

ECHO

of Islam

Special Issue for Imam Reza (AS) II



Austria	€ 4.50	Greece	€ 4.50	Lebanon	LL 7000	Qatar	QR 21.00	UAE	DH 21.00
Bahrain	BD 2.10	Iran	RIs 40000	Mexico	DH 36.00	S. Africa	R 26.00	UK	£2.80
Belgium	€ 4.50	Ireland	€ 4.50	Montenegro	DIN 240	Spain	€ 4.50	USA	\$5.00
Croatia	KN 22	Italy	€ 4.50	Morocco	DH 36.00	Tanzania	TSH 4700		
France	€ 4.50	Kenya	KSh 250.00	Nigeria	N 450	Tunisia	TD 3.70		
Germany	€ 4.50	Kuwait	KD 2.00	Oman	OR 2.10	Turkey	YTL 5.50		

INTRODUCTION

The International Festival of Imam Ridha (AS) is annually held in commemoration of Imam Ridha, Hazrat Masoomah's and Shah Cheragh birth anniversary during the Ten Days of Generosity (from the first till the eleventh of Dhu al-Qidah). The particular importance of this festival lies in the fact that each year researchers, thinkers, artists, and all the producers of sublime works try to promote the Razavi culture, teachings, and behavior.

A. The national thematic and specialized programs

The thematic programs defined in the International Festival of Imam Ridha (AS) include those programs developed by Provincial Offices of Culture and Islamic Guidance, universities, and other collaborating institutes and organizations in the framework of announcement, receiving the works, and selecting the winners. Currently, the specialized parts of the festival deal with scientific, cultural, artistic, journalistic, digital, children and teens, and cinema themes.

B. International programs

The programs developed for the international part of the festival enjoy the scientific and cultural capacity of thinkers and scholars who love the Eighth Imam across the world, having a scientific, cultural, and artistic approach.

C. General programs

The general programs of the International Festival of Imam Ridha(AS) are held around the country during the Ten Days of Generosity. Different groups of people and seventeen committees formed by institutions and public organizations also take part in the festival. The enforcement of these programs is supervised by the Organizing Council of the Ten-Day Celebration and fascinated by the cooperation of Supreme Council of Culture and Arts of Mosques and thirty other related cultural organizations in the country.

D. The programs of Dhu al-Qidah5, the day of commemorating the Imams' Decedents and the Holy Shrines

Commemorating the Imams' decedents as the cultural pillars of the society is one of the most important programs of the fifth day of Dhu al-Qidah in the cultural calendar of the country. Over the recent years, this program has been carried out in the framework of international conferences by Endowment and Charity Affairs Organization.

E. The programs of Dhu al-Qidah6, the day of commemorating Shah Cheragh

Based on the directive of the Supreme Council of Cul-

tural Revolution, the 6th of Dhu al-Qidah has been considered as the commemorating day of Ahmad Ibn Musa (Shah Cheragh). This program is chiefly held by the Holy Shrine of Hazrat Shah Cheragh in Shiraz and by the Organizing Council of the Ten-Day Celebration in other parts of the country.

F. The programs of Imam Ridha's Ghadamgahs in Vilayat Road

Commemorating Imam Ridha's Ghadamgahs in his way from Shalamcheh to Marv by promoting symbolic carnivals and special ceremonies is held in the provinces in this road and is greatly welcomed by people.

G. The Winners

One of the main achievements of the International Festival of Imam Ridha (AS) is recognizing the producers of sublime cultural and artistic works related to Razavi culture.

H. The Devotees of Razavi Culture

One of the programs of Imam Ridha (AS) is to introduce the devotees of Razavi culture. The Committee of Choosing the Devotees of Razavi Culture selects 16 scientific, cultural, and artistic figures having a significant contribution to Razavi culture in Iran and other countries, who are awarded the symbol of the festival.

I. The Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the International Imam Ridha (AS) Festival of Arts and Culture

The International Festival of Imam Ridha(AS) is held during the Ten Days of Generosity. It starts on the birth anniversary of Hazrat Masoomah in the Holy city of Qom and after being held in 31 provinces and many parts of the world, is finished at the night of Imam Ridha's birthday in the holy city of Mashhad

J. Publications

The Imam Ridha's International Festival of Arts and Culture has planned to publish sublime achievements in the realm of Razavi culture. The present book has been prepared by Islamic Culture and Communication Organization and Islamic Thought Foundation, which have always offered valuable services. We hope it can satisfy the Great God and the Holy Imam.

Seyed Javad Jafari

Managing Director of Imam Ridha (AS) International Foundation of Arts and Culture



No. 256, August 2016



Managing Director: Hamid Reza Azadi
azadi@itf.org.ir

Translator & Editor: Saeed Kalati

Editorial Board: Alireza Farsinejad,
Mina Vakilinejad, Saeed Kalati,
Fariba Rezazadeh, Hussain Khakpoor

Public Relations Manager:
Maryam Hamzelou

Art Director: Majid Ghasemi

Design: Karnic Advertising Agency
Fatemeh Ghasemi, Zahra Ghasemi

Magazine of ITF, P. O. Box:
14155-3899, Tehran,
Islamic Republic of Iran,
Tel: +9821-88897662-5,
Fax: +9821-88902725
Website: <http://www.itf.org.ir>
Email: Info@itf.org.ir

The Eighth Imam, Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha (AS)	4
Role and Effects of Imam Ridha's Cultural Management on the Shiite Society	9
Comparing Caliphate of Imam Ali, Imam Hussein, and Imam Ridha	17
Political Components in Imam Ridha's Lifestyle	20
Scientific and Ethical Principles of Razavi Debates	29
The Sanctity and Dignity of Woman in Family from the viewpoint of Imam Ridha (AS)	31

THE EIGHTH IMAM, ALI IBN MUSA AL-RIDHA (AS)

■ Mir Ali Tajeddini



Imam Ridha (AS) was born in Madina on 11th Zeeqaad 148 Hijri (1.1.766 AD) and died in the city of Tus, Iran, on 17th Safar 203 Hijri (26.5.819 AH). His period of Imamate was 20 years.

His grandfather, Imam Ja'far Al-sadiq (AS), died one month before the birth of Imam Ridha' (AS). The family must have been consoled by his birth which took place after such a great loss. Imam Ridha was brought up and instructed by his affectionate father under whose supervision he passed his boyhood and youth. He availed himself of the instructions of his learned father for thirty one years, till the later was taken to Baghdad to suffer the hardship of imprisonment for four years till his death.

Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (AS) could foresee that the hostile Abbasid ruler would not allow him to live peacefully and circumstances would take such a turn that his followers would not be able to see him or en-

quire about his successor prior to his death.

So, he felt the need to introduce his successor to his followers. He, therefore, Assembled seventeen prominent dignitaries from the descendants of Imam 'Ali (AS) and proclaimed that his son Ali Ibn Musa (AS) would succeed him.

He also wrote his will on which 60 respected elders of Madinah signed AS witnesses. Such elaborated arrangements were never made by any other Imam and they proved to be most appropriate due to the controversy about the Imamate which ensued after the death of Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (AS).

Imam Ridha (AS) was 35 years old when his father died in prison of Harun al-Rashid in Baghdad and the responsibilities of the Imamate devolved on him. At that time Harun Al-Rashid was the absolute ruler of Baghdad and the descendants of Imam Ali (AS) were passing AS ever, through trials and tribulations because of the tyranny of the Abbasid ruler.

After putting an end to the life of Imam Musa Ibn Jaa'far (AS) Harun al-Rashid lived for ten years. He had less tolerance for the existence of Imam Ridha. But he also knew that his Government had already lost face due to its prolonged maltreatment and eventual assassination of Imam Musa Ibn Ja'far (AS) or perhaps the tyrant felt the stings of conscience which kept him from

harassing the 8th Imam.

Still, Harun was antagonistic towards the Prophet's descendants and persisted in maltreatment of most of them in Madina. The local Governors of Madina who wished to please the ruler could not afford to be fair to Ahlul Bayt. People could not visit the Imam freely seek his knowledge, and he had little chance to teach his followers openly, for the eyes of the agents of Caliph focused unceasingly on the activities of the Imam.

Political wranglings in Baghdad between the two sons of Harun were rocking the Empire. His elder son Amin who had an Arab mother had the support of the Arabs and most of the Abbasid elders, while the younger son Mamun had a Persian mother and was sup-

ported by the Persians.

When Harun died in faraway Tus, the most northern town of his Persian Empire, Mamun was with him and buried him there. Amin in Baghdad immediately proclaimed himself the Caliph of the whole empire and immediately deposed Mamun from the rulership of the Persian Province. Mamun's main concern was to subdue the Persian province under any circumstances.

He realized that the majority of Persians favored the teachings of Ahlul Bayt and if somehow he could persuade the Imam of the Ahlul Bayt in Madina to side with him, he could confirm his rule there. Once he felt secure on that side of the Empire, he would then rise against his brother and easily depose him.

So the orders were sent out for the Imam to leave his home in Madina and go to the Abbasid ruler in faraway Tus. Imam, AS if by some miracle knew what was to come. So he left his wife and only son Muhammad Ibn 'Ali al Jawad, later known AS Imam Muhammad Taqi (AS) in Madina.

Imam's journey began from Madina to Makka where he performed the Umra, then he took almost the same route AS Imam Husayn (AS) took in 61 hijri towards Karbala. Half way through the hills of Hejaz when he crossed over to the desert of Najd his route changed to that of Imam Husayn (AS) and his caravan moved towards the eastern side and reached



Imam's journey began from Madina to Makka where he performed the Umra, then he took almost the same route AS Imam Husayn (AS) took in 61 hijri towards Karbala.





the town of Basra in the month of Shawwal.

After spending the Month of Muharram in Qum the Imam proceeded towards the northern part of Persia crossing the Alburz mountains to the town of Merv where Mamun had settled with his army to secure his empire for him.

It is thought in some historical circles that the 8th Imam involved himself in politics while his ancestors up to the 7th Imam after the martyrdom of Imam 'Ali (AS) refrained from this journey. Outwardly it looks like the Imam was abandoning the policy of his predecessors for the Imam could not be the

heir- apparent to the caliphate without becoming involved in the politics of the day.

Indeed if he had refused to proceed or shown any reluctance, force would surely have been used which would have been more humiliating for the Imam and his family.

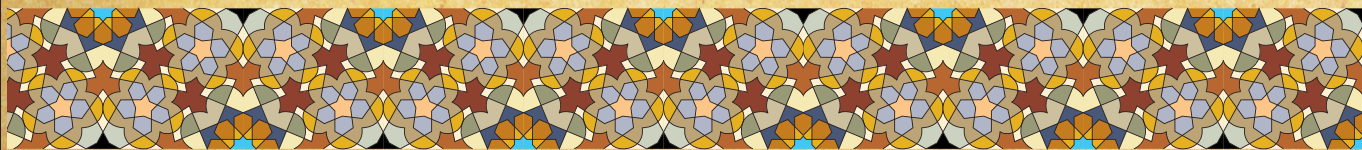
On his arrival in Merv, Mamun welcomed him with great ceremony and pomp. Mamun treated the Imam with great honor.

It is mentioned by various historians, Both of Shia and Sunni schools of thought, that when Mamun initially offered the Imam his throne, the Imam declined the offer firmly and reso-

lutely. After several attempts to bring the Imam to accept the offer failed, Mamun told him to accept the offer of being his heir- apparent to succeed him after Mamun's death.

Imam replied to this offer, "I will accept this to console you, but this will never happen for I will leave this world before you." Once Mamun achieved his desire to get the consent of the Imam as his successor, he declared this openly to all in order to see the reaction of the Abbasid clan who were favoring his half-brother Amin.

According to Yakubi it was on the 27th of Ramadan, in the year 201 Hijri that the Imam





was officially designated as Mamun’s “heir- apparent,”(Wali’ahd,) and the Imam’s name was included with his own on gold and silver coins. The inscription on these coins is well worthy of notice: “The King of God and the faith, Al-Mamun, Amir and Khalifa of the faithful, and Al-Ridha’, the Imam of the Muslims.”

He therefore took him by the hand and publicly acknowledged him AS his successor (Kulaini). He then gave his daughter Umme Habib in marriage. He also sent abroad the command that the wearing of black flags which was the symbol of Abbasid rule after the destruction of the Ummayyads, should be discontinued and that hereafter the use of green should be substituted. Green being the color of Ahlul Bayt and the House of ‘Ali (AS) was the order of the day.

Once this story of succession was announced Mamun’s political ambition was achieved. He secured the help of the Persians fully behind him. With their help his army invaded the capital of the Abbasid empire, Baghdad, Amin was killed and his head was sent to Mamun to see for himself that he had become the sole ruler of the Abbasid Empire.

But Mamun was still not secure on his throne. The Arab party who sided with Amin, never liked the appointment of Imam ‘Ali al- Ridha’ (AS) AS the successor of Mamun, no matter how dubious it looked to them on the face of it.

The chiefs of the Abbasid family in Iraq perceived that by this appointment the principal authority in the empire would very likely be taken from them. They got together, therefore, and proclaimed that for bequeathing the Caliphate after his death to the Imam ‘Ali Al-Ridha’ (AS), who was not their immediate family, Mamun himself was declared deposed.

They swore allegiance to Ibrahim al Mehdi, Mamun’s uncle as their new caliph. This proclamation took place on the 5th of Muharram 202 Hijri.

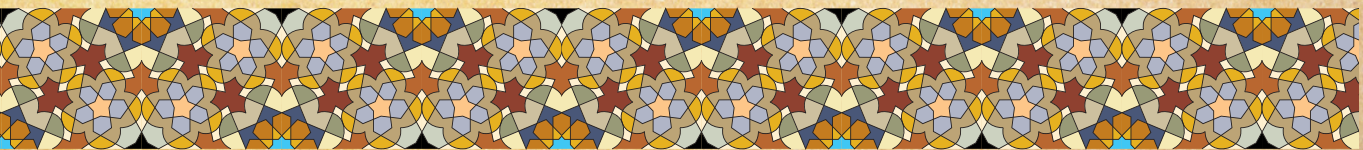
While Imam Ridha was with Mamun in Merv, his Prime Minister Fadl ibn Sahl arranged a conference on religions to which he invited the leaders of different sects, including Zoroastrians and Christians and Jews, that they might hear what the Imam of the Ahlul Bayt had to say to impress them of their spiritual abilities and excellences.

It was in these discussions with leaders of other faiths that the Imam clarified the position of sinlessness of the Prophets and of the guided Imams. These conferences were so successful that at one stage Mamun was fearful of the increasing influences of the Imam on the people as a whole.

In one such incidence on the occasion of the Eidul Fitr, the whole strategy of Mamun and the sheer hypocrisy of the drama he was playing was exposed. He had asked the Imam to lead the Eidul Fitr prayers



Once this story of succession was announced Mamun’s political ambition was achieved.



at the end of Ramadan that year. First the Imam declined, but when Mamun insisted, he agreed on the condition that he will direct the occasion as he would deem fit.

On the morning of the Eidul Fitr, when the military and civil leaders assembled outside the door of the Imam to come out and lead the prayers, they saw the Imam come out of the house bare foot, wearing a white shirt and white headgear. Imam also advised his companions to follow him in the same manner. He came out on the Road to the mosque outside the city of Merv.

All the citizens who saw the Imam in this fashion copied him and all walked barefoot. Even the military chiefs and civil judges walked bare foot. A huge crowd followed the Imam. He was saying Takbir loudly and all were following him and shouting Takbir (God is great.)

The situation became so tense that when Mamun was informed of this huge following of the Imam he immediately sent a request to the Imam to withdraw from leading the Eid prayers. Imam withdrew and it was a great show down for the Emperor and exposed his trickery to the full.

It was after about a year's stay of the Imam in Merv that Mamun decided to do something about the situation in Iraq. He knew that his uncle Ibrahim al Mehdi had been proclaimed as Caliph there in his place. This was a thorn in

his heart.

He decided that it was time for him to return from Khorasan and assert his rights in person. He had already strengthened his position due to the help of the Persians. With a huge army beside him Mamun prepared his journey back home.

He was accompanied, as Yakubi mentions it in his history, by Imam al Ridha' (as) as his heir apparent and by his prime minister Fadl ibn Sahl, who was known as the holder of two offices, civil and military, being the Prime Minister as well as the chief of the Army.

But when they reached the town of Sarakhs, Fadl ibn Sahl was assassinated in his bath by two persons, Ghalib al Rumi and Sarraj al Khadim. They

were found out by Mamun who immediately put them to death immediately that if there was any implication of Mamun in this murder it should not be exposed.

Mamun had his suspicions about his Prime Minister who was secretly gaining favor with the Abbasids in Baghdad. Historians did mention the name of Mamun in disposing off Fadhl ibn Sahl.

Within two days of this murder when the army reached the town of Tus, Imam Ridha' fell ill and died within three days of his illness. Yakubi reported that "his sickness was no more than three days and it was reported that Ibn Hisham, Mamun's favorite henchman had given the Imam poison which caused his death.

He mixed poison in grapes and when Imam had eaten the grapes he became ill in the same manner as Imam Hasan did and died within three days".

Imam 'Ali Ridha' (as) died and was buried far off from Madina, the home of his forefathers of the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet. In Sanabad, about a mile from the village where he died, they placed him in a grave inside the tomb of Harun al- Rashid who was buried there ten years ago.

Source: Al. Islam

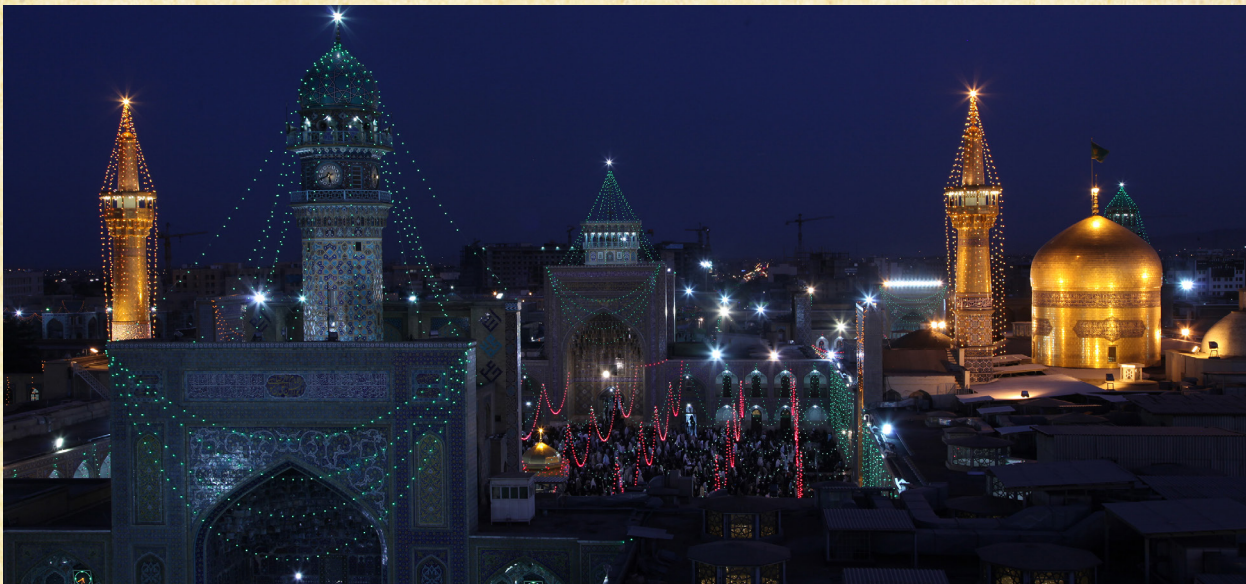


Green being the color of Ahlul Bayt and the House of 'Ali (AS) was the order of the day.



ROLE AND EFFECTS OF IMAM RIDHA'S CULTURAL MANAGEMENT ON THE SHIITE SOCIETY

Hussein Khakpour and Marzieh Mahumdi



In Islam, cultural management refers to training people based on Quranic and Ahlul Bayt's ideals. According to the Shiism insight, the necessity and importance of the management must be sought after in the great principle of Imamah. In Imam Ridha's era, especially his heir apparent issue, provided an opportunity by which he revived the half-dead body of Shiism and pure Islam through cultural management.

This paper tries to consider certain items of the cultural

management in Imam's life: role of Holy Quran and Ahlul Bayt in escalating mankind position in his society, reviving the Holy Prophet's tradition and Infallible Imams, explaining and establishing of Imamah principle, growth and development, organizing, protection and guidance, illumination, insight generation, etc.

Management is so important for God that God swears at "And those who govern the event" (An-Naziat/ 5) in Quran. Imam Ridha (AS) played a

very vital role in development and excellence of the Shiism culture. He was forced by Mamun to accept Crown Prince position which was associated with an opportunity for followers of other religions to promote their thoughts and question Islam.

Although Imam accepted this position and journey from Hijaz to Iran reluctantly, it is considered as one of aspects of Imam's cultural management, because if Imam's journey was covert and without public



announcement of the Government, its promotional and informative aspect would be weak, perhaps very small number of close Shiites would be aware of Imam's presence in the cities in his way to Marv. However, this journey and immigration to Khorasan was done while it has been planned by the government and since the government intended to take political advantages of this immigration, it has invested considerably in its promotional aspect. Imam started to promote Islamic concept and doctrines



Management's necessity must be sought after in the Imamah principle.



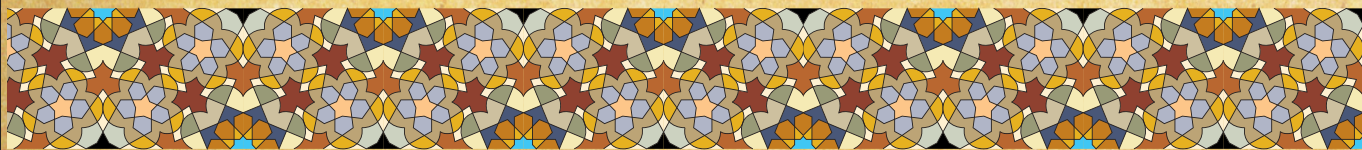
through active participation in debates and scientific discussions and also played an active role in confronting with doubts and nullifying the wrong opinions and attracting attentions of other schools' scholars; in practice, Imam promoted intellectual thoughts of Shiism through intellectual and cultural management.

The wise management of Imam Ridha (AS) escalated the position of both Quran and l'trat (the prophet's household) in the society; he also explained and described the important principle of Imamah through reviving the real Islam on the one hand and helped development and improvement of cultural and scientific growth of Shiism School in his time.

While organizing Shiite beliefs, Imam escalated theological principles of Shiism and protected Shiites against deviation and damages.

CONCEPTS Management

Management, in particular, means governing and running an organization towards a pre-defined and certain purpose (Nilipour, 2011, vol. 1: 153). In other words, management refers to working with others and using the limited resources, as best as possible, to materialize the organizational targets (Ahmadi, 2003: 16). However, management, in general, includes guiding and governing a society. Here, in this paper, we refer to management concept in its gen-





eral meaning. In Islamic references, Imamah and Wilayah have been used as equals for management (Nilipour, 2011, vol. 1: 153). Thus, in the light of Imamah principle, management means governing a society based on holy Quran and the Holy Prophet's Sunnah (Tradition) and also leading the society to the perfection (Alvani, 1995: 36).

CULTURE

In Persian language, "culture" is an extensive terms indicating the concept of decorum, wisdom or art, etc. (Naini, 2010: 27). Culture, in light of its popular meaning, refers to lifestyles people living in a society learn, participate and hand down from a generation to another (Cohen, 2009: 72). Survival of a society depends on maintenance, establishment, refining, transferring and promoting the culture (Haji Deh Abadi, 2006: 19).

Cultural Management

Islamic cultural management

means training people based on Quran and Ahlul Bayt ideals (Nilipour, 2011. Vol. 1: 29). Islam considers a very splendid and important position for leadership and management and introduces it as one of the most fundamental principles of a society and Islam. According to the Shiite perspective, management's necessity must be sought after in the Imamah principle. Imamah in a Muslim society is legitimate because it is related to Imamah and whenever it is cut, all other movement will lose their essence (Taghavi Dameghani, 1989: 51).

Escalating Role of Imam

The holy prophet has state, in the Thaghalayin Hadith, that the sole way of rescue is relying on Quran and Itrat; however, after demise of the great prophet of Islam Itrat was ignored practically by the rulers and Quran also took a marginal role; but Imam Ridha (AS) revived and escalated them once more.

Escalation of Quran Position

In Radhavi school is considered as the revelation and the most original resource of recognizing religious facts and epistemological and theological concepts. Imam Ridha (AS) reminded the Quran's great position through various ways. Imam refers numerously to Quranic verses, either in his debates or in other scientific discussions, in order to demonstrate his remarks on establishing the great position of Quran and used to introduce the Quran's speech unquestionable. However, referring to Quran in debates is possible when the other side is Muslim and believes in legitimacy of Quran; Imam used to refer to intellectual reasons and other resources when his opponent in the debate was a non-Muslim scholar.

Reflecting on Quran Verses

Moreover, Imam Ridha (AS) advised Shiites to recite and reflect on the Quran. Imam Ridha (AS) was asked about his idea about Quran, Imam said, "Quran is the Almighty God's words, don't trespass it, follow its instructions and use it as a sun to find your right way, because if you use other resource or book but Quran you will lose your way (Ibn Baboyeh, 1997: 546). Imam used to document his words with Quran verses (Tabarsi, 2011: 438; Arbali, 2003: vol. 3: 56).

Reviewing the Itrat's Position

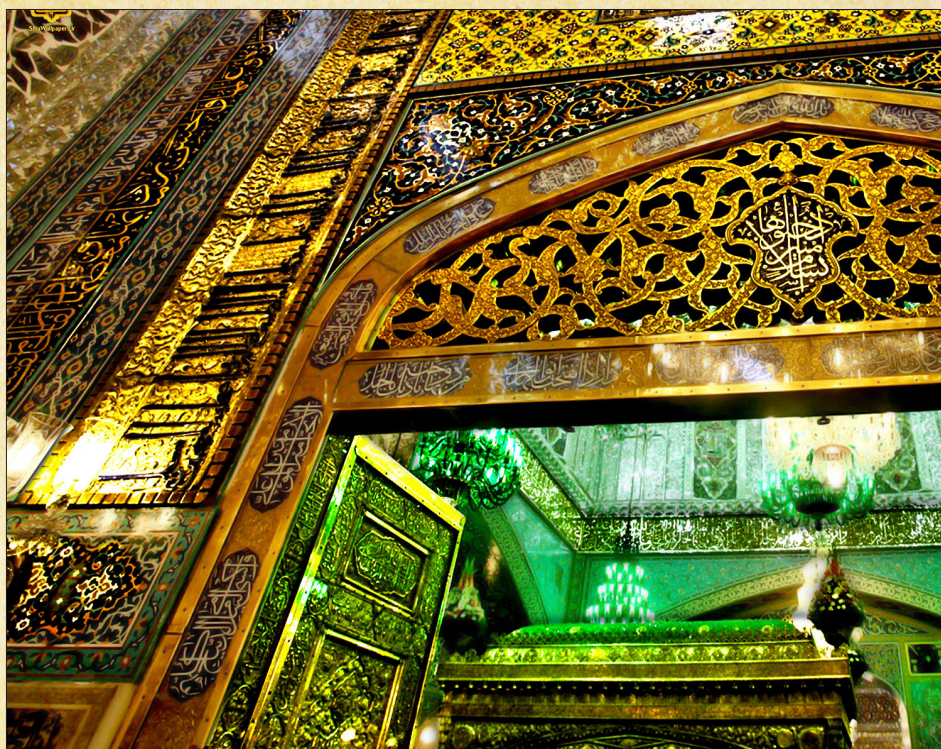
Imam Ridha used to seize any opportunity to define and demonstrate the great position of Itrat for people. Imam says: "Imam's are the Almighty God's caliphs on the earth" (Koleini, 1990, vol. 1: 275). Imam refers to Ahlul Bayt's Imamah as an indispensable concept and emphasizes the divine caliph position of Imam. Imam Ridha (AS) defined Imam a mean to revive Salat, Zakat and Hajj (ibid, Ibn Babouyeh, 1997: 676).

Reviving Role

Imam Ridha (AS) used to seize any opportunity to revive the Holy Prophet and Infallible Imams tradition in order to refine all deviations made and imposed by the time rulers in the society. For example, when Mamun ordered him to say the Eid al-Fitr's prayers, Imam initially denied, but when Mamun insisted, Imam accepted to do so on one condition: to say prayers as the Prophet and Imam Ali (AS) used to say prayers and Mamun accepted this condition. So, Imam and his close companions walked in the city barefoot, it made the Fazl bin Sahl to feel danger and asked Mamun to order Imam to return (Masoudi, 1983: 397-396; Ghetal Shirazi, 1987: 373-374; Mofid, Bita. Vol. 2: 256-257). It clearly shows how much Imam was determined to revive the original Islam.

Explanatory and Establishing Role

Without doubt, Imamah has the most pivotal role and posi-



tion in the theological thought of Shiism. Believing in "immunity against sins" on the one hand and the role Shiism considers for the spiritual position of Imam, i.e. the exclusive religious leadership, indicates how important that position was (Muhammadzadeh, 2009: 453). Insisting Imam's purity and infallibility indicates efforts made to match the leadership qualities with the holy prophet's qualities and it also shows maintenance of dignity of the society's leaders.

There was disputation on successor and Imamah between Muslims since the Prophet's demise. The ruling powers and the greedy one inflamed such disputes and as a result the Islam's Ummah was dispersed and divided into vari-

ous denominations. The most important denominations of Islam are Sunni, who believe in caliphate of four caliphs after demise of the Holy Prophet and Shia who believe in Imamah and think that it was Imam Ali (AS) and his offspring who was entitled to be successor of the holy prophet. Each of these denominations have reasons to demonstrate their legitimacy. However, the Ahlul Bayt's reasons are relied on clear traditions handed down from the holy prophet.

With regard to various intellectual current in Imam Ridha's time, the main difference was between Shiism and other Islamic sects and denominations and Shiite Imamah was among the most important issues on which they had different view-



points. Understanding the fact, Imam Ridha (AS) started to introduce and promote the Shiite Imamah and cleared the great dignity and position of Imams as complete as possible. As the result of all cultural efforts and activities taken by Imam the Imamah's position institutionalized in the shia thought. Hence, it is one of important fruits and results of Imam Ridha's cultural management.

Not only as a religious and moral leader of a certain group, but also as someone who was expert in presenting Imamah and Wilayah principle, Imam Ridha (AS) started to analyze and examine all covert and overt angles and aspects of leadership principle in the Shia thinking and school. He used any opportunity to answer questions and doubts raised about Imamah and Wilayah of Imams, as people considered him and his words as the criterion and standard to find something right and true.

It is worthy to say that a great part of Imam Ridha's mission (AS), like other Imams of Shia, was promoting and describing Imamah. Imam Ridha (AS) was in a condition in which he had to negate the time's rulers and to introduce himself as the real authority who can lead people to bliss and resumption. Sometimes, Imam did not restrict himself to just demonstrate his right to be Imam, but he enumerate the righteous former Imams and his ancestors. There are many narratives which illustrate and indicate

this fact. According to these narratives the precondition of monotheism is Imamah. As the result of Imam's efforts and endeavors, Imamah became the most important principle in Shiism doctrine.

After Imam Sadiq (AS), growth and development in all aspects owes to Imam Ridha's thought and management.

Cultural and scientific growth of Islamic civilization and Shiism

Improvement of cultural and scientific level of the Muslim society is one of important results of Imam Ridha's cultural management, the important position of Science and knowledge, among other civilization maker aspects and elements, is clear and its effective role in formation and continuance of the human civilization is not doubtful. The close relationship between science and Islamic culture and civilization is obvious in his era. However, despite Islam's efforts to train scientists and scholars, Muslims' incentives were not strong because of some social and political obstacles during the first and second centuries of Islam's history. However, relying on his wise tactics, Imam found his way to promote science and culture in the Muslim, especially Shia, society. Here we point to some of them:

Refining Muslims' view to religion, science and Shiite principles

Because of various jurisprudential and theological schools,

Imamah is one of important fruits and results of Imam Ridha's cultural management.

the years before Imam Ridha (AS) has become an arena for deviated thoughts including deviations caused by translation of foreign books which had targeted the original religious beliefs. The most optimal and wise measure in this situation is promotion of the religious culture and the original Islamic beliefs through offering ways to differentiate right from wrong and in fact an epistemological

During he was Crown Prince of Mamun, many cultural and political incidents occurred as Imam's popularity grew very quickly; as some suggest that Imam's immigration from Medina to Khorasan was not very effective, but if we consider and analyze this movement we will find out that it was very useful and fruitful for Shias.

In general, in these three years of political and cultural revo-

lutions and confessed on the weakness of their beliefs. Many Sunni scholars were astonished from hearing Imam's answers (see: Ibn Baboyeh, 1398 AH, 420-27; Tabarsi, 1403 AH, vol. 2: 416-421, etc.) and such measures strengthened and empowered the Shia culture.

Education along with Guidance

Apparently, Mamun confirmed



activity on the popular beliefs in order to demonstrate the righteous beliefs of Imam Ridha (AS). Imam used to go to centers of these deviated thoughts including Basra, Kufa and to discuss with their scholars (Mortezavi, 1996: 28-30).

During his stay in Marv, the scientific and administrative center of Khorasan, Imam spared no efforts to improve and escalate thinking and beliefs of people of Khorasan.

lution Imam conducted some deep and extensive activities for Shias, which, after Imam Sadiq's scientific movement, are unique in the Shia's history. This Cultural Revolution determined the original principles of Shiism in the highest level. The debate sessions, held by Mamun, in which Imam discussed with Muslim and non-Muslim scholars were very useful. Many materialistic scholars became convinced by Imam's

and encouraged Imam to express and promote the Shiism principles. In this era, when Mamun, as the most knowledgeable Abbasid caliph, took power, a good condition was provided for improving scientific level of the society. In this time, Imam followed two agenda: guiding and leading the mass and moving them towards what Quran and Itrat say on the one hand and training people and making the inter-

ested in science and fighting against various sorts of doubts, which finally they promoted and improved cultural principles of Shiism thinking.

Pervasive Growth of all Sciences

It is necessary to consider that the sciences taught in the Imam Ridha's school were beyond the Shiism. For example, promotion and growth of Medicine during Imam's lifetime can



There was disputation on successor and Imamah between Muslims since the Prophet's demise.



be considered as one of features of this time. Imam play a key role in development and promotion of Medicine in this time, as he has very important pamphlets on this regard: Dhabia Risala and it encouraged the Abbasid rulers to convince people on researching in this issue and they made many measures as well.

Likewise, the Theology was another science which has been considered and various discussions by different theo-

gists were posed in defense of their beliefs, which in turn encouraged people to research and study more on theological issues. Although, various sects, which suffered from belief deviations and spared no effort to demonstrate their false claims, were formed and developed in this epoch of Islam history, the fundamental role of Imam Ridha and his companions and pupils to nullify and undermine intellectual and discursive principles of these sects and reveal their deviations for people.

Development of a proper scientific space

Speaking about Imam Ridha's (AS) role in promotion and development of Islamic principles and concepts, we should not restrict ourselves to just say that Imam Ridha (AS) trained many great scholars on various sciences; because it shows a simple perception on his cultural management. Imam's major role in science development was forming and developing a proper scientific to offer opposite theories and thoughts and strengthening the speech freedom in the society. Therefore, both third and fourth centuries were accompanied with culmination of the Islamic civilization in three cultural, scientific and industrial and technological dimensions.

Promotion of Shiism in Imam Ridha's Time

Development and promotion of Shiism is another important consequence of Imam Ridha's

cultural management. Although Ashura Tragedy somehow affected public opinion, especially shia, and attracted them towards Ahlul Bayt (AS). Imam Sajjad, Imam Baghir, Imam Sadigh conducted very important cultural activities in order to promote Shiite principles and doctrine. Imam Kazim (AS), despite passed most years of his life in Abbasid jails, seized any opportunity to promote Shiism culture; however, the Umayyad and Abbasid's propaganda against Shiism was very strong and extensive, as Shias had no room to promote their thinking explicitly. These governments fought against Shiism in political and social arenas. In culture front, they used to distort and counterfeit Ahadith in order to deface Shiism.

During Imam Ridha's lifetime, there was an opportunity, i.e. introducing Imam as the Mamun's crown prince, which let Shias to act and work more freely than before.

The Shiite society grew in Imam Ridha's time in most parts of the Abbasid territory, especially in Khorasan. If we return to the past era, we will see that development of Shiism depended on several factors such as dispatching missionaries to various parts of Khorasan who were tasked with making people familiar with the true current of Imamah. Another factor which helped promotion of Shiism in Khorasan was Abbasid missionaries who worked in this area under the slogan of AL-REZA Min Aale Muhama-



md, (Ridha Son of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

According to the authenticated and valid historical resources, Shiism was developed not only in Khorasan, but also in Medina, Kufa, Baghdad and Qom in Imam Ridha's time (Ibn ShahrAshub Mazandarani, 1405 AH, vol. 4; 220). For this reason, Imam Ridha moved to Marv from Basra route instead of the main route in which there was main Shia cities such as Kufa and Qom. In general, Shias enjoyed a relative convenience during Imam Ridha's Imamah.

Conclusion

Relying on cultural management, Imam Ridha revived the semi-dead body of Shiism, which after Imam Sadiq's scientific movement is unique and



Development and promotion of Shiism is another important consequence of Imam Ridha's cultural management.



unprecedented in the Shiism history, the role and influence of this cultural revolution can be considered in several areas such as the reviving role of Imam Ridha to revive the pure and real Islam, Quran and Alavid traditions, Imam explained

the most pivotal factor of Shiism, i.e. Imamah, and established it in Muslims' thoughts, Imam improved cultural and scientific level of the society, Imam refined and improved Muslims' viewpoints and perspectives and developed all sciences and provided a proper scientific space.

Moreover, Imam's certain style to discourse and dialogue was very important as it helped Imam to solve many cultural problems of his society.

References

- Holy Quran;
 Iban Babouyeh, Muhammad Bin Ali, (1993). Uyun al-Akhbar al-Reza. Trans. Hamid Reza Mostafid and Ali Akbar Ghaffari. Tehran: Saduq;
 Iban Babouyeh, Muhammad Bin Ali, (1997). ALamali. Trans. Muhammad Bagher Kamarehi. Tehran: Ketabchi;
 Iban Babouyeh, Muhammad Bin Ali, (2003), Alkhisal. Trans. Yaghub Jafari, Qom: Nasime Kuthar;
 Iban Babouyeh, Muhammad Bin Ali, (2006), Illalol Sharaye. Qom: Modaresin;
 Iban Babouyeh, Muhammad Bin Ali, (1398 AH), Altowhid, Trans. Hashem Hussein, Qom: Jameh Modaresin;
 Iban Babouyeh, Muhammad Bin Ali, (1403 AH). Maani al-Akhbar. Trans. Ali Akbar Ghaffari. Qom;
 Iban Babouyeh, Muhammad Bin Ali, (1414 AH). Itighadat allmama. Second Edition. Qom;
 Ibn Share Asub Mazandarani, Muhamamd bin Ali, (1405 AH). Managhrib Aale Abi Talib. Beirut;
 Arabali, Ali bin Eisa, (2003). Kashful Ghameh. Trans. Ali bin Hussein Zavarei, third edition. Tehran;
 Tabarsi, Ahmad bin Ali. (1403 AH) Al-ihitijaj ala ahlol Hojaj. Muhammad Baghir Khorsani.

COMPARING CALIPHATE OF IMAM ALI, IMAM HUSSEIN, AND IMAM RIDHA

Mina Vakilinejad



The subject of caliphate of infallible Imams (AS) is a complicated and important issue, which has always been regarded as a priority by religious scholars and thinkers. However, it is still unclear and also there are many questions concerning this issue. Acknowledgement of the caliphate by two Shiite Imams has been

certainly proven by virtue of documents and historical literature. In both cases, they had refused the caliphate first, but then they acknowledged it reluctantly. The first case is Imam Ali (AS), who acknowledged the caliphate by in response to people's insistence, while the second case, Imam Ridha (AS), refused to acknowledge

caliphate, but eventually he agreed to be the heir apparent of Al-Mamun after pressures imposed by al-Ma'mun. Imam accepted to be his heir apparent on several conditions. There are some important points regarding the two cases that will be discussed later in this article.

As you know, on the other hand, one of the infallible Imams of Shiism, Imam Hussein (AS) rose up against the oppressor ruler of His time, Yazid; the difference of his movement with strategies taken by two above-mentioned Imams needs to be considered here.

Imam Ridha (AS), the Heir Apparent

Concerning the issue of Imam Ridha's heir apparent, there are either or ambiguous items, which both will be considered here:

The clear items:

1. There is no doubt that al-Ma'mun has offered Imam Ridha (AS) to be caliphate and has declared his intent of this suggestion.

2. There is no doubt that the Imam had refused al-Ma'mun's proposition.

3. Definitely, after refusal al-Mamun's proposition by the Imam (AS) to be caliphate, al-Ma'mun asked Imam Ridha (AS) to be his heir apparent.

4. There is no doubt that Imam Ridha (AS) also accepted to be his heir apparent by defining some conditions.

There are some items which



are not certain and most of the Shiite scholars dispute about them:

1. Why al-Ma'mun offered such proposition to the Imam and whether his intention was malicious?
2. Why the Imam (AS) did not accept proposition of caliphate?
3. Why Imam Ridha (AS) finally accepted to be al-mamun's heir apparent?
4. Whether Imam Ridha (AS) was martyred by poisonous grapes or al-Ma'mun did not play any role in Imam's martyrdom?

There are two theories for the first case:

First theory: Seyed Ibn Tavoos and Arbeli, his student, believe that al-Ma'mun was serious in his intention and truly decided

to delegate the power to Imam Ridha (AS).

Second theory: most Shiite clerics believe that Ma'mun had no good intention and he had other motives.

Confirmations of the second theory (popular theory):

Raja ibn Abi Zahhak was the al-Ma'mun's agent who was tasked with taking Imam Ridha (AS) from Medina to Khorasan. In the midst of the way, some of the Imam's companions offered to kill him, but Imam Ridha (AS) refused and said you want to kill a believer (Abi Zahhak) instead of an unbeliever (AL-Ma'mun) and this implies that according to Imam, al-Ma'mun was an unbeliever and infidel man.

When they wanted to take Imam from Medina to Khorasan, initially he visited the grave of his ancestor, the prophet (PBUH), and said that I would die in seclusion and I will never see my household in Medina.

When al-Ma'mun found that it is useless to insist and the Imam Ridha (AS) do not accept to be his heir apparent, he threatened to kill Imam, and it is clear that if al-Ma'mun had a good intention, he should not threaten to kill the Imam.

When Imam Ridha (AS) accepted to be al-Mamun's heir apparent, people came to visit and say congratulations to him, but Imam said to some of his close companions that congratulations are unnecessary, because this story does not have a happy ending.

When some of Imam Ridha's companions asked him about why he accepted to be al-Ma'mun's heir apparent, he answered them that he had to accept it; otherwise al-Ma'mun would kill him.

If al-Ma'mun was really honest in his intention, Imam should accept to be his heir apparent, because the caliphate was the inalienable right of Imams (AS).

If al-Ma'mun was really honest in his intention, why he finally martyred Imam Ridha (AS) by the poisonous grapes?

Why did Imam Ridha (AS) refuse to accept the power?

The interesting point is that some people asked Imam Ridha (AS) about why he has accepted to be al-Ma'mun's heir apparent, but nobody asked him about why he did not accept the power. This shows that nobody had any doubt in this case, because if it was ambiguous, they should ask about it, as though it was clear to all that Imam should not accept it. However, this question comes to mind that why people knew why Imam should not accept taking the power. Al-Ma'mun asked Imam about this matter and Imam said that I do not accept to take the power because I do not have the power to govern the people.

Why Imam Ali (AS) Refused to be Muslims Caliph At First

There are some points that must be carefully considered:
1) Asking Imam Ali (AS) for

the first time to be Muslim's caliph.

2) Imam's denial to accept the caliphate and the reasons Imam proposed for this denial.

3) Acceptance of caliphate after insistence of a lot of people, and the reason he proposed for this acceptance.

The movement of Imam Hussein (AS):

There is a serious and important question on Ashura Rising, which asks why Imam Hussein (AS) arose against Yazid? Because regarding the special character and features of Imam Hussein (AS), it was impossible that people remain faithful to Imam Hussein and, more importantly, if Imam Hussein could establish a regime, he certainly used to rule like his father, Imam Ali (AS), so, he would face same problems his father experienced.



The interesting point is that some people asked Imam Ridha (AS) about why he has accepted to be al-Ma'mun's heir apparent, but nobody asked him about why he did not accept the power



Conclusion

Imam Ali's (AS) refusal to accept caliphate was not a "political gesture". He knew that people could not tolerate the justice and fair government and he will face a new conspiracy every day, as he faced those after accepting the caliphate.

When he saw people's insistence to swear allegiance, he had no choice but to accept the caliphate; Otherwise, the question that why the Prophet's successor abandoned people would remain unanswered through the history.

The reason of why Imam Ali (AS) refused the caliphate uncovered the reason of why Imam Ridha's (AS) refused to accept to take the power. Imam could not accept the caliphate because he wanted to serve the justice, and the first one who should be judged was al-Ma'mun himself, because he had killed so many innocent people. And if he did not seeking for justice, it was obvious that his manner was in the conflict with his ancestor's manner and many verses of the Quran.

People asked insistently Imam Ali (AS) to accept the caliphate and al-Ma'mun had suggested Imam Ridha (AS) to accept the caliphate, but both of them refused to accept the caliphate for some reasons. If Imam Hussein had that reasons to refuse the acceptance of the caliphate, he did not initiate a movement against Yazid to form a government.

POLITICAL COMPONENTS IN IMAM RIDHA'S LIFESTYLE

Jalal Derakhsheh and Seyed Muhammad Mahdi Husseini Faegh



Imamah is one of the most original and important belief principles of Shiism and makes up its political thinking's base. Thus, directing the society, based on the Infallible Imam's viewpoints and attitudes, to reach individual and social bliss and happiness has been emphasized in the Shiism's belief literature. In the same direction, extraction of political components is among the fundamental imperatives which must be considered before reaching such bliss.

This article tries to analyze

political components of Imam Ridha (AS), which are rooted in the revelational principles and must be considered as a basis to adjust social and political relations of a society, through scrutinizing his biography and lifestyle. The results of this study will show that the politics, in Imam Ridha's lifestyle, covers some certain principles such as rejecting sovereignty of tyrant and forbidding any cooperation with oppressors, prudent dissimulation, expediency, negative fight along with other political practical considerations.

Prelude

Years of Imam Ridha's (AS) Imamah are treated as very sensitive era in Shiism's political history. Many years after Imam Ali's government, Shiites finally found themselves in a situation in which the time caliph proposed caliphate and primogeniture to the Imam. Imam Ridha's (AS) positions against this proposition include lessons on the Shiism political thinking. Imam's positions and approach in facing with three Abbasid caliphs, Harun, Amin and Mamun, implies the fact that Imamah strategy is

a unified strategy and apparent differences in infallible Imams' lifestyle is due to applying different tools and means.

In this regard, we need to consider Imam's positions against political issues before and after becoming the heir apparent. In fact, his lifestyle makes it clear that Shiism political thoughts are arranged based on the Infallible Imam's sovereignty and it is just him that can organize the sovereignty and direct the Ummah to the right way. It must be noted that the political thinking of Shiism never has been silent, even when the Infallible Imam has not been the main decision maker of the society for reasons, but it has proposed solutions whose main feature was temporality and tentativeness and dealing with them does not mean that the fixed and principal positions must be undermined or weakened; because Shiism has some consistent and stable principles on governance and politics and always waits for an ideal government. In analyzing various political components in Imam Ridha's biography, it must be considered that taking apparently different positions in various caliphs' (Harun, Amin and Mamun) eras has been made for a general strategy, Imamah strategy.

Theoretical Issues

Political Thinking

Referring to jurisprudential, theological (Kalami) and traditional (Hadithi) issues along with the political issues is unavoidable when one deals with

the political lifestyle of Infallible Imams. In such cases, regarding the unavoidable domination of religious approach on political approach, some believe that there is not any political concept in Shiite Imams, especially after Imam Ali (AS) time, so opening a discussion under the title of "political lifestyle and thinking" is futile.

Through two main approaches, we can answer to such doubts and questions:

First: demonstrating a political dignity for lifestyle and thought of Imam based on a conceptual framework, Imamah Paradigm.

Principally, according to the Shiism political thinking, "policy" is continuance of mankind guidance towards good, virtue and bliss and it is evident that following Ahlul Bait (AS) is the sole

way to achieve redemption.

Second: Political thinking and using politics is evident in Infallible Imams' attitude even if you do not believe in the Imamah Paradigm. As many western scholars have declared, the long distance between politics and governance and certain principles such as ethics, virtue and justice; as it is said that many current problems must be searched in the fundamental changes and developments in political area.

Regarding the many crises in ethical, economic, social, etc. areas, the contemporary political thinkers introduce the redefinition of politics and returning norms to policy level as the sole way to revive humanity and human society. In this way, the Infallible Imams' thinking, given its richness in terms of norms and even conditional, epistemological and functional indications, is categorized among the best types of political thinking. Later in this article we will shed more lights on this discussion through explaining about the political life of Imam Ridha (AS).



This article tries to analyze political components of Imam Ridha (AS), which are rooted in the revelational principles and must be considered as a basis to adjust social and political relations of a society.



Political Condition of Imam Ridha's Era

Imam Ridha (AS) was contemporary with three Abbasid caliphs (Harun al-Rashid, Amin and Mamun). In general, the political situation and Abbasid caliphate during Imam Ridha's lifetime had been accompanied with many tumults and turbulences. Very large territory of Muslim lands and emergence of uprisings and movements

against the Abbasid government such as uprising of Yahya bin Abdullah, development of the first independent Shia government, namely Idrisids, development of semi-independent government of Aghlabid dynasty, fall of Barmecides, rebellion of Hamza Khareji and rebellion of Khorasan people and similar crises prevented the caliphs from direct confrontation against Imam; but they never stopped torturing, killing and exiling Shiites. Among all Abbasid caliphs, after Mansur, Harun al-Rashid can be treated as the most brutal and relentless ruler against Shiites and Shiite Imams (AS). It was in his era that Alavids felt an unbearable oppression and pressure, as Shiites experienced very difficult condition when Imam Kadhim (AS) was martyred by the Caliph's mercenaries.

The Abbasid Caliphate system was about to kill Imam Ridha (AS) after killing his father; however, after killing Imam Kadhim (AS), to avoid an unbridled wrath and rebellion of Alavids, Harun al-Rashid decided to release oppression and pressures against Shiites. However, it must be said that the condition was so harsh that Imam Ridha (AS) had no choice but following prudent dissimulation (Taghia).

This condition did not change after death of Harun and during the five-year caliphate of Amin and it was even exacerbated by struggles between Amin and Mamun to reach the Caliphate of Abbasids. In this time, Shiites found an opportunity to promote



Shiism principles and doctrines and they made a very strong communicational network. Finally, when Mamun defeated his brother, Amin, and took the position of throne-holder of Abbasid Dynasty, the whole condition for Shiites was changed and they started a new era in their history. As Mamun proposed Imam Ridha to become his heir apparent and the next Caliph of Muslims. Mamun found a new way and consideration to

confront Imam Ridha (AS) and his followers, something which was unprecedented and maybe despite its acceptable appearance, it was the most hazardous measure to undermine the Shiism organization.

Mamun proposed Imam Ridha (AS) to become his heir apparent or next caliph of Muslims for the following reasons:

High popularity of Imam for Iranians, quenching rage of Alavid uprisings across the



whole Islamic territory (in this time, Zeid bin Musa bin Jafar in Basra and Ahwaz; Ibrahim bin Musa bin Jafar in Yemen; Hassan Aftas in Mecca and Muhammad bin Salman in Al-Mada'in fought against the Abbasid caliph), charging with err the Shiism claim on illegal nature of Omayyad and Abbasid caliphates and legitimizing the Abbasid caliphate, questioning Shiism beliefs on unauthorized nature of any cooperation and working with the oppressive rulers, controlling Imam as the most important pivot of fighting against the government, estranging people from Imam, divinzing the Abbasid government. As Shahid Mutahhari says, Mamun is the most knowledgeable caliph or even Sultan in the world (Mutahhari, 2011: 177). Hence, he used very wise tools to confront the Imamah current; as even today the reason of some of his actions are unknown.

Political positions taken by Imam Ridha (AS) were different during government of the three



This condition did not change after death of Harun and during the five-year caliphate of Amin and it was even exacerbated by struggles between Amin and Mamun to reach the Caliphate of Abbasids



mentioned caliphs because of what was mentioned earlier in this article.

Imam was living in Medina before becoming crown prince and when Harun al-Rashid was Caliph; so he used to follow the prudent dissimulation principles, but we have not enough accounts and documents on these years. When Harun al-Rashid died in the tenth year of Imam Ridha's Imamah and the struggles between Amin

and Mamun to be caliph was started and the whole Muslim lands suffered from insecurity and riots, Imam Ridha found an opportunity to train, guide and treat Shiites more than ever. In post-Harun years, despite Harun's consideration to avoid any disputes between his sons, the struggles between Mamun and Amin for becoming caliph became so harsh and sever. Exactly in this time, Alavids found an opportunity to rise against the ruling system and they take advantage as much as possible of this situation. Several movement were arranged in this time and as the available documents indicate Imam never supported them deliberately and even rejected invitation of some of them to join the movement.

Analyzing the actual and real nature of these movements, their slogans and leaders and Imam's positions against such movements makes clear a great and important part of fundamental principles of Shiism political thinking. After defeating Amin, Mamun, who was aware of the risk of the mentioned condition, invited Imam Ridha to come to Marv with the aim of quenching the Alavids' uprisings and other reasons mentioned already. Eventually, Imam had to move to Marv, where his political movement changed. Refusing Mamun's invitation for several times, moving to Marv alone and without bringing his household, his sayings when he said goodbye to his Family, events occurred in his way from Medina to Marv, His staying in

Neyshabur and other encampments, visiting Shiites in the path of Marv all include certain messages for Shiites. Imam's political positions culminated with Mamun's proposition to transfer the caliphate or heir apparent. Imam's responds and positions in this period of time and after accepting the proposition include the fundamental principles of the political thinking of Shiism Imamah.

Here we refer to some of principles that can be extracted from his biography: demonstrating the principle of Imamah, Imamah position and natural and divine consistency of Imam to lead a Muslim society, the

negative campaign, the condition of working or fighting with the a tyrant ruler, prioritizing the target over the mean, perspicuity and honesty in politics, paving the way for movements against the tyrants, covert and overt supports of sociopolitical illuminating movements, demonstrating the usurping nature of Abbasid caliphate, transferring political insight etc. (Derakhshah, 2012: 8-11). Later in this article, some not all of these principles are described.

Fundamental Principles Imamah Principle

The most important concept in Imam Ridha's political thinking



Imamah is one of the most original ideological principles of Islam and from viewpoint of sociopolitical considerations is a key basis for the political thinking of Shiism.



necessity of protecting Imamah dynasty and guidance way against the dissidents, following the principle of prudent dissimulation, enjoining what is right and forbidding the evil, the necessity of preserving Islam's pillars, paying attention to the Muslims general expediency, following

is Imamah and wilaya. There is a guaranteed relation between Islam's political thinking and concept of "Imamah". Imamah is the perfect form of the religion and the pervasive growth and evolution of mankind depends on following Imam. For Shiism, Imamah is considered as one of

ideological principles.

Imamah, from viewpoint of ideological and cultural considerations, is one of the most original ideological principles of Islam and from viewpoint of sociopolitical considerations is a key basis for the political thinking of Shiism. Before being a

theological and philosophical discussion, Imamah is something related to people's social life; as political leadership is one of its most important features and for this reason it plays a key role in the territory of sociology, politics, laws, etc. For Islam, government is defined in the framework of Imamah. The Infallible Imam is not only people's leader in worldly and religious affairs, but also he is the most deserved man to take the steering of the Muslim society. However, it is necessary to keep in mind that declining the Imam's position to governance is not righteous. According to the Islamic narrations, Imam has been introduced as the divine caliph, whereas other duties and affairs have been defined for Imams, as well.

Shahid Mutahhari defines Imam's positions through three aspects: Unconditional wilaya, authority in religious affairs and political leadership (Mutahhari, 2005, vol. 4: 850). The first and second aspects are the integral parts of Imamah, as Imam would not be considered a real Imam without them; but the third one depends on the proper condition and sometimes an Imam may live without the political leadership in his society. Therefore, political leadership is not treated as one of principles and bases of Imamah definition. As the narrations indicate, the unconditional wilaya underlies the Imamah and cannot be separated from it. It means that if Imams of Shia were not the rulers of their time, it does not affect their position

and dignity; but it means that Imam is the best and most deserved option for ruling in any condition and time; because the principle of Imamah is based on the fact that Imam must guide people in both their religion and worldly affairs and governance and political power is a tool by which Imam can fulfill his duties. Hence, pointing to Imamah discussion by Imam Ridha (AS) was not only important in terms of religious considerations, but Imam intended to point to certain political principles through explaining various aspects and dimensions of Imamah and wilaya position. Such principles can be classified into three general classes:

Introducing position and dignity of Imamah

Imam Ridha (AS) emphasizes the fact that Imamah is an appointed and sinless position and refers to it as a gift from the Almighty God for people; because people's mind and reason fails to choose an Imam (Tabarsi, 1403 AH, vol. 2: 433). He does not restrict himself to just point to spiritual and divine features of Imamah, but he enumerates explicitly its all political roles and functions including safeguarding borders, implementing rules and Sharia and financial management and Caliph and successor of God on the earth:





- Meeting general (religious and social) virtues;

- Protecting personal and social rules and safeguarding security in Muslim lands

- Inflict legal punishments

- Imam is the God's caliph and successor on the earth who makes Muslims proud and dissidents unhappy and pagans dead.

- Imam is a man devoid of ignorance.

Rejecting governance of fallible people, emphasizing the usurping nature of the government and the right of Ahlul bait to govern and act as caliphs

Imam Ridha (AS) says Imamah is the wilaya, so anyone who claims Imamah unjustly he will be considered pagan (Ibn Babouyeh, 1404 AH, vol. 2: 274). For government, Imam points to

the necessity of government and people's obey from their just and fair governor and leader and refers to the leader as someone in authority; moreover, Imam Ridha explains explicitly that the ruling a society is the right of Imam and nobody else is allowed, for any reason, to rule over a Muslim land. Infallible Imams of Shiism never acknowledged two parallel currents of Imamah and Caliphate at the same time and they never endorsed legitimacy of governance of caliphs. For example, when Mamun asked Imam Ridha to accept to be the next caliph and his successor, Imam questioned the basis of caliphate.

Imam not only rejects the tyrant government, but stresses to fight against the enemies and says that our religion will be perfect when we acknowledge

the Imamah and fight against enemies (Ibn Idris, 1410AH, vol. 3: 640).

It seems that the explicit and uncompromising tone of Imam Ridha (AS) on describing the position and dignity of Imamah was amongst the reasons that convinced Mamun to kill Imam. Imam, even in the presence of Mamun, used to cry his rights and it seems that Imam preferred to put aside prudent dissimulation in Mamun's time.

By introducing the Infallible Imams as the "almighty God's caliphs on the earth", Imam does not acknowledge ruling of other caliphs on the one hand, and undermines the false titles of caliphs on the other hand. Because, for Shia, "the God's caliph on the earth" is someone who has been appointed by God, so prophets and infalli-

ble Imams are examples of the divine caliphs on the earth.

Explanation of Imam's position in the Islam's political history

Imam Ridha (AS) points to deviations occurred during early years of Islam history, after death of holy prophet (PBUH), through recalling and explaining the position and dignity of Imam to rule and somehow related the current condition of the Muslim World as the result of that initial deviation.

Negative campaign approach

Imam Ridha (AS) took moderate approach in his political positions. There were radical Shiite currents in his time, including Zeidis who emphasized the necessity of armed uprising against the tyrant rulers and they inflicted armed movements depart from the condition and knowledge about their movements' consequences and usually they doomed to defeats, which it made conditions more difficult for other Shias. On the other hand, there were other groups who considered legitimate any government based on their own references and emphasized the necessity of following them. Negative campaign, when the armed struggles were futile and impossible, was the best strategy. Imam's negative campaign against the ruling system, especially in the story of crown prince, is explicitly evident. Here you can find a number of Imam's actions in this regard:



Shahid Mutahhari defines Imam's positions through three aspects: Unconditional wilaya, authority in religious affairs and political leadership.



- Imam did not answer Mamun's letter(s)
- Although Mamun ordered Imam to bring his household, Imam disobeyed him and said farewell to his household as if he would not come back again and will not see them again.
- Explicit and direct refer to the right of Infallible Imam to be ruler in his way to Neyshabur and even after visiting Mamun.
- Again in Khorasan Imam did not accept the heir apparent proposition from Mamun.
- Imam's reason against Mamun's insists was that Maman and his family are not legitimate and he is not honest in his proposition.
- After accepting the heir apparent, Imam unveiled the end

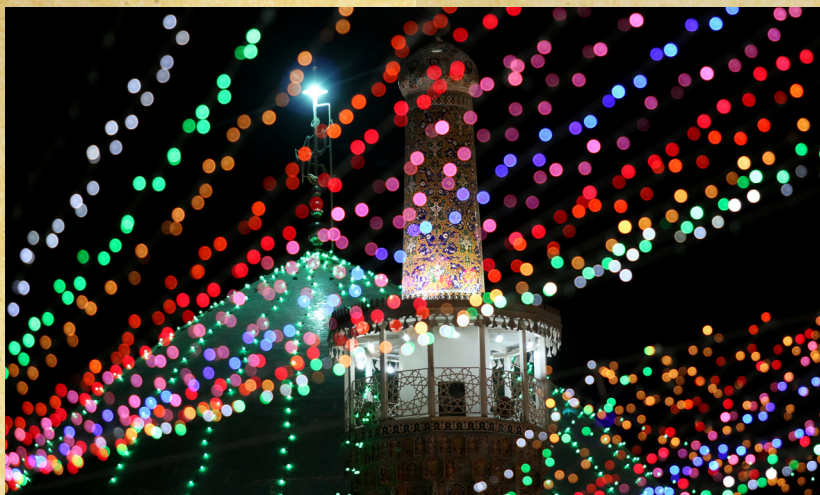
of this story to his close companions and even to Mamun himself.

Prudent Dissimulation Approach

Although the prudent dissimulation has been established as an exclusive Shiite principle with the Shiism thinking and practice, it is not just for Shia in the Islam's history, but it must be treated as a normal and prudent behavior any human being may show in certain condition. It is a sort of condition which is usually seen when a dominated individual or nation, who are in the minority, fails to fight directly or think that direct fighting is not good for them (Derakhsheh, 2009: 199). This principle plays a key role in protecting the Ahlul bait school and has saved and rescued Muslims from their enemies. Prudent dissimulation is not a simple practice, but it is like an extensive and comprehensive coverage, including all necessary operating ingredients and parts which has succeeded to defend Shiites identity.

The prudent dissimulation (Taghia) is defined as protecting yourself from harms inflicted through confirming speech or action of those who disagree with righteous acts (Sheikh Ansari, 1996: 320).

In general, it can be said that prudent dissimulation is a statement of belief or action against the right in order to prevent life, financial and reputational harms, of course, without internal and intimate belief in that action.



Imam's Political Approach as the Heir Apparent (Crown Prince)

As mentioned already in this article, most political positions of Imam Reza (AS) were taken during his heir apparent era. Accepting this proposition by Imam Ridha (AS) can be analyzed through various angles. Positions Imam took against Mamun mostly were based on his condition, that is avoiding any intervening in the governmental affairs; however, it has been narrated that in some cases Imam had admonished and advised Mamun. For example, with regard to the strategic and pivotal position and location of Baghdad in the time Muslim world, Imam suggested Mamun to move his capital to Hijaz (Majlisi, vol. 49: 166).

When Mamun asked Imam's opinion about extension of the Muslim lands and occupying new lands and countries, Imam says that the domestic and internal problems of the Muslim world are due to presence of unqualified and undeserved people over



Imams activities mostly were concentrated to refine affairs and explaining cultural and political principles and he did not anything against the Harun's government.



the vital positions of the government; so, the caliph before anything else needs to organize the internal affairs of his territory and to avoid trusting in underserved people. In this case, Imam Ridha (AS) makes Mamun aware of his information and knowledge about the Muslim World and Muslim Ummag and criticizes him for his ignorance.

Conclusion

With regard to the comprehensive and all-embracing definition of politics in terms of Imamah, which was proposed in this article, a great part of Imam Ridha's lifetime has covert and overt political positions and his political positions are not restrained into his crown prince era. Living in times of three Abbasid caliphs and the difference in sociopolitical condition and policies the caliph had taken against Imam has resulted in taking different approaches by Imam, hence it is impossible to determine a unique discourse for Imam Ridha's (AS) era. In Harun al-Rashid' era, Imam dealt with cultural and educational activities and tried to train his followers on political imperatives. Extensive cultural and scientific activities and training numerous pupils are among the important events of this era. Imam ordered his pupils to compile and archive the narratives. Totally, in this era, Imam's pupils have written 207 books. Hussein bin Saeed Ahwazi (30 books), Safvan bin Yahya (16 books), Muhammad bin Vaghedi (28 books), Musa bin Ghasem (15 books) are some of famous pupils of Imam Ridha (AS). As the historical evidence show, Imams activities mostly were concentrated to refine affairs and explaining cultural and political principles and he did not anything against the Harun's government.

In Amin's era, apparently Imam enjoyed some more freedom in contrast to Haru's time and his activities again were

concentrated on cultural and promotional fields.

In Mamun's time, Imam was suggested to accept the crown prince position. There are many doubts about how Imam may play his role as Imam and ruler at the same time, especially when it is necessary to struggle with the an oppressive government. However, Imam has demonstrated that it is possible to play these two roles at the same time as best as possible.

References

Ibn Idris, Muhammad (1410 AH). *Al-Kamel fi al-Tarikh*. Beirut. Dar Sader.

Arbali, Ali bin Eisa (1381 AH). *Kashf al Ghama fi Marefa al-Aema*. Hussein Zavaie. Tabriz. Haj Muhammad Bagher Ketabchi Haghighat. Islamic Press

Ibn Babouyeh (1404 AH). *Oyun akhbar al-Reza*. Beirut. Scientific Institute.

ANSARI, Sheikh Morteza Ansari (1996). *Almakasib*. Tabriz. Ettelaat Press.

Bashiryeh, Hussein and Naser Jamalzadeh (1998). *Discourse forms of Shiite Scholars from Sfa-vids to the Constitution Revolution*. Fall, 1998.

Hakimi, Muhammad Reza (2001). *ALhayat*. Ahmad Aram. Tehran. Islamic Culture Publication Institute.

Derakhsheh, Jalal. 2009. *Rein-terpretation of religious concepts and their effect on formation of Islamic Revolution of Iran*. Fall and Winter 2009. Vol.5 . no. 2

Derakhsheh, Jalal and Hussein Faegh (2012). *Politics and government in Imam Ridha's biography*. Tehran. Imam Ridha Cultural and Artistic Foundation.

Allama Majlisi. *Bihar al-Anwar*. Tehran. Islamic

Tabarsi, Ahmad bin Ali. *Al-ihitijaj ala ahl alajaj*. Mashhad. Morteza.

SCIENTIFIC AND ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF RAZAVI DEBATES

Fariba Rezaadeh and Alireza Farsinejad



As a tradition with a special position in Islamic culture, debate need certain principles and basics which learning them guarantees success of those who intend to debate. In a glance, such principles are divided into two classes: scientific and ethical. Scientific principles refer skills and sciences with which any debater must be equipped before starting the debate arena. However, only being equipped with the sciences and meeting technical points of discussions is not enough, but following ethical principles is necessary to influence the opponent and presumably

the other audiences.

In this regard and with the aim of offering an applied model, three scientific principles, namely the best struggle, using intellectual reasoning and avoiding sophistication, and also three ethical principles, namely to be polite, avoiding criticizing people's character and avoiding dogmatism are introduced as the most important principles to which Imam Ridha (AS) was committed.

Debate and sharing ideas and opinions in religious beliefs are treated as an efficient tool in promoting and defending the religion. As the Almighty God asked the prophet for it:



Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way. Lo! thy Lord is Best Aware of him who strayeth from His way, and He is Best Aware of those who go aright. (An-Nahl- 125)

It must be considered that this tool is two-sided, it means that its deep influence is realized when the essential principles are followed, while underestimating such principles will be followed by some reverse consequences. Thus, the necessary prerequisite to be successful in debates is following its principles.

To find the best and most effective principles, we need to refer to debates in which the Infallible Imams (AS) had been participated and principles had been resorted by them. Imam Ridha (AS) has left many debates with scholars of other religions which are considered as a very valuable resource.

1. Using argument

The debater needs to be aware



Proposing reasons and argumentation is one of the most important factors which guarantee success in a debate.



of the logic argumentation (Kha-zaeli, 2003, 76) and should to take advantage of normal logical techniques:

Proposing positive and preferred reasons to demonstrate the claim;

Demonstrating the truth of what is stated;

Proposing reasons and argumentation is one of the most important factors which guarantee success in a debate. It is not acceptable for a debater to use weak and nonsense reasons.

Therefore, proposing two strong reasons is better than proposing several reasons which can be rejected.

Imam Ridha (AS) used to base his argumentation on the same principles, because he never supposed that the Islam beliefs are undisputable for the opposite side, he never pursued dominance in his debates and always used arguments to demonstrate Islamic beliefs, because it is not possible to resolve conflict and contradiction among various religions.

2. Using the best struggle

There are several verses in the holy Quran which invite use to follow the best struggle manner in our debates; five main features which make a struggle a best one are as follows:

The best debate is one that makes the opposite side convinced in terms of intellectual bases (Habnake al-Meydani, 1419AH: 363) or something which is in favor of his/her interests or may be both (Tabarsi, 1993, vol. 8: 449);

It is necessary to debate and discuss based on understanding level and tolerance of the opposite side (ibid, vol. 6: 605; Hassan, 1421 Ah: 35).

A more profitable and useful method must be used.

The debaters should be close in terms of thinking level, it means that both of them should be interested in illumination of the matter in question.

They must avoid any contempt or mocking each other.

3. Avoiding false reasoning

Fair analysis of Imam Ridha (AS) debates with various scholars makes us convinced to conclude that he never used false reasoning in his debates, however, his opponents used this trick several times.

Ethical Principles of Imam Ridha's Debates

1. Being polite

Being polite in a discussion means that to stick to the subject of debate. Debaters need to be involved with something profitable and useful and they should insult each other because of any sort of mistake they may make.

2. Avoiding criticizing people's character

Avoiding criticizing the opposite side's character is among the principles of a normal and useful debate, because if the parties are looking for finding the truth, they just criticize the remarks and sayings of each other and they respect the dignity and position of the speaker.

3. Avoiding dogmatism

The debater's final goal must be reaching the truth and he/she must use any way to reach this goal. It will be achieved when the debate is conducted without any dogmatic positions and prejudice. Because being biased before starting the debate will result in a condition in which the debater will never be convinced.



THE SANCTITY AND DIGNITY OF WOMAN IN FAMILY FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF IMAM RIDHA (AS)

Ali Jalaian Akbarnia and Muhammad Reza Muhammadi

Different schools try to provide people with their own lifestyles relying on their foundations and ideologies. Islam provides an effective lifestyle with the centrality of Quran and Itrat. In the exemplar offered by Islam, a woman has a special and effective status and keeping her dignity plays a very vital role in the survival of a society.

Infallible Imams (AS) including Imam Ridha (AS) have clearly outlined the sanctity and dignity of Muslim women within the Islamic intellectual system. This article aims at analyzing the image provided by Imam Ridha (AS) for a Muslim woman, regarding her sanctity and dignity. Recognizing the dignity and status of women in Islamic society is essential, because it provides Muslim women with a certain identity and prevents them from being polluted with secular cultures.

Here we argue that woman's true dignity lies in obeying and performing the orders of religion about herself, her family and her society and it is believed that men and women are equal in creation; however, the subtle and sensitive spirit of woman requires special protection. The dignity of women may be safeguarded by themselves; and the social personal and social interactions

are very effective. Regarding her special mental and physical characteristics, woman has a special character. Attitude toward woman, her presence in the society, marriage, relationships with husband, job and financing are some important issues that the eighth Imam has discussed them and he has explained procedures to maintain the dignity of woman in each of these cases.

Women, Special Creatures

Human is the only creature of God who has a higher status than jinn and angels. This stand-in and status is reflected in the Holy Quran with unique phrases and expressions. God has granted human a position beyond that's of other creatures. God almighty has placed human in a position even higher than angels and he has put human as his successor on earth. This dignity was given to the

human being by the Lord of universe and this dignity and honor will remain for him, if he maintains his piety and his righteousness and he will enjoy this status, if he can move in the path of God almighty.

There is a vast source of literature regarding the dignity of human beings, but special attention to the issue of maintaining the dignity of woman from the perspective of Imam Ridha (AS) does not have a strong history. The main question is that whether in fact in the intellectual system of Islam woman has a special sanctity and dignity? Whether special spirit of woman and maintaining her dignity in the family are emphasized in the religious orders? The necessity of explaining and analyzing this issue is that today different lifestyles with various foundations are offered and each of them introduce a special position for women and



sometimes they criticize Islam because of ignoring women or tyranny toward them. However, Islam guarantees a special position for woman in society and in the family and it has provided this position with regard to the specific characteristics of women and their dignity.

The present article besides discussing the necessity of maintaining the dignity of woman attempts to express and review different examples raised by Imam Ridha (AS) on the sanctity and dignity of women in the family.

Dignity as a word and a term

Different meanings are mentioned for the word "dignity" and we summarize meanings and different types of dignity, from the view of etymologists and lexicographers:

Khalil Farahidi has described dignity as honor and being honorable (Farahidi, 1410).

Ibn Faris who was one of the most famous people in explaining the original meaning of words, explains Karam (dignity) in two forms:

It is spiritual dignity or moral dignity and Karim that is one of the names of God almighty means someone who forgives the sins of the servants (Ibn Faris, 1404).

Also, Johari believes that Karim is the opposite of miserly and mean (Johari, 1407).

Ragheb Esfahani in defining Karam refers to the second meaning raised by Ibn Faris and says: "granting and giving bless-

ings; when a man is described with the word Karam, then it is a name for good morality and good deeds by a man. The word Karim will apply for a person whenever we observe good morality and good behavior in that person". Karam is a good and holy act and the most Karim (or the best act) is something that pleases God (Ragheb Esfahani, 1404).

Ibn Athir also mentioned this meaning, but he believes that Karim contains all kinds of goodness, kindness, honor and virtue and states: "Karim is someone who glorifies himself from opposition and disobedience of Allah" (Ibn Athir, 1364).

Ibn Manzur also has translated this word like Ibn al-Athir (Ibn Manzur, 1405) and Tarihi believes that "Karam" is a feature that makes intellectuals satisfied and raises praise and adoration (Tarihi, 1408). In the

vocabulary of the holy Qur'an Keramat (dignity) means magnanimity and nobility, generosity, being valuable and beloved (Qureshi: 103).

Among Persian dictionaries, the dictionary of Dehkhoda has offered some meanings for Keramt and the first meaning is the idiomatic meaning and the second and the third meanings are acquired and innate meanings respectively: 1. Strange and wonderful things and extraordinary acts by some great spiritual people which are called Keramt. 2. Greatness, chivalry, generosity, benevolence, magnanimity and giving and donation. 3. Pride, dignity, magnanimity, sublimity and greatness.

In conclusion we should say that Keramat is the dignity of the soul and it is the opposite of meanness and baseness and according to some contemporary scholars: "Dignity is avoiding meanness. Karim differs from Kabir and Azim. Karim has no exact and comprehensive equivalent in Persian. God almighty believed that the natural world is against Keramat and called it Donia (the world), because Denaat is against Keramat (meanness is against dignity)" (Javadi Amoli, 1987: 21).

In terms of being innate and acquired, dignity (Keramat) can be classified in two forms:

God-given dignity; this dignity exists in the creation of all human beings. This dignity must be maintained regardless of any particular religion and it exists as long as human remain on the path of God almighty and



The dignity of women may be safeguarded by themselves; and the social personal and social interactions are very effective.



doesn't tarnish his dignity.

Acquired dignity which can be achieved through effort and planning and on the basis of religious teachings.

The lifestyle and behavior of Muslim scholars and specially Imam Ridha (AS) indicate the importance of respecting human dignity; whether it is innate or acquired dignity. Imam Ridha (AS) dignifies his servants -who have low social status- by sitting beside them on a table and his logic, is that human beings are equal in terms of innate dignity; because all of our parents have one God and acquired dignity depends on our deeds.

Equal status and dignity of women and men

According to the religious teachings men and women do not differ regarding their human dimensions and both are created in the best shape and both possess divine spirit. Also God has obliged common duties upon men and women as far as gender is not concerned and wherever gender has been concerned, duties have been assigned to them according to justice and by considering their conditions and this is honoring them, as well. Because they are asked to do something which they can and they are not obliged to do what they can't perform. As the role of women in family is upbringing children, they should not have financial concerns and they are not obliged to provide financial means for the family. Duties are assigned to man and women,



Keramat is the dignity of the soul and it is the opposite of meanness and baseness and according to some contemporary scholars: "Dignity is avoiding meanness.



according to their potentials and their dignity is respected and whoever is more pious he/she will be dearer to God and acquired dignity depends on one's righteousness.

Woman is an influential and epoch-making element in the society. Thus, her dignity should be maintained in order to protect the society and she must play her roles in the society according to her feminine identity and nature.

Respecting the dignity of women

Respecting the dignity of women is an issue that directs the presence of women in the society and in the family and affects creation of proper and healthy relationships between man and

woman. Paying special attention to the dignity of women clarifies the path of presence of women in the society, their employment and their political, social and economic activities. Hence a proper and healthy interaction with subtle character of woman within the family and in the society requires a special attention which should be consistent with her dignity and character and should not despise her.

Woman builds the society and healthy and grown people ascend from her lap to the heaven. Therefore, Islam has exempted her from performing hard, heavy and cumbersome works. She is responsible for upbringing the children generating and fostering generations is her responsibility. Woman should be as a management arm for his husband in their life. She must provide spiritual and mental tranquility for the family. Grace, kindness, compassion, courtesy and morality grows within the family in the light of the woman's management and her teaching.

The secret of dignity and pride of woman is using effective religious principles, in the interaction between women and society. Observing the dignity of woman is visible in all the orders and duties of Islam and especially in the area of orders on family. Easy and purposeful marriage, selecting a decent spouse, emotional family relations, behaviors and dialogues of couples, titivation of couples at home, maintaining the foundations and commitment to family, respecting sexual

rights, providing living expenses, rejection of violence, legal issues such as divorce and inheritance and ... are all orders that result in maintaining the dignity of family members and especially woman. The result of observing these orders is a healthy society, based on genuine religious thinking which provides needed grounds for creation of a great Islamic civilization.

The study of religious teachings proves this fact that Prophet (PBUH) and Infallible Imams (AS) have considered special status for man and woman in their behavioral and oral orders and by illustrating the path; they have explained the duties of each of them to maintain their dignity and to open the path toward their growth and excellence. In the meantime, the lifestyle of Imam Ridha (AS) can be recited due to the time of his Imamate. Therefore we investigate the dignity and status of woman in the family from the Perspective of Imam Ridha (AS).

Forming family and human dignity

Human reason and nature order him to form a family and prohibit him from evil and indifference; so marriage and commitment to the family is a sign of human character and it is the base of perfection of man and woman and it is an issue that God has granted it to the human. On the other hand, marriage is the natural need of men and women and it is the basis of their perfection.

In this regard Imam Ridha (AS)



believes that forming a family is a rational matter and even if the religion didn't emphasize on this matter, wise people and those who seek success in their lives would give high priority to marriage.

Marriage is perfection

Marriage provides grounds for mental and physical relaxation and paves the way for the growth of faith, beliefs and for human perfection. So, not marrying won't provide needed grounds for mental growth and development and it won't open a path towards grace and perfection; but refusal of formation of family diminishes a man's dignity and removes him from the circle of righteous people. Imam Ridha (AS), by referring

to a story from Imam Baqir (AS) emphasized on this issue that a supreme figure like Hazrat Fatima (SA) formed a family and married. Meaning that since no one is like Hazrat Fatima (SA) in terms of grace and perfection, so if staying single was a grace then certainly Hazrat Fatima (SA) did not marry at all.

The necessity of marriage

There is no doubt that anything should be done in its appropriate time and hastening or delaying is not accepted. Marriage also is not an exception and postponing it reduces its freshness and vitality and sometimes its delay leads to disrespecting one's character or challenging his/her dignity and we find examples of it in referring to for-

tune-tellers and soothsayers or undermining girls' characters.

Imam Ridha (AS) insists on maintaining the dignity of virgins during marriage and by stating a hadith resembles girls to fruits, because if delays occur in their marriage, they may face problems and intrigues which may not be easy to compensate.

Choosing spouse and maintaining dignity

The first element of marriage is choosing spouse which is highly sensitive and important and it affects the lives of couples and their families. Negligence in this issue may lead to irreparable consequences and it may inflict irreparable shocks to the status and character of each of the couples and may challenge their personal and social dignity. There are many men and women who have married to someone with whom they have nothing in common and this is because of their superficial and inaccurate marriage; so they have inevitably been forced to divorce or to live with the minimal conditions. In addition they have been forced to give up their honor, personal and social status and their dignity.

In the lifestyle of Imam Ridha (AS) and other Imams (AS) dignity of human beings does not depend on their appearance and wealth. As the Almighty states that the dearest peoples are those who are the most virtuous ones, Imam Ridha (AS) also sees values in internal issues and capabilities. Thus, in a meaningful warning he prevents

families from short-sighted attention to superficial and materialistic issues. On the other hand, Imam Ridha (AS) gives special attention to the piety of spouse and believes that existence of some moral vices in people indicate larger sins and he points out that seemingly small sins in a person are signs of greater sins and they provide grounds for greater faults. So if see a certain mistake in a person, we should not simply ignore it, but we must consider it as a window into the real character of that person.

Weddings ceremony and maintaining dignity

Celebrating marriage is an extremely important issue in maintaining the sanctity and dignity of women and the position of family. Marriage and creating a stable family based on religious factors is so important that it is appropriate to hold a ceremony, to inform and invite people and to serve them with foods. Also choosing an appropriate time for the ceremony is very important in maintaining the dignity and comfort of men and women; hence, it is recommended to hold the wedding ceremony at night and to serve food at night or in the afternoon.

Dowry and honoring the value of women

Islam considers the human status of women at the highest level. This issue can be examined from different aspects. One of most remarkable and most important issues is dowry. Dow-

ry is a gift that the man presents to his wife at the time of marriage to show his sincerity. Although both man and woman need marriage and forming a family, however providing dowry has been assigned to man in order to maintain the elegance of soul and the dignity of woman. The importance of dowry is so much that it must be exactly determined during marriage and it should be mentioned in the marriage rituals. Dowry is woman's prerogative and no one can deprive a woman from possessing it. Even the girl's father who can permit her to marry or not, he also cannot possess her daughter's dowry.

Economic issues and dignity of woman

Another aspect of maintaining dignity of women in Islam is re-



Woman is an influential and epoch-making element in the society.





lated to economic issues. In a family which Islam has outlined its system, man is responsible to provide everyday living expenses and because of her dignity and status, woman can not undertake the role of breadwinner in the family. This is contrary to the dignity of a woman to work hard from dawn to dusk outside the home to support her family. Woman must undertake tasks appropriate to their status and according to their mental capacities. Managing home affairs, proper upbringing of children, maintaining the family and managing and maintaining household structure, preserving the values of family members and providing peace of mind and thought for man are among the responsibilities of a woman. Woman is responsible for managing inside the home and

she is the strong arm of family management. This is one of the missions of woman in a Muslim and Razavi family.

In an Islamic family, bearing financial burden of family has not been assigned to woman and no one expects her to do it. On the other hand, the man is obliged to prepare alimony and what a woman needs for a life and if a man can afford, he must improve his wife's life. It is obvious that this improvement does not mean extravagance and luxury. But man must provide the real needs of his family and his wife so that his wife won't be forced to do a job which may be inconsistent with her dignity to meet their needs.

Titivation and honoring the status of woman

Islam believes that women's

dignity is a two-sided issue and it has analyzed deviations and possible mistakes and issues contrary to their dignity and also it has recommended ways to prevent the annihilation of their dignity. An issue which may destroy the family system and thus the dignity of woman is neglecting mental and sexual needs of a woman. Woman should be able to honor her husband and must see him as the base of her life and the man must be able to provide her psychological, emotional and sexual needs. Therefore, man should prepare himself in this regard.

Imam Ridha (AS) in a hadith by analyzing a mistake by Israelites women in disregarding their appearance refers to one of the needs of women which have been less addressed and so he urges husbands to pay more attention to this aspect of their wife's needs. Imam Ridha (AS) considered this matter in his practical life as well and he even painted his hairs and beard and in response to the questions and objections of other people, he said that husband's titivation will result in his wife's chastity.

Emotional relations and respecting the status of woman

Respecting the human dignity of woman is not only providing material facilities, but it involves responding to her real needs as well. Man and woman need to form a common life which is based on love and its fruit is peace and comfort. Expressing love is a method to

show love and friendship to the other person. Many failed marriages reflect the loss of love and friendship between the two sides. Expressing love must be refreshed; it is the source of stability of relationship between couples. When husband expresses his love to his wife, this will make woman to adhere to her family and to be more loyal and this can prevent from many psychological and emotional problems. Also it has been narrated that Imam Ridha (AS) during the birth of his son, Imam Jawad (AS) praised his wife and said: "she is sacred -the mother who gave birth to him- and he is created very clean and infallible". On the other woman should love her husband too and she must always express her love for him, unless man may try to find a love somewhere else.

Providing sexual needs and maintaining dignity of woman

Religious teachings have considered human dignity even in the most material physical needs. Islam has clearly expressed the duties of man and woman in providing sexual needs in a marital life. Razavi life style has also considered this issue. Paying attention to sexual needs of spouses and prohibited from leaving it is among the most basic rights of couples in the family. Providing sexual needs is considered an extremely crucial issue in preserving the foundations of the family.

Conclusion

Keramat is the dignity of the soul



Islam considers the human status of women at the highest level. This issue can be examined from different aspects.



and it is the opposite of meanness and baseness. Keramat is not only for women or men and according to the religious teachings men and women do not differ regarding their human dimensions and both are created in the best shape and both possess divine spirit. Also God has obliged common duties upon men and women as far as gender is not concerned and wherever gender has been concerned, duties have been assigned to them according to justice and by considering their conditions and this is honoring them, as well.

Respecting the dignity of women is an issue that directs the presence of women in the society and in the family and affects creation of proper and healthy relationships between man and woman.

Marriage is a social interaction which has a great role in respect-

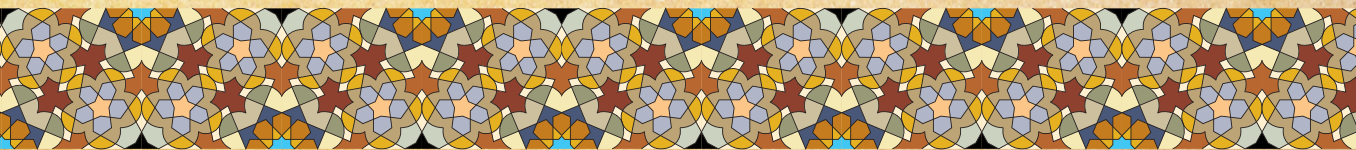
ing human dignity and it provides grounds for mental and physical relaxation and paves the way for the growth of faith, beliefs and for human perfection. So, not marrying won't provide needed grounds for mental growth and development and it won't open a path towards grace and perfection; but refusal of formation of family diminishes a man's dignity and removes him from the circle of righteous people.

Improper selection of spouse, paying too much attention to material issues, considering low value for internal issues, neglecting some behavioral disorders, neglecting emotional, physical and sexual needs are among the issues which according to Imam Ridha (AS) may create dilemmas for families and as a result they may undermine women's dignity.

The amount of dowry, informing relatives, celebrating marriage and choosing an appropriate time for the ceremony are very important in maintaining the dignity and comfort of men and women.

In a family which Islam has outlined its system, man is responsible to provide everyday living expenses and because of her dignity and status, woman can not undertake the role of breadwinner in the family. Woman must undertake tasks appropriate to their status and according to their mental capacities.

Source: Farhange Razavi Journal



WWW.ITF.ORG.IR

WELCOME TO CYBER SPACE



www.albadee.net / www.islamiclife.com / www.toonsonline.net / www.arabictoons.com

www.imam-khomeini.com / www.al-hooda.com / www.al-tahirah.com / www.echoofislam.com

www.al-aalam.com / www.al-wahdah.com / www.irannovin.info / www.iranoday.info

www.thaqafatuna.com / www.mahjubah.com / www.panoramaislamico.ir

www.lemessage.ir / www.zamzam-mag.com / www.itfjournals.com