UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI

FAKULTETA ZA DRUŽBENE VEDE

Hossein Mazarei

Politična moč šiitov na Bližnjem vzhodu

Political power of the Shias in the Middle East

Magistrsko delo

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I wish to thank everybody who stood beside me while compiling this dissertation.

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Milan Berglez, for his guidance, patience, and constant help and feedback. Despite all the work he had as the Speaker of the Parliament, he never hesitated to offer his help to me.

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IZJAVA O AVTORSTVU

Politična moč šiitov na Bližnjem vzhodu

V magistrski nalogi je razložena krepitev šiitske moči na Bližnjem vzhodu s stališča Irana kot glavne šiitske države. Za pojasnitev iranske zunanje politike in njene podpore šiizmu vse od iranske revolucije dalje je za teoretsko izhodišče uporabljen konstuktivističen pristop, ki temelji na konceptu identitete države. Na podlagi konstruktivistične paradigme je, s poudarkom na normativnih strukturah in ideologiji, kot sta kultura in religija, obrazložen politični sistem Irana in indetificirana islamska revolucija. Posebna pozornost je posvečena ideološkim in verskim orodjem, ki vplivajo na dejanja režima v mednarodnih odnosih.

Celovit vpogled v šiizem in razsežnost politike in vpliva moči na Bližnjem vzhodu je skozi zgodovino šiitskega Islama in pojav družbeno kulturne emancipacije med šiiti orisan s teološkega in filozofskega stališča.

V zadnjem delu posebno pozornost namenjamo Libanonu in študiji primera Hezbolah, saj zagotavlja najboljše analitično orodje za razumevanje iranske politike pri vpeljevanju moči v regiji.

Ključne besede: šiizem, Iran, Hezbolah, konstruktivizem.

Political power of the Shias in the Middle East

The master thesis seeks to accurately interpret and explain the reasons and the means of Shia empowerment in the Middle East by Iran as the main Shia state.

It attempts to apply an identity-based constructivist approach as a theoretical framework based on the concept of state identity in order to explain Iranian foreign policy behaviour and its support of Shiism in the region since the Islamic revolution. It is based on constructivism paradigm, with an emphasis on normative structures focusing on the role of ideational factors, such the role of culture and religion. The domestic meaning system and the identity of the Islamic revolution are considered. In particular, this thesis questions Iran's ideological and religious tools and sacred factors that impact on the Iranian regime's actions in its international relations.

In order to gain a comprehensive vision into the Shiism and its dimensions of politics and the impact on power equations in the Middle East, the study goes through centuries of Shia's history to review the theological and philosophical sources of Shia Islam, and the occurrence of socio-cultural emancipation among the Shiites.

Finally, the thesis suggests a particular concentration on Lebanon and the Hezbollah's case study with a theoretical framework which provides the best analytical tool to understand the Iranian behaviour in the empowering of the Shiites in the region.

Keywords: Shiism, Iran, Hezbollah, Constructivism.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AH

AMAL "Afwaj al-Muqawama al-Lubnaniya"

IR International Relations

IRGC Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps

IRI Islamic Republic of Iran

IRNA Islamic Republic News Agency (Iran's official news agency)

FTO Foreign Terrorist Organization

LNM the Lebanese National Movement

NDF National Defence Forces

PLO Palestinian Liberation Organization

PMU Al-Hash Al-Sha'abi

SCIRI Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq

USA The United States of America

USSR Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

1 INTRODUCTION

"It is a truism that almost any sect, cult, or religion will legislate its creed into law if it acquires the political power to do so." (Robert A. Heinlein)

Throughout the last century, the Middle East consistently appeared as an unstable and strategically alarming region. Violent events continually placed the region at the forefront of international politics. In the last four decades, after several decades of nationalism and Marxism movements that dominated the Middle East since the end of World War I, we have witnessed the re-emergence of Islam as a political, social, and even economic phenomenon in the public sphere. Religious ideologies started to play a significant role in the region, which led to the emergence of jihadist groups such as Hezbollah, Al Qaeda and other groups; this speaks volumes about the role and power of political Islam. Most Western discussion of the Middle East or Islam matters tend to focus on Sunnism. However, given the developments in the last four decades, especially the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the polarization of the political environment in the region between Sunni and Shia, the attention of Western scholars has been drawn to Shia and Shiism.

The overwhelming majority of Muslims are the Sunnis, of which approximately 154 million to 200 million belong to the Shiite branch of Islam, which means less than 15% of the world's Muslims population. Most of Shias live in the Islamic heartland, from Lebanon to Pakistan. They constitute more than 75% of the population of economically and geo-strategically sensitive rim of the Persian Gulf. Throughout history, the Sunnis have been associated with the state and the ruling elites, while Shia was more often associated with the political opposition to the Sunni rulers and elites (Aghaie 2004, 9). In fact, both the minority and majority Shia population in the Middle Eastern states have been ruled over and oppressed by the Sunni rulers (Nasr 2007, 21). They were long-term marginalized and isolated from the political power, known as the Forgotten Muslims (Fuller and Graham 1999, 32).

Nevertheless, political developments in the past few decades in the Middle East have led to an increased Shia influence in the power structure of the region. The Islamic Revolution in Iran (1979), the emergence of powerful organization such as Hezbollah and the collapse of the Bathist state in 2003 all enabled the emergence of the Shia as a strong political force in the Middle East.

The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran presented the highly politicized understanding of Shia history, which led to the creation of a new idea in political Shiism about Islamic states and the role of the Shiites that have not existed before. This has profoundly affected the developments in the Middle East and inspired the rise of Shiism in the region. Iran was the only country in which the Islamist movement managed to take power and a durable 'Islamic state'. It represented a lucid demonstration of the renewed political significance of religion in the region. Due to its vast territorial and demographic size, Iran has had an important influence on Shiite population in the Middle East as the key player in the region. Indeed, it presented new Shiite revolutionary ideas or political processes that were made more appealing for the masses of Shiite to mobilize them in order to drive them to the radical social changes. In fact, this created a new sense of identity, self-confidence and self-consciousness among many of the Shiites (Nasr 2007). It was inspiring for the Shiite groups, as well as for other states, such as Lebanon, Bahrain, Yemen, Saudi Arabia to regain their political role in the region. As they did not accept to be considered an outcast minority or second-class citizens, they started to fight for equality and recognition of their rights in the Sunni ruled states. In some countries such as Kuwait and Lebanon, they began to establish political parties and organization in order to gain further participation in political power. They were gradually entering management systems, government and the parliament. However, in the countries such as Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, where the Shiites have often been regarded as heretics, enemies of the state ideology or a threat to internal stability by Sunni Arab regimes, their movements were brutally repressed by the government. They are still being humiliated by conservative clerics, who named them rafida (rejectionists). The main reasons for the Sunni states to feud to Shia are twofold. First of all, the state elites' fear Iran's regional power expansion and, secondly, the anxiety about the possible increase in calls for influence for their Shia populations (Luomi 2008, 4).

After the Islamic Revolution, IRI, which was based on the principles of Shiism with the aim of creating a strategic and comprehensive the Islamic Union, sought to export the revolution abroad. Thus, Iran started to support various Islamist revolutionary and insurrectionary movements that were mostly Shia groups. The victory of Iranian revolution tied with emancipatory concepts brought new hope in the hearts of Islamic movements in the region and caused the emergence of many Islamic movements. The Iranian leadership believed that the Islamic Revolution was not only a historic event in a particular time or place to accompany a new regime to power. For them, it was a set of ideas, images, beliefs and concepts, which continuously and actively reproduced its discourse in the context of symmetric and asymmetric

socio-political, homogeneous and heterogeneous communities through the development and the spread of it. Indeed, the oppressed Shiites were the best target group to embrace the Iranian revolutionary ideas.

The Shia group in Lebanon was the first target in the exporting of the Iranian Revolution, all due to the turbulent Lebanon political landscape as the result of the Civil War, as well as the Israeli invasion. This resulted in the founding of Hezbollah by Iran in 1982. Iran's investment in Hezbollah, both through financial and ideological dissemination, created a powerful organization that has maneuvered itself into the Lebanese identity. For 35 years, with the help of the Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI), Hezbollah has been able to maintain an extensive security apparatus, political organization, and social services network in Lebanon. Hezbollah's ability to protect and support the marginalized Shiite in Lebanon has provided an organizational and aspirational model for other Shiite organizations and at the same time led to allowing the Iranian penetration in Lebanon. That persuaded IRI to simulate Hezbollah model in other countries. Tehran has followed the Hezbollah model in Iraq and Syria as well.

The Iraqi war indeed shattered the power balance between the Shias and the Sunnis. Not only at the domestic level, where the Shia's rise to power put an end to the century-old minority Sunni rule over the Shia majority, but also at the regional level, where regional powers in Iran and Saudi Arabia seemed to have tipped the scale in favour of Iran (Mervin, Sabrina, 2010). In fact, after the overthrow of the Taliban as Pan-Sunnism in 2001 and Saddam Hussein as Pan-Arab in 2003, Iran's position as the main Shiite power in the region was reinforced. Hence, it caused a severe reaction from the Sunni rulers (Maréchal, Brigitte, and Zemni, 2013). In December 2004, a year after the fall of Saddam, Jordanian King Abdullah II famously coined the term Shia Crescent during an interview with the Washington Post. Hereto, he predicted that an alleged Shiite expansion would change the traditional Sunni dominated make-up of the Middle East (Washington post, 2004). Subsequently, Hosni Mubarak made a strange comment in a 2006 interview with the Al Arabiya TV which can be an important debate in this thesis. He said: "Shia in the region is mainly loyal to Iran and not to their own states." Additionally, Saudi King Abdullah accused Iran for masterminding the proselytization in Arab countries.

Surprisingly, Sunni-led states that lost their traditional domination over the region are discovering that their interests increasingly converge with those of Israel in order to contain Iran. Moreover, they have been engaged in incorporating sectarian rhetoric in their foreign policy discourse.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND THESIS HYPOTHESIS

My proposed research will examine three key hypotheses that derive from these research questions:

(1) Whether Iran's generosity and unwavering support towards Islamic non-state actors and Shia groups in particular, is in line with Iran's regional expansionism or ambitions.

(2) Whether Iran uses religion and Shia groups as the instrument to expand its power and domination.

(3) How Iran has been able to improve the political situation of the Shiites in Lebanon by foundation of Hezbollah.

I will argue that this view, which considers Iran's supporting of Shia Groups is in line with Iran's regional expansionism or ambitions, mostly comes from positivist/rationalist approaches. They define states as rational actors with their interest only based on the strategic and cost–benefit calculations and materialistic objectives in order to maximize their security and power in international relations. However, through the rational approaches it is difficult to have a precise picture of Iranian behaviour and its foreign policy.

Iran is an Islamic revolutionary state whose foreign policy is shaped by ideational social factors rather than the material ones. Iran's commitment to support Shia groups such as Hezbollah comes from its Shia revolutionary ideology, rather than cost–benefit calculations and materialistic objectives. Although this leads to material achievements, such as the increase of Iranian power in the region, this has not been the main goal and the main reason to support Shia groups. In addition, I will argue that IRI does not use religion or the Shia groups as the instrument to expand its power and domination in the region, on the contrary, Iran uses all its resources (which has had a high cost for the state) in order to promote Shia religion.

Finally, I will discuss that four decades ago, Lebanese Shiite were deprived of any political, economic and social power. In time, South Lebanon, with 85 percent of the Shiites was the poorest and most backward region of the country. However, in the last half a century, with the emergence of Shia identity-based and emancipatory movements, the Shiites have been able to achieve a greater political voice to confront political and social injustices that were historically

imposed on them in the Lebanese society. This outburst would not be possible without the emergence of Hezbollah and the financial and spiritual support of Iran.

1.2 RESEARCH METHODS

For this thesis, a qualitative method will be used. Creswell (2009) states that qualitative research is a tool for uncovering and analysing the meaning that a person or group of people attribute to a social issue. The aim is to provide a qualitative method to demonstrate how the state identity is formed in the context of the state and international realms. Here, we avoid applying an explicit account of foreign policy decision-making or a model to test the personality of foreign policy leaders. Rather, the chosen methodology is concerned with the state as the constituent and as the authoritative agent formalizing the state identity. Moreover, the methodology employed assumes that identities are formed by meaning, norms and through intersubjective interactions between states. Identities determine interests, which are the basis of the behaviour of states.

The empirical parts of the study will be based on the selected information from reliable secondary sources, including a dissertation along with various books and articles. This dissertation is based on a review of available official documents, together with an assessment of the Constitution of Iran, official and public statements and relevant political positions and developments.

1.3 PURPOSE

The main purpose of this thesis is to develop an analytical methodology that allows an analysis of Iran's foreign policy with regard to the supporting and establishing of Shia groups in the region. To do so, the thesis suggests a particular concentration on Lebanon and the Hezbollah's case as it provides the best analytical tool to understand the Iranian methodology.

1.4 THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The dissertation will be divided into three parts.

The first part will focus on the historical perspective and the Shia traditions and evolution of the Shiism in the Middle East since the death of Muhammad till now, considering the key events

that can help illustrate the religion and its traditions, and the contemporary era which includes Islamic movements and the development of new Shia political ideologies in the twentieth century. In addition, we will examine in more detail the Shia's spiritual and ideological values and their impact on the political practice such as Umma, Mahdaviat, Martyrdom (Ashura), Marjaʿ taqlid (The secondary rules), Wilayat al-Faqih (Guardianship of the Islamic Jurists).

The second part will set out the theoretical foundations of constructivist analysis and its contribution to IR and foreign policy, with the aim of understanding the approach for subsequent empirical analysis. We will outline the main traits of the constructivist theory, initially with a brief overview of constructivist thought focusing on the evolution and the roots of constructivism and its contributions to IR theories. We explore the role of the state identity in shaping national interest and foreign policy. Then, we particularly focus on the Iranian foreign policy (which is mostly driven by its revolutionary values and ideological perspectives), with the examination of state identity concept and its role in foreign policy decision-making through a constructivist analysis. We attempt to address the determining identifying factors such as exporting Islamic Revolution, the support of the oppressed (mostaza'fin) against the oppressors and *Umm Al-Qura* that affects Iranian foreign policy regarding the support or the founding of Shia none state actors since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

The third part will study the domestic level and emancipatory social movements of the Shiite groups such as Amal and Hezbollah to gain power and revitalise the Shiite community in Lebanon. We will pursue it within the process of transformation, from being a marginal to an essential partner in the administration of the countries where it is identified as a minority. In addition, we will examine the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the reinforcement of Shia domination in Lebanon.

2   A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SHIISM: DOCTRINES AND THOUGHTS

In order to comprehend the Shiism and its influences on politics and power equations in the Middle East, the basic understandings of both the Shiite traditions and its historical development of the Islam world is essential. Historical method "tries to trace recent developments to roots and causes in the past" (Keddie 1983, 2). This past could be either distant or recent. Thus, this chapter will focus on addressing the history of Shia Islam and its evolution as well as an overview of the formation of Shiism in the Middle East with regard to the key

events that can help to illustrate the religion and its traditions since the inception of Islam in the contemporary era, which includes the Islamic movements and development of new Shia political ideologies in the twentieth century. It is through a well-integrated description of the context and religious ideas that political Shiism can be described and understood. Islam, like most other religions, has always been characterized by a number of internal divisions. The major division in Islam is between the Sunni and the Shia (Soltanzadeh 2013, 37). Most Western discussions of the Middle East or Islam matters tend to focus on Sunnism. However, given the developments in the last four decades, especially the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the polarization of the political environment in the region between Sunni and Shia, the attention of Western scholars has been drawn to Shia and Shiism.

The overwhelming majority of Muslims are the Sunnis, and estimated 154 million to 200 million belong to the Shiite branch of Islam, which means less than 15% of the world's Muslims population. But most of Shias inhabit the Islamic heartland, from Lebanon to Pakistan and constitute more than 75% of the population of economically and geo-strategically sensitive rim of the Persian Gulf. (Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life 2009). Iran is the only country with a Shiite regime. More than a third of the world's Shia Muslims live in Iran. The Shiites comprise the majority in Iraq, Bahrain, and Azerbaijan, and are Lebanon's largest religious community. They also form substantial minorities in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, India and the Gulf states. Nearly all of these are countries in Persia's historical sphere of influence from the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

Although, Shiism and Sunnism both agree on the fundamentals of Islam and share the same holy book (The Qur'an), they understand Islamic history, theology, and law differently. In fact, each branch has a unique approach to the question of what it means to be a Muslim and each deems itself as original orthodoxy (Nasr 2007, 34). Even though there are several main different denominations of the Shiites, the Twelvers (Ithna Asharis, or Ja'farais), the mainstream and the largest branch, will be discussed here. The Twelvers believe that there were 12 imams, the last of whom has existed in a supernatural state of occultation from 874 A.D. to the present.

2.1 SHIA AND SUNNI DIVISIONS

The initial split between the Sunnis and the Shiites dates back to a political and spiritual dispute over leadership of the Muslim community following Prophet Muhammad's death in the year

632 A.D. This issue led to a radical political change in the socio-religious orientation of the Muslim world and split the Muslim community into two main factions.

A group of Muslims who became known as the Sunnis believed that the Prophet's successor should be chosen through the Ijma (consensus of the ummah). In Arab tribal tradition, the position of the leader of umma is agreed to be taken by the most senior and respected elder. This is what happened after Muhammad's death, when through an intricate interplay of tribal affiliations and personal persuasion, Muhammad's closest friend and his father-in-law, Abu Bakr, was elected the first Caliph of the Islamic community.

In contrast, an opposing group, later known as the Shiites, believed that legitimate succession and religious authority (marjaiyati ilmi) belonged to 'Ali ibn Abu Talib, the Prophet's cousin, the son-in-law and the first convert to Islam; after him, to the Prophet's descendants as his Ahl al-Bayt (people of the household). Firstly, because they were most familiar with the Prophet's thinking and practices (Tabatabai, 35). Secondly, to guarantee the purity and infallibility of the successors. Thirdly, the Shiites generally believe that Prophet Muhammad appointed Ali as his heir and successor on several occasions before his death. According to the Shia beliefsMuhammad gathered all Muslims in the last year of his life, and gave a speech following his final pilgrimage to Mecca, on the way back to Medina at a place called Ghadir Khum. He raised Ali's hand and said: "Of whomsoever I am Lord (Mawla), then Ali is also his Lord. O God, love those who love him, and be hostile to those who are hostile to him" (Aghaie 2004, 6).

However, Ali did not challenge the rule and the position of the Abu Bakr's leadership. He prevented all uprising against the existing political order, which could have had a bloody nature, in order to safeguard the new Islamic State. Instead, in order to preserve the power of Islam, Ali and Members of the Shia community even fought in holy wars (jihad) and participated in public affairs. Hence, Shiism is as old as Islam. The term *Shia*, stems from the shi`at 'Ali, and conveys the meaning of followers, party, supporters, associates of Ali.

Abu Bakr ruled only three years and shortly before he passed away, the Second Caliph, Umar ibn al-Khattab, was appointed by Abu Bakr in his testament. Umar ruled for ten years before he was killed by an Iranian prisoner of war. He was followed by the third Caliph, Uthman ibn 'Affan, who was chosen by a six-man council which was organized and determined by the order of Umar before his death.

Uthman's rule had brought the Umayyads, a native Meccan clan to power. Under Uthman, the Umayyad clan was given a privileged and strong position in the Muslim community. However, this infuriated many other Muslim tribes, which eventually led to a rebellion and after a few days of siege and fighting, Uthman's murder in 656 C.E.

After Uthman's death, Ali was finally chosen as the fourth Caliph a quarter of a century after the death of Muhammad. The Shias perceive this as 25 year of injustice where Ali and his family had to bear great sufferings. When Ali came to power, he started his radically different type of government based more on justice and righteousness than political efficacy. He moved the capital of the Islamic state from Medina to Kufa in Iraq. He dismissed all the governors who were mostly unworthy members of the Umayyad family appointed by Uthman. During the five years of Ali's rule, the caliphate was challenged by two civil wars stemming from two opposition movements.

The first war was initiated by a coalition headed by one of the Prophet's wives, Aisha (the daughter of Abu Bakr). This rebellion was then scattered at the Battle of the Camel (Nasr et al. 1989, 143). As for the second war, called the Battle of Siffin, it was against Muawiya ibn Abi Sufyan, the cousin of Uthman and the governor of Syria who belonged to the Umayyad clan. He and his advocates challenged Ali's election to the Caliphate and accused Ali's followers for Uthman's murder. Actually, when Muawiya refused Ali's appointment of a replacement and rejected to swear allegiance to Ali, a conflict erupted between the armies of the two Muslim leaders (Rogerson 2007, 306—309). This battle was unsuccessful and ended only when Ali was assassinated in Najaf by Ibn Muljam, an angry extremist, who blamed both Ali and Muawiya for the crisis.

It should be noted, that among all Shi'a Imams only Ali was able to establish a government. Therefore, the Caliphate/Imamate of Ali is the only model of governance for the Shiites. For much of their early history, the Sunnis have been associated with the state and the ruling elites, while Shia was more often associated with the political opposition to the Sunni rulers and the elites (Aghaie 2004, 9). The Shia imams were usually rivals of the ruling Sunni caliphs or later of the Sunni empire. Given that they had popular support among the masses, they challenged the legitimacy of Sunni rulers. The Shiites consider the Caliphate of Ali as a Golden Age ruled by a courageous, well-educated and just man. It is held that he had complete knowledge of the religious law, and was a perfect judge. The Shiites have highly regarded Ali's judicial decisions in Shia jurisprudence.

The evaluations of Shiism during its history have been the result of interactions between the political developments and its doctrines. From its role as the initial supporters of Ali, the Shia has grown and experienced drastic changes in its political status: from a persecuted minority to an established dynasty and majority in certain Islamic communities (Nasr et al. 1989, 132). After Ali's death, the Shias gradually developed the theology of the Imamate, which represents the core concept linking generations of Shiite believers over centuries of substantial doctrinal and political change.

2.2 THE IMAMS AND THE IMAMATE

According to Shia theology, the Imams are the religious and political successors to Prophet Muhammad as the leader of the Muslim community. They are considered to have supernatural qualities and abilities, such as infallibility and special (or supernatural) religious knowledge (Aghaie 2004, 78). In addition, they hold a similar position as Prophets, while they do not receive revelation. In fact, for Shia, the Imams hold a special position as transmitters of the word of God. They are perceived as those who offer the believers spiritual guidance, maintain and interpret sharia and undertake the esoteric interpretation of the Quran and are theoretically responsible for its execution, although in reality this authority was never held by any of the Imams following Imam Ali (Flaskerud 2010, 34). Ali is considered the first Imam. With regard to the political and jurisprudence system, Imamate makes Shiite theology fundamentally different and sets it apart from that of the Sunnis. The Sunnis do not believe in Imamate at all, instead, they believe in the caliphate as the elected successor of the Prophet's political and military leadership but not as Muhammad's religious authority (Stewart 1998, 8). Many of Shiite scholars also consider imamate as the essential element of Shiism where legal and other differences are derivative (Stewart 1998, 6).

After the death of Ali, his elder son Hasan, recognized by the Shia as their second Imam, became the caliph according to the Ali's last will and testament. However, Muawiyah did not remain quiet and he laid claim to the caliphate as well. He marched his army against Hasan's caliphate into Iraq. Finally, he was able to force Hasan to hand the caliphate to him on the condition that the caliphate would again return to Imam Hasan or the Imam's household after Muawiyah's death and no harm would be done to his supporters (Tabatabai, 173). However, Muawiyah failed and broke his promise. The Shiites believe that he was poisoned to death by his wife on the order of Muawiya eight years after Hasan's abdication (Ostovar 2009, 22). He marginalized most of Ali's supporters or isolated them to the frontiers of Muslim territory. Then, he proclaimed his son Yazid as his successor creating the first hereditary dynasty in Islam

history, i.e. the Umayyad dynasty (reigned 661–750 A.D.). Yazid was always characterized by Shia as politically oppressive and a morally lax drunkard (Nasr et al. 1989, 147).

2.3 TRAGEDY OF KARBALA

According to Shiite history, following the death of Muawiyah (680 A.D.), and the succession of his infamous son Yazid, Hussein, Ali's younger son, known as the third Shiite Imam, refused to pledge allegiance (bay'ah) to him. According to the terms of the agreement between his brothers, Hasan and Muawiya, he claimed his leadership of the Muslim community. Moreover, Hussein received various letters from Muslims from Kufa asking him to travel to Iraq in order to lead them in an uprising to overcome injustice and tyrannical rule of the Yazid. Thus, Hussein left Medina toward the Umayyad ruled town of Kufa, with a small group of companions and all his family's members, confident of the support of the Kufans,. When the Umayyad governor of Kufa, Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad found out the plan, he arrested and killed some of Hussein's leading supporters in Kufa (Aghaie 2004, 8) in order to prevent people from joining Imam Hussein and also to nip the rebellion in the bud. Then he dispatched an army to besiege Hussein's convoy before reaching the city.

Hussein and his companions were surrounded and stopped by Umayyad troops in an empty desert named Karbala, located near the Euphrates River 70 km away from Kufa. In the next days, the Umayyad's troops tried to hustle Hussein to surrender under brutal conditions. They cut off the supply of fresh water to his camp, which caused the suffering of his companions especially children from thirst (Ostovar 2009, 22). The Kufan Shia who had persuaded Hussein to come to Kufa with the promise to join his struggle, did not rebel or aid Hussein and his companions against Umayyad aggression due to their fear of the Umayyad authorities. Finally, after several days of waiting, occasionally fighting, failing negotiations, Hussein's repeated the refusal to pledge allegiance to Yazid. The final battle took place on the Ashura day (literally the "tenth") of Muharram in the year 61 AH of the Islamic calendar (680 A.D.). Hussein and all his 72 fighterswere killed and their bodies were decapitated and mutilated by Umayyad assailants. The survivors were women and children, together with Hussein's son, Ali Zayn al-Abidin who was too ill to take part in the fighting, and Hussein's sister, Zaynab. Along with Hussein's severed head, they were taken captive and transported to Yazid's court in Damascus. Soon after the incident at Karbala, the mourning for Hussein and his fallen supporters at Karbala

began by the Kufan Shia, and through the commemoration of Ashura, a separate religious identity was developed for Shia. Following the events of Karbala, several campaigns and movements took place in the revenge of Imam Hussein, but all of them were suppressed and led to an intensified pressure on the Shiites which caused them to turn inward and practice silent or even omission form of their religion in the face of persecution for centuries.

Many scholars believe that the tragedy of Karbala is one of the main events in the early formation and development of the Shiite identity which has a large impact on the Shia theology. A prominent scholar of Islamic history, Heinz Helm argues that the Ashura incident "marked the 'big bang' that created the cosmos of Shiism and brought it into motion" (Aghaie 2004, 5).

Mahmoud Ayoub argues that the martyrdom of Imam Hussein has been considered by the Shiite as a cosmic event around which the entire history of the world, prior as well as subsequent to it, revolves (Ayoub 2011, 141).

Prior to the battle of Karbala, the differentiation between Sunnism and Shiism was mostly political and focused on the question of leadership of umma, not an issue of theology. However, throughout centuries after the martyrdom of Hussein, disputes appeared in other religious issues including ritual practices, political and legal systems, and theological doctrines (Elbadri 2009, 33—34).

The mourning for Hussein and his companions began immediately after the slaughter in Karbala. The 10th of Muharram (or Ashura) became an annual holy day of public mourning and commemorating Ashura among Shiite, when they gather to pray for Hussein and his companions, sing Marsiya and beg God for forgiveness for the failure of the faithful of Shiite who fear to join and stand with Hussein and die in Karbala. The battle of Karbala gradually became mythologized and its details became highly acquired a romantic and spiritual colouring with heroic embellishments. In this regard, Hussein became the principal symbol of martyrdom (Sayyid al-Shuhada', "the lord among martyrs") and his martyrdom at Karbala serves as a metahistorical example of resistance against tyranny in Shiism.

Karbala symbolism has been used to mobilize masses and rebellions throughout various periods, from the beginning in the political overthrow of the Umayyads to the modern era in the revolutionary movements of Shia communities. During their long history after Ashura incident, the mournful commemoration of Ashura plays a unifying and empowering role to create social solidarity among the Shiites community by cementing Shia identity. In addition,

the rituals associated with that have historically served as a vehicle for expressing and strengthening a variety of social communities, political movements, and religious collective identity. During the Iranian revolution in 1978–1979, the annual ritual of Muharram processions with the themes and symbolism of Hussein and his battle at Karbala had a significant role to mobilize and encourage Iranians to revolt against the Shah. While protesters equated the Shah and his army with Yazid and the Umayyad troops, they associated themselves with the followers of Hussein. They carried banners with the ritual political slogan: "Every place should be turned into Karbala, every month into Moharram, and every day into Ashura."

In the post-revolutionary era, Moharram symbols were extensively used as one of the primary means in order to promote the legitimacy and revolutionary program of the new state and later on in sustaining the Islamic Republic. In the 1980s, the concepts of jihad and martyrdom were employed effectively to motivate a sense of moral courage among the Iranian troops fighting against the Iraqi invasion (Aghaie 2004, 156—60).

Even today, The Political life of Imam Hussein is a core of the government propaganda in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Battle of Karbala has a very prominent presence in speeches and messages of the Iranian leaders. The Imam is a symbol of struggle and courage who did not comply with an unjust power, and sacrificed himself and his family for the ideals of Islam and people. The authorities of Iran have repeatedly mentioned the battle of Karbala as a symbol of not compromising with their "enemies", especially the powerful external enemies - such as the USA. Each year there are a lot of religious and political lectures and gatherings and publishing political pamphlets, books, political slogans, posters, and stamps, in order to promote these ideologies. The tomb of the decapitated martyr Hussein in Karbala is the holiest place for Shias outside of Mecca and Medina. Every year, millions of pilgrims visit the Karbala on the anniversary of Ashura incident.

The Battle of Karbala was the end of the period of Imams-led military revolts in the period when the Imams lived in a virtual house arrest under the suppression and restriction of Sunni regimes. This in turn led to the depoliticization of the role of the Imams among the Shiite community and to their marginalization in the political sphere of the Muslim world (Ostovar 2009, 25).

In 749–750 A.D. the Umayyads were overthrown by the Abbasids who assumed the caliphate and ruled the empire as a dynasty from Iraq. They flourished for two centuries, but slowly went

into eclipse with the rise to power of the local states. Their claim to power was finally ended in 1258, when the Mongols sacked Baghdad (Aghaie 2004, 8). The Abbasids were descendants of Muhammad through Muhammad's uncle Abbas, who were able to take advantage of popular discontent with Umayyads and succeeded to gain Shiite support and built a coalition with the Persians. Although Abbasids made immense use of popular Shia sentiments to incite the masses to revolt against Umayyad Empire, the alliance with the Shiites was nonetheless short, and after assuming the power, they mostly viewed the Shia as a threat to their legitimacy. Therefore, Abbasids like Umayyads sought to marginalize the Shiites. All the succeeding Imams were either imprisoned as political suspects or kept under strict surveillance in the capital of the Caliphate in Iraq (Aghaie 2004, 8). The Shiites believe that all of the Imams (except for the twelfth and final Imam) were murdered by the Sunni rulers.

The early tenth century coincides with the beginning of the decline of the Abbasid power, which aided greatly to the spread and the strengthening of Shiism. Several Shia states rose to power, including the Fatimids of Egypt, the Hamdanids of Syria and northern Iraq, and the Buyids of Iran and Iraq. In this period, Shiism was able to exist once again.

The first historical development that influenced the source of Shiism during the occultation period was the rise of the Buyids Dynasty (934–1055 A.D.) to power in the Iranian plateau and Abbasid capital, Baghdad as the heartlands of the Islamic empire. Indeed, that was a watershed event for the Shiites of the region. The Buyids used their temporal power to protect the faith and promote the religious and intellectual activities (Nasr *et al.* 1989, 143). During this period, Shia mourning rituals such as "Moharram procession," and the celebrations of the imamate were popularized and for the first time the Shiites were able to worship and cultivate their rituals publicly without as much fear of persecution. Moreover, the Buyids brought the opportunity to Shia theological writers to lay their own firmest intellectual foundations. For example, a special Shia school was founded in Baghdad, as the first independent Muslim college.

2.4 MAHDAVIAT: OCCULTATION OF TWELFTH IMAM

According to the Twelver Shia, in 874 C.E., the twelfth and the last Imam, Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Mahdi who is known among Shiite as Imam-i 'Asr (the Imam of the "Period") and

Sahib al-Zaman (the Master of the Age)went into occultation (ghayba) as a child shortly after his father, the 11th Imam, died. He wanted to avoid death from the hands of the Abbasid Caliph and waited for the right moment to reveal himself by God's permission" (Momen 1987, 166). For 67 years called "lesser occultation"(ghaybat-i sughra), he continued to contact followers through designated agents (Wakils). However, in 941 A.D., he ended his contact with his followers, entering the period called the "great occultation." Accordingly, he still remains in hiding today and will reappear (raj`a) from the occultation before the day of Judgement. Twelver Shia contends that the Hidden Imam is still part of the physical world, but out of direct contact with it (Momen 1987, 165).

The occultation of the Twelfth Imam has a strong apocalyptic component as the hidden Imam and is considered a messianic figure who will return with a company of his chosen men at the end of days, after a long period of chaos and ungodliness in order to save the humankind and the entire creation from degeneration. Hence, after defeating the evil forces in an apocalyptic battle, he will establish legitimate Islamic government to restore justice and equity on the Earth. He will fulfil the mission of all the Prophets before him (Ayoub 2011, 155).

The great occultation of the Twelfth Imam threw the Shia community into confusion and left a serious vacuum in the legitimate leadership. The question which the Shiites were faced with was how and who leads the Muslim society or resolves theological problems and juristic questions in the absence of a legitimate, infallible ruler. Until then the Shiites believed that only the Imams were legitimate and have the right to lead the Muslim community. In addition, nobody excepted the Imams had the authority to lead Friday prayers and declare an offensive jihad. This issue led to the rise of the Shiite ulama or clergy (mujtahids) as the only alternative and de facto leaders of the Shiite community who can only be vicariously used during the concealment of the Imam (Ostovar 2009, 26). The mujtahids are the learned doctors of the sacred law who were trained in the Shiite theology, i.e. jurisprudence. The mujtahids are considered as indirect deputies of the twelfth Imam and have the authority to explicate the teachings of Islam.

However, after great occultation, political Shiism followed the quietest school until the twentieth century where religious clergy chose not to be involved in political matters. The clergy believed that true Islam would not exist until the Hidden Imam was revealed, therefore the clergy did not want to take part in an imperfect political ruling. Hence, Shia theologians believed that their role was to keep their faith separated from the political power until the return

of the Hidden Imam. This was ingrained in a clear separation between clergy and politics (Tabari 1984). Throughout the centuries, depending on the development of the political environment, the evolution of ulama and their role and influence in Shia society have undergone considerable changes.

2.5 MODERN SHIISM AND THE RISE OF THE CLERGY

The Safavid period is an outstanding turning point in the history of Shiism and the beginning of a new phase in the Islamic world that had a major effect upon the religious-political fortunes of the Middle East, the consequences of which are still apparent even today. While Iran is the most influential Shia nation today and Shiism has often been treated as an "Iranian" variant of Islam, the majority of the population of the Iranian plateau was predominantly Sunni with only a small Shiite minority until the Safavid dynasty ascension. In the early sixteenth century, the Safavid dynasty's founder, Shah Esmail (1501–1524) who was the spiritual leader of a Shiite Sufi brotherhood, led a tribal military to conquer the city of Tabriz and soon claimed for Shia Islam the whole territory of Persia, which was once governed by Iran's Sassanids.

At this historical moment when Persia was separated into parts which caused a lack of a central powerful ruling system, a young Shia sheikh Ismail could gain the historical opportunity to consolidate his rule there. He was considered by many of his supporters as a direct descendant of Imam Ali. He launched his war by employing the slogan of retaining the lost rights of the Prophet's Household (Alagha 2006, 80). He decreed Shia religion as the official religion of Iran, as the first Shia state in Islamic history.

The Safavid dynasty was formed on two foundations. One was Shiism and the other was Persian culture. The Safavid was able to create a successful marriage between Persian culture and Shiism, which led to strengthening each other in a symbiotic process and an emphasis on their common interests. On the one hand, this laid the groundwork for the Persians to regain the rule and forge a new national identity after centuries of foreign conquest and rule. In fact, the Persian's new national identity was articulated in a Shia form. On the other hand, for the first time in the Islamic history, Shia Islam became the state religion with specific geographic territory. Thus, Shia Islam was linked with this revival, flourished and was adopted by most Persians (Nasr et al. 1988, 286).

From the political point of view, the Safavid's adoption of Shia Islam gave a cohesive and exclusive identification of a political entity with a geographic region and a particular sect for

Persians and the Safavid lands vis-à-vis their Sunni rival to its neighbors, the Uzbek in the East and their more dangerous rival to the west, the Ottomans (Nasr 2007, 67). This created a dynamic ideology to unify and motivate Persians against these enemies and hold both foes at bay (Nasr et al. 1988, 284). In general, Ottomans and Safavid entered a direct competition with a sectarian overtone over dominating and leading more Muslim lands. The conflicts between the Safavid shahs and the Ottoman sultans created a political and religious dispute between what were increasingly appearing as the two orthodoxy sects. Furthermore, the population that resided in each entity acquired a stronger sectarian identity. Thus, the lines between sects became increasingly defined. In fact, in turn, this politically-religious gap was an origin of the modern historical conception of a strict Sunni-Shia divide. Iran remained the Ottoman Empire's ideological and religious opponent, and very often its real enemy, well into the nineteenth century and later on following the collapse of Ottoman Empire.

Safavid's campaign of converting of the majority Sunni population to Twelver Shia faith was fulfilled by both the persuasion and also the force of the sword killed or coercive power in parallel, which eventually led to the conversion of nearly the entire Iranian population to Twelver Shiism in a few decades. Overall, conversion by the Safavids was largely successful, in terms of both the scale of the project and its permanence. Due to lack of native Iranian Shia scholars in order to promote Shiism, Shah Esmail and his successors imported many outstanding Shiite scholars from the Arab world namely the Jabal Amil from the region of Southern Lebanon to formulate a distinctively Shiite theory of rule whereby political power would be exercised in this regard (Alagha 2006, 20—21). These scholars were able to play a prominent role in defining the legitimacy of the Safavid state and disseminating of Shiism among the populace.

Shiism was applied as an essential pillar in the justice system of the Safavid. Before that, never - even in periods when the Shiites were under consideration and acceptance by local rulers, were the Shia traditions and principles did not apply in their judicial systems. Under Safavid, for the first time an explicit Shia jurist exercised certain authority with theologicopolitical connotations that reflect an elaboration through ijtihad of the authority of jurists in the context of a Shi'i state. Gradually, Shiite clergy (ulama) gained significant influence over political level they had not previously enjoyed, which led them to sit next to the most powerful political actors in Persia. In addition, under Safavid rule, the distribution of religious endowments was centralized and the ulama were appointed to governmental positions, such as judgeships, administrative positions as well as religious posts such as each city's Shaykh al-Islam and Sadr

al-Islam position: the city's senior religious official. Here the immigrant ulama and their descendants with the penetration into the governmental system formed clerical elite which had a profound impact on Iran's religious and political history and also on the evolution of Shiite thought. The involving of Shiite ulama to the political scene facilitated to systematize Shia jurisprudence, theology for the Safavid state within their territories.

The end result was that an entire region of the Islamic world was placed under the exclusive dominion of a Twelver Shiism, at the expense of other forms of Islam. Development of Shia symbols and rituals was important to the self-definition of the Safavid dynasty. This era was a crystallization of politics and religion institution. Collaborations and a favourable relationship between these two institutions caused their theorized religion in the politics sphere, which became a point of origin of many of Iran's religious-political developments until the modern era.

Simply put, this created a sort of strong coexistence and collaborations between the Shiite clerical class representing the religious institution and the Safavid shahs representing power institution strengthening each other. Religious institution legitimized the Safavids and subsequently the power institution promoted Shiism and strengthened the religious organization and the Shiite clerical class. Thus, the Safavid rule was divided into the political power which belonged to the Shah and religious affairs which were administered by the Shia jurisprudents.

The Safavids tendency to intertwine religious institution with the political sphere depended on the period and the conditions in different stages. The early Safavid empire was completely of a theocratic nature. Political and religious power were entirely intertwined and accumulated in the person of the king as a political and religious leader. Even Shah Ismail claimed initially to be the Mahdi (Hidden Imam). This was later denied by his successors who claimed to be the representatives of the Mahdi and rule at his honour but still wait for his emergence. During Abbas I (ruled 1588–1629 A.D.), the rule became more civilianized and secular. He tended to be an absolute monarch and less of a charismatic religious leader or a representative of Imams. He separated clergy and ulama from the state affairs while allowing them an independent source of support in their administration of the waqf system. Over time and by the end of the rule of Abbas I, it was the clergy and mujtahids, who would claim to be the spokesmen for the hidden Imam.

The Safavid period created a new environment to elaborate Shia symbols and rituals and also emerged new practices on the annual remembering, ritual sermon, recounting narratives of the key event in Shia history with new meanings and new forms (46). For instance, the Moharram procession, rowzeh khani or Taziya in mourning, the tragedy of Karbala, were all created in this period, which had a significant role for the self-definition and bolster Safavid legitimacy. The Safavids also financed to build shrines and other religious institutions. Under the patronage of the Shia Safavids, the number of Shia madrasas (religious schools), mosques grew rapidly all around Iran. The attraction of these madrasahs drew a stream of Shia learned men from other parts of the Islamic world to Iran, which turned Iran into a new centre of Shiism thought. At this time, ulama found an excellent opportunity to concentrate on writing and publishing an enormous number of books, which are still taught in the *hawzas* (religious seminaries or schools and religious universities) (Alagha 2006, 20—21).

When the Qajar dynasty took over after the Safavid, the power balance between the Shah and the religious leaders was changed and the clergy began to play a more independent role from the state. Unlike the Safavid kings that could rely on their own religious charisma to legitimize their rule, the Qajars relied upon the clergy to provide their support and even endorsement. Therefore, the clergy gained more autonomy over time (Aghaie 2004, 12). Within this context, new political Shiite ideologies began to formulate which allowed an active participation of the clergy in political life. Political events in Iran at the end of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century changed the face of political Shiism and the role of the clergy. New religious and political ideas began to emerge creating an internal transformation of Shiism, and debates have spurred about the potential role of political Shiism in the socio-political sphere. The newly-found political power of the clergy offered a new refuge for people to seek help and guidance from religious leaders. This relationship was further strengthened after the dissolution of the Qajar dynasty during the 1920s and the ascension of Reza Shah Pahlavi to the throne. The Tobacco Movement in Iran is one of the important events between 1890 and 1902, under the Qajar dynasty (1796–1925 A.D.) which many scholars consider a starting point of activism and the end of the quietest school in political Shiism.

Iran's Tobacco Revolt occurred in response to growing Western infiltration into the Iranian economy which required several trade concessions that were granted by the ruling Shah. In this period, the British were one of most active foreign powers in Iran that struggled to expand its imperial control over the Indian subcontinent and to further British power via a series of exploitative commercial ventures across the Middle East. In one such investment, in 1890, Nasir

al-Din Shah Qajar granted a concession to a British businessman, Major G. F. Talbot for a full monopoly over the production, export, and sale of all Iranian tobacco for fifty years which caused mass protests across the whole empire. Many Iranians made a profit from producing, selling, or transporting tobacco, and even more spent their income on tobacco products (Ostovar 2009, 40). The Qajar Shah's ties with European companies, and his marginalization of the national tobacco movement, alarmed Shiite theologians. In December 1891, a fatwa (religious edict) against tobacco attributed to the Shia Marja-e taqlid of the time, Grand Ayatollah Mirza Hasan Shirazi issued a calling for a nationwide ban of the use of tobacco. The fatwa stated the following: "In the name of God the Merciful, the Forgiving. Today the use of tobacco, in whatever fashion, is reckoned as the war against the Imam of the Age (may God hasten his glad advent)" (Browne 1966, 22).

With the religious verdict and legitimacy of the marja-e taqlid behind this order, the Shiites of the region from every class and standing (even Shah's servants and also women in the shah's harem) staged a successful boycott and affective protests that compelled the Shah to repeal the concession. After the tobacco movement, Shiism had become a powerful political force as an institution with an independent existence, serving as a check on the power of the shahs, the activities of foreigners, and the modernizing tendencies of the elite. In addition, the importance of having the institution of the marja-e taqlid (source of imitation) in Shiism as a central authority for all the Shiites was more determined.

Marja-e taqlid is a clerical establishment and was subject to the clear hierarchical structure of ulama with the different ranking and religious authority that became one of the main pillars of Twelve Imam Shiism in the 19th century. As a result every believer who was not a mujtahid (a prominent expert on Islamic law) should choose a trained mujtahid to follow in law and doctrine. In fact, the *marja-e taqlid* is regarded as the most respected and one of the highest *ulama* (clergy) in Shiism; his words and deeds serve as a guide for his large crowds of followers. As such, holders of the position have come to enjoy substantial political clout in the modern period, especially because believers throughout the world provide the Marja-e taqlid with considerable donations in the form of religious contributions – and thereby give great economic independence (Momen 1987, 201—206). Marja is "liable to dispense guidance on political matters in a sense opposed to the will of the state and ipso facto to become a leader of opposition" (Algar 1972, 235).

Although, tobacco movement was a significant itself, the Shia clergy was for the first time able to mobilize and leading the Shiite populace into a political protest against Shah as well as against Western imperialism and presented themselves as an independent and influential institution (Algar 1980, 217).

The twentieth century was dominated by a chain of various events that led to massive changes and developments in the world history in various political and social arenas: World Wars, the disintegration of empires and the emergence of nation-states, Cold War, and so on. It witnessed the emergence of new political ideologies such as communism, socialism, and nationalism which were confronted with the opposition of religious sects. This led Muslim intellectuals and religious leaders to begin to develop their own political ideologies that referred to as Islamism, political Islam, or fundamentalism gave motivation and religious legitimacy to political and militant organizations throughout the region (Ostovar 2009, 31).

2.6 IRANIAN REVOLUTION: VILAYET EFAQIH DOCTRINE

In 1979, the overthrow of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi by the Islamic revolution under the Grand Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini the monarchical rule in Iran ended. Ayatollah Khomeini was attributed in the group of Shia clerics that believe the theory of returning to self and revival of glory of Islam and Islamic identity that opposed Westernization. Khomeini was seen by his supporters as following the footsteps of the Shia Imam Hussein ibn Ali and the Shah in the role of Hussein's foe, the hated tyrant Yazid (Taheri 1987, 238). The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran emerged with utmost politicized readings of Shia jurisprudence and the history which led to create a new idea in political Shiism about Islamic states and the role of Shia clergy that did not existe before. This substantially shaped and impacted the development in the political and social arena of the Middle East and was a starting point for the revival of Shiism in the region. Due to its vast territorial and demographic size, Iran was a key player in the region with historically important influence on the Shiite population in the Middle East. Iran was the only country in which the Islamist movement managed to take power and a durable 'Islamic state' and represented a lucid demonstration of the renewed political significance of religion in the region. Following the Islamist's consolidation of power, Shiism became central and highly visible in the political institutions in Iran and quickly formulated Shia identity in the whole of the people's social, cultural and political life. Indeed, it presented new Shiite revolutionary ideas or political processes that were made more appealing for the masses of the Shiite to mobilize them in order to make radical social changes. With overthrowing the Shah, Ayatollah

Khomeini, the founder of Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) was able to meet his aspiration of establishing the Islamic State of Iran based on Shiism as the ideology of the revolution and his doctrine of vilayet-e faqih.

According to Vali Nasr, Khomeini represented a dramatically different kind of a religion leader in Shia history. With his charismatic personality and unique leadership qualifications, coupled with his religious credentials and courageous struggle against the Shah, he managed to secure his support well beyond his traditional followers (Nasr 2007, 121). Khomeini as the Imam and leader of the revolution exercised his charismatic authority in the following decade to shape various revolutionary structures and institutions of the theocratic IRI and minimize their dissonance. In doing so, he created the present system based on Shia jurisprudence by clerical councils, which was set in Iran's constitutional politics to the present.

Khomeini argued that Islam possesses all the necessary requirements that a human needs to attain, like happiness and prosperity in all affairs of life, including law and ordinances for ruling the state. Moreover, all principles necessary to guide a government and social administration can be extracted from the Qur'an and the Sunna (the life and teachings of Mohammed). (Moin 2009, 153) He criticized the traditional Shia school and the clerical class for their perceived impotence in the sense of refraining from political activity or no representation until the coming of the Mahdi. As he saw it, even the Prophet had clearly intended an Islamic State and a clerical assumption of leadership (Zubaida 2009, 22). In the time of the Prophet, Islamic laws were not only expounded and promoted; they were also implemented, which is why the formation of a government and the establishment of executive organs are necessary (Moin 2009, 153).

The foundation of the disputes in the refraining or participation in political activities was already laid between two rival Shia law schools in the 17th century. The Akhbari-school claimed that all political power was illegitimate as long as the Imam was in occultation. The Usuli-school also held that no political power was possible without the Imam, however, it argued that the illegitimacy of the state could be reduced by letting the fuqha (plural of faqih) operate as counsellors to the rulers. But Khomeini with his maximum understanding of Shiism, even went further than Usuli school. He argued that the Shia Muslims should not just wait for the return of hidden Imam; instead, they had to establish an Islamic State under the guardianship of the jurist. Indeed, the direct claim to political power by ulama in Shia Islam was consequently a new invention, alien to the traditional separation of religious and political spheres.

Khomeini claimed, in order to preserve the Shia community in the absence of the Hidden Imam, an Islamic state had to be headed by senior Jurist (Faqih) who was selected from the clerical leaders or by a council composed of high-ranking ulama (fuqaha). The Faqih is a clergy member that has reached the highest level of Islamic jurisprudence. Khomeini stressed that, because Faqih had superior knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, he was the best-qualified replacement of the Hidden Imam with the same temporal function (but not status) during the period of occultation in order to rule the believers who were preparing themselves on earth to live eternally in heaven (Altoraifi 2012, 140—142).

The year 1963 witnessed the first overt clash between Khomeini and the Iranian regime. As a result of the hard statement and other attacks on the Shah and following his opposition to the Shah's reforms, Khomeini was exiled in Najaf, Iraq for fourteen years. At this point, Khomeini had not revealed his vision of *Velayet-e Faqih*, yet. Instead, he delivered a few speeches about the importance of clerical intervention in politics in the Muslim world. However, during his exile he developed this idea further into his theory of Vilayet-e Faqih and delivered a collection of lectures to the religious students, which were published as a pocket-sized book in 1969, entitled Hukumat-i Islami (Islamic government) and distributed secretly in Iran before the revolution. In this book Khomeini fully described the theoretical groundwork for an Islamic government (Altoraifi 2012, 140—142). He debates several principles that outline the role of the Faqih in the government that can be stated as (Momen 1987, 194—197):

- A Faqih, single individual, may become the ruler of the community if he is determined by other clergy members to be the most learned and most just.

- All rulers in Islamic states must implement Islamic laws and the jurists have a divine mandate to supervise all of the state's executive and administrative affairs.

- Hence, the power invested in the Faqih becomes the absolute power on all matters, consolidating all local, national, and international issues in the hands of one person.

- If tyrants attempt to prevent the Faqih from exercising his rule, the Faqih should keep developing Islamic laws and fight for his right to rule because God vested him with this authority,

- The Faqih is the only one who can teach others because he has acquired the necessary knowledge and because other clergy members have approved that he is the most learned and

most just. In the early 1970s, Khomeini began to spread his revolutionary ideas that arose from the central Shia symbolism. He propounded the idea of a noble human being who could rise above his defeat and fight for his rights and justice. For example, he used Imam Hussein and the events of Karbala as the main Shia symbol for the battle of good against evil, righteous struggle against injustice and oppression. He called upon noblemen to start their migration toward God and to accept martyrdom and death as the necessary acts demanded by God to achieve honour and glory. Khomeini used Shi sentiments and employed interesting slogans and ritual such as "Every day is Ashura, every land is Karbala", "Islam is for equality and social justice," and "Islam will eliminate class differences," to inspire and mobilize the Shiite masses (Abrahamian 1993, 61—69).

Khomeini was successful to weave his revolutionary message into Iran's national identity. Shiism and *vilayet-e faqih* impact Iran's system of government and its regional posture. Since the Islamic revolution, religious institutions and individuals have been able to take control of all affairs. In the first decade of the revolution, they were able to eliminate or subordinate all their opponents and rivals. Indeed, the Islamic Republic became basically a government by clergy. Today, clergy and their affiliates have occupied most of the senior positions in the government, parliament, the revolutionary organizations (Abrahamian 1993, 61—69). Khomeini was able to expand clerical authority over the state and strengthen the place of traditional clerical authority. Now, *Vilayet-e Faqih* is the country's most powerful institution of command. On religious matters, his fatwa plays a role of the law, and on political issues, he is the final word. The sources of his enormous power are not only limited to the constitutional ones; he is considered as a religious and spiritual father of the nation.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The essential nature of international politics has become significantly more complex over the past decades. Increasingly, non-material and ideational factors play a considerable role as mobilizing influences, causing actors to behave in an unprecedented manner. Especially, the rise of the transnational ideologies among either state actor or non-state actors in the Middle East, have made it difficult to understanding and anticipate their behaviours by traditional theories. Given the enormous ethnic, religious and cultural differences in the Middle East, the region has always been known as the epicentre of conflicts. Today, identity features, such as ethnicity, religion, language have become more important factors in order to promote power in political, social, economic spheres in the world. Due to the traditional structure of the societies

in the Middle East, these identity factors are even more intensive. Therefore, based on the socio-political structure, the region has been a good example to understand the influence of cultural and religious identities in the politics. Thus, the strong presence of transnational identities headed by religious identity provides appropriate elements to determine the importance of identity factors and its role to describe the state's foreign policy and the position of none state actors.

Religion has been turned into a political ideology which has integrated into all aspects of society in order to influence the political and social spheres. The links between Muslim societies at a supranational level have been created through ideologies like Shiism regardless of political boundaries and concepts such as the nation-state. This applies to Islamic Republic of Iran more than any other country. Since the Islamic revolution in 1979, Iranian foreign policy has been shaped based on the set of Shia tradition and revolutionary values and discourses, which led to a crucial deficiency to analyse Iranian foreign policy for both IR and foreign policy scholars and in the context of mainstream IR rational approaches.

Generally, positivist/rationalist approaches ignore the effective role and capabilities of the non-material structures in shaping state's identity, interest, and behaviour; they rather focus on material structures as the only factor that has a causal effect on states foreign behaviour. They presume that all rational actors (states) have the same reactions to the same issues and situations according to their pre-assumed, fixed and universal rationality. They consider states as rational actors, which define their interest only in terms of power (Morgenthau 1972, 10). According to rationalist perspective, the foreign policy of all states toward the international politics is based on strategic and cost–benefit calculations and materialistic objectives in order to maximize their security and power in international relations. From this view, states try to apply a rational choice perspective in reaction of foreign policy challenges. Thus, according to the positivist/rationalist approaches, in many cases, it is difficult to explain Iran's behaviour based on some pre-assumed, predefined and objective national interests, and concepts like the rational actor, cost-benefit analysis and so on. From their perspective, most of the time, Iran has been a crazy actor whose policies have imposed too many costs on the state's national interests and increased its regional and international challenges since the Islamic revolution. However, Iranian foreign policy is more guided by the ideational social factors than the material ones. Revolutionary ideology and the Shia nature of Iranian foreign policy distinguishes it from other states of the world. In order to understand IRI behaviour, one should try to understand the ideological and normative characteristics of its foreign policy.

Constructivist theory is a most applicable approach to analysing Iran's foreign policy with regard to its commitment to support Shia groups in other regional states. Shortly, constructivism emphasizes the importance and decisive role of norms, non-material structures and identity in the formation of political decisions. It also points out the mutual construction of agents and structures at the same time. However, constructivists do not deny the importance of martial structures; rather, based on as constructivist assumption, material structures are given meaning only by social context in which they are interpreted (Hacking 2003, 41).

In this part, we are going to examine the theoretical underpinnings of constructivist approach and its contribution to IR and foreign policy, with the aim of an understanding of the theory for subsequent empirical analysis we will outline the main traits of the constructivist theory. Initially, we begin with a brief overview of constructivist thought with focusing on the evolution and the roots of constructivism and its contributions to IR theories. Then, we explore the role of state and none-state identity in shaping the national interest and foreign policy. This thesis does not primarily seek to add any new theoretical knowledge or aspects to the constructivist database; rather, it evaluates the already existing theory in order to analyse our empirical case.

3.1 CONSTRUCTIVISM: CORE FEATURES

People live within and interact through the overlapping of different social constructions namely nationality, ethnicity, ideology, gender, religion, culture, and other that create and alter the environments in which they live. On the one hand, individuals live in their own world. However, at the same time, everyone lives together in a single constructed world. Therefore, they all experience the world actively together. In other words, living in the world means acting "on it", not just acting "in it" (Onuf 2013, 4—7). Generally, the world that we live in is constructed between self and others through the material and ideational structures. Thus, there is not a predetermined and given issue in our world. Everything involved in the social world of mankind is made by them. The social world is an intersubjective domain: it is meaningful to people who made it and live in it (Hudson 2014, 7).

Constructivists characterize 'an interactive relationship between what people do and how societies shape their actions as the "mutual constitution" of structures and agents (Klotz 2015, 7). Unlike much IR-theory such as neorealism, neoliberalism that focuses on the distribution of material power, such as military forces and economic capabilities, it defines balances of power among states, constructivists reject such a one-sided materialist, rationalist forces. In the

constructivist view, it is ideas that always are an important matter. Accordingly, the material world is indeterminate and is interpreted within a larger context of meaning. Ideas thus define the meaning of material power (Tannenwald 2005, 19).

Does reality have an essential existence or is reality constructed by ourselves? Do we collectively invent the world rather than discover it? The answers to these ontological questions can drive us to constructivism or rational and positivist schools. Constructivists have applied an alternative ontology to describe and interpret aspects of world politics that were anomalous to the traditional materialist and positivist theoretical approaches. Contribution of constructivism to the IR lies mainly in emphasizing the ontological reality of intersubjective knowledge. According to constructivism, all aggregated meanings share understanding, and social knowledge such as norms, rules, meanings, languages, cultures, and ideologies as intersubjective phenomena in the social arena, reach people to a common and accessible understanding of reality and consequently form identities and guide actions that comprise structures and agents.

From this perspective, agents and structures are reciprocally constructed and their relationship as mutually constitutive and without giving primacy to either. Indeed, there is a dynamic relationship between them involves intersubjective understanding and meaning. Agents are in turn, constrained by structures, but structures are also drawn upon by agents in their actions, and thus, is produced and reproduced by the action (Giddens 1984). Constructivists stress that not only in the international system but also an international society play key role as origin of global politics. Early development of constructivism worldview is attributed to ancient Greek philosophy. Pre-Socratic philosopher, Heraclitus (535-475 B.C.) stated that "everything flows and nothing stands still" (Heraclitus 1962), Protagoras, a sophist (490 - 420 B.C.) claimed that "man is the measure of all things", and the Socratic famous maxim stated: "I only know that I know nothing". These statements somehow can be interpreted as initial indications of the constructivist paradigm.

In the Western context, constructivists attribute their intellectual genealogy to the writings of the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Vico maintained that "The human mind can only clearly understand what they have themselves constructed" (Glasersfeld 1995, 21). In his published Treatise (1710), he argues that the natural world is created by God, but the historical world is made by Man. human make their own history (Vico 1982, 26). According to Vico, states and subsequently state system are artificial creations

and it is made up by human. therefore, if they want to, they can change it and develop it in new ways. Furthermore, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) is another pioneer of constructivist thought (Hacking 2003, 41). He argued, in opposition to the Hume positivism, that knowledge of the world cannot come from observation alone, but through the lens of human beings'. Kant emphasized that knowledge is always obtained as subjective knowledge, which is filtered through human consciousness.

Although constructivism was known in other spheres of the social sciences it had not been considered as international relations theory until the late 1980s. The unexpected end of the Cold War's bipolarity without any war erupted and without any change in the anarchical world system, also the sudden emergence of new separatist nationalist movements and the rise of religious extremism in the 90s, on the one hand, firstly, asked new questions about the world politics. Secondly, it challenged the old and mainstream IR theories that represented by the microeconomic and rational-positivism approaches which are orientated to realism and liberalism schools. Thirdly, it indicated the failure to anticipate or account for the Cold War's peaceful, and also incapability of adequately imagining or explaining large-scale changes within international politics. On the other hand, it was a catalyst for broad changes that facilitated the emergence of a more diverse range of explanations and methodological approaches with a broader focus on identity, culture, and religion as key factors behind the behaviour of international actors. It also led to the emergence of the new generation of young scholars who embraced many of the propositions of critical international theories that challenged the ontological, epistemological, methodological, and normative assumptions of mainstream approaches (Phillips 2007, 62). In this regard, the historical context led to provide space for constructivists to demonstrate the heuristic power of sociological and non-rationalist perspectives, moving it from the margins to the mainstream of theoretical debate (Katzenstein et al. 1998, 670).

Overall, the failure and difficulty of the dominant rational theoretical paradigms, to predict and explain the abrupt collapse of the Soviet Union and the systemic transformations reshaping the global order, seemed to many that these difficulties stemmed from IR's materialist and individualist orientation, such that a more ideational and holistic view of international politics might do better (Wendt 1999, 4). So this has helped that constructivism has acquired considerable significance in IR especially among North American scholars. Constructivism attempts a reconceptualization of the discipline through the introduction of social theory to the field.

The term *constructivism* is first presented in international relations theory by Nicholas Honf in 1989 (Dunne et al. 2007, 186). He contended that states as much as individuals, are living in a "world of our making," as the title of his famous book goes (Onuf 2012). Onuf's key work lies in the area where international relations and international law meet. His constructivism was focused on an exploration of rules. He asserted meaning in human social relations which depends on the existence of rules (Onuf 2013, 18). In the following Friedrich Kratochwil made a complex analysis of the reasoning process in which rules and norms play a decisive role in international politics. He co-authored an article with John Ruggie which is an analysis of the supposed contradictions between Neoliberal regime theory's ontology and epistemology in (traditional) IR theory (Kratochwil 1989). Nevertheless, the constructivism was popularized and developed when Alexander Wendt published his influential writings, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics" in 1992 (Palnan 2000, 576). He pointed out that anarchy could be a structural fact about the world that states inhabit, but that it was dependant on actors and how they deal with that anarchy. Wendt described the basic tenets of constructivism social theory as follows:

First, states are the principal units of analysis for international political theory. Second, the key structures in the states system are intersubjective shared ideas, norms, and values, rather than material forces (Wendt 1999, 210). Third, state identities and interests are constructed, mediated by these social structures, rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics (Wendt 1995, 385). On the other word, unlike the Neorealism claim, which holds identities and interests of the actors as essentialist, stable, constructivism suggests that the structure leads actor's product or reproduce their identities and interests over the process of interacting ("socialized" process). Although, constructivism has been interpreted in a range of ways but it can be said that most IR constructivists agree with these basic assumptions. Further, he published his ground-breaking book, "Social Theory of International Politics" (Cambridge University Press, 1999) which dissected and formulated the core notions of constructivism approach. He developed his argument as a response to neorealism theory specifically Kenneth Waltz's work, Theory of International Politics, which is the canonical text of the neorealist school. Although, in definition of constructivism, Wendt uses the key elements of neorealism notions, such as the state-centrism and the importance of anarchy in conceptualizing the international system, however he has provided one of the most sophisticated and hard-hitting constructivist critiques of structural realism premise. In a critical view to neorealism, Wendt argues that Waltzian structural realism has great insufficiency to

explain the structural change well, but it cannot generate falsifiable hypotheses congenital to positivist approaches. In fact, constructivists before Wendt mostly demonstrated their notions with more orientation to social theories and even philosophy than IR theories. Wendt deserves the credit for bringing constructivism to the centre stage in theoretical debates of international relations. No longer after Wendt, other constructivists seriously applied it. Bringing the assumptions of social constructivism to security studies was the next substantial attempt, which was made by the scholars such as Katzenstein, Adler and Barnett. Adler pointed out that security seemed achievable through community rather than power (Adler 1998). Peter Katzenstein and his colleagues, in the book edited "The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics" (1996), concentrated on how ideational factors such as norms, identity, and culture shape different aspects of national security policy. They argue that the security environments in which states are embedded are in consequential part cultural and institutional, rather than just material factors. Cultural environments affect not only the incentives for different kinds of state behaviour, but also the basic character of states, which calls state "identity" (Katzenstein et al. 1998, 32—41).

3.2 STATE IDENTITY AND INTREST

In a socially constructed political world, identities operate to tell actors about themselves and others. Identities express who the self is, as well as compared with who the self of others is. A sense of self often tells people who they are and what they should do. Thus, having a certain identity determines an associated set of preferences and interests which generate motivational and behavioural dispositions in various circumstances and when different actors are involved (Zehfuss 2002, 40). Accordingly, identity provides actors with a method of predicting the behaviour of others, and since interests are constituted by identities, for guiding actor actions (Hopf 1998, 175).

The concept of identity is one of the main discussion that differentiate constructivism from the mainstream approaches of 'rationalism'. The constructivist alternative presented by Wendt revolves around the construction of identity. Wendt assumes that identities and interests are at any point in time historically contestable, constructed and contingent by interactions and intersubjective practice rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature (Wendt 1992, 183). He defines constructivism as a social structural theory of the international system that agents and structures are mutually constructed with 'equal ontological statuses (Wendt 1987, 339).

In other words, he conceptualizes intersubjective and interaction as the key structures in the states system that can determine agent's identities and interests. In accordance with an ontology of mutual constitution of agents and structures, constructivists considered identities as social relationships that are mutable characteristics of individuals or groups over time and across contexts. Constructivists seek the processes that link contexts and actions in the development the categories of Self and Other, its meanings, and their recursive effects. In addition, they explore to understand how ideas and norms affect identities and subsequently how identities provide the basis for interest of actors through the intersubjective aspect such as ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, religion and other social categories. Therefore, in order to achieve a comprehensive understanding and the analysis of a state's behaviour and foreign policy, it is indispensable to figure out the process of identity acquisition and in turn, actors' interest formation (Smith 2009, 220—221). In order to achieve such an objective, it is essential to analyse how ideas are created, how they evolve and influence actors' perceptions and response to their situation. Forasmuch as intersubjectively shared understanding, social knowledge vary across regions, over time period, constructivists have been concerned with the analysis of meaning within particular spatial, historical, and social contexts. Wendt argues that "it is through reciprocal interaction that we create and instantiate the relatively enduring social structures in terms of which we define our identities and interests." In other words, "social structures exist, not in actors' heads nor in material capabilities, but in practices. Social structure exists only in process (Wendt 1995, 74).

3.3 THE DETERMINANT IDENTICAL FACTORS IN IRAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iranian identical structures have mainly originated from the political Islam, Shia religion, the political standpoint of Ayatollah Khomeini and the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. IRI is an ideological regime which means that its ontological security is important as existential security. In other words, the discrediting of its ideology is equal to an overthrow of the regime. Changes take place in the structure only if necessary and in a very slow process. Iranian foreign policy has been relatively stable in its strategies and policies following the durability of domestic ideational structures. If there were some changes or adjustment in the ideational structures, they were very rare and took long to occur. Although, at the level of strategy or tactics, depending on the situation, Iran's foreign policy imposed some remarkable changes (Nia 2011, 279). In fact, in Iran, the religious ideology impacts on political decision – albeit to varying degrees. Shiism emerges as the most prominent contributor to the state's identity. As a theocratic regime IRI legitimized its system

by the employment of Shi ideology and connecting to its strong traditions and spirituality of religion. Elements of Shia ideology have dominated political life in Iran and propagate all levels of society. The political principles of Shia jurisprudence impact all aspects, from the formation of the political system and drafting of the constitution to the completion of the structures of power, foreign and domestic policies. The IRI ideological substance is clearly formulated in the Constitution. The Constitution is an excellent tool to study the worldviews, principled beliefs and causal beliefs of the Iranian Islamist Regime. Even the Constitution itself describes its own role as follows: "The mission of the Constitution is to realize the ideological objectives of the Revolution (Nehzat) and to create conditions conducive to the development of man in accordance with the noble and universal values of Islam" (Iranian Constitution, 1989). Moreover, for the last four decades, Iran's foreign policy has been subject to different doctrines and discourses as other identity sources and hence interests. Iranian foreign policy has been affected by its corporate identity with the domestic social ideas, which meant more than social identity at the international systemic level (Nia 2011, 289—291). On the other word, Iranian foreign policy was initially affected by domestic norms and ideologies (corporate identity) and then by social interaction at the systemic international level (social identity). Before, IRI had engaged with international interactions and the core of its identity was constructed which previously meant its interest, consequently its foreign policy roadmap was determined as well. Put simply, as the first step, before starting the interaction with the international community, IRI constructed its identity on its corporate identity at the domestic level which was focused on the nature of the internal normative structures. As the second step, this previously held identity was radicalized or moderated by Iran's already established identity due to the confrontational normative environment in the international arena. (Nia 2011, 289—291). In fact, Iran's ideational and discursive policy caused aggression from the regional states, their Western allies and hostile policy against Iran which caused changes in the ideational policy. This is well reflected in the shifting of the radical version of "export of revolution" doctrine to the Umm Al-Qura doctrine which is a more realistic and moderated view to the "export of revolution" that came up after the international systemic pressure. Nevertheless, the ideology of export of revolution still remains one of the fundamental ideologies in forming its state identity and also no remarkable changes have occurred at the levels of strategy.

Hence, in the present chapter we attempt to address the determinant identical factors that affect Iranian foreign policy regarding the support or founding of Shia none state actors since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

3.3.1 EXPORT OF REVOLUTION

Export of revolution is an internationalist approach based on transmission and spread of a certain kind of ideology and its implications by victorious revolutionary government of one country in order to promote the same revolution in other countries. Alternatively, if we get help from Fred Halliday typology offer of internationalism, exporting of revolution is somehow placed in revolutionary internationalism category, which is "radical" and is mostly associated with militaristic intervention, or the cooperation between revolutionary states and like-minded militant groups with the intention to influence the domestic affairs of other states (Halliday 1988). This concept of intervention is rooted in both the ideology and the acknowledgement of revolutionary states that international factors shape and to a large degree determine the success of a revolution (Ostovar 2009, 79). Crane Brinton's in "The Anatomy of Revolution", states that the export of revolution arises from the nature of revolution. An ideological revolutionary regime always results in the establishment of similar regimes in other countries (Brinton 1938). Fred Halliday in "Three Concepts of Internationalism" states that it does not mean that a revolution is worthless if it isn't international, however it's surely bound to be much less than the revolutionaries intended. Revolutionaries therefore struggle to be international as well as prudent because of the external pressures that post-revolutionary transformation invites (Halliday 1988, 21). Revolutions usually embark upon an active revolutionary foreign policy after a victory and gaining power. Revolutionaries throughout history have tried to promote the principles and spread their ideology, with the hope their victory would lead to the success of other likeminded movements across the globe. They want to export their revolutionary values and beliefs to others in order to maintain the achievements. Their ideas are usually universal and absolute. In export of revolution, what effectuates the required potential is the existence of universal and pervasive ideology with sharp rhetoric that structurally divides the world into two antagonist spheres, in order to create the contrast between "us" and "them"; the world of good and the world of evil, light and darkness, the "oppressed" and the "oppressors". In general, the leaders of revolution, to affect other nations choose attractive rhetoric concepts as the objectives of revolution. Concepts such as emancipation, justice, freedom, equality, democracy and other revolutionary expressions that are provocative to create utopia or the realization of the sublime universe. If they base revolutionary rhetoric on religious ideas or the development of democratic

ideals, it will incline to repeat the revolution in other countries. Furthermore, revolutionary ideologies are capable of producing great energy to look beyond their borders. Revolution constitutes a great challenge for states in its neighbourhood, at least in the early stages. Due to the concern of states to prevail a revolutionary ideology and prevent an internal crisis in their communities, they try to oppose it by creating obstacles and questioning the legitimacy of the revolutionary regime. In contrast, the revolutionary regime as a way of its consolidation and defence of hegemonic power, it tries to export ideas and values to attract the supporters beyond its borders and increase its power of influence. For instance, in the French Revolution in the late eighteenth century, the slogans of freedom and equality were issued out of the national borders and created massive developments in Europe. Similarly, some leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, such as Trotsky, used the slogan of the United States of Europe as a transitional demand from the early Communist International debates. Trotsky believed that the primary objective in coming to power by revolutionary socialist governments was the establishment of "United States of Europe", and subsequently the export of the revolution all over the world unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat." (Trotsky 1999, 6). Later on, Trotsky brought up the slogan as "Commissar" for foreign affairs in the Soviet government and in the Communist International. Moreover, Lenin stated that they should organize the product of their "socialist ideas, draw the attention of oppressed people around the world, and rise up a revolt against capitalism and if it is necessary resort to military force against corrupt classes and their governments."

3.3.2 EXPORTING ISLAMIC REVOLUTION OF IRAN (SUDUR INQILAB ISLAMI)

Since its inception, IRI has been committed to the "propagation of Islam" (tablighi eslami) and the export of revolutionary ideological concepts tantamount to essential Islamic obligation and the later as the main principle of the regime's ideology, emphasized in the constitution and the speeches and writings of Ayatollah Khomeini. In the early years of the rise of the Islamic Republic, he stated that: "By exporting the revolution, we would be, in fact, exporting true Islam and commands of Prophet Mohammad in order to put an end to hegemony of world oppressors. […] We must actively export our revolution to the world and discard the idea that we are not able to export the revolution. Islam makes no distinction among Islamic countries. We support all the oppressed. All great powers have risen to annihilate us. If we remained in a confined location, we would have certainly to face defeat (Khomeini 1980, 226). For Khomeini,

the Islamic revolution is not limited only to the borders of Iran; rather it has a special perspective across the borders. Iran as the first real Islamic state and its successful revolution should inspire other Muslim communities and Shiite in particular and serve as a model for all oppressed people. The concept of export of Islamic revolution (sudur inqilab islami) comes from the universal vision of Islam as a transnational phenomenon. It is also explainable with the principles of Shiism – Iranian with the aim of creating a strategic and comprehensive Islamic Union, which led to the redefinition of basic concepts such as national interests, power and values in domestic and international political scene. From their standpoint, Islamic government is the only solution to humankind's happiness that should spread across the Muslim communities. Therefore, in order to change the status quo, the discourse of exporting the revolution appeared both as a target and as a revolutionary mission. In fact, this feature can be traced in highlighting and rather radical interpretation of certain religious concepts and norms that shape the identity of the Iranian regime, such as the attempt to build an Islamic state, renewing the spread of ummah-oriented Islam, emphasizing on principle of the invitation (Al-Daʿwa Al-Islāmiyya), maintaining and restoring the Islamic identity. All of these semantic structures can be found in the constitution and the principles of Iran's foreign policy. The Iranian revolution and its ideology challenged the international system and threatened the existing international order where the structure of the current international system is perceived to be unjust and the uneven relations between the world powers and the week nations. Therefore, the corrupt rule must be replaced by a true order, based on just, fair and virtuous vision. Every revolutionary discourse defines itself by "the other" and determines the boundaries of its identity. If the "otherness" of the hegemonic discourse is wider, the spread of revolution over time will be greater. During the Cold War, Iran's foreign affairs revolutionary slogan was "Neither East, nor West", which was a critical view of the ideology of both USSR and USA, and insisted that only through Islamic principles, the humankind can be liberated from the oppression of tyrants who serve the interests of international imperialism. From their viewpoint, with renewed commitment to Islam, i.e. the Iranian, all oppressed nations will be able to overthrow oppressive and puppet rulers and get rid of the exploitation of imperialism. Thus, promoting ideas, slogans and revolutionary program, the claim of publication of freedom and emancipation were at the forefront of revolutionary policies. Due to lack of acceptance of new world order, creating an alternative order became the revolutionary ideal. Therefore, publishing revolution was a variable that could involve the process of continuous revolutions around the world of Islam. In the minds of the Iranian leaders, the Islamic Revolution is a living organism, or a "permanent revolution" to borrow Marx's term. Marx used the term to describe the strategy

of a revolutionary class to follow its class interests continuously and without compromise, despite the political dominance of opposing sections of society. The Iranian leaders believe that the Islamic Revolution was not only a historical event in a particular time and place to help a new regime to power, but it is a set of ideas, images, beliefs and concepts which continuously and actively reproduce its discourse in the context of symmetric and asymmetric socio-political, homogeneous and heterogeneous communities through the development and spread of it. In other words, the revolution starts in one country and continues until the rest of the world has become subjected to it. Thus, for them, the triumph of the revolution was not the end but was considered a new beginning for proliferation of revolutionary movement.

Furthermore, the revolutionary vision was not just confined to stand against the "Istekbar-e Jahani" (global arrogance), but also as opposed to the "corrupt Islamic states" which were linked to the oppressor. In consequence, Iran seeks to interfere between the ruling elites and the "oppressed masses." In public speeches, many Arabic regimes were entitled as either "un-Islamic" or as followers of the so-called American Islam by Iranian authorities due to their close relationship with the US and the Western states in general. Khomeini declared Islam incompatible with monarchy, denigrated the Arab states as "puppet governments" and urged the faithful to overthrow of numerous Arab monarchies in the surrounding Persian Gulf region (Gheissari 2009, 351).

Khomeini stated that: "Both law and reason require that we not permit governments to retain this non-Islamic or anti-Islamic character. […] We have in reality, then, no choice but to destroy those systems of government that are corrupt in themselves and also entail the corruption of others, and to overthrow all treacherous, corrupt, oppressive, and criminal regimes.[…] This is a duty that all Muslims must fulfill, in every one of the Muslim countries, in order to achieve the triumphant political revolution of Islam." (Khomeini 1981, 48)

According to Khomeini, spreading the Islamic revolution all over the Muslim world is not just a desire, but it is a religious obligation to get down "stooges of American imperialism" in the Islam world. The Arab and Sunni states in the region triggered fear by references to "exporting the revolution," which they considered as a motion by the Iranian revolutionaries to stimulate Shia Islam revolt in their societies and as a way of strengthening its position in the region. Therefore, they rose to protect themselves against the threat that revolutionary regime posed on their own security and even survival. For instance, after many protests and confrontation occurred by Iranian-backed Shiites in the Golf states there raised serious concerns of the rulers

in the Persian Gulf countries and led to the creation of a joint security pact «GCC» in order to prevent the expansion of the Iranian revolution and repel potential threats, respectively. While, Saddam took advantage of the situation to attack on Iran in 1980, all Persian Gulf states played the role by supporting and financing Iraq's war machine.

3.3.3 DIFFERENT VIEW OF REVOLUTIONARY ELITES

Since the inception of the Islamic regime, approaches of revolutionary elites regarding the exporting of revolution doctrine have not been consistent and convergent. In this regard, we can divide them into three main viewpoints: The first view consists of nationalists and secularists revolutionary groups such as Freedom Movement where Nationalist-Religious Movement considered the export of revolution against the international law and debilitation of Iran's national interest, which were in total disagreement (Branigin 1979). However, they were suppressed and marginalized in the early years after the revolution. Both second and third perspectives belonged to the revolutionary Islamist elites close to the Ayatollah Khomeini. Although both agreed upon the principle of exporting of revolution, they did not have the same approach and plan to achieve this goal. They can be divided into a moderate and hardliner or conservative spectrum. Moderate Islamists advocate exporting of revolution solely through education and propaganda efforts. They argue that we should spread revolution and its values by making Iran a role model for other countries. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Islamist hardliner perspective contends that the export of revolution is inevitable because the invitation is a global Islamic mission that is beyond the time and place. Secondly, the effective export of revolution must not be limited to the propaganda efforts, but also material assistance of any form is necessary. Those who subscribe to this line, consider Iran as the vanguard of the world liberation movements to rescue Muslim nations in particular, and other Third World nations in general, from the imperialist subjugation (Metz 1989, 72). Advocates of both views also cite Khomeini to legitimatize their position. Moderate party often cites Khomeini's sentence that Iran has no intentions of physical or martial intervention in foreign countries. At this point, they reference to Khomeini's statement that stated: "When we say we want to export our revolution, this is what we have in mind, this is what we want to export: we want to export the same spirituality which has emerged in Iran. […] We do not want to draw our swords and take our guns and attack. […] We want to export our revolution, our cultural revolution and our Islamic revolution to all Islamic countries. Once this revolution is exported, wherever it is exported, it will solve problems. What you must first do is to awaken your peoples [as Iran has done in] its revolution" (FBIS-MEA, 1980). Hardliners quote other Khomeini's statements on the

inevitability of the spread of Islamic revolution throughout the world, or supporting the struggles of the oppressed against the global arrogance. Since 1979, these two wings have been in disagreement on the formulation of foreign policy based on their own views. Although often, hardliner wing has been successful in this competition, these dispute have led to Iran's behaviour with regard to export of revolution through various stage.

3.3.4   EXPORT OF REVOLUTION: SOFT AND HARD MODELS

Export of revolution can be divided into two forms of either soft or peaceful and hard or intensive, depending on the methods and tools used by the regime. In the intensive form the use of military power, equipping liberation movements, planning, providing logistic support, and the implementation of operation in order to transfer and export revolutionary ideals are allowed. In the framework of the soft model, some mechanisms are applied that refer to the activities of software, cultural and discursive nature. Public diplomacy, ideological indoctrination, the use of community and international organizations, funding, and diplomatic and moral aid to Islamic liberation groups and other social movement organizations (even if divergent in ideology) are the main component of the soft model that IRI uses to export revolution. Subsequently, there are various organs in the Iranian apparatuses for the export of Revolution that depend on their responsibility that have a different activity. Some of them particularly work on one of the soft or hard areas and others are active in grey areas which involve either soft or hard forms. In this regard, the IRGC/QUDS Force is the driving force of the implementation of exporting the revolution doctrine in the hard form. It extends through the rest of the Middle East countries to serve regime's policy objectives of IRI allied states and non-states. Revolutionary Guard Corps (Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enghelab-e Islami) or IRGC are an Ideological Army (Artesh-e Maktabi) that in the turmoil followed the Iranian revolution, was founded by Khomeini decree as an ideological irregular militia, charged defending the Islamic Republic regime against internal threats, and presents a trusted counterbalance to the remnants of Shah's regular military (Katzman 1993, 30—36). Although, initially, the Guards functioned to ensure the internal security only, the Iraqi invasion in 1980 profoundly changed the role and responsibilities of the IRGC and pushed them into national defence. The respect with which the IRGC and Mobilization Resistance Force (Salman-e Basin-e Mostaz'afin) militias were considered for their services and self-sacrifices during the Iran-Iraq war resulted in the institutionalization of the revolutionary security services (Where 2009, 26). In fact, the reputation obtained over the important and committed role it had played in the "sacred defense", drove the IRGC into a new stage with powerful and influential multifaceted organization within the Iranian state-structure.

The IRCG has increased both the organizational levels and capabilities, developing from a makeshift revolutionary militia focused on the domestic environment into a well-organized, full-fledged army mission to enforce the values and ideology of the revolution at home and spread their vision abroad. Since its inception, the IRGC had been a hard-core advocate of revolutionary internationalism. As the organization claimed: "We will export our revolution throughout the world. As our revolution is Islamic, the struggle will continue until the call of 'There is no God but Allah . . .' echoes around the globe." (Payam-e Enqelab 1980) Thus, for extra-territorial responsibility, the Quds Force (Sepâh-e Qods), a paramilitary arm of the Revolutionary Guard with an alert elite unit within the command structure, and several thousands of personnel was set up as the de facto external affairs branch during the corps expansion (Ehteshami 2002, 193). That was even brought up explicitly in the preamble of IRI constitution, as an envisioned role of the IRGC, i.e.

"In the formation and equipping of the country's defence forces, due attention must be paid to faith and ideology as the basic criteria. Accordingly, the Army of the IRI and the IRGC are to be organized in conformity with this goal, and they will be responsible not only for guarding and preserving the frontiers of the country, but also for fulfilling the ideological mission of jihad in God's way; that is, extending the sovereignty of God's law throughout the world" (Iran 1989).

 Hence, the IRGC has not only a duty to preserve and guard the frontiers of Iran, but also is responsible for extending the Islamic ideology throughout the world. Quds Force is a highly specialized department, with its predecessors from the Guard's most skilled warriors. "It's quite possibly one of the best of special forces units in the world" (Daragahi 2007, 11).

The main mission of the Quds Force includes gathering intelligence and military operations abroad, as well as providing training, logistical assistance and material and financial support to the revolutionary movements, Shi'a militia, allied states, such as Hezbollah Lebanon, Shia militias in Iraq, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, or even Iraqi and Syrian governments.

Based on geographic location, the Quds Forces have several different directorates. In the Middle East, they extend from Lebanon, where the Quds Force is predominant in directing Hezbollah, to Iraq, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan, Syria, and other states. In countries with significant Shia population, such as Bahrain, Iraq and Yemen, Quds Force has tried to penetrate in the Shiite communities and create or activate the groups and movements loyal to the IRI and its ideology. To lead these groups, the Quds Force usually

select clerics who have close ties to the Iranian theocracy or have studied in the holy city of Qom in Iran. The Hezbollah in Lebanon is the best-implemented example in this regards.

Quds Force also plays an important role in the decision-making process in Iranian foreign policy. In some places, their sections and officers are present in Iranian embassies as diplomats and even ambassadors. Many of the current leadership spent their formative years at the front serving with the Revolutionary Guards. The elite of the IRGC is traditionally affiliated with the Supreme Leader as the commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. Supreme Leader personally appoints all Senior Commanders Armed Forces including IRGC and Quds Force. He directly receives all reports from the commanders (Ehteshami 2002, 60).

With regard to the implementation of exporting revolution in the soft form, so many organizations and government bodies are involved. Iran has an extensive relationship with the reference groups, parties, political and cultural elite, especially among the Shiites in neighbouring countries. They have made effective efforts by creating various cultural institutions, foundations, media and social services in order to manage and shape the public opinion. In fact, immediately after the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, revolutionaries recognized the necessity to establish the organizations and institutions which can develop and promote the cultural, religious, and ideological aspirations to other Islamic societies. To achieve this aim, the revolutionary institutions were established one after another by late Khomeini's command and they began to accomplish their duties. The Islamic Development Organization, Jihad of Construction (Jahād-e Sāzandegī), Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation are the most obvious examples.

Islamic Development Organization is a large public entity with many smaller subsets organizations aiming at promoting and making propaganda of IRI's values. These organizations have a broad scope of activities and responsibilities, i.e. organizing and dispatching religious-revolutionary missionaries as cultural attachés throughout the world, using mass media, compiling, publishing the books, press in various languages, holding congressed and conferences, discovering the reliable forces and establishing Islamic assemblies or similar groups in other countries, making relations with intellectuals, academics, religious scholars and cultural attachés in order to influence on them. Dispatching delegates and admission of students and scholars is also another effective method of exporting Iran's revolutionary ideals. In addition to dispatching, Islamic Republic of Iran annually receives thousands of students and Shia scholars from all over the world. These people, after training in ideological and religious

centres of Islamic Seminary of Qom, and returning to their own countries, promote the ideology and thoughts of the Iranian Revolution. Many Shiite leaders and protesters to the Persian Gulf countries have had a previous study in these centres. Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of the Hezbollah in Lebanon, Sheikh Salman Secretary General of the Al-Vafaq, the largest party in the Bahrain and the main opposition against Sunni Bahraini king, both studied at the religious centres of Islamic Seminary of Qom.

Jihad of Construction (jihad-e sazandegi) and relief foundation, have instigated penetration and popularity of IRI by the development and providing social services among rural periphery and deprived communities. Financial donations and the establishment of public service rebuilt the war-torn and impoverished regions. Constructing hospitals, schools and health services, the establishment of technical and vocational training organization in Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, Syria and some of the African countries to name just a few, were actions by both. Both organizations cooperated with the locals to establish locally developed organizations according to its own models. Apart from the attraction that its ideological rhetoric creates for some non-Shiite groups, IRI brings material aid through religious institutions to some underserved populations in the region and thus encourages them to support particular political movements.

Furthermore, there are family or regional networks of Shiite Clergymen close to IRI throughout the Middle East. They are effective in spreading revolutionary ideology of Iran due to their influence among the people. Like Sadr family who has influence in Lebanon, Iraq and Iran. Wide propaganda investments by Tehran, with the establishment of radio and television networks in foreign languages, as well as the use of cultural diplomacy are some of the things that should be added to the soft form category.

Over four decades, the balance between the use of the hard and the soft form of exporting revolution has differed in the circumstances and the discourses of different Iranian government.

3.3.5   EXPORT OF REVOLUTION: TARGET GROUPS

In the export of revolution, three target groups are considered: the publics, non-state actors, and governments.

Publics: The revolutionary government striving to challenge the existing international order usually seeks to communicate with people instead the governments. In this regard, it usually employs soft form methods to promote its ideas. It usually pursues its aims through educational, cultural, religious and media programs, campaigns, strategic messaging and other public

activities in the form of public diplomacy for people of targeted countries. Iran has preferred to speak directly to the Muslim population and over the heads of local governments avoiding dealing with hostile regimes. International broadcasting is a classic and important method of public diplomacy proceedings that provides a media platform to contact various large audiences and promote their ideas simultaneously. IRI Broadcasting (IRIB) as the communication arm of the Iranian regime is active, both domestically on TV and radio channels, as well as internationally in over 24 different languages. The IRIB is a classic tool of propaganda (Tiedeman 2005, 78). Such efforts seek to communicate with foreign publics in order to establish a dialogue designed to inform and influence.

Non-State Actors: The second category is non-state groups. Iran supports various Islamist revolutionary and insurrectionary movements in the Middle East. The victory of Iranian revolution tied with emancipatory concepts, brought about new hope to Islamic movements in the region and caused the emergence of many Islamic movements. Supporting liberation movements is clearly stated in Articles 3, 11 and 154 of the IRI constitution. Article 3 asserts that the government is duty-bound to provide "unsparing support to the dispossessed of the world," and Article 154 says that the government "supports the just struggles of the oppressed against the oppressors in every corner of the globe" (Iran 1989). This communication is usually associated with equipping and training Islamic opposition groups formed by the Quds Force. Quds Force using the sectarian and political coalitions increases the influence of Iran in the Middle East by asymmetric tactics. Therefore, in countries where the Shiites are a majority or a large minority, movements are in line with the government. In countries with Sunni majority, the IRI has no serious base and could not provide leverage to pursue its policies. However, the relationship and influence of the Quds Force is not limited to the Shiites, but to the groups that have close ideologies and non-Arabs. But this plan seeks to have the Shiites hegemonic position. The back bone of this hegemony is establishing a leadership position for the supreme leader of Shiite (Wali-e Faqih). Therefore, the Islamic coalition that is desirable for government is not limited to the Shiites, but the leadership for the Shiites. In fact, Iran's Shia identity may help Iran to build relationships with other Shia communities, it may also hinder Iran's relations with Sunni nations. Thus, Iran appears to either downplay or highlight its Shia identity depending on convenience.

Overall, Iranian support levels for non-state actors are different, depending on ideological affinity, loyalty and even functionality of the groups.

The first level are the groups that enjoy little support, ranges from logistical or technical assistance from selling and transferring of weapons and ammunition to periodic financial and military support. Actually, they are more considered as strategic utility or expected advantage than the ideological bases. Some of them can easily fade. Many smaller, often ethnic groups with little international capabilities fall into this category (O'Brien 2006, 65—72).

The second and third category, both are ideologically compatible and enjoyed full support from Iran. Evaluation and comparison of Iran's relationship with Hezbollah on the one hand and Hamas on the other, might be the best way to understand the distinction between the second and the third category.

In the second category, the groups do not fit the Shiite designation. They do not have organic affiliation to Iran as IRI is usually not the only supportive source for them. Although they share many common ideological goals, they have usually different origins and different ideological foundation. Therefore, they might have different approaches toward various issues. Sometimes they can even stand as opposition to Iran. Although, in many cases, Iranian influence is visible in their leadership patterns and structure, however they cannot be fully reliable. Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyya (HAMAS) can be the best example to represent this category. Ideologically, Hamas is a Sunni movement in the Gaza Stip, that are extensions of the broader, regional Muslim Brotherhood movement of the 1940s and 1950s. Iran was not involved in the founding of Hamas. Since 1990s, Hamas enjoyed the full support of Iran, both financial and military. But when Muhammad Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood came to power in Egypt in the summer of 2012, Hamas dramatically shifted to seeking patronage from Morsi, and allegedly stepped away from Iran. Relations between Iran and Hamas have been increasingly strained due to Hamas's incompatible position against Iran's policies in Syria and Yemen.

In the Third category, non-state groups are not only having a Shiite identity, but are loyal to Iranian Supreme Leader (Wali-e Faqih) as a religious duty. Their agenda has almost always aligned with Iran's policies and consequently Iran is their only benefactor and sponsor. In fact, they have a kind of organic affiliation. They are mostly established by IRI or at least Iran has a significant role to their creation. Furthermore, these groups can be used as proxies for Iran, in order to serve a multitude of political purposes in regional conflicts which provide deniability for the state. This "veneer of deniability" in which proxies operate allows both the state and the organization to work symbiotically to achieve political and military objectives (Kleiber 2007, 203). Very few groups are placed in this category. Hezbollah (Lebanon), the Supreme Council

for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and its militant wing, the Badr Corps (Iraq), Mahdi Army (Jaish al-Mahdī - Iraq) are accommodated in this category. Within the scope of social relations, it can be said that Iran's relationship with the second category is similar to the relationship of an individual with his close friend.

Governments: The third group is the governments. The influence and strong support of the Iranian regime to the Shiites' government of Iraq can be found in this context. This can be diplomatic support of Shia government at the international level or helping to mobilize and sustain the various Shiite groups to help the governments in critical conditions. They have a unique methodology in this matter. They organize paramilitary forces by mobilizing local operations into a security architecture in critical conditions where there is essentially a security vacuum in order to support the security forces of Shia government. This model comes from Iran's experience of the Iran-Iraq war when the Iranian military was weakened during the eight-year war with Saddam Hussein and so a kind of more voluntarily, locally organized Basij paramilitary force emerged in Iran.

The establishment of the Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) (Al-Hash Al-Sha'abi) in Iraq, is the best example in this regard. PMUs is a popular national Crowd / Volunteer Forces composed of mainly Shia Muslim groups that were founded under the direct influence of Quds Army of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps that comprise militia groups, after the Iraqi security forces proved to be inefficient against the advance of the ISIS, which ended up establishing its control on almost one-third of Iraq in June 2014.The government's support and the leading Shiite religious leader Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani's jihad fatwa against the ISIS, led many people to volunteer for PMU (Duman 2015). Many Iranian commanders and officers serve in the operations and support the militias in training and operational planning. Iranian officers who are called "military advisors" by Iran, sometimes directly participate in operations. Al-Hashd al-Shaabi has attained the position of the main and lead actor in the fight against the ISIS. In July 2016 that Hashd al-Shaabi forces (PMU) were placed on par with Iraq's army units and subject to military law. we can see a similar dynamic in Syria and the pro-government National Defense Forces (NDF).

UMM AL-QURA DOCTRINE

Halliday (1988) stated that "while revolutionary states may be animated by an interventionist spirit, their ultimate need for international cooperation and support leads to the tempering of interventionist ambition". Following the death of Khomeini, the end of the devastating war with Iraq, the emergence of serious problems in economic and military spheres coincided with the growing internal factionalism within the country, and international isolation. This gradually led to a shift in the IRI foreign policy with the top extreme revolutionaries moving closer to Iran's more pragmatic and conservative leaders (Rafsanjani and Khamenei). In such an atmosphere, the *Umm al-Qura* thesis rose up. Umm Al-Qura means the Mother of the Cities which refers to the centrality of one land to the surrounding areas (Ehteshami 1995, 134), which states that if a country in Islamic countries is the Umm al-Qura, its success or failure is considered the victory or defeat of the whole Islam. So maintaining the Umm al-Qura has priority over anything else and is obligatory for all Muslims.

Umm Al-Qura thesis was developed for the first time by an Islamic Republic ideologue, Mohammad-Javad Larijani. It was based on a new interpretation of the Shiite jurisprudential principles of public expediency or interest (maslahat) and the overriding necessity (zarurat) was citing the fatwa and comment of Ayatollah Khomeini, "protecting the Islamic government is the most necessary through the Islamic obligations" or "protecting the Islamic Republic is one of the greatest duties and obligations for all Muslims" (Larijani 1990, 15).

Larijani expressed the elements and features of this doctrine:

Firstly, The unified Umma (Ummah Wahida) is the pillar of this doctrine. Larijani stated that although the artificial geographical boundaries and dividing the Muslim Ummah into many different nations was the result of a planned conspiracy and a historically cruel process of the colonial governments, it has to be accepted under international law.

Nevertheless, all Muslims are a unified Umma whose interests are intertwined and have responsibilities towards each other. Ummah is a transnational, trans-ethnic concept that, unlike nation, it is not necessarily defined by common elements such as ancestry, territory, geography, language and even history, but the people (more specifically to the Muslim people) identify with a common faith and ideology. Ideologically, the Iranian regime has Non-Westphalian view. According to the current Iranian Constitution: "In the view of Islam, government does not derive from the interests of a class, nor does it serve the domination of an individual or a group. Rather, it represents the fulfilment of a political ideal of a people who bear a common faith and common outlook" (Iran 1989). The goal is to „strive with other Islamic and popular

movements to prepare the way for the formation of a single world community (Ummat-e Whâed-e Jahani)" (Iran 1989). Secondly, Leadership is a fundamental prerequisite for the unity of Umma. A country can be Umm al-Qura of Islamic world which have righteous, competent and jurisprudence (Faqih) for leading the Islamic world. National boundaries have no effect on the leadership. Leadership is responsible towards all Umma and people are also legally responsible for obeying him. From the Iranian perspective, the supreme leader (Vilayet-e Faqih) is the only qualified to lead the Muslim world. Therefore, IRI supporters and authorities' view the supreme leader, neither as the leader of Iran alone or of the Shiites in particular, but as a leader for the entire Muslim world. In Iran, in the mass media, newspapers, websites and other propaganda system, they call him "Wali-e-Amr Muslimeen- jahan" which means the leader of all Islamic Ummah in the world.Thirdly, Umm Al-Qura and Umma, both have rights and duties to each other. Umm Al-qura is required to consider the interests of the Islamic Ummah in their policies try to protect their rights with its power in the event of violation of Umma's rights. Conversely, the Umma has a duty to support the Umm al-qura and in a case of invasion by enemies, defend the Umm al-qura with all their might.

Fourthly, when the interests of the nation and national interests are not in line, the interest of Ummah is always preferred, unless the existence of Umm al-Qura is at risk.

Fifthly, the export of revolution and the defence of the Islamic Umma as a unified community (Ummah wahida) is essential. But if the prestige of Umm-alqura is threatened, all things may be sacrificed to save that prestige and entity. Larijani argues that after the victory of the Islamic revolution, Iran is the only country that can be in the position of Umm al-Qura in the Islamic world as Iran has been the only country that has been able to found the Islamic state with the supreme leader as the "Guardian of the Muslims of the world" (Larijani1997, 37—42). Finally, he concludes that the defeat of Islamic Republic of Iran is as a failure of the Islamic state theory, thus protecting this system is not only Iranians' duty but is the duty of every Muslim. Helping to release the Islamic land is one of the duties of Islamic republic of Iran. In this regard, IRI considers strengthening and supporting of Muslims such as Shiite militias its duty. Instead, the Shiite militia's is the supporter of Iran beyond its borders. If the enemy wants to attack the heart of Umm al-Qura (Iran), the Shiite groups should harm the interests of the enemy in the region. Overall, this doctrine was the end of the prevalence of Ummah-centered sub-discourse and the emergence of center-based sub-discourse within the same idealist discourse. In other words, it provided a more realistic and moderated view to the "export of revolution" in opposition to the view of extremist groups who believed that regardless of international law and by resorting to

any means, they should speed up the help to Islamic groups military, financially, and spiritually. Pragmatism justifies extremist critics by arguing that supporting the "right" is the only Islamic state's purpose, but without maintaining the foothold of the "right", it is not possible to reach the goal. Thus, preserving Umm al-qura has priority over everything. Even, sometimes for preserving Umm al-qura there should be a more lenient treatment with some states despite their corruption. In addition to this approach, by changing the strategic policy of the regime, some level of pragmatism entered the Iranian idealistic foreign policy and created a kind of balance between national interests and the regime's international aspirations (Ehteshami 1995, 139).

4 SHIITE IN LEBANON

Lebanon is a complex country with different tribes and religions. Except for some powerful and wealthy families, Lebanese Shia Muslims traditionally constitute the Lebanese underclass population. This historical marginalization was even attached to the law with the founding of Lebanon as a state after WWI. Lebanon was separated from a chunk of Ottoman Syria, as a French mandate. Since its inception, the French imperial power designed a confessional political system that distributed political office along religious lines, which was continued after Lebanon independency in 1943 as well. Accordingly, the majority Maronite Christians were given the most important political positions (including the presidency), then the Sunnis, the Druze, and finally the Shias (Rabil 2012, 50). Lebanon has the confessional system of government which was designed by the French imperial power after WWI. In the confessional system, the division of power is divided along religious lines.

The imbalance of power between ethnic-religious cults, since none of these nations constitutes a majority, makes the political environment in Lebanon unstable and fragile. The central government has always been a weak state because there was lack of legitimate rights for some tribes or sects. Tribes for protecting their interests in all sectors, created fully independent structures from the central government. Army and military forces were formed on the basis of ethnic and loyalty to tribes' priorities. Thus in ethnic clashes, army easily collapses. Therefore, there is no possibility to control the tribes by the army and the central government. Economic, social and cultural system of Lebanon is on the same basis and collapses quickly. The internal conflicts provide fertile ground for the intervention of foreign powers. Historically, each of these cults for political and social rights and access to the levers of power, rely on foreign support or the rulers of their own religion. For example, in the 19th and early 20th century, the Maronites were under the auspices of France, as well as Druze and Britain, Orthodox Christians

and Russia and in parts of the world, the Sunnis were under the auspices of Ottomans. Despite the fact that the Shiites were one of the oldest tribes with a significant population in Lebanon, they did not have external supporters. Due to lack of organization and internal cohesion, they were deprived of any political, economic and social power. As a result, in order to play an effective role in the social political arena, many young Shiites were drawn to join multi-confessional parties, which promoted equality and justice and the improved welfare. The communist party and miscellaneous left-wing movements were the main benefactors of this trend (Norton 1987, 37).

4.1 RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL LEADER MUSA AL- SADR AND AMAL MOVEMENT

In the 1950s, Ayatollah Sharaf al-Din, a Shiite leader of Lebanon attempted to remove isolation. In this period accelerating the migration of the Shiites to the cities and their independence in the first civil war between the tribes, were effective for their progress. After the death of Sharaf al-Din, in 1959, according to his will and recommendation of important Shiite clerics, Musa Al- Sadr was summoned from Iran as the successor and the new leader of the Shiites in Lebanon. Musa Al- Sadr was an Iranian-born young cleric who belonged to one of the most prominent cleric family who was summoned from Iran and has had a great influence among Shiite in Iran, Iraq and Lebanon in the past two centuries. Al-Sadr's religious studies ended in Najaf and Qom Seminary. Along with his religious education, he was educated in "law and Islamic jurisprudence" at Tehran University. When Al-Sadr moved to his ancestral home of southern Lebanon, he found a largely impoverished rural community of village farmers and sharecroppers.

In time, South Lebanon, with 85 percent of the Shiites was the poorest and most backward regions of the country. The level and quality of life had a significant gap with other areas of Lebanon. By any of the standard measures of socioeconomic status, the Shiites were the most deprived community in Lebanon (Norton 1987, 37). In political terms, they lagged behind other confessional groups as well. Compared with Maronite Christians and the Sunnis at the top of power and influence, the Shiite community was left to languish (Ostovar 2009, 92)

By the time, first of all, Al-Sadr began his activities with the aim of raising the level of social welfare and consciousness of the Shiites. In the framework of a medium-term plan between 1960 and 1968 he travelled to towns and villages all over the region, and organized a multitude

of community programs in Southern Lebanon in order to overcome deprivation and improve the welfare of the Shiites. He created several charitable and public welfare organizations, cultural and educational institutions. These actions led to the employment and economic self-sufficiency of many poor families, a reduction in illiteracy, the growth of public culture, and an increase in implementing a number of development projects in deprived areas. Throughout the next few years, he gained a significant reputation of a leading voice in the Shia community. He was effectively able to overcome many of the gaps that divided Lebanese Shiites and unified them by using the shared religious beliefs. Al-Sadr exhorted his followers not to accept their deprivation fatalistically. He encouraged the Shiites to participate in society for restoring their rights and overcoming their condition (Norton 1987, 41). He realized that in order to follow Shiite's demands, it is necessary to found a strong and effective civil society organization independently from state. Heretofore, despite the large population of the Shiite, they did not have the leverage to exercise the power in the society of Lebanon. Unlike the other sects, they lacked a legal and political entity to gain their rights. This led to deprive them from little rights that belonged to them by the Lebanese confessional regulation. Therefore, Sadr's political plan for Shiite "Supreme Islamic Shiite Council" or "al-Majlis al-Islāmī al-ShīʿīalAʿlá" was demanded in 1969, wand rapidly approved by the Lebanese parliament and signed by the president, and launched by this organization. In fact, the council made a significant effort to unify the Shiite masses into a viable political entity, and created new power base for political action on an equal footing with other Lebanese sects. That was the first time in the history of Lebanon that the Shiites owned a political entity at the national level. Supreme council chose Al-Sadr by consensus for the head of the council.

In his inauguration ceremony Al-Sadr presented his political program, which was outlined by (Algha 2006, 27): the fight against ignorance, poverty, backwardness, social injustice and corruption, organizing the affairs of the Shiite community and improving its socioeconomic conditions, implementing a holistic vision of Islam, his attempt to unite all Muslims, the cooperation with all Lebanese sects and communities, safeguarding national unity and supporting the Palestinian resistance. Taking an advantage of the support of powerful external powers is another required instrument to exercise power in the Lebanese political instrument. Therefore, in 1973, Al-Sadr went on a political coalition with Syrian leader Hafez al-Assad. Then, by the fatwa, Al-Sadr called Alawite (which Hafez al-Assad was part of it), as Shia sect in order to legitimize the coalition religiously. And subsequently, Assad undertook political and military support of the Shiites.

Al-Sadr for several years had negotiations with the government about the implementation of infrastructure projects and government's legal obligations for the deprived Shiite areas. He objected to the government standing to relinquish the south while a disproportionate amount of budget was dedicated to the Sunni and Christian neighborhoods. Following the central government's refusal to accept the demands of the Shiites, mass movement and strikes took place in the cities of Baalbek, Tyra and Sidon, which continued to lead to the formation of political organizations "Movement of the Deprived" (Harakat al-Mahrumin) in 1974. Movement of deprived was a disciplined organization which demanded justice and an end to discrimination and exclusion by the central government against the Shiites. Soon, this movement played a central role in political and social activities, and with the widespread support of the Shiites in accordance with their interests, the country's political developments were affected by these changes. In fact, the Supreme Council devoted to elites at a formal international level, but the "Movement of the Deprived" was mostly responsible to organize masses' movement. Although the Movement of the Deprived was a good Idea, it was not enough since it was sidelined by the beginning of the civil war and radicalization of the political environment a year later and the movement became marginalized.

On the one hand, the dread of Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon, due to the presence of the Palestinian Liberation Front, on the other, the outbreak of the civil war in 1975, the attack of Maronite militias and the government forces against the Palestinians and their Lebanese allies, the Lebanese National Movement (LNM), and in situations where all the tribes of Lebanon had long provided their own militia. In order to defend and protect the indigenous Lebanese Shiites, Al-Sadr launched a militant wing "Movement of Deprived" or " Afwaj al-Muqawama al-Lubnaniya" (AMAL), with the help Doctor Mostafa Chamran, a devoted revolutionary of the Iran Freedom Movement who had guerrilla training warfare in Cuba and Egypt. In turn, Mostafa Chamran was among the first Iranian immigrants that came to Lebanon. He was an ideological and revolutionary Iranian who abandoned his academic career and prestigious positions as a professor in the US, in order to assist the Palestinian and Lebanese movements as a revolutionary guerrilla. Actually, the presence of Al-Sadr led to the development in the Lebanese and Iranian Shiite relationship, especially after many Iranians fled from the Shah's regime to Lebanon. In time, south Lebanon had become a safe haven for liberal and Muslim Shah's opponents. Many Iranian armed movement were trained by the Palestinian freedom fighters who used southern Lebanon to launch attacks against Israeli's northern settlements. Iranian fighters were also interested in fighting beside Palestinian (Algha 2006, 26). With the

Islamic Revolution taking place, many of these Iranian activists returned to Iran, became IRI top leaders or early IRGC commanders. Chamran associated with IRGC and later, was appointed he first civil defense minister of the Islamic Republic (and became Khomeini's personal military aide). He was killed in the Iraq warfront in June 1981.

However, Chamran found independent AMAL training camps and became the first central organizational cadre of AMAL. He resided in Tyre and soon became Sadr's right-hand man. Military organization "AMAL" secretly worked for almost two years and had close relationship with the Palestinian organizations. Until the explosion at a military base in the Beqaa Valley the nature of movement disclosed. Then inevitably Al-Sadr announced the existence of "AMAL" a military organization. AMAL received strong support from Syria government. During the Lebanese civil war, it was the most important Shia militias that were able to follow Shiite interest.

Despite the efforts of these individuals, Shia political activism was fairly due to the prolonged civil war and the weakening of the political system. In addition, it was at this time that Israel invaded Lebanon for the first time. Al-Sadr travelled to different countries of the region with the aim of creating alliances between groups inside Lebanon and to gain the support of the Arab countries in order to strengthen "movement of deprived" and to deal with Israel. For the last official visit invited by Muammar Gaddafi in 1978, Musa al-Sadr flew to Libya from which he never returned. Al-Sadr struggled to give a greater political voice to the historically neglected Lebanese Shiite community to confront political injustices imposed on them. However, despite his Shiism ideologies, he was associated with political Shiism and establishing the AMAL militia, but he had not a radical revolutionary view. He attempted to avoid violent confrontation and tried to open a dialogue with other sectarian groups. Even he believed that for peace Christians should hold the highest post in the confessional system (Norton 1987, 42).

Musa al Sadr's sudden mysterious disappearance coincided with the outbreak of the revolution in Iran, which led to a reduction of the ability of the AMAL Movement to supress the ideological gap that was forming in the organization and Shi'a community. The new approach of some members, opened a great gap among the members. The next two prominent AMAL leaders, Husayn al-Husayni and Nabih Berri worked to secularize the organization. They adopted some moderate nationalist policies whichled religiously minded activists to leave AMAL. These disputes came up firstly by the interaction with the newly established IRI, and later in dealing with Israel. In fact, the AMAL movement was confused and unsure of how to

best deal with Khomeini and his new revolutionary regime (Lotfy 2008). Nabih Berri concerned the Islamic Revolution of Iran as a source of strength for the Lebanese Shiites, but he does not as an appropriate model for solving the dilemmas of the sectarian society in Lebanon. He believed "AMAL" in terms of belief was following Ayatollah Khomeini, but would politically move independently and in accordance with only the national interests of Lebanon. However, Islamist members within the party strongly approved Islamic Revolution of Iran and their policies. In addition, they considered themselves as advocates of Khomeini's political and religious views. On the other hand, Iranian revolutionary government drastically attempted to change the character of the AMAL from a protecting entity to a radical revolutionary organization, but was confronted with the opposition of AMAL leaders. Even, Iran had encouraged former al-Da'wa members to join and infiltrate AMAL in order to challenge the secular and moderate orientations of AMAL (Algha 2006, 32). In fact, there were different approaches from two different major Iran-Lebanon networks with regard to AMAL movement; first fraction was the revolutionaries who were affiliated to Iran Freedom Movement such as Ayatollah Taleghani, Mustafa Chamran. They had close ties with AMAL leaders and they attempted to make both sides closer together, but were not very successful to bring the AMAL interests in line with the Islamic Republic regime. Another main Iran-Lebanon network was constituted by the radical Islamist revolutionaries such as Mohammad Montazeri, Ali Akbar Mohtashami, and Jalal al-Din Farsi. In fact, Iran's current involvement in Lebanon was founded by this group who largely opposed AMAL due to their insufficient support for the Palestinian resistance. This faction was able to create strong ties with Shia clergy in Beirut and the Biqa Valley and PLO in southern Lebanon (Ostovar 2009, 93). Along with the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Nabih Berri's participation in the "National Salvation Committee" meeting in 1982 and his co-opting with the Lebanese government for the initiative of ending conflict with Israel, was opposing many radical AMAL members, who were inspired by Khomeinism revolutionary ideology. In protest, a number of main cadres, including men such Hassan Nasrallah, broke off and either formed small splinter groups which later formed the initial core of the Hezbollah movement. As a result, on the one hand, the Iranian revolution which demonstrated the value of radical ideology to many political actors, the Israeli invasion, and finally also the Intensification of the sectarian civil war had Polarized the Lebanese political environment to such an extent that the moderate approaches had no takers. On the other hand, the versatility of the AMAL Movement with new conditions, as well as given to that the AMAL leadership cadre was not enough coherent and charismatic to attract the necessary ideological support, AMAL position was ideologically weakened.

4.2 HEZBOLLAH (OR "PARTY OF GOD")

Hezbollah was unofficially founded in 1982, out of the turbulent Lebanon political landscape, as a result of Civil War, as well as the Israeli invasion. Although, the ideological basis was set out, however, the emergence of Hezbollah as a coherent organization did not occur until 1985. Following Saddam's empowerment in Iraq and his hostile policies against Shia institutions and figures, and consequently the intensification of the Shiites protests, the Saddam's regime started to crack down on the Shiite. Many of non-Iraqi Shiite clergymen and seminary students were expelled from Iraq. Some of the young Lebanese expelled clergymen, such as Hasan Nasrallah, Sayyid Abbas al-Musawi, Shaikh Subhi al-Tufayli foundedreligious schools, Hawzat al-Imam al-Mutazar and scattered Islamist political sectors in South Lebanon.

The Israeli invasion, Civil War and the constant clashes between AMAL against the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), created a polarized environment that oriented the Shiite to Islamist parties upward mobility and Islamist social movements. The convergence of these Islamist sectors with the members of the Da'wa party, "The Lebanese Union of Muslim Students", some former members of the Islamic AMAL, independent active Islamic figures, few members of Fatah and the Lebanese Communist Party formed the resistance movement of Hezbollah as an Islamic jihadi movement against the Israeli occupation, with the material and spiritual support of Iran and backing from Syria. Indeed, Mohtashamipour (Iranian ambassador to Damascus) was very efficient in bringing together a collection of like-minded militants and low-level clergy. Ali Akbar Muhtashamipour was one of the "radical […] elements, advocating the export of the revolution," who spent a considerable time in Lebanon in early 1980s, created strong ties with the leading Islamist cadres and low-level clergy. At a later stage Muhtashamipour became the Iranian ambassador to Damascus. Many believe that he was the mastermind of Hizbullah (Ranstrop 2002, 103). He was the main Khomeini's intermediary within Hezbollah.

The second Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon in June 1982 led to displacing and the deaths of thousands of Lebanese Shiite. Although Iran was intensively engaged in a consecutive battle against the Saddam forces, the IRGC Central Headquarters immediately announced: "Iran would send soldiers to Lebanon to engage in face-to-face battle against Israel, the primary enemy of Islam and of the Muslims."

Furthermore, Iranian president Ali Khamenei (the current leader) proclaimed that:

"To us, there is no difference between the fronts in the South of Iran and in South Lebanon [...] We are prepared to put our facilities and necessary training at the disposal of all the Muslims who are prepared to fight against the Zionist regime. We believe that victory will belong to the Muslims, and to those who are on the side of truth" (BBC 1982).

By the end of June, around 1500 Revolutionary Guards (Pasdaran) under Mohtashamipour helm were dispatched to Lebanon's Bekaa Valley with the permission of the Syrian government in order to organize and train Islamist warriors. At the same year, the first conclave of Hezbollah was held in Tehran of which Subhi al-Tufayli was adopted as the first Secretary-General. Hezbollah was highly successful for the enthusiastic revolutionary IRI to universalize the Islamic revolutionary message to the Shia population in line with the implementation of its goal to export the Islamic revolution around the world.

Hezbollah's approach influenced by the Iranian revolution with the ideological belief of religionlooked quite militant and radically revolutionary and anti-world power. They made efforts to build their legitimacy on the battlefield. From Hezbollah's point of view, "aggression can be repelled only with the sacrifice of blood, and freedom is not given but regained with the sacrifice of both heart and soul" (Norton 2007, 38). They established the war on three fronts in their agenda: the war against the Israeli occupation, Western military forces inside Lebanon, fighting against the government led by Amin Jumayyel who was a pro-Western puppet from Hezbollah point of view, or any Lebanese government who made peace with Israel.

From the beginning, they resorted to a radical-violent approach and a rigid political discourse with uncompromising attitude. Actually, violence strengthened Hezbollah's stance against the status quo. They were able to attract more attention with their fuss since they displayed themselves as the most effective force of the resistance. They organized radical operations against the Israeli occupation forces and the multinational forces deployed in Lebanon. One of the most important of these operations which made Hezbollah gain global attention occurred when members of the clandestine "Islamic Resistance" made twin-suicide attacks to the Marines America headquarters in October 1983, which led to the death of 241 US marines and 58 French paratroopers. This was considered one of the worst incidents for US troops since the Vietnam War (Algha 2006, 20).

Although measures such as terrifying suicide bombings, hijackings, hostage-taking of foreign forces, undermined the prestige of Hezbollah at the international level, it ultimately led to the

Western forces made a fast exit from Lebanon, cancellation of treaties signed between the Lebanon government and Israel, as well as the Israeli withdrawal from most of Lebanon territory to a so-called security zone. Over the next fifteen years, Hezbollah succeeded to end up occupation totally by an efficient, disciplined, and popular guerrilla war against the Israeli military (Shatz 2004).

Although, the United States, some of the Western states, and Israel designated a group as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO), Hezbollah gained instant global prominence amongst Islamists. At the time when the government was unable to protect Lebanese territory, Hezbollah was the only fighting force that was resisting the occupation of the Lebanese land. Over the years, given to the durable resistance against Israeli and Western intrusion, coupled with socio-economic programs, Hezbollah was deemed as a legitimate resistance movement among the majority of the Muslim world and became the undisputed champion of the Lebanese people, Shi'a community in particular.

Hezbollah publicly announced its existence in a published Open Letter what it called "An Open Letter to all the Oppressed" on 16 February 1985 for the first time. Previously, their activities and covertly operating were identified as the "Islamic Resistance Front" entity which was the general name for all fighter groups against Israel. The Open letter was a political manifest that outlined its religious-political ideology, which can be considered as the first-hand source of Hezbollah positions and approaches in respect to Lebanon and the region in the 1980s.

It is visible that content and language of Open letter was affected by ideological inspiration from the Iranian revolution and the teachings of the Ayatollah Khomeini, such as division of the world into the 'oppressors' (mustakbirin) and the 'oppressed' (mustad'afin), anti-Western imperialism and anti-Zionism attitude, desire for establishing a Islamic state, and etc. They clearly introduced their movement as an extension of the Iranian revolution. Nevertheless, Al-Tufayli in his statements repeatedly emphasized that "Hezbollah's aim of establishing an Islamic state in Lebanon as part of an all-encompassing regional Islamic state, headed by Iran" (Algha 2006, 21). Hezbollah's "Open letter" stipulates that Islam should not be imposed by force, but should be the result of a consensus among the Lebanese.

In the Open letter, Hezbollah disclosed its radical uncompromised approaches that the Lebanese political system was considered an essential infidel system and the Lebanese government as an apostate, that should be eradicated by a top-down revolutionary movement and replaced by the

rule of Islam (Algha 2006, 20). Furthermore, Hezbollah refused any relation with Israel whether collaborator, treaty or ceasefire, and peace agreements. The terminology that applied in the writing of the letter has an abundant resemblance to Ayatollah Khomeini's speeches. The letter explains the conclusion of Israel's occupation of Lebanon as a "prelude to its final obliteration from existence," and describes Israel as "the ulcerous growth of world Zionism," and adds, "our confrontation of this entity must end with its obliteration from existence." The letter also criticizes Arab rulers siding with Saddam Hussein's Iraq in its war against Iran (Samii 2008, 32). On the one hand, by the late 1980s, Hezbollah emerged as an evolved social movement in the sense of having a coherent structure, systematic organization and strong ideology aiming at social change within the Lebanese political sphere. On the other hand, Hezbollah failed to integrate into Lebanese political life due to its monopolistic political religious ideology and violent approaches.

4.2.1 THE SHIFTS IN HEZBOLLAH'S IDEOLOGY

Since the establishment of Hezbollah in 1982, this organization has undergone several transformations depending on the internal and external conditions. The early 1990s coincided with the beginning of Hezbollah's shift from an "Islamic jihadi movement" with an exclusivist religious ideology towards a political party with a pragmatic political program and over its goals and the desirability of turning Lebanon into an Islamic state.

 In the continuation, there was the end of the Iran-Iraq War, the death of Khomeini as Hezbollah's godfather, the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War, the revival of Arab-Israeli negotiations at the Madrid Conference and finally the end of the civil war, the signing of the Ta'if accords as a charter of national reconciliation and restoration of social democracy in Lebanon. All these were important widespread changes at the international, regional and domestic level that encouraged Hezbollah to adjust political views and adopt more rational and realistic policy. Hezbollah came to the conclusion that political participation is a vital step in revitalizing its image and standing on the political scene of Lebanon. Therefore, they decided to go along with the multi-confessional system mentioned in the accords. The Ta'if Accords effectively ended the 15-year Lebanese civil war, which also was adopted as Lebanon's new constitution in September 1990. In the Ta'if Accords there was an attempt to create a pluralist political system for all sectarian-confessional groups with more or less 'open' public sphere. Nevertheless, the Ta'if Accords forced all Lebanese militias to disarm and close their military and training centers and the surrendering their weapons to the Lebanese state.

Hezbollah was exempted from the rule, given the differences between militia and resistance movement. Hezbollah was the only militia that was permitted to keep up its arms in order to carry out its resistance against Israeli forces to release and protect the Southern regions of Lebanon. In fact, Hezbollah's military wing, the Islamic Resistance was deemed as a legitimate national resistance by the Lebanese state (Algha 2006, 41).

Compliance and enforcement of Taif accords by Hezbollah was a starting point to jump from rejectionist and radicalism to some sort of accommodation. In this regard, Hezbollah made extensive changes in leadership, structure and form of organization. Firstly, the organization transformed from a mysterious and closed organization with a security view toward a political party, with relatively transparent structure. They made some changes in the structure of the Shura Council as well. Hezbollah designed a disciplined leadership and organizational structure where the general secretary as chief commander was elected by a seven-member shura council which in turn supervised five sub-councils: the political assembly, jihad assembly, parliamentary assembly, executive assembly, and judicial assembly.

Hezbollah held its second conclave which led to elected Sayyid 'Abbas Al-Musawi as its second Secretary General. Abbas Al-Musawi had an open approach to new circumstances, in comparison to former Hezbollah secretary general, Subhi al-Tufayl who had an uncompressible view in the new developments in the party. Al-Musawi planned "infitah" program which led to develop a new discourse and made it pluralistic and inclusive in orientation. However, a few months later al- Musawi was assassinated by an Israeli helicopter. Then, Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah who had similar views was elected as Hezbullah's third Secretary General. He has retained his post till the present day. However, Hezbollah, which before the Taif Accord, had a hostile relationship with other groups and the Lebanese political parties, in the second conclave set written moral rules upon which it began to open the dialogue with all other parties, except those who had blatant connections with Israel. Even later during the election campaigns, according to the new requirements Hezbollah nomination with nominations from parties such as, AMAL Movement, the Communist Party, Christians in particular and the party of ethnic Surrey accommodated together in a coalition election list.

Hezbollah, which since its establishment considered the Lebanese political system as an infidel, illegitimate, un-Islamic system and called for the overthrowing with regard to the establishment of an Islamic state, apart from the ideological slogans, following its transformation process which is described as the "Lebanonization of Hezbollah" gradually dropped that notions from

all its political programs. Over time, they conveyed a more moderate stance towards the Lebanese political system. They accepted that due to the multi-sectarian population of Lebanon, the foundation of an Islamic state is neither logical, nor possible

During this period, Hezbollah's literature also underwent a significant development. On its yellow flag and underneath its main emblem, Hezbollah replaced its original motto of the "Islamic Revolution in Lebanon" with the motto "Islamic Resistance in Lebanon." (Abdul-Hussain 2009). Indeed, Hezbollah tried to strengthen their Lebanese identity coordinated with the Lebanese political rule game by a higher level of participation which led the party to strengthen its position in the Lebanon's political system. The party has focused more on the ballot box than on bullets and military victories (Hamzeh 1993). Therefore, the important window to establish the relationship between Hezbollah and the government was opened. The Lebanese government recognized Hezbollah's resistance and despite disarmed Lebanese groups, Hezbollah in southern Lebanon was legally premised to maintain in his arms deal with Israel. Later, every time Israel attacked southern Lebanon, Hezbollah went to the counterattack, yet trying to respect the constitution and regulations of the country. Moreover, Hezbollah tried to compete and participate in the socio-political scene in the Lebanon by participating in the parliamentary elections. In the 1992, Hezbollah found it difficult to make a decision about its participation in the upcoming elections; this decision entailed a scrutiny and the evaluation of the party's religious-political ideology. Nevertheless, eventually with a confirmation of Ali Khamenei supreme leader of Iran (waliyy e-faqih), Hezbollah decided to participate in elections, and launched its political program. Hezbollah was able to win all of the twelve seats on its election list in the first open elections in more than two decades in Lebanon. Thereby forming a parliamentary bloc that was dedicated to supporting and representing organization's objectives. They repeated their success in the next elections. In 1996, the election was affected by the Israeli "Grapes of Wrath" military campaign. The declared objective of these attacks was to put pressure on the Government of Lebanon so that it would curb the activities of Hezbollah. But, Israel's efforts had an unintended result: which caused to bring the people even closer to Hezbollah and made a powerful consensus among most Lebanese parties on Hezbollah's resistance legitimacy. It also reawakened a sense of bitterness against the West. Even Lebanon's former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri (head of Sunni community) stated the government's growing tolerance of Hezbollah when he claimed that it was not the government's duty to stop Hezbollah's "resistance." (Jaber 1997, 172). In the wake of the Israeli aggression, provoked by "April 1996 Understanding/Agreement", Hezbollah had victoriously won the

political support that it had intended for in its restructuring campaign (Algha 2006, 287). The operation Grapes of Wrath proved the emergence of the modern perceptions of Hezbollah's capabilities.

Commentators note the organization's political power grew significantly in May 2008 after Hezbollah was effectively granted veto power in the cabinet via the so-called Doha agreement. The agreement ended the two- year long political crisis that culminated in Hezbollah's takeover of West Beirut (Samii 2008, 31—2) Hezbollah won ten parliamentary seats in the 2009 national elections. By 2010, it was powerful enough to bring down the government of Saad Hariri, a Saudi-backed Sunni by pulling out of the coalition government. Although Hezbollah was the effective force behind the replacement of Prime Minister Najib Mikati, it forced his departure from office and the collapse of the government in March 2013 in a dispute over the Lebanese security forces. Hezbollah now plays a significant role in the Lebanese political structure and government. It has the important influence to prevent the creation of any government that would try to exclude it. Since 2011, the Lebanese government has been dominated by Hezbollah and its coalition partners, making it the de facto ruling party in Lebanon.

In 2009, the group's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, updated Hezbollah's manifesto in which he avoided applying "controversial language" and tones down the earlier religious rhetoric such as the call for an Islamic Republic in Lebanon- even though the party with emphasis on diversity Lebanese diversity clearly stated that establishing the Islamic government is not a priority anymore. The manifesto reflected the political and military evolution of the organization since the 1985 Letter and described the party's strategic view for the future. Hezbollah outlined its basic political principals in Chapter II: "Israel is a threat to Lebanon and Hezbollah must keep arms to defend Lebanon; political sectarianism should be eliminated, and its opposition to federalism" (Lebanon Renaissance Foundation 2009). The 2009 Manifesto adopted similar concepts and literature, however, with a greater degree of political sophistication which reflected the political maturity of the organization. For instance, while in the 1985 letter Hezbollah mentioned the US and the West as an "evil and oppressive force" in the Muslim world, the 2009 manifesto with more diplomatic literature explained about the US world prospect in terms of seeking global "hegemony" and underlined the negative effects of globalization on the Muslim and Arab identity (Jerusalem Quarterly 1988). In other words, although similar in content, the 2009 document showed a better understanding of the organization of international politics and attempted to employ terminology and notions that are commonly associated with the "anti-globalization" and "leftist" movements (Berti 2010, 93).

Since adopting infitah policy Hezbollah stances have changed due to evolving circumstances developing in Lebanon and region however, its position towards fundamental principles issues such as anti-Zionism attitude or full compliance from Velayat-Faqih remained the same.

When Hezbollah could somewhat consolidate his political position in the domestic and regional sphere, it found the opportunity to create the network of social services that benefited Lebanese Shiites, along with Lebanese of other sects. The stylized space this time, Hezbollah sought to expand cultural activities, social services. With Iran's help, Hezbollah has been able to build an entire social welfare structure for the Shiite community.

Hezbollah distributed basic services in the form of housing, education, health, electricity, water, agricultural extension, vocational training as well as aiding widows, orphans, and the disabled. In continuation, Hezbollah established several foundations with Iranian direct engagement, such as The Imam Khomeini Relief Committee (Komite-yi Imdad-i Imam) which is a charity organization to provide support for underprivileged families, or The Martyrs Foundation (Bonyad-i Shahid) which provided financial support to the families of the killed or imprisoned, and repaired infrastructure damaged by Israeli attacks and by warring domestic factions. Iranian support with the extensive involvement of parastatal charitable foundations remained considerable in Hezbollah's focus on the reconstruction of war-torn Lebanon's Shiite district, through building schools, clinics, hospitals, sanitation facilities, and cheap housing, as well as aiding widows, orphans, and the disabled. In fact, delivering social services did much to enhance Hezbollah's standing and popularity among all segments of Lebanese society (Takeyh 2009, 71). These charitable activities are largely funded by the money from Iran. This enables Hezbollah to continue to strengthen its influence in Lebanon now that the war ended. Indeed, due to the lack of government spending, coupled with the long policy of neglect, Iran and Hezbollah tackle the situation itself. In fact, they have dominated the public sphere with its involvement in providing social services to Lebanon's population (Jaber 1997, 47). Hezbollah derives a tremendous amount of its popularity from its robust social services programs. These programs are effective because the Lebanese government cannot or will not provide basic services that are critical to a well-run society. By providing this kind of social services Hezbollah legitimizes itself as a national liberation movement. In fact, it created a dependency and social service network that guaranteed its dominance. Hezbollah has managed to get a hegemony over the Shiite community in Lebanon. It represents an absolute majority of the Lebanese Shiite population. This can be seen in its success in achieving the popular vote in different elections. Through this hegemony with the popularity Hezbollah has managed to

become the dominant political force in Lebanon, and is thus able to control the direction of national politics as well.

5 CONCLUSION

(1) After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iranian identical structures have mainly originated from the political Islam, Shia religion, the political viewpoint of Ayatollah Khomeini and the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. IRI is an ideological regime. This means, its ontological security is important as existential security. In other words, the discrediting of its ideology is equal with the overthrow of the regime. In fact, in Iran, the religious ideology impacts on political decision – albeit to varying degrees. Shiism emerges as the most prominent contributor to the state's identity and hence interests. IRI as a theocratic regime legitimizes its system by the employment of Shi ideology and connects to its strong traditions and spirituality of religion. Elements of Shia ideology have dominated the political life in Iran and propagate at all levels of society. The determinant identical factors such exporting of Islamic Revolution, support the oppressed (mostaza'fin) against the oppressors and Umm Al-Qura that affect Iranian foreign policy regarding the support or the founding of Shia none state actors since the 1979 Islamic revolution. The concept of export of Islamic revolution (sudur inqilab islami) is an ummah-oriented discourse that comes from the universal vision of Islam as a transnational phenomenon. It is explainable on the principles of Shiism – Iranian with the aim of creating a comprehensive Islamic Union, which led to the redefinition of the basic concepts such as national interests, power and values in domestic and international political scene. Accordingly, all Muslims are a unified Umma whose interests are intertwined and have responsibilities towards each other. Ummah is a transnational, trans-ethnic defined public by common faith and ideology and ignores geographical boundaries. According to Khomeini, spreading the revolution throughout the Muslim world is not just desirable, but it is a religious duty to get down the "stooges of American imperialism" in the Islam world. Therefore, for them, export of Islamic revolution is inevitable because the invitation is a global Islamic mission that is beyond the time and place. In addition, they consider Iran as the vanguard of a world revolutionary movement to liberate the Muslim countries. Umm Al-Qura Doctrine came up after exporting Islamic revolution, including Vilayet-e Faqih theory. They discuss that the leadership is a fundamental prerequisite for the unity of Umma. A country can be Umm al-Qura of Islamic world which have righteous, competent and jurisprudence (Faqih) for

leading the Islamic world. The national boundaries have no effect on the leadership. Leadership is responsible towards all Umma and people are also legally responsible for obeying him. All of these semantic structures can be found in the relationship between Hezbollah and IRI. However, with the study of these factors, IRI's behavior is easily explainable. Iran's commitment to support Shia groups such Hezbollah comes from these identical factors rather than cost–benefit calculations and materialistic objectives. Although this leads to material achievements, such as the increasing of Iranian power in the region however it has not been the main goal and the main reason to support Shia groups. The establishment and supporting Hezbollah took place at the time when Iran was at war with Iraq and under the most intense economic and political pressure. Nevertheless, IRI sent 1,500 men from the most skilled military forces to Lebanon to support Shiite against Israel attack. If IRI followed cost-benefit rather than its ideology, in order to expand its influence or increase its power it did not need to feud with America and Israel and consequently create and found the groups such as Hezbollah or Hamas in order to confront them. They could follow the foreign policy of the previous regime of Iran, and by the rapprochement with world powers, stay in its position as the police of the region. This is similar to Wend's example about the cold war. He states that in concrete terms 'if the United States and the Soviet Union decided that they were no longer enemies, "the cold war would be over". It is collective meanings that constitute the structures which organize our actions. Actors acquire identities—relatively stable, role-specific understanding and expectations about self—by participating in such collective meaning'.

(2) Four decades ago, Lebanese Shiite were deprived of any political, economic and social power. At that time, South Lebanon, with 85 percent of the Shiites was the poorest and most backward regions of the country. However, during the last half a century, with emerging of Shia identity-based and emancipatory movements, the Shiite have been able to achieve a greater political voice than the historically disenfranchised Lebanese Shiite community to confront political injustices imposed on them. The establishment of Hezbollah is the most important and a turning point for the Shiite in Lebanon in this regards. Hezbollah is a Shia Islamist political, military and social organization that has been able to achieve remarkable power in Lebanon during the last three decades. They have evolved and played important roles in the various historical situation. With its previous assignments fulfilled, such as anti-Israeli resistance, the party is now left to play a role of a defender of the Lebanon's Shiites. When Israeli forces finally withdrew in 2000, Hezbollah was credited with pushing them

out. In the political sphere, Hezbollah's political wing is one of the largest political parties represented in Lebanon's parliament. The group gradually became a key power broker in Lebanon's political system and has effectively gained veto power in the cabinet. Hezbollah, besides its military and political wing, operates a massive network of social services that benefits Lebanese Shiites, along with the Lebanese of other sects. This led to their popularity among other sects as well. It also explores the circumstances that gave rise to Hezbollah and established it as the most popular and powerful force in Lebanon. Hezbollah truly represents the majority of Shia community. If we consider Hezbollah a real representative of Shia community in Lebanon, all the success of the organization in empowerment in the political, social, and economic arena of Lebanon can be considered as Increasing power and development of Shia community.

(3) The success of Lebanese Hezbollah and its loyalty and ability to protect and support the Shiite's interest has provided an organizational and aspirational model for other Shiite organizations and also has persuaded IRI to simulate Hezbollah model in other countries. Hezbollah, itself plays an important role in the formation of similar groups in other countries. Under the supervision of IRI and with the cooperation of Iran's Quds Force, it expands its activities in other countries. It has the military, logistic, advisory, and training role in Palestine, Syria, Iraq and Yemen. For example, the establishment of the Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) (Al-Hash Al-Sha'abi) in Iraq, or National Defense Forces (NDF) in Syria by Iranian support, followed a similar instruction and methodology. In July 2016 Hashd al-Shaabi forces (PMU) were placed on par with Iraq's army units and subject to military law. This is quite similar to legitimizing Hezbollah as an armed "resistance" party following the end of the Lebanese war. All these Shiite groups are in close relationship with each other in a network under the command of the vilayet-e faqih. The acceptance of Iran's absolute vilayet-e faqih ideology, where political, social, and religious loyalties go to the Iranian Supreme Leader, it is essential for all these groups that vilayet-e faqih has the final word on the crucial matters of the parties.

Povzetek magistrskega dela v slovenskem jeziku

Magistrska naloga obravnava krepitev šiitske moči na Bližnjem vzhodu s stališča Irana kot glavne šiitske države. Za teoretsko izhodišče smo uporabili konstuktivistični pristop, ki temelji na konceptu identitete države. Osnovni namen naloge je razviti analitično metodologijo, ki omogoča analizo iranske zunanje politike v zvezi s podporo in vzpostavitvijo šiitske skupnosti v regiji. S poudarkom na Libanonu in študiji primera Hezbolah smo hoteli zagotoviti najboljše analitično orodje za razumevanje iranske plolitične moči. Glavni namen je uporaba kvalitative konstruktivistčne metode, ki služi kot orodje za opazovanje kako je formirana državna identiteta v kontekstu države in mednarodnih igralcev.

V prvem delu smo se osredotočili na zgodovinsko perspektivo šiizma na Bližnjem vzhodu, od smrti preroka Mohameda do danes. S poudarkom ključnih dogodkov smo opisali religijo in njeno tradicijo ter pogledali v sodobnost islamističnih gibanj ter razvoj novih šiitskih političnih ideologij dvajsetega stoletja. Poleg tega smo preučili več podrobnosti duhovnih in ideoloških vrednot šiizma in njihovega vpliva na politično prakso, kot so Umma, Mahdaviat, Ashura, Wilayat al-Faqih.

V drugem delu je predstavljen teoretični model konstruktivizma, ki nam je služil kot podlaga za analizo in razumevanje empirične analize na primeru Hezbolah v Libanonu. V tem delu so predstavljene ključne točke konstruktivistične teorije s kratkim pregledom konstruktivistične misli. Osvetlili smo pomen državne identitete in oblikovanje nacionalnega interesa na zunanjo politiko, tako da smo se skozi konstruktivistične analize posebej osredotočil na zunanjo politiko Irana in njene vloge na zunanjo politiko odločanja.

V tretjem delu smo na študiji primera šiitske skupine Amal in Hezbolah analizirali pridobivanje politične moči šiitske skupnosti in krepitev šiitske dominacije v Libanonu. Razložen je proces transformacije skupine Hezbolah vse od marginalne skupnosti do ključnega igralca pri pridobivanju politične moči, ker šiti veljajo za manjšinsko skupnost. Na tem mestu smo preučili tudi vlogo Islamske republike Iran pri vzpostavitvi šiitske dominacije v Libanonu.

Raziskava izhaja iz treh raziskovalnih vprašanj na katera skušamo odgovoriti:

- Ali je podpora Irana pri zunaj državnih političnih igralcih v skladu z iranskimi regionalnimi in političnimi ambicijami Irana?

- Ali Iran uporablja religijo kot orodje za krepitev in širitev politične moči in dominacije?

- Kako je Iran s podporo šiitske skupine Hezbolah izboljšal politično situacijo šiitov v Libanonu

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