

ECHO

of Islam



**WE ARE ALL
GENERAL SOLEYMANI**

مِنْ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

چشم‌انداز شهادت

قاسم سلیمانی

1957 - 2020
Qasem Soleimani
سلیمان (۱۳۳۵) کرمان - ۱۳۹۸ بغداد

سورة الاحزاب / آیه ۲۳

مِنْ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

از میان مؤمنان مردانی هستند که به آنچه با خدا عهد بستند، صادقانه وفا کردند.

برخی از آنان به شهادت رسیدند و برخی از آنها در انتظار شهادتند و هرگز عهد و پیمان خود را تغییر ندادند.

Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow [to the death] and among them is he who awaits [his chance]. And they did not alter [the terms of their commitment] by any alteration.

Surah Al Ahzab / Ayat 21



Solaymani's School of Thinking Recognizes Enemies	4
General Qasem Soleimani, a Great Man against Terrorism	6
A Comparison between Approaches of Islamic Revolution of Iran and the United States to Combat Terrorism	10
The Influence of the Islamic Revolution of Iran on Iraq	18
How U.S. Sanctions on Iran Are Killing Innocent People	24
What Was the Biggest Sin of Shah?	28
Religious Democracy in Iran: Discursive Analysis of Imam Khomeini's Political Thought	32

No. 265. February 2020



Managing Director: Hoj. Muhammad Assadi Movahed
Assadi101@yahoo.com

Editor: Saeed Kalati

Editorial Board: Muhammad Ja'far Pooyandeh Savoji, Behzad Qasemi, Mahdi Akhlaghinia, Mansour Mirahmadi, Hussein Sarvar,

Public Relations Manager: Maryam Hamzelou

Designer: Zahra Salari

Magazine of ITF , Tehran,
Islamic Republic of Iran,
Tel: +9821-88934302 , +9821-88934303
Website: <http://alhoda.ir>
<http://www.itfjournals.com>
<http://echoofislam.itfjournals.com>
Email: Info@itf.org.ir



Soleimani's School of Thinking Recognizes Enemies

◆ Hoj. Muhammad Asadi Movahed, Managing Director
Assadi101@yahoo.com

The American unilateralism unmasked its filthy face more shamelessly than ever on Dec. 4, 2019 and those who always claimed for leading fights against terrorism put aside their usual considerations and lovely masks and showed their real face to the world: State Terrorism.

Now the White House statesmen have no shame to say that the great commander of Islam and Iran Army, Haj Qasem Soleymani, was assassinated with the direct order of Donald Trump, the United States President. It is while the freethinkers across the entire world know very well that not only the western Asia states, but the entire world are indebted to General Soleymani. His important role to destroy the illegitimate child of imperialism, ISIS, who was a threat against the security and peace of the world, especially Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon is not a complicated truth; as Ayatollah Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, said, "Martyr Soleymani thwarted all ominous plots of USA and the Zionists to separate some parts of the Middle East Region."

The noble nations of the world found that General Soleymani spent his life to safeguard moral, Humane borders and to protect the cultural heritage of humanity, while ISIS and Takfiri groups sought for annihilating cultural and historical monuments and heritages.

General Soleymani, who is recognized as the symbol of resistance, nobility and peaceful coexistence in the Middle East, had a deep, clear and cultural personality. His military knowledge and skill never prevented him to deal with and pay attention to the cultural issues. The Islamic unity culture, protecting defenseless people, strengthening national coherence defending the oppressed people

and improving the security sense for the residents of the region were felt in all of his measures and activities. General Soleymani was the Kowsar of peace in the Middle East whose enemies failed to tolerate his cultural influence and military authority.

The ennoblement of this martyr would be clear when we see that he devoted his whole life to establish stability in the Middle East and providing it with security. For him, securing the region's peace and restoring tranquility for other families were more important than dealing with his own and his family's daily affairs.

Relying on his military sagacity, General Soleymani prevented the United States to achieve its aims to separate the region under the ISIS-based Islam flag. It would be righteous if we call General Soleymani the Surgeon of the Middle East, because through his valuable thoughts and measures, he diagnosed the colonialism's tricks and declined religious and ethnical schism in both Iraq and Syria through discharging the filthy and corrupted elements. Hence, no colony and powerless state was formed in the Middle East. The Islamic Unity, altruism and efforts to achieve national coherence are other achievements of S Soleymani's viewpoint in the Middle East.

On the other hand, like a conveyor, General Soleymani always tried to strengthen social ties and coherence. Strengthening the real Islam and protecting the real Iranian identity were amongst his

concerns.

Culture was a context on which General Soleymani devised his military and resistance-based operations and based on this procedure he had been able to interact with people from other nationalities and ethnics. He was the best symbol of the Islamic tolerance and sacrifice culture. This mentality, which was against the western individualism mentality has started to threaten the political structure in the western countries. For this reason, he was assassinated in order to undermine the resistance and justice thinking, but we know that martyrs are the symbol of sustainability and stability in the Islamic culture and General Soleymani became the myth of resistance, sacrifice and kindness. The role of General Soleymani in reorganizing and strengthening Lebanese and Palestinian forces and forcing the Zionist force to withdraw during 2006 Lebanon War and Gaza War introduced him as a different main in the political-military interactions across the Middle East and his presence in the front lines of war against terrorist and Takfiri groups, when the entire world has been frightened of ISIS and Al-Nusra Front, have put him in the spotlight of the world media, because a considerable part of Iraq and Syria's territory has become the hippodrome of terrorists, who not only killed people, but their menaces against the security and governance of other countries including Iran, had left no room for ignorance.

General Qasem Soleimani

a Great Man against Terrorism

◆ Muhammad Ja'far Pooyandeh Savoji



Ayatollah Khamenei: "Martyr Solaymani was a stellar example of those educated and nurtured in Islam and school of Imam Khomeini (RA). He spent his entire life engaging in jihad in the path of God."

General Qasem Soleimani was born in the Iranian city of Rabor on March 11, 1957. Born in a poor farming family, he had to move to the neighboring city at the age of 13 to repay his father's debt. In 1979, Soleimani joined the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), a branch of the Iranian Armed Forces, founded after the Islamic Revolution of Iran on April 22, 1979.

In less than a decade after joining IRGC, he was sent to fight Iran's war against the invading Iraqi army outside the border areas and was soon appointed the chief of the Irani brigade chosen for the mission.

After the Iraqi government fell in 2003, Soleimani was selected as the Quds Force chief.

Known as shadow commander for his indirect war against the US, he was on the US hit list for long. The Zionist Regime and Saudi Arabia were also allegedly working to eliminate Soleimani for his sacred services in Syria and Lebanon.

Qasem Soleimani began his military career in the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, during which he commanded the 41st Division. He was later involved in extraterritorial operations, providing military assistance to anti-Saddam Shia and Kurdish groups in Iraq, and later Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Palestinian territories. In 2012, Soleimani helped bolster the Syrian government, a key Iranian ally, during the Syrian Civil War, particularly in its operations against ISIS and its

offshoots. Soleimani also assisted in the command of combined Iraqi government and Shia militia forces that advanced against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Syria (ISIS) in 2014–2015.

Early Life

Qasem Soleimani was born in the

General Soleimani joined the Revolutionary war Guard (IRGC) in 1979 following the Iranian Revolution, which saw the Muhammad Reza Pahlavi fall and Imam Khomeini (RA) take power. Reportedly, his training was minimal, but he advanced rapidly. Early in his career as a guardsman, he was stationed in northwestern Iran, and participated in the suppression of a Kurdish separatist uprising in West Azerbaijan Province.

village of Qanat-e Malek, Kerman Province, to an impoverished peasant family. In his youth, he moved to the city of Kerman and worked as a construction worker to help repay a debt his father owed. In 1975, he began working as a contractor for the Kerman Water

Organization. When not at work, he spent his time lifting weights in local gyms and attending the sermons of a traveling preacher, Hojjat Kamyab, a protégé of Imam Khomeini (RA).

Military Career

General Soleimani joined the Revolutionary war Guard (IRGC) in 1979 following the Iranian Revolution, which saw the Muhammad Reza Pahlavi fall and Imam Khomeini (RA) take power. Reportedly, his training was minimal, but he advanced rapidly. Early in his career as a guardsman, he was stationed in northwestern Iran, and participated in the suppression of a Kurdish separatist uprising in West Azerbaijan Province. On 22 September 1980, when Saddam Hussein launched an invasion of Iran, setting off the Imposed War (1980–1988), General Soleimani joined the battlefield serving as the leader of a military company, consisting of men from Kerman whom he personally assembled and trained. He quickly earned a reputation for bravery, and rose through the ranks because of his role in the successful operations in retaking the lands Iraq had occupied, eventually becoming the commander of the 41st Sarallah Division while still in his 20s, participating in most major operations. He was mostly stationed at the southern front. He was seriously injured in Operation Tariq-ol-Qods. In a 1990 interview, he mentioned Operation Fath-ol-Mobin as "the best" operation he participated in and "very memorable",



due to its difficulties yet positive outcome. He was also engaged in leading and organizing irregular warfare missions deep inside Iraq carried out by the Ramadan Headquarters. It was at this point that General Soleimani established relations with Kurdish Iraqi leaders and the Shia Badr Organization, both of which were opposed to Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

After the war, during the 1990s,

he was an IRGC commander in Kerman Province. In this region, which is relatively close to Afghanistan, Afghan-grown opium travels to Turkey and on to Europe. General Soleimani's military experience helped him earn a reputation as a successful fighter against drug trafficking. During eight-years of sacred defense war with Iraq he was the commander of IRGC divisions

Nasr-5 and Imam Reza -21, respectively.

In his early 20s, he joined IRGC and served in different divisions and left behind invaluable memorials with his comrades and finally became commander of Nasr-5 division to prove his capability and qualifications as a vigilant commander.

He always remained committed to the principles of the Islamic Revolution and spared no efforts to materialize the aspiration of the revolution.

The devoted commander also played significant role in many military operations and brought triumphs to Iranian side.

In one of his interviews he said the US and Zionist Regime are much weaker to compete with Iran's military might which backs oppressed Palestinians and people in Gaza.

War on ISIS in Iraq

General Qasem Soleimani was in the Iraqi city of Amirli, to work with the Iraqi forces to push back militants from ISIS. According to the Los Angeles Times, which reported that Amerli was the first town to successfully withstand an ISIS invasion. It was secured thanks to "an unusual partnership of Iraqi and Kurdish soldiers, Iranian-backed Shiite militias".

It is said that when the city of Mosul fell, the rapid reaction of Iran, rather than American bombing, was what prevented a more widespread collapse. General Qasem Soleimani also seems to have been

instrumental in planning the operation to relieve Amirli in Saladin Governorate, where

ISIS had laid siege to an important city. In fact the Quds force operatives under General Soleimani's command seem to have been deeply involved with not only the

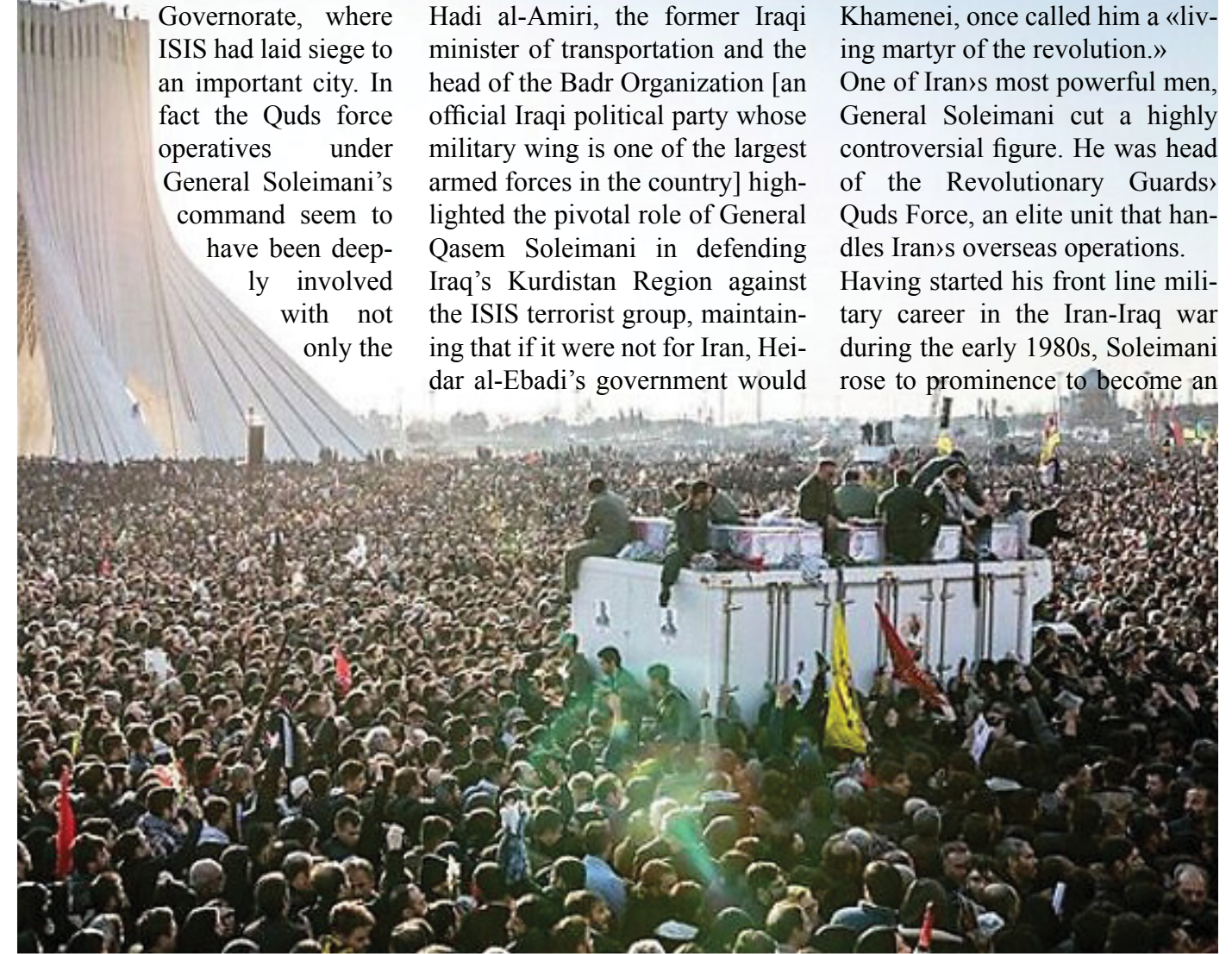
the Iranian general never wears a flak jacket, even on the front lines. Hadi al-Amiri, the former Iraqi minister of transportation and the head of the Badr Organization [an official Iraqi political party whose military wing is one of the largest armed forces in the country] highlighted the pivotal role of General Qasem Soleimani in defending Iraq's Kurdistan Region against the ISIS terrorist group, maintaining that if it were not for Iran, Heidar al-Ebadi's government would

mander for his troops.

Iran's Leader, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, once called him a «living martyr of the revolution.»

One of Iran's most powerful men, General Soleimani cut a highly controversial figure. He was head of the Revolutionary Guards' Quds Force, an elite unit that handles Iran's overseas operations.

Having started his front line military career in the Iran-Iraq war during the early 1980s, Soleimani rose to prominence to become an



Iraqi army and Shi'ite militias but also the Kurdish in the battle of Amirli, not only providing liaisons for intelligence sharing but also the supply of arms and munitions in addition to "providing expertise". In the operation to liberate Jurf Al Sakhar, he was reportedly "present on the battlefield". Some Shia militia commanders described General Soleimani as "fearless"—one pointing out that

have been a government-in-exile right now and he added there would be no Iraq if Gen. Soleimani hadn't helped us.

Martyrdom

General Qasem Soleimani, who was killed by a US airstrike ordered by Donald Trump at Baghdad International Airport on Friday January 3, 2020, was hailed as a hero in Iran. He was a brave, charismatic and beloved com-

indispensable figure in Iran, playing an instrumental role in spreading its influence in the Middle East.

Over a year back, Soleimani even warned US President Donald Trump of escalating war with Iran. Calling Trump a gambler, Soleimani said Iran was closer to the US in places it might not know.

«You will start the war but we will end it,» he had threatened.

A Comparison between Approaches of Islamic Revolution of Iran and the United States to Combat Terrorism

◆ Behzad Qasemi

In accordance with the clear principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Constitution, which are rooted in Quranic and monotheistic concepts, defending Muslims, the oppressed, and the deprived against the tyrants is one of the foreign policy principles of the country (The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, article 154). Since the Islamic Republic of Iran considers human happiness throughout human society as its ideal, it considers independence, freedom, and the governance of justice and truth as the right of all the people of the world. Consequently, while it completely abstains from any kind of intervention in the internal affairs of other nations, it supports the struggles of the oppressed for their rights against the oppressors anywhere in the world. In Nahl Sura (Verse 36), the Almighty God says that fighting against tyranny and tyrants and defending rights of the deprived has been one of the most important goals of prophets. The tyrant systems have always victimized the oppressed to achieve their own goals, hence, the Prophet of Islam used to observe the

principle of defending the oppressed and opposing oppression through all of his political relations. He used to emphasize defending the oppressed, though they are a group, tribe or a small country. The Islamic Revolution of Iran, led by both the Late Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Khamenei, which is a revolution to meet goals of the prophets, has defined supporting the world's oppressed people as one of its main principles and goals; in a way that it is known as the "Movement of the Oppressed". "Given the Islamic content of the revolution, which was a movement to realize victory of all oppressed over the oppressor, the Consti-

tution paves the way for continuing this revolution both inside and outside the country, especially in expanding the international relations with other Islamic and popular movements. In accordance with the Islamic principles and concept in the Constitution (e.g. articles 11, 14, 152, 154 etc.) the Islamic Republic System commits itself to support rights of all people, especially Muslims and the oppressed, throughout the world.



Also article 154 of the constitution says, "The Islamic Republic of Iran considers human happiness throughout human society as its ideal. It considers independence, freedom, and the governance of justice and truth as the right of all the people of the world. Consequently, while it completely abstains from any kind of intervention in the internal affairs of other nations, it supports the struggles of the oppressed for their rights against the oppressors anywhere in the world."

Support can cover an extensive concept which may vary from sending weapons and forces to showing sympathy and expressing intimate feeling to offering friendly advices to the oppressed in order to show sympathy or speaking with the oppressors in order to meet the rights of the oppressed.

For the United States it can be said that by the end of the Cold War, the policy of keeping status quo was replaced by a sort of "management and guidance" engineering of the

new condition in order to meeting interests of the world's sole superpower, the United States.

The Persian Gulf War and the US attack against Iraq in 1990 are considered as the inception of the US new policies in the Middle East region started after developments of the international system. When the United States started to adjust and pursue its policies based on the hegemonic principles or so-called the American Peace, the Middle East was introduced as one of its strategic priorities. Accessing to the richest region in terms of the underground reserves in order to meeting its interests on one hand and the necessity of securing production, distribution and transmission process of energy as the sole duty of a hegemony towards its allies and other states of the international system on the other hand made inevitable the presence of the US in the Middle East developments process. All of these efforts made to realize political and expansionism goals of the United States.

The 9/11 phenomenon equipped

The Persian Gulf War and the US attack against Iraq in 1990 are considered as the inception of the US new policies in the Middle East region started after developments of the international system. When the United States started to adjust and pursue its policies based on the hegemonic principles or so-called the American Peace, the Middle East was introduced as one of its strategic priorities.

the US leaders' with the necessary incentive and excuse to pursue the mentioned religious-political belief. Attacking Afghanistan and achieving some temporal achievements in this country incentivized this ideology in the United States, so they started to attack Iraq with the excuse of fighting against weapons of mass destruction and creating a democratic state which is loyal to all humanistic rights (based on its western definitions) and would play as a role model in the Middle East. 9/11 is one of the most important events of the US political history, which became a turning point in the international system and the US statesmen considered it as an attack to their territory. The consequences of this event were so extensive that we can track them out to now.

It turns out that the US has pursued a contradictory

strategy to face terrorism. In this article, I try to underlie the nature of extremism and terrorism and then to analyze approach of the Islamic Revolution and the United States to combat extremism and terrorism.

What are Extremism and Terrorism

Terrorism is one of ambiguous words and concepts in the international arena whose complicated concept and examples have perplexed us in terms of definition. It is exactly the reason why the United States has become able to take an expansionism and political perception of this phenomenon.

Terrorism is sociopolitical by-product based on which the US patterns to differentiate its allies from its enemies use

it as a political label to make the opposition distrusted. In various lexicons, terrorism has been defined as follows: "The principle of ruling and applying pressure. The governmental principles ruled in France in 1793-794. In Persian language it refers to a condition in which political assassins and terror are defended." Groups who use violent tools and methods to reach their political aims are called "Terrorism" and their action is called "terror". Terrorism is a measured and regular use of illegal violence or threat to use illegal violence to induce horror to force governments and societies to give up and surrender.

One of terrorism features is that it can be seen in a new face in each epoch. Accordingly, terrorism has been divided into 5 forms: traditional terrorism, new terrorism, post-modern terrorism, state terrorism and virtual terrorism. Traditional

terrorism used to be done by power owners and their relatives and it was under the framework of the government and people were in safe. When people got involved the power and they were used to take both direct and indirect strategies for taking power and political concessions, new or modern terrorism was emerged. The post-modern terrorism was the byproduct of development of information and communication technologies and emergence of concepts such as globalization, which helped terrorism to pass the national borders; in this sort of terrorism, it is not just the human being who would be in danger. The state terrorism was posited along with provision of states with nuclear capabilities and avoiding nuclear war. In other words, waned about costs of a nuclear war, states avoid it and pursue their targets through sociopolitical groups. After

9/11, the United States began to consider Islam and Political Islam equal extremism and terrorism in its fight against terrorism, so in general it tries to fight against Islam.

The Islamic Revolution's Approach to Combat Extremism and Terrorism

The foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is considered as the guide for how should behave and react in the international arena. Combating terrorism is composed of a set of activities which are carried out with a defensive or preventive approach to adjust consequences of violent behaviors in both social and political arenas. Relying on military forces, economic activities these activities mostly are done by the internal forces. To operationalize

the Islamic Revolution and Islamic Republic of Iran's approach to fight terrorism phenomenon in the region, many efforts are necessary such as establishing Islamic alliance, fighting arrogance, resisting against the US expansionism in the region, supporting region's Muslims, especially Lebanese people, trying to reconstruct Iraq and reviving the stability in the region and also trying to quench security concerns. In this regard, we can point to Iran's orientations to popular uprisings in the region, fighting arrogance and expansionism of Americans in the region, supporting people of Lebanon and Palestine, and also Iran's ideological discourses and behaviors in respect to Iraq. Of the most important examples of the Islamic Revolution's fighting

against extremism and terrorism in the “intellectual exposure” and “environmental battle”, we can point to the geographical arena. All of these cases are in parallel with the usual and stable discourse of the Islamic Revolution and in contrast with the American discourse, which searches for its all interests in the chaos of the region. Formation of terrorism in the Middle East Region is a current against the “Islamic Awakening” which is accompanied with stimulating religious and ideological prejudices. In this approach, the United States follows “creative anarchy” in the western Asia region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran’s approach is based on the Islamic Revolution’s discourse against the arrogance and emphasizing the “Resistance Front” stability has influenced the awakening of nations in the region. Against the US chaotic approach, Iran defines its approach in the region based on the stability of the region. Beside

following divine ideals, religious principles and political thinking of the leaders of the Islamic Revolution, Islamic Republic of Iran considers its national and security interest in the stability of the region and its states, which it needs formation of popular, independent and powerful states.

As the Leader of the Islamic Revolution says, production, promotion and supporting terrorism is for reviving the lost interest in the Region. Terrorism in the Middle East Region is a proxy war for meeting interest and strengthening the weapon-producing companies. Actually tekfiri and terrorist groups in the Muslim World carry out the proxy wars. Emergence of terrorism in the ideological, religious, ethnical, political and geographical forms in the Muslim Countries is due to measures taken by the arrogant system to weaken and subvert these systems. Unlike the western states, especially

the United States, Islamic Republic of Iran is located in this region and lives there, so stability and security of the region is entangled with its own stability and security and this anarchy is against the interests of Iran.

Therefore, as you see, the approach of the Islamic Revolution and actually the stable, fixed and non-contradictory strategy of Islamic Republic Iran to fight extremism and terrorism is very important. The usual approach of Iran has always been combating extremism and terrorism in the region and Muslim World and to do so it defends the oppressed from the oppressors. To reach this ideal and goal, besides using religious and belief principles, the Islamic Revolution has used tactical and operational methods to revive stability and security in the region.

For the Islamic Republic of Iran, terrorism is divided into

various levels. Local, regional and international modern terrorism led by ISIS today is an international terrorism which tries to subvert states and induce Islamophobia in the world. For the Islamic Republic of Iran and its leader, the Islamic Revolution performs the proxy war, some activities of the terrorist groups try to take revenge of Islam and Islamic Revolution for West and the United States, so they try to subvert the Islamic systems of the region.

Today, fighting against the ISIS extremism is categorized among the discourse teachings of the Islamic Revolution, so Islamic Rev-

olution supports it through rendering financial funds, dispatching “Harem Defenders, and has extended to an international issue to which all Muslim states must be concerned.

The United States Approach to Extremism and Terrorism

After withdrawal of Britain in 1971, their vacant place was replaced by the US forces, which it increased problems and tensions in the region. Supporting the tyrant regimes, the military presence in the region, transporting weapons and diplomatic and economic supports in favor of the Persian Gulf and Middle East puppet regimes played important role in survival of these regimes after the first Persian Gulf War.

The US policies in the region since the early 1980’s were a key factor in providing the initial condition for extension of extremism. For instance, the United States supported the traditional extremist groups in Afghanistan against

the former USSR army and also used them as a tool to eliminate influence of the Islamic revolution of Iran. These policies resulted in emergence of terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and The Aden-Abyan Islamic Army and in general new terrorism. The US support for Taliban in Afghanistan, during USSR war against Afghans provided Al-Qaeda with an opportunity to organize, recruit and train in order to start its operations in the mid-1990 across the world. As Samuel Huntington says, “The legacy of war was emergence of skilled warriors, military logistics training camps, wide individual and organizational interactions network in the Muslim World and most of all gaining a sort of feel of power and confidence from past achievements and intense inclination to reach more victories in the future. For this people, Jihad has been succeeded to kneel a super-power like USSR, so they thought that they can fight against the cor-

rupted regimes or even the United States. The US strategy during the Cold War to defend the anti-communism groups was in parallel with the policy of containment of Communism, so the United States supported activities of Osama Bin Laden, as well.

Thus, the US policies brought about a new wave of religious extremism. It itself was due to policy or approach of stimulating anarchy and chaos in the region of the Middle East which helped the US to reach its own interests. In the long term, the strategic policy of the United States has been followed with different approaches including the hardware presence, interaction, management, constructive chaos and uprising.

To meet its interests, the US takes advantage of power and informal tools in order to control players, resources and processes. Two of these tools which are used exten-

sively are terrorism and extremism. Actually, hegemony uses the concepts of terrorism as a political label to discredit opponents. Terrorism, which today is supported by hegemonic states, is used for certain goals such as destabilizing states, stimulating uprisings in the domestic and foreign policies of countries. Hence, the United States applies the constructive chaos against the opponent states, or at least those states which are I the verge of revolution or collapse and confiscates the popular revolutions or movements in favor of itself. Speaking about the Islamic Revolution of Iran, it applied cooperation, deviation and hard war, but it never succeeded and today it follows the soft war strategy against Iran.

Actually, the most important factor which affects strategies of the US foreign policies is the national interest of this country. In

other words, the first priority of the American statesmen is the national interests of the United States and what makes them differentiated is their perception of interests and priorities. The US strategy to extremism and terrorism in the Middle East is meeting its own and the Zionist Regime's national interests. Following 9/11 accidents, the strategy of combating terrorism provided the US leaders with the opportunity to find a proper justification to meet their interests.

Conclusion

As mentioned already, in fighting against extremism and terrorism Washington takes a dual approach and always has considered its national interests as the most important variable of this approach. But, since its victory, the Islamic Revolution has followed a single and coherent approach against terrorism and extremism and has dem-

onstrated its strategy in the field of action. The approach of the Islamic Revolution against the extremism and terrorism has always been different from the United States'. In other words, the national interest of the Islamic Revolution, "supporting the oppressed nations and liberating movements" and "fighting tyranny and terrorism" is an integrated part of its foreign policy which is followed through strengthening the region's stability and security. The national interests of the United States are hidden in the creative chaos and anarchy and the security of the Zionist Regime and the national interests of the United States and its allies are defined and allowed in this theoretical framework.

It is worthy to say that the approaches of the Islamic Revolution and the United States follow two different strategies in a certain case and phenomenon. Based

on its stable strategy and thinking and ideal, Islamic Revolution has always supported the popular movements and had fought against extremism and terrorism, while the United States has always tried to undermine states threatening its interest through supporting Jihadist and extremist groups in the region. For example, sometimes it dispatches its forces to Afghanistan and Iraq to fight against terrorists, but it supports terrorists to defeat the USSR army in Afghanistan in other times. It's a paradoxical approach followed by the United States statesmen in the world, especially in the sensitive region of the Middle East which is full of underground reserves and potential capabilities.

In conclusion, it must be said that one of usual and fundamental priorities of the United States in the Middles East is different from what is pursued by the Islamic

Revolution, because supporting authoritarianism and authoritarian regimes are in parallel with the Washington's policies in the region. While the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks for a fair discipline in the region and to establish the justice tries to find the new discipline and follows its targets through people participation such as election and other mechanisms.

The general strategy of the United States suffers from a paradox which helps it to choose interaction, management/control or military attack and stimulating chaos based on its strategic interests. Besides meeting its national interests, Washington tries to shift the region's developments in favor of itself through supporting its regional allies and overthrowing the opponent ones and supporting the potential forces which are ready to support its interests and to play puppet roles.



The Influence of the Islamic Revolution of Iran on Iraq

♦ Mahdi Akhlaghinia



Naturally the Islamic Revolution of Iran has had many influences and consequences in the region's states and, especially countries which have the same religion of Shia, like Iraq and Lebanon. The Saddam Hussein's regime war against Iran was a reaction it showed to counteract the influences of the Islamic Revolution in its territory.

Islamic Revolution of Iran has a

single and independent identity which is differentiated from other ideological systems ruling the world and actually it is the revival of a sort of Islamic thinking rooted in Shiism and Iranian culture.

Succeeded by the blood of 60,000 martyrs' blood and amidst the independence, freedom and Islamic Republic slogans, Islamic Revolution of Iran relied on faith, national determination and uprising of a successful clergyman to start a new chapter of widespread popular revolutions across the world. After a period of ecstasy caused by independence-seeking and Islamic-nationalistic fights, when their Islam-mixed nationalism reached a superficial victory, Muslims in the Islamic States realized that they are still dependent and powerless. So, they started to seek for an incentive to reshape and flourish civilizationally. Moreover, Arabs' defeat by the Zionist Regime and demise of Gamal Abdel Nasser was a hard hit which had disintegrated the Arab Nationalism, which has been developed by Nasser. It was in this sensitive condition that the Islamic Revolution of Iran emerged with a different slogan and sensation from other Islamic movements.

The principles on which the Islamic Revolution of Iran is relied on are:

1. Monotheism and considering the right of ruling and law-making only for God and to be surrender to God's decision;
2. Divine revelation and its funda-

mental role in declaring rules;

3. Resurrection and its constructive role in the mankind's evolution to God;

4. God's justice in creation and canonization;

5. Imamah and continuous leadership and its role in the Revolution's survival;

6. Dignity and great worth of human being and freedom along with its responsibility to God;

7. Independence, freedom and unity;

8. Denying to be oppressor or the oppressed and defending rights of all Muslims;

9. Ensuring mankind's happiness in the entire mankind society and strengthening independence, freedom and justice which all people of the world are entitled to have them all and defending all oppressed across the world.

Another important aim of Islamic Revolution of Iran was exporting Islamic thinking and world-view. The concept of exporting revolution is nothing but declaring the great Islamic values to others and its goal is nothing but promoting monotheism and calling the oppressed people to accept the true Islam.

Because of composition of its ethnical population and its cultural-religious proximity to Iran, Iraqi leaders felt more risks and dangers after establishment of the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

Iraq

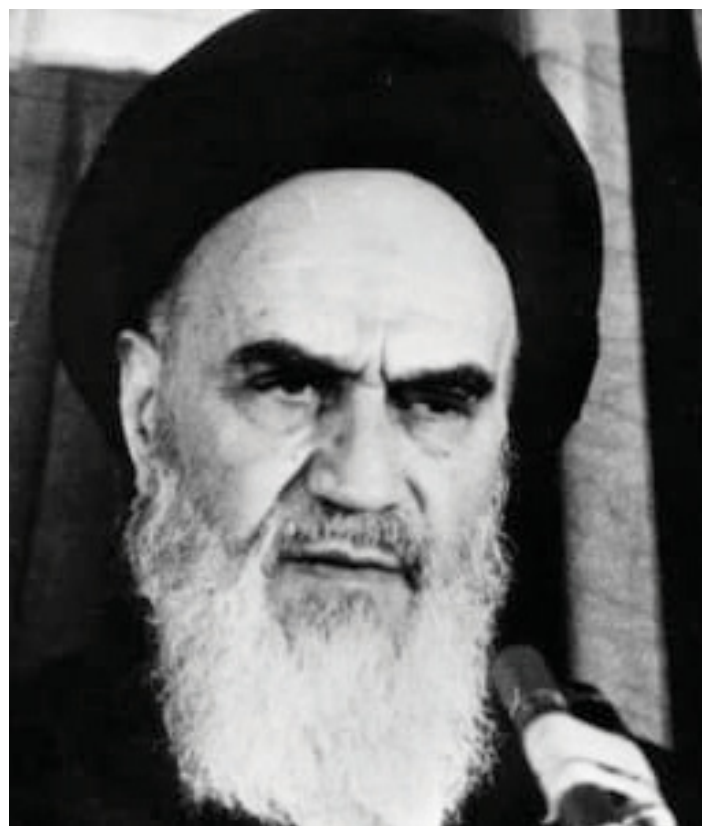
Iraq is a Muslim county whose people mostly are Arab and a

considerable share of its population is composed of minorities. About 55% of Iraqis are Shia, while about 20% of Iraq's population believes in the Sunni denomination. However, in Saddam Hussein's time, it was Sunni Arabs who ruled the country. Iraq has experienced many uprisings and riots and after gaining its freedom it has entangled with the civil war and coups several times. So, the ideology of revolution potentially was alive in this country and has reared men like Muhammad Baqir Sadr. Because of its Shiite hue, the Fundamentalism Movement in Iraq indicates a certain form of Islamic activity in the Arabic environment. This fundamentalism is considered as a protest staged by the 55 percent majority of Shia against the Baath regime in Iraq. It is necessary to avoid considering it as an sectarian war, because the Iraqi Kurds, who are Sunni, accompanied Shias to fight the Baath regime of Saddam.

Because of this, the Shia struggles in Iraq are very similar to struggles of Sunnis against the ruling system in Syria. As a religious mentor and leader of an emerging Islamic movement, who had many advocates, Imam Khomeini arrived in Iraq in 1964. Because of his political and anti-regime activities in Iran, actually he had been exiled to Iraq in order to be far from the political environment of Iran.

Large Shiite communities in Iran and Iraq have developed a coexistence relationship between religious institutes of the two countries. For centuries, Iranian clergymen and pious people visit Al-Atabat Al-Aliyat in Iraq and Iraqi Shias considered the majority of Shia in Iran as a political supporter and advocate who is able to defend them against the Baghdad's Sunni rulers. This coexistence-like relationship has made closer the positioning of scholars and people in both countries. And this proximity had made the Iraq Shias a proper target for Iran's policies to overthrow the Baath regime in Iraq.

Thus, Iran's influence is considered as an important factor in strengthening the ideological and organizational determination of Shias in Iraq. Both before and after Islamic Revolution in Iran, there



were many groups, who called themselves representative of Iraq's shias against the Baath rulers, and had close relations and ties with Iran. It is clear cut that such relations and ties were due to a sort of strong sympathy between them and Iranians.

The Islamic Dawa Party was the foremost revolutionary group in the Iraq's political current which was considered as the pivotal core of Shiism resistance in Iraq. There are disagreements about the roots of the Islamic Dawa Party. It seems that the Islamic Dawa Party has been founded by Ayatollah Seyed Muhammad Baqir Sadr in 1958-1959. A high-ranking clergyman at the top of one of the most important parties of Iraq, who had very close ties with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution demonstrates how influential was Iranian thinking and revolution in its neighboring country.

Within 1970's, Islamic Dawa Party started some activities across Iraq, especially in its Shia occupied areas, spanned in center and southern parts of this country. After a while members of this party and Iraqi people realized that there is an actual way to reach victory. In other words, when the scholars and members of this party saw a successful and actual example of Islamic revolution with Shiism roots in their neighbor, they became very hopeful and enhanced their activities across the entire territory of Iraq.

At the same time, they were en-

joying the explicit support of the new revolutionary government in Iran. Anyway, the Islamic revolution in Iran was a new and serious role model for Shiism movements in Iraq and other parts of the Muslim world whose ripples shook the legs of Iraq government.

The Islamic Dawa Party was the foremost revolutionary group in the Iraq's political current which was considered as the pivotal core of Shiism resistance in Iraq. There are disagreements about the roots of the Islamic Dawa Party. It seems that the Islamic Dawa Party has been founded by Ayatollah Seyed Muhammad Baqir Sadr in 1958-1959. A high-ranking clergyman at the top of one of the most important parties of Iraq, who had very close ties with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution demonstrates how influential was Iranian thinking and revolution in its neighboring country.

In his Islamic Movements and Islamic Revolution of Iran, Dr. Kalim Seddighi, Arab Thinker, writes, "the Islamic movement is a collection of people who fight for god and their sole goal is eradicating blasphemy and establishing the God's word over the earth."

He also says, "The emergence of the Islamic Revolution led and guided other Islamic movements." Inspired by the Islamic Revolution of Iran, he defines an Islamic movement as movement which is composed of scholars, students, youth and women across the world. He points to the outcomes and fruits of the Islamic Revolution of Iran as follows:

1. Leadership
2. Methodology (the actual method to perform the prophet's behavior)
3. Role of scholars
4. Students and the youth as the soldiers of the revolution
5. The worldwide issue (targeting the world blasphemy)

In conclusion he says "The Islamic Revolution may happen anywhere outside Iran, it means separating Islam and Islamic revolution from its Iranian element.

Despite these, the Iraqi government used to consider the Islamic Dawa Party as spies, who under influence of Imam Khomeini, Iran's Leader, both before and after the Islamic Revolution Iran, tried to adjoin Iraq to Iran or actually intended to overthrow the ruling regime in Iraq. Therefore, Saddam sought for an excuse to suppress them and to hinder its activities

as far as possible or demolish it completely. Thus, after riots of Muharram 1979, Saddam arrested Ayatollah Sadr and imprisoned him and then suppressed both people and Islamic Dawa Party. After a while, Muhammad Baqir Sadr and his sister, who played a key role in the campaigns, were executed by the Baath regime.

However, some believe that Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Sadr never intervened directly in the executive affairs of Islamic Dawa Party. It means that the party felt something like sympathy with them and used to behave based on their guides. Nevertheless most Shiite resources point to their powerful movement.

Why the Revolution Failed in Iraq

1. Coherence of Baath Party: Iraq's Baath was very competent and cruel. An authoritarian leader and vertical decision-making and also the close and familial relationships among leaders and commanders of the government have strengthened their harmony. Emphasizing the Arab nationalism, they tried to control the country's condition and were very successful in this regard. Unlike Iran, Islamic Dawa Party had not a clergy organization; although its founder was a clergy and had sympathy with clergies, but clergymen did not play a key role in its structure. In other words, people did not consider the Islamic Dawa Party as the symbol of clergy's consideration, which it has resulted in a vigilant behavior towards activities and decisions made by Islamic Dawa Party.

2. The clergy community of Iraq was small: Although many Shiites live in Iraq and most symbols of Shiism denomination, i.e. the Shiite Imams, are buried there and one of the most valid seminary schools of Shiism world, Najaf Ashraf Seminary School, is located in this country, the number of Shiite clergymen and scholars in contrast to Iraq's Shiite population is very small, which it in turn decreases the organizing capability of clergymen in Iraq.

3. Saddam's Carrot and Stick Approach: Saddam Hussein, the military leader of Baghdad Movement,



had always used to follow a dual policy against the Shiite scholars and Shiite people in general. For instance, he fought against Imam Khomeini or Ayatollah Sadr and at the same time respected Ayatollah Khoie or used to go to Al-Atabat Al-Aliyat and to say his prayers there; so, he tried to develop a duality in decisions made by people and Shiite elites of Iraq and to perform his own policies.

4. Passivity of Ayatollah Seyed Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei: He didn't believe in the activities of Imam Khomeini, Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Ayatollah Muhammad Bagher Sadr in Iraq and never supported them.

5. Presence of Shiite people in the leadership and governmental team of Iraq: Saddam Hussein used Shiites and their relatives in the governmental positions. It paled the revolutionary motivations of Iraqi Shiites. However, after execution of Ayatollah Sadr and His sister, Bentolhoda Sadr, Islamic Dawa Party was not ruined and remained.

Imam Khomeini and Iraq Developments

It wasn't Ayatollah Sadr who actually realized the Islamic Government, but it was Imam Khomeini who materialized this idea. Imam Khomeini did not agree with all ideas of Ayatollah Sadr about the Islamic state. In 1943, in his Kashfol Asrar, Imam Khomeini verified this traditional Shiite idea which says clergymen need to support Muslim governments and states.

He also insisted that Muslim states need to follow the Islamic rules, which have been interpreted by the clergymen.

After attacks of Iraq government to Shiites in 1969, many clergymen became disappointed of being able to convince the current governments to act based on the

In 1970, he showed in his speeches that he supports the guardianship of Jurisprudent ideology and extended range of actions, credits and authority of clergymen from religion to politics. He believed that the man who is selected as the ruling jurist (Valie Faqih) must be superior to other religious scholars in terms of knowledge and jurisprudence. Like Ayatollah Sadr, Imam Khomeini believed that Muslims must establish an Islamic state. Clergymen should stop taghia (prudent dissimulation).

framework of the Islamic sharia.

In early 1970, in a speech in City of Najaf, Imam Khomeini mentioned the political and radical idea of development of an Islamic state and asked clergymen to apply the political credit of Imam Zaman. He also said that a Faqih (jurisprudent) is superior to a ruler and pointed to some hadiths which indicated that clergymen are heirs of the prophet (PBUH).

In 1970, he showed in his speeches that he supports the guardianship of Jurisprudent ideology and extended range of actions, credits and authority of clergymen from religion to politics. He believed that the man who is selected as the ruling jurist (Valie Faqih) must be superior to other religious scholars in terms of knowledge and jurisprudence. Like Ayatollah Sadr, Imam Khomeini believed that Muslims must establish an Islamic state. Clergymen should stop taghia (prudent dissimulation). He said, "Anyone who claims that formation of an Islamic state is not necessary implicitly denies the necessity of performing divine rules, their universal and comprehensive nature and the eternal credence of faith, itself."

So it is obvious that how influential was the Islamic revolution of Iran in the Shiite society of Iraq. This influence got its climax in 1979 when not only Iraq, but also the entire Muslim World was shaken.

Source: Political Studies and Research Institute

How U.S. Sanctions on Iran Are Killing Innocent People

◆ Vijay Prashad

In late October, Human Rights Watch released a short report with a sharp title—"Maximum Pressure: US Economic Sanctions Harm Iranians' Right to Health." In November 2018, a year ago, the U.S. renewed its unilateral sanctions against Iran, and included "secondary sanctions" on non-U.S. entities. These secondary sanctions choked off Iran's ability to commercially buy many products, including crucial medical supplies. "The consequences of redoubled US sanctions," writes Human Rights Watch, "pose a serious threat to Iranians' right to health and access to essential medicines—and has almost certainly contributed to documented shortages—ranging from a lack of critical drugs for epilepsy patients to limited chemotherapy medications for Iranians with cancer."

Human Rights Watch is not the first to document

this serious situation. The unilateral U.S. sanctions in the Obama period had already badly damaged the health of Iranians. In 2013, Siamak Namazi wrote a first-rate report for the Wilson Center, in which he noted, "sanctions are indeed causing disruptions in the supply of medicine and medical equipment in Iran. Procurement of the most advanced life-saving medicines and their chemical raw materials from the United States and Europe has been particularly challenging."

Over the course of the past several years, the medical journal *The Lancet* has run a series of important studies of the deteriorating health conditions in Iran as a result of the unilateral U.S. sanctions. This August, five doctors based in the United States and Iran wrote a powerful editorial in *The Lancet*, which pointed out that Iran's system of universal

health coverage has been deeply damaged by the sanctions, and that Iran is at "a high risk of moving towards a severe situation for the provision of health services with a potentially substantive impact on mortality and morbidity."

A year ago, Dr. Seyed Alireza Marandi, the president of Iran's Academy of Medical Sciences, wrote one of many letters to the UN secretary-general. He pointed out that patients who require organ transplants and who have cancer are being "deliberately denied medicine and medical equipment." There has been no public answer to these letters.

The evidence is undeniable. The U.S. sanctions are seriously destroying Iran's health infrastructure and are leading to immediate deaths and suffering of the Iranian population. Last year, UN special rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures Idriss Jazairy concluded from a look at the sanctions regime, "The current system creates doubt and ambiguity which makes it all but impossible for Iran to import these urgently needed humanitarian goods. This ambiguity causes a 'chilling effect' which is likely to lead to silent deaths in hospitals as medicines run out, while the international media fail to notice."

Collective Punishment

The United States government has used whatever mechanisms possible to suffocate Iran. It has used its Specially Designated Global

In August 2019, Jan Ege-land, the head of the Norwegian Refugee Council, which works with Afghan refugees in Iran, said, "We have now, for a full year, tried to find banks that are able and willing to transfer money from donors." Ege-land is not naïve. He was the UN's undersecretary-general for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief from 2003 to 2006.

Terrorist (SDGT) facility, its Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons (SDN) list, and its Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) to tighten its grip on the Iranian economy. Human Rights Watch reiterated what humanitarian agencies have been saying over this past year, which is that banks refuse to allow their services to be used to transfer money even for humanitarian reasons.

The United States is welcome to trade or not to trade with any country that it wishes, but the stranglehold that the United States has on the financial system means that U.S. sanctions and secondary sanctions prevent other countries from making their trading decisions.

In August 2019, Jan Ege-land, the head of the Norwegian Refugee Council, which works with Afghan refugees in Iran, said, "We have now, for a full year, tried to find banks that are able and willing to transfer money from donors." Ege-land is not naïve. He was the UN's undersecretary-general for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief from 2003 to 2006. Squeezing the banks has allowed the U.S. government to wreak havoc on Iran's ability to import food and medicines, impacting the human rights of Iranians. There is ample evidence that the U.S. government is not merely intent on hurting the government, but in fact has a strategy to attack the Iranian people.

The Human Rights Watch report is called "Maximum Pressure" for a reason. This is the phrase associated with the Trump–John Bolton policy toward Iran that led to the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA) and the reinstatement of harsh sanctions. As the U.S. put these sanctions on Iran in November 2018, U.S. Treasury Secretary Ste-



ven Mnuchin said, “The maximum pressure exerted by the United States is only going to mount from here.” This is, as Human Rights Watch notes, “a recipe for collective punishment.”

Self-Reliance

Universal health care has been the basic policy orientation of the Iranian government. The program received focus in 1985 with the establishment of the National Health Network, and then over the next several decades—hampered by lack of resources—

the rural and urban Family Physician programs. By all indications, the health care system in Iran has been sharply hit by the sanctions—mainly since this has made it impossible to import key materials (such as bandages for epidermolysis bullosa and drugs to reduce inflammations such as tumor necrosis—a factor that inflicts those who had been struck by chemical weapons used by Iraq against Iran—and supplied by Western Europe and the United States). Iran has over the past century developed a high-

quality indigenous pharmaceutical industry—now rooted in the public sector Social Security Investment Company. Until the past few years, Iran had been able to produce a wide range of drugs, but even here there has been attrition, since several of these production lines rely upon imports of key components of the drugs.

▶ In late October, Human Rights Watch released a short report with a sharp title—“Maximum Pressure: US Economic Sanctions Harm Iranians’ Right to Health.” In November 2018, a year ago, the U.S. renewed its unilateral sanctions against Iran, and included “secondary sanctions” on non-U.S. entities.

A few days ago, Venezuela’s Minister for Science and Technology Gabriela Jiménez was in Tehran to buy medical equipment, including a hundred dialysis machines. This tells us two things: first, that Iran continues to produce medical equipment and pharmaceutical drugs—despite the sanctions; and second that these two coun-

tries that are being hit hard by the West’s hybrid war have had to turn to each other for trade. Venezuela’s medical system has been hit harder than that of Iran—last year, the Venezuelan Pharmaceutical Federation reported that it was suffering from an 85 percent shortage of essential medicines.

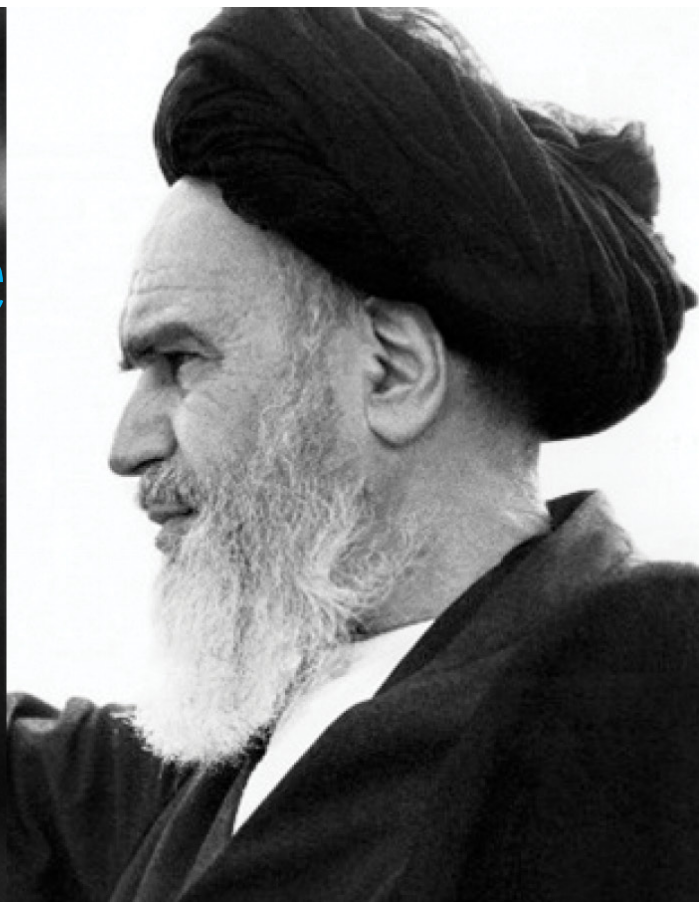
It is a measure of the fortitude of Iran that—despite these unilateral U.S. sanctions—it has been able to maintain production of medical equipment and drugs. Nonetheless, the Human Rights Watch report should be seen as an alarm.

Humanitarian Exceptions

The United Nations has repeatedly said that sanctions are not a humane policy and must no longer be allowed to be part of the arsenal of the powerful nations. Exceptions for medicines and food are routinely argued for. The United States claims that it does not use sanctions to hurt people, which is why it often provides exceptions. In August 2019, the U.S. government released guidance that putatively softened its policy vis-à-vis Venezuela. It said that “humanitarian support can flow” into Venezuela. Even if this is merely rhetoric, no such softening has occurred for Iran. The U.S. has not issued any such guidance toward its policy on Iran. Rather, it has tightened these dangerous sanctions as part of its hybrid war against Iran.

Source: Iran Review

What Was the Biggest Sin of Shah?



» Note: The Dark Night of Imperial, which has been published by the Islamic Revolution Press, is speeches of Ayatollah Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, about the former royal systems of Iran.

Dimensions of Dependency in the Dark Workbook of Pahlavis

By the victory of Islamic Revolution in 1979, Iran, as a country, was a dependent nation. This dependency, especially during 55 years of Pahlavi's corrupted reign, reached its peak. For Ayatollah Khamenei, one of the biggest crimes and sins of Muhammad Reza Pahlavi was that he had kept the country dependent on foreign states in various aspects such as technical, industrial, economic

and cultural. Hence, in contrast to other corrupted states of the region, his state was more infamous in terms of insufficiency, corruption and dependency on foreigners. Referring to the fact that "mother of all national plagues is dependency", Ayatollah Khamenei names some items and examples of this dependency in order to shed more lights on the internal and Iranian aspect of the Revolution which brought about a great dignity for Iranians.

1. In Politics Arena

There is no shame for a nation worse than the condition in which its rulers, commanders, politicians and authorities are chosen by the embassy of another state! Which shame is worse than this? Reza Khan, the bully, who behaved the people aggressively and oppressively was a humiliated thing against the British, because it was the British who helped him to take power in Iran. It is not said by the Reza Khan's opposition, it is admitted by the regime's relatives



and all impartial historians. Again, it was the British who overthrow Reza Khan, because during his tenure they felt that the Pahlavi Regime is inclined to the German Power, who in the time had reached some initial achievements during the World War II. Another reason for this inclination was the similarity between Reza Khan and Hitler's behavior and thinking, hence Reza Khan has become interested in this German Counterpart. The British figured out it and did not tolerate it, so they overthrew Reza Khan. They expelled it like a humiliated puppet from Iran and then helped his son, Mu-

hammad Reza, to take power instead of his father. This is what has been verified by themselves and is among the most clear facts of the history.

Moreover, when they expelled Reza Khan in 1941, his son, Muhammad Reza, did not know whether he would be the King? It is what I have said from one of Muhammad Reza's close friends, so you now see that how he was humiliated and weak.

Let me speak about Muhammad Reza Pahlavi, in the early days of expel of Reza Khan, when nothing was clear in this country, the British Ambassador says to one who

had come to him from Muhammad Reza that since according to our information, Muhammad Reza listens to Radio Berlin and follows the German achievements and victories, he is not trustable for us. The man who had been sent by Muhammad Reza brings the news of the British to Muhammad Reza. So, he stopped listening to Radio Berlin and abandoned it. After a while, the British ambassador says that, now there is no problem he can be the king.

Naturally if the regime, the government which leads it, is so dependent on the embassy of foreign country, who is able to determine

what they should do and what they should not do and the former has no choice but accepting them in order to reign, so it is nothing to say that how he would be dependent on the foreign forces. These are the realities and truths of this country.

Another example of this dependence can be seen in the story of Dr. Mosaddegh; when the Mosaddegh movement, which was a natural movement, started in this country, it felt danger, and the danger was not from the government or royal system, but it was from the British! And when then realized that they cannot handle it, they dragged the Americans, as a result the latter robbed the scene from the former and became the dominant power in Iran.

Someone with a briefcase full of money came to Iran to overthrow the national government and dominated Muhammad Reza Pahlavi's regime again through stimulating a simulated crisis.

2. In Political Arena

It had induced our society with the thinking that the path of development is that we need to imitate the western states. They stressed that the imitation should not be limited to learning and studying, but it also must cover our appearance, it meant that our women needed to put aside their Hijab and our men should don western garments, otherwise they were culprits, then they came ahead one more step and said that Pahlavi hat or Chapeau hat, because the western people and Europeans used to put on these cloths.



Various local cloths and garments our people use to wear were abolished and banned, because they force us to wear what had been imported from the west, but why? For development! The assumed that this country's development depended on imitating Europeans in terms of what they used to wear. See how it was shameful and irritating? However, they were not shameful that day and were honored and cried it with joy!

The problem is that sometimes you choose something with information and awareness, but sometimes they force you to do something and you have no choice, it was that the Pahlavi Regime did with Iranian people, in other words, they spared no efforts to dominate and indoctrinate the western culture over us.

3. In the economics arena

There was a time, our governmental authorities used to say that Iran is unable to fabricate even a simple pipe and they used to import everything from overseas. One day in a session I was criticizing this demeanor, there was one of authorities in the session, too, he addressed me and said that for what you are criticizing, we are like masters and other countries are working for us like servants. Is it bad? You see? It was the reasoning of our statesmen in the Taghut era. Now it was the appearance of their reason and there was others behind it; numerous economic and ethical corruptions.

4. Other Remarks

From the beginning of the Revolution, the people of Iran have played their role 12 times in electing the highest-ranking officials of the country... Moreover, the people's choices and votes have brought about 10 Islamic Consultative Majlises,

Political dependence came to an end thanks to the Revolution... We were thankfully liberated, but that we are still dependent in terms of the economy and culture. We should work on this because dependence will lead to disaster. I will tell you that when I look at the memoirs which have been written by Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's friends, I read that in certain cases, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi himself was extremely angry at the Americans. He sometimes cursed them. Of course, he did so in his private room and in the company of his

close friends. He was like a person who goes to his rooftop and swears at a policeman in a distant city. He used to swear at them in his private room, but whenever the British or the US ambassador delivered a message, made a phone call and issued a command, he was ready to bow to them and obey their command. He had no choice and he had to do so. This is dependence. This should be destroyed. Well, political dependence has completely been uprooted in our country.

From the beginning of the Revolution, the people of Iran have played their role 12 times in electing the highest-ranking officials of the country... Moreover, the people's choices and votes have brought about 10 Islamic Consultative Majlises, five city and village councils and five Assemblies of Experts. All these have been achieved thanks to the Revolution. Our new generation should not forget certain things. We experienced the pre-revolutionary era with all our being. Before the victory of the Revolution, the people did not have any role in the management of the country and in the appointment of managers. Heads of countries, monarchs, kings and their cohorts used to come and go, but the people were mere spectators. They did not have any role. The Islamic Revolution came and moved the people from the periphery into the center. This way, the people were given the power to choose everything.



◆ Mansour Mirahmadi
Professor, Faculty of Political Science and International Relation, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

Religious Democracy in Iran: Discursive Analysis of Imam Khomeini's Political Thought

Introduction

The 1979 Islamic Revolution of Iran was the formation beginning of the pattern of the political system in Iran known as the Islamic Republic. Leaving behind the “monarchic order,” the revolution laid the groundwork for shaping up a new order defined as “popular order.” So this order is the first experience of political life for Iranians outside the “monarchic one.” In such an order, the

socio-political relations of citizen with rulers are regulated by people themselves, who enjoy the right of organizing their order. The Islamic Republic established this order in the socio-political life of the Iranians in 1979.

Almost two decades after the advent of the Revolution and the system of the Islamic Republic, the model of “Religious Democracy” was introduced. Raising this pattern emanated from the theoretic

cal necessities that were felt both at home and abroad. The model was brought up not apart from the Islamic Republic but as an extension to it in order to greatly enhance its potentials. Moreover, it resulted in various scientific issues and dialogues about the concept of “religious democracy,” its potentials, limitations, pillars, and institutions. Questions such as what does it mean? How can a political system be religious and



at the same time democratic? Isn't it paradoxical? Also, the like "were discussed." The result of these discussions was the formation of relatively popular literature, providing suitable awareness. However, less attention has been paid to the theory in a discursive approach. Therefore, in the present article, the discourse formation of religious democracy is presented with a brief look at its concept. Clearly, understanding the theory and its deference with another type of democracy depends on the understanding of this discourse formation.

Definition of Religious Democracy

At first glance, it seems that religious democracy is a compound term. Thus, the combination of democracy and religion is considered a compatible one and spoken of as religious democracy among other types of democracy. However, while democracy is regarded as the pattern of a particular political system based on particular political thinking and philosophy, the combination of religion and democracy appears to be a conceptual impossibility. Indeed, the incompatibility of secular democracy with religion in the modern era is taken for granted according to this view. Since incompatibility with Islam is re-

garded as an integral part of a term, there is no point to discuss its compatibility.

Given the mentioned incompatibility as to the concept and basis of democracy, the advocates of religious democracy have set out to explain the compatibility of democracy with religion, using a different approach. In their opinion, democracy relates to the manner of governance of a society rather than being a mere socio-political philosophy. This view is based on an approach, which is related to a kind of political system and the interpretation of people's political lifestyle.

According to this approach and based on Karl Cohen's view of democracy, some writers have analyzed the concept of democracy, by segregating democracy as a method from democracy as a value, and considered religious democracy as an acceptable approach. Admitting to the impracticality of the principle of "government of the people by the people," Cohen considers the existence of "democratic order" in the political structure of society as the main characteristic of "governance based on public participation." Therefore, Cohen's definition of democracy is widely accepted today, and it seems

that the issue of religious democracy should be investigated in light of this version of "democracy"

On the contrary, it seems that it is possible to talk about, instead, of another approach to the possibility of the concept of religious democracy. Given the linguistic distinction made between 'concept' and 'conception,' various conceptions could be presented from a single concept. In other words, every term or expression has a single concept, which could have various conceptions based on particular aspects of its concept. These conceptions are multiple and various since they are based on different presuppositions and principles. However, because conceptions finally refer to aspects of a single concept, they possess a kind of unity. Indeed, conceptions are interpretations that different schools of thoughts have presented from facets of a single concept, justified it and its aspects based on their acceptable principles, and, as a result, provided a particular definition of the concept in question. That is why there is no pre-judgment in concept, and its facets do not evoke a particular value.

Religious Democracy as an Iranian Discourse

At the end of the second decade of the Islamic Revolution, religious democracy entered the political literature of Iran. Raising the issue of religious democracy in this era derived from the internal and external requirements. In this period, the Islamic Republic put forward the theoretical model ruling over its political system as a rival model against other models of democracy, especially liberal democracy. In such a situation, considerable theoretical efforts were made to explain this model, and remarkable literature was compiled and presented. However, discursive analysis has not been done much to explain this model. Consequently, the charting out discourse on religious democracy as an Iranian discourse is quite significant and would, provides the possibility of comparison with other models.

Nodal Point of Religious Democracy

In every discourse, floating signifiers become meaningful in light of "Nodal Point." The process of finding meaning for signifiers is called articulation. In the act of articulation, signifiers and various con-

cepts of discourse become meaningful regarding the nodal point. Therefore, the possibility of meaningful understanding of reality in discourse theory depends on articulation. In fact, in such a process it is possible to determine the position of signifiers and concepts of discourse, and explain the formation process of signifiers and concepts. As a result, in every discourse analysis, first, determining the nodal point is necessary, and second, the meaning of other signifiers should be taken into account in light of this nodal point.

In this theory, knowledge of law means knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, and justice means the existence of conditions and states that guarantee the safety of a government and prevent deviation from Islam. For this reason, in an Islamic government, the primary objective is the execution of Islamic decrees, and jurist stands in a central position to execute and guarantee these decrees. Of course, he needs more qualifications such as the ability to manage the society, a good experience in management and the like so that he can implement the Islamic ideas.

Floating Signifiers of Religious Democracy

As it was mentioned earlier, in discursive course analysis after the explanation of nodal point, the explanation of floating signifiers plus their way of formation reveal discourse formation in which floating signifiers become meaningful in relation to the nodal point. The main floating signifiers of Religious Democracy in the Iranian discourse are:

People

The first floating signifier of religious democracy is the people signifier. In religious democracy, people are regarded as the first signifier that becomes meaningful based on the outlook of juristic political Islam. In this process, people are the central pillar of religious democracy. In fact, in this theory, the people's sovereignty right is recognized, but it is derived from a divine right whereby "the law of Islam is known as the cause of liberties and true democracy".

Therefore, although divine law forms the essence of the political system, the votes of people is the only basis for the formation of the Islamic political sys-



tem. Imam Khomeini as the leading theorist and representative of the process of juristic political Islam in modern Iran asserts, "Criterion is the votes of people. Sometimes a nation votes by itself. Other times, it determines a group of people to vote". This statement reveals the role and status of people and their votes, and at the same time, introduces the concept of "nation" in the juristic political literature of Iran. The centrality of the nation (being a yardstick) is analyzed from various aspects:

1. System-Making

According to the theory of religious democracy, the Iranian nation stands in the position of system-making. However, as it was mentioned earlier, the meaningful role and status of people rely on the nodal point of this theory, which is political Islam and wilay-

at al-faqih. Although the votes of people do not grant legitimacy to Valie-h Faghih or Supreme Jurisconsult – since he enjoys a divine right and legitimacy – they provide him with authority to form the government. Imam Khomeini explains this role as such, "A jurist enjoys the authority in every aspect [of society]. However, the governance of Muslims' affairs and the formation of government are issues dependent on the votes of the Muslim majority, a point, which is also mentioned in the Constitution, and was interpreted as taking the oath of allegiance (بیعت) to the Guardian of the Muslims (Wali Muslimin) after the advent of Islam"

2. Decision-Making

The second field of public participation in the theory of religious democracy is the field of

decision-making and law-making. According to this theory, the votes of people determine the role of institutions and the law-making and decision-making organizations. Moreover, the role of people in the process of decision-making is explained with emphasis on the concept of consultation (Showra) as one of the essential Islamic teachings. Therefore, the votes of people determine the formation of the Islamic parliament (Majlis) as the most critical decision-making and law-making institution, and for this reason, parliament enjoys a very significant position. In accordance with Imam Khomeini's view, "Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis), which supersedes all other institutions of the system of Islamic Republic, has particular characteristics of which the most important one is its Islamic na-

tional identity. It is Islamic since all its efforts are directed at enacting laws compatible with the holy decrees of Islam, and it is national because it emanates from the context of people. Today, Majlis is the true home of people"

3. Implementation

Public participation in religious democracy is also recognized in the field of implementation of the law in addition to system-making and decision-making. Referring to this theory, the president is directly elected by the votes of people, which are also determining in the implementation of the laws. However, the role of people becomes meaningful in the light of Islam and juristic approach. The theory of religious democracy in Iran explains the legitimacy of a presidential body with the "confirmation" policy of the Islamic leader or wilayat al-faqih. For this reason, Imam Khomeini writes about the presidential confirmation of a number of presidents as such, "Because the legitimacy of president must be based on the appointment by the Supreme Guardian (Vali-yi Amr), I confirm the votes of the noble people, and appoint him as the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran"

Law

Law is one of the most important signifiers in the theory of religious democracy in Iran. According to this theory, the socio-political relations between people and government are determined based on law. Therefore, the law is considered as the most essential basis of

regulating the socio-political life, and democracy would not be realized without it. In the discourse formation of religious democracy in Iran, the floating signifier of law becomes meaningful in the light of the political Islam as a nodal point, so law here is the Shari'a Law, which is discussed and written in the Jurisprudence. According to this discourse, the most advantage of this law is that it is the Divine Law, so is perfect and can make the happiness of humankind both here and hereafter. Law becomes meaningful in this theory in the following two main areas:

1. The Constitution

Although the constitution of religious democracy in Iran is enacted [by human beings], it receives its legitimacy from divine law and Islamic teachings. For this reason, according to this outlook, the Islamic Republic as a religious and democratic model is a "state based on Islamic principles; its Constitution is Islam, which is the executor of Islamic precepts". In fact, it is safe to say that with the acceptance of the authority of Islam in democracy, Islamic law is regarded as the principal source of the Constitution, and is recognized as the source of the socio-political life. Therefore, the policies and laws of the country cannot be inconsistent with Islamic law.

2. Normal Law

The compilation of the Constitution based on Islamic law in the theory of religious democracy in Iran does not mean the denial of the credibility of human law-

making. This theory recognizes the usual law-making in political life but interprets its legitimacy in the process of the meaningful discourse based on its non-inconsistency with Islamic law. According to religious democracy, law-making as planning and regulating laws and rules of political life based on the logicity of people's representatives should not be inconsistent with Islamic law. For this reason, according to the theory of religious democracy, "All programs that are carried out in the governance of society in order to fulfill the needs of people should be based on divine laws".

Political Equality

The concept of political equality as one of the floating signifiers is put forward in the discourse formation of religious democracy. This concept becomes meaningful concerning the nodal point, which is the political Islam. Political equality recognizes two types of its kind in the discourse of religious democracy:

1. Equal Political Participation

In the discourse of religious democracy, equal political participation is recognized for all citizens. In this discourse, the equal role and presence of all Iranians in the formation of various institutions of the system of the Islamic Republic are accepted, and every Iranian enjoys an equal right to vote. Of course, this type of equality divides citizens into Muslims and non-Muslims in relation to political Islam. Non-Muslims of Iran including Zoroastrians, Jews,

and Christians enjoy the right of participation as religious minorities, although there might be some differences regarding their rights and powers compared with those of Muslims. Imam Khomeini explains the status of minorities in Iran as such, "Islam has respect for them. We give full rights to all of them. They have the right to have a representative in Majlis (Parliament), and freely have their social and political activities, and freely practice their own religious rituals. They are Iranians".

2. Equality before the Law

In religious democracy and the conceptual process of political equality, equality before the law is distinguished from equality in law, and at the same time is recognized. According to this outlook, all citizens enjoy equal position before the law, although they are not regarded as equal in law. This is how democracy is defined: It is the right of all people to express their views about public issues through institutions of civil society and participation in state, and this right belongs to all citizens based on the principle of equality.

Freedom

The notion of freedom is other floating signifier in the Iranian discourse of religious democracy. This type of discourse aims to explain freedom in the political arena based on the philosophical and discourse bases of freedom, and uses the practice of religious jurisprudence or *ijtihad* to explain the concept of freedom in relation to

the nodal point of political Islam. Political Islam basically recognizes God's absolute ownership of the universe and mankind plus negates the domination of people over people. According to Imam Khomeini's viewpoint, "The root and principle of all of our most important and valuable beliefs is the principle of monotheism. This principle teaches us that humankind must only be submissive before God, and must not obey any human being unless obeying him is meant to be obedience to God. From this principle of belief, we learn the principle of human freedom based on which no person has the right to deprive another human being or society or nation of freedom" (IRR. Cons. CVII). According to this view, freedom is regarded as a divine right for "God has created every human being free".

Independence

Independence is one more floating signifier

and concept in the Iranian discourse of religious democracy. In this discourse, the independence of the Islamic Republic is investigated in relation to other political systems. The cultural, economic, and political independence forms the most important aspects of this concept, which was introduced from the beginning as the slogan of "Independence, freedom, Islamic Republic." According to this discourse, the achievement of independence relies on the negation of any dependence on the Western blocs that existed at the time.

For this reason, Imam Khomeini asserts, "if we want to be independent and free, we should find ourselves.

We are lost. We must leave behind ...".

Conclusion

The primary aim of this essay is a discursive formulation of Religious Democracy in Iran. Based on the linguistic distinction between

"concept" and "conception," Democracy as a concept and Religious Democracy as conception can be considered. This essay, therefore, reached the following conclusions:

1. Religious Democracy is a conception of Democracy, so, it can be considered as a rival conception against liberal democracy and other conceptions of democracy.

2. Religious Democracy is a conception that recognizes the authority of "Religion" in the "justification," "analysis" and "explanation" of the components of Democracy, i.e. "collective authority" and "public participation."

3. Recognizing the authority of "Religion" leads to the recognition of "Political Islam" as the "Nodal Point" of the Religious Democracy, so the theory of *wilayat al-faqih* will be regarded as the basis for the legitimacy of the political system.

4. The most important "Floating Signifiers" of the Iranian discourse of Religious Democracy are People, Law, Political Equality, Freedom, and Independence. The meaning of these signifiers will be understood by referring to the Political Islam as the nodal point of the Religious Democracy.

Nowadays in Iran, this kind of Democracy is exercised, and it seems that the most important "strategic and political necessity" for Islamic countries is exercising the "Religious Democracy" of their own as the alternative for Liberal Democracy in the globalization era.

ایران و الحاکم الامام محمد باقر

