A Comparative Study of Contemporary Political Islamic Discourses with Imam Khomeini's Discourse

Yahya Fozi (PhD)

Professor, Research Institute of Imam Khomeini and Islamic Revolution
yahyafozi@yahoo.com

Abstract

In this paper attempts have been made to study the discourses dominating political Islam to answer these questions: How can one categorize these diverse political Islam discourses? What are the similarities and differences among these discourses in general, and with the Islamic Revolution discourse in particular? The research methodology employed for this study is historical-comparative and the hypothesis of the paper suggests that various political Islamic discourses can be categorized into two jurisdictional-rational discourse and narrative discourse. Islamic Revolution is included in the first category. The two discourses, however, have major differences in central signifier and in interpretations on the floating signifiers. To make a more accurate clarification of the two discourses, in this paper the two discourses have been compared and contrasted in terms of terminology and ideological commonalities with political consequences. To that end, viewpoints of the advocates of each discourse on such variables as their interpretations of monotheism and Divine Sovereignty, justice, excommunication, Holy War, Islamic unity, attitude toward Sharia law, characteristics of Islamic government and qualities of an Islamic ruler, attitude toward political rights of people, attitude toward the West, modernization and new civilization have been studied. Findings of this paper show that despite verbal and conceptual commonalities, there are major differences between the two discourses in interpretation of these commonalities, each of which is believed to have serious political consequences.

Keywords: Political Islam, Islamic discourse, Imam Khomeini's discourse

Introduction

Islamists have established a wide spectrum of movements in the contemporary world. The general mass media movement in many world countries typically refer to Islamist movements with such terms as fundamentalist, strict, radical, moderate, progressive and so on. Classic classification like that of H. Gibb, W. Smith, A. Hourani, L. Binder, H. Mintjes, and R. Humphrey point to the well-known triple typology namely: traditionalism/fundamentalism, modernism and secularism (Mintjes 1980: 46-73) and (Binder 1964: 31-40). John Esposito puts his base of study on "positions or attitudes toward modernization and Islamic sociopolitical change". On this basis, he makes a new classification: Conservative, Neo-traditionalist, Islamic reformist, and Secularist attitudes (Esposito 1984: 216). Yvonne Haddad, too, points to trends and tendencies and calls them Normativist and Acculturationist (Haddad 1982: 1-14). William Shepard believes that Islamic ideologies are responses to the influence of the West and the plans to revive the history of Islam. He presents eight distinct types based on a dual classification: Islamic Absolutism and Modernism (Shepard 1982: 308). And John O. Voll reviews and analyzes styles of action in the history of Islam and classifies them in three groups of "Adaptionist", Conservative and Fundamental (Voll 2:5). Fazlur Rahman contrasts Neo-fundamentalism with Islamic Modernism, that according to him, is synonymous with imposing change in the content of Sharia law (Fazlur Rahman 1979: 311-17). He cites another trend known as "Post-modern Fundamentalist" with the theme of "anti-Westernization" (Ahmad 2004: 180) Tarek Ramadan's classification does not follow suit of the triple traditional categorization. He reviews the current trends in Islamic ideology, and therefore, in comparison with the traditional categorization, he clarifies the future intellectual trends of the groups and movements with more precision (Ramadan 204: 24). Reports released by Rand in 2004 on Islamism contain a foursome typology of "ideological positions" namely: Fundamentalism, Traditionalism, Modernism and Secularism (Rand Report 2004).

But beyond these diversified classifications on the Islamist movements, in this paper we will focus on the discourses governing the Islamist political movements in order to provide an answer to this question: How can we categorize these diversified political Islam discourses? Where does Islamic Revolution discourse stand among these discourses? And, what are the similarities and differences among these discourses?

By the Islamist political sub-discourse we mean the sort of sub-discourses within the major discourse of the political Islam discourses, all of which agree on the major fundamentals of the political Islam but retain differences in interpretation of these fundamentals. According to the common fundamentals of political Islam, Islam is a sociopolitical school of thought and ideology that is capable of running the Muslim communities. Supporters of this school are of the opinion that communities in the world of Islam must be administered based on the rules of Islam and the Sharia law. They defend the sort of sovereignty enriched with Islamic values, and authorized based on the belief in Divine sovereignty.

The methodology of the research is historical-comparative with discourse approach. The hypothesis of the paper suggests that various political Islamic discourses can be categorized in two jurisdictional-rational discourse and narrative

discourse. Islamic Revolution is included in the first discourse. The two discourses, however, have major differences in central signifier and in interpretations on the floating signifiers.

A- Theoretical Framework

We have used Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's theoretical framework to study various Islamist discourses. They have specifically worked on a sort of discourse dealing with political trends and placing emphasis on relational qualities of the discourse (Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe, 1987: 166). According to these researchers, a series of signs are placed along one another in an equivalence chain by which they achieve meaning. Therefore, the signs of a discourse get their meanings through links with each other. Laclau and Mouffe have used the views of Ferdinand de Saussure (Swiss linguist and semiotician) to adopt the concept of articulation. According to them, articulation means any interaction establishing a relation among various elements in such a way to change their identity. The concept refers to collecting various elements and combining them into a new identity. In articulation of the concepts, floating signifiers play an influential role. They determine dominant rules that make identity of the discourses and social formations. Laclau and Mouffe argue that it is through the drawing of political boundaries and the construction of antagonistic relationships between 'friends' and 'enemies' that discourses acquire their political identity (Laclau & Mouffe, op cit.).

On this basis, any discourse is presented with a new articulation of concepts and by drawing of political boundaries and construction of antagonistic relationships at certain social, economic, and political conditions. As these researchers argue, when the identity formation occurs for the subject, social or economic unrest will result. This turmoil causes the former subjects feel the sense of identity crisis. In such circumstances, subjects are trying to reconstruct their own identity and social meaning by identifying and articulating alternative discourses. When a political power assumes the dominant role of setting the rules and meanings in a certain social formation, the result will be hegemony. According to them, a hegemonic discourse will then restore meanings in the concepts at the social level.

Using his theoretical framework, we can say that political Islam is a discourse in contemporary world with centrality on the belief – as central signifier - in the fact that Islam possesses all sociopolitical instruction and that religion and politics are interconnected. Political Islamists have articulated floating signifiers or the same ordinary concepts and terms in Islamic society, around this central signifier, thus presented this discourse against two rival discourses, i.e. non-religious secularism and religious secularism. The examples of this discourse can be found in various Islamist movements in the world of Islam that share political Islam discourse.

A second look at the subject, however, reveals that political Islam is divided into sub-discourses itself that although share the principle of belief in political Islam, they have certain differences we will cover hereunder.

B- Islamist Political Discourses

Although today the political Islam seems to be on a par with secularism and individualistic conservative Islam, the discourse has sub-divisions in itself in confrontation with the political movements involved. In other words, although all Islamist political movements share the belief in political Islam, they have differences in the fundamentals of religious and jurisprudential cognition and the rhetoric of these movements. On the whole, the three important sources of religious cognition, i.e. narration, wisdom, intuition, play important roles in interpretation of the fundamentals of Sharia law as the commonly believed fundamentals among the proponents of these movements. This is because the factor shapes the majority of the rules and jurisprudential reasoning that a Muslim obliges himself to obey (Masjed Jamei, Mohammad, Grounds for Political Thought in the Realm of Shia and Sunni Islam, 1991). On this basis, one of the factors effective in behavioral differences in these movements in political terms relates to their discourse and jurisprudential fundamentals. By discourse here we mean belief in monotheism, prophethood, imamate and Divine justice… This has made them support various political patterns such as caliphate or imamate. Thus they adopt various strategies based on their attitude toward political life of the prophet and justice. For instance, one of their important discourse discussions is their attitude toward monotheism and their certain attitude toward belief and disbelief, based on which they divide human beings into monotheists, polytheists, and unbeliever. The more restricted the realm of monotheism, the more confined will be relationships with the Muslims. This sometimes leads to condemnation of the person to excommunication and religiously ordered capital punishment. The broader the belief in monotheism, the extensive the relationship will be with Muslims. These attitudes are influential in the unity of the Muslim world. Therefore, based on these cognitive and discourse fundamentals, two types of distinct discourses will be traceable among the contemporary Islamist movements. It should be noted that parts of the movements related to these two discourses (like part of the traditional Islamists, Sufis and modernists) are outside the preference of discussion of this paper. Our concentration will be on political Islam movements that make attempts to realize Islamic sovereignty in the sociopolitical arena of the world of Islam. These two discourses are in constant competition based on different central signifiers and different articulation of floating signifiers inside political Islam. They define otherness with their fellow identity indeed. Therefore, these two discourses can be called Narrative Political Islam discourse and Rational-Jurisprudential Political Islam discourse, as defined below.

1- Narrative Political Islam Discourse

The central signifier of this discourse centers round a narrative interpretation of the religious instructions and codes. Although text as the explicit discourse, is the main source of all jurisprudential deductions among jurists and Muslims, and to that end, the Holy Quran as the Book of Revelation along with the tradition attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) and his behavior, with companions of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Imams as the exegetists of revelation hold special status in the meantime, and although Muslims attach great significance to the text, they have different attitudes

toward the text. They see text not as a written source, but as something trans-historical that needs no interpretation whatsoever. They believe that the apparent text reveals the reality of the Revelation. Irrespective of the differences among texts, they consider them as Muhkamat (words with a transparent meaning that is readily understood and that admits of no interpretation other than its prima facie sense) that are enforceable at all times and in all places. (Rabbani Golpayegani, Ali, Salafi History, Traditionalists and Hanabilah, Bashgah-e Andishe Website)

The traditionalist movement in the history of Islam represented this understanding of the text that the movement was established since the advent of Islam to pay attention to the surface meaning of the Sharia texts, thus prohibiting any interpretation or exegesis of the texts. Although trends are seen among various Muslim Shia and Sunni sects, there is stronger tendency toward narration among the Sunni sub-sects of Hanbali and Maliki. These Islamic movements used to make their interpretations of the religion based on their own intellectual tenets. They were influential in the formation of some Islamic movements in the world of Islam. Today, many movements in the Islamic societies in the Central Asia, Balkans and Southeast Asia are dominated by such ideology. Also the radical Salafis, called Takfiri or Jihadi Muslims are part of the movements with strong belief in narration trends, chiefly under the influence of Ibn Taymiyyah (728 H. (1328)). The examples of this intellectual movement can be also found in Indian subcontinent (Deobandi revivalist movement), Taliban and in some violence practicing movements such as Al-Qaeda, Sipah-e-Sahaba sectarian group in Pakistan and some Takfiri groups in Egypt and in some Arab states and Central Asian and Caucasian republics.

2- Jurisprudential-Rationalist Discourse

The central signifier of this discourse focuses on jurisprudential-rational interpretation of the religious texts. Contrary to the narrative discourse that believed the text was something trans-historical and enforceable at all times, and in all places, this discourse believes in interpretation of the texts. They regard the texts as written sources that need exegesis in order to understand their correct meaning. They do not suffice to the texts and attempt to gain an in-depth understanding by resorting to the etymological, literary and logical reasoning and by drawing a comparison with Muhkamat or unequivocal verses of the Holy Quran and Mutashabehat or equivocal verses of the Holy Quran. (Jenati, Mohammad Ebrahim, Ijtihad Sources in View of Islamic Sects, Kayhan, First Edition, 1991) The majority of Muslim and jurisprudential reformists maintain this approach to the texts. As a matter of fact, some traditional forces tend to traditional instructions on one hand, and on the other hand, depending upon certain time and place requirements they maintain developmental and reformist approach toward politics. This ideology was promoted in contemporary age by such scholars as Seyed Jamaladin Asadabadi and Muhammad Abduh. In the course of history, this transformism has taken the shape of reformism or revolutionary. Part of the Islamic movements in the world of Islam has been under the influence of these forces. In theoretical and jurisprudential area, this movement places emphasis on expediency and the role of wisdom in comprehension of Sharia rules, role of time and place in Ijtihad, emphasis on expediency and the secondary rules as well as the

government rules to present a new perspective of the traditional trend that has its roots in the Book and tradition on one hand, and meets the demands of the time on the other hand. This has created a sort of reformist attitude in the political arena.

Among the Sunni Muslims (specially in the contemporary world), this movement has placed emphasis on such concepts as council, allegiance, bidding for good and forbidding from bad, fighting oppression and suppression and fighting colonialism and tyranny. It has emphasized the need for turning to Ijtihad and sought boosting the capacity of the jurisprudence to address the demands of the time proportionate to the time and place requirements. In interaction with new national and international conditions they defended a sort of religious democracy and reformism in political field. An example of this intellectual movement can be found in Islamic groups in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Southeast Asia namely Ikhwanul Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood), Hamas, Muhammadiyah Islamic society in Indonesia, … This form of reformism is common among the Shia Muslims. Islamic Revolution in Iran was a product of this type of movement that is under the influence of principalist and rational Shia jurisprudence. This movement defends the role of wisdom and tries to clarify an appropriate relationship between Sharia and rationality (Fozi, Yahya, Reviewing Capabilities of Shia Reformist Discourse in Iran, Matin Quarterly, No. 17). These rationalist groups consider wisdom as a tool for understanding the rules of Sharia, and with the tool of wisdom they interpret the narrative. The presumption of this group is this that Sharia laws are closely intertwined with rational rules but rationalism in the sense of admitting wisdom is not something apart Revelation. Rather, wisdom is considered as a method for understanding the religious instructions and Sharia rules. According to them, since the Almighty God is All-Wise, He never issues contradictory and unwise rules. Therefore, wisdom can be a reliable method for understanding Sharia on one hand, and on the other hand it can be used as an instrument for setting the Sharia law. Even in some cases, they say wisdom can be used for issuance of independent rules approved by the Sharia law. Therefore, there is a two-sided relationship between wisdom and Sharia (Whatever wisdom orders is the order of Sharia). Such an attitude toward the relationship between wisdom and Sharia has given this group a high potential for maneuvering in confrontation with new issues so that they believe Sharia can meet the new demands everywhere and anytime. This group tries to explore principles and reject superiority of the positive laws over principles with the tool of wisdom. They are of the opinion that the scholars of religion must issue religious orders within their Ijtihad according to the time and place requirements. This means that they should not confine themselves to scholastic understanding of the Holy Quran and the tradition. Although this ideology has a spectrum of thoughts on the relationship between wisdom and Sharia in itself, so that some of them are close to the narrative discourse and some to the modernists, a great number of them adhere to moderation and try to establish a link between prinicipalism and rationalism. On the whole, this jurisprudential discourse comprises of an important portion of the movements in the world of Islam between the Shia and Sunni Muslims who try to safeguard Islamic identity in the changing world conditions. Presenting rational solutions and extracting them from the Sharia law in line with the time and place requirements, they intend to present a rational and

efficient image of the Islamic Revolution. The Islamic Revolution of Iran and Imam Khomeini supported this discourse.

C- Similarities and Differences between the Two Islamist Discourses based on Articulation of Floating Signifiers

The two Islamist discourses have tried to articulate instructions of political Islam as floating signifiers round their projected central signifier to give them new meanings. On this basis, the Islamic concepts in each discourse have found a different meaning without which the discourse is not understandable. Hereunder we will discuss these floating signifiers that are apparently similar but possess different meanings inside each discourse. This will help us gain a more realistic understanding of the differences and similarities between the two discourses.

1- Different Interpretations on Monotheism in Rulership and Specifications of Islamic Model of Governance

There are serious differences between the two discourses on the pattern of governance and the qualities of a Muslim ruler. Although political Islam believes in the relationship between the religion and politics and in the need for establishment of a government based on Islamic values, this exposes them to challenges with non-religious secularism and religious secularism. However, there are different approaches to the desirable model of governance and Muslim ruler among the movements supporting political Islam that come from their diversified interpretations of the principle of monotheism and Divine sovereignty. At a time all Muslims believe in the principle of monotheism, the narrative discourse has a superficial interpretation of some Quranic verses with exclusive perspective of monotheism. The superficial attitude toward monotheism has created a narrow interpretation of monotheism among the supporters of the narrative discourse and yielded the following results:

- Claiming monopoly of sovereignty for God, they attach no role for people in governance, equalize democracy with blasphemy, and saying any objection or uprising against the government is religiously prohibited. Whereas the rationalist discourse, while admitting Divine sovereignty, believe that this sovereignty is established through satisfaction of people as the owners of the Divine right in the society. They highlight the role of people and the Divine-popular legitimacy of the ruler, and consider qualifications for the ruler while observing no contradiction between public right and monotheism in governance. As a result, this sort of attitude toward monotheism will have important consequences in setting boundaries in Islamic communities as well as in forcing otherness in political field.
- Part of the narrative discourse accentuates a type of government based on caliphate that is a kind of return to the past. Their preferred mode of governance is return to the past and justifying the historical stages in which caliphs have taken the office through caliphate to absolute dominance. (Mavardi, Ahkam al-Sultaniyah) According to this discourse, political

ruler can assume power in any way possible and as far as he has not openly announced his unbelief, he will be the "ruler" of Islamic community and obeying him will be religiously mandatory (Ibid). This discourse sees the relationship between people and government one-sided in which people are obliged to obey the government thus any objection to or uprising against the government will be religiously forbidden, thus the culprit shall be subject to punishment. They even consider the elections and councils as issues imported from the West and from the lands of blasphemy. (Osamatul Ataya, Hoquq Valiul Amr va Vajebatohu va Manzelat Velatul Amr fil-Mamlekatel Arabia val-Saudia, p. 9) Such an attitude toward the government can be found in the conservative narrative discourse of political Islam in Saudi Arabia and in some other Muslim states.

- Another part of the radical narrative movements admit caliphate model but in revision of the pattern of caliphate they insist on rejecting the rulership of the unbelievers. Thus the ruler of Muslims for them is the one whose objective behind establishment of the government is the foundation of an Islamic governance and enforcement of Sharia laws including the law on bidding for good and forbidding from bad, otherwise the ruler will be considered outside the inclusion of the Sharia approved ruler of Muslim community. This is why they argue that the majority of modern-day rulers in the world of Islam are illegitimate. They live in opposition with the Saudi government and defend a sort of caliphate with restricted authority and establishment of an Islamic emirate under the leadership of an Islamic scholar who assumes power through consensus, contract or by the use of force. Establishment of an Islamic emirate in Afghanistan by the Taliban and the attempts for establishment of such an emirate in Iraq and Syria by Al-Qaeda are clear examples of this model of governance. (Afshar, 2012)

Whereas the rationalist discourse of the Shia and Sunni Muslims follows a model of governance proportionate to the time and place requirements and defends a sort of religious democracy based on bidding for good, establishment of councils and swearing allegiance (upon new interpretation, i.e. elections). They are of the opinion that the pattern of allegiance must be reviewed. This perspective can be observed among the Ikhwanul Muslimin (Hassan al-Banna, Majmuat Al-Resael, p. 228) and some other traditional rationalist movements in the world of Islam such as the Muhammadiyah Islamic society in Indonesia and Al Nehzat Movement in Tunisia. Also Imam Khomeini's views and Islamic Revolution discourse are placed in this discourse. Imam Khomeini tried to uphold an Islamic system of government that is a kind of religious democracy in which the ruler is the most qualified one selected by the public vote. Although he insists that the leader must have the knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, it does not mean that all jurists are rulers by nature, rather, realization of the rulership of the ruler has been conditioned to public consent and vote. According to him, "The order of the public-elect ruler is enforceable" (Sahifeh Nour, Vol. 22) and the relationship between the ruler and people is reciprocal and based on conditional representation of the general public. It can be said indeed that paying attention to the role of people in admitting the ruler and supervising his performance

on one hand, and negating his domination or force as a means of assuming political power is the distinctive point between rationalist discourse (like that of the Islamic Revolution and Imam Khomeini) and the other narrative discourses.

2- Type of Attitude toward Political Right of People

One of the most distinctive cases in political thought of rationalist Islam and narrative Islam is the type of attitude to political rights of people in religious government. Upon a review on the standpoints of the rationalist and narrative discourses one can admit that there are serious differences between this discourse and the rationalist-jurisprudential discourse on one side and the Islamic Revolution discourse on the other side in terms of attitudes toward the rights of people. A major part of the narrative discourse, i.e. Salafi thought, consider right and justice as something religious not rational. On this basis, they say considering a framework for justice beyond Sharia is meaningless. They reject the rights of people as an example of something outside the religious texts such as wisdom or fitra (innate disposition). This means they believe in no political right for people except what they consider for them. They are of the opinion that the people have the right to swear allegiance to the ruler after he was appointed through heredity, council of the elderly or by the use of force, but they deserve no right to make objection to, criticize or stage uprising against the ruler. Upon a special interpretation of the Divine nature of the government, they believe people have no right of intervention.

However, more moderate movements in the world of Islam have tried to keep distance from this perspective. For instance, Hassan al-Hudaybi the general Murshid of Ikhwanul Muslimin has opined on the role of people in the religious government as the following: "The people in the community (umma) elect the ruler for a certain or uncertain period of time and the ruler is under public surveillance not only in political terms, but also in judicial and social terms. He shall be accountable for what he does and anyone can file a complaint against the ruler in any court. In this sense, the ruler is equal to the ordinary people." (Hassan al-Hudaybi, Du'at la Qudat, P. 417) Even when the Ikhwanul Muslimin rose to power in Egypt during the recent years, they insisted on the need for keeping the government popular. (Tofiq Yusif al-Waei, Al-Raviyat el-Shameliya le-Tavajjohat al-Ikhwanul Muslimin al-Eslahiya, p. 69).

This perspective has been clearly reflected in the discourse of many Muslim thinkers including Imam Khomeini and Islamic Revolution thinkers who believe that based on Sharia and rational principles people deserve much human and Sharia rights, therefore any imposition on them will be illegitimate. They insist on the principle of justice and believe that political right of people is a part of their God-given right and realization of this right is a clear instance of meeting justice. In this connection, Imam Khomeini insisted on the right of people to determine their fate and on the right to freedom as a Divine blessing. Referring to the Holy Quran, tradition and wisdom, Imam Khomeini considered rights for people – in addition to the right to determine their fate – such as the right to make political decisions, the right to make supervision in political matters, the right to vote for political officials and the right to criticize them, the right to make objection to the conduct of the political officials and the like. He used to talk about a mutual right between the government and the nation (Sahifeh

Nour, Vol. 20: 76). The emphasis on these discussions has its roots in different fundamentals of jurisprudential and discourse methodology of this discourse and the type of their attitude toward the human rights and also belief in justice as an ultra-religious principle.

1- Type of Interpretation of Sharia Rules

The emphasis on the Sharia rule is the joint emphasis of all contemporary Islamist movements. The manifestation of oneness and Divine sovereignty is indeed manifested in realization of the Divine rules. However, there are various interpretations of this concept. On one hand, the Jihadi discourse supports the role of wisdom and tries to clarify an appropriate relationship between Sharia and rationality. This intellectual movement considers wisdom as a tool for understanding the Sharia rules, thus they use it in interpretation of narrative discourse. (Fozi, 2014: 42-54) Based on their perspective, wisdom can be a reliable method for understanding Sharia on one hand, and on the other hand, it can be used for determining manifestations of Sharia rules. In some cases, wisdom can be used to issue independent rules that are approved by Sharia. (See Mozaffar, Principles of Jurisprudence, Rational Independent Rules) Such an attitude toward the relationship between wisdom and Sharia has given this group a high potential for maneuvering in confrontation with new issues so that they believe Sharia can meet the new demands everywhere and at anytime. This group tries to explore principles and reject superiority of the positive laws over principles with the tool of wisdom. They are of the opinion that the scholars of religion must issue religious orders within their Ijtihad according to the time and place requirements. This means that they should not confine themselves to scholastic understanding of the Holy Quran and the tradition. Although this ideology has a spectrum of thoughts on the relationship between wisdom and Sharia in itself, so that some of them are close to the narrative discourse and some to the modernists, a great number of them adhere to moderation and try to establish a link between prinicipalism and rationalism. The followers of this discourse can be observed among Shia and Sunni Muslims. For instance, Ikhwanul Muslimin, receiving influence from Hassan al-Banna, supported Ijtihad. One of the major principles the Muslim Brotherhood believed in was promoting the principle of Ijtihad. This is because in view of Ikhwanul Muslimin, Muslims have to bring themselves into conformity with the time requirements and use God-given wisdom in all affairs without turning their back to the principles of religion. (Amraei, 2014: 136-138) Hudaybi the general Murshid of Ikhwanul Muslimin criticizes some viewpoints and expresses his opinion on Divine laws as the following: "There is this misunderstanding with some who think that God has not allowed people to establish organizations for planning and lawmaking to regulate their life affairs. This is because they see lawmaking as making a partner to God." Hudaybi says such understanding of the matter is against wisdom. He believes that God has bestowed upon man part of the authority to make laws for betterment of his life on earth. According to him, "Lawmaking on changing and permissible affairs is one major duty of man." (Alikhani, p. 413)

Islamic Revolution thinkers and Imam Khomeini too insisted on the interdependency between wisdom and Sharia and the need for Ijtihad based on time

and place requirements, and opposed any form of paganism and superficiality in understanding religious rules. These distinct interpretations of Sharia among the two Islamist discourses have created serious impacts on their political conduct and way of confrontation with the problems in their societies, the example of which can be seen in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On the other hand, jurisprudential methodology of the narrative discourse insists on such cases as direct reference to the traditions, trust in unsupported traditions, avoiding interpretation and exegesis of the religious texts, and rejecting the use of wisdom in religious understanding. This has allowed a sectoral attitude toward Islamic rules. In this perspective that is chiefly supported by traditionalists, any rationalism is opposed as a source for understanding the Sharia. They believe that wisdom is not a source for discerning the Sharia rule. They support a sort of Sharia wisdom indeed and the rule of wisdom is supported to the extent to be clearly approved by Sharia. This superficial perspective places excessive emphasis on narrative and rejects wisdom. Therefore, this discourse presents all deductions on political issues and the type of attitude toward the everyday issues as well as the type of attitude toward new civilization in this framework. Some manifestations of these discussions can be observed in the following:

- Polytheism and unbelief: The type of the attitude toward monotheism in jurisprudential discourse understanding in this group and their manner of behavior manifest in political field, based on which some radical movements appear inside this superficial discourse, such as the Salafi thought. They consider the majority of the religious practices such as meeting the graves of the saints, resorting to the Imams and the prophets, intercession and making tombs and domes for the graves as contrary to monotheism. They call everyone with such practices as polytheist and unbeliever. On the contrary, the jurists belonging to the jurisprudential discourse believe that this discourse has an improper and unreal interpretation of the verses and that they have generalized some rules and verses on the idols and infidels to many other cases.

- Religious innovations: The above jurisprudential inference results in religious innovation. Despite the fact that all Muslims oppose innovation in religion and reject it, narrative discourse once again makes some generalizations outside wisdom and Sharia and terms many practices as instances of innovation. Such religious ceremonies as festivity on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the Prophet (PBUH), resorting to the saints, reading Fatihah (prayer for the forgiveness of the dead) after the daily prayers and many other similar practices are all instances of religious innovation for them. Whereas according to the rival discourse, when there is no reason to testify prohibition, necessity, hate or recommendation on the part of the Sharia lawmaker, the practice shall be considered permissible. This is technically called "Isalatul Ibahah" (Principality of Permissibility). However, Abd al-Wahhab has invented the term "Isalatul Hazar" (Principality of Avoidance) or "Islatul Man'a" (Principality of Prohibition). He considered many practices such as decoration of the

mosques as an instance of religious innovation and an act of Haram or religiously forbidden act since there was no likeness of the practice in the tradition. The results of this discussion find significance in otherness in political arena.

- Excommunication: The excommunication of the intellectual opponents is another major discussion with the political thought of the narrative discourse. Resorting to this, they excommunicate the majority of Muslims opposing their opinion, whereas according to the jurisprudential discourse, unbelief appears when man openly expresses his disbelief in the religion or consciously rejects acting upon the religious rules and prefers to be unbeliever than believer. Abd al-Wahhab argued that "People committing innovation in religion are all unbelievers and apostates and anyone denying their apostasy or saying their practice is not wrong will be ruled as corrupt, thus his witness shall not be accepted and he shall not be followed in performing prayers. The religion of Islam shall not be complete indeed except by acquittance of the apostates." This belief has had serious consequences in political field and in contacts with others.

- Jihad: Although the principle of Jihad has been accepted in almost all discourses, the Salafi thought – which is placed inside the narrative political Islam discourse – has a certain interpretation of Jihad hat goes even against a major part of the narrative traditionalists. They consider Jihadism as a strategy to uproot polytheism, unbelief and discord in the world as a main duty of Muslims. They believe in greater Jihad as a forgotten religious obligation that must be revived (Abd al-Salam, Faraj, Jihad: Dominant Religious Duty). Sayyid Qutb in his Ma'alim fi al-Tariq says Jihad against the enemy is inevitable. He argues that "Establishing the government of God on Earth and elimination of the rule of man, taking power out of the hands of the oppressor servants and returning it to God, sovereignty based on Divine law and eliminating the man-made laws will not be possible through preaching only." (Sayyid Qutb, Ma'alim fi al-Tariq) It should be noted that both political Islamic discourses believe in the fight of the Muslims against hegemony and enmity of the Western colonialists, which they consider it an instance of defense. However, the pessimism toward the Jihadi Salafi discourses becomes apparent knowing that they have a narrow interpretation of monotheism, polytheism and discord which encompasses the majority of Muslim and non-Muslim sects. On this basis, all these Muslims are targets of Jihadi fatwa or religious decree. On the other hand, the radical and Jihadi movement say the use of force and violence as well as inappropriate behavior with the captives are permissible. This type of Jihad leads to the expansion of violence and extremism in the world as well as Islamophobia. Whereas the followers of Jihadi discourse do not accept such an attitude toward Jihad (see Egyptian Mufti: Gadhi Mohammad Saeid Ashmawi, Al-Islam al-Siasi (Cairo, 2008). In this connection, Imam Khomeini argues that first, military Jihad is a part of Jihad in contrast with the spiritual Jihad it is called minor

Jihad. Second, he proposes certain conditions for Jihad and believes that Jihadism depends upon the presence of Infallible Imam. Thirdly, he believes in defensive Jihad that is applicable in cases the Muslims are under aggression. Fourth, in this type of Jihad, the Sharia regulations such as the rights on war must be observed and illegal violence must be avoided (Imam Khomeini, Tahrir al-Vasilah, Chapter on Jihad).

4- Islamic Unity

Although based on Quranic verses all Islamists insist on the need for Islamic unity, the narrative-Salafi discourses and the resulting branches stick to their dogmatic thoughts and do not tolerate opposition groups and rule on their excommunication. Part of the narrative movements do not accept Shahadatayn (The Testimony) as a declaration of belief in Islam; rather, they believe that a Muslim must be a real believer in deed and creed. Their interpretation of Sharia is the criterion for accepting the deed of the individuals. (Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, Towhid) This means a Muslim should behave according to the interpretation of the narrative discourse of the Sharia in addition to declaring the testimony to be a Muslim. This interpretation excludes not only non-Sunni groups such as Shia and Sufi from the circle of Islam, but also instigates serious opposition and discord with the four schools of thought in Sunni sect. This has weakened unity among various Islamic sects and strengthened violence, discord and hatred against Shiite, Sufism, philosophers, … as the manifestations of polytheism. In jurisprudential discourse, there is an inclusive attitude toward Muslims and non-Muslims and anyone declaring the testimony will be considered a Muslim (Imam Khomeini, Tahrir al-Vasilah). The unity of Muslims, according to the followers of this discourse, is the unity of everyone believing in monotheism and prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH), however in behavior following any jurist in the world of Islam. Therefore, Imam Khomeini believes that performing prayer after a Sunni congregational prayer leader and even following their jurisprudential conduct will be permissible in many cases.

5- Type of Attitude towards the West and Modern Civilization

Although there are three pro-Western, anti-West and West-philia tendencies in the world of Islam, one can say that part of the contemporary Islamist movements is anti-West and a major part is West-philia, that means their selective attitude toward the new civilization dominating the world. In this connection, the narrative political discourses are anti-West by nature. For instance, the Salafi school opposes Western civilization and all its attributes as the manifestation of polytheism and blasphemy. The solid evidences for their claims can be found in the weird fatwas by the Wahhabi muftis. (See http://www.aviny.com/occasion/jang-narm/vahabiat/shenakht-vahabiat/fatva-vahabiat.aspx) A number of them believe that the civilizational and historical relics and monuments must be destroyed. A number of traditional Wahhabi jurists prohibited learning philosophy, logics and new sciences. They even prohibited riding bicycles since they believed it is the "chariot of Satan" that is driven by sorcery and with the Satan's feet. They opposed new inventions such as telephone, telegraph,

and camera. (Motahhari, 2005: 64). During the recent decades, however, the state Wahhabism approved using modern technologies to strengthen the pillars of power of Saudis. Thus they try to give a new interpretation of modernity and civilization. The Jihadi Salafis use all modern-day technologies in practice but theoretically they are seriously against new civilization as they call it pagan civilization that must be destroyed. Sayyid Qutb, was an intellectual leader of the Jihadi Takfiri movement who called the Western civilization modern paganism that must be uprooted (Sayyid Qutb, Ma'alim fi al-Tariq)

However, the jurisprudential discourse used to insist on selective attitude toward the modern civilization. In this connection, Imam Khomeini says: "We are not against modernity. We are against corruption. It is not like that when an Islamic government is established, the everyday life of people will be messed up." (Sahifeh Nour, 2000, Vol. 4, p. 54) He continues to say: "If manifestations of civilization and innovation are inventions and new developed industries that help the progress of human civilization, Islam has never opposed and will never oppose this. Science and technology have always been emphasized by Islam and the Holy Quran. If by modernity and civilization they mean absolute freedom in all forbidden acts and in corruption, even in homosexuality and the like, (we should say) all Divine religions and scientists and scholars oppose it." (Ibid, Vol. 21, p. 407) On the whole, although this discourse criticizes cultural and ethical decadence in the West and highlights the colonial and arrogant nature of the system, it lauds technological aspects and the development in the West. They accept aspects of modern civilization as the joint heritage of mankind. Imam Khomeini in a letter to the Guardians Council recommends them to avoid misinterpretation of Islam in such a way that it might represent Islam as opposing civilization (Sahifeh Nour, Vol. 21, p. 56)

Conclusion

In this paper, we reviewed various Islamist discourses and found out that although political Islam is a discourse in the contemporary world with the central signifier of belief in sociopolitical nature of Islam as presented in contrast to the two rival discourses, i.e. non-religious secularism and religious secularism, in an in-depth glance at the issue we must say that political Islam falls itself into sub-discourses. Although these sub-discourses jointly believe in political Islam in principle, they have differences in interpretation of these fundamentals. In other words, although today the political Islam seems to be on a par with secularism and individualistic conservative Islam, the discourse has sub-divisions in itself in confrontation with the political movements involved. In other words, although all Islamist political movements share the belief in political Islam, they have differences in the fundamentals of religious and jurisprudential cognition and the rhetoric of these movements. Since these discourses are intellectual movements, one of the factors effective in behavioral differences in these movements in political terms relates to their discourse and jurisprudential fundamentals. By discourse here we mean belief in monotheism, prophethood, imamate and Divine justice, … This has made them support various political patterns such as caliphate or imamate. Thus they adopt various strategies based on their attitude toward political life of the prophet and

justice. Based on these cognitive and discourse fundamentals as well as jurisprudential methodology, two distinct discourses can be identified in the contemporary Islamist movements that can be categorized as narrative and rational discourses. The two discourses are different based on the central signifier and different articulation of the floating signifiers inside the political Islam. They define otherness with their fellow identity indeed. Therefore, these two discourses can be called Narrative Political Islam discourse and Rational-Jurisprudential Political Islam discourse. The central signifier of the superficial discourse centers round a narrative interpretation of the religious instructions and codes and the central signifier of the rationalist discourse is the rational-jurisprudential interpretation of the religious texts. The two Islamist discourses have tried to articulate instructions of political Islam as floating signifiers round their projected central signifier to give them new meanings. On this basis, the Islamic concepts in each discourse have found a different meaning without which the discourse will not be understandable.

To make a more accurate clarification of the two discourses, in this paper we have compared and contrasted the two discourses in terms of terminology and ideological commonalities with political consequences. To that end, we reviewed viewpoints of the supporters of each discourse on such variables as their interpretations of monotheism and Divine sovereignty, justice, excommunication, Jihad, Islamic unity, attitude toward Sharia law, characteristics of Islamic government and qualities of Islamic ruler, attitude toward political rights of people, attitude toward the West, modernization and new civilization. Findings of this paper show that despite verbal and conceptual commonalities, there are major differences between the two discourses in interpretation of these commonalities, each of which is believed to have serious political consequences. The solid evidence of this can be found in two political Islam patterns in Iran as symbol of jurisprudence on one side and practical behavioral pattern in Taliban in Afghanistan and Daesh (ISIS) in Iraq and Syria as a symbol of narrative and superficial political Islam on the other side.

Similarities and Differences between Contemporary Political Islamic discourses

Comparative Item	Constructionist interpretation Superficial Discourse	Jurisprudential Discourse (Imam Khomeini)
Type of interpretation of monotheism and Divine sovereignty	superficial attitude toward monotheism opposing political participation of people as something against Divine sovereignty	Broad interpretation of monotheism Supporting political sovereignty of people along the Divine sovereignty
characteristics of Islamic government and qualities of Islamic ruler	Supporting traditional caliphate pattern Considering democracy as blasphemous	Supporting religious democracy pattern

attitude toward political rights of people	Negating human rights without Sharia law	Emphasis on innate and God-given rights of mankind
attitude toward Sharia law	Opposing part of the Muslim beliefs as polytheistic Religious innovation in new affairs (Isalatul Hazar) Excommunication of intellectual opponents Expanding the scope of coverage and manifestations of Jihad	More tolerant view of polytheism and religious innovation Admitting non-prescribed new affairs (Isalatul Bara'a) Different interpretation of verses on Jihad
Islamic unity	Considering people acting against their fatwa as non-Muslims Restricting the area of manifestations of unity	Broader attitude toward clear manifestations of rules Emphasis on unity of all sects with the emphasis given on commonalities
attitude toward the West, modernization and new civilization	Serious opposition to the new civilization Using manifestations of civilization when urgently needed	Selective attitude toward civilization

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