in the course of the 20th century once in 1925, and once in 1953, the Shi'i clerical establishment was instrumental in restoring monarchical rule to Iran, in both cases out of their fear for the rise and supremacy of alternative sites of ideological resistance.⁶²

However, from early 1960s until just before the 1979 revolution, an unprecedented action of Mohammad Reza Shah, the second king of the Pahlavi (1941-79), turned the Monarch itself into an abominable potential enemy to rouhaniyyat. In relation to the significance of this period, Madani stipulates:

The last fifteen years of the Pahlavi dynasty is noteworthy and must be kept in mind for it represented the long history of kingdom in Iran, and the collapse of the kingdom in the hands of the Iranians proves the capability of people who are willing to lose their lives for their country.⁶³

The Shah, unlike his father, had a pseudo-Islamic and democratic stance, and started to force several modernizing reforms known as “White Revolution”. According to Madani:

It was called White Revolution because the Shah firstly wanted to ruin the image of revolution and make people disappointed from revolutions, and secondly it was called “White” because the revolution was from the top and eventually the Shah would definitely win the victory.⁶⁴

He was planning to make socio-economic changes in Iran. He held a referendum for the rules of the White Revolution such as land reform, women's suffrage, nationalizing the forests all over the country, and so forth.⁶⁵ Those who opposed the regime were seeking for a solution. After long consideration, opposition parties and politicians who claimed the leadership made a slogan—*eslahat, ari! dictatori, na!* (reform, yes! dictatorship, no!).⁶⁶

Some of the ulama considered Shah's plan deceitful and a definitive threat to Islam. When Ayatollah Kamalvand who was one of the prominent ulama of Khorramabad, the capital city of Lorestan Province, met with the Shah to declare the opposition of the ulama in Qom to Shah's anti-Islamic reforms, the Shah said:

If ulama agree with the reform and do not stand against it, I assure them to listen to their suggestions and to fulfill their demands in relation to the rouhaniyyat community.⁶⁷

Khomeini who was not openly politically active until then⁶⁸ strongly rejected Shah's plan and stood boldly against it. Abrahamian argues:

He denounced the regime for living off corruption, rigging elections, violating the constitutional laws, stifling the press and the political parties, destroying the independence of the university, neglecting the economic need of merchants, workers and peasants, undermining the country's Islamic belief, encouraging *gharbzadegi*—indiscriminate borrowing from the West—granting 'capitulations' to foreigners, selling oil to Israel and constantly expanding the size of the central bureaucracies.⁶⁹

It was an outstanding shock for Mohammad Reza Shah's regime. Khomeini issued a statement on the new year's day of 1342 (March 20, 1963) as follows:

The ruling system violates the sacred orders of Islam and intends to violate the rules of the Quran. Muslim women are to be assaulted, and oppressive system with its unlawfully legislated rules wants to denigrate the women and disgrace the Iranian people.⁷⁰

On June 3rd 1963 in Ashura sermon, Khomeini went far to compare the Shah to Yazid⁷¹ and even warned him of a bitter end. SAVAK got into action immediately. Khomeini was arrested on June 5th at his house in Qom and was taken to Qasr prison. News spread quickly and hundreds of thousand people in different cities demonstrated and demanded Khomeini's immediate release. Demonstrators were confronted by tanks and paratroopers. It is said that hundreds or thousands of people were killed and within a few days the regime weathered the storm. Thus the uprising died down.

Khomeini's status as a religious political leader and his popularity among people was crucially intensified. Particularly, secular intellectuals who until those days thought Khomein was merely concerned with religious issues realized that his words had an incredible influence on people. And the significant is that its influence was political and religious.⁷² Khomeini was defeated in 1963 in spite of the uprising of 15 Khordad. However, it put the Iranians, particularly rouhaniyyat at an alert situation.

Although the Shah's regime had experienced a quite fatal shock from religious group, the Shah paid a lot more attention in controlling

nationalist and socialist groups. Since tyrannical regime of the Shah and rouhaniyyat were both afraid of modern secular ideologies, communism in particular, once again they decided to condone the animosity and stand against the bigger threat. Thus, the uprising of 15 Khordad remained barren like previous movements in achieving its goals. However, the uprising brought about significant meanings for 1979 revolution; one of them is the advent of Khomeini as the anti-regime movement leader. The uprising showed that Iranians were capable of devoting their lives for their country, which extremely scared the Shah regime. And for the first time rouhaniyyat participated in such a great scale directly in political affairs.⁷³

Concluding Remarks

Through the above brief examination of outstanding movements in modern Iran prior to 1979 revolution, remarkable commons can be observed. It is quite obvious that they were all against the tyranny, either owing to the absence of law, or due to the blatant violation of the constitutional laws. In a sense, it can be inferred that they were pro-democratic movements, for they were unanimously seeking decentralization of power. They strongly opposed the ego-centric decisions made by the Shah.

It is worthy of note that the significant role of rouhaniyyat can be remarkably seen in the process of the movements. The instrumental use of religion either in favor of or against the movement, if not both, can also be witnessed.

Although they partially achieved their ideal goals, they all failed in full achievement, due to the absence of solidarity in leadership which ultimately led to chaos, and the intervention of foreign forces, namely Russia, Britain and America. Foremost, due to the insufficient knowledge

about socio-political as well as religious matters not only among the masses but also ulama and intellectuals any of the movements resulted in a tragic end.

Iran is a country where Shi'i Muslims occupy more than 90 percent of the population. And sustained by the marja-e taqlid (source of emulation) system under which many of ordinary Muslims (moqalled) obey orders issued from the highest religious authority (moqallad), political movements can be said to have been frequently under religious influences.

The next chapter particularly focuses on such a close relations between religion and politics seen in the modern history of Iran.

CHAPTER TWO

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS BEFORE 1979 REVOLUTION

Introduction

Even if the ultimate outcome of 1979 revolution in Iran had been far from what people sought for in its process, certain factors that led the revolution to the establishment of the new Islamic regime must not be neglected. Having studied the modern history of socio-political movements toward democracy, one definitely finds out the significant role of ulama and secular intellectuals (roushanfekran). In the process of the Constitutional Revolution, for example, the latter used the former's socio-political influence, mass mobilization power and popularity in order to achieve their goal, namely democracy.

However, during the Pahlavi era in which the so-called modernization and secularization were dominant, the intellectuals, partly due to the progress of the socio-political awareness of people, became empowered to independently attract mass attraction to their own democratic idea. On the other hand, threatened by the advent of secularism, ulama were obliged to find a new political way for their own. It was in the historical background that appeared many revolutionary ulama like Ayatollah Khomeini who struggled to realize his ideal order of velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist). And it is needless to say that the changing role of the ulama and intellectuals in the modern history of Iran has been examined by researchers like Abrahamian, Algar, Chehabi, Bakhash and Dabashi until now. They have already explained why the ulama who were not willing to get involved in politics changed their stance eventually.

This chapter, in particular, will focus on the following points they may not seem to have paid enough attention to: a) Changing relations between the ulama and intellectuals and the way they influenced one another in history, b) the drastic change of intellectuals, being religious or secular, and the reason they gave in to the idea of Islamic democracy, which yet needs to be discovered, and c) the reason religious intellectuals still emphasize on the feasibility of Islamic democracy.

2.1 Ulama, State and Political Affairs in Iran

There is no doubt about the fact that ulama have had an obvious impact on political affairs in Iran and that their political role in the contemporary Iran has been more outstanding than ever. However, it must not be overlooked that ulama themselves have been under a noteworthy influence of secular intellectuals. Nonetheless, ulama have not been unilaterally under the intellectuals' influence; as a matter of fact, ulama have also influenced the intellectuals to a great extent, particularly in political affairs. Thus, in case of the political movements in Iran, it seems quite impossible to study either ulama or intellectuals, without considering their reciprocal effects or relations.

In order to show the mutual influences of the ulama and intellectuals and both groups' roles in democratic movements in Iran, it is necessary to study their backgrounds. Considering what they have done, and what they have gone through in the history, it may be possible to find out how they have influenced each other. And when ulama and intellectuals are being considered about, it is crucial to mention that either one of them falls into several different categories. Since all of the ulama and intellectuals were not in agreement at least in some specific matters, it should be clarified

who or which group of ulama and/or intellectuals are at focus. As ulama have a longer history than intellectuals, it might be better to study the former first so that our insight would lead us to a more logical inference.

As a matter of fact, ulama do not have a very long history. However Shiism and the appearance of ulama in Iran go back to several hundred years ago; during the Safavid era (1501-1736) they were amazingly empowered and achieved an outstanding progress. They gradually obtained great power and even socio-political status. The power of ulama such as Al-Karaki⁷⁴ was astonishingly so high that they could even approve or disapprove the eligibility and legitimacy of Shah. They were considered to be the vicegerent of the Hidden Imam.⁷⁵ The support of the Bowayhids dynasty (934-1062) caused the Shii communities to become stronger in Iran and Iraq with a more solid identity.⁷⁶

At this point something important is that even though ulama were respected by Shah, they were not truly favored by him. It is also significant to bear in mind that ulama were also aware of this fact, and never trusted Shah. For this very reason there was a possibility that ulama turned into a potential opponent for Saltanat (Kingdom). In the last decade of the Safavid era their animosity appeared to be highly diminished, and the most prominent religious figure of that time, Mohammad Baqer Majlesi showed no reluctance in seeking advantages from the secular arm of the Shah. He considered the exercising of secular power legitimate, not on the basis of any inherent rights of the monarch, but merely as a tool of the ulama, the collective representation of the Hidden Imam.⁷⁷ Another important fact is that Shii ulama, due to their high status than that of Sunni ulama, had a much higher financial power. For the Shii ulama were administrators of

khoms (tithe), especially the “imam’s share.”⁷⁸ In relation to Shii ulama’s financial power, Abrahamian also points out:

In short, the Shi’i ulama, in contrast to their counterpart in the Sunni World, enjoyed their own source of income. Thus they were more independent of the central government.⁷⁹

Considering the above-mentioned, it can be inferred that:

1) Although ulama and Shah were not in favor of one another, they granted each other power and popularity.

2) They could cause each other serious trouble in case they had conflict.

3) Ulama made Shah acceptable for majority, Shii Iranians under the name of Islam.

4) Shah in return seldom stood against ulama and did not interfere with their financial as well as religious affairs.

Now, it is very crucial to find out what caused the ulama to turn their back on their somehow peaceful mutual relationship with Shah. Despite the fact that ulama were empowered and glorified by Shah, their true power and popularity was bestowed upon them by the society, namely the Shii Iranians. As a result, when they saw the discontent of different social groups, they decided to go out of their way to take a stand for the Shii Iranians. The incapability of the Qajars, their extreme oppression, and the absence of law had caused all social classes to feel intolerable. As a result, the ulama had no other options except maintaining the trust of their true supporters, the Shii Iranians. Hitherto ulama had been more clearly divided into different groups particularly due to their approaches toward socio-political matters.

In the process of democratic movements in Iran, ulama such as Tabatabai, Behbahani, both prominent revolutionary figures of the Constitutional Revolution and Shariatmadari, a pro-reformist in the process of 1979 Revolution, had quite less radical approach compared to the others such as Fazlollah Noori and Khomeini. Fazlollah Noori, who was one of the highest-ranking ulama in Constitutional Movement era strongly insisted on Mashruteye Mashru'e (Legitimate Constitution based on shari'a). And Khomeini, an uncompromising Islamic revolutionary leader, wanted Saltanat to end, for he believed almost all kings were corrupted; although at first he did not have a very radical approach. Khomeini's below proclamation is a good evidence:

My generation remembers that in 1941 the Iranian people were actually happy that the invading foreigners threw out the Shah. I do not want the present Shah to meet the same fate as the old Shah. This is why I beseech the Shah; respect the religious authorities, don't help Israel, and learn from your father's mistakes.⁸⁰

What is more, Abrahamian maintains:

It was not until the late 1960s that Khomeini raised the radical cried amending the destruction of the monarchy and the creation of the Islamic Republic.⁸¹

In case of the Constitutional Revolution, the main difference between the two above-mentioned types of ulama can be seen as argued by Hairi:

Both groups were defenders of Islam, but the absolutists rose against the new system of government because of it being un-

Islamic without making any attempt to reconcile it with Islam. The Constitutionals, on the other hand, tried to reconcile, because they saw no excuse whatever to support the old regime.⁸²

It must not be forgotten that some ulama were basically in favor of reform and not necessarily revolution in the first place. Taleqani whose ideology is examined in the Chapter Four can be a proper example of this group.

2.2 Progressive Intellectuals and Political Organizations

In order to understand the mutual influence between secular intellectuals and ulama, different democratic movements evolved in modern history of Iran are necessary to be examined separately. In the Constitutional Revolution the ulama were not only influenced by the intellectuals but also enticed to get involved politically. Secular intellectuals such as Mirza Agha Khan Kermani and Mirza Malkum Khan clearly offered the ulama, among all the highest authority of marja'-'e taqlid, Mirza Shirazi to get the government control in his hand. As stated by Ajoodani:

Even secular intellectuals such as Mirza Agha Khan Kermani and Mirza Malkum Khan also wanted to use political influence in their political struggles. A group of the same intellectuals and merchants with the participation of Agha Khan Kermani and Malkum wrote a letter to Mirza Shirazi. He was encouraged not to be content with the victory of Nehzat-e Tanbaku (Tobacco Protest), and to "finish things up to the last point", that is, to end the ruling of the king—Nasir al-Din Shah.⁸³

Given the tyrannical regime of Qajar, utilizing the ulama, whether it was the only option the secular intellectuals had, played an undeniable role in realizing the idea of Islamic government, or the so-called velayat-e faqih.

Although it was not secular intellectuals' intention to endorse religious despotism that Ayatollah Na'ini had warned about, the outcome of their action must not be overlooked. Of course, not all secular intellectuals agreed on this matter.

For instance, Mashallah Ajoodani's view about Mostashar al-Dowleh⁸⁴ is noteworthy in this relation.

Akhondzadeh criticized the idea of Mostashar al-Dowleh while he (Mostashar al-Dowleh) strived to show compatibility between Islamic principles and the modern concepts such as democracy.⁸⁵

It is needless to say that the post-Constitutional Revolution's intellectuals such as Iraj Mirza opposed the ulama more overtly. It could be the result of radical approach of Sheikh Fazlollah Noori against the Constitution and secular intellectuals.

There are some significant factors which must be examined precisely to show particularly the negative attitude of the ulama toward intellectuals. As the reason mentioned before, it was the intellectuals who utilized the ulama, used their power and popularity to achieve their own goals, and then marginalized them. On the other hand, the ulama were also being deprived of their long run tasks such as judgment and education.⁸⁶ As a result, ulama who did not trust Saltanat in the first place now found themselves betrayed by their new rivals, the intellectuals.

It must not be neglected that Reza Khan himself used the power of high ranking ulama to get his legitimacy approved. At first, as pointed out by Faghfoory:

With the ulama's approval and backing, Reza Khan ousted his rival in May 1921. The support of the ulama proved useful in this episode, and Reza Khan was to seek further ties with them.⁸⁷

However, after Reza Khan stabilized his own position and got himself into throne in 1925, he broke pledges he had made with ulama one-by-one. During his dictatorial reign ulama were so harshly oppressed that Taleqani recalled those days with fear.

Every single day my father left home we had no idea what awaited him. We didn't even know whether he would return alive that night.⁸⁸

After Reza Shah's abdication in 1941, there was a great opportunity for all political groups and individuals including religious ones to get involved in socio-political affairs more than ever. It can be said that ulama experienced a crucial turning point in political relation to the state. Their participation in government and significant decision-making can be clearly seen after that. The important role of ulama in the process of Oil Nationalization Movement and particularly their opposition to Shah's White Revolution beginning in 1960s is undeniable.

After the two periods of Constitutional Revolution and Reza Shah's dictatorial rule, we need to understand how ulama's ideologies changed on political affairs. It is obvious that they would never want to be utilized by intellectuals again. In fact, it can be seen that intellectualism entered a new phase. Because secular intellectuals were accompanied by religious intellectuals. It is, of course, controversial whether religious intellectual is acceptable or not. For, as Ata Hoodashtian argues:

Intellectuals should avoid anything that might impair their judgment and bias their criticism.⁸⁹

If being in a certain political party or having a strong religious anxiety gets in their way, they will not be able to carry out their commitment as intellectuals.

2.3 Nehzat-e Azadi and the Goal of Political Solidarity

Among the prominent religious intellectuals such as Bazargan, Taleqani, Shariati and Motahhari, it is quite obvious in their works how much they cared about their religion, Shii Islam. Since the political freedom was remarkably restricted during Mohammad Reza Shah's dictatorial regime, particularly after the coup of 1953, intellectuals carried out their missions more carefully but earnestly than ever. There could be seen a firm linkage between secular intellectuals and ulama.

When National Front was stifled by the dictatorial regime of Pahlavi after the coup of 1953, Nehzat-e Moqavemat-e Melli (National Resistance Movement) was established to realize Mosaddeq's political ideas. It was politically active until 1960 when the second National Front was founded. However, the insufficient solidarity among its members, the lack of organized leadership, and particularly lack of a solid ideological identity, Nehzat-e Azadi-ye Iran (Freedom Movement of Iran) was established by three outstanding revolutionary figures, Bazargan, Taleqani, and Sahabi. This organization played an important role in the process of 1979 Revolution. In relation to the motive of the establishment of Freedom Movement of Iran (FMI), the below written by the founders of the organization may be suggestive:

Especially in these turbulent time and circumstances, where the coup and riots take place every day in the world of politics, and with the huge, rapid and intense changes, the claim of being the most stable country in the Middle East will be denied. We admit that it is already late, yet it is better than not commencing.⁹⁰

The reason for being late in establishing the organization could be: firstly the reluctance due to the fact that in those days Iranians did not trust the political parties or organizations. It was because some parties and organizations were founded for personal agendas such as obtaining political power, and right after achieving their goals they terminated their activities. And secondly it could be because of the individuality of Iranians, the lack or weakness of their social spirit, which must be sought in the breadth of the geographic location of Iran and the depths of its history.⁹¹ The significant is that they felt responsible toward Iranians for the hardship they went through. As a result, they determined to establish an organization in order to bring solidarity among political groups which were seeking for the same goal. However, they did not establish FMI because they considered other political organizations ignorant or incapable but because they thought Iranians would find the reflection of their own ideologies in FMI.⁹² Consequently, they said:

Nehzat-e Azadi-ye Iran does not intend to oppose National Front but to move alongside with it and if possible to complement it. If National Front accept us, we will eagerly cooperate with them and if reject us, we will not stand against them, for we are to do what Iranians expect National Front to do.⁹³

Bazargan explains the ideological reason of establishing FMI in a more clear and comprehensible way:

I don't say that the others (political activists) were not Muslims or that they opposed Islam. They did not consider Islam as a socio-political ideology but we did. And because such a party or organization had not been founded or did not exist in those days if founded we decided to establish FMI.⁹⁴

Taleqani also thinks that it is about time someone took a firm stand for saving the country from corruption. As a result, in relation to establishing FMI he asks and states:

What other choices do we have? How can we keep silent and watch the complete destruction of our country, or wait for a savior to come and rescue us? Those who have not been corrupted and still feel responsible will have to get together and find a solution for saving the country.⁹⁵

Thus, considering the above mentioned facts, the goals of FMI were announced as follows:

First, we aim to revitalize the constitutional rights of Iranians by enforcing the constitutional law in order to achieve a democratic system. And second, we intend to encourage Iranians to follow righteousness and to stand against corruption, dependence on the foreign powers, and any obstacles that weakens Iranians individuals and communities.⁹⁶

Democratic nature of FMI can be seen through their activities which are all authentically documented. For example, during the White Revolution they issued a paper including the following statement:

We all know that the ruling regime by Press censorship has deprived Iranians of their freedom in expressing their opinion about their lives and destinies, and against international laws and

human rights has commenced a deceitful reform in order to impose its evil aims.⁹⁷

The remarkable tasks FMI was to accomplish were bringing solidarities among secular and religious groups and individuals so that every Iranian could participate in making socio-political decisions.⁹⁸ And it is needless to say that they succeeded in attracting secular intellectuals and professionals from whom some members founded Mojahedin-e Kalq after the leaders of FMI went to prison. Considering this fact Chehabi's precise explanation is noteworthy:

Of those LMI members or sympathizers who did not go to prison, some gave up political activity altogether, preferring to wait for better times. Those who did not wish to give up, chose one of three ways of action. One group carried on political action from abroad. Another group came to the conclusion that the people's political and religious awareness had to be raised before any opposition to the Shah could have a chance of success. Still others, mostly younger people, gave up the idea of political activism, which had become impossible anyway, and resorted to armed struggle. They founded the Mojahedin guerrilla group.⁹⁹

During the years prior to the 1979 Revolution, social freedom was improved but political freedom more restricted. Although the lower class in society did not enjoy much the improving social welfare, the upper class did. As it can be anticipated, on the one hand, the increase of social freedom and welfare brought about a huge gap between social classes causing dramatic discontent among the low class, and on the other hand, it gave middle and high class the opportunity to think about what was missing in the society, namely political freedom.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the role of intellectuals who founded Nehzat-e Azadi-ye Iran or who joined it later, both religious and secular in

awakening the mass and reminding them of their inalienable rights, became more important and outstanding than ever. They made great efforts and gathered the mass together in mosques and hosseiniyehs (venues for religious gathering) and made effective and impressive speeches.

2.4 Hosseiniyeh Ershad and New Generation of Islamic Thinkers

In the process of 1979 Revolution it cannot be denied that several renowned places like Hosseiniyeh Ershad and Hedayat Mosque played significant roles in gathering young professionals, students, and intellectuals. It might be of value to mention the role of Hosseiniyeh Ershad here, so as to realize its significance in mass mobilization.

Hosseiniyeh Ershad was established by Mohammad Hodayun and Nasser Minachi in Tehran in 1967. It was a non-traditional religious institute, designed more like an amphitheater. Regarding the establishment of Hosseiniyeh Ershad, Seyyed Hossein Nasr who is known as Islamic thinker in the environmental issue now says:

The first four Consultants appointed for Hosseiniyeh Ershad were Morteza Motahhari, Nasr himself, Shariati and Shahcheraghi. It was a religious Cultural Center founded for modern thinkers and intellectuals. By and large, the speeches and lectures were arranged and organized by Motahhari.¹⁰¹

In 1969 the first publication of home was published by Motahhari under the title of *Mohammad, Khatam-e Payambaran* (Muhammad, the Last Prophet). In relation to this book, two outstanding articles *Hejrat ta Vafat* (Migration and Death), and *Sima-ye Mohammad*, (Muhammad's Features) had been written by Shariati. It was not long before Shariati attracted a great number of listeners to Hosseiniyeh Ershad.¹⁰² At the very

beginning, he was praised by Motahhari. Even after Shariati took over Motahhari in Hosseiniyeh Ershad, when there were attacks against Shariati, Motahhari rose to his defense. He stated that differences of opinion were natural among Muslim scholars and the proper way to resolve them was by discussion and debate. If someone called for unity among various groups of Muslims because they faced the same enemy, that did not mean he was a Sunni.¹⁰³ However, some ulama criticized Shariati for his not calling Mohammad with the familiar title of hazrat. Shariati believed that simplicity was more accepted in modern world, and that it was not the title that made Muhammad, Ali or Hussain sacred. They were sacred for what they did, not for what they were called.

Shariati's approach toward religion was quite new and his worldview touched almost all listeners' heart, even if they were secular intellectuals who strongly believed in Marxism. That, in turn, caused some religious figures to severely criticize him. Once he went too far in an analogy and compared Imam Hussain to Che Guevara, the Argentinian Marxist revolutionary. Motahhari himself could not tolerate it and stepped out of Hosseiniyeh.¹⁰⁴

The above facts were merely mentioned to show how Iranian masses including those who even followed non-religious ideologies were attracted to the new ideologues like Shariati who advocated the so-called Islamic democracy. Of course, several important factors that paved the way for this matter to take place must not be overlooked. For instance, the excessive tyranny and political repression had caused a vast discontent among Iranians, turning most of them against the Shah regime. In addition, the fear of Marxism and/or communism had caused the regime to give freedom and in some occasions even assist religious movements. For it was believed

that they would distract Marxists who were considered to be the most dangerous threat both for Shah regime and Islam.

There, in Hosseiniyeh Ershad, thousands of young thinkers, students, professionals, bazaries (merchants) and other social groups were so attracted by Shariati's speeches that almost every one of them was ready and willing to rise and avenge for Imam Hussain. It is said that he had turned almost all of the audience into revolutionaries. The regime eventually realized the threat of Hosseiniyeh Ershad and SAVAK (National Intelligence and Security Agency) forcibly shut it down in 1972. As mentioned above, it is evident that Shariati advocated Islamic government. He had made it his mission to show the Muslims that Islam was a revolutionary religion.

It is very crucial that prominent religious intellectuals such as Bazargan and Shariati were in favor of Islamic government as some revolutionary ulama like Khomeini, Motahhari and Taleqani. The noteworthy question here is what caused conflict among them while they unanimously advocated the same aim? And was there an essential difference in their understanding of Islamic government? The answer to them will be examined precisely throughout this research. Yet, what must be focused on is the mutual influence that intellectuals and ulama had before and in the process of 1979 Revolution. It is not hidden to anyone that intellectuals and ulama have always had reciprocal impact in political ideology and movement since intellectuals' emergence in Iran.

They have either had partial or indirect impact on one another. It is partly because apparently they have never been able to expound entirely what they knew or had in their mind. Pro-democratic intellectuals, for instance, did not explain what exactly democracy was and/or what the

status of religion in a democratic country would be.¹⁰⁵ They either concealed it deliberately; they knew otherwise it would not be approved by ulama; otherwise, intellectuals themselves had not realized what democracy is in the first place. On the other hand, neither had the ulama explained what exactly the traits of an Islamic government were. That also was probably because they knew that intellectuals would not give in to their Islamic idea if they knew what the case was, or ulama themselves had no idea what an Islamic government would be like, because they had never experienced one.¹⁰⁶

Lack of information on either side led to believe that there was compatibility between secular democracy and Islamic government. The Islamic democracy's emergence could be an outcome of extracting democratic concepts such as equality and freedom from Islamic texts, Quran in particular.

As for indirect influence, it should be said that different social classes played very important roles. Because uncovering the truth about the concepts such as democracy and Islamic government meant a grave conflict among ideologically different groups and people. In order to obtain the support of mass, both ulama and secular intellectuals would have to give quite deceitful interpretation. Therefore, each of the two groups had made a utopia of their own ideologies.¹⁰⁷

Majority of people who were attracted to modern concepts such as equality and freedom believed that Islamic democracy would be the best option. Thus, mutual unawareness between the two groups led people to criticize both intellectuals and ulama, particularly after the revolution. Iranians finally realized neither group kept their commitment to their very ideologies.

Concluding Remarks

The remarkable role of ulama, particularly in political affairs of contemporary Iran is undeniable. They have been of great power and status in movements toward democracy in Iran. However, it is evident that most of ulama could not exactly define modern concepts such as freedom, equality and democracy. And no one seems to have denied that their source was secular intellectuals. In addition, they were enticed by the intellectuals to get politically involved. It was because intellectuals understood that ulama were of the necessary force required for change.

Thus, they took advantage of ulama in achieving their goals. Ulama, on the other hand, who did not trust Saltanat in the first place, found themselves betrayed by their political allies, the intellectuals as seen in the Constitutional Revolution. Therefore, they determined to be very cautious in order not to be utilized again. The emergence of religious intellectualism can be said to be the result brought about by the ambiguity in definition of the modern concepts and the misinterpretation of Islamic principles. And since the mutual influence of the intellectuals and ulama has been of shortcoming, it has created skepticism among them.

In relation to the 1979 revolution, some prominent revolutionaries' ideologies and political activities will be examined in the following chapters. After the analyses, their political stands and their influences on the post-Revolutionary intellectuals, particularly those who have advocated Islamic democracy in Iran are also to be considered.

CHAPTER THREE

BAZARGAN AND HIS ATTEMPT FOR AN ISLAMIC DEMOCRACY

Introduction

After the bitter failure of the Constitutional Revolution, the hardship of Iranians did not cease, in particular during and after the First World

War. And in 1925, the dictatorial dynasty of Pahlavi was founded by Reza Shah. Under the political oppression of the new dynasty, some prominent socio-political thinkers began to cope with the distressing problems of the time such as Western ideologies including Marxism, which had attracted a great number of young students, professionals and intellectuals.

Mehdi Bazargan (1907-1995) known as a political moderate and liberal nationalist was one of those outstanding thinkers. Therefore, Bazargan tried to integrate Islamic principles and secular democracy in order to realize Islamic democracy in Iran. Considering his contribution under the process of the 1979 revolution, it is possible to understand easily why he assumed the significant positions during and after the revolution.

3.1 Bazargan's Life as the Background of his Ideology

Bazargan was born in the midst of Constitutional Revolution. His birth coincided with the conflicts between the revolutionists and Mohammad Ali Shah in the Constitutional Revolution.¹⁰⁸ In order to know Bazargan himself and his ideology better, it is of importance to examine his personality from several different angles considering various factors that formed his personality at first.

His father Haj Mirza Abbasqoli Agha, known as Eslambolchi, was born in Tabriz. He learned how to read and write Arabic in Maktabkhane (traditional school). And he became a merchant in his hometown and he moved to Tehran at the age of eighteen in order to develop his business. It is interesting to know that, in the early years of Constitutional Government, most of the general businesses were either run or controlled by the private sectors.¹⁰⁹

Mehdi Bazargan was the fifth son among six brothers and he had four sisters. Two of his brothers graduated from high school. In Iran of those days, people who graduated from high school would get very good positions as government officials. Bazargan himself says as follows:

At that time going to school and receiving diploma from high school was like going to America and high school diploma was more valuable than the Ph. D degree at present.¹¹⁰

Bazargan saw himself way behind his hardworking siblings. Therefore, he always strived to compensate his retarding by perseverance and hard working.¹¹¹

There is no doubt that the upbringing method of his father influenced Bazargan's character and ideology. His father treated his children quite differently. Bazargan admits:

I don't remember our father to have treated us harshly or forced us to wake up and pray in the morning. He didn't use bad languages. He just changed his tone when it was necessary for us to be reprimanded. Moreover, his strictness was mingled with rationality and free from violence.¹¹²

Another remarkable fact about Bazargan's family is the idea of consulting. In almost all family matters, his parents made decisions together and respected each other's opinion, which had a great influence on their children.

At first, Bazargan like his elder brothers went to Sarvat School, and then to Soltani School up to the ninth grade. And because it didn't cover upper grades, he moved to Dar Al-Mo'allemin High School, where he met Mirza Abolhasan Khan Foroughi who was interested in philosophy, and

modern approach toward religion. He looked at religion from a scientific angle and interpreted Quran by using scientific findings. As a matter of fact, he was a pioneer of Quranic exegeses from a scientific point of view. Bazargan was not only influenced by Foroughi, but also had a very close relationship with him.¹¹³ The influence can be seen in many Bagargan's works and he frequently mentions Foroughi as his ideological mentor.¹¹⁴ Bazargan finished his high school in 1927.

Two years after his graduation at high school in 1927, there was a program to send some students abroad to study, which according to Bazargan:

It was one of the most essential tasks Reza Shah carried out in renewing the country.¹¹⁵

The ulama in those days would regard going to Europe as no less than going into the land of filthy non-believers in those years. Although Bazargan's pious father also was supposed to oppose his studying abroad, he dared to get permission. Bazargan wrote:

I told my father, with the current situation in Iran, owing to the infidelity to religion, which is apparently an impact of the West; I might abandon my religion in a few years. So, I had better go there and see for myself. If this is not true, my faith will even become stronger.¹¹⁶

He eventually got his father's consent and successfully passed the two examinations held for that purpose, and was dispatched to France in 1929. He started his two-year prerequisite course in Lycée Clemenceau. Then, he took part in the Grandes Ecoles and his great and remarkable success granted him the opportunity to enter Ecole Centrale.¹¹⁷

Bazargan totally stayed in France for seven years, two years in Lycée, three years in Ecole Centrale, one year internship in factories and during his last year of stay he went to Ecole supérieure de Textile de Tourcoing. During his stay in Europe he had lots of diverse experiences which not only strengthened his faith, as he had anticipated, but also influenced his ideology remarkably. Bazargan was highly influenced by Alexis Carrel and Pierre Lecomte de Nouy.

On his return to Iran in 1935, he entered military service for one year. Although the one year military service seemed to be very useful for Bazargan, he confessed it was very tough.

The higher the academic education or the family class of a person, the more they were harassed. Another problem was dirty language of the officers and noncommissioned. Theft, bribery and gambling were widespread and common.¹¹⁸

Having finished his military service, Bazargan entered the world of business, and with six other comrades who had finished school the same year, Bazargan founded a construction company named “EMA” (Ettehad-e Mohandesin-e Iran)¹¹⁹ on which he put in his words,

It was probably the first consulting-Engineering company in Iran that was simultaneously working on constructing projects, machineries, facilities and chemical industry.¹²⁰

Nonetheless, he like other students who had studied abroad with the financial aid of the government would have to work as a government official. He started his first government job in Iran’s National Rail Road Company whose chief managing director in those days was Mohandes Hussain

Shaqaqi. But before long, he went to the National Bank of Iran and took place of Monsieur Berg who was in charge of the Facility Department.

In 1936 Bazargan and some other Europe graduates were invited to teach at Tehran University. He worked as a professor in Engineering College for twenty five years and was twice appointed the Dean. Regarding it, he says:

In the second round, I received the unanimous votes of the Faculty Council, which implied they were quite content with my management. It was probably because I strongly emphasized on team work and raised the important issues of the college in the council. In short, it was a democratic procedure, the method which was not previously practiced or even considered.¹²¹

In late 1951, Bazargan was invited by Dr. Karim Sanjabi, Mosaddeq Cabinet Secretary of Education to serve as the Deputy Minister. However, soon he was given another grave responsibility. As a matter of fact, he was appointed as the temporary managing director of Iran's Oil Company to expropriate the former officers who were chiefly British.

When Bazargan was appointed as the managing director of Oil Company, at first he was not willing to accept this huge responsibility. It is because he believed he did not have adequate experience. About his decision he told Dr. Hasibi¹²²,

What people are you? You want to send some mice to fight with tigers? How can we win against them? At least you should select some individuals who have enough experience in this field and know everything about Oil Company.¹²³

But Mosaddeq had adopted another policy. He was not meaning to fight them (the British), for he wasn't willing to give them excuses to propagate

against Iran. Considering the rationality of Mosaddeq's wise decision, Bazargan accepted the responsible post, and successfully accomplished this great work. Bazargan says:

I am delighted to say that thanks to grace of God and the cooperation of the nation, when the British officers left, none of the company's divisions came to a halt.¹²⁴

In less than a year, he was given another important job. This time, Bazargan was supposed to complete Tehran's water pipeline. He was always ready and more than willing to serve people, even though it kept him behind his own schedule and plans. In this relation he says:

Such an assignment was unexpected and would disturb my teachings, but bringing water to people and reviving the city of Tehran were more crucial than any tasks, for *va ja'alna men alma'e kolle shai'*¹²⁵ (everything needs water). Since the time I was studying in Europe, it was always my dream to become an influential individual and to serve my country people.¹²⁶

After the coup d'état of 1953 when Bazargan was still carrying out his significant mission, the first election of the Iranian parliament was organized by Shah's government. Bazargan opposed the election process, because he believed it was carried out illegally and no voice was given to the opposition groups. Prime Minister General Zahedi (1892-1963) who replaced Mosaddeq asked him either to side with the new government or to resign.¹²⁷ Eventually, Bazargan's determined to submit his resignation. And he states the reason as follows:

When I heard what General Zahedi said, I thought siding with him is no less than surrendering to Yazid.¹²⁸ As a result, I

immediately accepted to resign. But he told me to think about it for a few days. Nevertheless, my decision was the same and the letter of my resignation was published in Roushanfekr magazine on February 11, 1954.¹²⁹

3.2 Bazargan's Ideology

All the great influences of the above-mentioned education and experiences undoubtedly made Bazargan a far-sighted modern Islamic thinker who was of faith and thoughtfulness. And the following four main points can be extracted from the ideology of Bazargan.

The first point is Tawhid (Unity). Throughout his life he emphasized on the greatness of unity which specifically in this case he means the oneness of God, or in other words monotheism. He argues that belief in practical unity causes people to stand against any power other than God whom they subordinate. In relation to the unity, Bazargan's noteworthy work is *Afat-e Tawhid (Destructive Elements to Unity)*.

He even believes that blind emulation is no less than polytheism. In this regard, Eshkevari states:

Once, in reply to my question, "Who are you emulating?" Bazargan said: "I'm not a polytheist."¹³⁰

He had a discerning eye and for that reason in 1979 when almost all the Iranians had fought against despotism, he strongly expressed his opinion about practical Tawhid. Like Taleqani, he warned the danger that any humane power other than God would turn into a despot by people's unconditional emulation and subordination. In relation to Tawhid, other

prominent thinkers such as Taleqani, Shariati and Nakhshab were of great works and significant influence.

The second characteristic is compatibility between the Islam and science. With the emergence of modern scientific concepts, a contradiction appeared between religion and science.¹³¹ But there was not a strong conflict between Islam and science as there was in Christianity. Because many Islamic scholars made a great effort for a long time to show the harmony between Islamic principles and science. And Bazargan's most outstanding works on this matter are seen in *Motahharat dar Islam* (Purities and Cleanest in Islam), *Rah-e Tei Shode* (The Paved Path), *Eshgh va Parastesh* (Love and Worship), *Zarreye bi Enteha* (Timeless Particle), and *Seyre Tahavvole Qoran* (The Evolution of the Quran), which commonly show a mathematical order in Quran and Quranic verses. In replay to this question: Why did you decide to show the harmony between religion and science? Bazargan says:

When I returned from Europe, Kasravi's works had prevailed a religion. He strived to prove there was no adaptability between religion and science, yet I wanted to prove he was wrong. Thus, I refuted his opinion by showing the existence of harmony between them.¹³²

Although Bazargan's ideology had a scientific inclination, he did not mean to make religion scientific, nor wanted to make science religious. In fact, he argues:

I just wanted to show the compatibility between religion and science.¹³³

And on the issue of a contradiction between scientific concepts and Islamic principles, Bazargan would definitely take a firm stand for religion. In this regard, he had a noteworthy influence on other Islamic thinkers of his own time such as Taleqani, Sahabi, and his next generation thinkers like Eshkevari and Soroush.

The above is closely related with the third point, compatibility between religion and democracy. For Bazargan who tried hard to show the harmony between science and religion made another great effort to prove religion and democracy were of compatibility. In 1950s particularly after the coup overthrowing Mosaddeq's government in 1953, many political groups and individuals strongly opposed the tyrannical regime of Pahlavi and did their best in revitalizing Constitutional Revolution's goals, the realization of democratic government. Since several secular political groups including the leftists had already started advocating democracy and secular democratic concepts, he began to display the compatibility between religion, particularly Islam, and democracy.

There are quite a few evidence in his *Defa'iyat (Defences)* of 1964 in the court. His insistence there indicates that despotism in every form is condemned and Islam is an anti-despotic religion. For example, in the judicial court he points out in his own defense:

In a society governed by a despotic regime, God is not worshipped.¹³⁴

And in this relation, he wrote his books *Bazyabiye Arzeshha* (Rediscovery of Values), and *Maghzubin* (The Disfavored) after the Revolution of 1979 in

the latter of which he pays a great deal of attention to various types of despotism and their outcomes.

Moreover, adaptability of nationalism and religion of Islam can be an outstanding point of his ideology. Islamic traditionalists would try to show contradiction between religion and nationalism and strived to show religions superiority to nationalism. But Bazargan determined once again to refute such a baseless opinion. Indeed, he wrote a book, *Iran and Islam*, in order to show there was no conflict between religion, particularly Islam and nationalism. He points out the difference between his own idea and that of Khomeini in relation to nationalism;

He (Khomeini) is at first a Muslim and then an Iranian, whereas, I am at first an Iranian and then a Muslim.¹³⁵

Bazargan never accepts the contradiction between Islam and nationalism nor either superiority or inferiority. Significant is his insistence that there are plural identities in an individual, and they coexist.

3.3 Bazargan's Political Activity

At first, Bazargan seemed to have no intention to participate in political activities. He says:

The reason I didn't take part in political parties in those days was that I didn't think the lack of political parties was the main problem Iran was facing. Therefore, I emphasized on intellectual beliefs and spiritual education of the youth more than anything else.¹³⁶

As a matter of fact, he mostly devoted his energy in 1940s on what he considered the most important matter, particularly strengthening the intellectual beliefs of the university students. Consequently, he was regarded as a revivalist modernist. He was not only uninterested in getting involved in politics but also resented that. He explains the reasons:

After the incident of September 1941, the chaos in Iran, the flooding of political parties and groups, and several short-lived political population most of which were established for personal or group goals caused me to loathe politics.¹³⁷

More hateful for him than the aforementioned reasons were the formation and collapse of the fifteen states, corruption, political ties and spread of chaos in various aspects of the country. Nevertheless, in early 1951, took place an important incident in Iran which revolved his political activities. It was the approval of Oil Industry Nationalization Law in Majles.

Although Bazargan did not get seriously involved in politics until 1953, he had already been given some official responsibilities during Mosaddeq's Premiership (1951-1953). They in turn could be considered as political participation in his profile. When he was appointed as the first Iranian head of National Iranian Oil Company and sent to Abadan in order to end the chaos after the Oil Industry Nationalization Law, he performed the given task successfully. Nevertheless, his mission did not last long, and he returned to University after nine months.

As a matter of fact, he believed that if everyone carried out their responsibilities properly, there would be no need for all to get involved in politics. The coup d'état of 1953 caused him to overtly begin his political activities. He argued:

When authorities and staff did not do their jobs, they were treacherous and thieves, and nobody can keep quiet. Everybody has to do everything. University professors will have to get involved in political issues.¹³⁸

On the reason of his participation in political issues after he was arrested as a main political activist in National Resistance Movement, he admitted at his trial as follows:

I felt my house was on fire, obviously in such a case the first thing you decide to do is putting out the fire and that was what I did.¹³⁹

In the year of 1953 National Resistance Movement as a successor organization of Mosaddeq's National Front was formed by prominent figures such as Seyyed Reza Zanjani and Mohammad Nakhshab. It was active until the second National Front was established in 1960.¹⁴⁰

After his participation in the both, Bazargan established the before mentioned Freedom Movement of Iran (FMI). All of them are motivated by his Islamic and nationalistic ideology. In this regard, Motahhari describes Bazargan's religiosity in a fascinating manner:

Bazargan's faith sent him into the world of politics.¹⁴¹

Faith and ethics were two undeniable traits of Bazargan's personality, which were constantly reflected in his ideology. The formation of FMI could be given as an evidence for this claim. In *Asnad-e Nehzat-t Azadi-ye Iran* (FMI's Documents), it can be seen that Bazargan, Taleqani, and Sahabi did not establish FMI to oppose Second National Front, but to move along with it. Rather, in order to exploring the links between their faith, democratic

government, nationalism and social reform, they advocated and modelled rationality, political commitment and social responsibility in Shi'a Muslim practice.¹⁴² The significant reason mentioned in the documents is partly because there were some members in Second National Front who were staunchly in favor of separation of religion and politics. In addition, it is partly because that there were conflicts among its members due to the lack of ethics which led to deterioration of their solidarity.

After FMI was active for nineteen months, its leading figures including Bazargan were arrested, and the movement was forcibly shut down. Nevertheless, FMI continued its activities under the leadership of Yazdi, Shariati, and Chamran in America and Europe.¹⁴³ Bazargan's defenses in his trial such as the one held on December 17, 1963 in which he announced the court's inability to process his case, have been often referred to as clear evidence of his advocacy for democracy by many of Iranians, including even his opponents.¹⁴⁴ He was sentenced to ten years of imprisonment.

After his release in 1967, although Bazargan remained committed to his opposition to the dictatorial regime of Pahlavi, he openly refrained from political activities for a decade; in the meantime, he wrote several noteworthy books. For example, in *Be'that va Ideology (Commission and Ideology)* he refers to Islam as a practicable ideology for change. This book became very controversial, particularly after 1979 Revolution. Because Bazargan in this book is said to have limited the role of Islam to a way of reciprocity for the good of the hereafter, whereas previously he had said Islam was sent to save human beings from being slave of whoever other than God. Therefore, Bazargan was castigated in spite of the lack of concrete reasons. Another outstanding work written by him during the

period was *Seir-e Tahavvol-e Qoran (The Evolution of the Quran)*. He tries to show that Quran's revelation history follows an evolutionary procedure. In relation to the influence of this book on prominent thinkers and revolutionary ideologues, it might be necessary to restate what Shariati writes in a letter to Bazargan;

This book has elevated my faith in the scientific methodology of the Quran.¹⁴⁵

In 1977 Jimmy Carter raised the issue of human rights across the world, under influence of which Shah relaxed his strict police control. Thus, Bazargan, who had always fought against despotism, and had made a great effort in bringing different opposition groups together, found a great opportunity to re-start political activity. He was elected as the Secretary General of Iranian Population in Defense of Liberty and Human Rights.

In the process of 1979 Revolution, in order to meet with Khomeini, Bazargan visited Paris in late 1978. In his discussion with Khomeini on the post-revolutionary government system, he insisted on the term of democratic republic. However, Khomeini emphatically stated that Islam, by nature, is democratic, thus, using the term democratic is redundant.¹⁴⁶

3.4 Premiership and Draft Constitution of 1979

In February 1979 when the revolution almost succeeded, Bazargan was appointed by Khomeini as the prime minister of the provisional government to confront Shapour Bakhtiyar government to which the Shah entrusted the last hope. It is said that he was highly recommended by Motahhari. It is evident that no one else was as equally respected and

trusted by the intellectuals and ulama. But those were not the only reasons for this appointment. Bazargan had a great skill in management and was of integrity in his conduct. On the other hand, some of the revolutionary figures, Taleqani in particular, strongly advised him to reject the offer:

I know these people (ulama, in general, including Khomeini) very well, and I do know you (Bazargan) and your personality. You might as well reject it (premiership).¹⁴⁷

After all, Bazargan accepted the premiership; however, he did it merely because he had entirely devoted himself to democracy and anti-authoritarianism. And he believed that everybody was responsible toward the slogans of the revolution, namely *Esteqlal* and *Azadi*. However, his emphasis on *Esteqlal* and *Azadi* which meant independence and freedom of all Iranians regardless of the differences of religion, ethnicity, ideology and so on, later drove radical ulama to oppose him.

Due to his liberal and democratic stance, Bazargan was in favor of moderate and gradual change not only in socio-economic issues but also in foreign policy. He insisted on the obedience of law and order, whose absence brought Pahlavi regime to its end. But the radical ulama and their adherents who aimed to realize *velayat-e faqih* (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist) system interpreted the theological concepts under a democratic veil, and finally led Iran off a secular democratic path.

When the draft of the new Constitution was drawn and announced by the cabinet of Bazargan in May 1979, it was accepted by Khomeini at first. However, it was completely rewritten later, as Bakhash points out:

Khomeini insisted that clerics should have the sole responsibility for revising the draft of the Constitution from an Islamic perspective.¹⁴⁸

In the draft Constitution drawn by Bazargan’s provisional government and the Constitution created by the Assembly of Experts (Majles-s Khobregan)¹⁴⁹, there are fundamental differences as shown in table 1 on the next page:

Table 1. Shows several differences between the draft Constitution drawn by Bazargan’s government and the Constitution created by the Assembly of Experts in 1979

	Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Republican constitution consistant with Shiite islam	A constitution fundamentally Islamic incorporating specifically Shiite principles of government

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to be appointed by the president	Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to be appointed by Head of the Judiciary
President, the highest official in the country for internal affairs, international relationship and implementation of the Constitution	Vali-ye faqih determines the general policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran after consultation with the Expediency Council
The legislative, executive, and judicial branches must be independent. The relationship between them to be established by the president	The legislative, executive, and judicial branches are all subject to “the supervision of the vali-ye faqih”
The president is the chief commander of the armed forces	Vali-ye faqih is the chief commander of the armed forces
General amnesty to be announced by the president	General amnesty to be announced by vali-ye faqih

Some of the differences between the draft Constitution drawn by Bazargan’s provisional government such as announcing general amnesty, appointing the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and being the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces which were the responsibility of the president were revised in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic.

In November of 1979, when US embassy was occupied by a group of students¹⁵⁰, Bazargan resigned the premiership, mainly because he was frequently annoyed by the radical and opposed their confrontational policy. In addition, it was partly because decisions taken by his government were disrespected by Revolutionary Council as well as Khomeini.

During the nine months of his premiership, unlike Khomeini who had an uncompromising stance toward Shah, America and their allies, Bazargan made several great and crucial efforts in bringing back stability and peace. In this regard, he even wrote a letter to Shah asking him for his return. He allegedly discussed the issue with Khomeini and received his

permission in writing the letter. However, the permission by Khomeini was later denied, and Bazargan was solely kept viable for writing the letter.¹⁵¹

In November of 1979, right before his resignation, he met with Zbigniew Brzezinski in Algiers in order to ask him to improve the relationship between Iran and the United States.¹⁵² Another remarkable task, in the process of 1979 Revolution that proves Bazargan's view was his strong opposition to revolutionary tribunal and severe punishment of the military as well as the dependents of the former Shah regime. As shown in those activities, he attached a great importance to democratic procedures in judicial system.

3.5 Subsequent Ideological Development

In spite of the fact that Bazargan was dismayed by the arbitrary actions of the radical ulama and this adherent people seeking for power, he did not withdraw from politics; instead, he remained committed to his long-life mission. It was authoritarian behavior of a ruling group standing against Islamic principles that made Bazargan determined to get involved in politics without a break. In fact, he became a candidate for the first Iranian Majlis (parliament) after the revolution in 1980, and was elected as one of the representatives of Tehran. During his premiership, as he describes it himself, "a knife without a blade,"¹⁵³ he was not given a proper chance to practice democracy. But he took advantage of the opportunity to stand for it as Majles representative. He opposed the ruling ulama in various ways, for he believed that despotism was condemned in every form, particularly even if it were religious. It was because religious despotism would even exploit people's spirituality. In relation to that Mehdi Noorbakhsh argues:

Bazargan challenged ruling ulama in four specific areas: Challenging them on their reading and interpretation of faith that had an impact on government, politics and policies, the war with Iraq, human rights, and freedom.¹⁵⁴

In May 1982 when Khorramshahr was freed from Iraqi occupation army, Bazargan and other FMI members insisted that war should be ended. While they were advocates of the defense of the country against the invading forces of Saddam Hussein, they opposed the continuation of the war.¹⁵⁵

He wrote several other books such as *Bazyabi-ye Arzeshha* (*Rediscovery of Values*), *Bazgasht be Qoran* (*Returning to the Quran*) and *Maghzubin* (*The Disfavored*), and tried to show how religion is being taken advantage of. In fact, like Taleqani, he believed that Quran would be utilized to dominate Iranian Muslims. Misinterpretation of Quranic verses were given to justify their decisions, controlling power, as well as restricting human rights. Bazargan was criticized not only by his opponents but also by some of his proponents for some of the books he wrote after the 1979 Revolution. His works before and after the revolution were said to have paradoxical ideas. However, studying his books carefully, one would realize that his ideas in those books were not in contradiction at all; rather they were precisely expounding the same ideas. They can be said to be the product of a more developed ideology examining Islamic values from different angles.

Concluding Remarks

Bazargan's ideology was under influence of various elements. Although some of his post-revolutionary works such as *Be'that va Ideology*

(*Commission and Ideology*) were misinterpreted, the most important to him was a pure form of Islam. He fought against religious superstitions that marred the holy concept of Tawhid (Unity). And since he believed the only legitimate power capable of ruling people was nothing but God, he bravely opposed the tyrannical regime of Pahlavi. He, like his father and Taleqani, his life-long intimate comrade, was against authoritarianism. He reluctantly entered the world of politics as a faithful Muslim, due to his responsibility toward Islam. He made great efforts in every field, including his career as a professor, and engaged in political activities toward practicing democracy.

He established Nehzat-e Azadi-ye Iran in order to realize and fulfill Mosaddeq's democratic demands and to bring solidarity among pro democratic groups and individual. He did all to regain the trust of the Iranians, for he believed they deserved the democratic government the coup of 1953 deprived them of. In spite of the many revolutionary colleagues' advice, he accepted the premiership of the provisional government to have fulfilled his mission. However, because the Constitution, apparently different from the content of the draft he prepared, was drawn by the Assembly of Expert for the Constitution, he resigned the premiership.

But he stayed committed to his own responsibilities, mainly believing in the value of Islamic democracy. In his post-revolution activities, he made several attempts in revitalizing democratic concepts, particularly, freedom and human rights. Bazargan was of great ethics which strongly signifies his democratic characteristics. For democracy can never be achieved through violence.

Bazargan was not alone in revitalizing Islamic concepts. Warning people of the potential threat of secular ideologies such as Marxism,

awakening people about misinterpretations of religious texts, and showing people the compatibility between Islam and democracy were shared by other Islamic intellectuals. Therefore, the ideology and political activity of other prominent revolutionary ideologues such as Taleqani and Motahhari will be necessary to be examined. And in order to reach a definitive conclusion about their stands toward Islamic democracy they will be comparatively analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

AYATOLLAH TALEQANI AND THE 1979 REVOLUTION

Introduction

Ayatollah Seyyed Mahmoud Taleqani (1910-1979) is known as a prominent religious figure and an Islamic thinker. In particular, his liberal stance toward other ideologies earned him great popularity among many political groups and individuals. This chapter mainly focuses on Taleqani, his specific ideology, political activities and crucial role as a revolutionist. In addition, the influence of Bazargan's ideology on Taleqani is also considered. In this relation, some researchers like Chehabi, and Dabashi

have already examined his political role and have also commented on some of the important aspects of Taleqani's character. But his ideology and role, in comparison with other ideologues of his time needs to be reexamined in order to find out the reason of their various perceptions of the Islamic democracy they advocated. Thus, all the clues and evidence in this chapter should lead us to a better understanding of his ideological development as well as his unique and remarkable role particularly as a linkage between the secular intellectuals and ulama in the process of the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

4.1 Taleqani's Early Life as the Background of His Ideology

Taleqani's father, Seyed Abolhasan, was one of the most renowned and trustworthy ulama (clerics) in Taleghan. Having finished his primary Islamic lessons in Qazin, he went to Najaf to complete his studying. He was the Imam-e jom'eh (a religious leader of Friday prayers) in Qanatabad Mosque, and Chehabi describes him in a very impressive manner as follows:

Unlike many *ulama* who were notoriously venal and led quite comfortable lives, S. Abolhasan had a reputation for incorruptible honesty.¹⁵⁶

It is said that he made a meager income by repairing watches. His Islamic principles and Quranic lessons had a great influence on his son, Mahmoud and caused him to become an outstanding symbol of faith and grew him to an important revolutionary figure that was highly admired.

Taleqani whose birth coincided with the post-Constitutional Revolution chaos grew up in fear and anxiety, and his early life was either filled with or shadowed by a misery that neither left him nor even seemed to

abate to his very last years. But it was just the beginning, because Reza Shah who got himself into throne four years after the Coup d'état of 1921 exacerbated the socio-political situation in Iran, thus increasing Taleqani's pain and sorrow.

Taleqani learned reading and writing in Galird Taleqan, Alborz Province where he was born, and then moved to Tehran to live with his parents and continue his studies. At the age of ten, he was sent to Qom to study at Razaviye and then Feiziye School under Sheikh Abdulkarim Haeri's guidance. During the time he was studying in Qom, he was highly influenced by some well-known ulama such as Ayatollah Khalil Kamare'i known as an intellectual due to his broad knowledge and interest in philosophy. Shortly after his father's death in 1931, Taleqani secretly went to Najaf to study *Kharej* lessons (an Islamic advanced requisite lesson for ulama)¹⁵⁷ under the guidance of Ayatollah Abu al-Hasan al-Esfahani, Haj Shaikh Muhammad Gharavi, and Agha Zia al-Din Araqi. He finally received ejazeh (permission of ejtehad)¹⁵⁸ from Ayatollah Esfahani in 1937. Having returned to Iran, he also received ejazeh from Ayatollah Ha'eri in Qom. It is necessary and of significance to know that Taleqani was strongly influenced by one of the most prominent and high rank ulama of Constitutional Revolution era, Ayatollah Na'ini and his book *Tanbih al-Ummah wa Tanzih al-Millah* (The Awakening of Islamic Community and Refinement of Nations) which endorsed the constitutional law and system. Under this influence, Taleqani spent most of his life in anti-dictatorial activities seeking a solution to save people from tyranny and excessive exploitation of the Pahlavi regime.

4.2 Taleqani and Other Revolutionary Ideologues

In delving into the ideology of Ayatollah Taleqani, we can easily find his open mindedness and liberal stance. For instance, he examined from all different angles the ideologies of some of the most prominent thinkers, including Motahhari, Shariati and Khomeini, to reach a very significant conclusion. Regardless of the differences in their Islamic ideologies, he came to realize that every one of them emphasized a specific aspect of the Quranic messages and the Sunna, which, however, does not necessarily mean that there is any standing conflict among them. According to him, it could just be inferred that they explained what they understood to be true through their studies on the situation they faced.¹⁵⁹ And Taleqani thought that since Islam and its respectable messages were being neglected for certain reasons, they were merely trying to provide the people with clear explanations. Therefore, every one of them drew upon their own expertise and the vast knowledge they held as individuals as a means of clarifying the Islamic principles. In relation to Motahhari's view on Islam compared to that of Shariati, Taleqani points out:

Motahhari viewed Islam from a philosophical point of view, and tried to explain the rise of Islam and the reasons for which every single Quranic verse was revealed.¹⁶⁰

Then he adds:

Motahhari strongly believed that philosophy and logic could not accept anything coming into existence without any definitive reason, particularly when done by God who is all-knowing when it comes to matters of the universe.¹⁶¹

Probably for this very reason, ideas expounded upon by Motahhari were much more difficult to comprehend in comparison to those elaborated

on by Shariati, for the latter's ideas were more tangible than the formers. To make the controversial issue more comprehensible, Taleqani goes on comparing Motahhari and Shariati's views as follows:

On the other hand, Shariati looked at the Quran from a different angle. He explained the messages from a sociological point of view, and made a great effort to relate them to the current situation.¹⁶²

In Taleqani's opinion, the Quran which is a perfect book does not belong to only one society or generation. It is so great and perfect that the Quran can provide every individual or community with a solution for any problem that may arise.

Considering the above points of Motahhari and Shariati, Taleqani strived to create an intimate relationship between supporters. In particular, he believed people could eliminate their conflicts only if they realized that Shariati and Motahhari's Islamic ideologies were not contradictory, and the only difference was the angle from which they were being viewed.¹⁶³ Considering such facts, it can easily be figured out that ideal Islamic government would be under the influence of such ideologies as theirs.

Khomeini, on the other hand, looked at Islamic principles and laws from fiqh (jurisprudence) point of view. Rather than examining the reasons for which the Quranic messages were revealed or measuring them against social problems, he focused on the laws themselves. In his opinion, Islamic laws had to be accepted just as they were revealed without any interpretation or commentary.

Going back to the ideology of Taleqani, significant is that his expansive knowledge of the Quran is what granted him the exclusive ability to interpret the holy book. Such interpretations show he was

strongly bound to the divine laws but also prove that he could examine the reasoning behind the revelations while keeping them in measure with the concomitant situation of his society. In relation to the interpretation of sura al-Nazi'at,¹⁶⁴ Taleqani himself commented:

It is a specification of the Quran that some of the Quranic facts must be clarified for humans through motion. For instance, regarding the interpretation of Surah *An-Nazi'at*, as you might have seen in *Partovi az Quran (A Ray from Quran)*.¹⁶⁵

He added:

When I came out of prison and saw the movement and the revolution, some other facts became clear to me. And this is the unique perspective of the Quran. As the Quran itself mentions, some allegories can only be interpreted through needs and interactions.¹⁶⁶

4.3 The Threat of Marxism and Taleqani's Ideology

Taleqani's liberal stance is not limited to the above-mentioned Islamic ideologies. He also put great effort into examining secular ideologies as well. Whenever he found other philosophies to be rational and not in contradiction with Islamic principles, he strived to show the positive and helpful aspects of those ideologies to other people. As a matter of fact, he even mentioned that the sacredness of those secular ideologies was put forth in the pursuit of freedom, for this was the very goal of the Quran, too.¹⁶⁷ The important thing is that, unlike many other religious thinkers, Taleqani was not afraid of secular ideologies such as Marxism which was highly popular in the decades prior to the Islamic Revolution. He certainly

considered Marxism a threat, but it was because he was worried about misconceptions with regard to these ideologies or the blind following of them. He once clearly mentions in his statements:

In Communist countries, we see that individuals' freedom has been taken away from them by the power of the party and economy has been placed above freedom.¹⁶⁸

As a result, it can be concluded that Taleqani's recognition toward the threat of communism was not baseless at all. As a Muslim intellectual, he considered it his responsibility to promote awareness among Iranians so that they would not become trapped in cloak slogans.

With this aim, Taleqani was constantly making greater efforts toward the awakening of the youth, the mission he had commenced years earlier. And he strived to revive the neglected messages of the Quran by any possible means. He staunchly believed that the youth would have a very significant role in shaping the future of the country. He also thought that due to their strong ambition and lack of information, they were in grave danger. Accordingly, he clearly stated this mission as follows:

I have always tried to show the young people the origin and principle of the religion, the Quran, the Sunnah, the Prophet and the guiding Imams, and to discuss Islamic justice with them. This is the most important matter.¹⁶⁹

Having examined both religious and secular ideologies and fully taking into consideration their shared points, Taleqani gives a precise description of his ideal Islamic government. In his opinion, government belongs only to God¹⁷⁰; therefore the Islamic government Taleqani describes about comprises a hierarchy with God at the highest position. The Prophet,

who has been selected by God to reveal the divine laws can be entitled to the head of government – the *Khalifa*. Next to the Prophet comes the Imam, who is a true and faithful follower of the Prophet and who holds the responsibility of leading the nation—the Ummah. In the absence of the Prophet and the Imam, the nation chooses a group of faithful and trustworthy followers who have sufficient knowledge to run the government.¹⁷¹ It is necessary to mention that the Islamic government for Taleqani is not ruled by a single person, and is always supervised by representatives of the nation in order to remain immune to corruption.

In this regard, Taleqani explains how despotism begins. He believed that when anyone who has not been selected by God, becomes over-respected and popularized that he/she would finally become idolized and worshiped. This idolatry will eventually make that person believe that he/she knows and does everything. Consequently, they begin ruling people with regard to every aspect of their lives and making decisions for them. And since it is characteristic of human nature, once in power they begin to dominate others by trying to control the actions of every individual. They do never listen to anybody's advice for they already see themselves in a Divine position – in other words, as God. If anyone opposes them, they are severely punished. ¹⁷² According to Taleqani, such an obvious example was Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. Taleqani thought that Mohammad Reza became the only person who knew what the correct thing to do was, thus he never heard the voice of the nation.

In Taleqani's opinion, many people including some of the prominent religious figures were responsible for this and should be put to blame. He felt that they, inadvertently or intentionally, had turned Mohammad Reza Pahlavi into an idol by their approval of his illegitimate actions.¹⁷³

4.4 The Birth of Revolutionary Stance

As a matter of fact, Taleqani was strongly in favor of reform and the constitutional government. Because he believed that the constitutional laws limited the power of Shah, and would get people closer to their ideal government. He argues:

Doesn't it (the constitutional law) rein in the uncontrollable despotism? Can't we take it, as much as possible, closer to the great divine government?¹⁷⁴

For this reason, he did his very best to resuscitate the constitutional laws forgotten in Iran. He put an elaborate introduction and explicit commentaries in the book of Ayatollah Na'ini, *Tanbih al-Ummah wa Tanzih al-Millah*.

The remarkable change in Taleqani's ideology—the one that drove him from a reformist into a revolutionist—was not accidental. His extreme discontent at the Pahlavi regime was one of the most crucial factors in this transition. Having witnessed numerous and growing illegitimate actions of the Shah, Taleqani concluded that the idea of reform could no longer work. This was because of his recognition that the Shah with plenary power had already been turned into a kind of idol. Not only did his regime not listen to the voice of the nation, but also started becoming more violent day by day. According to Taleqani:

The Shah had reached the excessive point of despotism known as *taghut*. Therefore, no one's advice could now change or even influence him in a positive way. In fact, it would just make him more aggressive and increase his anger.¹⁷⁵

The Shah who at first did not want to rule in the same way as his father gradually became a stubborn dictator; particularly after the coup of 1953 engineered by the U.S and British. He proved with his arbitrary decisions and plans that he was no less than Reza Shah.

Taleqani had always stood against the dictatorial actions of Reza Shah, and never endorsed any of his plans. And he kept this oppositional stance in the era of Mohammad Reza Shah. Once Taleqani saw that the Shah was disrespecting the constitutional laws, like his father, he carried on with the mission he had begun years earlier, i.e. awakening the youth; but became more passionate about it. The publication of Ayatollah Na'ini's book in 1955, which almost coincided with the rise of tyranny, was considered a brave and outstanding task accomplished by Taleqani. He blew fresh life into a book that had been neglected for many years and reminded Iranians of the lives they had lost and the blood they had sacrificed.¹⁷⁶ He urged people to understand the significance of the Constitutionalism to recover precious lives of Iranian which were lost in vain, and notice their political goal not to replace a ruler with a dictator more murderous than the previous one.

However, Taleqani's political activities were not restricted to awakening the youth or reviving an overlooked book for a long time. Taleqani had been imprisoned several times due to his opposition against the dictatorial regime. While in prison, he found the opportunity to meet and talk with other political prisoners. As a result, Taleqani learned more about other ideologies. Having found numerous similarities between their goals and his own, Taleqani supported them more than ever before. On the other hand, he also tried to persuade them that what they were looking for could actually be achieved following the Quranic principles.

After the coup of 1953 brought the Mosaddeq government to an end, Taleqani joined *Nehzat-e Moqavemat-e Melli* (The National Resistance Movement) which was founded to carry on what Mosaddeq had initiated. In this relation, Taleqani stated:

Some admirable intellectuals who wanted to follow Mosaddeq's way sincerely have risen to hoist his flag again.¹⁷⁷

After the National Resistance Movement was suppressed and the second National Front established, Taleqani supported the National Front. However, internal conflicts between the groups made Taleqani, Mehdi Bazargan and Yadollah Sahabi establish another organization. And eventually in 1961, they founded the Freedom Movement of Iran (FMI) and tried to recover the people's trust lost in the strife inside the political parties. They intensified their opposition against the dictatorial regime. Their oppositions became so intense that they were all eventually arrested. This was not the end of the movement, however, and what they had begun was then being carried on in Iran and abroad. In 1978, the FMI became more active.¹⁷⁸ In fact, it can be said that when the Shah regime relaxed oppressive stance under the influence of Carter administration's "human rights policy", the FMI was one of the most significant organizations contributing to the revolutionary movement in 1978-1979.

4.5 Taleqani and Mass Mobilization

Upon realizing several similarities between the various aims of the religious and secular political activists, Taleqani placed an emphasis on solidarity among all the opposition groups. He made great efforts in attracting people to support them. He knew very well that one political

group or even the network of groups could not succeed in toppling the powerful regime which had grown even stronger due to support by the West in the several decades prior to the 1979 revolution. In order to politically attract and mobilize the masses, Taleqani would need to open the eyes of all Iranians so that they would be able to see that what they were all fighting for was the sacred goal of freedom. It was not an easy task but he was fortunately not alone in fulfilling the task. Prominent thinkers such as Shariati, Motahhari, Bazargan and Sahabi assisted him greatly in this endeavor, although Shariati died an unnatural death in London in 1977, without seeing the revolution.¹⁷⁹

Nevertheless, Taleqani did have an outstanding role in mass mobilization and it was his role to create a link between the religious and secular anti-regime groups, even when they became weakened by internal conflicts. Placing importance on solidarity, he emphasized the necessity for leadership. It was his belief that a powerful and sincere leader who was trusted by the majority could help solve problems. As a result, he thought Ayatollah Khomeini in exile could hold popularity and thus urged the masses to follow him.

However, most religious leaders including Ayatollah Khomeini did not see the militant activists like Mojahedin-e Khalq and Fedaiyan-e Khalq in a positive light. On the other hand, most of secular activists were pessimistic about the religious leaders because of their longstanding silence on empowerment of the Shah. In this sense, Taleqani's role as mediator became increasingly more important than ever.¹⁸⁰

His role was to build links not only between the religious and secular groups, but also to build bridges between the universities and the ulama. In

this regard, Homa Katouziyan who stayed to teach economics at a university in Tehran acknowledges:

We, university professors and students, owe Ayatollah Taleqani because he was one of the first thinkers who wanted to make a bridge between universities and rouhaniyyat, and to relate these two science centers to one another. And this equal relationship was not one at the level of velayat (authority), with one group in the front and the other one as an emulator.¹⁸¹

4.6 Seeing the Revolution in Danger

After the success of the Islamic Revolution, Taleqani was still worried about the future of the Iranian people, for he knew that the real victory was yet to be achieved. He knew well that, due to the possible chaos caused by conflicts among the various groups, the revolution and its goal would be in great danger. For that reason, he constantly reminded the people of the failures in the Constitutional Revolution:

Why did the Constitutional Movement fail? And why from the constitutional parliament, and all of the bloodshed and sacrifices, did Reza Khan appear? It is because some opportunists changed the direction of the revolution. The constitution which stipulates the right of the nation to vote for their own representatives and choose their own destiny, has been turned into a weapon in the hands of despotic powers inside and outside Iran.¹⁸²

Furthermore, he kept raising their awareness by telling them:

After every revolution, groups and individuals try by all possible means and at any cost to get their hands on the power.¹⁸³

As a result, he continuously urged people to follow Khomeini in order to reach the ultimate victory—for which many brave and innocent people lost their lives. In his opinion, it was not only the conflict among the groups that would put the goal of the revolution in danger, but also the greater danger which would be generated by the opportunists who would misuse these schisms. He believed that America would do everything in its power not to lose the strong base of Iran in the Middle East. Therefore, he requested the people not to provide the enemies with such a chance;

You, young people with whatever your ideologies, I know that your nature is pure and I do know you have suffered and lost your trust in religion. I know that very well because I have lived with you, but now, in this critical situation people are not seeking for a school of thought.¹⁸⁴

He warned secular intellectuals and activists of potential dangers of power struggle which tends to take place in the post-revolution era:

The nation is not looking for an ideology. It is looking for freedom and every moment there is the fear of being beaten again.¹⁸⁵

Upon founding the Islamic Republic, Taleqani had another worry as daunting as any of the other problems he faced; this was the problem of power concentration. His ideal Islamic government, as earlier described, would be a legitimate government under the supervision of the nation. He did not approve any power concentration on whoever; as he believed that this would lead to despotism again. Moreover, he warns the religious despotism as the worst possible kind. In this regard, he clearly stated that:

In such a situation, appears a self-respecting person who is also very smart. How does he deceive people? By promising them a better life, food, a house and welfare he will do. And in such a situation, in order to achieving his goals, this person justifies every one of his actions, even taking advantage of the religion.¹⁸⁶

Taleqani always emphasized on the role and significance of the shora (consultation) properly. He believed that this was the only way for the people to choose their own representative to supervise the government. He would always agonize over why such an important issue was being neglected, in spite of the fact that it played a significant role as motivation for the masses before the Islamic Revolution. On the reason why the shora is not accepted, he points out as follows:

If the shora gets established, probably those people in power might worry about their position.¹⁸⁷

As a result, Khomeini finally approved Taleqani's proposal—the shora. He then urged the people to form a shora as soon as possible, saying:

All shora members, including those from small, remote cities and villages, should participate actively in taking their own destiny into their hands.¹⁸⁸

Concluding Remarks

The analysis presented in this chapter reveals some significant points about the ideology of Taleqani and infers important features regarding his role in the Islamic revolution of 1979. In comparison with some of the other prominent ideologues of his day, such as Shariati and Motahhari, Taleqani held a more liberal, and humanist stance. Through his

explanations of the many dimensions of the Quranic messages, he made a great effort to eliminate the conflicts between both the followers of different groups and their ideologies.

Although he advocated Islamic government, he opposed power concentration and emphasized what is called *vesayat-e foqaha* (jurisprudents' supervision). And as a mediator, his role outweighed other revolutionary thinkers, particularly the ulama. While Khomeini was in exile, prior to the Islamic Revolution, Taleqani exactly played the most significant role in mass mobilization; and in order to bring about solidarity among people he urged all political groups and individuals to follow Khomeini.

Moreover, because his concern for the Iranian people was always at the forefront, while witnessing the extreme pressure of the regime and realizing that the idea of reform by the Shah regime was deceitful, he adopted a more practical solution. The pressure of the Pahlavi regime, however, was not the only factor that led him to change his stance from a reformist to a revolutionist. The danger of Western ideologies also had a crucial impact on him. And last but not least, while he felt the revolutionary goals were being overlooked, he even raised his voice to warn the authorities and ask the nation to be cautious, and to take their destiny into their own hands. It can be safely said that the sudden death of the great mediator Taleqani in September 1979 gave rise to severe power struggles thereafter.

CHAPTER FIVE
MOTAHHARI'S IDEOLOGY, DEMOCRACY AND VELAYAT-E
FAQIH

Introduction

In the process of 1979 Revolutions, prominent thinkers, religious and secular intellectuals played significant roles in mass mobilization and attracting young professionals, students including those who were following modern secular ideologies such as Marxism and/or nationalism. The role and ideologies of outstanding revolutionaries like Taleqani and Bazargan in the process of the revolution have already been examined. In this relation, Ayatollah Motahhari is another prominent religious ideologue, who tacitly

advocated democracy, particularly before the revolution. He gave no definitive explanation about the traits of an Islamic democracy, but uniquely took a firm stand for the so-called *velayat-e faqih* (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist) after the revolution.

5.1 Motahhari's Life as the Background of His Ideology

Morteza Motahhari was born on 2 February 1920 in Fariman, a city about a hundred and thirty kilometers from Mashhad, a major and religious city in the northeast of Iran. After he finished his primary studies, Motahhari moved to Mashhad to continue studying. He seemed to have become very interested in philosophy. When he was 16 years old, he left Mashhad for Qom because his teacher Mirza Mahdi Shahidi who was a prominent philosopher in Islamic Studies passed away. In those days studying philosophy was not very common in Iran, particularly for those who studied Islamic courses. In this relation, Dabashi states:

Motahhari have demonstrated a particular pre-election for Islamic philosophy. But in 1936 as indeed during most periods of Islamic history the study of philosophy was not a readily available course of education, next to mysticism the study of philosophy was severely protested by contemporary juridical masters.¹⁸⁹

Although Qom was a center of Islamic studies, studying philosophy was relatively possible.

In 1941 Motahhari moved to Isfahan and started studying *Nahj al-Balaghah* with Haj Mirza Ali Aqa Esfahani. He was a master of Shi'i texts, in particular *Nahj al-Balaghah*, and had a great influence on Motahhari.¹⁹⁰

Thereafter, Motahhari returned to Qom again and started studying jurisprudence with Ayatollah Borujerdi who had moved to there in

1944. Motahhari started to study *Manzume* under the guidance of Khomeini (d. 1989) in 1945. It is one of the most outstanding philosophical books written by Molla Hadi Sabzevaari for Shiite Muslim, particularly in Hadith. One year later, he began to read *Kifayah al-Usul* with Khomeini. This book is also on jurisprudence and written by Akhond Khorasani, a politician and a philosopher who had a great role during the Constitutional Movement. It can be safely said that Motahhari's philosophical ideology found a more vigorous tie with fiqh under great influence of Khomeini. Motahhari built a close relationship with Khomeini and continued his study of both juridical and philosophical texts with him.

Motahhari was a religious figure, a professor and above all a philosopher, whose works not only influenced the pre-revolution intellectuals and thinkers, but also had a greater effect on the post-revolution intellectuals. For example, even Khomeini evaluates as follows:

All his works without exception were Islamic and noteworthy. ¹⁹¹

5.2 Motahhari's Fundamental Premise on Ideology

One of the most remarkable characteristics in Motahhari's ideology is his unique perception of ideology itself. His approach toward ideology, though exhorting eloquently, seems to be more intricate than that of other Islamic contemporaneous ideologues. In particular, he drew the attention of addressees to the root of ideology, his worldview. He promoted to necessitate a collaboration of two inseparable elements of humans as intelligent beings, knowledge and belief, or in other words science and faith.¹⁹² In order to clarify the issue, he rhetorically asks several questions

and tries to draw a logical inference. For example, he questions the essence of science and faith and the relationship between them. He asks:

Can an idealistic interpretation be accepted by science? Or, are all thoughts given to us by science and philosophy against faith, hope, and optimism?¹⁹³

Thus, Motahhari's approach to ideology appears to have gone through an explanatory process. And he finally reaches the conclusion that science and faith grants us a worldview which in fact tells us what the world is like. In addition, he explains the emergence of ideology.

Islam, with an emphasis on the teachings of God, has a great emphasis on science and attaining power in Quran. Since the introduction of Islam to this day, Islam has had the answer to salvation for humanity and it is holistic enough to be able to answer the modern needs of humanity.¹⁹⁴

By examining Islamic thinking, we may notice that Islam has allowed any form of science as long as it is useful for the Islamic society. And he points out that:

Science is limited neither by the learner, nor by the teacher nor by the time nor by place. It can be and it is a recommendation by religion.¹⁹⁵

Since Motahhari used to expound everything with a detailed introduction, it might be somewhat necessary to digress at this point to reach a better understanding of his intended ideology. For example he says:

As every living species evolves and moves toward perfection, evolution is perceived as worship.¹⁹⁶

It is simply because of his belief that according to Islam, God is the only perfect being. Evolution, therefore, means moving toward God. And Motahhari maintains:

However, for human beings, this type of worship does not suffice. It is because human can be distinguished from other beings by their concepts of science and faith. As a result, they should worship God in precisely distinctive ways.¹⁹⁷

Motahhari, like many other religious thinkers, believes that everything such as working, feeding, and even resting, is to be done for the sake of God and is another type of worship. Nevertheless, it is not still enough and does not mean that man is exempted from prayer. Because the first two types of worshiping might have a different impetus or motivation, whereas prayer's main motivation and goal are worshiping God. Having considered all the above mentioned factors, Motahhari insists as follows:

Worldview provides us with an image of life or the world as it is, while ideology enables us to make it the way we want. In order to achieve happiness and an ideal world, having an ideology or believing in a school of thought is an inescapable or undeniable necessity.¹⁹⁸

5.3 The Significance of Philosophy in His Ideology

Motahhari's broad knowledge in philosophy enabled him to challenge not only the secular ideologues but also other pro-democratic individuals and groups, before and after the 1979 revolution. It is stated that, "Thinkers such as Ali Shariati and Morteza Motahhari invaded the Marxist

ideology in occasions and their main gathering station was at the Hosseiniyeh Ershad—a religious institute in Tehran.”¹⁹⁹

In fact, by writing commentaries on Allameh Tabatabai's (d. 1981), *Principles of Philosophy and the Realistic Method*, Motahhari confronted the political issues of his time, particularly the widespread ideology of Marxism. However, because of his imprecise knowledge about Marxism based on either secondhand materials or translated books, Motahhari's works regarding Marxism were not highly evaluated. In addition, he might have been also in such a rush fulfilling his mission. Dabashi in this regard says:

His impatience with sustained and long-term projects and his lack of a first-hand knowledge of non-Islamic intellectual traditions more often than not led him to make such presumptuous thunders as passing judgment on Mohammad Iqbal's book on Islamic philosophy, considering it 'very short and insignificant' while confessing that he had not actually seen it.²⁰⁰

Another significant matter related to Motahhari's ideology is his non-scholastic approach and simplicity. Either done deliberately or unpremeditatedly, it has caused him to be praised and criticized. For that very reason, he might be believed to have had a hidden ideological agenda. It is also believed that since he was a religious teacher, he highly likely considered it his responsibility to simplify complex discourse so that everyone could be benefited. Evidently, he had a similar intention when he started collecting moral and educational anecdotes about the Islamic saints in his prize-winning book, *Dastan-e Rastan* (Stories of the Virtuous). Thereby, he tried to resuscitate the Islamic memories in order to save the

general ethics which was endangered by the propagation of secular ideologies. He maintains:

The reform and the corruption of social classes affect one another. It's not possible to build a wall between them with one corrupted, while the other remained immune. However, corruption usually starts from the elite and contaminates the public. Reform, on the other hand, usually starts from the public by their awakening, and eventually and inevitably spreads into the elite group.²⁰¹

In this regard, Dabashi also states:

By targeting his audience among the general public, Motahhari wished to educate the intellectual elite as well.²⁰²

Since Motahhari's approach toward Islamic democracy is from a philosophical point of view, it has sometimes turned into a puzzle and required discerning eyes. For example, when we need to reach a rational and logical inference of his ideal Islamic democracy, it is necessary to consider his conditions for an 'eligible government'. In brief, one needs to realize how Motahhari went on defining government and how he explained the conditions of eligibility of the government. In his words,

State or government in fact is the symbol of the society's power in regard to external attack, and the symbol of justice. Security and law are internal affairs, and also the symbol of social decisions in social relationship.²⁰³

Moreover, to have considered the role of a government, now we must find out what exactly he meant by eligibility of a government. Unlike the general definition of government eligibility derived from political books and theories which refer to the type of government accepted by the society,

which in turn means it should be in accordance with the constitution of the society, Motahhari refers to the right of governing. He looks at eligibility through a political philosophy. Therefore, he says:

By eligibility of a government, we actually talk about: Who has the right to govern and who deserves the power of governing? Who must the nation follow or obey? And finally we will have to see how he has received this right and authority.²⁰⁴

5.4 Motahhari, Velayat-e Faqih and Islamic Democracy

Ayatollah Morteza Motahhari was appointed by Ayatollah Khomeini to form the Revolutionary Council several months prior to the victory of Islamic Revolution of 1979. Motahhari who was a disciple of Ayatollah Khomeini and Allame Tabatabaie had a unique stance as a socio-religious reformist among other religious revolutionaries. And his stance in political affairs is different from Khomein's and Tabatabaie's.

Firstly, in order to understand his attitude toward velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist), significant is how he methodologically approaches the concept of political jurisprudence under the School of Osuli and criticizes the Akhbari School. According to his opinion, the Akhbari is thought to have overlooked one of the most significant sources of epistemology, namely aql (reason), which is considered indispensable as an absolute condition of Islamic leaders. And based on it, he considers the issue of leadership with a clear look at the societal changes. The absolute authority of the Supreme Leader is the major axis of Motahhari's political ideology. He believes in continuing of leadership in the ideology of Shiite and he goes far to say:

Imam is in occultation but Imamate is not.²⁰⁵

As a result, he argues that political jurisprudence should offer Islam's viewpoint proportional to the socio-political changes.

In relation to the above, he categorizes the government into three types: a) despotic, b) democratic and c) religio-democratic. He believes that Islamic democracy is a lot better than secular one because of its emphasis on metaphysical concepts which are all absent from the secular democracy. He claims that science and democracy are not separated from Islamic government. And even in a more general expression he says that:

Liberal values and teachings are inherent in the Islamic teachings.²⁰⁶

He then expresses his opinion about Islamic Republic. According to Motahhari, republic is the form of government which is based on the demand of the people, while Islam is the content of that and the Supreme Leader is an ideologue who is responsible for the affairs of the society and determines the general policies.²⁰⁷ Motahhari believes that Islamic rules should be seen in the light of modern concepts.

He, like most of his contemporary Muslim thinkers, believed that politics is an inseparable part of the Islamic faith. Therefore, he wrote extensively on the subject, and then generalized this to whole Islamic concepts and says that:

Liberal thought are to be incorporated with the Islamic ideology.²⁰⁸

Of course, he emphasizes on the influential role of people in the government. For according to Quran, he believes that the demand of the Muslims who have surrendered to God and prophet are accepted. And choosing the Supreme Leader is regarded as an evidence of this. However, he says:

The leader receives his legitimacy from God, thus it means the supreme leader is selected by people, even if he is not their lawyer.²⁰⁹

He not only believes in the guardianship of the jurist in the Islamic Republic's Constitution but also believes that it should be the right of people both to choose and to remove the Supreme Leader. Therefore, it is under this condition that he supposed the Islamic science could flourish.²¹⁰ In fact, according to Motahhari, vali-ye faqih is responsible for the Hidden Imam as well as God itself. Motahhari counts three essential elements for an Islamic government: a) competence of the leader, b) legitimation, and c) power—the power of the people given to him by choosing and accepting him.

Concluding Remarks

Motahhari, unlike Bazargan and Taleqani, was neither a political activist nor a liberalist. He was a socio-religious reformist. He made a great effort to revive true Islamic concepts, based on his firm belief that Islam is the most perfect religion; on the other hand, he saw that Islam had lost the efficiency of revitalizing human in the real world. It is because, in his words,

Islam is like water. It gives life to every creature, but in case it is polluted, it loses the efficiency. It cannot revive human. Like

polluted water, depraved Islam could even kill human, spiritually and mentally.²¹¹

Unlike Khomeini, Motahhari hardly openly and directly attacked the Shah's regime as a political activist. Rather he criticized people as a social reformist, for he believed that they were responsible. In fact, like Bazargan and Taleqani, he believed blind emulation had caused people to get trapped in religious superstitions. As a result, he understood that they did not think properly, and therefore they did not act in accordance with the Islamic principles.

In Motahhari's opinion, true Islam would be able to solve all humans' problems. Thus, it could save them from exploitation of the tyranny. He argued:

Since all democratic concepts such as freedom, and equality, do exist in Islam, by embracing Islam, people would achieve the best form of democracy.²¹²

And he added:

As we have one hundred, we definitely have ninety. It means, because Islam is a comprehensive religion, it is consist of democratic principles as well.²¹³

Regarding democratic government, as it was mentioned earlier in this chapter, he finally concludes:

In fact, republic is the form of the government and Islam is its content.²¹⁴

Like Bazargan, and Taleqani, Motahhari seems to have influenced post-revolutionary intellectuals and thinkers, philosophical ideologies in particular. Consequently, in the next chapter post-revolutionary intellectuals, particularly those who have firmly and overtly advocated Islamic democracy will be focused on. And their ideological characteristics in comparison to Bazargan, Taleqani and Motahhari and their influences will be considered.

CHAPTER SIX

POST-REVOLUTIONARY INTELLECTUALS AND ISLAMIC DEMOCRACY

Introduction

The pre-revolutionary prominent ideologues made great efforts in decentralization of power. However, their attempt for establishing Islamic democracy underwent unanticipated changes. Since the victory of 1979 revolution there have been remarkable developments in the politics of Iran due to several significant factors. Iran adopted Islamic Republic system and the term democratic which was recommended by Bazargan was not approved. For Khomeini and Motahhari strongly believed that Islamic Republic was comprehensive, and hence, the term democratic was

redundant.²¹⁵ The draft constitution drawn by Bazargan's provisional government was revised by the Assembly of Experts. As a result, *velayat-e faqih* (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist) was approved by a national referendum and Khomeini strengthened his political power as the supreme leader. Shortly after the revolution the Iran-Iraq war broke out in 1980 and continued for eight years. It not only worsened the post-revolutionary turmoil but also helped the stabilization of Khomeini regime. As stated by Abrahamian:

The war with Iraq, like the hostage crisis, provided the regime with a highly potent rallying cry. Even those with strong reservation about the regime were willing to rally behind the government in a time of national emergency.²¹⁶

The first decade after the 1979 revolution ended in the post-war chaotic situation and Khomeini's demise in 1989. The constitution of Iran with amendments was approved by the national referendum on 28 July 1989.²¹⁷ It brought about several important changes in administration such as abolishment of the premiership post in Iran. As in the constitution the necessary condition of *marja'iyat* (religious authority) for *vali-ye faqih* (religious supreme leader) was eliminated, Khamenei was eligible to assume the post.²¹⁸ After the establishment of post-Khomeini regime, factional politics became characteristic in Iran.²¹⁹ Particularly, after Mohammad Khatami supported by young generation was elected as the president of Iran in 1997, factional politics remarkably involved the society.²²⁰

Witnessing the above-mentioned political developments in Iran, post-revolutionary religious intellectuals strengthened their political stance

against the regime. As intellectuals are expected to criticize the weak points and shortcomings of socio-political aspects of a system, they, like their predecessors, have been striving to find an ideal system to replace the current one. Contrary to the pre-revolutionary ideologues who were opposing the authoritarianism of the Pahlavi regime, they have faced another type of authoritarianism in the present Islamic regime. They are opposing the so-called religious despotism, what Na'ini had warned about and referred to as the most dangerous type of despotism.²²¹

Significant is that Taleqani and Motahhari did not live long to realize whether velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist) system was compatible with the Islamic democracy system and took firm stands for. In other words, their death shortly after the revolution does not allow us to realize their ideological development after the revolution. On the other hand, Bazargan lived longer to compare velayat-e faqih with the Islamic government he himself had recommended. And he admits as follows in relation to ideological Islam in order to mobilize the mass against the dictatorial regime of Pahlavi:

By the boom that arose in our youth in the years after the coup of 1953, and the spirit of struggle against the regime and the ruling politics of the country, the need for and acceptance of a radical religious movement was intense.²²²

Considering the above example regarding his ideological development, it can be inferred that he had realized making a decision in haste regardless of its significance can lead to undesirable outcome.

In order to see the different perceptions of the Islamic democracy among the post-revolutionary intellectuals and their ideological

development, it is necessary to compare their ideologies with those of their immediate predecessors’.

Although post-revolutionary intellectuals can also be divided into two main groups of secular and religious intellectuals, this chapter aims to focus on Abdolkarim Soroush, Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari and Mohsen Kadivar, the three above-mentioned prominent religious intellectuals who have been highly influenced by pre-revolutionary ideologues and advocate Islamic democracy. The ideological development of those intellectuals will be analyzed as well, so as to understand their current stance in relation to Islamic democracy.

6.1 Abdolkarim Soroush and Liberal Democracy in Islam

Abdolkarim Soroush, born in 1945 in Tehran is one of the most well-known intellectuals in Iran today. He graduated from Alavi High School where students learn both modern and religious sciences. He studied pharmacology and then philosophy. Aside from his studies at university, he also became familiar with and remarkably influenced by the thinking of the Islamic philosophers like Motahhari, whom already referred to in Chapter five. After the opening of Hosseiniyeh Ershad whose role in the process of the revolution was expounded in Chapter 2, Soroush regularly attended Dr. Shariati’s lectures.²²³ He then went to London for a post-graduate program on analytical chemistry, history and philosophy of science. While he was in England, he attended Iranian students’ political gathering. Some of the speeches he delivered were copied in form of books, among which *Dialectical Antagonism* particularly focused on the prevalence of Marxism ideology and its influence on young Iranians.²²⁴

After the victory of 1979 Revolution, Soroush gradually distinguished himself as a prominent speaker of the Islamic Republic and proved his ability to engage in socio-political discussions. From 1981, he was an active member of Setad-e Enqelab-e Farhangi (the Headquarters of the Cultural Revolution).²²⁵ But in 1983, he submitted his resignation from membership in the Cultural Revolution Council to Imam Khomeini. Since then, Soroush has held no official position within the ruling system of Iran except occasionally an advisor to certain government bodies. His principal position has been that of a researcher in the Institute for Cultural Research and Studies.²²⁶ As his ideology evolved, Soroush expressed some ideas that the current regime considered controversial. Once he was even attacked by over a hundred young members of Ansar-e Hezbollah (Supporters of the Party of God), and was physically injured.²²⁷

As a prominent Iranian thinker and a religious intellectual, he has written several books on Philosophy of religion, and socio-political philosophy such as *The Theoretical Contraction and Expansion of Religion*, *The Theory of Evolution of Religious Knowledge*, *Intellectualism and Religious Conviction*, and *Expansion of Prophetic Experience*. He has also written several books on other fields of his interests on literature, poetry in particular, for instance, one of his works is the definitive edition of *Rumi's Masnavi*.

Soroush believes that today religious intellectualism in Iran has the same root as the one in pre-revolutionary era. However, there are differences between their socio-political evolutions, so they are being viewed differently. Since many of intellectuals are now associated with the government, if not dependent on, they cannot carry out their main responsibilities, namely criticism.²²⁸ Before 1979 Revolution, opposing the

widespread secular ideologies like Marxism caused the intellectuals to ideologize Islam. However, Soroush states and questions:

Now, the intellectuals are criticizing the Islamic ideology itself. They have engaged in a serious debate on topics of fundamental political importance. At question are such vital issues as: Can there be one final interpretation of Islam? What is the role of religion in politics? Is Islam compatible with democracy?²²⁹

He strongly believes that Islam is beyond ideology. As far as Soroush is concerned, ideologies are in general formed in order to stand against other ideologies. Therefore, their lives are ephemeral, whereas, religions are eternal.²³⁰ On the other hand, ideologies are used for mass mobilization. And in the process of 1979 Revolution, Islam was used as an ideology. In this relation, he says:

Ideologies do not only live for a short time, they also have limitation. They lose their efficiencies after they reach their goals.²³¹

He maintains:

The seed of religion resists contamination, but the plant that grows out of that seed opens a canopy for the virtuous and villainous alike. Religion is not sent for angels but for human beings subject to envy, frailty, avarice, and impatience.²³²

Soroush categorizes religion into two groups: a) fiqh-based and b) faith-based. He argues a government which is based on the fiqh cannot be either democratic or based on faith. Nonetheless, a democratic government can protect faith as well, for in a democratic system everyone is free to have any

religion they wish. In this regard, his idea has a strong shared point with that of Bazargan and Eshkevari. As mentioned in Chapter Three the former says, “In a society governed by a despotic regime, God is not worshipped.”²³³ And the latter maintains:

We can categorically say that a faithful life is not possible in any autocratic system. In fact, particularly in a religious autocratic system, there is an inescapable refusal of faith.²³⁴

Soroush sees no contradiction between freedom inherent in democracy and Islam. In one of his several interviews in Tehran and Washington, D.C. in 1994 and 1995, he said:

Although Islam literary means “submission”, Islam and democracy are not only compatible, their association is inevitable. In a Muslim society, one without the other is not perfect.²³⁵

He believes that those who think Islam and democracy cannot coexist may not differentiate between religion and religious knowledge. In his opinion, Islam does not need to change in order to become compatible with democracy; it is the religious knowledge that should change to understand and interpret Quran, and Hadith.²³⁶ He asserts that, only in democracy, religion is not changed into an ideology, and that democracy is not limited to Western democracy only.²³⁷

6.2 Hassan Yousefi Eshkevari, Achieving Democratic Goals through Reform

Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari, a mid-ranking religious scholar is well known as an outspoken critic of the current government of Iran, though he

was a very active supporter of the 1979 revolution. In 1950 he was born in Eshkevar near Rudsar, a city in Gilan province. After finishing primary education, he entered the Rudsar Seminary in 1961. In 1965 he went to Qom Seminary, and until 1979 he studied Islamic sciences there. During this period, he learned basic knowledge in fields such as literature, logic, commentary, theology, philosophy, principles (osul), and jurisprudence (fiqh). In addition to studying them, he also worked on writing. His first article was published in the “Daneshmand Magazine” in 1970. Eshkevari collaborated with Daneshmand Magazine until 1979. He also wrote articles for some other publications such as “Neda-ye Haq” (Tehran), and Tolu’e Islam (Rasht).²³⁸ In 1961, as the Rouhaniyyat Movement began, he got engaged in political activities and was arrested twice in 1974 and 1975.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, he was elected to the first Majles of the Islamic Republic as the representative of two cities, Shahsavar (currently, Tonekabon) and Ramsar.²³⁹ In this way he actively joined in Iranian politics after the revolution, but his participation and controversial remark in the Berlin Conference held in April 2000 became a significant turning point for him to be a famous intellectual against the regime. Eshkevari was arrested and sentenced to death in Dadsara va Dadgah-e Vizheh-ye Rouhaniyyat (Prosecutor’s Office and Special Court of Ulama) in December 2000. He was charged for ‘apostasy’ and his words and beliefs about the variability of social laws of Islam, including the freedom of the veil of Muslim women. However, the sentence was thereafter reduced to seven years in prison. After spending less than five years in prison, Eshkevari was released in 2004.²⁴⁰

Eshkevari was influenced by the great Muslim thinkers, especially Iqbal Lahori, Bazargan, Ayatollah Taleqani, Motahhari and most of all Dr.

Ali Shariati. In 1997, he founded the Markaz-e Farhangi-ye Doktor Ali Shariati (Cultural Center of Dr. Ali Shariati) in collaboration with a number of contributors, and has since served as the head of the office. He has also been involved in the establishment of the Bonyad-e Farhangi-ye Mohandes Mehdi Bazargan (Cultural Foundation of Mehdi Bazargan).²⁴¹

Like Soroush and Kadivar, Eshkevari is an outstanding intellectual, in contemporary Iran. He expresses the relationship between democracy and Islam in a robust way. From his point of view two essence of democracy are inseparable: a) the worldly and popular origin of state government and power; and b) pluralism and the widest possible distribution of political power among people.²⁴² In this relation, Eshkevari argues:

The most religious and also the most appropriate manner for administrating Muslim Society is democracy.²⁴³

It is probably because he thinks religious justice without resorting to democratic method is impossible. Eshkevari strongly believes that Islamic government must be democratic, because authoritarianism, despotism or any other system in which people are not allowed to participate in decision-making process for their own destiny is absolutely against religion, particularly Islam.²⁴⁴ In his opinion, government is a non-religious system, however. Therefore, he says:

I can briefly say that from a purely Islamic point of view, “rule” and as a result, “political power” is orfi (secular), and public. It is not feqhi (jurisprudence) or shar’i (religious).²⁴⁵

In order to reach a logical conclusion about nature of government, Eshkevari explains orfi as secularism against Sharia, and not in its common meaning, “customary”. Consequently, he argues:

In the case of the implementation of the Sharia, it should also be said that, firstly, the Sharia which is part of the social law is subject to the rule of the state, and hence, it cannot be divine. Secondly, as the law is drawn up for justice and security, it cannot be eternal. As a consequence, change in law is inevitable.²⁴⁶

Eshkevari makes a significant distinction between religious pluralism and religious democracy in his book, *Ta'amolat-e Tanhai (Thought of Loneliness)*.

Eshkevari does not think democracy is a perfect system without any shortcomings. However, he states:

Democracy does not have only one form, and Islamic democracy can be practiced like other types of democracies, such as parliamentary or liberal democracy.²⁴⁷

He optimistically believes that Islamic democracy can also evolve and find a better status. He emphasizes on democracy, not because it is the most perfect system, but because he believes that by removing its weaknesses, it can become a very decent system compared to the others. In this regard, he challenges those Muslims who are against democracy, saying:

Those who consider democracy anti-Islamic must say what they recommend instead. If not the caliphate whether the Abbasid, Ottoman or Saudi Arabian styles, what mode of government do they have in their mind?²⁴⁸

Eshkevari also rejects the idea of Soroush when he considers all religions righteous, and argues:

It is Islam indeed which is right and a just religion. In fact, democracy is a method and system for running a society, whereas guidance and devotion are the matters that give an individual, motivation as well as direction.²⁴⁹

Like Taleqani, Eshkevari strongly emphasizes on one of the most remarkable principles of Islam, namely shora (consultation). He goes so far as to call Islamic democracy, shoracracy. Eshkevari was highly influenced by Bazargan, and in this relation he admits:

There is no doubt that Mehdi Bazargan is one of the most influential socio-political and religious intellectuals in contemporary Iran, who has not only influenced his own generation thinkers and intellectuals, but also his next generation.²⁵⁰

Eshkevari believes Bazargan made a great effort in reconciling Islam and democracy, particularly when he tried to prove by evidence that Islam was a socio-political religion.²⁵¹ In relation to making religion scientific or science religious, Eshkevari's view is quite similar to that of Bazargan.²⁵² He argues:

Science, directly, depends on the scientist. As a result, in order to have a scientific religion, religious scientist must be created at first. Now, who is supposed to create such religious scientists?²⁵³

Therefore, he indicates neither Bazargan intended to make Islam scientific nor Eshkevari himself thinks it is possible to do such a thing.

6.3 Mohsen Kadivar: Velayat-e Faqih, a non-Islamic Government

Mohsen Kadivar is also a religious scholar and a prominent intellectual like Eshkevari. In 1959 he was born in Fasa in the southern province of Fars. After he graduated from high school in 1977 in mathematics, he started studying as an honor student in electronic engineering at Shiraz University. When he realized he was very interested in humanities, he left his studies in electrical engineering for theological studies. In October 1980 he began studying in the Shiraz Seminary and in 1981 he transferred to the Qom Seminary (Hawzeh-ye 'Elmiyyeh-ye Qom).²⁵⁴

He owes his expertise in jurisprudence to a decade of studies under the mentorship of his most prominent teacher, the late Ayatollah al-Ozma Sheikh Hossein-Ali Montazeri Najaf-Abadi (1922-2008), from whom Kadivar received his certificate of Ijtihad in 1998. He began teaching philosophy and speculative theology as well as political thought and human rights in Islam at Imam Sadeq University in spring 1992. Since then, Kadivar's articles were published in several journals in Iran. After the publication of his first series of articles in respect to political thought in 1995, he began to face condemnation in Qom. It is because Kadivar criticized Ayatollah Khomeini's velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist) theory in his book *Theocratic State* (1998).²⁵⁵ Finally, Kadivar was prohibited from teaching at the University of Imam Sadeq in Tehran since 1998. In his extensive interview with Persian daily newspaper *Khordad* in February 1998, Kadivar criticized the Islamic Republic's 20-year report card. On February 17, 1999, he was accused by Prosecutor's Office and Special Court of Ulama like Eshkevari and was sent to Evin prison.²⁵⁶ He was released from the prison on July 15, 2000. Kadivar went to the

United States in September 2008, and during academic year 2008-2009 he was the visiting professor of Religious Studies of University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

In the 10th Presidential elections, it is said that Kadivar supported Mir-Hossein Mousavi. After pervasive electoral fraud and suppression of the peaceful protests of the people, he sided with the Green Movement and became one of the organizers and a member of policy-making council for the Internet Network of the Movement of Green Path “Jaras” (July 2009-October 2011).²⁵⁷

It is evident in Kadivar’s words that pre-revolutionary ideologues such as Taleqani and Bazargan had great impact on his ideology. Regarding philosophy, he has been highly influenced not only by Ayatollah Montazeri, but also Motahhari.²⁵⁸ He believes that post-revolutionary intellectuals look at religion from a more historical point of view. It is because they think religion has not abruptly come into existence. It definitely has a history and throughout time it has evolved. In addition, post-revolutionary intellectuals have given speed to secularization though they have not initiated that. He admits that pre-revolutionary ideologues made a great effort in introducing anti-authoritarianism. However, he maintains:

Today religious intellectuals are taking a bigger step toward democracy, for they are criticizing a religious government.²⁵⁹

Like Soroush, he divides secularism into two groups: a) political secularism and 2) philosophical secularism. He then argues:

Does religion by dominating politics cause people to be more faithful?²⁶⁰

In addition, regarding the role of religious intellectualism, Kadivar asks a very noteworthy question:

In case political secularism is achieved, what is the role of religious intellectuals?²⁶¹

He asks this question because he is suspicious about the outcome of political secularism. In other words, he says, what if, after secularization, religious intellectuals admit that they had already reached the conclusion and realized that religion was not of benefits in politics? If such a thing happens, intellectuals will be ethically criticized for having concealed the truth. Kadivar, like Soroush, believes that intellectuals' words and deeds must be compatible.

He draws a clear line between religion and mysticism. He then argues:

If intellectuals introduce mysticism to people under the name of religion and conclude that it has solution for all the problems, how will people trust intellectuals?²⁶²

Kadivar emphasizes on the difference between religious knowledge and religious philosophy. In this relation, he says:

Religious philosophy explores the religion philosophically, and although it is needed for the society particularly for a religious society, it cannot make them faithful. In order to become faithful,

religious knowledge is necessary and intellectual guidance is required.²⁶³

In relation to democracy and a democratic government, Kadivar, like Taleqani, believes that one of the most important elements is considering the rights of all minority groups and giving them opportunity to take part in decision-making for their own destinies. Thus, he says secularism is a necessity. He strongly opposes velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist) and expresses the reasons why it is not a democratic system at all. He stipulates:

Velayat-e faqih, as even its name implies, is religious authoritarianism. Even jurists must follow the supreme leader.²⁶⁴

He articulates that every effort or attempt for democratization is considered a crime in Iran. He asks:

In a democratic system, is it possible to have parliament without having political parties? Or is it possible to have political parties without having the rights to voice your demands?²⁶⁵

Kadivar strongly believes that velayat-e faqih, even if it might have a democratic form, is not accompanied with essential democratic concepts, particularly the freedom of belief, religion and politics.²⁶⁶

Concluding Remarks

Through analysis of the above-mentioned intellectuals, Soroush, Eshkevari, and Kadivar, it can be concluded that although they, like their

immediate predecessors, strongly supported the Iranian revolution of 1979, they are not content with the current Islamic government of Iran, so-called velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist), due to the following reasons.

First, in the Islamic government recommended by pre-revolutionary ideologues, there was not such a concept as absolute supervision of vali-ye faqih. Second, although velayat-e faqih has a democratic form, it does not have a democratic content, due to its essential shortcomings, mainly the absence of freedom in politics, belief, and religion. Third, the Iranians underwent the 1979 revolution to end a secular authoritarianism, not to replace it with a religious one. Fourth, even though Ayatollah Taleqani and Motahhari died shortly after the revolution, neither they nor Bazargan approved power centralization. Even Motahhari, who is believed to have foregrounded velayat-e faqih after Khomeini endorsed the draft of the constitution drawn by Bazargan's government, said that vali-ye faqih is only an Islamic ideologue, and hence, he would not rule.

Although there are differences among the ideologies of Soroush, Eshkevari, and Kadivar's on democracy including Islamic one, they seem to have agreement on several points. They all seek for a democratic government, in which ulama do not have any particular privilege or superiority over the other Iranians. Thus, in their recommended Islamic democracy, all Iranians have the same right to freely participate in socio-political affairs, as they could do in secular democracy.

CONCLUSION

Absence of law, excessive oppression, and authoritarianism of tyrannical governments were the undeniable cause of the discontent, among different social classes in modern Iran.²⁶⁷ They eventually led to great movements toward democracy. There are similarities not only among the causation of the movements but also in their process. One of the most remarkable similarities is the role of religion, in particular the roles of ulama and intellectuals in mass mobilization, which was foremost the basic factors in the victory of revolution in 1979.

As ulama were of great power and popularity among people, it is evident that intellectuals, whether religious or secular, would not achieve their goals without their support²⁶⁸. Since majority of Shi'i Iranians were strangers to modern concepts such as democracy, intellectuals would have to show them the compatibilities between Islam and democracy in order to make them more acceptable. Consequently, they resorted to religious leaders. Apparently, in the process of the Constitutional Movement in particular, it was the only option they had through twentieth century. Therefore, the emergence of the Western concepts such as freedom and equality which are the fundamental principles of democracy and whose significance has not been sufficiently conscious of in Iran was not independent from their religion. Intellectuals before the Constitutional Revolution needed to explain democracy in the religious context of Islam.²⁶⁹

Majority of ulama, who were not familiar with democracy, found its principles in harmony with Islam. Thus, they began to propagate it without being aware of their inconsistencies. From the very beginning, significant facts about dissimilarities between Islam and democracy were hidden. It was because intellectuals believed that ulama would not agree with it, in case they realized the contradictions between the two. As a result, they would not receive any support from ulama.²⁷⁰ But that was not all. Intellectuals were afraid of potential new foes; for they knew democracy meant no privilege for religious figures. It is nothing else but democracy is a comprehensive system in which equal participation of all citizens irrespective of religion in political decision making is assured.

In order to achieve a greater goal, namely law and order, religious and secular intellectuals selected two different approaches. Some religious intellectuals such as Malkom Khan and Nazem al-Islam Kermani

suggested ulama to get involved in politics directly.²⁷¹ At the same time, secular intellectuals strived to show them that principles of democracy could be in line with Islamic principles. For instance, shora (consultation), horriyat (free from slavery), shari'a (Islamic law) and qest (equality) were regarded as the counterparts of democratic principles. Intellectuals' great effort was successful. Thus, ulama took a firm stand in the struggle for democracy. However, shortly after the Constitutional Revolution, ulama such as Fazlollah Noori denounced democracy and proclaimed that its principles were against shari'a.²⁷² By the failure of the first democratic movement which was caused mostly by the post-revolutionary chaos and foreign power intervention, the desire of having a democratic government was not fulfilled. Thus, the failure in achieving democratic system left Iranians craving for democracy.

During Mosaddeq's Premiership in early 1950s, Iranians experienced another democratic government. In a sense, it could be considered even more democratic than its preceding one, for all political parties and minorities were given a chance to participate equally in the government. However, it did not last long, for Britain and America which found their own profits in danger intervened in the oil nationalization movement.²⁷³ Mosaddeq's government came to its end with the coup engineered by the foreign powers in August 1953.

The second failure was a bigger and bitterer shock. After the coup, the tyrannical regime of Pahlavi under Mohammad Reza Shah restricted the freedom of political activities more strictly than ever. By stifling political activities, Shah who had already increased his unlawful actions left no more choices for democratic reformists and revolutionaries.²⁷⁴ Prior to the 1979 Revolution, intellectuals appeared with a robust ideology that

gave them a quite distinctive figure in comparison to those during Constitutional Movement. Their noteworthy heritage in ideology was Islamic modernism. Prominent revolutionary ideologues such as Bazargan, Taleqani, Motahhari and Khomeini were not only known for their anti-tyrannical stance but for several more factors which make them unique in their own kind.

Their religiosity made them feel responsible toward Islam as well. They were unanimously opposing the Western ideologies such as Marxism, for they believed it was no less dreadful than tyranny. They thought while authoritarianism exploits people physically, such ideologies can also enslave human being mentally, by taking away their priceless identity.²⁷⁵ For this very reason, they tried to introduce a system that could replace authoritarianism and save Iranians from being trapped in Marxism. Thus, they advocated democracy. However, it is undeniable that their faith and religiosity again narrowed their views toward secular democracy as well. In spite of their different readings of Islam,²⁷⁶ they all adhered to the idea of having democracy in an Islamic framework. Thus, Islamic democracy was suggested. In order to make Islamic democracy acceptable, those religious intellectuals made a great effort to convince secular intellectuals that Islam and democracy were compatible. The vicious circle was moving the other way around, this time. Once again, for the greater goal which was bringing law back, truth was hidden. Inconclusive compatibility which is not admissible was emphasized on.

Democratic concepts were being extracted from Islamic text, particularly Quran. Definitive explanations about Islamic democracy were not provided. It was all because, evidently, demolishing tyranny was the ultimate goal.²⁷⁷ Yet, the serious problem was in the shortcoming of their

explanation of democracy. Even though their familiarity with democracy and its principles in comparison with the pre-Constitutional Movement's intellectuals was more developed, there were some ambiguities. It was because they also tried to religiously define democratic principles and find equivalent for them in conceptual terms.

Thus, they emphasized on shora (consultation) for people's participation in political decision making.²⁷⁸ Nevertheless, there are significant differences between them. As, according to shari'a, shora is a necessity, and all Muslims are responsible for participating in it, the concept of freewill is being neglected. So, it can be inferred that Muslims, by participating in shora, are not practicing their natural rights, but only obeying the divine law. Horriyat was emphasized as an equivalent for freedom. As long as people live under the pressure of a tyrannical regime, they are not allowed to worship almighty God. It is because obedience to a tyrant is considered polytheism which violates tawhid (oneness of God).

Prominent ideologues of the 1979 Revolution who advocated Islamic democracy were in fact opposing an essential element of equality in Western democracy. The reason is that, even in an Islamic government like the one suggested by Taleqani and Bazargan, special rights are given to a certain group of ulama who can supervise the legislated law in order to approve its legitimacy, and to figure out whether it is in accordance with shari'a. It can be considered as an obvious evidence that Bazargan and Taleqani's opinion about Islamic government was not of much difference compared to that of their political mentor, Ayatollah Na'ini whose ideology was introduced earlier, particularly in Chapter Four. It is mainly because they were quite content with the Constitution of 1906.²⁷⁹ They regarded it as both Islamic, and democratic. And they did not endeavor much in

improving a new model for their suggested democratic government. The other reason seems to be related with the limitation of their understandings of democracy, particularly in case of its compatibility with Islam.

Bazargan whose ideology was considered as a pioneer of religious modernism in Chapter Three made great efforts and was quite successful in showing the harmony between Islam and science. His approach toward democracy was pragmatic and could be seen in his ideology, political activities, works as well as his personality. However, it cannot be denied that his attempt particularly in realizing Islamic democracy was insufficient. For example, he was expected to have taken a firm stand and not to have withdrawn during his premiership for what he strived throughout his life. Unlike Taleqani and Motahhari, Bazargan had some linguistic advantages, which would enable him to have direct access, particularly to European sources on democracy. Nonetheless, there is little trace of such sources in his works.

The remarkable role of Taleqani as an intermediary between secular and religious groups is a strong indication of his pro-democratic ideology. It goes without saying that Taleqani's role, in solidarity of the mass, if not more crucial, was no less than Khomeini's. His humanitarian stand for minorities as well as his liberal stance toward non-Islamic ideologies, as analyzed in Chapter Four, could be all considered as his high concern for democracy. Yet, the most outstanding factor that made Taleqani staunchly proponent of democracy is his opposition to the centralization of power, and his warning about religious despotism.²⁸⁰ However, by suggesting *vesayat-e faqih* (supervision of the jurists) he limited people's free and equal participation in determining their destiny, which is an inalienable right

granted to them in a democratic system. His death immediately after the victory of the revolution might have deprived of his further ideological development for Islamic democracy.

Unlike Bazargan and Taleqani, Motahhari did not pay much direct attention to politics in the process of 1979 Revolution. His approach not only toward religious issues but also politics was inductive. As examined in Chapter Five, he believed that social changes would eventually lead to political change. In his opinion, corruption spread from the elites into lower classes of the society, whereas the social reform would take place in an opposite direction²⁸¹. In other words, low level classes of the society would play the most crucial role in bringing socio-political reform. In spite of the fact that Motahhari did not clearly express his stance toward democracy until after revolution, his pre-revolution works made more logical sense, particularly in formation of democracy as content. Nonetheless, after the revolution, Islamic government suggested by him was not in line with his previous works, for he believed that democracy is only the shape of government and Islam is the content.²⁸² Thus, it led to his acceptance of the Islamic Republic. The early death of Motahhari and Taleqani gave them no chance to see the subsequent outcome and development of the revolution, and to see the power struggle after 1979 Revolution which resulted in absolute power centralization under the name of velayat-e faqih (the guardianship of the Islamic jurist) system led by Khomeini.

Witnessing the drastic transformation of velayat-e faqih, post-revolutionary religious intellectuals such as Soroush, Eshkevari, and Kadivar have been striving to prove that there is compatibility between Islam and democracy. Among them Soroush has selected a different approach. He tries to prove religious democracy is possible and for sure

acceptable. It is an extra-religious matter in his view. Based on two different understandings of Islam, a) fiqh-based; and b) faith-based, he advocates there will be ultimately two different types of society and also two different types of governments.²⁸³ Since, according to Soroush, people in a fiqh-based government are to follow the divine law, *amal* (freedom of action) is not fully practiced. And as a result, faith-based government is recommended, because people feel responsible to participate in political decision making, not for executing divine law, but to practice their rights. However, what he has not grasped yet is a basic difference between Islam and other religions, namely Islamic shari'a. This may be a kind of hurdle for him to realize his ideal Islamic democracy.

From Eshkevari's point of view, significant is that it is impossible to have religious justice without having a democratic method.²⁸⁴ Although he does not think democracy is a perfect system without any shortcomings, he believes Islamic democracy is applicable like the other forms of democracy.²⁸⁵ Thus, he says that by removing its weaknesses it has capability of evolving and turning into a more decent system.

The approach of Kadivar toward democracy is more like that of Taleqani. He strongly opposes power centralization under the present *velayat-e faqih* system.²⁸⁶ Although he does not fully approve the separation of religion and democracy, he takes a firm stand for all minorities in particular. He does not believe that only the right to vote makes a government democratic. It is because, in contemporary Iran under the political system of *velayat-e faqih*, even representatives are not allowed to participate in political affairs equally and freely, which lacks an essential condition in democracy.

Through the precise analyses of every chapter, some conclusive points are necessary to be considered. The first significant point that should be discussed is the undeniable strong relations between Islam and democracy which is due to the fact that majority of the Iranians are Shi'i Muslims. For instance, in the process of the Constitutional Revolution in the early 20th century the strong relations between Islam and democracy can be seen, even though it remained unfinished and failed to achieve freedom which was one of its greatest goals. For the fear of foreign power intervention had caused Iranians to put more emphasis on independence rather than freedom.²⁸⁷ Although the Oil Nationalization Movement was under the leadership of Dr. Mosaddeq and tends to be regarded as a secular nationalist movement, the relation between Islam and democracy in this very movement cannot be denied either. It is because the positive influence of the Ayatollah Kashani's participation in the beginning turned it into a nation-wide movement. However, by the Anglo-American coup in August 1953 after Kashani withdrew his support for the movement, Mosaddeq's democratic and nationalistic government was overthrown.

Consequently, the dictatorial regime of Mohammad Reza was empowered by the support of U.S. government. Ayatollah Khomeini, who had not got openly involved in politics until the demise of Ayatollah Borujerdi, rose to prominence as a religious opposition leader. And because he had learned a historical lesson from the above-mentioned movements he took an uncompromising stance against the dictatorial regime of Pahlavi.²⁸⁸ Thus, he brought up the ideological theory of velayat-e faqih as a result of the close relations between Shi'i Islam and democracy in history.

The second point which is necessary to be considered is that the velayat-e faqih system could be regarded as one of the democratic options

for many Iranians in the revolutionary period. It is because majority of Iranians accepted the position of Khomeini as the supreme leader of the post-Pahlavi regime in a referendum in December 1979. In fact, by approving the constitution of Islamic Republic after the draft constitution drawn by Bazargan's provisional government was revised by the Assembly of Experts, velayat-e faqih system would be endorsed. Velayat-e faqih system provided people with the right of free participation in politics. For instance, president and representatives of the parliament (Majles) are elected by popular elections. In addition, significant is that the members of body called Majles-e Khebrgan (The Assembly of Experts) which is given the power to appoint and dismiss the supreme leader are chosen from the candidates of ulama by people. Considering the above facts, the velayat-e faqih system doesn't seem to lack any procedure of representative democracy.

On the contrary to the form of the velayat-e faqih system, in which people can freely participate in socio-political decision making, the excessive control of shari'a over the policymaking of the government poses serious problems. The problem is related with eligibility to run for election. For example, candidates for presidency and Majles are screened by the Shora-ye Negahban (The Council of Guardians) consisting of high-ranking ulama. In relation to the functions of this organization significant is that though not specified in the constitution, one of the functions that the Council of Guardians has assumed is to vet candidates for the parliament and the presidency by determining whether or not they are qualified to run. This has generated great controversy in recent years, especially after the Council of Guardians deemed many sitting parliamentary deputies in the reformist camp as unqualified to run for re-election to the Seventh Majles

in the February 2004 elections.²⁸⁹ In this regard, the velayat-e faqih may be considered as ‘Shi’i Islamic democracy under state-control’.

The third point necessary for consideration is the continuity and change of the controversial ideologies on Islamic democracy as well as the velayat-e faqih system. Immediately after the demise of Khomeini in June 1989, because it was very difficult to choose Khomeini’s successor for the leadership of the regime, the constitution of the Islamic Republic was revised in order to remove one of the most essential requirements—marja’iyat-e Taqlid (the highest-ranking ulama with the title of the Ayatollah Ozma)—for the post of vali-ye faqih. Ayatollah Montazeri’s abrupt and public removal from all official positions, and his subsequent house arrest beginning in 1997, exposed deep fissures at the highest levels of the state. Nevertheless, with Montazeri out of the way, the “second republic” became dominated by two of the revolutionary leadership’s key original figures. On June 5, 1989, Hojjatoleslam Ali Khamenei, who had served as the Islamic Republic’s President for two terms since 1981, was elected as the new faqih by the Assembly of Experts and was simultaneously elevated to the rank of Ayatollah.²⁹⁰

The above-mentioned continuity and change of the velayat-e faqih system led to the condition that worsened factional politics thereafter. Although it is not explained in detail here, Hashemi Rafsanjani who assumed president in 1989 organized the ‘realist’ group against the ‘conservative’ led by his political rival, Khamenei. Mohammad Khatami who supported by younger generation including women succeeded Rafsanjani as president in 1997 and became a leader of the ‘reformist’. Khatami’s democratic movement in real politics is quite evident. His political stance toward freedom of expression was noticeable and liberal.

Above all, Khatami's great effort was not able to further democratize the system because of the repulsion from conservatives. And Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a 'radical conservative' politician succeeded him. Post-revolutionary ideologues such as Soroush, Eshkevari and Kadivar who have witnessed such political moves and problems for democratization are openly opposing the post-Khomeini regime, and try to regain the Islamic democracy which was sought by their immediate predecessors. It is important to point out that the ideologies of Shi'i Islam and democracy have developed and become diverse throughout modern history of Iran. The view that there should be a contradictory interrelationship between Islam and democracy is often seen in the research of Western scholars. But the above-mentioned cases in Iran prove that this view either has been distorted deliberately or overlooked inadvertently.

The fourth point is closely related with the reason Dahl considered the political system of the United States a polyarchy rather than democracy.²⁹¹ As a matter of fact, he distinguishes them carefully between two rather different categories. One is considered to be the continuum from agreement to disagreement over goals. And the other one is a continuum from autonomy to control, i.e. a group is autonomous to the extent that its policies are not controlled by individuals outside the group.²⁹² Thus, the content of velayat-e faqih system can be compared to polyarchy, though it has a democratic form. Based on the above understanding, it can be said that, whether the West or Islamic world, the both have pursued the realization of the more ideal democratic system for their own, which could emancipate us from the dichotomy between Islam and democracy at least.

In this relation, the fifth point is the diversity of Islamic democracy which has been advocated by both pre and post-revolutionary ideologues.

For instance, Bazargan and Taleqani approved Na'ini's opinion that constitutional law restricts the power of the monarch and brings Iranians one step closer to democracy. That meant Islamic democracy for them could be an endorsement of the supervision of legislation by ulama, which is to keep legislated laws in accordance with shari'a. However, it undoubtedly not only restricts the scope of the law to Islamic principles but also contradicts minorities' rights.

For instance, Bazargan's nationalistic stance would not allow Iranians to be deprived of their rights regardless of their ethnic or religious minorities. And Taleqani who had a liberal stance toward secular groups emphasized on vast participation of Iranians through shora in socio-political decision making. It should not be neglected that Taleqani believed that even though Islam is a comprehensive religion, nothing about Islam should be accepted without thorough contemplation through aql (reason).²⁹³ On the other hand, Motahhari who belonged to prominent ulama like Taleqani but more traditional interpretation of Islam looked for democracy within Islamic texts, in particular Quran, and shari'a. It was because he considered Islam a comprehensive religion which has solution for all problems at all time,²⁹⁴ and hence, compared to Bazargan and Taleqani's views, his perception of democracy can be said to have been of a narrower vision.

Taking all the above-mentioned facts about diversity of democracy and velayat-e faqih system into account, Soroush's perception of Islamic democracy may be expounded more comprehensibly. Like the above pre-revolutionary ideologues, he believes that Islam as a religion is compatible with democracy and there is no contradiction between them. However, his approach toward Islamic democracy can be considered as a struggle over

the combination of Islamic values and Western democratic ones. On the other hand, the Islamic democracy perceived by Eskevari and Kadivar might be found closer to secular democracy in comparison to Soroush's. It is because they see no contradiction between the idea of ulama and religious figures having the right to freely participate in political affairs. And they strongly oppose superiority of ulama over the other Iranians. It is evident that the excessive control under the velayat-e faqih system has been considered by them as a hindrance in the process toward Islamic democracy. Although they believe that politics cannot be separated from Islam, it does not mean that Islam as a religion should govern the state. Particularly, in relation to the velayat-e faqih considered as non-democratic, it is undeniable that there is an ideological diversity.

Finally, considering the age of Khamenei (1931-), a change in the state of the regime under his rule may be inevitable in the near future. Significant is that political growth in modern Iran is so remarkable that some young people's ideologies in realization of democracy have transcended those of intellectuals.²⁹⁵ Now over half the population of Iran is the generations who have never known the Islamic Revolution of 1979, and majority of them are seeking for the realization of a more democratic system. Although the prediction of the future of Iranian politics is very difficult, the movements toward democracy must be continued under the ideological influence of the intellectuals analyzed here and on the basis of the relations which exist between Shi'i Islam and democracy.

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Notes

¹ Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 9.

² H.B. Mayo, *An Introduction to Democratic Theory*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1960, p. 60.

³ Houchang E. Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran under the Shah and Khomeini*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1990, p. 35.

⁴ Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 112.

⁵ Dahl, *On Democracy*, pp. 85-86.

⁶ The principle concepts of Islamic democracy are: shura (consultation), ijma (consensus), ijtihad (conscientiousness), and khilafah (succession). For detail see, Tauseef Ahmad Parray "Operational Concepts of Islamic Democracy" *Journal of Humanity and Islam*, Volume 1, Issue 1, April 2011.

⁷ Ali Shariati Mazinani (23 November 1933- 18 June 1977) was a prominent sociologist and an outstanding intellectual of the twentieth century in Iran. He has been recognized as a theorist who did the most to prepare the Iranian youth for revolutionary upheaval. Event made this Muslim sociologist, shortly after his 1977 death, the ideologist of the revolt. See also, Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003, p. 200.

⁸ Chehabi, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

⁹ Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundations of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, New York: New York University Press, 1993, p. 229.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233.

¹¹ Vennesa Martin, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2003, pp. 124-125.

¹² Morteza Motahhari. *Piramoone Enqelab-e Islami*, Tehran: Sadra, 1993, See esp. pp. 44-47.

¹³ Soroush Dabagh (Born on 7, June 1974) is a renowned Iranian researcher in Religion, Philosophy and Literature. He is the author of

Muslim Veiling, On Analytic Philosophy, and The Sanctum of the Grasses of Proximity.

¹⁴ Soroush Dabagh, “A Talk on Islam and Democracy”, at Gothenburg University. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vupYpYagP-k>

¹⁵ Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent*, p. 157.

¹⁶ For instance, see Motahhari in *Nezam-e Hoquq-e Zan dar Islam*, Qom: Sadra, 2002, pp. 11-12. Polygamy, a monopoly rescue agent: Yes, the admission of polygamy is the biggest single-player rescue factor. This means that in the conditions that result in polygamy and the number of women in need of marriage from men in need, if women are not recognized as the right to marry, and that men who have physical, financial and moral conditions are not given a polygamy, illegitimate relationship will cause the real monogamous roots to die.

¹⁷ Abdolkarim Soroush, Roshanfekri-ye Dini (Religious Intellectualism) (2, June 2015), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBxABBxMD_s

¹⁸ Ramin Jahanbegloo, *Democracy in Iran*, London: Palgrave, 2013, p. 18.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²⁰ Behzad Keshavarzi, in Enqlab-e Mashrooteh be Ravayat-e Jonbesh-e Secular Democracy (5, June 2014),

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRYxVDUhxDk>.

²¹ Islamic modernism is an ideological approach toward Islam; through which Islamic principles are reconciled with non-Islamic, particularly Western values such equality, and democracy.

²² For detail see, Ehsan Yarshater (ed.) “Constitutional Revolution,” *Encyclopedia Iranica*, vol. VI, Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1993, pp.163-216.

²³ Homa Katouzian, *Iranian History and Politics: The Dialectic of State and Society*, London: Routledge Curzon, 2003, p. 27.

²⁴ See also, Mohammad Amini, Bazbini va Bazshenasi-ye Enqlab-e Mashrooteh, (Ninty-eighth Seminar of Democracy Forum held in Paris on 5, January 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzVzo7aeMik>

²⁵ Kamran Matin, *Recasting Iranian Modernity: International Relations and Social Change*, London: Routledge, 2013, p. 66.

²⁶ Mashallah Ajoodani, *Mashroote-ye Irani*, Tehran: Akhtaran, 2008, p. 154.

²⁷ *Yek Kalame* is the book written by Mirza Yousuf Khan Mostashar al-Dowleh Tabrizi. It is said to be the first book that introduced modern democracy concepts to Iranians. However, it is also the first book in Iran, which tried to show compatibility between Islam and democracy. As a matter of fact, it goes far to say democracy is derived from Islamic sources.

²⁸ For more details, see also Amini, Mohammad, *Shi'igari-ye Ahmad Kasravi*, Tehran: Sherkat-e Ketab, 2011, pp. 64-66.

²⁹ Heinz Halm, *Shi'a Islam: From Religion to Revolution*, Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1997, p. 107.

³⁰ Amirahmadi, Mehran, Roshanfekran, Bazar va Rouhaniyyat dar Mashrooteh, (Secular Democracy Seminar, 21, August 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e54wnukQG6I>

³¹ Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabai, *First Parliamentary Minutes*, quoted by Mehran Amirahmadi in "Roshanfekran, Bazar va Rouhaniyyat dar Mashrooteh," (Aug. 21, 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e54wnukQG6I>

³² Mashallah Ajoodani, *Mashroote-ye Irani*, Tehran: Akhtaran, 2008, pp. 374-376.

³³ Heinz Halm, *Shi'a Islam: From Religion to Revolution*, pp. 108-110.

³⁴ Ajoodani, *op. cit.*, p. 385.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 387.

³⁶ Sheikh Fazlollah Noori, ed. Gholam Hossein Zargari Nejad, *Hormat-e Mashrooteh*, Tehran: Akhtaran, 1995, pp. 159-160.

³⁷ Behzad Keshavarzi, in Enqlab-e Mashrooteh be Ravayat-e Jonbesh-e Secular Democracy (5, June 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRYxVDUhxDk>.

³⁸ Ayatollah Mir Seyyed Ahmad Tabatabai (1264-1329 HQ), brother of Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabai, who was one of the religious leaders of the Constitutional Movement.

³⁹ Ajoodani, *op. cit.*, pp. 377-378.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 409.

⁴¹ Nehzat Farnoodi, Zirbana-ye Ravani-ye Democracy (4, September 2014), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oz9HdtZix-Y>

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- ⁴² Katouzian, op. cit., p. 99-100.
- ⁴³ Khalaji, Mehdi, (Secular Democracy Seminar, 28, November 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64zKICwS4-I>
- ⁴⁴ Abbas Milani, Prospects and Problems of Democracy in Iran, (Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, 26, November 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfYtLqwz8mk>
- ⁴⁵ Mohammad Amini, Bazbini va Bazshenasi-ye Enqelab-e Mashrooteh, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzVzo7aeMik>
- ⁴⁶ Etehadiye-e Anjomanha-ye Islami-ye Daneshjuyan dar Oruppa, *Mosaddeq va Nehzat-e Melli-ye Iran*, Tehran: n.p., 1357/1979, p. 77.
- ⁴⁷ In 1935, APOC was renamed the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). See also "Anglo-Persian Oil Company," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, II/1, pp. 61-65.
- ⁴⁸ Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, p. 250.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 251.
- ⁵⁰ Ervand Abrahamian, *The Coup: 1953, the CIA, and the Roots of Modern U.S.–Iranian Relations*, New York: The New Press, 2013, pp. 52-54.
- ⁵¹ Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, p. 252.
- ⁵² Etehadiye-e Anjomanha-ye Islami-ye Daneshjuyan dar Oruppa, *Mosaddeq va Nehzat-e Melli-ye Iran*, pp. 84-85.
- ⁵³ For detail see, Simin Fadaee, *Social Movements in Iran: Environmentalism and Civil Society*, New York: Routledge, 2012, pp. 44-51.
- ⁵⁴ Mosaddeq, Mohammad, Addressing Iranians on a Radio Program in 1951, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwFn4LmHh6c>
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid*
- ⁵⁶ Etehadiye-e Anjomanha-ye Islami-ye Daneshjuyan dar Oruppa, *Mosaddeq va Nehzat-e Melli-ye Iran*, p. 78.
- ⁵⁷ See Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p.114.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid*
- ⁵⁹ Abbas Milani, Miras-e Mosaddeq, (19, Mach 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUB3dNw69T4>
- ⁶⁰ Abrahamian, *The Coup: 1953*, p. 218.

⁶¹ Mohammad Amini, Reza Shah Pahlavi-Bekargiri-ye Zoor (20, June 2015), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogHREtK_Rsk

⁶² Hamid Dabashi, *Islamic Liberation Theology: Resisting the Empire*, London: Routledge, 2008, p. 91.

⁶³ Madani, Seyyed Jalal al-Din. *Tarikh-e Siyasi-ye Moaser-e Iran*, (Jeld-e 2), Qom: Daftar-e Entesharat-e Islami, 1361/1982. P. 6.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶⁵ Saeed Rahnama, Sohrab Behdad, *Iran after the Revolution: Crisis of an Islamic State*, London: I.B. Tauris, 1996, pp. 43-44.

⁶⁶ Madani, Seyyed Jalal al-Din. *Tarikh-e Siyasi-ye Moaser-e Iran*, (Jeld-e 2), p. 11.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶⁹ Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 425.

⁷⁰ Madani, Seyyed Jalal al-Din. *Tarikh-e Siyasi-ye Moaser-e Iran*, (Jeld-e 2), p.21.

⁷¹ Umayyad Caliph Yazid I was the Caliph, with whom, Imam Hussain did not swear allegiance. And Hussain and his followers were massacred in Karbala, which has been well known as Karbala tragedy in Shii History.

⁷² Madani, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁷⁴ Al-Karaki, Nur-al-Din Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali b. Hosayn b. 'Abd-al-'Ali, who was known as Moḥaqeq al-Tāni or Moḥaqeq 'Ali (1464-1533), was a major Imamate jurist.

⁷⁵ Heinz Halm, *Shi'i Islam: From Religion to Revolution*, Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1997, pp. 107-109.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-96.

⁷⁷ Halm, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁷⁹ Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 15.

⁸⁰ Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, p.426.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 427.

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- ⁸² Abdul-Hadi Hairi, *Shi'ism and Constitutionalism in Iran*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977, pp. 236-237.
- ⁸³ Mashallah Ajoodani, *Mashroote-ye Irani*, Tehran: Akhtaran, 2008, p. 162.
- ⁸⁴ Mirza Yousuf Khan Mostashar al-Dowleh Tabrizi (1813-1895) is a Persian diplomat and the writer of the book *Yek Kalame*, 'One Word'.
- ⁸⁵ Ajoodani, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.
- ⁸⁶ See also Abdul-Hadi Hairi, *Shi'ism and Constitutionalism in Iran*, p. 237.
- ⁸⁷ Mohammad H. Faghfoory, "The Ulama-State Relations in Iran", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Cambridge University Press, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Nov., 1987), p. 415.
- ⁸⁸ Seyyed Mahmoud Taleqani, *An Introduction to Tanbih al-Ummah Va Tanzih al-Millah*, Tehran: Sherkat-e Enteshar, 1955, pp. 11-12.
- ⁸⁹ Ata Hoodashtian, "Roushanfekre Dini Kist?" (2012), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcV9bXy-Xkc>
- ⁹⁰ Asnad-e Nehzat-e Azadi-ye Iran, *Tarikh-e Moaser-e Iran*, vol. 1, Tehran: Raika, 1361, pp.5-6.
- ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ⁹⁴ Mehdi Bazargan, *Shast Sal Khedmat va Moqavemat*, Vol. 1, Tehran: Rasa, 1998, p. 370.
- ⁹⁵ Asnad-e Nehzat-e Azadi-ye Iran, *Tarikh-e Moaser-e Iran*, vol. 1, pp. 47-48.
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 196.
- ⁹⁸ Mehdi Bazargan, *Shast Sal Khedmat va Moqavemat*, Vol. 1, pp. 378-379.
- ⁹⁹ Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism*, p. 186.
- ¹⁰⁰ For details, see Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 284.
- ¹⁰¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr (2012), Ali Shariati, Hosseiniyeh Ershad va SAVAK. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNAk_UZtZ6I
- ¹⁰² See H. E. Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism: The Liberation Movement of Iran under the Shah and Khomeini*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1990, p. 204.
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 208.
- ¹⁰⁴ Nasr (2012), Ali Shariati, Hosseiniyeh Ershad va SAVAK.

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- ¹⁰⁵ See Ajoodani, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-117.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.
- ¹⁰⁸ Mohammad Ali Shah, 1872–1925, the 6th *Shah* of Persia (1906–9), son of Muzaffar al-Din *Shah*, of the *Qajar* dynasty.
- ¹⁰⁹ Mehdi Bazargan, *Shast Sal Khedmat va Moqavemat*, Vol. 1, Tehran: Rasa, 1998, pp. 15-16.
- ¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- ¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 65
- ¹¹⁴ Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari, Seyri dar Zendegi-ye Mohandes Bazargan, (Mar 14, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2V2OoIVwy8s>
- ¹¹⁵ Mehdi Bazargan, *Shast Sal Khedmat va Moqavemat*, Vol. 2, Tehran: Rasa, 1998, p. 143.
- ¹¹⁶ Bazargan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 122.
- ¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 124.
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 227.
- ¹¹⁹ Ettihad-e Mohandesin-e Iran (Iran’s Union of Engineers), was allegedly the first construction consulting company in Iran, established by Mehdi Bazargan and six other engineers with whom Bazargan studied abroad.
- ¹²⁰ Bazargan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 232.
- ¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 253.
- ¹²² Mohandes Kazem Hasibi, was the person appointed by Mosaddeq to select the members of the Oil Company Expropriation Committee.
- ¹²³ Bazargan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 276.
- ¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 288.
- ¹²⁵ Quran, Sura 21(Al-anbiya)-aya 30
- ¹²⁶ Bazargan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 298.
- ¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 302.
- ¹²⁸ Umayyad Caliph Yazid I was the Caliph, with whom, Imam Hussain did not swear allegiance. And Hussain and his followers were massacred in Karbala, which has been well known as Karbala tragedy in Shii History.
- ¹²⁹ Bazargan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 302.

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- ¹³⁰ Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari, Bazargan and Montazeri in Ethics and Political Power, (Jan 29, 2010), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIXH8HVBMiY>
- ¹³¹ Mehdi Bazargan, *Motahharat dar Islam* (Tehran: Sherkat-e Sahami-ye Enteshar, 1943), p. 54.
- ¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 56.
- ¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- ¹³⁴ Mehdi Bazargan, *Modafeat*, Tehran: Sherkat-e Sahami-ye Enteshar, 2006, p. 289.
- ¹³⁵ Eshkevari, Seyri dar Zendegi-ye Mohandes Bazargan, (Jan. 30, 2013), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4RhxSW9794>
- ¹³⁶ Bazargan, *Shast Sal Khedmat va Moqavemat*, Vol. 2, p. 267.
- ¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 268.
- ¹³⁸ Bazargan, *Shast Sal Khedmat va Moqavemat*, Vol. 1, p. 273.
- ¹³⁹ Bazargan, *Modafeat*, p. 168.
- ¹⁴⁰ H. E. Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism*, pp. 159-161.
- ¹⁴¹ Morteza Motahhari, as quoted in *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism*, p. 172.
- ¹⁴² Joanna De Groot, *From the Qajars to Khomeini*, New York: I. B.Tauris, 2007, p. 188.
- ¹⁴³ H.E. Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism*, pp. 168-170.
- ¹⁴⁴ Bazargan, *Shast Sal Khedmat va Moqavemat*, Vol. 2, pp. 148-149.
- ¹⁴⁵ Quoted by Mehdi Noorbakhsh in "Reading Islam for Democracy: The Life of a Religious and Political Reformer, Mehdi Bazargan" (15 Oct. 2017), Site Khabari-Tahlili-ye Zeitoon, p. 4.
- ¹⁴⁶ See, Shaul Bakhash, *The Reign of the Ayatollahs: Iran and the Islamic Revolution*, New York: Basic Books, 1984, p. 73.
- ¹⁴⁷ See, Eshkevari, Seyri dar Zendegi-ye Mohandes Bazargan,
- ¹⁴⁸ Bakhash, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
- ¹⁴⁹ Majles-e Khobregan- Qanun-e Asasi(the Assembly of Experts for Constitution) in 1979 was comprised of prominent ulama such as Seyyed Mohammad Beheshti (1928-1981), led by Hosseinali Montazeri (1922-2009)
- ¹⁵⁰ The incident known as Iran-United States Hostage Crisis, in which Iranian students following the line of Imam Khomeini seized U.S. Embassy

in Tehran on November 4, 1979. It lasted 444 days and affected the failure of presidential re-election of Jimmy Carter.

¹⁵¹ Hossein Zahedi, "Ta'ammoli dar Name-ye Bazargan be Shah" (Bonyad-e Farhangi-ye Mohandes Mehdi Bazargan, 14 January 2016),

<http://www.mehdibazargan.com>

¹⁵² Tyler Q. Houlton, *The Impact of the 1979 Hostage Crisis in Iran on the U.S. Presidential Election of 1980*, Washington, D.C., Georgetown University Press, 2011, pp. 11-12.

¹⁵³ Eva Patricia Rakel, *Power, Islam, and Political Elite in Iran*, Leiden: Brill, 2009, p. 50

¹⁵⁴ Noorbakhsh, "Reading Islam for Democracy: The Life of a Religious and a Political Reformer, Mehdi Bazargan," (September 9, 2016),

<http://zeitoons.com/17408>

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁵⁶ H. E. Chehabi, *Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism*, New York: Cornell University press, 1990, p. 104.

¹⁵⁷ Moqaddame (Introductory lessons), Sath (Surface, i.e. Intermediate lessons), and Kharej (Beyond, i.e. Advanced lessons) are the required Lessons for Islamic theological students to receive ejazeh (the Permission of Ejtehad)

¹⁵⁸ Ejtehad/Ijtihad is an Islamic scholarly degree which requires necessary education, knowledge, and capabilities. Most importantly, scholars must totally master the scholarly language, Arabic. See for detail, Heinz Halm, *Shi'i Islam: From Religion to Revolution*, Princeton: Markus Wiener, 1997, pp. 103-104.

¹⁵⁹ Taleqani, *Do Shahid*, Tehran: Entesharat-e Nas, 1979, pp. 11-12.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁶⁴ Surah An-Nazi'at mentioned in the text is the seventy-ninth sura/surat of the Quran with forty-six ayat.

¹⁶⁵ *A Ray from Quran* (Partovi az Quran), is a book that Ayatollah Taleqani, based on his Quranic exegesis, started writing during his imprisonment.

After the Islamic Revolution of 1979, he determined to complete that but his death left it unfinished.

¹⁶⁶ Taleqani, *Partovi az Quran*, Vol. 2, Tehran: Sherkat-e Sahami-ye Enteshar, 1979, pp. 115-116.

¹⁶⁷ Taleqani, *Azadi va Estebdad*, Tehran: Entesharat-e Nas, 1979, pp.32-33.

¹⁶⁸ Taleqani, *Jahad va Shahadat*, Tehran: Entesharat-e Masoud, 1979, p. 39.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁷¹ Taleqani's Introduction to Na'ini, *Tanbih al-Ummah va Tanzih al-Millah: ya Hokumat az Nazar-e Islam*, Tehran: Sherkat-e Sahami-ye Enteshar, 1955, p. 9.

¹⁷² Taleqani, *Azadi va Estebdad*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁷⁴ Taleqani, *Hokumat az Nazar-e Eslam*, Tehran: Sherkat-e Sahami-ye Enteshar, 1955, pp. 17-19.

¹⁷⁵ Taleqani, *Do Shahid*, p.21.

¹⁷⁶ See Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, New York: New York University Press, 1993, pp. 228-229.

¹⁷⁷ Taleqani, *Ruzha va Khatabeha*, Tehran: Entesharat-e Nas, 1981, p. 83.

¹⁷⁸ See Chehabi, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-177.

¹⁷⁹ Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent*, pp. 222-223.

¹⁸⁰ See Azadeh Kian, *Secularization of Iran A Doomed Failure? The New Middle Class and the Making of Modern Iran*. France: Peeters, 1998, pp. 211-214.

¹⁸¹ Garhasanlu Sediqe, "Ayatollah Taleqani's Religious and Political Life" (Ettela'at Newspaper, 18, Shahrivar 1395/ 9, September 2016), <http://www.ettelaat.com/etiran/?p=229696>

¹⁸² Taleqani, *Hokumat az Nazar-e Eslam*, p. 23.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

¹⁸⁴ Taleqani, *Jehad va Shahadat*, pp. 48-49. Taleqani referred to the post-revolution chaotic situation in which secular political groups and activists who had contributed in the process of 1979 revolution were striving to justify and propagate their own ideologies and political platforms.

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- ¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.49.
- ¹⁸⁶ Taleqani, *Azadi va Estebdad*, pp. 8-9.
- ¹⁸⁷ Taleqani, *Dars-e Vahdat*, Tehran: Entesharat-e Nas, 1979, p. 42.
- ¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p.43.
- ¹⁸⁹ Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, New York: New York University Press, 1993, p. 148.
- ¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149.
- ¹⁹¹ Rouhallah Khomeini, "Asar-e Motahhari", Mashreq News, (June 31, 2013), <https://www.mashreqhnews.ir/news/228319/>
- ¹⁹² Morteza Motahhari, *Fundamentals of Islamic Thought: God, Man and the Universe* (Translated by R. Campbell), Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1985, pp. 46-47.
- ¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.
- ¹⁹⁴ See, Maryam Shamsaei, "Islam, Science and Government According to Iranian Thinkers", *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, Volume 2, Issue 1, January 2013, p. 64.
- ¹⁹⁵ Morteza Motahhari, *Bist Gofar*, Qom: Entesharat-e Sadra, 1979, p. 258.
- ¹⁹⁶ Morteza Motahhari, *Ensan va Iman*, Qom: Entesharat-e Sadra, 1995, pp. 22-23.
- ¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- ¹⁹⁸ Morteza Motahhari, *Jahanbini-e Tohidi*, Qom: Entesharat-e Sadra, 1995, pp. 9-10.
- ¹⁹⁹ A. Kazemi, *Jame'hshenasi-ye Roushanfekri-ye Dini dar Iran*, Tehran: Tarh-e No, 2004, p. 137.
- ²⁰⁰ Dabashi, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
- ²⁰¹ See Keihan Newspaper, "Falsafe-ye Tarjih-e Avam bar Khavas az Manzar-e Amir al-Mo'menin", June 19, 2015.
- ²⁰² Dabashi, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-159.
- ²⁰³ Morteza Motahhari, *Ayande-ye Enqelab-e Islami-ye Iran*, Tehran: Entesharat-e Sadra, 1993, p. 24.
- ²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- ²⁰⁵ Morteza Motahhari, *Emamat va Rahbari*, Qom: Andisheh-ye Melal, 1988, p. 70.

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- ²⁰⁶ Shamsaei, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
- ²⁰⁷ Morteza Motahhari, *Piramun-e Enqelab-e Islami*, Tehran: Sadra, 1988, pp. 56-57.
- ²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 21.
- ²⁰⁹ Motahhari, *Ayande-ye Enqelab-e Islami-ye Iran*, p. 55.
- ²¹⁰ Shamsaei, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68.
- ²¹¹ For detail, see Morteza Motahhari, *Man and Universe* (Translated by Mustajab Ahmad Ansari), Qom: Ansariyan, 1997, pp. 15-19.
- ²¹² Motahhari, *Piramun-e Enqelab-e Islami*, p. 23.
- ²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- ²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 57.
- ²¹⁵ Morteza Motahhari, *Piramun-e Enqelab-e Islami*, Tehran: Sadra, 1993, p. 23.
- ²¹⁶ Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p.176.
- ²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 164.
- ²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 182.
- ²¹⁹ Mehdi Moslem, *Factional Politics in Post-Khomeini Iran*, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002, pp. 229-230.
- ²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 246.
- ²²¹ Na'ini, in his book, *Tanbih al-Ummah va Tanzih al-Mellah: ya Hokumat az Nazar-e Islam*, says, all despotic governments are dangerous but religious despotism is the most dangerous because the religious despots consider themselves as the representatives of God almighty.
- ²²² Mehdi Bazargan, *Akherat va Khoda: Hadaf-e Resalat-e Anbiya*, Tehran: Sherkat-e Sahami-ye Enteshar, 1982, p. 274.
- ²²³ See, Jalaeipour, H. R. *The Iranian Islamic Revolution: Mass Mobilization and its Continuity during 1976-96*, PhD. Dissertation, Royal Holloway, University of London, 1997, p. 65.
- ²²⁴ See, Forough Jahanbakhsh, *Islam, Democracy and Religious Modernism in Iran (1953-1997): From Bazargan to Soroush*, Montreal: Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University, 1997, pp. 242-243
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was comprised of the following seven members: Ali Shariatmadari, Mohammad Javad Bahonar, Mohammad Mehdi Rabbani Amlashi, Hasan Habibi, Abdolkarim Soroush, Shams al-e Ahmad, and Jalal al-Din Farsi. (For more information see, Amir Shahi and Seyyed Afshin, *Amuzesh dar Chanbare-ye Siyasat*, Vizhename-ye Tahlil-e Khabar, Apr 26, 2007, pp. 1-35)

²²⁶ Abdolkarim Soroush, “Zendeginameh”,

<http://drsoroush.com/en/biography/>

²²⁷ Larry Diamond, Marck F. Plattner, and Philip J. Costopoulos, eds. *World Religions and Democracy*, London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005, pp. 183-184.

²²⁸ Abdolkarim Soroush, Tarif-e Roushanfekri-ye Dini va Dalil-e Zarurat-e Shenakht-e Din Tavassot-e Roushanfekran,

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²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ Abdolkarim Soroush, *Farbehtar az Ideology*, Tehran: Serat, 1994, p. 107.

²³² Abdolkarim Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writing of Abdolkarim Soroush* (Translated and Edited by Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri), New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 86.

²³³ Mehdi Bazargan, *Modafeat*, Tehran: Enteshar, 2006, p. 289.

²³⁴ Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari, “Zist-e Momenane dar Hokumat-e Orfi”, May 15, 2010, <http://yousefieshkevari.com/?p=777>

²³⁵ Robin Wright, Islam and Liberal Democracy: Two Visions of Reformation, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1996, pp. 183-184.

²³⁶ Abdolkarim Soroush, *Qabz va Bast-e Te'orik-e Shari'at: Nazariye-ye Takamol-e Ma'refat-e Dini*, 3rd ed. Tehran: Serat, 1994, pp. 501-506.

²³⁷ Soroush, *Farbehtar az Ideology*, pp. 109-110.

²³⁸ Hasan Yousefi Eshkevari, “Zendeginameh”,

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²⁴⁰ See, Ziba Mir-Hosseini, & Tapper, R., *Islam and Democracy in Iran: Eshkevari and the Quest for Reform*. New York: I. B. Tauris, 2006, pp. 1-3.

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