The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Contemporary Iran and Its Impact on the Retrieval of Islamic Civilization

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Abstract

The Islamic world, beside historical and ideological factors, impacting on the general process of the Islamic civilization and its stagnation, has been facing the more serious challenge of development of the Western civilization during the last two decades. Toward this challenge, Moslem thinkers actively tried to find a religious resolution to free the Islamic world from the dominance of the Western civilization and culture, and at the same time, to reconstruct religious thought. Certainly, this reconstruction opened the path to the borders of the resurgence of the Islamic civilization, and its most salient parade is seen in the Islamic Revolution of Iran as the most perfect example among the contemporary Islamic movements. In fact, it prevented Islam from being isolate in the world. In the present paper, it will be tried to study the process of reconstruction of religious though within two frameworks of "the relationship between politics and religion" and also "Messianism" in Iran, and its impact on the retrieval of the Islamic civilization.

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Introduction

Since the beginning of formation the Islamic government, in Medina to the present time, the Islamic world has somehow been enjoying integrity and mental uniformity. This uniformity which was the result of theoretical harmony in such infrastructures as monotheistic worldview, direction, and other Islamic teachings strangely promoted the historical ability of Moslems to form and expand the Islamic civilization. This civilization could gather and organize the political, intellectual and social attempts in its historical process, and with the help of innovation and creativity, produce a different life style across the world for humans. This realm of civilization could form a system of knowledge and universal ethics so that Moslem citizens could easily define themselves within that framework with elation. But it was gradually exposed to some challenges in its historical course and as a result. It wasn't able to effectively and constantly reconstruct its elements. Some factors from inside and outside were undoubtedly influential on the disintegration of the Islamic civilization. During the intellectual controversy of the Schsmatics (pertaining to Mo'tazeleh) and Ashaereh, and the final victory of Ashaereh and isolation of rationalists, the concentrated autocracy of governments and the reactions against it by the social structure, neutralized the internal dynamism of the civilizational scope. From outside also, the Crusades and invasion of Moguls and other wars disrupted it, and thus, the Islamic civilization lost its foundations after a period of prosperity, of course, after this terrible period such political powers as Ottomans, Safavids, and others emerged in the world of Islam, but they never could successfully reconstruct the Islamic civilization. But simultaneous with the disintegration of the Islamic civilization, a period of emergence of civilization appeared in the West. That civilization not only replaced the pervious relationships with new political, social and economic relationships through its extension, but also represented a new definition of human and this-worldly life. There is no doubt that one the most important challenges threatening the Islamic intellectual territory and seriously resisted against in

intellectual and historical capabilities of the Islamic world. At the time when Europe was slowly originating its modern civilization foundations, the Islamic world experienced a complete stagnation under the influence of the increasingly developing Western civilization. Indifference toward the new evolutions of the world along with the spread of ignorance and autocracy across the Islamic territory and the separation among Moslems continued constantly. The arrival of Western colonialization in the Islamic world started a new age for all Moslems during which, they faced several new challenges such as political religious divergence, as well as a superior power that never hid its dominance. The successive invasions of the West on the Islamic culture had comprehensive cultural, political and economic unpleasant effects on the thinking system of Moslems. These effects were so deep and extensive, as opposed to the consequences of the previous ones that Moslems finally realized that their social and cultural institutions and faith have been threatened by the force, wealth and diplomacy of the Westerns. A glance at the intellectual evolutions of the Islamic world during the new age shows that the emergence of the Western modern culture with its deep influencing on the traditional intellectual pattern of the Islamic world, caused Moslems to endeavor in the direction of revival of their collective and civilizational identity. Of course the scopes of reactions of Moslems to the new conditions were different, but among all, the "Islamism" discourse found a special superior, influential place. This discourse sought for an escapement from backwardness and resistance against the Western hegemony as the foundation of the Islamic culture to revive its Islamic reasonable life style. This discourse was called as the discourse of "harmony of Moslems", against the Western colonialization or: Pan Islamism" by Dr. Haeri (Haeri, 1368: 85). The founders of this concept put forward the Islamic monotheistic theory of resistance against domination of the West within this framework and regardless of their other ideas, (Enayatzadeh, 1365: 8). A group of them advised their audience to use the scientific results of the Western culture in order to promote the scientific power of the Islamic community and to expand the power of Moslems, yet observing the

framework of religious beliefs. On the other hand, the question of "What meaning do the Islam and Islamic heritage have in the life of today's man, and how could the Islamic societies be strengthened against the invasion of values of the West within the framework of native values" was seriously put forward. This was an attempt with the aim not only to show the importance of Islam in the lives of Moslems in the modern age, but also to emphasize on the reconstruction of the Islamic culture and identify its spiritual features. Thus, this reconstruction was focused as a unique resolution for the problem of backwardness of Moslems. Among all Islamist groups, the most powerful atmosphere was created by the Islamic revolution of Iran that specifically clarified the spiritual foundations and moral worldview of Islam. Regarding that mental and intellectual infrastructures of all cultures are prior to their material achievements, it is necessary to identify their spiritual features, and this is just the case that was precisely focused in the process of formation of the Islamic revolution of Iran. It seems that by formation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the necessary atmosphere has been provided to reflect such a civilization in the world of Islam. Undoubtedly achieving such an ideal condition necessitated the reconstruction of religious beliefs. This paper will, attempt to study this reconstruction and equipment of religious beliefs and to explain this process within the framework of representation of the Islamic culture.

1. The Islamic Revolution of Iran and Reconstruction of Religious Thought

There is no doubt that the Islamic revolution of Iran is located between the end of transition period of previous universal experiences and the beginning of new experiences in civilizational relationships. The best index of this new experience from knowledge viewpoint is return to Godly traditions and emphasis on spirituality and organization and realization of social and political thinking regardless of universally accepted relationships. This is exactly the major theme of thinking that supports Iran's revolution and is able to teach the modern man the way of living and represents a different

interpretation of the existing universal norms. In this direction, the reconstruction of religious thinking in the historical process of the Islamic revolution of Iran is highly important, complicated, and involving the difficult process of evaluation and identification. The Iranian contemporary history, specifically after the World War II, is historically considered as the beginning of a complete evolution in religious perception, as well as religious thinking structure, because according to new conditions, apart from the political experience the Shiite scientists had obtained during half a century ago, the Iranian thinking arena was invaded by the leftist anti-religion groups based on Marxism, and on other hand, anti-religionism was put forward by some intellectuals in the framework of elimination of traditional concepts of religion. These challenges created some reactions in the layers of religious society of Iran that continued both, qualitatively and quantitatively until the victory of the Islamic revolution, preparing the necessary basics to represent a new pattern for infrastructures of a new civilization. And in such a condition, some thinkers emerged who explained religion according to the requirements of time and place and with a viewpoint different from the merely traditional toward religion and its function. This course had a political quality beyond what Dr. Enayat analyzed it in the framework of social motivations and reasons (Enayat, 1365: 78). The major representative of this evolution actively attempted to bring religion to the society of Iran and prepare the religious thinking and reconstruct it to play a more fundamental historical, political and social role. These attempts were clearly different from the retrieving efforts and reformations following by Sonnies in the contemporary Islamic world. A great part of this difference according to Dr. Motahari referred to the culture of Shiism that enjoys a vivid culture inspired by Imam Ali's thoughts. This is a culture having such important turning points as Ashura, Sahifeh Sajjadieh, Imamat, and the two-hundred-year course of Esmat (Motahari, 1361: 147). In addition, Islam has a set of deep and mysterious teachings that differentiate between pure obedience and the spiritual life (Zuelm, 1377: 90). This was a message known to all people as the symbol of their lost identity

and personality, (Katoozian, 1360: 6). Historically, the literature concerning reconstruction of religious thinking goes back to Seyyed Jamaleddin Assadabadi, and after him and during the events of constitutionalism ,the most important book on this topic belonged to Mirzaye Naiini under the title of Tanbiholomma   Va Tanziholmella (Naiini, 1327). Of course the process of returning to religion was largely abandoned with the formation of government by Reza Shah, but after his fall and weakening of the central governmental power, the necessary social and political atmosphere was prepared to express religious thoughts so that after the world war, until the victory of the Islamic revolution, it constantly extended and "A group of Shiit scientists tried to prove that Shiism is politically a system", (Enayat, 1365: 50). Specifically during the 40th and 50th decades, with the emergence of new expressions of religious literature, involving political and social issues, the relationship between religion and knowledge, philosophical revival, and finally representation of Islam in a new tone to an extensive spectrum of educated young people specifically the non-religious groups of the time was provided. This led to representation of religion as a tangible factor across public, everyday life stage. Those effects remarkably increased the level of public awareness and their expectations toward religious function among the youth, and unveiled their faith toward religion, specifically Shiism. Among all of these efforts, Imam Khomeini has his specific place from the 20th decade concerning the victory of the Islamic revolution. In fact, the most influential intellectual positioning represented by clergymen against anti-religion attitudes was reflected in Imam Khomeini's "Kashfolasrar". In his book, Imam Khomeini showed that religion is compatible with today's life style because religious commandments are exactly concordant with the reasoning of wisdom (Imam Khomeini, Bita: 235), that have been made for organizations, countries and life (Imam Khomeini, Bita: 236). In his book, Imam Khomeini considers unfamiliarity with religion as the major reason for backwardness of societies and suggests that if the rules of Islam are enacted in our country, one day, we will become the precursor of civilization across the world, (Imam Khomeini,

Bita: 238). Other efforts of Imam Khomeini which were followed later within the framework of theoretically representing a political system included his books under the titles of "Albai'", "Tahrolvasileh", and "Velayate Faghih" during the struggles of the 40th and 50th decades that finally led to the victory of the Islamic revolution. All of these efforts were in the direction of rejecting Western knowledge components and escaping from the realm of Western civilizational theoretical obligation. In fact, these efforts provided the necessary theoretical capacity in order to create meaning in the Islamic revolution of Iran and to retrieve the cultural structure inside the Islamic revolution.

2. Reconstruction of Religious Concepts as the Conceptual Foundation of the Islamic Revolution's Culture

Production of meaning in the Islamic revolution of Iran necessitated not only the identification of those concepts that helped the production of the meanings, but also, equipment and reconstruction of them. For that reason, accurate understanding of the new intellectual tendency of Shiism is not possible without sensing the quality of this process, and this is just the evolution that, as Avini suggests, "…happened beyond the cultural of Renaissance," (Avini, 1380: 30). Accordingly, a new approach formed toward such themes as the relationship between religion and diplomacy, Wait for Relief, prevarication, jihad, and martyrdom since four decades before the victory of the Islamic revolution in the intellectual literature of Shiism, which played an influential role in mental nourishment and changing attitudes toward a historical commitment and fundamental evolution according to religion, (see Dorakhsheh, 1382: 221-265). Shiite thinkers in this time period came to this conclusion that Shiism has the capacity necessary for the political and social pattern, and religious revival in the modern age, but some traditional norms act as obstacles on the way of playing this role. Therefore, if such perceptions are not corrected, the probably-ideological interpretations won't be eliminated. Certainly, agreement with the perception that achievement of political ideals of Shiism

in the present condition world be impossible, and, at the same time, there is a clear distance between ideals and realities prevents religious leaders from social mobilization and retrieval of religious capabilities. This reconstruction was in fact a fresh energy that could effectively help to organize and accumulate the social, dispersed capabilities and open the path to form a new system, and put forward the problem of political power as well as several dimensions of diplomacy including the role of people and their political participation, social justice, economic system and the like. The most important features of this reconstruction that can effectively help to promote and reproduce the Islamic cultural capabilities across the modern world can be studied in two themes of "relationship of religion and policy" and "Messianism", among which the former was necessary regarding the political function of religion to create a system while the latter not only defeated the preventive interpretations, but also illustrated the future view of the Islamic civilization. Here, both themes will be studied in the contemporary intellectual history of Iran.

2-1. The Relationship of Religion and Policy

It seems that every civilizational movement should be explained in the framework of political commandment, an element that has usually been associated with civilizations and thus the Islamic civilization also has constantly been associated with it during its history. Certainly the formation of the political commandment based on religion depends on the explanation of relationship between religion and politics, and defeating the perception represented about it in the current society of Iran. Thinking about the relationship between religion and policy has always been one of concerns of political thinkers. The domination of religion upon politics within an extensive part of human life has always been established as the product of man's religious attitude toward universe. This issue has been sought even in societies that didn't follow a Godly religion, in the framework of relationship between the world and metaphysics. But argument on this realm has faced some greater questions during the recent centuries. These questions have

been posed in the world of Islam as well. The findings of Western thinkers about the relationship between religion and politics have generally been influenced by historical Western experiences and acceptance of humanistic ideology. The spread of this attitude convinced Western thinkers to believe that religion and religious beliefs belonged only to primitive and traditional communities and in the modern world they have no functionality, instead, they prevent man from advancement. But contrary to this thinking way, during the past history, Moslems have always had a certain tendency toward diplomacy so that their past history has constantly been identified as a political history. As Dr. Enayat suggests, "Understanding of priority of politics is impossible without paying attention to a basic case, which is in fact the inherent link between Islam as a comprehensive program to regulate living, and politics as a necessary tool to realize that program, (Enayat, 1365: 16). In other words, it is defendable to claim that Islam is political and the specific tendency of Moslems toward politics during their past history confirms this assertion. Shahrestani mentions in his book "Almelal Vannehal" that the greatest dispute among the Islamic ommat has been for leadership, because more swords have been used for it in the history of Islam than for any other problem, (Shahrestani, Vol. 1, Bita: 30), and this shows clearly this historical attraction. This approach can be explained by exact study of the holy Koran, tradition, as well as religious literature of Moslem scholars. Dr. Enayat also believes that, since the major goal of the holy Prophet was to establish a government on the base of Islamic teachings, Moslems are also obligated to follow this pattern in this regard, (Enayat, 1365: 17). He emphasizes, "If the basis of policy were the question of who should rule and why we should follow his commandments, no alert Moslem could study his history even in a simple and cursory manner without feeling the need to ask these questions and discuss them with his coreligionists", (Enayat, 1365: 18).

But during the contemporary period of time, the theory of separation of religion and politics spread among Moslem societies including in Iran under the influence of Western historical experiences indicating that religion leads

to under development, backwardness and dictatorship. Believers in this viewpoint emphasized that religion seeks for individual moral virtues and the spiritual realm of man is different from his worldly realm. This type of thinking formed in Iranian intellectuals who had educated in Europe since 19th century. At the time of Reza Shah also an extensive attempt was made to establish a secular government. Imam Khomeini writes in his "Kashfolasrar": "The government actively tried to separate spiritual feature from material feature. We cannot believe that this separation originated from Reza Khan's empty mind because this [separation of religion from politics] was an intellectual foundation, (Imam Khomeini, Bita: 209). In that time anti-religious propaganda was so extensive that most of newspapers spent their time and their readers' time, (Imam Khomeini, Bita: 232), so that even for some clergymen it became natural to be away from politics". In fact the propaganda on this topic was so extensive that clergymen had come to this belief that they shouldn't intervene in political affairs, (political office ofSepah, 1362: 209). This process continued during the time of Mohammad Reza Shah and the majority of clergymen were discouraged to have active social and political roles. Hashemi Rafsanjani, explaining the conditions of that time, criticizes those clergymen, writes: "They started another campaign to prove that religion is separated from politics. An ideal clergyman was he who had traffic only from his house to the mosque and vice versa. Intervention in politics was considered as perversion. If a clergyman held a newspaper in his hand and walked along the street, hypocrites would asperse him. In the definition of religion, they said that religion is the relationship between man and his God", (Hashemi. Rafsanjani, Bita: 18).

This was a case that Imam Khomeini also emphasized on it a few decades after the victory of the Islamic revolution, and suggested: "At the beginning of our Islamic struggles… when the motto of separation of religion from politics was established, and naturally clergymen also were not allowed to go out of this circle and intervene in political and governmental affairs,…a clergyman was respectable conditioned that stupidity covered all his body from his feet to his head, or else he was playing a trick, and this

was among our common difficulties. Everyone who went astray, was considered to be more religious, (Imam Khomeini, Vol. 21, 1369: 91). In such conditions, naturally any kind of social and political change by clergymen in Iran necessitated a redefinition of religion. Certainly, in the season of suspect toward clergymen concerning social and political affairs the role played by them in that hard condition in the direction of redefining religion cannot be denied. The most important theoretical attempt, after Kashfolasrar of Imam Khomeini should be sought in the repeated edition of "The Notification of the Ommat and Warning of the Nation" of Mirza Naini by Ayatollah Taleghani in the 30th decade. Questions and explanations that Ayatollah Taleghani added in his introduction to the book as well as his criticism toward those who merely resort to prayers and ask Allah to close-out the epiphany of Imam-e-Zaman (Taleghani, 1334: 6) is a clear evidence of change of approaches toward religion during that time. He suggests that no one can quit social duties as non-intervention in politics (Taleghani (introduction), 1334: 15). Pointing to monotheism as the final goal of messengers, Taleghani-suggests, "If messengers wished to induce people merely to pray and spend their time prostrating in mosques and temples, then neither Namrood would throw Ibrahim into the fire, nor Pharaoh would fight against Moses, nor the Roman king would attempt to kill Christ, nor Kasra would disagree with Mohammad (P.b.u.h.)'s invitation to Islam", (Taleghani, 1334: 7). In this direction, the writings of some scholars in the theological school during the 30th decade under the title of "The Journal of Shiism", and specifically the viewpoints of Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Beheshti were highly important which later were published with the name of "Government in Islam". In those articles Dr. Beheshti tried to represent the theory saying that there is no place for mere praying in Islam, because it is a political, social religion, (see Beheshti, 1367). Another remarkable attempt in this direction was a set of articles published in 1341 under the title of "A Discussion on Religious Authority and Clergy" by a group of religious scholars that represented a new approach toward religious authority and clergy. Those articles were clearly seeking to assign a different role for

religious authority and clergymen in political and social affairs (see "A Group of Scholar", 1341). But among all of the above-mentioned attempts the most remarkable intellectual and practical one was made by Imam Khomeini during the years 1320 to 1357. In fact, his completely active and comprehensive interpretation about religion and its social and political function led to the elimination of the dead end existing on the way of intervention of religion in politics. Imam, in definition about Islam believed that "Islam is the religion of fighters in the way of Islam who are following right and justice; those who want freedom and independence, but Islam has been introduced wrongly; a wrong image of Islam has been created in public minds. In fact the wrong form represented in the theological schools is for the purpose of negating the revolutionary quality of Islam so that Moslems cannot take part in any attempt and movement in order to create a government that provides them with prosperity according to their dignity", (Imam Khomeini, 1377: 4).

This type of attitude was certainly the mental prelude to represent the governmental theory of Imam Khomeini under the title of "Guardianship of the Islamic Protector". In his analysis of Islam, Imam Khomeini suggests, "The holy Koran and Hadith books as authentic resources of Islamic commandments, along with other practical essays written by religious scholars, are completely different regarding their impact on social life. The ration of social themes in the holy Koran to its devotional ones is higher than 100 to 1. From among 50 books about the Islamic commandments, only three or four books are about praying and the duties of Moslem toward Allah, some are about morality, and the remainder is about social, economic, political, and other similar affairs", (Imam Khomeini, 1377: 5). The representation of such Islam certainly necessitates some reformations within theological, and Shiite schools, and changing of mental presuppositions of clergymen, and this attempt was among the most remarkable features of preparation and equipment of conditions in order to create a new intellectual atmosphere and after it a religious systematization. In this relation Imam Khomeini suggests, "Of course the Islamic devotional cases should be

taught, but political issues are more important, as well as economic and social cases; attention should be focused on these affairs", (Imam Khomeini, 1: 116). Allocation of remarkable parts of the book "Guardianship of the Islamic Protector" to Islam as a political and social religion shows the atmosphere of the society and the Iranian theological schools during that time, and the attempts of Imam Khomeini to create the necessary confidence among the clergymen and prepare the society to make a social and political change. Imam had well noticed that without eliminating the existing presuppositions, and creating new mental moral foundations, no change will be possible; for this reason in all his arguments during this period of time, he has pointed to the redefinition of religion as a central issue. He says", Really, Islam is entirely consisted of politics; they have introduced it wrongly; written politics originates from Islam, (Imam Khomeini, 1361: 62). Meanwhile, representation of "the Islamic government" theory, is the clear evidence of such a perception, and it is under the influence such an approach that he points to necessity of formation of the Islamic government and fighting against the tyrannical governments in his book", (Imam Khomeini, 1377: 17-92 and 115-141). In another place, Imam Khomeini points to this topic more clearly and suggests, "Many of devotional commandments have political and social origins. The Islamic devotions are generally associated with politics and social features; for example, "the group prayers", and "the gathering of Hajj, and Friday" have social qualities and, at the same time, ideological and spiritual features… We should use these gatherings for the purpose of religious propaganda and teachings; but unfortunately some Moslems don't have any concerning except saying their prayers with correct Arabic pronunciation", (Imam Khomeini, 1377: 120). In Imam's opinion, the intervention of religious scholars in political affairs is not a new phenomenon, and regarding that religion has been the greatest factor of Moslem's material and spiritual prosperity during past period of time and its conceptual system has had the capacity to fulfill several needs of man in different conditions, the religious scholars now play are remarkable role in the explication of political and governmental thinking. What was important

for Imam Khomeini was the explication of canon law as a theoretical framework as well as commandments with social and political quality. Based on what was mentioned, any movement that brings about civilization and evolution within the society of Iran necessitates not only recognition of inter-religious concepts, but also preparing it for the new conditions and consequently explanation of the relationship between religion and politics in Islam was urgent in order to theoretically clarify this movement. This was the explanation within the general process of the thinking that finally contributed to the Islamic revolution of Iran. Certainly in this direction the formation of political power and the new authority was very important. This factor was realized as the first step in the path of victory of the Islamic revolution. The importance of this process is so much that as Gidenz suggests, "…In the past, sociological giant thinkers such as Marx, Durkheim, and Max Weber, considered the general universal process as going toward secularization, and marginalization of religion, but from the beginning of the 80s with the Islamic revolution of Iran, we have been witnessing the contrary of it, and now we can see that the entire world has begun the reverse process, and is going toward religion", (Gidenz, 1374: 75).

3. Messianism and a Godly Pattern for the Future

Another case that is undoubtedly highly important for creating a system is to represent an image of the ideal society for future. Certainly an approach with the ability to bring out civilization has constantly had such an image. In this relation, the final defeat of wrong by right and justice, the spread of faith, and formation of the Utopia as a Koranic thought and the establishment of all of these by a character who has been referred to as "Mahdi" in the Islamic narrations, is a belief that more or less exists in all Islamic groups. Meanwhile, for Shiites, belief in the presence of "Mahdi" (P.b.u.h.) and his emergence in order to spread justice across the world and correct the social conditions, is considered as being the most promising point. In fact, it is a plan for the future and to represent a civilization based on religious teachings. It is clear that there is some kind of optimism and hopefulness

toward the process of history and the future condition of human life. This exciting hopefulness which is known in religious literature as "Wait for Relief", is an ideological support for this approach, conveying that the believers in Allah should never be disappointed; rather they should know that God's blessing is always supporting them, (Motahhari, 1368: 5-7). This basic teaching of Shiism, has been reflected in the listing of Shiism thinking, and is visible in their basic approach and historical positioning, specifically in ideological controversial and political arguments. According to Shiite scholars, this approach has roots in Godly afflatus and the holy Koran. In four places in the holy Koran (Noor: 55, Ghesas: 52, Eraf: 128, and Anbia': 105), Allah has pointed to this issue. In fact, these Koranic verses clearly explain a completely hopeful future for the believers. Of course there are several narrations also on this case (the emergence of Imam Zaman (P.b.u.h.) that make this problem more meaningful. "Waiting" verbally means to be patient and expect the occurrence of an event in the future. In the thinking of Shiites, this term, conceptually conveys the request of disentanglement in all affairs of Mohammedians and elimination of hardships in the direction of the goals of Imams and messengers. For this reason, according to the narrations expressed by the holy Prophet and Imams, this kind of waiting is among the best tasks,and those who are waiting for that Imam are considered as the most respectable people, (Majlesi, Vol. 52, 1403: 128, and Ghomi, Vol. 2, Bita: 516). Although the valuable theme hidden in this ideology has constantly led Shiites toward perfection as well as creation of a new moral world. But during the history of Shiism, it has rarely been used to activate political and social movements; rather it has mainly remained as an idealistic viewpoint in the minds of Moslems, and as Dr. Enayat suggests, "It has mainly remained in the form of a canonizing ideology to accept passively the status quo,"Enayat, 1365: 53). This idealism, as a rule, should not have contributed to the motionlessness of its follower during the important historical points of time; but at least for a remarkable group of Shiites, such a state was created, having a reverse impact on their social and political behavior, and produced a kind of indifference toward social and political

conditions in them who should have tendency toward fighting against oppression and injustice, inspiring by the rise of Imam Hossein (P.b.u.h.). This has constantly been annoying the modern Shiite interpreters, and they always tried to eliminate these antinomies, and adjust Messianism based on the current political and social conditions and explain it as a dynamic system, and as a result, two approaches were formed toward Waiting as follows:

The first approach belongs to a group that believed in giving strife up and quitting social responsibility. Their reasoning was dependent on narrations that mainly rejected any uprising and revolution before the emergence of Mahdi (P.b.u.h.). Among those narrations, there is a hadith attributed to Imam Sadegh (P.b.u.h.) that says, "Any flag rising before the uprising of Mahdi (P.b.u.h.), its owner will be considered as rebel against God (Alhorolamoli, 1412, Vol. 11: 37 and 50-57). This is the type of interpretation which Imam Khomeini rejected at the beginning of his combat. He suggested, "We are obligated to protect Islam. You are the vicegerents of Islam only if you teach Islam to people and don't advise them to entrust all their commitments to Mahdi (P.b.u.h.). Do you leave your prayers until Imam Zaman rises? The protection of Islam is more important than your prayers. Don't follow the reasoning of the governor of Khomein who said sins should increasingly spread till Imam Zaman comes. If sins spread Imam won't come" (Imam Khomeini, 1377: 58). Meanwhile, criticizing seriously those who interpreted Waiting as isolation, Imam Khomeini says, "Some people believed that Waiting means to sit in a mosque and implore Imam Zaman to come. They carried out their religious duties, and admonished their fellow believers to do right and to avoid sin. Another group interpreted Waiting as being indifferent toward what happened to the world and to nations. They only waited for Imam (P.b.u.h.) to come and improve everything. There was another group who said, "The world should become full of sins so that Imam comes. And the other group acted far above all others, believing that we should excite the spread of sins and make the world ready for the coming of Imam. They were simple-

hearted, but among them there were self-interested individuals who behaved in this manner with specific intentions…," (Imam Khomeini, 1374, Vol. 2: 864).

He looked at the Waiting issue as a "thought". In an independent and theoretical discussion, under the title of "Upraise and Revolution of Mahdi from Historical and Philosophical Viewpoint" Motahari explicates this subject, and rejecting the viewpoint of spread of sins, he considers this attitude as being similar to Marxism within the evolution of history. According to that reasoning, production and spread of social disorders is legitimate, while partial reformations and making attempts to relief social pains is considered as betrayal and stupefaction of the society. Motahari considers this type of thinking as the instrumental perspective of history and as opposed to the inherent human insight. He believes that the Movement of human and society is of dynamic, and not mechanical type.(for more information see Motahari, 1368: 43-61). For this reason, he considers the ideal and revolution of Mehdi (P.b.u.h.) as the great social-Islamic philosophy, (Motahari, 1368: 57), and the logic of Waiting as a completely different framework, some kind of waiting that is productive, motivating, and binding, .He objurgates the destructive, and deterrent Waiting, (Motahari, 1368: 61). Motahari considers these two types of interpretation of Waiting as originating from two perceptions from the emergence of Imam Zaman (P.b.u.h.) and suggests, "A group of people believe that Imam's emergence has a merely explosive quality, causing only by the expansion of oppression, discrimination, political suppression, injustice, and corruption… When no power is dominant except the power of untruth, and no righteous person lives on the earth, this explosion happens and a hand from the invisible world comes out and improves everything. Therefore any reformation by others will be condemned;… on the contrary, any kind of sin, corruption, oppression, and discrimination will be ideal as the prelude of that explosion. Thus the spread of corruption is the best way to help his coming, and in this way; sins become tools of pleasure and ambition from one side, and a way to help Imam's emergence from the other side," (Motahari, 1368:

61-62). He considers this perception from Emergence as a type of "indifference" as opposed to the Islamic and Koranic teachings, (1368: 64-65). Motahari introduces the emergence of Mahdi as part of extensive combat conducted by believers in the truth against the wrong that finally ends in the victory of the truth, (Motahari, 1368: 64-65), and clarifies that the promised Mahdi is the realizer of the goals of all messengers, Imams and fighters in the way of Allah, (Motahari, 1368: 68). Regarding what was explicated about Messianism and waiting for the coming of Mahdi (P.b.u.h.). It can be concluded that there are two attitudes about it within the intellectual realm of Shiism in the contemporary time period: The first one, considered any hostile attempt to make improvement in affairs, and admonishing others to do right and to avoid sin as forbidden due to their preventing Imam from coming. The advocates of this viewpoint explain it according to some so-called Islamic narrations. Of course it was clear that to undo and break the talisman of this viewpoint it was necessary both, to theatrically explicate and analyze the existing narrations on this topic in Shiism, and to make a practical attempt against the perspective, which led to the formation of a second approach toward the matter. The activities of a group of religious scholars of Shiism who looked at Messianism within the productive, ideal framework, opened a path to expand and institutionalize ideal and suitable interpretations out of it. However there is no doubt that the theoretical and intellectual foundation of any civilization depends on a promising attitude, and the Islamic civilization also becomes meaningful within that framework, that is a promising perspective toward the future. Therefore, the Islamic revolution of Iran has explicated the matter of Messianism in Shiism as an important capability by representing a different concept of Waiting in the direction of creating a moral world whose main story is justice.

Conclusion

The appearance of the modern Western civilization, deeply influenced the traditional patterns of thinking of the Islamic world. With the confrontation of the Western world with the Islamic world, and acceptance of

backwardness by Moslems, different reactions formed toward it by Moslems. Undoubtedly, the discourse of Islamism was the most powerful course in order to exit the crises which Moslems had faced. That discourse defended Islam as the foundation of identity of the Islamic societies and Moslems. Meanwhile, among all, the most complete Islamic movement was the Islamic revolution of Iran that happened in the end of transition from previous experiences of the world and the beginning of new experiences in political and social relations. Accordingly, the Islamic revolution emphasized on spirituality and moral coexistence across the world, recasting religion across the modern world regardless of the global current relations. At the same time, such a change could not take place without reconstruction and equipment of interreligious concepts. That reconstruction made it possible to open the border of revival of the Islamic civilization, because the Islamic revolution was a great change with the name of Allah, and should be explicated within the semantic and critical framework. Meanwhile, here, two cases of "relationship between religion and politics", and "Messianism" are of fundamental importance, because the Islamic revolution of Iran is based on the theory of homogeneousity of religion and politics that is indicative of the capability of religious intellection to create a governmental system. Meanwhile, the "Waiting for Emergence" that depends on representation of an image of the ideal society, formed a pattern that could form a civilization atmosphere inside itself. Certainly, the formation of a new authority based on religion, necessitated the reconstruction of such themes that were considered as the beginning of entry into the realm of retrieval of the Islamic civilization identity in the modern world after centuries of stagnation and weakness. Accordingly, that authority can receive a basic attention and prove its effectiveness as a governmental pattern specifically in the direction of revival of the Islamic civilization and at the same time, gather the scattered energy of the society and redirect it toward political power and several dimensions of statesmanship based on religion.

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