CHAPTER IV
THE ROLE OF IMĀM AL-MAHDI DOCTRINE OF SHĪʿAH IN
THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION AND CONSTITUTION

A. The Role of Imām Al-Mahdī Doctrine of Shīʿah in the Iranian Revolution in 1979

In general, the word “revolution” is used in the sense of resistance to the established authorities. According to Kalim Shiddique, this meaning is regarded as a loose meaning of revolution. However, the Islamic revolution does not include in this meaning. Islamic Revolution is more than just a movement to tyranny or against to the governance. In this case, Iranian Revolution in the 1979 is representation of Islamic revolution shape being intended. As the distinction, this revolution can be compared to some of other revolutions have ever occurred, such as French Revolution and two important revolutions in the 20th century, which are the Marxist Revolution in China and Russia.

French Revolution cannot be said as Islamic Revolution because in this phenomenon the rebellion only confined to the resistance of tyranny and luxuries among absolute monarchy in France and the bourgeoisie. Likewise the two other revolutions, those are Marxist Russian Revolution in 1917 and revolution in China in 1949. The fundamental distinction between Islamic Revolution and both is on ideology. The ideology of Marxist had been conducted to revolutions

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in Russia and China was not a genuine product of the two countries. Lenin, the leader of communist party in Russia gained authority not because he had defeated the Russian army and established Russian government, yet as the army and Russian governmental had come so weak since the First World War. Similarly in China, Mao -leader of Marxist Revolution in China- should produce another version of Marxist doctrine in order to be applied in China. Later, both of revolutions, Marxist doctrine should be nationalized in order to be accepted as a revolutionary ideology.

It was so clear about the distinction of Iranian Revolution that all people totally involved in the movement. Valued system drove the masses in revolution was patterned by Shi’ah Islam in Iran which had been there more than 1400 years. That is the distinction. While, in other revolution imported and imposed foreign ideology into local society. However, in Iran this ideology was a system of local values, it’s doctrine of Islam and Shi’ah, especially Shi’ah Istanâ Ash’ariyah.

In the Shah’s era, Iranian society was divided into two groups. First was Pro-shah and his ruled ways, including his westernization agenda. They were the political elite, a bourgeoisie or groups of middle and upper, capital owners, Shah's armies, and some of advantages groups. Second is contra-Shah. They were the opposition group consisting of traditional religious groups, middle lower class such as labors, traders and workers, students, Front Nationalist and other minority groups such as Tudeh Party, feedayen, and Mojahidin Khalq. Before they came to unite in comprehensive opposition under

\[^{2}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 148\]
Khomeini’s leadership, during the times of the 1960s and 1970s, their ideology and movement was formed by core figures involved in the revolution.

These core figures were not only responsible for masses coordination at the revolution, but the most important thing was their thoughts and opinions on forming basic assumptions or ideology of revolutionary to the masses. Finally, the mass-appropriated with each of their tendency had basis and ideology as basic movement. It was more than displeasure action that was being long crystallized as they received unfair treatment from Shah’s governance. However, their protests gained justification through Shi’ah doctrines they professed. The only one doctrine that affected the masses was about Imam al-Mahdi doctrine.

Since its inception, the discourse of Imam Al-Mahdi has been identical with political movement to the oppressive ruler, namely Umayyad regime. Mukhtar’s Propaganda over the messianic role, Muhammad bin Hanafiyyah was clearly got good response from the followers of Shi’ah in Kufah. In fact, they more interested in joining Mukhtar’s movement and Shi’ah Kaysaniyah than following Ali Zainal Abidin, the only survivor son of Husayn after Karbala war. It indicated that the claims of messianic or Al-Mahdi along with legend about final victory was clearly getting influence in any Shi’ah’s political movement.

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The other fact supporting this opinion is the lack of interest among Shi‘ah in Kufa toward Yahya bin Zaid’s uprising, son of Shi‘ah Zaidiyah’s leader. He did not succeed getting sympathy from the followers of Shi‘ah Kufa after his effort for more than 3 years. Just like his father’s movement, his rebellion was ultimately unsuccessful. Yahya and his father’s movement cannot attract the attention and sympathy of Shi‘ah activist groups because they did not use messianic or al-Mahdi’s claim around their movement. The idea was already familiar with Shi‘ah masses at that time.

However, Messianic expectation of Shi‘ah Kaysaniyah has affected a large number of Muslims, even from non-Shi‘ah groups. Actually, idea of Imām Al-Mahdi is a reasonable meaning on expressing general feeling of society at that time and used as an effective tool for political adventure.

Dissatisfaction, oppression and burden among society in political, social and economic aspect were supported by religious presence in each aspects of human life, making fluctuation and opposition to the regime expressed in religious languages. The increasing of social problems and damage may not be directed against religious law of Islamic governmental. Because the Qur‘an and Sunnah are never wrong. Consequently, the leaders who must be responsible for applying both, maintaining and managing the justice as being targeted as they are not able to responsible their duties and to ignore God’s word and Sunnah of the Prophet.

4 *Ibid.* p. 358

Mahdī, they are still filled by their best tried, namely through selection of the pious and fair leader, so that, people can imitate his behavior and guide them to carry out of divine laws.

The endeavors of Imamate scholars, especially the deputies of the Imam, at different times, in regard to elaboration, systematization, and crystallization of the Imamate doctrine of the Mahdi, succeeded in establishing a sort of spiritual link in the lives of the Imamate who looked forward to the appearance of their Imam. The belief in the appearance of the Hidden Imam as the Mahdi helped the Shi‘ah to endure under unbearable situation and hope for a just future pending the return of Imam Mahdi.
• Compliance with the requirements of science and justice for religious leaders.

• Be knowledgeable of social and political, brave and having capacity in public administration.

The position of ahl al-hallī wa al-aqdī as the highest governmental institution in Iran is a form of State legitimation to the concept of wilayah al-faqih. It has been explained that all of basic movement in Iran is Shi‘ah’s tradition. According to Shi‘ah, during the awaited period, all forms of governmental are not legitimated. Thus, need to form political concept authority and constitutional, so that the form of governmental can be acceptable to the level of legitimacy. That concept is wilayah al-Faqih. The application of this concept at the same time showed that they could not deny the existence of the twelfth Imam whom they stated as the ghāib as Imam al-Mahdī. Because although that Priests is not exist, but surely he still leading through applying the concept of perfect leader. Although they cannot and may not be able to replace the position of Imam Al-Mahdī as their leader, at least by applying the concept of wilayah al-Faqih in official State Constitution, they hope Iran will be in the leadership of al-Mahdī.

The role doctrine of Imam Al-Mahdī in 5 and 19 sections also indicates to create such advanced state, the leader (as the power charger while the loss of priest) must fulfill the requirements have been set. It is surely intended that the leader can guide the community to carry out the affairs of the world based on God’s laws. Thus, it can be concluded that although Iranian people are waiting for Imam Al-

Thus, the expectation of liberation and political system changing, social and economic does not mean by eliminating of existed law, but through actual implementation of commands and divine laws. This expectations, for Shi‘ah will come true through their belief in al-Mahdī in every movements they did as he is the leader who gets God’s guidance under liberation and victory mission. From these historical facts can be concluded that the doctrine of al-Mahdī run as the ideology in every Shi‘ah’s movement and struggle.

Ideology composed of two parts, “idea” which is thinking, imagination, motto, conception. And “logy” which has a Latin root and means logic and recognition. So, literally ideology is recognition of an Idea or in one word is idea as understand it in Persian. In the same view, an ideologue is a person who processes a particular idea or tenet. Therefore, ideology is particular belief, opinion or tenet of a group, class, nation or race. Ideology is an idea and it consist of human imagination and interpretation of the world, life and many human interpretation and particular evaluation of problems that form society and intellectual atmosphere and suggestion. And also there is solution as well as the presentation of “ideal samples”

Terminologically, ideology is often associated with Marxist groups. Ideology is a belief that is presented as an object which is actually a reflection of material conditions among society. This understanding is taken from Karl Marx’s view. According to Marx,
prior meaning of ideology is a kind of false consciousness of society created by bourgeoisie who dominated them. Furthermore, this definition was later criticized and changed by Maxis own followers, such as Jurgen Habermas and Louis Althusser.

Hubermas, principally still agreed with Marx. But, he emphasized that the process of ideology that was claimed by Marx could only happen if there was a material factor and production process that not always exact. Instead, the process of ideology could occur in any segment of social life, because according to him, ideology is the interest in every of human’s. While according to Althusser, ideology is the activity of human existence as a subject, which is then represented in various forms of existed material. Haryatmoko defined ideology as a whole representation of thoughts and beliefs of people in group which have bonding to each other. Based on these definitions can be concluded that ideology is a belief imparted to a person or society so that becomes a consciousness.

If ideology is in equal with belief, so ideology serves as an explanatory presence, expression of egocentrism and ownership in a class, as well as how to define something. As an explanatory presence and expression of egocentrism, it is understood that when person has committed to a certain ideology, so throughout himself it

If looking at the chart, the Quran and Hadith occupied the highest position in the governmental structure. It means that all matters relating to the constitution drowned from basic laws of Islam. Al-Quran and Hadith serves as a main source of social and national activities in Iran. Afterward, both are interpreted to be a draft of law required for implementation of Iranian Islamic Republic. Here, the Expert Council served as its interpreter and drafter. The design is then validated by Islamic Council of Shūrā. In addition to draft a constitution, the Expert Council also has authority to appoint the executive branch of government, namely the President and judiciary whose job as a law enforcement agency in Iran.

The doctrine of Imam Al-Mahdī al-Muntadzār is implemented in 5th section of Islamic Republic’s Constitution in Iran, i.e.:

5. – Imamate and continuous leadership, and its fundamental rule in the perpetuation of the Islamic revolution.

This article asserts that during the occultation the State must be led by Fiqh (jurist) pious and fair-conscious about the condition on his time. A commentator of the constitution unabashedly declares that the ulu al-amri refers equally to the Imam and the deputy (nā‘ib) of the Imam. His deputy is the jurist who is installed in this position with the necessary conditions. He also have to having ability in governmental and referral sources, recognized and accepted by Iranian people.

To maximize the aforementioned of that regulation, the terms and characteristics of the leader described in 19 section, which including:

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21. Dilip Hilo, *op cit.*, p. 403
the wilayati amri, and his supreme office is interchangeably defined as Imamate and leadership. People are given democratic opportunity to choose the 73 member Council of Experts (ahl al-halli wa al-waqdi) which consists of the Mullahs whom Mu’tabarah, including the representatives of religious minorities in Iran. When a board of experts has been shaped, gradually it formed the supporting institution of modern state that is known as triad politics. For more details, the structure of governmental in Iran can be seen from the following chart.

![Diagram of governmental structure in Iran]

19 Zainal Abidin, Imamah dan Implikasinya dalam Kehidupan Sosial, Badan Litbang Kementrian Agama, Jakarta, 2012 p. 174

will be understood according to its ideology. It is also as a way on defining something. Someone who has certain ideology will see something or defines it based on ideology he believed.

When ideologies having function as an expression of egocentrism and defining something, on the next stage, ideology has function as the main elements that motivate actions of followers of ideology. It also may reconstruct the follower’s action systematically. So, it is genuine if the followers of any particular ideology willing to sacrifice anything to keep their ideology. Strictly, ideology has a momentum that sometimes goes beyond the limits of rationality. According to Ali Shari’ati, ideology consists of 3 phases: world vision, critical environment and finally suggestion and solution in the form of ideals and aims. Each ideology, then, is responsible to change the injustice status quo relative to his ideals and convictions. The ideology working that is able to influence human’s actions, can be found through this following scheme:

11 For example is a person who thinks socialist, then naturally he will be linked with the ideology of Marxist. Also with people who speak based on the Qur’an or hadith, then he will be claimed as adherents of Islamic ideology. Ibid., p. 69
12 For example, people who follow Islamic ideology, then he will automatically define analyze and conclude anything based on Islamic principles which he believed. Ibid., p 70
14 Cases like this can be found easily, like the followers of the radical Islamic ideology that is willing to carry out suicide bombings, militancy Red Stalin’s troops, the spirit to against the PKI in the 1960s, and so on.
The scheme above gives a description about ideology’s function as an effective activator toward human action. Firstly, ideology is just an ideology or belief about certain ideas. Then, the belief is converted into points of ideology through simple language in order to be accepted by mind and society. The changing of belief to the society’s accepted ideas called the change from system of thought into doctrinaire system of belief. After this changing, in the next stage it will be the driving factor that making society taking action in accordance with message of ideology.\textsuperscript{15}

Working mechanism of ideology as such is also applied in the role doctrine of Imām Mahdī in the Iranian Revolution. The dictator regime of Pahlevy that ruled Iran for 54 years and their westernization planning had made Iran getting worse. The country’s wealth from oil had been captured by political elite. As a result, poverty continued to rise in Iran and being visible differences between elite and common people meant being brave to protest totally toward injustice system existing currently, as every human and community had a hope in getting a better life. In summary, the belief toward Imām Al-Mahdī was the belief toward the existence of ultimate victory and a better condition in the future. Imām Māhdi is an imaginary leader whose power to move and unite the Shi‘ah society in Iran on doing rebellion toward the ruler. This is a positive historical philosophy, historical determinism and optimism in the future. The power of spiritual and intellectual movement that brought promise and responsibility on its track and eventually became the protester of philosophy to prevailing various circumstances as well as the rejection to all damaged values, which had been governed for a long time. The principle of waiting is not negative and pessimistic submission. It’s not an ideology that causes Muslims stagn and broke.

B. The Role of Imām Al-Mahdī Doctrine toward State Constitution Formed after Iranian Revolution in the 1979

In less than a decade, Khoemeini’s theory was embodied in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. On the basis of a revolutionary reinterpretation of wilayati amri and equally revolutionary reinterpretation of Imamate as the principle of continuous (mustamar, i.e. uninterrupted by the occultation of the twelfth Imam) theocratic leadership, the ruling jurist is identified as

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 135
The faithful must wait until all that is promised is accomplished and the signs of his appearance that they have been informed through traditions, has come. The conceptions of appearance in Shi’ah conveys an important aspect in the belief of awaited Imam.

The appearance of Imam Mahdi is also a cosmic event involving the whole creation. The signs and wonders which precede his appearance from the omens of the universalistic Islamic eschatology to which explicit reference is made in Islamic traditions. However, the eschatological Mahdi, in the Shi’ah faith, is primarily the twelfth Imam from among the descendants of the Prophet, in whom the primordial light of the prophet hood has continued to shine through the ages. He is the light of God in the darkness world. The existence of Imam Mahdi and the faithful from Shi’ah to him, has been show that in the other hand, Shi’ah not only thought about question of leadership in political terms, but also laid religious emphasis on it. Thus, Imam Mahdi more than ordinary person, but he must have been divinely chosen and hence the true leader who could guide his people to salvation, and he must from prophet’s household.

As well as Shi’ah’s political movement happened before, in Iranian revolution, Imam Mahdi was a figure who led the movement they did. For Iranian people, although Imam Mahdi was in his disappearance, but his leadership could not be ignored. Through the opinion of Iranian’s revolutionary figures, understanding toward the waiting period of Imam al-Mahdi became an Islamic ideology that

people. Westernization also brought hazard to the Iranian cultural traditions with strong Shi’ah’s teaching. The government ignored Islamic law, even Ulama’ had no role in administration. The ways and policies of Shah were impartial administration toward Iranian people and punished those who criticized him was enough reason for them on doing political movement.

The mass consisted of people who dissatisfied to Shah’s governance and tried to get claim justification of their rebellion act through religious language. That was Shi’ah’s tradition had been entrenched to them. One of religious tradition is doctrine of Imam al-Mahdi. In this case, the figure’s opinions about Imam al-Mahdi, his disappearance and awaiting period, such as Murtadlo Muthohhari, Ali Syari’ati and Khomeini had important role in addition to coordinating the masses.

During Ayatullah Khoemeini was in exile, Ali Syari’ati and Murtadlo Muthohhari had important role in mobilizing the masses, influenced, and formed ideology in educating the masses. As the part of raushanfikr (intellectual religious), both of them got big popularity in the Iranian society. In order to slaughter Shah and to realize the Revolution, their thoughts focused on Islamic idea. According to them, Islam is the dynamic religion. All of its teaching aspects can be the way to solve out of Muslims problem and make them having progress.

Two types of waiting or Intidzar of Murtadlo Muthohhari is the legitimacy of truth and untruth people’s behavior in the period of Imam’s disappearance (ghabat). People who is in ghabat time do not

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take any action to oppose tyranny, in this case the government of Shah, which the one who conducted to Intidzār in wrong way, therefore it was contrary to the principles of Shi‘ism. In contrast, people in the ghāibat time struggling to defend the justice and against tyranny is person who conducted to intidzār in right way.

The similar view is also expressed by Ali Syar‘āti. For him, the duty of intellectual person is to find the deepest meaning and purpose of public who believing and waiting for Imām Al-Mahdī. The action of meaning and purpose must be something positive because Al-Mahdī is a truth for Shi‘ah’s followers. Ali also classified into two types of Intidzār principle, there are positive and negative Intidzār. Through negative Intidzār, he blamed the society who just sits back and passively during ghāibat time. The ghāibat time certainly has meaning the period of Shah’s governance. Those actions will bring people to the damage and degradation.

While through positive Intidzār, he invites people to develop the progressive of Islam, namely by future oriented, active and do the best effort. The waiting period of Imām al-Mahdī is an Islamic ideology that teaches social responsibility, awareness and leadership. The waiting people mean a bravery to totally protest over injustice system existing in the present as every human alive means having hope for a better life as well as the community.

After opinions about Intidzār disseminated to the masses, the next stage, that thought become idea that was believed by the public. Thus, in addition to the Iranian people who have a desire to be free from government immediately authoritarian, more motivated to make a

In that process, the doctrine of Imām Māhdi as the one of Shi‘ah teaching was internalization through the thought of revolutionary figures. Then, that doctrine was formulated in the form of ideas, such as waiting period, positive dan negative intidzār, the wrong and right ways of intidzār, and final victory. Those ideas than conveys in the institutions that have been led or influenced by revolutionary figures. It’s like Ali Shari‘āti at NMR (National Resistance Movement of Iran) dan IPP (Iranian People’s Party), and Murtadlo Muthohhari at Jamia’i Ruhayuna’i Mubarris and Husainiyi Irshad. In these organizations, the revolutionary figures conveyed their ideas about Imām Māhdi to the several groups whom have been consolidated in those organizations. Through that process, the idea of Imām Māhdi be acceptable and functioned as ideology of movement.

The important point about Imām Māhdi as the messianic in Islam is that he will come forth from his occultation and appear for the sight of all mankind. The appearance of the twelve Imām absorbs the interest of the Imāmate doctrine, that they believed as the apocalyptic visions. They long and pray for the fulfillment of these visions. The message conveyed in the numerous traditions about the appearance is that the appearance of Imām Māhdi is at hand, and that the righteous and elect adherents of the Imām who long for it should not despair at the seemingly prolonged ghāibah of the Messianic Imām. When the ghāibah, the promised Imām will be appear in a “twinkling of the eye,
intellectual community and youth groups in Iranian revolution. Likewise with Ayatollah Khomeini, his thought affected to form ideology among religious groups as well as middle and lower class. In Iranian Revolution, the community jointly opposed Shah and demanded him to resign from Iranian governance. Iranian people regarded and accepted Khoemini to be their leader. The receipted of Khomeini as a leader brought by all Iranian people means that the religious language and symbols was the most powerful and acceptable thing among Iranian people.

The acceptable process of Imam Mahdī doctrine until accepted by society can be seen in this frame:

![Diagram of the acceptable process of Imam Mahdī doctrine](image)

political movement, because it is the message of the intidzār’s ideology they have believed.

In addition, the ideas about interpretation or understanding of al-Mahdī also affected to the course of revolution. For Ali or Murtadlo Muthohhari, the belief about al-Al-Mahdī has meaning to the final victory of a struggle. It was God’s promise for good deeds done by human. As well as waiting period or Intidzār would be end through the reappearance of Imam al-Mahdī, the struggle and uprising (the process of right and positive Intidzār) against to the shah’s regime would be end in the victory (victory was a symbol of Imam Al-Mahdī). This matter, according to both of them, was not a personal assumption, but it was historical determinism which already existed in the Qur'ān as the story of Moses with Pharaoh or the Prophet Muhammad who defeated unbeliever groups. It was inevitable that such opinions had a great influence for the course of Iranian Revolution. The mass that joined the rebellion was really sure because the victory would be on their side. Both of their thoughts were obviously very affect to the assumptions and public understanding of Islam, particularly their understanding over Shi‘ah’s tradition. Ali Rahmena, in his book about Ali Shari’ati’s biography, he write that around the year 1960s, in any political speech, Ali Shari’ati always directed the youths of Iran for make the military action. At April 1971 until 1972, he was held his lectures about the history and control of religion, because his popularity, this lecture was followed over approximately 3400 students. And in its lecture, his thought about Imam Al-Mahdī was delivered. Ali Shari’ati considered that their
understanding toward the Shi’ah’s doctrines is an important element in the revolution. This opinion is relevant to his discovery that the Revolution was not just being realized through the class’s awareness, but could be realized through religious awareness. As the succeed revolution in Iran was the truth of the assumption. Unfortunately, Ali Shari’ati had died before revolution achieved. However, his political slogans still echoed by mass revolt, while Murtadlo Muthahhari organized the scholars in continuing revolution in various areas. His role continued until Khoemeni returned to Iran and led the masses directly. In this case, Murtadlo Muthohhari’s thoughts affected to modern-minded scholars, because he was a well-respected scholar.

If thought of the two figures affected to the formation of intellectuals and youth group’s ideology, Khomeini’s thoughts influenced to the formation of religious groups, especially orthodox scholars and middle-class society’s ideology, such as traders, laborers and workers. It should be noted that in Iran, the middle-lower class was very close to the Scholar. Khoemeini was a counterbalance for the formation of thought from the former two figures because he had orthodoxy thought. As basically, the thought of Murtadlo Muthohhari can’t be accepted by orthodox, therefore, he was killed by al-Furqân, the youth organization, which having different opinion from him in interpreting the Qur’an.

The main most influential Khomeini’s thought to the Iranian Revolution was the position of Scholar in governmental during the loss of Imam. In Iranian Revolution, the role of Khomeini and his thought was very important. Khomeini, while he was in Iran or in times of his exile, constantly influencing to the Iranian society through his thoughts. Revolutionary movement in Iran was heavily influenced by Shi’ah’s tradition. According to Khomeini, during the loss of Imam’s period, Shi’ah’s followers had been obliged to obey the Scholars, as the power changer. Hence, he proposed a concept of wilayah al-Faqih as a representation of doctrine. If this concept applied, the State had duty to handled responsibility of divine law. However, it can’t be applied during Pahlevy’s dynasty in Iran, because during his leadership he used to depress and to make policies in which scholars had no participation within the scope of practical politics and governmental. Even it was also in education and other fields.

Based on this reason, through his sermons -when he was still in Iran- and through his illegal pamphlet, cassette, radio and all existing medium, consistently he claimed that Shah’s governmental was illegal governmental. Thus, it was an obligation for Shi’ah’s followers to revolt and to replace its governance with Islamic rule (by applying the concept of wilayah al-faqih).

Khomeini’s opinion that was no less important to the formation of ideology in Iranian revolution was about Islamic alignments commitment to the oppressed groups. According to him, the world is divided into two parties. First was the oppressor, meant as Shah’s governance, and the second was the oppressed, namely Iranian people who became victims. From that opinion, he was really sure that the end of Iranian revolution was the victory of Iranian.

Hence, the figure’s thoughts, such as Ali Syari’ati and Murtadlo Muthohhari about Imam Al-Mahdî and Intidzâr had influenced to the