



**Iran's Foreign Policy towards Shiite Groups in the Middle East:
The Cases of Lebanon and Iraq**

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**Iran's Foreign Policy towards Shiite Groups in the Middle East:
The Cases of Lebanon and Iraq**

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ABSTRACT

Iran's Foreign Policy towards Shiite Groups in the Middle East: The Cases of Lebanon and Iraq

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This thesis discusses Iran's foreign policy against the Shia groups in the Middle East using Iraq and Lebanon as a base. The study analyzes the post-revolutionary regional dynamics and the Shia strategy of Iran until now. Iran's politics in Iraq, is supported by Hezbollah from Lebanon, Yemen and Bahrain politics have been emerged in the interest of Iran. Moreover, the effect of the Velayat-e Faqih theory in Iranian foreign policy was examined. As a hypothesis, a question emerges; how does Iran affect the states like Iraq and Lebanon while the majority of the people are Shia? As an argument, we can say Iran's political activity in Iraq and Lebanon and the continuation of penetration into the states of the Arab Gulf States such as Bahrain and Yemen in that majority of the people are Shia. On the other hand, Iran's reconciliation of sectarian cultural richness with the concept of the Velayat-e Faqih and imposing it on Shiites as a norm had created a strong state model (vision) for the Shiites in the region.

The distinctive factor of the Khomeini revolution was the impressive power that will evoke the existed Shia groups until the time of revolution. After the process of normalization of domestic politics, the revolution could not stay in its own shell and began to spread. Revolutionary principles and the success due to the power of Khomeini gained recognition by Shia groups which are close to Iran. Revolutionary principles have made itself felt in many places, including the Gulf States.

Moreover, Iran uses its foreign political tools perfectly. As forementioned, Iran uses political tools such as military, cultural, religious education, social support, finance and other political instruments. The usage of these political tools depends on the geopolitical and strategic position of the Shia groups. For example; In Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kuwait and other countries, religious education is used as a political tool to influence Shiites. However, in countries such as Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Bahrain, Iran uses the power management. In addition, Iran has established tremendous intelligence networks in every country where it has political interest. On the other hand, the Supreme Leader has appointed representatives to the areas where Shiites live.

Keywords: Shi' ism, Iranian Shiites, Velayat-e Faqih, Iraqi Shia groups, Lebanese Shia groups

ÖZET

Ortadoğu'da Şii Gruplara karşı İran'ın Dış Politikası: Irak ve Lübnan örneđi

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Bu tez Irak ve Lübnan'ı temel alarak, Ortadođu'daki Şii gruplarına karşı İran'ın dış politikasını tartışmaktadır. Bu çalışma, devrim sonrası bölge dinamikleri ve bugüne kadar İran'ın Şii stratejisini analiz etmektedir. İran Irak üzerindeki politik oyunu, Lübnan'da Hizbullah'a desteđi, Yemen ve Bahreyn politikaları İranın çıkarları doğrultusunda ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca İran dış politikasına Velayet-i Fakih teorisinin etkisi incelenmiştir. Hipotez olarak ortaya bir soru ortaya çıkmakta, İran çođunluğu Şii mezhebine sahip olan Irak ve Lübnan gibi devletleri nasıl etkiliyor? Kanıt (argüman) olarak İran'ın Irakta ve Lübnan'da siyasi hareketliliđi ve Arap Körfezindeki çođunluğu Şii mezhepli olan Bahreyn ve Yemen gibi devletlerde nüfus etme etkisini sürdürmesini söyleyebiliriz. Diğer yandan, İran Şii mezhepsel kültürel zenginliđi Velayet-i Fakih kavramıyla bağdaştırması ve bir norm gibi Şiilere dayatma çabası İranı bölgede Şiiler için güçlü devlet model görüşünü (vizyon) yaratmıştır.

Humeyni devrimini farklı kılan etken, devrime kadar var olan Şia grupları harekete geçirecek etkileyici gücün olmasıydı. İç siyasette normalleşme sürecinden sonra devrim kendi kabuğunda kalamazdı ve normal olarak yayılmaya başladı. Devrim ilkeleri ve Humeyni'nin başarısı ve gücü Irana yakın olan Şii gruplar tarafından kabul gördü. Devrim ilkeleri Körfez ülkeleri dâhil birçok yerde kendisini hissettirmiş oldu.

Ayrıca İran, dış siyasi araçlarını mükemmel olarak kullanmaktadır. Yukarıda da bahsi edildiği gibi, İran askeri, kültürel, din, dini eğitim, sosyal yardım, finans ve bu gibi başka siyasi araçlar kullanmaktadır. Bu siyasi araçların uygulanma şekli, Şia gruplarının jeopolitik ve stratejik konumuna göre değişmektedir. Örnek verecek olursak; Azerbaycan, Türkiye, Kuveyt ve bu gibi ülkelerde, Şiileri etkilemek için dini eğitimi siyasi araç olarak kullanmaktadır. Ancak Lübnan, Yemen, Irak, Bahreyn gibi ülkelerde İran güç yöntemini kullanmaktadır. Ek olarak, İran siyasi çıkarı olduğu her bir ülkede, muazzam istihbarı ağı kurmuştur. Öte yandan, Şiilerin yaşadığı yerlere, Yüce Lider tarafından temsilci atanmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Şiilik, İranlı Şiiler, Velayet-i Fakih, Iraklı Şii gruplar, Lübnanlı Şii gruplar.

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To My Family

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZET.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	viii
DEDICATION.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	x
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Shi' ism.....	5
1.2. Iranian Shiites	12
1.3. Velayat-e Faqih doctrine and Khomeini	21
2. Iran's Foreign Policy Approach and Methodology	30
2.1. The role of Velayat-e Faqih doctrine in Iranian foreign policy.....	30
3. Iran's Political Relations with Lebanon after the revolution	39
3.1. Hezbollah.....	40
3.2. The Brigades of the Lebanese Resistance or "Afwaj Al-Muqawama Al- Lubnaniyya" (AMAL) and Iran.....	51
4. Iran's Iraq Politics after the invasion in Iraq.....	53
4.1. Post Saddam regime: Iran and Iraq relations	54

4.2. Sadr movement	58
4.3. Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (Al-Majlis al-‘Aala li al-Thawra al-Islamiyah fi- l-Iraq) SCIRI and IRAN.....	62
4.4. Iran relations with the DAWA Party.....	67
5. CONCLUSION.....	70
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	73



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Iran is an important influential country in the Middle East. Today, Iran influences the region and Shia groups. Furthermore, Iran has leadership role within Shiite regions. Iran dominates internal affairs of Yemen and Bahrain, and is significant for Iraqi and Lebanese Shiite population.

The thesis elaborates Iran's political relationship towards Shiite groups in the Middle East: The cases of Lebanon and Iraq. It aims to demonstrate that how do these cases affect the Shiites in Iran and the Middle East. Consequently, my aim is to investigate the influence of Shi'ism in Iran's foreign policy.

In 1979 Iranians were established the new Islamic Republic of Iran. The realization of the revolution led to change the social and political direction of Iran. At the post-revolutionary period, in the center of Iran's foreign policy, there was not the Western politics but the revolutionary principles based on the political and ideological power of Iran. That means imposing the ideology of the revolution on the countries where the Shiites were the majority and spreading political impact. The primary agenda of Iran's foreign policy was to spread this ideology among the majority of Shiites in Iraq and Lebanon.

Iran was easily able to export the ideology of the Iranian revolution in Lebanon. Because before the Revolution, many Iranian Shiite ulema who criticized the Shah regime in Iran were expelled from the country and were forced to leave live a life of exile in the countries such as Iraq and Lebanon. We can give Musa al-Sadr and Khomeini as example of Shiite ulema. That Musa al-Sadr is in favor of Khomeini, the Imam Khomeini's principles and ideology have taken place.

In Iraq, exportation of the Iranian Revolution ended complete failure in between 1979-2003 years. Iraq offered incredible opportunities for Iran after the US invasion. Iran who benefited from the chaotic situation that emerged after the fall of the Saddam regime and the de facto disruption of the Iraqi state is making so much effort to achieve its strategic goal. It is important not to forget the US support that caused Iraq to open its door to Iran knowingly and unknowingly. Thus, that Sunni political elite was ignored by the US served to Iran. Revolution in Iran was not only for Iran, but also for the Middle East and has been a source of inspiration for all Shiites.

In the Pahlavi era, Iran was a secular state. Naturally, the country's foreign policy is based on the relations with the West. Shah, gave importance to relations with the US foreign policy in Iran, and was pushing for the westernization of Iranian national identity. Persian identity was at the forefront in Pahlavi era in Iran. It was under Western influence in social life, especially in foreign policy. Mohammad Reza Shah was ambitious about turning the country back to its former glory. He did not want to give up the Grand Persian allegations. In foreign policy it was the opposite application. For example, Iran gave up its claim to Bahrain for a long time. The Shah agreed to have an independent state of Bahrain. Additionally, in Pahlavi's regime it was a foreign policy aim to have good relations with the Sunni states. Moreover, the Shah has not forgotten to interfere with the clergy which was opponent to him. Shia ulema were expelled from the country, and Shiite shrines were subject to strict control. Shah's foreign policy strategy was despotic administration in Iran and also economic problems brought the end of the Shah regime.

Iran Islamic revolution has not only changed the political regime in Iran, but also changed the agenda of the foreign policy. The protection of oppressed Muslims is one of the basic principles of the revolution. Naturally, reforms such as how the revolution should be done were put forward. Troops formed around the Supreme Leader. Revolutionary forces began spreading outside of Iran. Iran has become a key country affecting the region in the post-revolutionary time.

After the revolution, Iran began to institutionalize Shi'ism inside and outside Iran and became the strategic goal of making Iran a political instrument. In fact, we can see this in Lebanon and Iraq. After 2003, Iran's Iraq policy, Iran's Shia Crescent's' for the creation led to the emergence of some ideas. First, this idea was proposed by King Abdullah II of Jordan. In the

literature, it has been theoretically treated by Vali Nasr.¹ It is a fact that Iran is making an effort to create a Shiite shield against any potential threat from outside. In particular, this was against Saudi Arabia. In countries with a high number of Salafist currently, Iran Saudi conflict is apparent.

In fact, in 2004, Jordanian King Abdullah II paraded fears of new “Shi’ite Crescent” cutting across the Middle East. Abdullah said that “a new “crescent” of “dominant Shiite movements or governments stretching from Iran into Iraq, Syria and Lebanon could emerge, alter the traditional balance of power between the two main Islamic sects and pose new challenges to U.S. interests and allies”.² The specter of a “Shi’a crescent” influenced by Iran and stretching across the Middle East is a significant worry in the minds of America’s Arab allies, as well as for the United States and Israel.³

Iran's foreign policy has focused on three main goals. One of the reasons for the formation of the Shia Crescent was the withdrawal of the Sunni political elite from places where Iran was influential. Secondly, the states where the majority is Shia such as Iraq, another goal of Iran is to bring the Shiites in Lebanon and the Gulf states under political influence.

Additionally, Former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak appeared in *al-Arabiya* television channel in an interview and said that “The Shiites in the region are more loyal to Iran than their own countries,” which substantiates just how much the Arab elites are concerned by the Iranian Shiite influence upon the average people in their countries. The popularity of Hassan Nasrallah of Lebanese Hezbollah and ex-president Ahmadinejad of Iran, two Shiite leaders, in the Arab streets is of great concern for the Arab Sunni elites.⁴

Iran's efforts to create a Shiite shield and its expansion and spreading its ideology to the region have led to political crises with Sunni Arabs and Saudi Arabia at first. This is the political effect which Iran created on Bahraini and Yemen policies and the Shiite communities in the Gulf States.

¹ Azandehie, M, B and Kiani, V. (2014). A Critique on Shia Geopolitics Discourse: With Emphasis on Genealogical Approach. *Geopolitics Quarterly Journal*, Volume: 9, No 4, pp 83-106. Retrieved from <http://www.ensani.ir>

² Ehteshami, A. and Zweiri, M. (2007). *Iran and The Rise of its Neoconservatives the Politics of Tehran’s Silent Revolution*. London: by I.B. Tauris

³ Ma’oz, M. (2007). *The “Shi’i Crescscent”: Myth and Reality*. Retrieved from The Saban Center at The Brookings Institution. www.brookings.edu

⁴ Barzegar, K.(2008). Iran and The Shiite Crescent: Myths and Realities. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, volume XV, pp 87-99. Retrieved from www.live.belfercenter.org

Iran aimed to export Shia ideology to other countries. Until 1979, Iranian Ulama has never been a political force. The revolution was an Ulama vehicle carrying political power. These are the reasons of Iranian clergy coming into power. First of all, Ayatollah Khomeini made the Islamic revolution in 1979. The second reason is that Velayat-e Faqih concept was revised as concept by Khomeini. A third reason is the Constitution of Iran.

In Iran, a new era was opened, and Shah escaped in 1979. Iranian people believe in Velayat-e Faqih concept and Ayatollah Khomeini. In order to keep the Iranian people alive after the revolution and to restore the scattered state system, the government has started to rebuild the social, political, economic and educational fields by putting the concept of Khomeini Velayat-e Faqih as a norm. In addition, the concept of Velayat-e Faqih started to form the external line of the politics of the country. This political rhetoric of "Oppressed Muslims" and "Great Satan" continued throughout the life of the Supreme Leader Imam Khomeini.

When we look at Iranian political relations with Shiites outside Iran, and the states where the majority is Shia in terms of Social Construction Theory of International Relations, many Iranian identities emerge. I will discuss this topic in the second part of my thesis.

All in all, so many times that Iran, despite international pressure, the regime is still standing. The international system, particularly to keep themselves and their interests in the Middle East, and to protect the identity of the state is the primary task of the Iranian state.

1.1 Shi'ism

Shi'ism is the second sect of Islam, constitutes fifteen percent of the world's Muslims. Shiites are becoming a force in the Middle East political system today. Generally, the Shiite majority in Iran, Azerbaijan, Iraq and Bahrain are also wide-spread. Shi'ism is also one of the largest sectarian group in Lebanon. Likewise Shiites are living in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf countries.⁵

Recently, Shi'ism has three branches. In terms of sects, Twelver Shi'a is the largest branch of Shi'ism. Zaidi and Ismailia sects are formed by other small branch of Shia. For understanding it is meaning and emergence we need to look at the historical background.

Shiites emerged when Prophet was alive. In addition, in the Hijri 2nd century Shiites have formulated their own theories and identity. In the Hijri third century, the first Shia government and society was established. In the Hijri second century, Shia changed and was divided into many sects.⁶ In Shiism, it is important to understand the politics of the Middle East. Shiism is the most important feature that distinguishes it from other denominations and it is the perception of *revelation and Imamate*.

According to Sayyid Husain Muhammed Ja'fari (1976):

The term *Shi'a*, keeping in view its historical development, must strictly be taken throughout this chapter in its literal meaning as followers, party, group, associates, partisans, or in a rather looser sense, the "supporters". In these meanings the word Shi'a occurs a number of times in the Qur'an (p 6).⁷

Arabic dictionary "*Shia*" word: a single Arabic name group, party, sect, refers to supporters. Moreover, parties and sects in the equivalent word in Arabic means *Hizb*. Its plural is giving the meaning *Ahzaab*.⁸ Both terms are used in the Holy Qur'an:

"Then shall "We" certainly drag out from every sect all those who were worst in obstinate rebellion against ALLAH (swt) most gracious". Al-Quran, Surah Al-Maryam: 19.⁹

⁵ *World Shia Muslims Population*. Retrieved from <http://shianumbers.com/shia-muslims-population.html>

⁶ Onat, H. (2013). Şiiğin Doğuşu, ilk Şii Fikirler ve ilk Şii Hareketler. in Onat, H. and Kutlu, S. (Eds.), *İslam Mezhepleri Tarihi [History of Islamic Sects]* (p 159). Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları.

⁷ Ja'fari, S. H. M. (1976). *The Origins and Early Development of Shia Islam*. Qum: Ansariyan Publications.

⁸ *Ibid*

In the Shia sect, Imamate theory is a theory that intertwined with religion and politics. Therefore, we can easily analyze the various Shia regions.

Hasan Onat explains the meaning of Shi'ism in "Islamic Sects History" (2013):

According to early Shi'ite authors Nevbahti and Abu al-Khalaf al-Ashari Qummi;

"While living prophet, 'Shia at Ali' ('faction of 'Ali') was formed Ali fans. After the Prophet's death, Ali's supporters claimed that he was the Imam and Caliph".¹⁰

Islam's fourth caliph, Ali's fans began to call themselves Shia. Naturally, Shi'ism in Islamic literature, "Shia of Ali," or "Ali' faction" is associated with the name. Shia term refers to Ali's era and later periods. Then Ali's son Imam Hussein took his father's place. In the desert of Karbala in Iraq, Imam Hussein was martyred in a battle with the Umayyads in 680 (CE).¹¹

The main basis of this idea lies on Shi'a, Imam and Caliph Ali that would be appointed by the Prophet. The mainstay in the formation of this idea is the hadith and Ghadir Khumm event. This verse confirms the fact that the Imam is appointed in the event.

"This day I have perfected for you your religion, and have bestowed upon you My bounty in full measure, and have been pleased to assign for you Islam as your religion." Al-Quran, Surah Al- Maida: 5.

Here it suggests that the religious Ali completed his mission.

According to Shi'a scholar Allamah Sayed Mohammad Husain Tabatabai (1975):

Shi'ism began with a reference made for the first time to the partisans of Ali, the first leader of the Household of the Prophet, during the lifetime of the Prophet himself (p 34)¹²

The Prophet, according to many unquestioned and completely authenticated hadiths, both Sunni and Shi'ite, clearly asserted that Ali was preserved on error and sin in his actions and sayings. Whatever he said and did was in perfect conformity with the teachings of religion and he was the most knowledgeable of men in matters pertaining to the Islamic sciences and injunctions.¹³

⁹ *The origin of Islam* (2012). Retrieved from www.khorasaan.net

¹⁰ Onat, H. (2013). Şiiliğin Doğuşu, ilk Şii Fikirler ve ilk Şii Hareketler. in Onat, H. and Kutlu, S. (Eds.), İslam Mezhepleri Tarihi [History of Islamic Sects] (p 159). Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları.

¹¹ *Life of Al-Hussein Ibn Ali Ibn Abi Talib (ALLAH Bless With Him)*. Retrieved from <http://infopediapk.weebly.com/life-of-al-hussein-ibn-ali-ibn-abi-talib.html>

¹² Tabatabai, A. S. M. H. (1975). Shi'ite Islam. (Translator Nasr, S. H.). New York: New York Press.

¹³ Tabatabai, A. S. M. H. (1975). Shi'ite Islam. (Translator Nasr, S. H.). New York: New York Press.

According to Syed Husain Iqbal Rizvi (2012):

“Shia” term, short and clear “Ali followers” means either “Ali’s party” to the statement. Shia Islam is based on the teachings of the Islamic holy book, the Qur’an and the message of the final prophet of Islam, Muhammad.¹⁴

In Shiite faith, Prophet’s family, namely “*Ahl al-Bayt*” (“People’s House”), is considered to be the Imam. Shiites believe that Imam have the political and moral authority over the society. Furthermore, as Imams would be Muhammad’s successor, Shiites rejected the legitimacy of the other caliphs.

Ali was Mohammed’s successor, and he was able to manage equitable society. Therefore, he is far from the mistakes and sin and divine judgment as the first Imam (*Nass*) was appointed by God. From the point of view similar to Ali Shia “perfect man” (*al-insane al-kamil*) is known.¹⁵ This concept is valid for Ali’s family. Namely, Twelver covers innocent imam.

The other subject is Ghadir Khumm event. Ghadir Khumm event as historical and ideological is very important for Shiites. Shi’a claims this event is ignored deliberately. This event happened a few miles away from Mecca, and Medina took its place; it has taken on a place called Ghadir Khumm swamp with a pool or shady trees. On March 10th in 632, when the Prophet returned back from the he stopped at Ghadir Khumm and he shouted to the pilgrims who accompanied him from Mecca.¹⁶

Sayed Hussain Mohammad Ja’afari explains event (1976):

Taking Ali by the hand, Muhammad asked his followers whether he was not superior in authority and person (*mawla*) to the believers themselves. The crowd cried out in one voice: “*It is so, O Apostle of God.*” He then declared: “*He of whom I am the mawla (master, leader, and friend), of him 'Ali is also the mawla (man kuntu mawlahu fa 'Ali-un mawlahu). O God, be the friend of him who is his friend, and be the enemy of him who is his enemy (Allahumma wali man walahu wa 'adi man adahu)*” (p 22).¹⁷

¹⁴ Rizvi, S. H. I. (2011). *Shia*. Retrieved from www.shia-e-ali.com

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Tajddin, A. M. *Muhammad, Holy Prophet(571-632 A.D.)* Retrieved from <http://ismaili.net/heritage/node/10627>

¹⁷ Ja’afari, S. H. M. (1976). *The Origins and Early Development of Shia Islam*. Qum: Ansariyan Publications.

However, Sunni sect rejected this event. According to Sunni clerics, this event has never happened in Islamic history. Some Sunni Ulema admits Ghadir Khumm event. For instance, Ibn Kathir, the most loyal supporters of the Sunni perspective, devoted to this issue as seven pages, and had collected narrations. Except Ibn Kathir the famous historian al-Tabari written all the details of this incident. *Kitab al-fedail* name which, in its unfinished work to give news of this incident. Also, it must not be forgotten that it was a modern scholar Husain Ali Mahfouz. Mahfouz did research on the event of Ghadir Khumm. And, Mahfouz has recorded many documentations for this event.¹⁸

The largest Shia sect *Ithnā Ashariyyah*, or *Twelver*. Zaidi and Ismailia Shia forms the small branch of Shi'ism. Iran, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Iraq's majority population constitutes the *Ithnā Ashariyyah* sect. *Zaidiyyah* constitutes a significant part of Yemen. Shia constitutes an important party as minority group in other countries particularly in Pakistan, India, Kuwait, Syria, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and south Turkey.

According to Allamah Sayed Mohammad Husain Tabatabai (1975):

Shi'ism held, moreover, that the external teachings of the Qur'an, which are the injunctions and regulations of the *Shari'ah* and include the principles of a complete spiritual life, are valid and applicable for everyone at all times, and are not to be abrogated until the Day of Judgment. These injunctions and regulations must be learned through the guidance of the Household of the Prophet (p 74).¹⁹

There are some differences between the Twelve Imams and Zaidiyyah. In Zaidiyyah it is limited for *Ahl Al Bayt* Imams. According to them, the imams consist of five people which are Ali, Hasan, Husain, Zayn-al-Abidin and Zaid. Likewise, they do not follow the jurisprudence as the Twelve Imams.²⁰ However, Twelver Shias accept Imams and their jurisprudence.

According to Ismailia perception, another difference between the Twelve Imams and Ismail is that Imams are seven people, and revolves around the prophet of Muhammad. Moreover, according to the Ismailia, it can be changed by orders and conversion to *Shari' ah* acceptable.

¹⁸ Ja'fari, S. H. M. (1976). *The Origins and Early Development of Shia Islam*. Qum: Ansariyan Publications.

¹⁹ Tabatabai, A. S. M. H. (1975). *Shi'ite Islam*. (Translator Nasr, S. H.). New York: New York Press.

²⁰ Rizvi, S. H. I. (2011). *Shia*. Retrieved from www.shia-e-ali.com

According to Twelver Shi'a Prophet "seal of prophecy" and the Prophet the following twelve people, it is very important to implement his (Muhammad) will. They hold the external aspects of the 'Sharia' to be valid and impossible to abrogate. They affirm that the Qur'an has both an exoteric and esoteric aspects.²¹

Muhammad Ja'far al-Sadiq eldest son, Ismail was born in Medina. Ismail died when he was a boy. But, some people did not believe this. One group thought that Ismail's death was the best way to conceal him from the fear of the Abbasid Caliph. Another thought Ismail was dead as Imamate mission would pass Ismail's son Muhammad.

In addition, due to the Ismailia's faith, unless there was God's presence (*hujjah*), world would not have been created. Sharia has two witnesses: preacher "*natiq*" and silent one "*sami*". In this context, the orator emerges as the guardian of the implementation of the prophets and imams heritage. In any case, the people of God are proof of it.

The principle of the presence of God, constantly revolves around the number seven. A prophet was sent by God to bring the Divine Law or Shari'ah and a miraculous function. Prophet is God's perfect manifestation of divine mysteries and has the esoteric power (*Velayat*).

The Ismailia says that as a prophet having miraculous power, Adam was sent to a certain group of people as a guardian and he had functions like guardianship and custody. These functions came from Abraham continued until Muhammad.

They consider the '*vasis*' of the Prophet to be; Ali, Imam Hasan, Husain ibn Ali, Ali ibn Husain al-Sajjad, Muhammad al-Baqr, Ja'far al-Sadiq, Ismail ibn Ja'far, and Muhammad ibn Ismail. After these series there are seven descendants of Muhammad ibn Ismail whose names are hidden and secret (p 71).²²

The first Fatimid caliph of Egypt was the first seven intendants. Ubaydallah al-Mahdi was the founder of the Fatimid dynasty. In addition, the Ismailia, which always distinguished followers "*naqib*" and twelve "chiefs" are believed to be present. Druze's of other esoteric "*Batini*" branch, they had six "chiefs", or six imam.²³

²¹ Ja'fari, S. H. M. (1976). The Origins and Early Development of Shia Islam. Qum: Ansariyan Publications

²² Tabatabai, A. S. M. H. (1975). Shi'ite Islam. (Translator Nasr, S. H.). New York: New York Press.

²³ Rizvi, S. H. I. (2011). Shia. Retrieved from www.shia-e-ali.com

In the 8th century, 4th imam died and Zaidi's diverge from other Shiites. Today, the *Fivers*-also known as the *Zaidi's*, are the most moderate Shiites, closest to the Sunnis. Initially *Zaidi's*, like Zaid himself, two caliphs Abu Bakr and Umar were considered to be the imam.²⁴ Some Zaid after a while, began to delete the name of the first two caliphs from the list of Imams and chose Ali as the first Imam.

Most Alevis are well-integrated into Turkish society and some speak Turkish and some Kurdish. The *Druze* community was an eleventh-century offshoot of Ismailia Shiite Islam and is concentrated in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Israel. Today, the Druze faith differs considerably from mainstream Shi'ite Islam.²⁵

As mentioned above, the Shiite sect spread through a wide geographical area, so the Iranian government is using the Shiite and Shiite sect as a political tool to keep the legitimacy of its power. As an example, they argued that after the death of Prophet Muhammad, commanding the Khalifa was the right of Ali, and after him, it was the right of the people who followed him. Argue that it is the right of those who follow him. And also they argued that the administration should be given to imams via Nass and Vasi with the concept of "custody". As forementioned, the concept of Nass and Vasi which is also accepted in the Twelve Imam Shi'ism or Ja'afari jurisprudence has formed the base of the concept of Khomeini's Velayat-e Faqih and based on the principles of this concept, managerial authority was given o Khomeini on the score of interpreter of Islamic law and the guardian of the Imam.

Besides, apart from exceptional cases, Iran generally gives superiority to establish its foreign political ties based on Ja'afari Shi'ism. The representatives who have been appointed to Shia-denominated countries by the Supreme Council and the students from outside are imposed on Iran's political ideology. Moreover, the Iranian government has a role of guardian and protector of oppressed people all over the world, using the patriarchal status and protector of the oppressed in Velayat-e Faqih. Although, it has said that so called Syria, Iraq and Lebanese politicians are practiced to protect oppressed Muslims' rights, they are actually serving Iran's

²⁴ Tomar, C. (2015). *Zeydilik, Husiler ve El Kaide: Yemen'de neler oluyor? [Zaidizim, Houthis and Al Qaeda: What is happening in Yemen]* January 24. Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/gorus/zeydilik-husiler-ve-el-kaide-yemende-neler-oluyor>

²⁵ Blanchard, C. M. (2009). *Islam: Sunnis and Shiites*. Retrieved from CRS Report for Congress www.crs.gov

interest policy today. If Iran had pretend to be an advocate of the truly oppressed Muslims, Muslim blood would not flow in Muslim countries.

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1.2. Iranian Shiites

Most the Iranians believe that Shi'a branch of Islam is called the Twelver Shi'ism or Ithnā Ashariyyah. In 15th century Shi'ism was founded by the Safavid dynasty.²⁶ Indeed, as Shah Ismail and his family had chosen Shia sect. During that period, Shi'ism was growing, and as a sectarian force had begun to spread and crystallized. The Shi'ite political regimes were for the most part transient phenomena and their Shi'ism was either nominal or heterodox.²⁷ Moreover, the Shiite religious scholars under the auspices of the Safavid state managed to lay intellectual and institutional basis of religion.²⁸

Also, the collapse of the Safavid dynasty, followed by the Sunni Afghan invasion, the Qajar dynasty changed the role of Shia in Iran's social and political life. Nadir Shah had been persecuted by the Shiite leaders.²⁹

During Nadir Shah's time, Shi'ism among other Sunni schools was reduced to the status of the fifth Sunni school. Furthermore, with this attempt, Nadir Shah confiscated the assets of Shia ulema. This policy of Nadir Shah weakened his power. Due to this instability in the relationship between Shi'ism and the State, the scholars and religious clergy developed an institutional structure which could survive independently of government sponsorship.³⁰ At the end of the 18th century, it was re-established stability in Qajar, Iran.

Most of Shi'ism scholars of Shia continue to distinguish between “*Iranian Shi'ism*” and “*Arab Shi'ism*” in similar ways. However, Yitzhak Nakash points to the “down-to-earth” quality of Iraqi Shi'ite religious practices as compared to Iranian ritual practices, because in

²⁶ Ghasemi, S. (2016). *History of Iran: Safavid Empire 1502 – 1736*. Retrieved from <http://www.iranchamber.com/history/safavids/safavids.php>

²⁷ Perry, E. (2010). The rise of Shi'ism in Iran. *Cross-sections: The Bruce Hall Academic*, volume VI, pp 121 - 137. Retrieved from www.brucehall.anu.edu.au

²⁸ Ibid,

²⁹ Cole, J. R. I. (1989). *Roots of North Indian Shi'ism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722-1859*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Retrieved from <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft0f59n6r9/>

³⁰ Perry, E. (2010). The rise of Shi'ism in Iran. *Cross-sections: The Bruce Hall Academic*, volume VI, pp 121 - 137. Retrieved from www.brucehall.anu.edu.au

his view, Shi'ite tradition in Iran contains Sufi and mystical elements, both of them are missing in the Iraq tradition.³¹

Similarly, Frank Korom, relying on Peter Chelkowski's interpretation of the meaning of "ta'ziyya", P. Chelkowski say that "Ta'ziyeh Khani, or shabih-khani, popularly known as Ta'ziyeh, is the Shi'i passion play performed mainly in Iran. The only indigenous and serious marna in the Islamic world, "ta'ziyeh" describes the death of Husain and his followers on the plain of Karbala"³².

Korom is links the genealogy of Indian Shi'ism to Iran by tracing the origins of Muharram in Iran to before Islamic beliefs widespread there:

"Veneration of deceased heroes had long been an important part of Persian culture; the theme of redemption through sacrifice found parallels in such pre-Islamic legends as the death of Siyavush. . . And in the ancient Mesopotamian rituals of renewal for Tammuz and Adonis. Perhaps because of their system of hereditary kingship and strong nationalist sentiment, the people of the Iranian plateau were particularly hospitable to the Shi'a form of Islam."

Korom explaining more "during the Safavid period, Shia symbols and narratives were used to unify the country against Sunnis":

"It was at this time that the Karbala narrative was used to bolster a strong sense of national unity (among Iranians). Commemoration of Husain's martyrdom increasingly became a vehicle for patriotic sentiment even as it retained its soteriological function as a ritualistic act."

He analyzes the particularity of Iranian Shi'a as a "creolized" religious form and concluding that the "Invocation of the Husain myth ever since has served, inter alia, to separate Shi'a from Sunni and Iranian from Arab."³³

³¹ Eisenlohr, R. S. (2007). Imagining Shi'ite Iran: Transnationalism and Religious Authenticity in the Muslim World. *Iranian Studies*, volume 40, pp 18 – 35. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cist20>

³² Empey, H. (2003). *The Shi'i Passion: Ta'ziyeh, Tragedy and the Sublime*. (Master thesis desertation, Mc.Gill University)

³³ Eisenlohr, R. S. (2007). Imagining Shi'ite Iran: Transnationalism and Religious Authenticity in the Muslim World. *Iranian Studies*, volume 40, pp 18 – 35. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cist20>

Iranian scholars, to learn the religion, a large amount of money being put into place based on tutorial Shia as Mashhad and Qom. The target is to offer Iranians Shia-centered learning and tradition. Members of these Iranian religious elite present the Iranian Revolution as the successful Shi'ite Revolution deserving respect and emulation, which has succeeded in producing the most pious Shi'ite Muslims.³⁴ As a result, the other Shi'ites in the world have the right to imitate the Iranian Ulema. They represent the most authentic and legitimate Shi'ite image. Usually Iranians outside the country for these claims, magazines and publications, cultural centers, they use as their “*marja'iyya*” network.³⁵

Iran has a rich Shi'ite sect cultural tradition. They kept faith with the spirit of Islam, and for the same reason they gravitated towards the Household of the Prophet and “*tashayyu*” came to be deeply rooted among them. In other words, the Iranians discovered spirit and meaning of Islam in the Family of the Prophet. It was the family which could alone answer and meet their spiritual and intellectual needs.³⁶

The politicization of Shi'ism is based on four developments which are jurisprudence (*ijtihad*), “*Marja-e taqlid*”, “*khums*” (religion tax) and the triumph of the “*Usuli*” over the “*Akhbari*”. Among Shi'ite clergy, there was theological discussion interpretation (*ijtihad*) on the right idea which emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This discussion by two Shia schools developed outside the “*Akhbari*” and the “*Usuli*”.

Since the disappearance of Imam Mahdi, the “*Akhbari*” believed that interpretation of hadith wasn't a right thing to do and believed that tradition was legal source of Islamic law. For this reason, it was not necessary to follow the interpretations of a “*mojtahed*”. In contrast to the *Akhbari*, the *Usuli* believed in “*ijtihad*” and the leadership of the “*mojtahed*”.

According to “*Usuli*” religious scholars, religion had to be interpreted based on current circumstances. Consequently, the dispute between the two theological schools were resolved and policy formulation within Shi'ism has been legitimized. The victory of the “*Usuli*” over the “*Akhbari*” paved the way for the creation of the modern Shi'a clergy and the formation of

³⁴ Eisenlohr, R. S. (2007). Imagining Shi'ite Iran: Transnationalism and Religious Authenticity in the Muslim World. *Iranian Studies*, volume 40, pp 18 – 35. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cist20>

³⁵ Ibid,

³⁶ Mirbaghari, F. (2004). Shi'ism and Iran's Foreign Policy. *The Muslim World*, volume 94, p 555 – p 563 Retrieved from www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com

an autonomous clerical body separate from the state. Only the *mojtahed* or ayatollah, and later, in the mid-19th century, the centralized leadership “*Marja-e taqlid*” (the source of imitation), had the right to ‘*ijtihad*’, and each believer had to follow their interpretations.³⁷

In the mid-19th century the institution of the “*marja’iyya*” emerged. *Marja’iyya* institution was a single *mojtahed* whose religious authority exceeds all others, and therefore it is recognized by leader of the Shiite community, also it is a relatively recent phenomenon. Even well into the 20th century the primary loyalty of most Shiites was to local “*sayyids*” or “*sheikhs*” rather than the more educated religious establishment of the shrine cities.³⁸

Other issue, which Iranians believe, was *Entezar* or *Mahdaviat* Shiite doctrine. According to Shia doctrine, managers of infallible Shia Muslim community are the Twelve Imams that had political and religious power. When the Mahdi appeared, oppression and tyranny in this world was to fill the earth with equity and justice.

Entezar, the main source of Shiite politics is waiting for the return of the Hidden Imam. According to *Entezar*, while the world is filled with injustice, it was decided that justice can be achieved with the Mahdi's return. In fact, Mehdi's return will be late as he aims to create a just society. This ruled out political activism as a method of improving one's life, a belief that clearly created friction within the increasingly politically aware Shiite community of the 20th century. Ayatollah Khomeini sought to undermine the pacifying effects of *Entezar* in order to achieve his political goals.³⁹

Shiite doctrine of the Imamate is a central distinction between the spiritual realms and infidel. Shia confesses the sovereignty of God over mankind. Prophet and Imams, with representatives of God on earth, have established legitimate authority in the name of God. After the prophets and imams, all the governments which are not legitimate.

Moreover, Shi' ism is often treated as the ‘*Iranian*’ variant of Islam or the ‘*Persianisation*’ of Islam, yet its history is far more complex. Contrary to earlier views ascribing the rise of

³⁷ Rakel, P.E. (2007) Iranian Foreign Policy since the Iranian Islamic Revolution: 1979-2006. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, volume 6, pp 159 - 187. Retrieved from www.brill.nl/pgdt

³⁸ Maynard, B. P. (2005) *The Role of Ulama in Shiite social movements: Bahrain, Lebanon, and Iraq*. (Master thesis, Naval Postgraduate School).

³⁹ Ibid,

Shi'ism to Persia, it has become increasingly evident that Shi'ism had its beginning amongst the Arabs. Importantly, it is amongst the Persians that Shi'ism flourished. Thus, Shi'ism became a “distinctively *Persian* encoding of Islam.”⁴⁰

According to Luis Alberto Vittor (2006):

This fact is so clearly manifested that it cannot be overlooked on the basis of tendentious historical arguments that insist on confining Shi'ism within the imprecise bounds of concepts like “sect” or “heresy.” In this aspect, modern Western criticism of Shi'ism is unjustified and misguided. *Contrary to the common views of Orientalists, Shi'ite Islam is not a “sect,” a “heterodox” form of Islam (p 60).*⁴¹

Additionally, Vittor stresses;

According to Islamic metaphysics, which stems more or less directly from Shi'ism, the “heterodoxy” of any idea implies, in one way or another, the falsity of its formulations which are in absolute disagreement with the metaphysical and esoteric principles of the tradition (p 97).⁴²

Iranian Shiites and other Shiites believe that Imams are the spiritual and political successors of Mohammed. Imam is not only managing equitable society, the individual and at the same time is able to interpret the Divine law and esoteric meaning. There is a guidance model in the words and acting of the Prophet and the Imam to be followed by the society. As a result, they must be free from error and sin, and must be chosen by divine decree, or *Nass*, through Muhammad.⁴³

Between 656 and 661 (CE), Ali ruled the Islamic Ummah to justice. When he was killed, Ali was prostrating “*sujud*”, “*secde*” in prayer. Over this event Shia add, he is the *vali* (chosen one) of God" (*Va- 'Aliyun valiyul-Lah*), to the “*adhan*” and “*shahada*” but this became obligatory.⁴⁴ Additionally, the Shiite religious belief and religious practice among prayers are

⁴⁰ Perry, E. (2010). The rise of Shi'ism in Iran. Cross-sections: The Bruce Hall Academic, volume 6 , pp 121 - 137. Retrieved from www.brucehall.anu.edu.au

⁴¹ Vittor, L. A. (2006). Shiite Islam: Orthodoxy or heterodoxy ?. (Translated by Dr. John A. Morrow.). Seville: Edwin Mellen Press.

⁴² Ibid (p 97).

⁴³ Rizvi, S. H. I. (2011). *Shia*. Retrieved from www.shia-e-ali.com

⁴⁴ Ibid

a little different from the Sunnis. Sunnis while performing prayers five times a day, Shias pray three times a day. At the same time, the Shia would draw the other two prayer time. Also, the interpretation of religious and political authority in Shi'ism has a completely independent system.

The words "*Ali-un-waliullah*" shows the importance of the Imamate in Shi'ism. According to Shia belief, Ali is declared as the God's Prophet and his successor and said that "for whoever Muhammad a '*Moula*' of them, Ali is his '*Moula*'".

According to Syed Husain Iqbal Rizvi (2012):

Hence, they say the *Kalema* is required further confession of the third phrase "*Ali-un- wali-ullah*," meaning "*Ali is his* (Mohammad's) "*Wali*", its care taker, stressing the need that for continuation of faith there is a requirement of *Wali*, the Imams which are the real care-takers of Islam.

The *Kalema-tut-shahadat* includes three Islamic teachings, "*Tauhid*", "*Nabuwat*" and "*Imamate*". In this belief, the *Nabi*, Mohammad and the Imams are so linked together that these cannot be viewed separately. One leads to the other and finally to God, "Allah", the almighty.⁴⁵

Most Shias believe that the mind is the divine wisdom. The mind is the source of knowledge of the Prophet and the Imams, and they believe they have extraordinary knowledge because of the blessing of the Divine. It is believed in Imamate in the divine guide or the Twelve Imam Shiite and Ismailia Shia basic belief is based on the notion that God could not leave humanity to access divine guidance.⁴⁶

Before Hussain was martyred in Karbala, he appointed his son Zayn al –Abidin as imam. Moreover, according to Shi'as, Hussein instead appointed his son for himself. In this context, the most commonly reported story is a story about Hussein, which is told by the Prophet's wife.⁴⁷ (Umm Salema). Imam Zayn al- Abidin was the only surviving son of Hussein's wars and so imamate passed to him.

Zayn al-Abidin raised allegations of management from the prophet and gathered a few followers among themselves. He laid the foundation of legitimate Shia group; provided

⁴⁵ Rizvi, S. H. I. (2011). Shia. Retrieved from www.shia-e-ali.com

⁴⁶ Abdillah, A. *Extremisim views in Islamic Religion*. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/9827840/extremism_views_in_islamic_religion

⁴⁷ Hlayhel, A. (2013). *Did the Prophet Know that his Grandson al-Hussain was Going to be Martyred?*. November 13. Retrieved from <http://muslimmatters.org/2013/11/13/prophet-know-grandson-al-hussain-going-martyred/>

development of the legitimacy principle of the Shia concept of duty and appointed Muhammad al-Baqr as the fifth Imam.

The sixth Shia Imam was Abu Abdullah Ja'far, son of Muhammad al-Baqr. Imamate of Ja'far as-Sadiq period, with its political and doctrinal areas, was the most important period in the history of Islam. During this period, violent movements, many groundbreaking events, there was a natural result of the revolutionary attempts. For these reasons, the Ahl al-Hadith and “*Muri'ites*” attitude between the disciples and all the conciliatory efforts as a doctrine for the synthesis of the Muslim community or the “*Jamaa*” is necessary to standardize. The existence of complex and multilateral cases, facilitated the rise of the Imamate of al-Ja'afari. Imam had made extremely emphasis on two basic principles.

Sayed Hussain Mohammad Ja'afari explains event (1976):

The first was that of the *Nass* that is, the Imamate is a prerogative bestowed by God upon a chosen person, from the family of the Prophet, who before his death and with the guidance of God, transfers the Imamate to another by an explicit designation (*Nass*).⁴⁸

The “*Nass*” was thus initiated by the Prophet remained strictly until it reaches Ja'far. This theory is valid in Ja'fari Shi'ism. So, starting from the first until the last imam they all were appointed by the divine power. Zaidi did not accept this theory.

Other basic principle highlighted by Ja'far and embodied in the doctrine of the Imamate was that of “*Ilm*”. This means that sharia science, a total of Imam's special religious knowledge, which means that Imam has a divine inspiration. This science was created by imams who follow each other. In this way, the Imam in religious matters would be exclusively authoritative source of information and without the guidance of the Imam; no one can keep the right way. Special information in the Qur'an includes unusual meanings. A close scrutiny of the traditions related from Al- Baqr and then mostly from Ja'far on the subject of the Imamate will show that they rotate around these two principles of “*Nass*” and “*Ilm*”, which are not merely conjoined or added to one another, but are so thoroughly fused into a unitary vision of religious leadership that it is impossible to separate the one from the other.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Ja'fari, S. H. M. (1976). *The Origins and Early Development of Shia Islam*. Qum: Ansariyan Publications.

⁴⁹ Ibid

Another hadith says:

*“God delegated to the Imams spiritual ruler ship over the whole world, which must always have such a leader and guide. Even if only two men were left upon the face of the earth, one of them would be an Imam, so much would his guidance be needed.”*⁵⁰

Imam Ja'far Sadiq hadith are interpreted as follows. According to Imam al-Ja'afari, two imams can be available at the same time, but the other is his successor. For example, during his father's authority, Imamate position was given to him but his father didn't pass Sharia provisions. (In this case imam's son knows that his father is under a glorious authority, but remains silent because sacred and religious secrets were entrusted to him. When the father's task was ended, Ja'far son immediately steps into his place and becomes the “proof” “*al-Hujja*” for mankind⁵¹

We can get two results from short summaries. First, Islamic thought and the formation of institutions in the process are based on the teachings of his predecessor, Ja'afari. Then, solid basis for the preparation of the Shia imamate system of law was provided by Shia theologians and religious jurists. Second, many people, working various aspects of religious life and the fact that Imam chose his acceptance of the principle of *Nass*, and gather around Ja'far was set Shia Imamate flow with a unique character in Islam.⁵²

In every anniversary of the Karbala incident, putting a religious visit to Iraq into practice, elegizing, walking on the day of Ashura in Muharram ul Haram are carried on the fatwa of the religious men of Iran. This is not in Iran only, but also in all places where Shiites are the majority. For example, while Azerbaijan has a secular state structure, Iran calls to Azerbaijani Shiites every Muharram ul Haram. Although the political administration has declared its objection, the Iranian government ignores it. This is happening in Lebanon and Iraq, too. The only difference from Azerbaijan is that the Lebanese and Iraqi governments voluntarily apply these calls and desires. Using the religious culture, Iran is in an effort to create a common culture identity.

⁵⁰ Ja'afari, S. H. M. (1976). *The Origins and Early Development of Shia Islam*. Qum: Ansariyan Publications

⁵¹ Ibid,

⁵² Ibid.

The five articles of faith in the Shi'a Roots of Religion are:

- a. Oneness -“*Tawhid*”
- b. Justice- “*Adl*”
- c. Prophet hood -“*Nubuwwah*”
- d. Leadership -“*Imamah*”
- e. The Day of Resurrection -“*Yawm al Qiyyamah*” (*Ma’ad*)⁵³

Twelver have five Principles of the Religion which relates to Aqidah

1. Prayer. 2. Fast. 3. Pilgrimage. 4. 2.5% of savings to the poor. 5. 20% of savings of which the first half must be given to the Imam of *Ahlul-Bayt* or his representatives. 6. Struggle. 7. Enjoining what is good. 8. Forbid what is evil. 9. To love Muhammad and his ‘*Ahl al-Bayt*’. 10. To hate, curse and disassociate from the enemies of Muhammad and his ‘*Ahl al-Bayt*’.⁵⁴

Overall, it is beneficial to mention about Shia state due to one of three approaches: first, government, full participation, attempting to influence activated policies in politics, or passive cooperation, the latter at least participation, the third most common, just or tolerance that, for example, they are staying away from.

This has changed with the Iranian Revolution, the twelve Shia Imams, Imam Khomeini and his followers established a new government theory to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The superiority of Islamic law is based on the superiority of Khomeini's theory of Islamic jurists. While not all Twelver Shi'a accept this theory, it is uniquely Twelver and the basis of the constitution of Iran, the largest Shi'a Muslim country, where the Supreme Leader must be an Islamic jurist.⁵⁵

⁵³ Rizvi, S. H. I. (2011). *Shia*. Retrieved from www.shia-e-ali.com

⁵⁴ Ibid,

⁵⁵ Ibid,

1.3. Velayat-e Faqih Doctrine and Khomeini

Thirty-seven years ago, the Islamic Republic of Iran was founded by Imam Khomeini. Imam Khomeini believed that it was the work of the masses. It is a fact that the Iranian people pass the Mullah despotic regime from the Shah regime.

Khomeini and his supporters, accelerated further this transition. Nowadays, when we look at Iranian politics, it stands much more firmly the collapse of the regime.

Ayatollah Khomeini was a charismatic religious leader. His ideology and his foresight influenced many Iranians and his supporters. Khomeini analyzed the political events that are happening in his own time and revealed his opinion, its unique political ideology. First of all, Khomeini was against the Shah's regime. Secondly, Khomeini never head tilt to the Shah. Thirdly, Khomeini was opportunistic politician. He was performing the revolution in the country and had succeeded in the international political conjuncture. Shah's political failures were not amnesty in the country and the outside of the world. As a result, Imam Khomeini achieved triumph against the Shah.

Khomeini was born in 1902 as a child of a wealthy family. He grew up in a spiritual family that is well-known by everyone. His uncle was Akhund Hajj Mullah Hossain Khonsari, a highly respected “*mojtahed*” in Isfahan.⁵⁶

When Khomeini was 18 years old, he was studied in Arak. He studied theology with Shaikh Abdul-Karim Ha'eri, a leading “*Marja -e taqlid*” known for his avoidance of politics. In 1930, Khomeini attended at the Fayizieh faculty to learn religious sciences. In 1937 Ayatollah Haeri died. The first response to Khomeini's political regime was proposed in 1943. In response to a book titled *The Secrets of a Thousand Years (Asrar-e Hezar Saleh)*, Khomeini published a defense of Shia Orthodoxy titled, *Revealing the Secrets (Kashf-e Asrar)*. Khomeini's one of the questions in this book: “*Shah, appointed by the constituent assembly would be better if the foqaha.*”⁵⁷

Other section we will turn to a discussion of Khomeini's notion, which was distributed under the title *al Hukuma al-Islamiyah* (Islamic Government). In Khomeini's book, *Islamic*

⁵⁶ *A Glance at Imam Khomeini's Life*. Retrieved from <http://ijtihadnet.com/imam-khomeinis-life/>

⁵⁷ *Ibid*,

Government, he began to criticize unjust and adverse conditions. Furthermore, he states managers' polytheism (*Shirk*) and pagans (*Taghut*), the government today announced the system at the time of the Umayyad's.⁵⁸ To his fellow Muslims, Khomeini say that:

*"We are responsible for ridding our Muslim society of polytheism and forcing it from our lives completely."*⁵⁹

Khomeini strongly condemned the imperialist powers. In response to the colonial power, Khomeini to Muslims, as did the Prophet and son-in-law, argues that the need to develop a government based on Islam and invitation. Khomeini argument, an Islamic government and Islamic law on the state to be established, he always emphasizes.

*The idea of oppressive, tyrannical governments that must be resisted had long been a part of Shia Islamic thought.*⁶⁰

Moreover, the best form of government of the Islamic State was shared by many Sunni scholars including the Egyptian Mohammed Al Ghazali (d 1111), Syrian Rashid Rida (d. 1935), and Pakistani Abu-l A 'la Maududi (d. 1979).⁶¹

On February 1st, 1979 Khomeini was returned from exile in Iran. After two weeks of Mohammad Reza Shah was forced by new regime followers to flee Iran. And then, the revolutionary forces that were loyal to Khomeini obtained power in Iran. On 11 February, Khomeini emerged as the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He was succeeded in building a new theocratic state of Iran as he envisioned in his doctrine of *Velayat-e Faqih*.

The doctrine of *Velayat-e Faqih* is the general framework for the vision of Khomeini. Islamic government, and Khomeini's leadership will constitute grounds for obtaining the Islamic Republic. According to this doctrine, it has its roots in Shi'a Islam notion of the guardianship

⁵⁸ Pick, D. D. (2000). The Islamic Republic of Iran and the importance of Khomeini's "*Mandate of the Jurist*". (Master thesis dissertation, Princeton University)

⁵⁹ Ibid,

⁶⁰ Ibid,

⁶¹ Ibid,

of jurisprudence vehemently espoused by Khomeini and opposed by some which gives the jurist (*faqih*) the power to decide on state and religious matters.⁶²

In Islamic juristic terminology, the term “*Velayat*” has several usages. When the term “*Velayat*” is attributed to the Imams, it carries the implications of “mastership”, “sovereignty” and “lordship”. Following this interpretation, the followers of the Imams provide a large number of traditions and historical evidence that confirm the delegation of the Imams, by God, through the Prophet (the doctrine of appointment) as “guardians of the believers” (*Vali ul-Mumineen*).⁶³

In order to investigate the historical emergence of Velayat-e Faqih, we must first stress that Velayat-e Faqih has more precedence in Iranian political life. And after re-studying by Imam Khomeini this concept has returned to Iran's political life. If we look at the historical background, the Iranian Muslims always based their ideas on the Velayat-e Faqih. For example, the Tobacco rebellion, which started in the period of Kajars was settled in by using the Velayat-e Faqih.

Between 10th and 14th centuries, Shia law has been established by previous scientists. However, both rudiments study “*furu*” and methodology resisted systematic encoding. Even the “emergence” of the status of the “supreme exemplar”. From the 16th century until the 19th century, namely early Safavid and Qajar periods throughout the Shia law, a remarkable level of sophistication gained momentum, particularly "roots of jurisprudence" in the theoretical field (*Usul al -Fiqh*).⁶⁴ The source of emulation “*marjai taqlid*” in the 19th century remained largely an informal practice. No set of objective standards for designating such a leadership ever developed and no specific legal privileges were arrogated to this office. As late as the mid-20th century, it “*marja'it*” largely aimed for a common leadership instead of addressing the needs of the supreme legal authority. Before Ayatollah Boroujerdi, there was no “*Marja*” for its legal opinions and never claimed to be universally binding. Nor any of the “*marja's*”

⁶² Prifti, B. (2010). *The security and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran: An offensive realism perspective*. (Master thesis dissertation, University of South Florida).

⁶³ Vaezi, A. (2004). *Shia Political Thought*. London: Islamic Centre of England

⁶⁴ Fujinaga, A. F.(2013). *Life and Limb: Irreversible hadd penalties in Iranian criminal courts and opportunities to avoid them*.(Master thesis dissertation, University of f Edinburgh)

claimed to be standing at the apex of a judicial hierarchy or was accepted as such by the “*mujtahids*” or by the community at large.⁶⁵

Between the late 18th century and early 19th century, for doctrine of position and the position it can be traced to the emergence of a Velayat-e Faqih doctrine with political authority of the Imam. For example, Shaikh Jafar al Kabir Kashif al Ghita (d. 1813) was the first person working on Velayat-e Faqih. In al-Kabir book’s *Awa'id al Avam*, Naraqī found nineteen different arguments to support the validity of Velayat-e Faqih. He argued in keeping with the Usuli’s insistence that the clergy were the “general agents” of the hidden “Imam” that the “Marja- e- taqlid” represented the “Imam”, and thus possessed the latter’s worldly, if not soteriological, authority. The emergence of this doctrine arose historically at the time of the Russian-Iranian war. Iranian Shia Ulema revealed this doctrine for the development of pro-Russian ideas in Iranian society and threat of the expansion of Wahhabism.⁶⁶

In the 20th century, the rise of the Pahlavi secular autocracy from the middle of the 1920s precipitated the growth of modern educational institutions. Regime was abolished the “*mojtaheds*” civil courts and replaced them with a state-controlled judiciary. State made some arrangements and the ulama weakened economic structure of social status and influence. Moreover, most importantly, the jurists gradually moved away from the state-“ulama” alliance that was linked to the ancient principle of preserving social equilibrium through guarded collaboration. On account of the new “*marja'iyā*” reconstituted its base not only in the bazaar community, where it was traditionally strong, yet among a new class of urban and urbanized poor. A number of “*marja's*” that “emerged” after the death of Boroujerdi in 1960, including Ayatollah Khomeini, were no doubt more organized in their teaching and charitable operations. Yet there was no attempt in the clerical circles to revisit the nature and conditions of “*marja'iyā*”, let alone arrive at a consensus about criteria for such leadership or the hierarchy.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Abbas, A. (2003). From *ijtihad* to *wilayat-i faqih*: The Evolving of the Shi'ite Legal Authority to Political Power. *Logos*, volume 2, pp 1-15. Retrieved from www.logosjournal.com

⁶⁶ Pick, D. D. (2000). *The Islamic Republic of Iran and the importance of Khomeini's "Mandate of the Jurist"*. (Master thesis dissertation, Princeton University)

⁶⁷ Abbas, A. (2003). From *ijtihad* to *wilayat-i faqih*: The Evolving of the Shi'ite Legal Authority to Political Power. *Logos*, volume 2, pp 1-15. Retrieved from www.logosjournal.com

Khomeini's use of jurist (faqih), rather than "mojtahed or Marja", in his own articulation of guardianship underlined sheer proficiency in ' *fiqh* ' rather than any acquired clerical status based on vague qualifications. Khomeini's " *velaya* ", in theory at least, could be extended to any jurist and not the one that is publicly recognized as the most important "Marja" or even a mojtahed. Such a definition, while admittedly weak Khomeini made his Najaf office during exile. The theory of the "Guardianship of the jurist" was applicable to public law as well as civil law. In the absence of the Hidden Imam, he claimed that the jurist presents the least oppressive form of authority because contrary to temporal rule it is founded on Islamic principles⁶⁸.

According to Khomeini, the jurist is the most qualified in matters of law which is inherently superior to any secular body of law. And he was obliged by the same Islamic legal principals to uphold and enforce it. It was therefore incumbent upon the jurist, as an "individual duty" to strive for acquiring political authority in order to form the Islamic government. Khomeini's doctrine was a revolutionary interpretation of the authority of the jurist even though he tried hard in his *Velayat-e Faqih (later Hukumat-i Islami)* to fortify his theory with precedent from classical legal texts and citations from such " *Usulis* " jurists as the 19th century Mullah Ahmad Naraqi. No Shia jurist before Khomeini ever extended the very limited application of legal " *Velaya* " to include public affairs, let alone, assuming of political power.⁶⁹

Thirdly, the doctrine of *Velayat-e Faqih*, the resources constitute the essential elements of the Iranian constitution. While Imam lives, *Velayat-e Faqih*'s sense of importance could not be in that much. After Khomeini, this doctrine kept its importance. Iranian constitution has made some arrangements in 1989. Khomeini's theory was embodied in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the basis of a revolutionary reinterpretation of " *Velayat-e Amr* " and an equally revolutionary reinterpretation of Imamate as the principle of continuous theocratic leadership. The ruling jurist is identified as the " *Valley-e Amr* " and his supreme office also interchangeably defined as *imamate* and leadership " *Rahbar* ". Islamic Republic of Iran's constitution is defined as a system based on faith:

⁶⁸ Abbas, A. (2003). From *ijtihad* to *wilayat-i faqih*: The Evolving of the Shi'ite Legal Authority to Political Power. *Logos*, volume 2, pp 1-15. Retrieved from www.logosjournal.com

⁶⁹ Ibid,

According to Iranian Constitution:

1. The one God (there is no god but God) and the restriction of sovereignty and legislation to Him, and the necessity of submission to His command. . .

5. Imamate and continuous leadership, and its fundamental role in the perpetuation of the Islamic revolution." (Article 2)⁷⁰

Shia clerics, traditional religious middle class, urban poor, the young and charismatic Ayatollah intellectuals, his “defense of religion and the state union of *Velayat-e Faqih* his theocratic concept, as they fell back. Khomeini was advocated for this case, “unification of religion and state, and the transfer of all power theological and political to the highest religious authority, the *Marja’-e taqlid*”.⁷¹

Ayatollah Khomeini, asserted that this struggle manifests itself in the shape of a confrontation between oppressed (*Mostazafin*) and oppressor (*Mustakbirin*). This Arabic term *Mostazafin*, the plural of “*Mustazaf*”, comes from the verb “*Zafa*”, means deemed weak, powerless, and oppressed. In the Quran the term is used to refer to those who are feeble because they have been exploited and kept in a state of ignorance. When used by the ayatollah, it refers to two groups: the downtrodden and dispossessed masses inside a country, or the entire dispossessed people of the globe, the vast majority of whom live in the Third World. With reference to the Quran, the ayatollah stated that God has promised to assist the oppressed against the oppressor and make them the leaders and inheritors of the world. Imam asserted that all God’s messengers fought against the oppressed of their times.⁷² The struggle between these two opposing sides, according to the claim of Khomeini in Iran to be an Islamic state in the war against “*Mustakbir*” should lead to “*Mostazaf*”.

Khomeini, in June 14, 1979, accepted the preliminary draft of the Iranian constitution. At the end, supporters of clerical domination were more numerous in the Assembly. While it maintained the semi-presidentialism of the before draft (albeit with drastically curtailed powers of the presidency), the principle of *Velayat-e Faqih* was grafted onto the republican

⁷⁰ Arjomand, A. S. (1988). *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*. New York: Oxford University

⁷¹ Menashri, D. (2001). *Post-Revolutionary politics in Iran religion society and power*. New York. Routledge Press

⁷² Taremi, K. (2014). *Iranian Strategic Culture: The Impact of Ayatollah Khomeini’s Interpretation of Shiite Islam*. *Contemporary Security Policy*, Volume 35, pp. 3-25 Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2014.884n341>.

structure, producing a document that conferred ultimate authority on Shia ulema.⁷³ Khomeini himself became the first incumbent of the future office of Leader.

Khomeini approves of his 1979 constitutional amendment at the end of his life. All in all, in the spring of 1989, shortly before his death, Khomeini named a council of twenty five men to propose changes to it. This council eliminated the position of prime minister and conferred more powers to the hitherto almost ceremonial presidency, and incorporated Khomeini's then recent reformulation of *Velayat-e Faqih* as "*Velāyat-e Motlaqa-ye Faqih*", i.e., "*Absolute Dominion of the Jurist*," into the pertinent articles. The attributes of the state's religious leadership were also changed, as we shall see below. At the apex of Iran's political structure stands the "*Rahbar-e enqelab*", or "Leader of the Revolution", whose position is translated into institutional reality the theocratic notion of *Velayat-e Faqih*. The supremacy of this office is underscored by placing the three branches of government under its supervision (*Article 57*)⁷⁴.

Originally, in the 1979 constitution, a "*Marja'-e taqlid*", was accepted as senior leaders of the clergy and had to be accepted by the majority of the population as an ideal leader. However, by the late 1980s it became clear that none of Khomeini's peers agreed with the principle of *Velayat-e Faqih* or were acceptable politically to the top leadership of the Islamic Republic, and so the precondition of "*marja'iyat*" and any reference to acceptance by a majority of the population were removed in the revisions of 1989.⁷⁵

Regarding legal opinion (*ijtihad*) in social matters, Ayatollah Khomeini put forward interesting ideas. Let us first refer to one of his speeches in this regard:

"Ijtihad in prevalent sense in religious centers is not sufficient for the holders of authority. That is, if a person is the most learned in religious studies but is unable to recognize the interests of his society or distinguish between useful and useless persons for the society, i.e., he does not have a proper social insight, he is not in fact Mojtabeh and cannot pass decrees on socio-political affairs. Hence, he is not eligible to hold the authority"

⁷³ Chehabi, H. E. and Schirazi, A. (2015). The Islamic Republic of Iran. *Journal of Persianate Studies*, Volume 5, pp 175-204. Retrieved from www.brill.com

⁷⁴ Ibid,

⁷⁵ Ibid,

Keeping in view this point and what we have said earlier, it can be concluded that “*fiqahat*” includes both efficiency and management (*Alamiyyah*). It is clear that being the most qualified Islamic scholar in political and social affairs are different with “*Alamiyyah*” in pure religious issues which are the criterion of being a grand imitation –“*Marja for taqlid*”.⁷⁶

What is not necessary in Imam's view is the prevailing “*marjaiyyah*” or “*Alammiyyah*”. For “*Alamiyyah*”, “*fiqhi*” knowledge, political and social awareness and management are necessary qualifications for a leader. This point was incorporated in the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Regarding the condition of justice and piety as qualifications of a leader, Imam Khomeini says:

“A person who intend to be the guardian of the Muslims and successor of the Commander of the Faithful, should not bet attached to worldly matters. If one indulges in worldly matters, he cannot be the trustee and reliable person for people.”⁷⁷

Some of these conditions are accepted by all contemporary jurists, for, they believe in the necessity of holding the “*Hasbiyah*” affairs by qualified jurist in the Imam's absence. In this regard, Imam Khomeini, like other scholars, recommends such authority for a juris consult (*Vali al Faqih*).

Obviously, guardianship over “*Tashri*” of religious precepts belongs to the prophets. If you try to explain complex religious practice of the Imam, try to throw light upon what the Prophet left for them. Elaborating on this period, Imam Khomeini says:

“In an Islamic state, God is the ruler. The prophets and their successors try to be the executors of the rules of God. They never forward any rule versus God's rule. Yet, they use their authority wherever there is not any clear principle.”

Anyhow, in Imam Khomeini's view, a “*faqih*”, apart from using his authority in “*Hasbiyyah*” affairs, has authority in executing statutory and discretionary penalties, penal codes, and

⁷⁶ <https://www.al-islam.org/message-thaqalayn/vol2-n2-3/general-principles-imam-khumaynis-political-thought-kazem-ghazi-zadeh/general>

⁷⁷ <https://www.al-islam.org/message-thaqalayn/vol2-n2-3/general-principles-imam-khumaynis-political-thought-kazem-ghazi-zadeh/general>

enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. Khomeini has also guardianship over the state and politics within the jurisdiction of religious laws, civil laws, and implementing Islamic rules.⁷⁸

Leader's position is no longer a political authority that legitimizes religious grounds in the Islamic Republic. Khomeini's concept of *Velayat-e Faqih*, he argues that in the absence of the hidden Imam, the right to rule is devolved to the Islamic jurists. Society should be governed by *Sharia* knowledge with practical skills and community justice. The implication of being selected by consensus as "the most learned" and "the most righteous" is that this Islamic Jurist should be the "*Marja'-e taqlid*". In fact, this is the interpretation of *Velayat-e Faqih* that was codified in the 1979 Constitution of the Islamic Republic. *Article 107* of the 1979 Constitution says:

"Whenever one of *the fuqaha* possessing the qualifications specified in Article 5 of the Constitution is recognized and accepted as *marja'* and Leader by a decisive majority of the people....he is to assume the office of the *velayat-e 'amr*."

In the event that no "*faqih*" met the qualifications, then a Leadership Council would be established to govern, thus maintaining the tradition of consultation among the "*fuqaha*".⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Zadeh, K. G. General Principles of Imam Khomeini's Political Thought. *Journal Ahlul Bayt World Assembly*, 2, 1-10. Retrieved from <http://www.al-islam.org>

⁷⁹ Pick, D. D. (2000). *The Islamic Republic of Iran and the importance of Khomeini's "Mandate of the Jurist"*. (Master thesis dissertation, Princeton University)

CHAPTER II

Iran's Foreign Policy Approach and Methodology

2.1. The role of Velayat-e Faqih doctrine in Iranian foreign policy

As written at the introduction of the thesis, a theoretical research will be done in this section. While investigating Iran's foreign political relations, we first need to pay attention to the identity of Iran. Theoretically, we have to apply to the theory of Social Construction in International Relations. From this point of view, this theory is based on the identity and interest theory of relations with Shiite groups and states such as Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen and Bahrain, where the majority of Iran's Shia live. In addition, Iran is one of the states that has contributed to the chaotic situation in the Middle East these days. The anarchic and chaotic situation is suitable for the interests of Iran. By the expression of Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is what states make of it"⁸⁰, that means, states sometimes apply to this method to practice their own strategies. In addition, Iran is showing its own strength by making use of the chaotic level that it has created. While ontologically finding an answer to the main question of the thesis, the Iranian attitude, the political frame that attained by the Velayat-e Faqih give epistemological form. The methodology is that how Iran carried out the actions in practice. As an example we can demonstrate the actions of Yemen in Iran. The sectarian crisis in Yemen, which has been in existence since 1990, is still ongoing. The conflict between Shiite Yemeni Zaidi supported by Shiite Iran and Sunni Yemen supported by Salafi Arabs is still under way. As an example, we can demonstrate the 2004-2009 Iranian crisis in Yemen.

In August 2009, Houthi started rebellion as a second phase. After that, the Yemen government announced a scorched-earth policy and vowed to fight until the Houthi problem was definitely resolved. In 2009, the Saudi military intervention in Yemen and along with the citizens over the government six months without getting to fight the specified destination, declared another truce. In addition, the Yemeni government has accused the Iranian government. At the same

⁸⁰ Küçük, M. (2014). Uluslararası İlişkilerde Sosyal İnşacılık. In Gözen, R. (Eds.), Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri. (International Relations Theories). İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık

time, the Saudi owned satellite Arab Sat and it unexpectedly stopped transmitting the Iranian Arabic language news channel *Al - Alam*.⁸¹ Furthermore, Yemeni government put forward a new claim about Iran. According to Yemeni spokesman, Iranian ships carrying Iranian flag over loaded with weapons for the Houthis has entered the Gulf of Aden in Yemen. But Iran and the Houthis has denied this claim somehow quickly. Iran's foreign minister side in a planned manner during visits to Yemen, President Saleh was resolved concerns about this incident.⁸²

After the Arab spring that followed, the reoccurring of the crisis caused political tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The Arab Spring has provided new opportunities for Yemeni Houthis. Again the Houthis rebellion began in 2011. Houthis mainly Sana'a and some of the neighbor regions were able to expand their control. Houthis easily accomplished this because the government forces left important centers. Followed by a bomb attack of the Presidential Palace, Saudi-backed Saleh was injured and was forced to resign. After that, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi was elected as the president of Yemen. President Hadi did not provide any solution to this crisis. The deepening of the crisis resulted in Mansur Hadi to flee from the country. Yemen had again exposed the Iranian and Saudi conflict. Houthis and Salafis became the pawn of the conflict.⁸³

In fact, Iran activates it is media tools in Sana'a during the conflict and expressed new concerns of the US. Local tribes just rely on the party that provides unlimited supply. Iran, not only monetary support, but also provided training facilities for the Houthis in Hezbollah training camps in Lebanon. In addition, it points to the provocative presence of Iranian warships and submarines in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Yemen.⁸⁴

Iran has entered into an effort to establish a common identity with Shiites living in the neighboring states and Gulf countries. Shia Crescent aims at forming a common identity. In other words, it is taking the Shiites living in Iraq, Lebanon and Bahrain, Yemen and other states under the roof of common denominational identity. Whether it is military, political or

⁸¹ Winter, L. (2010). Fragile State: Yemen in Conflict. *Journal of Current History*. Pp 395-400. Retrieved from <http://fmso.leavenworth.army.mil/documents/Fragile-State.pdf>

⁸² Terill, A. W. (2014). Iranian Involvement in Yemen. The Foreign Policy Research Institute, pp 429-440. Retrieved from www.fpri.org

⁸³ Kronenfeld, S. and Guzansky, Y. (2014). Yemen: A Mirror to the Future of the Arab Spring. *Military and Strategic Affairs*. Volume 6. Pp 77-99.

⁸⁴ Ibid,

economic. As an example, religious education and religious culture services are provided to Bahrain's Shi'as by Iran. This is also in use for some Shiites in Lebanon and Iraq.

Many Bahraini Shiites "Twelver" believe in this sect. Also, they are following the Ja'afari School of jurisprudence. In addition, there are outstanding Shiite scholars of theological issues that guide the community. They find solutions for Religious issues based on Marja 'al-taqlid. As a religious guide, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is considered by many Shi'ites as the religious leader and the Qum School is followed. Many Bahraini Shiites politically adopted the doctrine of Velayat e-Faqih.⁸⁵

Moreover, the Shiites are forced to rely on Iran for their social and political discrimination by the current regime as happened in Bahrain. Thus the situation of Bahraini Shiites continues to contribute to instability. Shiites have been condemned to be the second-class in every way in the country. Also, Bahrain Shias are resentful of foreign labor in the country. But, the foreign worker population still provides the government some stability. At the end of all this stringency, it resulted in the Bahraini Shiite uprising against the government. To get rid of this difficulty, the Shiites had no choice but to call them in a reliable way. As a result of mismanagement, Bahraini Shiites led to a sectarian proximity to cooperate with Iran.⁸⁶

Moreover, Iran's media propaganda works very well. It looks dagger at the political events which are not in favor of the government covering up them. Internet pages of Iran are publishing Shi'a propaganda and Friday sermons of the Supreme Leader. Especially for the protection of Shia holy cities, Syria and Iraq are calling for jihad. Also internet pages of Hezbollah can be added to this. Bahrain is a good example of this.

As a result of the beginning of the Arab spring, relations between the countries deteriorated. Such that the ideological war over Iran's media has affected the majority of Bahraini Shiites. Iranian media, which is popular among Bahraini Shiites, is monitored daily. Iran's Arabic Al-Alam, Iran Voice, Iran's Press TV and Sahar TV were more popular. These media organizations show Bahraini Shiite political resistance to the world on a large scale.

⁸⁵ *Report of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry.* Retrieved from <http://www.moi.gov.bh/govactions/wps/themes/html/BICI/en/pdfs/C2.pdf>

⁸⁶ *ibid,*

Moreover, Bahraini Shiites are supported by the Supreme Leader. In fact, Ayatollah Khamenei preached a sermon in the mosque criticizing the Bahrain kingdom.⁸⁷

Well, is the Velayat-e Faqih a norm? When you're talking about social construction, you cannot talk without the norms, especially while talking about the Velayat-e Faqih. After Islamic regime was established in Iran, the Velayat-e Faqih changed everything from social structure to cultural structure taking as norm as a rule. And everything was synthesized in accordance with the Velayat-e Faqih. By blending the Iranian cultural structure with the Velayat-e Faqih norm, a structurally shared Shia identity has been put forward. This gives Iran the image of a model state in the eyes of the Shiites in the region. On the other side, Iran's Shiite sectarian religious cultural richness has given Iran a common cultural identity. As an example, the city of Qum is the religious teaching center and a common point of reference for most Shiites and Shiite clergy. In addition, common interests are inseparable links between Shia groups and Iran. For instance, Iran has a common interest relationship with Hezbollah in Lebanon, the family of the Sadr in Iraq and other Shiites who support Iran have common interests with Houthis in Yemen. It is a fact that the Velayat-e Faqih is the norm for an Iranian Shiite, but it cannot be considered a norm for an Iraqi Shiite. As a reason, it's better to say that Shi'ism in Iraq is shaped exactly like Imamiyya sect like Iran. However, there is a Shiite mentality based on the Najaf. Faith and worship are practiced instead of classical imam. Najaf is a sacred center for all Shiites. Prophet Ali's tomb is here. Najaf is also one of the centers where the Shiite ulema are growing up. Karbala, where Hussein's shrine is located, is another important place.⁸⁸

The reason for failing as the Velayat-e Faqih norm in Iraq is that, it is the former Shiite center as mentioned above, and that many Iraqi Shia religious scholars are against him. Most Iraqi religious scholars emphasize that Velayat-e Faqih is only the norm for Iran and Iranians.

Well, why is the Velayat-e Faqih accepted as the norm in Lebanon? The main reason for this is that the ethnic structure of Lebanon is mixed and fragile. The fact that the population is 59.7 percent Muslim, and that 32 percent of Lebanese Muslims accept the Shiite denomination this reveals that Iran is successful in Lebanon. In addition, Lebanese Shia religious scholars voluntarily accepted the principles of Velayat-e Faqih and Khomeini.

⁸⁷ Afshari, A. (2014). *Khamenei preaches Shiite-Sunni unity against Islamic State, US*. Retrieved from <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/10/iran-khamenei-sunni-shiite-ghadeer.html>

⁸⁸ Onat, H. (2013). Şiiğin Doğuşu, ilk Şii Fikirler ve ilk Şii Hareketler. in Onat, H. and Kutlu, S. (Eds.), *İslam Mezhepleri Tarihi [History of Islamic Sects]* (p 159). Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları.

Another point of view is that the Velayat-e Faqih is the line of division of political elites as a rule. Moreover, Iranian foreign policy is absolutely determined in the constitution of Iran. Iran's foreign policy ideology is based on Khomeini's principles and the Velayat-e Faqih rules. That is, as a state, Iran's political power and functional interests are always at the forefront. For example, military action in Syria, intervention in Yemen's domestic politics, and the surrender of Lebanon to Iran after the last presidential election have all started in the interest-oriented direction. In the first twenty years of the revolution, even if the principles of the Revolution constituted the Iranian foreign political agenda, then in the following decades a program of support for Islamic movements will be implemented.

Generally, the factors that influence the foreign policy of Iran most divided Iran's political elite. These dual structural and ideological differences of theology are felt. This system is as follows:

	Islamic	Secular
Revolutionary	Political Islam Khomeinism	Third World ideology
Conservative	Traditional Shia	Nationalism

(Refer for the table, Walter Posch, the Third World, Global Islam and Pragmatism: The Making of Iranian Foreign Policy. in 2013)

Iran's main strategic policy is mainly associated with territorial integrity, national sovereignty and Iran's economic development. Underlining Iran's Islamic revolutionary identity, it should assume the role of a protective power for the Shiites in the region. Iran encourages Third World state identity and anti-imperialism.⁸⁹

On the first part of the Iranian Constitution, foreign policy (Articles 152-154) is repeated more clearly. To illustrate, thus Article 153 confirms the ban on entering into agreements “that could give occasion for the establishment of foreign power positions in the areas of natural and economic re-sources, culture, the army and other affairs of the country”. Alliances with “imperialist powers” are hence explicitly prohibited by Article 152. The same article

⁸⁹ Posch, W. (2013). *The Third World, Global Islam and Pragmatism: The Making of Iranian Foreign Policy* . Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Retrieved from www.swp-berlin.org

stipulates that the constitution is valid beyond the state borders of Iran and asserts that the state of Iran must defend the rights of all Muslims. This obligation is reiterated in similar words in Article 154 which states that although the Islamic Republic will refrain from any interference in the internal affairs of other states, it nevertheless supports “the struggle of the oppressed (*Mostazafin, Mazlum*) to assert their rights vis-à-vis their oppressors (*Mostakberin, Zalem*) at any place in the world”.⁹⁰

Iranian state ideology known as the most important pillar of Iran's *anti-Americanism* and *anti-Zionism* is based on the revolutionary traditions of the constitution and form anti-imperialist orientation.

Iranian political elite

Overall, Islamic Republic of Iran can be divided into two main groups in terms of foreign policy, orientation and geopolitical visions.

The first group is always emphasizes a return to the identity of the Islamic revolution and Islamic values. Moreover, to achieve these objectives, the Islamic Republic of Iran has a good partnership with the Islamic countries and Muslim masses, and also argues that it should avoid rapprochement with the US. These are mainly represented by the Conservative faction of the Iranian political elite. This group is dominated by the view that a more stable ideological foreign policy should be followed.⁹¹

The second group consists of mainly pragmatist and reformist factions. According to these groups, the Iranian nation state should play an important role in international relations. In addition, they believe in international trade and political ties with Iran's important tool in protecting the national interest. Therefore, they argue that Iran should follow the West and

⁹⁰ Posch, W. (2013). *The Third World, Global Islam and Pragmatism: The Making of Iranian Foreign Policy*. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Retrieved from www.swp-berlin.org

⁹¹ Raket, E.P.(2009). *Power, Islam, and Political Elite : A study on the Iranian Political Elite from Khomeini to Ahmadinejad*. Boston. Brill Press

especially in establishing a good relationship with the US. Pragmatist and Reformist factions have a pragmatic foreign policy approach.⁹²

Foreign policy

After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini claimed himself as the absolute source of emulation (*Velayat-e Faqih*) because he was claimed to be descended from the blest Imams. His political hypothesis until the last Imam Mahdi's arrival time, all government tasks were related to the infallible Imam who didn't bring them in a fair way. Khomeini later declared the secrets of the Twelfth Imam saying that anyone is a deputy in the world.

Khomeini believed that the interests of these hegemonic powers were based on politically, economically and culturally subjugating the underprivileged nations, plundering their resources and confiscating their territorial independence.⁹³ He therefore stated that Islam, the Qur'an and the Prophet blamed the enemies of the US and Israel. Consequently, he called for resistance and confrontation as a part of Islamic tasks against U.S. and Israel.

Furthermore, Imam, while calling for resistance, on the other hand, was trying to export the ideology of the Islamic revolution. Therefore, Khomeini supported Shias who were living in Lebanon, Iraq, Kuwait, and Bahrain, Yemen and even Saudi Arabia and other countries. Moreover, new regime was established of the clerical relations that linked leading Shia Ayatollahs, throughout the Arab world to one another and to their loyal adherents. After Khomeini's call, Shiites have abandoned their leftist and nationalist ideologies. Subsequently, the Shiites, the Shiite movement took part in the support given by Iran. For example, Party of Unity -“*Hizb-e Wahdat*” in Afghanistan.⁹⁴

The Lebanon war was a turning point in local and regional politics. Iran promised to support Hezbollah and Iran transported weapons for Lebanon upon Syrian territories. Iran created

⁹² Raket, E.P.(2009). *Power, Islam, and Political Elite : A study on the Iranian Political Elite from Khomeini to Ahmadinejad*. Boston. Brill Press

⁹³ Salamey, I. and Othman, Z. (2011). *Shia Revival and Welayat Al-Faqih in the Making of Iranian Foreign Policy. Politics, Religion and Ideology*, volume 12, pp. 197–212. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ftmp21>

⁹⁴ Johnson, H.(2014). *Islamic Nationalism: Tracing Paradoxes in the Evolution of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps*. (Master dissertation, Claremont Mckenna College)

Hezbollah in the Lebanese territory, as a new "Shiite castle". Furthermore, Iran supported Sunni groups such as the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria, the *National Islamic Movement* in Sudan, *Hamas and Islamic Jihad* in Palestine, the *Muslim Brotherhood* in Jordan, the *Al-Nahda Party* in Tunisia and the *Jihad Group* in Egypt. Furthermore, they also supported the Muslims in Bosnia in the 1990s and the *Islamic MORO Movement* in the Philippines in the 1980s.⁹⁵

But, Iran did not support Russian Chechen war, especially Chechen mujahidin. As it is today, Iran supported the political position of Russia in 1990s. It is always concerned about the political process in the Caucasus. Azerbaijan factor was always forcing Iran, Iran to support Russia. Eventually, for ten years, in short from 1980 to 1990 Iran supported Shia groups in the Middle East. However, in the Middle East for the US and Israel, Iran was not so easy to stop. US, to prevent Iran from implementing this policy, have resorted to political and economic sanctions. Iran's northern neighbor Azerbaijan stands in a range consisting of Shiite Muslims. However, this is not the case for Iran's southern Shiite neighbors.

"Exportation of revolution" is "Islamic support for the revolutionary movement. " In fact, after the revolution, the country "self" as regional and extra-regional states with long strategies with new definitions tried to develop a new identity". Iran tries to challenge oppressive and hegemonic foreign policy and it is strongly against the monopoly of power in the international system and the core of colonialism and despotism and absolutism and it is looking for ways to completely eliminate all kinds of imperialism. Iran's anti-Western and anti-American policies are understandable in the context of these goals and motivations. To this end, Iran "has expanded its efforts to establish a new front against imperialism in the Muslim world and Asia".

"Islamic Unity" and "Islamic Solidarity"

Even if the first years of the Iranian Islamic Revolution passed through the calls for Islamic unity and Islamic solidarity, such calls after Khomeini's death were thrown into the background. For instance, Imam Khomeini statements were good examples for these slogans

⁹⁵ Rakel, E.P. (2008). *The Iranian political elite, state and society relations, and foreign relations since the Islamic revolution*. (Doctoral dissertation, Universiteit van Amsterdam, University of Amesterdam)

as he aimed to unite the Muslims under a single roof. Khomeini, without discrimination between Muslims in every speech, underlines that the establishment of Islamic unity against imperialism should be carried out. In fact, this is not something impossible. Khomeini was ignited it as ideological, yet acted on it in practice novice application.

There are some certain mistakes naturally in the new system, especially in the foreign policy of the country. In this regard, Khomeini's fatal error was to spread this ideology among the Muslim world regardless of the international balance policy. In the first decade after the revolution, it followed two main agendas in foreign policy which resulted in frustration of Islamic unity and Islamic solidarity.

The first one was summarized in the slogan: “*Neither East nor West, but the Islamic Republic;*” The second guideline was the “*Export of the Revolution.*”⁹⁶ Consequently, Khomeini first accepted neither East nor west statement, the West is dependent on economy and the country might receive support from many Muslims. The second issue is “Exportation of the Revolution.” In Exportation of the Revolution politics, foreign policy was completely razed to the ground in Iran. These policies of the Iranian government, which opt for the Islamic Union, were converted into a state monopoly. As a result, Iran failed because of the reasons above.

The effect of domestic actors over Iranian foreign policy

There are four great powers that shape Iran's domestic and foreign policy; “ideological radicals”, ‘conservatives’, ‘reformists’, and the Supreme Leader himself. The first leading ideological radicals are gathered around Khomeini's perception of power. According to radical group, the U. S. is responsible for all the bad things in Iran. 1953 CIA-backed coup included its supporters of Iraq during the Iran–Iraq War, and U.S. supporters of Israel against the Palestinians and Lebanese.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Rakel, E.P. (2008). *The Iranian political elite, state and society relations, and foreign relations since the Islamic revolution*. (Doctoral dissertation, Universiteit van Amsterdam, University of Amesterdam)

⁹⁷ Salamey, I. and Othman, Z. (2011). Shia Revival and Welayat Al-Faqih in the Making of Iranian Foreign Policy. *Politics, Religion and Ideology*, volume 12, pp. 197–212. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ftmp21>

Second prominent political group in Iran consists of ‘‘conservatives’’. Conservatives emphasize the importance of a pragmatic and negotiable nuclear policy and the support of Islamic nationalism over transnationalism and sectarian expansionism.⁹⁸

As third, very powerful group has been established by ‘reformists’. This group has been forthcoming in questioning the entire concept of Iran being in conflict with the West and demanding a limit to religious authorities’ interference in political affairs. This group represents the continuation of Rafsanjani and Khatami’s pragmatic political discourse in domestic and foreign affairs. Also, it includes two 2009 presidential candidates, former Prime Minister Mir-Hossain Mousavi and the former parliamentary speaker Mehdi Karroubi.⁹⁹

The last most important factor in Iranian politics is the Supreme Leader. The significant role of the Supreme Leader in directing Iranian foreign policy has been reinforced by an organizational network abroad holding direct allegiance to him. Ayatollah Khamenei played a very important role as a balancer against the radicals and he was able to balance various political groups in Iran.

⁹⁸ Salamey, I. and Othman, Z. (2011). Shia Revival and Welayat Al-Faqih in the Making of Iranian Foreign Policy. *Politics, Religion and Ideology*, volume 12, pp. 197–212. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ftmp21>

⁹⁹ Ibid,

CHAPTER III

Iran's political relations with Lebanon after the revolution

In this section relations between Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah and the Lebanese Resistance Organization (AMAL). The historic ties of Iran-Lebanese rely on the Safavid Empire established in Iran in the 16th century. Some of the Shiite Lebanese living in Lebanon are ethnically rooted in Iran. Therefore, Iran's influence is very influential on the Lebanese Shiites. As mentioned above, starting from the 16th century, Shiite Safavid dynasty and Lebanese Shiites, Shiite ideology ties between have been established. Lebanese Shiite ulema were brought to high religious authorities in the palace of Safavid. After the Ottoman and World War I, relations between Lebanon and Iran weakened and then since 1963 the bilateral relations have gained momentum again. The Iranian imam Musa al-Sadr has become one of the impetuous names in relations. Imam Musa al-Sadr was removed from his citizenship because he criticized the Shah in Iran in 1963 for his arrival in Lebanon. He became a Lebanese citizen in the same year. Unfortunately, Imam Musa got lost in a time of a travel.

Subsequently, after the Islamic Revolution took place in Iran, it became even closer to Lebanon. Thus, the Lebanese Shiites communicated with the executive positions that made the revolution by establishing solidarity committees with the Iranian Islamic Revolution. These committees, nine people, three from ulema in Beqaa region, three from the Islamic committees and three from the AMAL Movements conveyed the document to the Iranian religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini. With the ratification of the document, more than thousand revolutionary guards were sent to Lebanon to train AMAL militants. Khomeini said that Lebanon is not different from them, and sees Lebanon as part of Iran.¹⁰⁰ Today, Iran always supports the Lebanese Shiites and provides every support from cultural support to financial support and logistics so that the Shiites can be effective both on the military arena and on the political arena.

¹⁰⁰ Sen, S. (2016). Lübnan ve İran Arasındaki İdeolojik Yakınlaşmanın Tarihsel Kökeni. Retrieved from <http://www.tuicakademi.org/lubnan-iran-arasindaki-ideolojik-yakinlasmanin-tarihsel-kokeni/>

3.1. Hezbollah

Hezbollah, the radical Shiite political organization, has emerged in the process of Israel's invasion of Lebanon. Hezbollah is supported by Iran. In addition, Hezbollah is Iran's center of Shi'ite wing since 1982 in Lebanon.¹⁰¹ The first official attack of Hezbollah, the attack on military headquarters by Ahmed Kassir on November 11, 1982 was the beginning of the Shiite resistance.¹⁰² After this action, Lebanese Shiite militant organizations that left from AMAL joined under the name of Hezbollah with the support of Iran.

Hezbollah (Arabic for "Party of God") was officially born in 1983. Molla Mohammed Gaffari is the father of the name of Hezbollah. Gaffar, who opposed the shah regime in Iran, argued that he was the only party in the letters he wrote in his years in prison, and that he was the party of Allah.¹⁰³ The factors that led to Hezbollah's occurrence were Israel's occupation of Lebanon, the Iranian Islamic Revolution. Another reason for the tight ties between Hezbollah and Iran is the concept of the Velayat-e Faqih. Hezbollah accepted the concept of the Velayat-e Faqih and at the same time accepted Imam Khomeini as a guide.¹⁰⁴

The establishment of Hezbollah

Israel invaded Lebanon and Shiite southern Lebanon in 1982. This is in response to the occupation, including the more radical elements such as AMAL, several Shi'ite Islamist guerrilla groups merged in 1985 a group called Hezbollah official. As of 1982, Beirut was under state control Hezbollah, Beqaa (Bekaa) Valley and southern Lebanon could form its own structure. Hezbollah had rapidly evolved into the sophisticated organizational structure and administrative system required by its growing stature, strength, and capabilities in

¹⁰¹ Majed, Z. (2010). *Hezbollah and the Shiite Community: From Political Confessional Specialization*. https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/docs/pubs/LRF_AW_digital_1122.pdf

¹⁰² Sen, S. (2016). Lübnan ve İran Arasındaki İdeolojik Yakınlaşmanın Tarihsel Kökeni. Retrieved from <http://www.tuicakademi.org/lubnan-iran-arasindaki-ideolojik-yakinlasmanin-tarihsel-kokeni/>

¹⁰³ Ibid,

¹⁰⁴ Ibid,

Lebanese affairs.¹⁰⁵ From its earliest years, Hezbollah had managed to define itself *AMAL*. 1988-89 was a turning point for Hezbollah. Militant groups have fought for the south of Beirut. Now, it is almost half of the district where the Shiite population in southern Beirut was under the control of Hezbollah. In 1989, with *Taif* alliance, civil war in Lebanon was ended. Yet, Hezbollah did not allow the abolishment of the privileges of a militia in the southern part of the country. Despite receiving a heavy blow on Hezbollah in 1992, Hezbollah continued its guerrilla campaign against Israel and Israel itself had an army in a secure zone in southern Lebanon during the 1990s.

Decision-Making Shura Council (Majlis Shura al-Qarar) or “Lebanonization”

Party Secretary General Abbas Mousavi in 1991 published the four-point political program. This new program was designed to discuss issues in Lebanon and these issues had to be resolved.¹⁰⁶ This expansion policy was a project established for other groups and for Christians, and for the establishment of Hezbollah to alleviate social problems. The term ‘Lebanonization’ has been used to describe the official Hezbollah’s demand for an Islamic state in Lebanon. But, in 1992, the second party secretary general Sayed Abbas Mousavi was assassinated.¹⁰⁷

At the same time, Sayed Hassan Nasrallah, leader of Lebanese rapprochement, participated in the political system and started to communicate with non-Islamist party. Nasrallah era, Lebanon has passed “Lebanonization” process. Sayed Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's senior

¹⁰⁵ Rudner, M. (2010). “Hizbullah: An Organizational and Operational Profile”. *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, Volume 23, pp. 226-240 Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08850600903565654>

¹⁰⁶ Norton, A. R. (2007). The Role of Hezbollah in Lebanese Domestic Politics. *The International Spectator*, 42, 475–491. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com

¹⁰⁷ Azani, E. (2006). House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation. Translator Horowitz, M. Retrieved from Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT), at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel. www.investigativeproject.org

political leaders, as Secretary General of the organization, since 1992, is the chairman of the Shura Council.¹⁰⁸

The Shura Council is composed of nine members: seven Lebanese plus two Iranian representatives (from the Iranian embassies in Beirut and Damascus) who provide a direct link on matters that require strategic guidance or Iranian assistance or arbitration.¹⁰⁹ Many Lebanese members consist of Shia clerics. These members are to penetrate the theological-political in Hezbollah. Hezbollah judicial structures, as a political and ideological point of view, are similar to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Hezbollah with political ally AMAL, Lebanese political life since 1992 has been playing an active role. At the same time, the party program published in 1996 by Hezbollah:

- resisting the Israeli occupation until “our” occupied land is completely liberated;
- achieving equality and establishing the “Just” State;
- the introduction of a more equitable economic policy for development;
- reforming public education and reinforcing the labor movement;
- a wide-ranging program of social, health, and housing measures;
- safeguarding public freedoms;
- A foreign policy stance designed to reinforce Lebanon’s connection with Syria, eliminate Western influence and interference in Lebanon, and deal with America as identical to and supportive of the Israeli enemy.¹¹⁰

After that, Hezbollah has made many political actions. In 2005, by the Hezbollah terrorist coup, political action was held. Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafiq Hariri was plotted in a terrorist attack. Then, in the Hariri cabinet ministers they were assassinated. Hezbollah opposition government was abolished. In February, the representatives of Hezbollah and AMAL block took their place in Prime Minister Fouad Siniora Government of National Unity by obtaining thirty five seats in Parliament.

¹⁰⁸ Bar, S. (2006). *Lebanese Hizballah Political, Ideological and Organizational Highlights*. Retrieved from <http://cco.ndu.edu/Portals/96/Documents/Articles/Lebanese-Hizballah-Ideological-and-Organizational-Highlights-Shmuel-Bar.pdf>

¹⁰⁹ Rudner, M. (2010). Hizballah: An Organizational and Operational Profile. *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, Volume 23, pp. 226-240 Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08850600903565654>

¹¹⁰ Ibid,

In 2009 at general elections, Hezbollah has reduced the number of seats in parliament. This was the beginning of the political shock waves for Hezbollah. Hezbollah lived the victory of the 2006 war, after the assassination of Hariri and parliamentary elections that weakened Hezbollah's reputation in the world and the Lebanese public.

Political ideology

Hezbollah's political ideology coincides with Iran's political ideology. Today, Hezbollah is following Iran's political ideology and Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. And, the party has accepted *Velayat-e Faqih* principle. Khamenei nominated Hasan Nasrallah as his deputy in Lebanon in 1995. Iran's support for Hezbollah is not new. Iran, before Hezbollah, was supporting the AMAL movement. Hezbollah declared the followers of Khomeini's principles. These principles are as follows:

- Obtaining legitimacy for Shiite activism until the time of Khomeini's rule, the Shiites were passive and oppressed due to their being a minority within the Muslim world. Under Khomeini, the Shiites underwent a change and became an active group that strives to achieve political goals, including the use of violent measures. Khomeini called for action by the "oppressed" against the "oppressors".
- De-legitimization of corrupt Muslim regimes Khomeini classified the regimes that do not follow Sharia law as corrupt and illegitimate, thus sanctioning the means to overthrow them.
- Joining the Jihad against corrupt Arab rulers and the West as a means to promote the idea of the Islamic nation.
- Defining the enemy Khomeini coined two phrases that defined the enemies of Islam: the "Great Satan" the US, and the "Little Satan" Israel.
- Khomeini reformulated the principle of sacrifice. He advocated a transition from the state of sacrifice to the state of self-sacrifice through Jihad against the enemies of Islam. In such, Khomeini founded the basis on which the phenomenon of suicide attacks as a strategic means for terrorism to achieve its goals developed. Hezbollah adopted the idea and carried out suicide attacks against foreigners in Lebanon between 1983 and 1985. This method of operation was later adopted by other terrorist organizations.

- The principle of “the rule of the jurisprudence”. According to Khomeini’s approach, religious scholars need to run the Islamic state since they are the only ones that can interpret God’s laws. This principle is unique to the radical Shiite thought and is strictly followed by Hezbollah as well.¹¹¹

Hezbollah is deeply hostile to the United States. It is natural for Iran to call the United States "Great Satan" and to support Iran in Hezbollah. In fact, this hostility, as a consequence of the revolutionary point of view, has been transferred to Hezbollah. According to Hezbollah’s claims, the goal of American policy is to take over the entire region and strip the natural resources of the Arab countries, with Israel being one of the tools for this plan.¹¹² One of the example of alleged Hezbollah may be the second Lebanon war. Including Nasrallah, everyone thinks that the US plotted this war. Moreover, in Hezbollah parade and rally “Death to America, death to Israel” chants are heard frequently. Moreover, the main purpose of the party, free Jerusalem, is to eliminate Israel and the most important aim is to establish the Iranian-backed Lebanese Islamic state. In addition, Hezbollah has ownership of the slogan, ‘Neither East Nor West’.

Hezbollah's propaganda on the media

Hezbollah’s propaganda vehicle as a military power has great power. Hezbollah is increasing its popularity using the wide field of media such as the internet, radio, television, newspapers. In addition, the media has taken on the bridge ties between Beirut and Tehran that is available through solid foundation. Moreover, since 1995 with the support of Iran, Hezbollah's 50 television channels and 100 radio stations have begun broadcasting. Furthermore, Hezbollah's mass media consists of three elements. In the first place, the internal media such as bulletins directed to Hezbollah’s members and it contains analysis about recent events. In the second place, there are the advertising and cultural media such as posters, exhibitions, tapes, CDs,

¹¹¹ Azani, E. (2006). *House Committee on International Relations Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation*. Translator Horowitz, M. Retrieved from Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT), at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel. www.investigativeproject.org

¹¹² Ibid,

video games and books which are generally Islamic. In the third place, the traditional and online media outlets are available.¹¹³

The purpose of the first part is to educate and train members of the party. And, it is divided into four categories: Political, Cultural, Supreme Leader speech and Hebrew bulletin.

The Political Circular: The purpose of this news section is to teach the terms of Hezbollah's view on local, regional and global political issues. It is managed by Party cadres.

The Cultural Circular: The office depends on the party's cultural office, general concepts, such as Hadith and Islamic sermons which are published periodically.

The Supreme Leader Speech: The concerned department in the party issued a periodic pamphlet is called *Miskat Al-Nour* (The Lantern of Light) and it includes the recent speech of Iranian Supreme Leader Sayed Ali Khamenei who is considered Hezbollah's supreme jurist (*Al-Wali Al-Faqih*).¹¹⁴

The Hebrew (Jewish) news bureau: Here, they are translated into Hebrew news connected with Hezbollah, or on the contrary from Hebrew into Arabic, 'Know your enemy' notice is published under the title of the slogan.

Hezbollah's first mass media of "*Sawt Al Mustadaf's - Sawt Al Islam*" (The Voice of the Oppressed - The Voice of Islam) are radio stations. In particular, after the first Israel-Lebanon war, first in the city of Baalbek, then media outlet Radio stations in the northern Beqaa valley, began in 1982.¹¹⁵ Radio was being broadcasted by Iran's presidency. Radio was the target of the Palestinian occupation. Therefore, radio supported the Palestine intifada. Although the raid was carried out by Israeli radio center, radio broadcasting was stopped in 2002. Likewise, Hezbollah's second power of the media, *Al-Ahed* (The Pledge) newspaper has been going on to be published since 1984. Weekly, along with five magazines, there are printed newspapers. At the same time, *Al-Nour* (The Light) radio station has many followers¹¹⁶. Moreover, Hezbollah is using more than 50 cyber websites. In particular, they organize cyber-attacks against Israel.

¹¹³ Al-Zein, H. (2014). Identifying and Understanding the Media Discourse of Hezbollah. *Malaysian Journal of Communication*, Volume 30. pp. 117-140. Retrieved from www.ukm.my

¹¹⁴ Ibid,

¹¹⁵ Ibid,

¹¹⁶ Ibid,

Lebanon's South's most popular and most watched broadcaster is *Al-Manar* television channel. *Al-Manar* broadcasts propaganda and doesn't accept hate messages via television. Other Arab television stations assist in disseminating the messages of hate by providing a media platform for Nasrallah. In addition, the "Islamic Jihad" (holy war) to justify Hezbollah is using the media. Moreover, *Al-Manar* publishes anti-Semitic messages and gives psychological war against Israel to support the Palestinian resistance movement. After the Palestinian intifada, "*Intifada Television*" was called as *Al-Manar*. *Al-Manar* followed this strategy:

- Seeking to be the first channel in Lebanon and the world concerned in the conflict with Israel by supporting "The Islamic Resistance" and Palestinian Intifada.
- Seeking to be the first channel in Lebanon and the Arab World concerned with airing political and Jihadist programs.
- Seeking to be a basic channel in Lebanon and the Arab World concerned with scientific, social and educational issues after May 2000.
- Seeking to train the channel's cadre to entice a big audience.¹¹⁷

Second Lebanon and Israel War, the Israeli air force bombed *Al-Manar* channel headquarters in southern district of Beirut. The bombing did not help and *Al-Manar* continued broadcasting. At the same time *Al-Manar* sport, entertainment, music and songs are broadcasted.

The relationship between Iran, Hezbollah and Fadlallah.

As mentioned above, Hezbollah has learned lesson from the Iranian revolution and based on the principles of the political agenda of the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini. AMAL movement to enter the politicization process has created spaces in Lebanon as a military power. Subsequently first erupted in Lebanon - Israeli war, more accelerated process right now. AMAL movement cooperating with Iran in the field of politics seemed to have reached its goal. However, the armed forces in the field did not succeed in Iran. Therefore, Iran decided to establish its own army forces in Lebanon. Ayatollah Khomeini "exporting

¹¹⁷ Al-Zein, H. (2014). Identifying and Understanding the Media Discourse of Hezboolah. *Malaysian Journal of Communication*, Volume 30. pp. 117-140. Retrieved from www.ukm.my

revolution” based on the policy in this case is exactly tailored to the Iranian foreign policy. Members of the Lebanese Shiite armed groups ideological and military training coordination were connected to Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC or Pasdaran). Hezbollah forces were trained by Iran in Lebanon's eastern Beqaa Valley. Furthermore, direct communication was provided for strategic guidance, assistance arbitration by Tehran. The Iranian embassy in Beirut and Damascus assigned two Iranian representatives.¹¹⁸ This is a fact that in the development of these relations, Iran's former ambassador Mohamed Hassan Akhtar in Syria has a very important role. For example, the former ambassador has led Iran's direct involvement in the development of Iranian relations with Hezbollah through Syria. Recently, this fact was elicited. Last May, in an interview with the London-based Saudi newspaper *al-Shark al-Awsat*, Akhtari said:

“who is also known as the “Operational Father” of Hezbollah, detailed the origins and evolution of the Lebanese Shiite militia-cum-political party. The idea to create Hezbollah initially came from Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, Iran’s Ambassador to Syria between 1982 and 1985. During the Iran-Iraq war, elements from Hezbollah, trained by the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), fought with Iranian troops against Iraq. At that time, Ayatollah Khomeini decided to dispatch to Lebanon a large contingent of Revolutionary Guards to help in the creation and training of Hezbollah.”

At the same time, Syria has become the center where the parties met.

Following Iran because of external political agenda, it has become popular among many Shiites. This political agenda has been ongoing since 1979. These principles are follows: First, support for the oppressed peoples of the world and their struggle for justice. Second, solidarity with Islamic groups and support (both financial and military) for movements fighting for self-determination, such as the Palestinian Hamas, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Badr Brigade and Mahdi Army in Iraq and the Army of Muhammad (Sipah-I Muhammad) in Pakistan. Third, total opposition to the US (‘the Great Satan’) and Israel.¹¹⁹

Imam Khomeini's vision in foreign policy has been maintained by Ayatollah Khamenei. Especially about the issues related to Israel, Khamenei is always against the Arab-Israeli peace discussions and opposes them. For such reasons, Israel's political 'Zionists' attitude was

¹¹⁸ Rudner, M. (2010). “Hizbullah: An Organizational and Operational Profile”. *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, 23, 226-240. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08850600903565654>

¹¹⁹ Irani, G.E.(2008). *Iran’s Regional Security Policy: Opportunities and Challenges*. <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/95117/WP%2052,%202008.pdf>

argued. Hezbollah is part of Lebanon's political unrest and one of the main reasons that has the support from outside Iran. Iran via Syria, as a result of intervention in domestic politics in Lebanon, Hezbollah was able to put the parliaments. As a result of Iran's support of Hezbollah three objectives were announced: That Islam is the comprehensive, complete and appropriate programme for a better life; Resistance against Israeli occupation through the “*jihad*” (holy war); and the legitimate leadership of the Jurist Theologian (*Velayat-e Faqih*), who is considered as the successor to the Prophet and the Imams.¹²⁰

In 2006, after the outbreak of the second Lebanon-Israel war, the relationship between Hezbollah and Iran, gained momentum in the second stage. This was the turning point of militant organization, Hezbollah. Hezbollah is a party for the winners of the war. Since the establishment of Israel, it has not been the first time that an Arab States themselves have defeated a smaller Hezbollah organization. Israel did not accept this defeat, continued their attacks against Palestinians. Israeli foreign affairs spokesman has accused Iran of supporting Hezbollah. Since the mid-80s, a regular annual 100 million dollar financial support has been provided to Hezbollah by Iran. Moreover, Hezbollah military trained to keep fit and sent troops to Iran's Revolutionary Guards camps.¹²¹ Additionally, foundations and charities have been created by the Supreme Leader. As a result of advanced military training, Shia religious and moral education was provided to Hezbollah by Iran. In Cairo, between Ahmadinejad and Nasrallah war status quo was negotiated in September 2006. Iran didn't want another war that could harm to Shia alliance. Therefore, they adopted political decision to open up to other political groups in Lebanon by the Iranian leadership. The newly elected Lebanese President Michel Suleiman was invited to Iran. The official visit took place in 2008.

Overall, there were three leading Shiite cleric of Lebanese Shiites. The first of these is the Lebanese resistance movement (AMAL) leader secrets of Al-Sadr. Second is the intellectual leader of the Shia community, Sheikh Mohammed Mehdi Shamseddine. Third is the spiritual guide of Hezbollah Sayed Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah.

Of Lebanese origin, he was born in the Iraqi city of Najaf. Up to 25 years he has learned the traditional Islamic Shiite religious teaching. Sayed Muhsin al-Hakim and Ayatollah Sayed Abul-Qasim al-Khoei were Fadlallah education teachers. Fadlallah as Khoei representative, as

¹²⁰ Irani, G.E.(2008). *Iran's Regional Security Policy: Opportunities and Challenges*. <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/95117/WP%2052,%202008.pdf>

¹²¹ Maynard, B.P.(2005). The role of the ulama in Shiite social movements Bahrain, Lebanon, and Iraq. http://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/1902/05Jun_Maynard.pdf?sequence=1

a result of political pressure returned to Lebanon in 1965 and resided in East Beirut. Returning to Beirut was a turning point for Fadlallah. Fadlallah, in the east of Beirut, met the needs of immigrants and dispensaries, orphanages, etc. buildings were opened. When Fadlallah was 25 years old, he published his first major work, entitled *Uslub al-Da'wa fi al-Qur'an*, which he followed by *al-Hiwar fi al-Qur'an*. This work was published in response to allegations of Orientalists. According to the claims for Orientalists, Islam was spread by the violence and condone violence. Fadlallah worked to refute these claims. These two works highlight the centrality of dialogue (*hiwar*) and appeal to logic (*mantiq*), as well as to innate human nature (*al-fitra al-insaniyya*), to the spread of the Islamic message¹²². Both works replete with reminders to those who seek to spread the message of Islam, especially among the People of the Book (Christians and Jews). Furthermore, those who call for Islam (*du'at*), ought to resort to gentle exhortation and dialogue with their non- Muslim interlocutors, and to do so by highlighting the areas of agreement before debating divisive matters of religious belief (*dogma*).¹²³

Fadlallah's name began to be used in the Lebanese political history starting from 1970, and this continued until the end of his life. In short, the spiritual leadership of his political activity is divided into three periods. First period, in August 1978, is founder of the *AMAL* movement and the head of the Supreme Shia Council and Imam Musa al-Sadr disappeared during his visit to Libya. Al-Sadr, in the absence of spiritual religious leaders took Fadlallah giant task of *AMAL* movement. While right-Sadr continues his movement, Fadlallah's political power is identified as a reformer of Islam and religious leaders have shown him as example for Lebanon's Shia community.¹²⁴

Second period is after the realization of the revolution in Iran in 1979. At that time, the new regime quickly came with the Palestinian cause, and especially the Shia population in the name of resistance against Israel tried to defend the Palestinian cause. Despite all these,

¹²² Baroudi, S. E. (2013). Islamist Perspectives on International Relations: The Discourse of Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah (1935–2010). *Middle Eastern Studies Journal*, Volume 49, pp 107-133. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2012.743887>

¹²³ Ibid,

¹²⁴ Saouli, A. (2014). Intellectuals and Political Power in Social Movements: The Parallel Paths of Fadlallah and Hizbullah. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2014.878509>

Fadlallah's religion continued to follow Abu al-Qasem al-Khoei. However, after his death in 1992, he was recognized as the authority of Ayatollah Khomeini on political issues¹²⁵.

Third period was Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. As a result, Shiites started the process of radicalization. Fadlallah created uncompromising stance toward the 'Zionist entity' and against US. Consequently, Hezbollah established itself as the pre-eminent power among Lebanon's Shi'a in 1982. From Fadlallah to Hezbollah, albeit unofficial, rhetorical support has been the inspiration and source of strategic guidance. Fadlallah of Hezbollah as a religious guide was supported and continued until 1995.¹²⁶ The reason that led to the conclusion of this relationship, Ayatollah Khomeini increased his influence in Lebanon, and Hezbollah officially accepted Khomeini's religious guide. Fadlallah has not accepted any time these Hezbollah leaders. In a newspaper, Fadlallah says:

"I'm the one who raised this generation. This accusation is completely unfounded. I am completely independent, never limiting my mission, and I will limit it."

Fadlallah has a concept unique to himself. The key to comprehend Fadlallah conceptualization of international relations is his notion of motion or movement (*haraka*), which is at the core of his call for a dynamic Islam. For Fadlallah, constancy belongs to God, while the universe is in a perpetual state of motion in accordance with God's established laws of the universe (*sunan al-kawn*).¹²⁷ Fadlallah was thinking ideologically different. Fadlallah's ideas about the Mosque are more interesting. According to Fadlallah, mosques are not just places of worship. Mosques should be the center of a much larger work; the mosque should be built for the adoption of the revolutionary spirit of the Lebanese Shiites and they think the mosque needs to be brought into the centers.¹²⁸ Just like the time of our Prophet, mosques must be transformed into centers of learning. Leaving deep scars on Hezbollah, Ayatollah Fadlallah died in 2010.

¹²⁵ Luomi, M. (2008). *Sectarian identities or Geopolitics? The Regional Shia-Sunni Divide in the Middle East*. The Finnish Institute of International Affairs. Retrieved from www.mercury.ethz.ch

¹²⁶ Norton, A. R. (2007). The Role of Hezbollah in Lebanese Domestic Politics. *The International Spectator*, 42, 475–491. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com

¹²⁷ Baroudi, S. E. (2013). Islamist Perspectives on International Relations: The Discourse of Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah (1935–2010). *Middle Eastern Studies Journal*, Volume 49, pp 107-133. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2012.743887>

¹²⁸ Ibid,

3.2. The Brigades of the Lebanese Resistance or “*Afwaj Al-Muqawama Al-Lubnaniyya*” (AMAL) and Iran

As written above, the history of the formation of the Lebanese Resistance Brigades is linked to an agreement with Iran. Initially, The Lebanese Resistance Brigades were formed for resistance and military purposes then resulted in the politicization of the organization. Arabic name for the organization is *Afwaj al-Muqawama al-Lubnaniyya*, but later it is known by its short names AMAL, or "Hope". Lebanese resistance movement is linked to an agreement with Iranian-born Musa Al Sadr. Al Sadr, at the beginning of the 1970s, supported the populist reform movement “*Harakat al-Mahrumin*” (the Movement of the Deprived) and he has been named the leader of the militia group. With Al-Sadr in the Lebanese Shiite organization of leadership, the process continued until 1978. The first decade of the Lebanese Shiites was organized for resistance. For the next twenty years, it was one of the reasons for resistance to the occupation of Palestine by Israel. In fact, in the early 1970s and the armed Palestinian presence grew stronger and many young Lebanese Shi'a found their place in one or another of the *fida'i*, or guerrilla fighter organizations. AMAL was initially trained by Fatah, the largest organization in the PLO, and played a minor role in the fighting of 1975 and 1976.¹²⁹

Additionally, since the 1970s, the Shah opposites, the Iranian youth began to participate in the Lebanese resistance movement. From this period, Lebanon felt the influence of Iran. The second most important person in the AMAL movement was Mustafa Chamran. Mustafa Chamran mysterious secret continues hitherto. From 1970 until 1979, Mustafa visited Lebanon several times. During these years, he met several Lebanese Shi'a personalities. In addition, he met with Nabih Berri and AMAL party members. Later he returned to AMAL movement and gave military training to Shia militias and members. Moreover, according to Iranian government claim, Chamran became part of a Shi'a network and was linked to Ruhollah Khomeini and he was appointed by Khomeini in Lebanon. Moreover, Mustafa knew

¹²⁹ Norton, A. R. (1999). *Hizballah of Lebanon: Extremist Ideals vs. Mundane Politics*. New York: New York Press

that it was connected via Syria and Iran. The best example of this is the establishment of Hezbollah.¹³⁰

Furthermore, the 1970s began to establish transnational networks among Lebanese Shiites and Iran. Relations were standing in the center of Liberation Movement of Iran (*Nehzat-i Azadi-i Iran*), which they gathered members of the anti-Shah movement. Musa Al-Sadr and the group have established a very close relationship with AMAL movement. As a result of this collaboration, many members of the anti-Shah opposition group, al-Sadr and with his activism and perspectives in Lebanon began to associate their ideologies.

These bilateral relations continued until the Iranian revolution. However, the Iranian-Lebanese Shi'ite ties after the Iranian revolution and Iran's religious ruling elites clash between the visions of Lebanon's Shiite identity. Before AMAL movement, the first one was major Lebanese Shi'a movement. On 24 February in 1979, Chamran and a delegation of AMAL leaders Husain Husseini and Nabih Berri as well as the Lebanese Shi'a religious scholars then associated with AMAL and visited Tehran.

Chamran died in 1982. As a result of the establishment of Hezbollah, AMAL movement began to weaken its relations with Iran. After 1982, an Iranian official AMAL delegation visited it for the first time in 1996. In response, the minister of culture, Ayatollah Mohammad Khatami visited Lebanon. Since 2001, the official contact between Iran and AMAL movement has been interrupted.

Although Iran's ties with AMAL are not as tight as Hezbollah, Iran has tried to keep Lebanon under control. Whether it's AMAL or Hezbollah, it's always trying to get it under its own influence. Furthermore, as a result of the clashes between AMAL and Hezbollah, AMAL keeps itself away from Iran. Ideologically, Iran adopted its political ideology. Moreover, the moderate politics of AMAL contradicts the interests of Iran. Despite all these influencing factors, both parties are trying to keep the relations at a good level.

¹³⁰ Eisenlohr, R. S. (2007). Postrevolutionary Iran and Shi'i Lebanon: Contested Histories of Shi'i Transnationalism. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 39, 271-289. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30069576>

CHAPTER IV

Iran's Iraq Politics after the invasion in Iraq

Iran's relationship with Iraq is more sensitive than others, but it is so colorful and rapidly changing. Though the heart and center of the Shiite sect is in Iraq, these days have assumed the role of patron and guardian of the Iranian Shiites. It is related to the historical background of Iraq not being in this position. Despite the fact that 60 percent of Iraq people are Shiites, the Sunni political elite was the leader of the Iraqi government until the US occupation and becoming a dominant power. After 2003, the US occupation opened Iraq doors for Iran forever. While Iraq and Iran are two hostile states after the war, Iraq and Iran are showing their friendship today. After Saddam's regime collapsed, Iran benefiting from the anarchist level that was recruited, knew very well the power of Iraq Shiite forces close to Iran. In this respect, the following issues will be discussed. Muqtada al-Sadr is one of the great supporters of Iran's in Iraq. We can accept the Sadr family as the same as Hezbollah in Lebanon. Just like Hezbollah, they regarded the concept of the Velayat-e Faqih and Khomeini as their leader. Well, there is a question emerging here. The Velayat-e Faqih is accepted by all Iraq Shiites as a norm. Naturally, the answer will be no. Although Iran tries to impose the city of Qum and Mashhad cities as sacred and central cities to Shiites, Iraq is the scientific kingdom of Shi'ism from its historical roots. In addition to this, Najaf and Karbala, the holy cities should not forgotten. Moreover, the different views of the Iraq Shiite religious community do not coincide with the interests of Iran. Despite all this, Iran is playing a role in the political system of Iraq Shiites. If needed, it does not withdraw from interfering with its political system. Iran is using all its means to keep Iraq. The Iraq Shiite politics of Iraq is not welcomed by Iraq Sunnis at all. In addition, Khomeini does not consider some Iraq clergy as leaders. The Shiite clergy, like Sistani, say that the Khomeini principles are only in use for Iran and Iraq has its own social and political structure.

4.1. Post Saddam regime: Iran and Iraq relations

The world was witnessed the invasion of Iraq by the US and Saddam's regime in 2003. After the US intervention, the Iraq state was structurally fragmented and became a complex state, and at the same time Iraq became a federal state. Due to the political regime and system change, the neighbor led to the regulation of relations with Iraq again. In addition, Iraq has a diverse ethnic structure. Arabs, Kurds and Turkmen, which have ethnic structure of Iraq, but also the rural or urban; educated or not; tribal or have a modern look. At the same time, there are Iraq Muslims or Christians, though a few members of other religions to the people of the motherland. Muslims in Iraq as sectarian are separated and are dominated by the Shia sect in the country. Arabs make up 80 percent of Iraq's population and are accepted as 60 percent of the country's Shiite sect.¹³¹ Furthermore, the vast majority of Iraqi Shiites are believed to be Twelve Imam.

Since Shiite sect emerged in Iraq, based Shiite-centric Najaf, Samarra, in cities like Karbala, always well-established centers for theological studies and religious tourists have been established. Therefore, Shiite in Iran was placed particularly in Iraq's southern Shiite region in the domain and became a part of Iran. From another side, Iraq has always been in a relationship with Sunni Arabs living in south-western Iran. Shiite Arabs are dominant in terms of numerical superiority in southern Iraq. Moreover, approximately two million people live in the Shiite Sadr City (former Saddam City) east of Baghdad.

Iraq intervention in 2003 to exhibit unstable behavior is to surprise everyone knew how to deal with Iran. In fact, Iran abandoned Iraq and remained silent only to overthrow the enemy regime. As a reminder, in comparison to other neighbors, Iraq and Iran are sharing longer border line. Iran has preferred to remain silent to avoid exposing it to possible attacks. After two years of indecision, the silence was broken by the Supreme Leader of Iran. Additionally, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei argued that:

“The US claims that its objective is the elimination of Saddam and the Ba’athist regime. This is, of course, a lie. Its real aim is to appropriate OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting

¹³¹ Sharon, O. (2003). *Irak: The Sunnis. Council on Foreign Relations* Retrieved from <http://www.cfr.org/iraq/iraq-sunnis/p7678>

Countries) and to swallow up the region" soil resources, to offer a closer support to the Zionist regime and to plot more closely against Islamic Iran, Syria, and Saudi Arabia".¹³²

After that, there is only one option for Iran: Post-Saddam Iraq in establishing the rule of Iraq Shiites. First potential that could come from the Iraq military is that economy and religion are supposed to prevent such threats. Second, Iran's aim was to limit US influence in Iraq and the busy thoroughfare because for US President Bush's speech about Iran, Iran pushed for such a strategy. To perform them, ideology has been used as a political tool by Iran.

Tehran political strategy

Post-invasion Iraq politically poses several threats to Iran. The first political threat is that the government is dominated by Shiite political, nationalist and secular Shiites to cooperate with Sunnis and turning a potential enemy has always been the fear of Tehran. The second threat is establishing government of pro-US, the US "puppet" to fear. Thirdly, Iran is never in favor of the emergence of rival political model in Iraq and preventing the emergence of alternative every time. For instance, either being democratic, or establishing new religiously regime. The fourth threat is the Kurdish problem. From the Kurdish political future in Iraq, Iran is worried too. The reason for this is the fear of the uprising of the Iranian Kurds. It also can pose a threat to the territorial integrity of Iran. Iraqis Kurds, to gain more autonomy, should be motivated and mobilized for the same demands of Iranian Kurds. Last threatening, chronic instability or civil war in Iraq, with a strong possibility of spread of the Sunni Al-Qaeda, Sunni armed groupings and increased the concerns of Iran.¹³³

Apart from political threats, Iran had a fear of encountering economic and religious threats. Teheran became a strong competitor for the export of oil and oil products, in view of the substantial reserves of petroleum of Iraq. The reason for this is the reduction of impact on Iran's OPEC politics, and fear of loss of income.

Religiously, the fear re-emerged as the most important center of learning in Najaf against the Iranian city of Qom. Because moderate interpretation of political Islam and defending the

¹³² Bongers, R. (2012-2013). Iran's foreign policy towards post-invasion Iraq. *Journal of Politics and International Studies*, Volume 8, pp 124-160. Retrieved from www.polis.leeds.ac.uk

¹³³ Ibid,

Velayat-e Faqih to the rejection of the ideas influx of Iranian clerics in Najaf, and again questioned the legitimacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iran's Foreign Ministry is not unauthorized for the coordination of relations between two countries. The relationship between the two countries was carried out by Iran's Intelligence Agency and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps.¹³⁴ The other important issue is Tehran's intelligence and agent network. These networks established by Iran are made up of Iraq agents and Iraq agents serve them for money. In addition, Iran is investing in large-scale projects specifically, such as social welfare, religious tourism, supporting political parties, and construction projects.

The establishment of the government in a pro-Iranian Shiite leadership in Iraq was an important issue for Iran. Iran was threat against him and wanted to get rid of the fear created. Between 2003 and 2005, Iran calculated that it suited its interests to support the entry of Iraq Shiite Islamist factions into the U.S.-led election process, because the number of Shiites in Iraq virtually ensured Shiite dominance of an elected government.¹³⁵

Iran's other strategic objectives, despite the federal government made, and does not want the deterioration of Iraq's territorial integrity. Furthermore, Iran with the help of political allies in Iraq, is trying to change Iraq's political agenda. After 2003, the first political ally, Iran, in 1982, ISCI was founded in Iran by Iraqi political refugees. After the collapse of the Saddam regime, Iraqi political refugees began returning in time to get closer to Iran. Clearly they were pro-Iranian supporters in Iraq. Iran's second political supporter was former Badr Corps or Badr Brigade. Many of Badr members hold senior positions in the Iraqi military system. Third allied group was the Islamic Dawa Party. The Party resisting against Baath Party was always supported by Iran. The faction was supported by Iran because of its resistance against the Ba'ath Party. Since 2006, Former Prime Minister of Iraq, Nuri al-Maliki has been Dawa's leader. After many years, Iran has gained control over large Dawa. Fourth allies were the ones in Sadr movement. According to Mustafa Zahrani, an Iranian senior officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said:

¹³⁴ Banerjee, U. (2015). Revolutionary Intelligence: The Expanding Intelligence Role of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. *Journal of Strategic Security*. Number 3 Volume 8, No. 3, Retrieved from <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1449&context=jss>

¹³⁵ Katzman, K. (2007). *Iran's Activities and Influence in Iraq*. Retrieved from CRS Report for Congress www.crs.gov

“People do not like how Sadr is trying to play a role in Iraq, but the consequences of what Sadr is doing may be beneficial for Iran”.¹³⁶

These comments suggest that how important the Sadr movement is for Iran. Additionally, former foreign minister Kamal Kharrazi will accept this connection.

In addition, Iran was controlled via the main two Kurdish parties, the KDP and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. Moreover, Iran has supported an alliance between its Shiite allies and Kurdish party's coalition.



¹³⁶ Bongers, R. (2012-2013). Iran's foreign policy towards post-invasion Iraq. *Journal of Politics and International Studies*, Volume 8, pp 124-160. Retrieved from www.polis.leeds.ac.uk

4.2. Sadr Movement

Two million Shia-backed Sadr movement holds an important place in Iraq politics. Central in the Sadr city in eastern Baghdad, the leader of the political movement was Muqtada al-Sadr. Al-Sadr family has the largest population among Iraq Shiites. In particular, among the indigenous Shiites, they live in Sadr city. Muqtada al-Sadr, who was killed in 1999 by Saddam's intelligence, is the son of Grand Ayatollah Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr. Until 2003, he has received religious training in Iran, and he has accepted the Khomeini *Velayat-e Faqih* principle. US intervention in Iraq, following the overthrow of the process of Saddam's regime in April 2003, Iranian Muqtada al-Sadr has been appointed as the representative of Iraq and called Ayatollah Kazim Ha'eri. This event was considered as an attempt to Iran. Furthermore, Ayatollah Kazem'i was a mentor to Muqtada al-Sadr. Sadr and long lived in the city of Qom.

Personally, it is a leader with radical views and anti-American. Also, like Sadr mentor Ayatollah Kazim Ha'eri conducted the implementation of the theory of *Velayat-e Faqih* in Iraq and wanted the establishment of the Islamic Republic. Even for that Sadr has a strong Islamic social agenda. Ayatollah Kazim has created standoff between Sadr's radical visions. Nevertheless, it has been Ayatollah Kazim al-Sadr supporters. Likewise, he adopted the ideas of his teacher.

Ayatollah Kazim had an interesting claim about Saddam Hussein. According to him:

“Saddam Hussein was actually an American agent for many years, but God “caused the fire of disagreement and war to erupt among the unjust themselves, namely between the masters of global arrogance (the United States) and their most vicious agent (Saddam Hussein).”¹³⁷

While he was in Qom, Iran has influence on him, so they were in favor of his stay in Iran.

Thanks to Muqtada al-Sadr in 2003, the first Friday prayers in Kufa mosque in one of the anti-American sermon were taken as headline news in all the media. Moreover, the US puppet Iraqi interim government condemned the violence and to the US supporters. In addition, he was demanded by the Iraqi people, especially the Shiite uprising against the US occupation. Additionally, Sadr used all its capabilities to influence regional and international media. And,

¹³⁷ Terrill, W. A. (2004). *The United States and Iraq's Shi'ite Clergy: Partners or Adversaries?*. Retrieved from Strategic Studies Institute. U. S. <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi>

his video interviews and sermons were given to the media by supporters of Sadr. Sadr demanded the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq.

Subsequently, in 2004, he launched several uprisings against US and Iraq forces and challenged repeatedly against the Iraq government. In city center in Sadr, there were the resistance's headquarters. The first uprising began in Sadr city. Then the Najaf crisis erupted. In addition, Sadr made this statement about the United States: the statement “Spread and as a cancer that must be removed” has defined the United States. Sadr also said they would not support a long-term agreement between Iraq and the United States clearly. Iraq status of forces agreement (SOFA) could be given as example. On 28 May 2004, the Muqtada al-Sadr called for a protest against the deal. After this call, more than 10,000 rebels took to the streets of Sadr city. Civil protests led to a civil war in Iraq.¹³⁸

The protesters were arrested by US troops. Then, the “*Jaysh al-Mahdi*” (Army of the Mahdi) went into armed conflict against US and Iraqi forces. Including "Sadr City", Najaf and other Shiite cities continued armed clash until April and August. Consequently, armed operations in the US and the Iraq army, the Mahdi Army and Sadr offensive uprising were suppressed.

So, what force is behind al-Sadr? Who is it that arming the Mahdi Army? To answer them, we need to analyze the relationship between Iran and al-Sadr.

Iran is always anxious about Iraq because Iraq seemed allied to Iran and was also a rival of Iran. Thus, Iran does not want Iraq to be more developed. Iran still continues to have concern against the threat from Iraq. Therefore, there is a need for political figures such as al-Sadr. Iranian-backed al-Sadr was kingmaker in Iraq's policy between 2003-2007 years. The aim of Iran is that the Shiite head of the Iraqi government should be supported. Therefore, Iran has supported the Sadr uprising. In fact, US commanders have said Sadr and private groups are linked to Iran. Also, Iran helped to collect \$ 80 million for Sadr's movement. In addition, he established camps along the two countries border to provide basic military training to the “*Jaysh al-Mehdi*” members.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Malkasian, C. (2006). Signaling resolve, democratization, and the first battle of Fallujah. *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Volume 29, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01402390600765843>

¹³⁹ Felner, J. and Fishman, B. (2008). Iranian Strategy in Iraq Politics and “Other Means”. *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*. <https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Iranian-Strategy-in-Iraq.pdf>

Unsatisfied with that of Iran, the Shiite militia during the armed conflict was given specific information thanks to Iran. In addition, a wing of the Revolutionary Guards' Quds (Jerusalem) Forces "entered into a number of events within the borders of Iraq. During the Civil War, it was recorded in Iraq and there were around 150 of Iranian agents. For instance, from December 2006 until October 2007, in city of Erbil, US forces arrested more than 20 Iranians in Iraq. Most of them are alleged as Quds Force officers.

Naturally, Iran has benefited greatly from the political process in Iraqi as an example, in January elections in 2005. In total, al-Sadr won 30 seats in the 275 seats in parliament, the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) took part in the coalition government. This was the political success of Iran in Iraq. However, al-Sadr was not possible to stay long in this Alliance. In September 2007, he announced that he had officially left the United Iraqi Alliance. After that, al-Sadr began to challenge the Iraqi government forces. And the second round started uprising.

Coalition forces captured Hezbollah being in action in Iraq in July 2007. According to reports, the Lebanese Hezbollah via Iran would provide military training to Shiite militias in Iraq. Subsequently, Sadr to confirm the month of August of the same year, Hezbollah and the Mahdi relations, he said these words:

"We have formal links with Hezbollah, we do exchange ideas and discuss the situation facing Shi'ites in both countries. We copy Hezbollah in the way they fight and their tactics, we teach each other and we are getting better through this."¹⁴⁰

In July 2007, the Brig. Gen. Kevin Bergner had an interview "Quds Force" using Lebanon Hezbollah members of the Iraqi Shiite militia training. In addition, Hezbollah has weapons and about \$ 3 million financial support. Overall, from 2003 until December 2007, over 200 US soldiers have been killed in clashes. In August, according to a statement issued by the US spokesman, US troops caused Iraqi Shiite militants to die. In addition, the spokesman added in this sentence, the Shiite militias are equipped with 122-millimeter mortar rockets by Iran.¹⁴¹

In 2008, in Basra, Sadr City and Amarah city was seized by a majority of the arsenal of the Mahdi Army, which is the production of Iranian rockets, mortars and other weapons

¹⁴⁰ Cordesman, A.H. and Ramos, J. A. A. (2008). Sadr and The Mahdi Army: Evolution, Capabilities, and a New Direction. New York: New York Press

¹⁴¹ Ibid,

appeared. This is an indication of the impressive aspects of Iran. War in Basra, Iraqi government officials were forced to visit Iran to make a truce. In response, Iranian diplomats reported that they would support Iraq. The Iraq Study Group final report's first recommendation was that the United States included Iran (and Syria) in multilateral efforts to stabilize Iraq.¹⁴² In Baghdad, bilateral meetings were held between Iran and the United States. The speeches were a success in the result. 2009 parliamentary elections, Iraqi Shiites opposed to al-Sadr and they took part in the elections.

Sadr went to Iran for the defeat in 2007. From 2008 until 2011, Sadr lived in Iran. After the resignation of Maliki's government, he returned to Iraq in January 2011. Sadr did not appear until 2014, after the fall of Mosul by Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), he announced that he established the Peace Brigades militant group. In November 2014, 200 membership Peace Brigades organized an attack against ISIL in the town of Heet Ambar province.¹⁴³ Thereafter, Al Sadr appeared in April 2016. Sadr supporters stormed the parliament building. In response, the government decided to arrest them. Consequently, the Sadr still continues to play an effective role in Iraqi politics. Sadr's visit to Iran and getting Iranian support mean that Iran still tries to give up al Sadr.

¹⁴² Katzman, K. (2007). *Iran's Activities and Influence in Iraq*. Retrieved from CRS Report for Congress www.crs.gov

¹⁴³ Ibid

4.3. Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (Al-Majlis al-‘Aala li al-Thawra al-Islamiyah fi-l-Iraq) SCIRI and Iran

Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq is known as Iraq's biggest Shiite party. In Arabic, it is called “*Al-Majlis al-‘Aala li al-Thawra al-Islamiyah fi-l-Iraq*”. After that, it will be called as SCIRI or ISCI. In fact, the party was founded out of Iraq and the party's influence has going on to stabilize Iraq's politics. The historical roots of the party depend on the Shiite Iraqi immigrant family. Usually the party leaders have become one of the family members. In addition, the party leader had been one of the family members until 2003. After the change of Saddam regime in Iraq, Shiite families, who had been exiled because of some political reasons, they began to return from Iran to Iraq. The famous al-Hakim family was one of the families returning to Iraq.¹⁴⁴

The party was founded in 1982 by Muhammad Baqr al-Hakim in Iran. Moreover, as the representative of Khomeini, Khamenei joined the newly formed party of the opening ceremony. Naturally, Khomeini and Velayat-e Faqih theory was adopted. After Khomeini's death, they recognized Ali Khamenei. The aim is to topple the Baathist regime in Iraq, then to establish Islamic rule. In response, the regime killed seven al-Hakim's son and grandsons. Thus, the council decided to cooperate with the United States and became the Interim Governing Council members.

Khomeini's ideas have been preserved since 1982. After Saddam's ouster, the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq adopted the principles of liberal democracy. One reason for this, the council was reluctant to be involved in Iraq's political elite. In June 2003, Muhammad Baqr al-Hakim made a statement:

“If the new Iraqi government was to function well, it should be founded on several key pillars, including respect for the will of the people as expressed at the ballot box, respect for ethnic minorities through a federal system of government, and respect for Islam through the enforcement of Islamic canon law or Shari’a.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ International Crisis Group. Working to prevent Conflict Worldwide.(2007). *Shiite Politics in Iraq: The Role of the Supreme Council*. Retrieved from <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/473d5d632.pdf>

¹⁴⁵ Schmidt, S. (2009). The role of religion in politics. The case of Shia-Islamism in Iraq. *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, Volume 2, pp 123-143. Retrieved from www.tapir.pdc.no

On August 29, Muhammad Baqr al-Hakim was killed in the assassination. Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim took over the leadership. Thus, the SCIRI decided to cooperate with the United States and the Interim Governing Council members. In January 2005 parliamentary elections, with the support of Grand Ayatollah Sistani, the party won 140 places.¹⁴⁶ They took their places in the United Iraqi Alliance coalition government. The important Finance and the Interior Ministry also obtained Vice President Tasks. Moreover, there were still the backbones of the future government elections in 2006. The reason for this was that the alliance with the Iraqi Kurds. In particular, Jalal Talabani Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) had 20-years long strong political relationships.¹⁴⁷

In May 2007 Abd-al-Aziz al-Hakim at party conference said he would go on to change the party's name. According to him, the party had successfully completed the first mission and the results toppled the regime. Therefore, the party's "revolution" word should be removed. In addition, it entered the political process through elections based on a constitutional imperative for peaceful power. After that, the party would have a new name of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq. The reason for the name change to be mad was an exile-based Islamic Revolution in Iran and this was related to the transformation of the rebel group.

In addition, there has been a disagreement between Sadr and the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq. Sadrists and the Supreme Council due to security forces in Karbala and other places of conflict, and of the assassinated governor led to an escalation of tension between the two Shiite parties.

Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq has strong military powers. Former Badr Brigade or Badr Organisation was the military wing of the party. This military organization was established by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and underwent military training at a high level. Furthermore, they are connected with high loyalty to Iran.¹⁴⁸ In 2003, the Badr Organization expelled members connected to Iran, however, it still continues as pro-Iranian organization. In October 2003, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim in *al-Jazeera TV* interview said these words about Badr. According to al-Hakim:

¹⁴⁶ Rahimi, B. (2007) . *Ayatollah Sistani and the Democratization of Post-Ba'athist Iraq* . Special Report 187.

Retrieved from <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr187.pdf>

¹⁴⁷ El-Shibiny, M. (2010). *Iraq :A Lost War*. New York. St. Martin's Press LLC

¹⁴⁸ *Badr Organization of Reconstruction and Development*. Retrieved from <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/435>

“The Badr Corps had “turned into a civil organization and will play a role in the restoration of security and the reconstruction and building of a new Iraq.”¹⁴⁹

In addition, since 2004, the Badr Organization in Iraq has trained youth ideology of the Islamic Republic. For this, the Islamic Cultural Center was opened. Headquarters were in Baghdad, but there were branches in other Shiite cities. Over time there was a disagreement, but after 2010 the Badr Organization of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq left the road. Although there was the dichotomy among the ideas, they still continue to be an ally. Badr Organization, closer to Iran, has become independent. Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq now has been attached to it in the Ashura Brigade.

Current Badr leader Hadi al-Amiri and Iranian General Qasem Soleimani have connections with each other. Also, al-Amiri has dual citizenships. The Badr Organization continues to be influential in the Iraqi government. Prime Minister Abadi was appointed by Mohammed al-Ghabban as interior minister. He is also a member of the Badr Organization. Badr has more than 15,000 fighters and they are fighting against ISIL.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Khalaji, M. (2006). *The Last Marja: Sistani and the End of Traditional Religious Authority in Shiism*. Retrieved from United States of America by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Retrieved from www.washingtoninstitute.org

¹⁵⁰ Al-Laythi, N.(2014). Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi's government finally complete. Retrieved from <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/10/iraq-appoint-ministers-defense-interior.html>

Ali Sistani's religious and political views.

The rise of the Shia city of Najaf has been the center of religious teaching of the Shiite sect. Najaf religious schools have different opinions for the Iranian religious schools. In particular, for historical position and location, the condition is associated with the principles of their theology and jurisprudence. One of the main differences of the Najaf clergy from the historical centers of political power is to keep itself independent. However, the historical dimensions show clearly that that's not the case.

According to the *Velayat-e Faqih*, Khomeini has privileged jurists (*fakih*) appointed by God. Sistani emphasizes it as a condition in which the popularity and social acceptability were evident. Moreover, Sistani directly criticized the Iranian political system. Supreme religious leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Velayat-e Faqih system were at the center of criticism. Sistani's representative in Kuwait Morteza Mohri explained the reason for this:

“Sistani deliberately hesitates to express his opinion on Velayat-e Faqih because if he declares that he holds that Velayat-e Faqih is an accurate principle in Shi’ism, since he believes in priority and superiority of “the most knowledgeable mojtahed” (*mojtahed-e aalam*), it would mean that he believes in himself as the only legitimate ruler *faqih (vali-e fahi)*, not only in Iraq but also in the Shiite world. Sistani knows, Mohri adds, that he does not have the capability that Khamenei projected, without which his claim for Velayat-e Faqih would remain without any social, political, and even economic support. In addition, such a claim would put him in competition with the Iranian regime and its Supreme Leader, which would damage Sistani more than the Iranian regime.”¹⁵¹

In conclusion, although there are some ideas and criticisms against Iran, it continues to have Sistani relations with Iran especially with religious madrasas in the city of Qum.

Furthermore, his political stance affected Iraq's coalition government. Sistani was forced to stop his political activities during Saddam's regime. This recession continued until 2003. However, after the United States intervened in Iraq, Sistani returned to the political arena.

When talking of Iraq, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim and Sistani appear as leaders having dual management. Also, Sistani fatwa is the largest political tool to influence Iraq's political system. On June 26, 2003 in Iraq, Sistani issued a fatwa on the establishment of a new

¹⁵¹ Khalaji, M. (2006). *The Last Marja: Sistani and the End of Traditional Religious Authority in Shiism*. Retrieved from United States of America by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. www.washingtoninstitute.org

political system. In the fatwa content, there was a general referendum on a new constitution for Iraq's coalition administration, and then they would vote for a constituent representative parliament. In the same year, on October 29 second fatwa was given by Sistani.¹⁵² The new fatwa reportedly recognized the legitimacy of the parliament made through elections. After that, the United Iraq Alliance supporters in Basra began to show the Sistani posters. Speaking during the demonstrations in the city of Maysan in December Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim had support against Sistani. He says that:

“The UIA was the coalition “that had been established with the blessing of Imam Sayed Sistani”¹⁵³.

In January 2004, the Sistani-backed giant demonstrations were held in all of Iraq. The autumn of 2004 was the coalition negotiation, and Sistani took part in this meeting. Sistani was the winner in the parliamentary elections in 2005. Moreover, Sistani demanded the establishment of the Constitutional Court based on Islam. In addition, he stressed the need to apply the law according to Sharia law. These requests became moot point by coalition authorities. Because, the main purpose was not Islamic government but it was to establish a secular and democratic Iraq. For the results of the constitutional negotiations, there was consensus about the following topics.

*Islam is the official religion of the state and is a basic source of legislation:
(Article 2).¹⁵⁴*

Furthermore, Sistani called for consensus to stop the sectarian conflict in Iraq. This was the last call to stop terrorist attacks by Sunnis against Shiites. In February 2006, the destruction of the Shiite mosque in Samarra accelerated further civil war. At the end of 2005, the coalition government fell apart.

¹⁵² Schmidt, S. (2009). The role of religion in politics. The case of Shia-Islamism in Iraq. *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 2, 123-143. Retrieved from www.tapir.pdc.no

¹⁵³ Visser, R. (2006) *Sistani, the United States and Politics in Iraq: From Quietism to Machiavellianism?*. Retrieved from Norwegian Institute of International Affairs <http://www.nupi.no>

¹⁵⁴ Khalaji, M. (2006). *The Last Marja: Sistani and the End of Traditional Religious Authority in Shiism*. Retrieved from United States of America by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. www.washingtoninstitute.org

4.4. Iran relations with the DAWA Party

DAWA party is one of Iraq's historical opposition parties. In the mid-20th century, it was founded by Muhammad Baqr al-Sadr in 1959. Party emerged in response to the spread of Arab socialist and communist movements. Party's goal was to promote Islamic and ethical values. However, the judicial function was different from the religious authorities, and the government believed that they should gather under the constitutional mechanism. Additionally, the Dawa Party's primary goal has been to establish an Islamic state in Iraq. Also it has always supported democratic elections and the parliamentary system.

Party ideologically aimed the rule of God on earth. In the context of the Shia faith, as successors of the twelve Imams, Shiite scholars will undertake this role. In 1975, as a result of work done by Sadr, the four principles of the Islamic Political System management were revealed.

- ✓ Absolute sovereignty belongs to God.
- ✓ Islamic injunctions are the basis of legislation. The legislative authority may enact any law not repugnant to Islam.
- ✓ The people, as vice-regents of Allah, are entrusted with legislative and executive powers.
- ✓ The jurist holding religious authority represents Islam. By confirming legislative and executive actions, he gives them legality.¹⁵⁵

However, Saddam did not allow the realization of this dream. Nevertheless, Iranian revolution will inspire the Dawa party, and Iranian-backed party members will make a revolt against Saddam.

Imam Khomeini's Islamic revolution was launched in 1978 and he managed to achieve this in 1979. That was the reason for the admiration and respect of other Shia groups and parties against Khomeini. In particular, the Shiite population was greater in Iraq. In the same year, following the Iranian revolution and it was approved to establish a law banning the party. However, for the concept of *Velayat-e Faqih* and loyalty to the Supreme Leader, the Dawa Party was increasing the number of members. Ultimately, it creates constant tension and

¹⁵⁵ Shanahan, R. (2004). Shi'a political development in Iraq: the case of the Islamic Da'wa Party. *Journal Third World Quarterly*, Volume 25, pp 943–954 Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0143659042000232045>

internal disagreements within the party.¹⁵⁶ For this reason, Dawa party was divided into two groups in 1980: Dawa Party and Dawa Tandhim. The second group neither recognized the Khomeini's theory, nor the intervention of Iran in the internal affairs of the party carried out. In addition, party opened its own offices in Damascus, Tehran and London.¹⁵⁷

Soon after the split, the party's founding leader Mohammad Baqr al-Sadr lost his life in 1982. In the same year Council of Jurisprudence (*al-Majlis al-fiqhi*) was established. Al-Dawa's greatest strength is a Congress held every two years. New leaders are elected at this congress. Additionally, there are two important offices: the political and military office.

Another important issue is that after 1980, al-Dawa was converted into a group that was militant. Iranian intelligence-backed groups staged assassination against Saddam in the 1980s and 90s. The most sensational attack was directed against the former Iraqi prime minister, Tariq al-Aziz. Saddam's response to these attacks came soon after. Sadr including a thousand people were executed in April 9, 1980. Moreover, all the party members were expelled from Iraq. Exile period continued until 2003.¹⁵⁸

During this period Nuri al-Maliki opened the Dawa office in Damascus, and Hezbollah was active in organizing help to establish a new Shia-Islamist organization in Lebanon. Also, by al-Maliki as spiritual guide Fadlallah was visited frequently. In addition, al-Dawa and ISCI's close political and military cooperation continued in the 1990s. This caused doctrinal and political disputes. Maliki said these words at the end of 2002:

“We prefer the democratic game. What the people decide is the thing that matters, away from sects and ethnicity. This although we call for an Islamic not religious state as long as the Iraqis voluntarily and willingly supports such a state.”¹⁵⁹

Al-Maliki started to signal a new political era in Iraq. In January 2003, Ibrahim al-Ja'afari visited the United States. To prepare ground for the invasion of Iraq, he met with the former US ambassador, the UN Zalmay Khalilzad. During the transition towards Iraq sovereignty,

¹⁵⁶ Cordesman, H. A. and Khazai, A. S. (2012). *Iraq After US Withdrawal: US Policy and the Iraqi Search for Security and Stability*. Retrieved from https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/publication/120702_Iraq_After_US_Withdrawal.pdf

¹⁵⁷ Shanahan, R. (2004). The Islamic Da'wa Party: Past Development and Future Prospects. *Rubin Center Research in International Affairs*. Volume 8, No2

¹⁵⁸ *The Death Penalty Worldwide*. Retrieved from http://www.eidhr.eu/files/dmfile/the-death-penalty-worldwide-report-2010_en.pdf

¹⁵⁹ Schmidt, S. (2008). *Shia-Islamist political actors in Iraq: Who are they and what do they want?*. Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies

which was taken into consideration for the need of US support, Maliki was forced to show pragmatism in his relations with the United States. Moreover, there were no militia groups that supported Maliki's party. Therefore, the party seemed weak despite other Shia parties. At 2005 parliamentary elections, the party entered the United Iraq Alliance. As a result of the elections, the Dawa Party could win four ministries and the prime minister's seat. He became the prime minister of a coalition government of Iraq. Al-Maliki, as a party political role, did not opt for the direct participation of the clergy or religious institution. However, it should be compatible with the basic principles of Islam. Until 2006-2008, Maliki was the Prime Minister of Iraq and had the support of all Shiite factions. Moreover, Iran had supported al-Maliki. In the 2009 elections, there was an increase in the Dawa Party votes. This is the reason for the increase in Sunni group voting for the party. State of Law Coalition won 28 percent of the vote in the 2009 provincial elections.¹⁶⁰ This has led al-Maliki to be stronger. The winner of next year's parliamentary elections became Maliki. Iraq began the second al-Maliki period. In December 2010, he formed his own cabinet as the prime minister of Iraq. After that, Tehran consolidated Shiite political allies in Iraq. The reason for Tehran to take such steps was the Shiite groups in Iraq having conflict with each other.¹⁶¹ Another reason is that the process of US withdrawal from Iraq was to increase Iran's influence in Iraq. For example, in December 2009, Iranian forces took over an oil well in the oil field, located in Fakka in the Iran-Iraq border in Maysan province. In addition, Iran pushed the Sadr group during the elections. Iran has been very successful in the elections in Iraq. Moreover, Maliki's government has given support to the Iranian military. In addition, at that time, in Camp Ashraf and Camp Hurriya in 2007, they had close ties with Iranian government.

Maliki has conducted balance policy in his second period. In fact, he did not criticize Tehran a lot. On the other hand, he continued his relationship with the US. This policy continued until 2011. US withdrawal from Iraq had caused the change of balances. This was the end of al-Maliki period. DAWA Party won only thirteen seats in the next elections. Al-Maliki's group won 89 seats in the parliament.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Dawisha, A. (2010). Iraq: A Vote Against Sectarianism. *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 21, Num 3. pp. 26-40. <http://faculty.washington.edu/swhiting/pols204/A%20Vote%20Against%20Sectarianism.dawisha.pdf>

¹⁶¹ Katzman, K. (2011). *Iraq: Politics, Governance, and Human Rights*. Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from www.crs.gov

¹⁶² Katzman, K. (2010). *Iraq: Politics, Elections, and Benchmarks*. Retrieved from www.crs.gov

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

Though in line with the general policy of Iran's Shiite, the impact of these changes in respect for Shiites in each country is still felt. So, if Iran mobilizes the armed Lebanese Shia easily, it does not apply to the other Shiite countries such as Azerbaijan. Iran, for the resulting conjuncture policy, has diversified Shia diplomacy. Another example is Iraq's strategy for Iran, however, there are conflicts due to religious teaching centers.

We can say that Iran is engaged in a regional Shia politics. Iran is very important and significant power for the Levant (Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine, Israel) region. So to speak, this is the relationship of the main vein with Iran's Shiite group. The existing military and financial resources pose interest in the region. Because, posing a threat to Israel is subject to government and establishing itself in Lebanon is one of the expectations of Iran. On the other hand, this means a door of Iran to the Mediterranean.

Other important areas are Baghdad and Tehran relationship. After the revolution, Baghdad, as a strategic goal, after a long struggle, became Iran's political hinterland. After that the US strategic failure in Iraq as a result of political upheavals in 2003, Shiites obtained the unexpected strength as a result of the efforts of Iran. Iraq has now become a base for Iranian fighters.

Moreover, Iran is also changing the attitude of hostility towards the United States and Israel. Nowadays, there is a feeling of softening in the traditional enemy attitude of Iran towards the USA. Iran's new foreign policy of Saudi management of new enemies, and his supporters have taken the place of the former enemies. Iraq submitted to the United States, and reached consensus softening US policy towards Iran. Of course political situation can not change without the approval of the Supreme Leader. In addition, the US indirectly feels its support towards Iran. For example, the ongoing activity of Iran in Syria.

Relations between Tehran and Damascus is based on a long historical period as there is a passing road from Damascus to Beirut. The existence of Hezbollah depends on Damascus. There was a protection from Damascus and around it there were opponents to demonstrate the power of the Iranian army. Clashes still continue in Syria. The survival of the Assad regime depends on the Iranian factor. To me, this is due to unfinished US plans. US ignores the activities of Iran in the region.

The geographical region of the Gulf is essential for Iran. Iran expects threat from this region. To prevent a possible military threat, there might be the revolt of Yemen and Bahrain against Saudi Arabia. Moreover, Iran wants to dominate the strait in the Gulf and it supports the Shiites living in Saudi Arabia.

As a result, despite the failure of Iran in Iraq, the continuation of its influence must not come from ignoring. Although Iran and Iraq have differences, they know that Iran will continue its political influence. We must not confuse this success with religious principle. Velayet-i Fakih and Khomeini principles are not very important for Iraq.

On the other hand, the fact that Iran fully influences Lebanon, and the determination of political actors directly, can be regarded as a successful example of Iranian foreign policy. We can see it as denominational, political, military and economic. In addition, Velayet-i Fakih has become an integral part of Lebanese Shia.

In countries such as Lebanon, the religious leader Ali Khamenei and Velayat-e Faqih are accepted. However, this does not apply to Iraq. Because, there are differences between the Arab Shia of Persian Shiism. Iraq would have a radical Shiite school but Iran ignores it. Iraq Velayat-e Faqih does not accept Ali Khamene as the religious leader and criticisms are made about the issue. There are some groups losing their tolerance against Iran, yet, half of the Iraqi Shia Arabs are in support of their grand Ayatollahs. As noted above, some Iraqi Ayatullahs say that Iraq has a Najaf-based Shiite teaching and culture. We know that the city of Najaf is the capital of the Imamet ashtray. In addition, Kufa and Basra, Kerbela cities being there are more sacred to the Shiite than the Iranian. Even if the Velayat-e Faqih is accepted as the norm for some of the Iraq Shia, it would be wrong to accept that as a norm for Iraq's own Shiite who follows the tradition of Shia which is unique to Iraq. On the other hand, it needs to be reminded that Hezbollah's Lebanese identity quest should be carried out.

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