

ON THE NORMATIVE FUNDAMENTS REGARDING THE AMALGAMATION OF THEOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY IN IMAM KHOMEINI'S TRADITION

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Abstract

One of the significances of the Islamic Revolution of Iran is the approximation of theocracy and democracy. Imam Khomeini's wisdom and charisma raised hope among not only the Moslems of Iran and the world but also all the followers of monotheistic religions concerning the absolute truth that sovereignty belongs to God and establishing a state is the right of people. The Global epics beyond national borders and cultures that were founded upon religious faith flourished and became widespread inspired by the supreme teachings of Islam. Led by Imam Khomeini, the Islamic movement which is erected upon the divine wisdom of the Koran and aims at implementing the salvation of humankind succeeded in presenting the current world, overcome by abnormalities, a combination of republicanism and Islamism within one state. Imam Khomeini emphasized strictly that the whole essence of this newly established republic lay in its very naming, ie the Islamic Republic, not a word less and not a word more. This republic, he further elaborated, was the outcome of the slogan "Allah is the Greatest" chanted by the people during the Islamic Revolution and the blood of the faithful martyrs; therefore, all bore the first and foremost responsibility of preserving this republic. The amalgamation of theocracy and democracy demonstrates that a people's movement is based on religion and that religious movement is popular. The aforementioned amalgamation suggests that people in the remotest of lands enjoy a profound faith in God and it is reflected by all those who seek God and the ultimate truth. Hence, it offers an optimistic prospect of the extension of a theodemocratic state. The state's Islamism and republicanism is a unique combinatory example of the regime whose architect was Imam Khomeini in an attempt to revive and promote the real Mohammedan faith throughout the globe. Such an Islamic state is to be considered a gift of God to Imam Khomeini for his service to Him. The Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic left behind by Imam Khomeini should eternally remain under his name in the book of history.

Introduction

In an age which is the scene of the deterioration of all the moral fundamentals of society through both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and Moslems' religious beliefs, rites, and traditions were on their way towards extinction, the introduction and promotion of the norms of jihad within social life and the revival of religious sensitivity against immorality in Islamic countries turned into an inevitable reality. All future generations need to recognize this reality. Imam Khomeini raised hope within the hearts of not only the Moslems of Iran and the world but also all the followers of divine religions concerning the absolute truth that sovereignty belongs to God and establishing a state is the right of the people¹.

Democracy: Its Common Interpretation and the Need to Amalgamate It with Theocracy

The world in its current state is undergoing an era in which Humankind is held captive by the superpowers' propaganda; people are entangled with the most abominable of all trickery and machination. The powers exploit any form of philosophy and thought to their merely materialistic and perverted advantage harming the spiritual and supreme values that nations deserve. The most common and yet most regressive and outlandish interpretation of democracy in these times is being determined by these very powers, hence, this interpretation requires an in-depth investigation and an evolutionary revision. Adopting this approach, one can save democracy by complementing it with religion, in other words, the amalgamation of democracy and theocracy.

The implementation of God's decrees in the organization of people's state resulted in the spread of religious epics inspired by the supreme teachings of Islam which went beyond borders and cultures.

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The uprising of June 4th 1963 – though it turned into an extremely ugly bloodshed – was the fountainhead of the ever-increasing spread of Imam Khomeini's movement paving the way for the rapid spiritual and epical preparation of the Moslem nation and thereby guaranteeing their great victory. This victory which was the victory of a nation not acquainted with the tactics of warfare and without arms and troops against the most diabolic protégé of the superpowers in the region was an event that the whole world admitted.

Imam Khomeini succeeded in placing a bond between sovereignty and theism which was on the one side influenced by his own unique character in the potential of a divine sovereign and inspired by the godliness of the Islamic Revolution and its quest for truth on the other. The fruitful achievement of this struggle was a disruption of the superpowers' strategies and a panic within their protégés.

In actuality, Imam Khomeini designed the Islamic state as a rich culture to enhance humankind thereby guiding nations ideologically, morally, and practically and calling upon them to acquire cognition and defy injustice. Any form of abnormality such as sedition, rage, tumult, plunder, and deception are unjustifiable in this state and, hence, there would be no room for the hegemony of global satanic powers. Each and every single one of the colonial powers and their protégés were humiliated and proven worthless and weak by the sacred will of all those oppressed throughout history. The establishment of this state was the embodiment of the noble and previously suppressed authority of Islam spreading the word of God's ultimate supremacy to generations

of humans. Imam Khomeini set out his reign through compounding Islamic decrees with regulations required for administering a state emphasizing the importance of establishing a regime named the Islamic Republic based on observing religion and its objectives. He states, "Islamic decrees encompassing all economic, political, and legal laws are to be observed and practiced until the Hereafter This perpetual continuity of the decrees necessitates a state that would guarantee the credibility and policy of these decrees and assume the responsibility of implementing them; this very implementation can only be materialized through establishing an Islamic state."² He further continues, "To this end, structuring an Islamic state and government is the responsibility of all just Islamic jurists."³ And to make sure that Islam may not be misused and taken advantage of by subscribers of other beliefs and ideas, he elaborates, "The kind of Islam which does not serve the needs of the society and is of no use to the state is in reality an isolated form of Islam."⁴

On the subject of bonding religion with the assembly of Moslems, Alameh Tabatabayi writes, "Whilst in their heyday enjoying triumph after triumph, the Islamic assembly is obliged to implement religion not falling into diversity when it comes to observing religious fundamentals, at the same time, in days of despair and defeat, the Islamic assembly again must endeavor to revive religion and the word of God."⁵

A matter of concern here is the objectivity and existence of democracy and its extent of realization; in simple words, in which human society has democracy ever been established in its original concept as the government by the people and for the people? To answer this question, one needs to put away the theorists' hypotheses and obtain a realistic picture of an average society with citizens from all walks of life, be it active or inactive, layman or lettered, influential or desperate, delinquent or decent, living together naturally. Indubitably, every single person in this society would have a different character and, thus, a disparate understanding of one very concept. How can one procedure

acceptable to all these persons become common practice without the influence of miscellaneous mental attractions and desires? This approach demonstrates the impossibility of democracy with the objective of one unified procedure and notion since the laws and regulations adopted by various humans in a society and practiced by them would one way or another be incompatible with some of the ideas, trends, emotions, interpretations, and consciences of the people in that very same society.

This whole world is based on systematicity and justice in its creation and follows an evolutionary track in which it is compatible with regulations that bring about superior achievements in relation with the products of human mentality. The comprehensiveness and supremacy of the world reforms any sort of sensitivity and tension created through any trends of hegemony based on mere instinct, removes the contradictions existing among social classes in their struggle to rule over one another, calls upon sovereigns to observe their evolutionary task of equipping states run by people with political piety and austerity, innate purity, and justice based on human dignity. Imam Ali acknowledges people's general reform as a major objective⁶ securing the evolutionary unity of civil societies; the implication of Imam Ali's saying is that a state run by people requires the evolutionary aspect of a sovereign who is politically austere, that is a sovereign who enjoys a relationship with the one and only God as well as his relationship with the people.

In his well-quoted order to Malek Ashtar on the pious qualities of a statesperson, Imam Ali declares, "Do not hold the faintest of hesitation in that unless you succeed in correcting yourself, you shall never be able to correct and reform even one single human being let alone a society. Unless you cling on to God's endless glory, you shall never assess your own real self. Beware that nothing can deprive humankind of rationality and wisdom as much as arrogance and haughtiness. Miserable are the people of a society run by administrators deprived of rationality and wisdom; their lives are nothing but instrumental motion, instrumental will, and an

instrumental sense of reflection. Like their administrators, these people shall never experience a purposeful life."⁷

Elsewhere he says, "God Almighty has endowed you great honor by granting you Islam and allowing you from among all others to have the opportunity of becoming Moslems. The significance of this lies in the fact that the religion of Islam is synonymous with calmness and composure and is the dynamic origin of magnanimity and values. God Almighty has promulgated His path most clearly and revealed His guides' external knowledge which enlightens all and internal wisdom which proves most fruitful."⁸

Almighty God is the Ultimate Proprietor and humankind is merely His property. He rules and we are ruled. He is rich and we are poor. Dear He is and grants His blessings to us. It is He who appoints sovereigns their realms and power. He allows us His messengers and guides so that they lead us the way. He has sent us prophets with clear reasons and His word calls upon all to rise for justice.⁹

In Imam Ali's words, "If we were able to correct our relationship with God, He shall correct our relationship with people."¹⁰

Amidst incessant global propaganda which targeted at brainwashing individuals with skeptic and rigid mentalities and sought to unify human civilization employing all means, Imam Khomeini presented a model of a state run by people combined with religious thought and spoke of forming a noble state opposed to dialectical materialism. He introduced the attractive features derived from the sincere virtues and restrictions of life in a world overcome by quantitative attitudes and on the run from spirituality and called for structuring a world filled with true meanings and supreme human examples. Designing a state with educational, social, political, cognitive, ideological, and revolutionary dimensions in the framework of an austere uprising together with dignity, open-mindedness, piety, and esteem was in actuality good news of changing the principles governing the domains of unbridled states, good news of novel

horizons, good news of preventing bitter global catastrophes, and good news of a model of state adding "the decrees of God", ie the leading factor of life, to the two notions of "people" and "state" and objectifying humankind's advancement to the divine realm through the establishment and practice of this state.

In Robert D Lee's words, "Imam Khomeini employed the tradition of the Shiite faith in an attempt to relate velayeteh faqih (the rule of the Islamic jurisprudent) with the unfinished task of God's messengers and demonstrated how individualistic religious practices may be fulfilled in a collective setting, ie a strong government which would be led correctly securing the social requirements and circumstances."¹¹

Imam Khomeini's Objectives and Approach towards an Islamic State

Imam Khomeini elaborated on the material and spiritual objectives of the Islamic Revolution and state by arguing that, "Ever since its emergence, Islam has been an offender to the world's ruling regimes and has contained a specific social, economic, and political regime itself which has specific rules for all the aspects of personal and social life and it does not accept anything else for the salvation of the society."¹² He writes elsewhere, "The Holy Koran and Prophet Mohammed's tradition contain more decrees on state and politics compared to any other issue."¹³ He defended divine power and authority to reach a novel society not paying the least attention to achieving the honors and positions based upon the world's conventional political culture. He rejected the sovereignty of the affluent tycoons since they would be automatically tempted to become arrogant; rather, he repeatedly counted on the elite of dignity and epics to safeguard the achievements of the Islamic Revolution and establish worldwide unity within Islamic societies against the enemies. In the eyes of Imam Khomeini, the religion of Islam has a completely state-oriented nature and is extremely sensitive towards the states designed and constructed by human beings.

Imam Khomeini elaborated on the concept of revolution and the establishment of an Islamic state based on the jihad of the oppressed masses against the superpowers. The manner in which the vulnerable classes of the society voluntarily took part in the eight-year war against Iraq, the living conditions of the families of the martyrs and the war victims, and their graceful endurance under all pressures, problems, and deficiencies all confirm the expectations of Imam Khomeini.

Imam Khomeini had dedicated his heart and soul to contemplating Almighty God and his consideration of God had made him free from any deficiency. He would receive divine perfection and progress increasingly; this is why his status, practice, mentality, and discourse were different from those of other people. For him, there was nothing to be sought and observed in his sovereignty except God.

Imam Khomeini resuscitated the unending covert power lying within people – the power that oppressors never consider – and sparks of hope became thereby alight in the heart of the oppressed masses. The key to those successes lay in his resistance against various misleading and equivocal doctrines, trends, and waves. In his will which has both divine and political facets in one, he stresses that, "Islam and Islamic state are divine phenomena. Islam is an ideology which unlike its atheistic counterparts interferes with and monitors all personal, social, material, spiritual, cultural, political, economic, and military aspects and has not ignored one single point however trivial in training humans and society and material and spiritual progress. It has noted the obstacles and problems of perfection in society and for the individual and has contributed to removing them."¹⁴

He describes the overall and unending power of the Moslem nation of Iran, which was brought about by Almighty God's assistance in their struggle to form the Islamic state, as the people's adherence to divinity and considered it the reason for the comprehensiveness of the state, ie the state's Islamism.

On people's proximity with and distance from

Almighty God, Imam Khomeini explicated one verse from the Koran: "We are from God and to Him we shall return". He further argues that those who believe they are the emergence of God feel close to Him while those who are unable to conceive this truth become distant from Him.

Bearing in mind the Iranian nation's trust in God's infinite power, Imam Khomeini declared to the world that, "This nation shall continue going ahead like an ocean of waves and standing up invincibly against the superpowers and their worthless agents."¹⁵ At the same time, he opened the horizon for the Islamic nation, "You have been blessed with God Almighty's favor from the very beginning. As long as you maintain your stand – which God willing you will – Almighty God shall support you and you will remain strong."¹⁶

The mentality and practice of the sovereign of such a state is fundamentally distinct from those of others; the Islamic sovereign sees no event without observing Almighty God before, during, and after that event. In this way, the sovereign manages to understand the real essence of all issues and events with no impediments and perceive God's manifestations more and more through much contemplation on Him and His qualities. Reciprocally, the increasing success in understanding the real essence of events would significantly strengthen the sovereign's fondness of God.

On the Impact of Imam Khomeini's Character on the People's Divine Movement

The sense of commitment that religious sovereigns should hold so that they could lead people towards perfection and good is the most effective factor in the manifestation and activation of the divine nature bestowed on humankind. This is the greatest representation of the conscience and the embodiment of real divine advantages in human societies throughout their sovereignty.

Such a commitment signifies that religious sovereigns are primarily and continually after discovering the original realities and persistently abstain from trickery and lies thus adhering to

honesty and purification at all times in all ways.

Imam Khomeini, as the pioneer and leader of the Islamic nation and an eminent thinker in the path of purification, degraded material and physical pleasures. He always favored the promotion of thinking and profundity and precision of perception. This is how he had been able to obtain the power of establishing justice. The extent of his adherence to the path portray his success in walking that path since he kept utterly away from any instance of abnormality in his conduct and performance, such as

- * Rebellions which would be a defiance of one's position towards God.
- * Oppressing and corrupting the people of the land.
- * Turning away from God and engaging oneself with temptations.
- * Arrogance and considering oneself as somebody important before Almighty God and wishing to win a higher position than others.
- * Glorifying oneself and seeking a higher position than others which mean forgetting God.
- * Boasting about the abundance of one's wealth which means ignoring God.
- * Preventing others from gaining their financial rights.
- * Extravagant waste of money to reach fame and stardom.
- * Proud engagement with worldly affairs and forgetting the Hereafter.

On the other hand, Imam Khomeini's distinguished character and practice included such graceful norms as:

- * If all the lands and all the wealth of the world were put in his hands, he would continue considering God as the Ultimate Proprietor.
- * He would never accept oppressing and corrupting himself or others.
- * He considered everything and everyone including himself in favor of truth and sought kinship to truth.
- * He was thankful towards God and this he felt as the outcome of his certainty with divine success

and the successes in the way of God and his mystic confession of inability before God.

- * He was most modest since he knew that all power, glory, leadership, and cognition are examples of God's blessing, mercy, and generosity.
- * His generosity was such that he would be ready to give away all possessions.
- * He had the country and power in his hands but his heart was focused on praising God.
- * He abstained from forbidden acts and anything affiliated with those acts and was very serious in fulfilling divine obligatory duties and decrees.
- * His stability of character was such that he would be moderate and balanced in all material aspects of life.
- * He always surrendered to and contented with God's will since he kept his word with God and had given Him his soul and property¹⁷.

Those trained by Imam Khomeini had found a forerunner who would teach them the way of humanitarian life and salvation; they knew him as a responsible man who knew the traitors and had rejected them with eternal damnation and hatred.

Those trained by Imam Khomeini never gave up, felt weak, or groaned under the pressures they encountered in their struggle for God. They are the living examples of those who heed God's words and "fight in their struggle for God against those who fight them."¹⁸ In their struggle to defend and preserve the people's divine state, they sought no objective other than safeguarding the religion of God and coming out with flying colors in God's great test the result of which was the invigoration and continuity of the sacred Islamic state.

Those trained by Imam Khomeini were primarily the highly distinguished martyrs of the Revolution whose martyrdom struck the heads of the enemies of Islam as deadly weapons. Their relation with Imam Khomeini is analogous with that of Prophet Mohammed and his companions who, according to the Koran, set out to struggle and did not become weak under the pressure of troubles and turmoil in their struggle. Yet again, this relationship is reminiscent of that between Imam Ali and one of

his orators: on the day they were pledging allegiance to Imam Ali, he was overcome by sincere joy and ecstasy and told the Imam, "By accepting to lead Moslems, you gave a noble position to leadership and not the other way round. You raised the status of leadership; leadership did not raise your status."¹⁹

The state's Islamism and republicanism is a unique combinatory example of the regime whose architect was Imam Khomeini in an attempt to revive and promote the real Mohammedan faith throughout the globe. Such an Islamic state is to be considered a gift of God to Imam Khomeini for his service to Him. The Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic left behind by Imam Khomeini should eternally remain under his name in the book of history. It is now clear why Plato profoundly advocated the sovereignty of the wise stating that true philosophers should be chosen to rule²⁰.

It was to this end that Jean-Jacques Rousseau concluded in his final chapters of the rationale for democracy that, "An ultimately wise person is required to better discover the laws that serve nations. That person should be able to observe all human lust but not feel it himself/herself. S/he should have a thorough knowledge of nature but have no relationship with nature. His/her salvation should not be related to ours but s/he must be prepared to contribute to our salvation."²¹ He further adds, "According to what was said, only the gods can adopt appropriate laws for humans." By "the gods", he meant the representatives of God on earth. This is why he also writes, "The grand spirit of the legislator is the only miracle that can prove his/her heavenly task to the masses."²²

In conclusion, briefly, Imam Khomeini was the new architect of religion and the Islamic state and presented an objective model of the theodemocratic Islamic state thereby shedding light on the most prominent normative difference between a theocratic sovereign and a democratic sovereign within the framework of a state. He demonstrated

practically that the latter might do something that the former cannot and that is defying divine decrees.

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