Analyzing the Interaction between Islam and Ideology in the Political Thought of Hassan al-Banna and Ayatollah Khomeini

Hasan el-Benna ve Ayetullah Humeyni'nin Siyasi Düşüncelerinde İslam ve İdeoloji Arasındaki Etkileşimin Analizi

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between Islam and ideology through the thoughts and works of Ayatollah Khomeini and Hassan al-Banna, who led Islamic movements. To achieve this aim, the study will examine the fundamental elements of their political thoughts, ideological approaches, and social impacts. Specifically, it will explore how Khomeini used Shia theology to garner support from both religious and secular communities during the revolution and his efforts to export the regime post-revolution. Additionally, it will assess Khomeini's efforts in three crucial areas—nationalism, Islamism, and anti-imperialism—to reinstate Iran's Shia values and ideology. Similarly, the study will analyze al-Banna's evaluation of Islam as a "system" and his contributions through the Muslim Brotherhood organization. Al-Banna's ideological foundation includes anti-imperialist principles and the argument that there is no separation between religion and the state, advocating for an approach where Islam encompasses all aspects of life. This research will be conducted using a qualitative method, focusing on the works and discourses of these two intellectuals. The study aims to provide an in-depth examination of how both thinkers established the relationship between Islam and ideology and the impact of this relationship on contemporary Islamic movements.

Key Words: International Relations, Ideology, Identity, Islamic Thought, Hassan al-Banna, Ayatollah Khomeini.

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, İslam ve ideoloji arasındaki ilişkiyi, İslami hareketlere önderlik eden Ayetullah Humeyni ve Hasan el-Benna'nın düşünceleri üzerinden analiz etmektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, Humeyni ve el-Benna'nın siyasi düşüncelerinin temel unsurları, ideolojik yaklaşımları ve toplumsal etkileri ele alınacaktır. Çalışmada, Humeyni'nin Şii teolojisini kullanarak devrim sürecinde dini ve seküler kesimlerin desteğini nasıl kazandığı ve devrim sonrası rejim ihracına yönelik çabaları incelenecektir. Ayrıca, Humeyni'nin milliyetçilik, İslamcılık ve anti-emperyalizm gibi üç önemli alanda İran'ın Şii değerlerini ve ideolojisini yeniden tesis etme çabaları değerlendirilecektir. El-Benna'nın İslam'ı bir "nizam" olarak değerlendirmesi ve İhvan-ı Müslümin teşkilatı aracılığıyla ideolojik ve kurumsal katkıları analiz edilecektir. El-Benna'nın düşünce temelleri arasında anti-emperyalist prensipler ve din ile devlet arasında bir ayrım olmadığı savunusu yer almaktadır. Bu bağlamda, her iki düşünürün İslam ve ideoloji arasındaki ilişkiyi nasıl kurduğu ve bu ilişkinin günümüz İslami hareketlerine etkisi değerlendirilecektir. Araştırma, nitel bir yöntemle, bu iki düşünürün eserleri ve söylemleri üzerinden yürütülecektir. Çalışma, her iki düşünürün İslam ve ideoloji arasındaki ilişkiye dair katkılarını derinlemesine inceleyerek, bu ilişkinin İslami hareketler üzerindeki etkisini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası İlişkiler, İdeoloji, Kimlik, İslami düşünce, Hasan al-Benna, Ayetullah Humeyni

Introduction

Islam and ideology have had a substantial impact on social and political life in the Muslim world. This impact arises from political discourses, political actors, policymakers, and cultural and traditional motives. Consequently, ideology is assessed more comprehensively within political thought rather than being solely described as a project for rebellion; instead, it encompasses the dogma of political action. Likewise, ideology is an integral part of political discourse, and identity and ideology are deeply embedded in political discussions. Apparently, the concepts of "Self and Other" or "US and Them" are not independent of constructs of ideology, politics, and identity; they are presumed to be inherently intertwined. The role of ideology aligns with the functions of national identity. When it appeals to a common identity, it serves the cohesive needs of the state. Focusing on social actors and relations raises questions concerning individual and collective identity on the one hand and the hierarchy of ideas and power relations resulting from their ideological underpinnings on the other. In the context of the function of ideology, how is 'identity work' conducted by groups, institutions, and individuals? How can identities bridge ethnicity, gender, negotiation, representation, religion, and profession? How are power relations enacted and represented in discourse?[1] The representation of in-groups and out-groups has become particularly critical in conflict situations across various dimensions, such as ethnicity, culture, religion, and politics.[1]

Turning to Islam and Islamic ideology from a general perspective, it can be noted that political transformation is a significant facet of the Muslim project, rooted in religious legitimacy. One of the key issues pertains to the interaction between Islam and power. This core aspect has recently gained prominence in praxis and Islamist discourse, with updates in Qur'anic hermeneutics and explanations of Islamic rules and regulations.[2] Consequently, the importance of Islamic ideology lies in its role as a significant resource in the competition for power among diverse entities involved in the comprehensive domain of political Islam. The analysis of political Islam primarily represents a political and philosophical trend. In this context, two prominent ideologues and thinkers are explored from the perspective of Islam and ideology. Hassan Al-Banna, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, is popular all over the Muslim

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[1] Monika Kopytowska, "Ideology, identity and interaction within discourse and society dialectics", *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines* 5/2(2012), 2.

[2] Hamid Algar, "Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini". *Berkeley, [Calif.]: Mizan Press*, 1981, 53.

world with his views regularly cited by Muslims and non-Muslim thinkers. The thoughts of Hassan Al-Banna have influenced not only the intellectual climate of his own time but also all Islamic movements in Egypt that followed him. The ideological foundation of Hassan Al-Banna's thought includes anti-imperialist principles and in the ideology of Hassan Al-Banna, the fundamental argument there is no seperation between religion and the state, and advocating for an approach where Islam encompasses all aspects of life. Khomeini, on the other hand, the main figure in the Iranian revolution and rebellion against the Shah. The primary success of Khomeini made a struggle existing political structures and statusquo by consolidating the all society around religious concepts and Iranian revolution principles.

Economic and societal challenges, coupled with historical circumstances, have led to the collapse of political establishments in several countries, including Egypt and Iran. For instance, Egypt has grappled with these challenges, paving the way for the upheaval of Islamist establishments as conflicting agencies.[3] According to Islamic ideologues, Islam primarily opposes modern nation-states from the perspective of national sovereignty and advocates the establishment of theocracies, emphasizing the implementation of Sharia law to assert the sovereignty of Allah.[4]

Given this backdrop, the purpose of this research is to employ constructivism to analyze the relationship between Islam and ideology in the political thought of two prominent ideologues, Khomeini and Hassan al-Banna, respectively. Constructivism underscores the significance of ideas, identity, discourse, and alternative expressions, as opposed to explanations based solely on interests and material considerations, in understanding foreign policies. Constructivism also highlights the role of norms and normative structures in shaping state behavior, guided by considerations of appropriateness and constructed narratives of self and others. In accordance with international relations theory, state relations cannot be solely explained by national interests, as the interactions between states can be influenced by the social and cultural identities of actors. Additionally, constructivists assert that the international system is shaped by intellectual, social, cultural, and normative elements rather than just material factors. In brief, constructivists contend that national interests alone do

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[3]   R.C. Barrett, "Islam: Ideology and Conflict.", *JSOU Press,* 2014, 11.

[4]   Liu, Z., "Commentary on 'islamic state' thoughts of Islamism", *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia),* 7(3), (2013), 23.

not dictate a country's foreign policy, and the social identities of policymakers and citizens play a crucial role in shaping foreign affairs.[5]

Building upon these theoretical foundations, following the Iranian revolution in 1979, the Islamic Republic fundamentally relied on a transnational religious ideology. According to Adib-Moghaddam,[6] the fusion of revolutionary energies of Islamic Republic and channelisation them into politics transformed Iran's monarch system from status quo power to universal Islamic movement. The main objective of Ayatollah Khomeini was to export revolutionary ideologies for reshaping to neighboring countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran, hence, has aimed to equip itself with the transnational mandate to export the revolution's principles (idib). He strived on three important main points for Iran to reinstate Shi'a values and ideology i.e. nationalism, Islamism, and anti-imperialism, in order to maintain its power in the Middle East and international arena. Consequently, Iran's state identity transitioned from a monarchy to an Islamic Republic. While being the historical backdrop of this transformation, the concept of Walayat-i Faqih or the Guardianship of the Jurist, which was systematized by Khomeini, has been reinterpreted as the fundamental paradigm of Iran's religious and political life. This notion represents the delegated authority to the Hidden Imam and stands as the most significant contribution in institutionalizing the historical background. The discourse of Ayatollah Khomeini highlighted neither the East nor the West but rather the concept of an Islamic Republic. The ideology envisioned Iran being part of the Islamic Ummah and defined its role as a leader in the fight against the secularism and materialism of the West. Ayatollah Khomeini was also the first clerical leader, who envisioned an alternative to the concept of the Caliphate, with the aim of making Iran the leader of the Muslim world and protecting the oppressed from the oppressor. Ayatollah Khomeini transformed the concept of Walayat-i Faqih into a political concept to protect all oppressed, primarily the Shiites. The other Islamist theorist is Hassan al-Banna, who shared a commonality of thought with the likes of Rashid Rida, Sayyid Qutb and Maududi; rejected national identity in favor of religious identity and advocated the sovereignty of Allah over secular national sovereignty. They also opposed the separation of politics and religion, advocated for the

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[5]   T., Flockhart, *Constructivism and foreign policy*, in Smith, S; Hadfield, A & T Dunne (Eds.), Foreign policy. Theories, actors, cases. Second edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (2012), 85.

[6]   Adib-Moghaddam, A. ed., *A critical introduction to Khomeini.* Cambridge University Press, 2014,131.

establishment of an Islamic state, and rejected tyranny and despotism while supporting Islamic democracy[7].

This study consists of two sections, wherein the first section discusses Khomeinism and his Islamic and political thought, while the second section explores the Islamic-based political and ideological thoughts of Hassan al-Banna.

1. Khomeinism and His Islamic and Political Ideology

Ayatollah Khomeini's legitimacy as a politician has been discussed. A number of scholars have struggled to understand his charismatic power as a complicated politician which helped him develop his ideology and advance the Iranian revolt. In this context, Ayatollah Khomeini creatively organized and encouraged his supporters to merge the Third World ideology with his interpretation of Shi'i Islam; similar features can be easily found in his tomb. The tomb was built in his memory as a civic shrine and a prominent pilgrimage site, not only a sign of religion but also a state group in Islam.[8] However, Khomeini is not merely known for his charismatic power; he is recognized as a central figure in the uprising against the Shah. He can be defined as, a brave, uncompromising challenger of the rule in Iran by 1962. Due to his severe fight against the Shah as well as oppression in Iran, Khomeini was imprisoned for 2 months and later put under house arrest for 4 months. Khomeini displayed courage and unwavering determination when the confrontation intensified between Iran's authorities and himself, primarily triggered by the Shah's land reforms in 1963. Consequently, Khomeini was exiled first to Turkey and later to Iraq.[9]

Many societal classes in Iran were dissatisfied with reinforcing the rights of clerics and contributing to their victory. This dissatisfaction was particularly notable among merchants and artisans in the marketplace. They were concerned about the replacement of traditional factories and supermarkets, which threatened the economic dominance of the marketplace. The emerging mercantile class, however, maintained friendly relations with the imperial system and successfully imported tax-free commodities. On the other hand, Iranian agriculturalists faced a different

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[7]   Liu, Z., "Commentary on 'islamic state' thoughts of Islamism", Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (in Asia), 7(3), (2013), 33.

[8]   Rizvi, K., "Religious icon and a national symbol: the Tomb of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran.", *Muqarnas*, 2003, 210.

[9]   Ismael, J.S. and Ismael, T.Y., "Social change in Islamic society: The political thought of Ayatollah Khomeini.", *Social problems*, 27(5), (1980), 610.

predicament. They were offered small parcels of land by authorities but lacked the necessary revenue to repay their debts, leading to a life of oppression in urban settings. The arrogance displayed by government officials in their dealings with citizens further fueled discontent and played a role in the uprising.[9]

Nevertheless, revolutionary leaders, leveraging their extensive initiatives, aspired to leave an indelible mark on history. Their primary objective was to challenge the global order and promise comprehensive change. Prior to 1979, Khomeini did not identify as a revolutionary leader and had no contact with the relevant government authorities in Iran. However, with the advent of the Iranian revolution in 1979, the Pahlavi Dynasty promoted an identity rooted in a particular racist discourse that emphasized the superiority of the "Aryan" nation (Mellat-e Aryan) in Iran. The dynasty envisioned an ideal social and political order for the Iranian people and believed it to be applicable to the whole world.[10]

Khomeini[11] believed that in order to provide a happy life for hundreds of millions of Muslims, it was an obligation to overthrow the oppressive government and replace it with an Islamic administration. He staunchly opposed monarchy, citing the absence of any Quranic or Hadith reference supporting a monarchical system. In contrast, these sources contained numerous criticisms of the monarchy. During his exile, Khomeini's efforts to lead the revolutionary group in Iran were limited, and his influence was not fully felt by supporters until his release. His time in exile may have contributed to the destabilization of his followers in Iran.

Khomeini's discourse aimed to create both an internal and external counter-revolutionary threat, seeking to purify the remnants of the previous regime. His discourse was a concerted effort to recapture a seemingly lost but, in his view, irreversibly significant historical narrative. Consequently, Khomeini and his supporters aimed to unite in the pursuit of a thoroughly Islamic identity for Iran. Additionally, Khomeini reinterpreted Shi'i principles related to 'imamat,' linking them not only to religious leadership but also to political leadership. Khomeini advocated political radicalism and was regarded as a prominent jurist in both the Muslim world

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[10] Adib-Moghaddam, A. "Iran in world politics: The question of the islamic republic." *New York: Columbia University Press*, 2010, 45-46.

[11] Khomeini. "Islam and revolution, translated by Hamid Algar", *Berkeley: Mizan Press*, 1981, 1-4

and Iran's political sphere. His theory of Islamic government found wide acceptance among Western as well as Muslim scholars.[12]

Nonetheless, the demise was not limited; it was the counter-radicalism that proved to be significant. A similar discourse pervaded other major upheavals in contemporary history, such as the Cuban, Russian, Chinese, and Iranian revolutions, blurring the boundaries between life and death in an attempt to underscore the historical significance of the ongoing conflict.[13] Despite the fact that the implementation of policies occurred towards the end of the rebellion, a higher number of Khomeini's followers perished compared to those opposing him. Consequently, the rebellion resulted in the loss of lives on both sides, illustrating how both the rebellion and the counterrevolution contributed to the continued casualties during the struggles. Although Khomeini frequently called for a non-hostile policy, as mentioned earlier, he ultimately accepted the reality of renunciation as a possible path for the revolutionary process in Iran.[14] It is evident that Khomeini was compelled to make concessions due to the deaths of his followers, leading him to establish an internal counter-revolutionary group capable of advocating for the rights of their people.

Khomeini strived to apply the ideology of an excellent man to his political philosophy. He evaluated the concept of jurisprudent authority, which creates a strong leader of the Islamic Republic. In his thought, this leader is only responsible to God. Khomeini also assigned a novel interpretation to the idea of "Vilayat." The word originates from "Vali," which means friend or holy, or as expressed by Haar John, one who has progressed on the spiritual path to a station where they have a unique connection with God, owing to what is secured or granted by God. Khomeini attributed this position to himself, and later, this position was ascribed to his successor, Ali Khamenei.[15] However, the idea of an imperfect man is evident in Khomeini's declarations, which represent an apparent reflection of the threats to the ideology of the Iranian Revolution posed by social crises and group disunity.

These declarations illustrate Khomeini's commitment to offering the best solutions. The first declaration was made in December 1987 when employment

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[12] Goudarzi, M.R., Jawan, J.A. and Ahmad, Z.B. "The roots of the formation of Ayatollah Khomeini's political thought.", *Canadian Social Science* 5(6), (2010), 65.

[13] Bhagat, G., "Khomeini: Leader Of Islamic Revolution In Iran.", *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 48(1), (1987), 37.

[14] Adib-Moghaddam, A. "Iran in world politics: The question of the islamic republic." *New York: Columbia University Press*, 2010, 56-57.

[15] Abed-Kotob, S. "The accommodationists speak the goals and strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt.", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 27(3), (1995), 441.

conditions were questioned, and societal welfare, as well as conflicts and key aspects of the new labor law, were scrutinized. This new labor law stipulated that the state could provide numerous services to the private sector and later required this sector to adhere to specific rules and regulations. In response, Sarhadizadeh, speaking on behalf of Khomeini, clarified that the state could demand respect in mutual interactions among service providers.[16] The implications of this declaration were more significant than the letter itself. When questioned about its implications, Sarhadizadeh stated that the response of the Clerical Leader encompassed extensive areas, and these broader declarations would govern the Islamic regime and its future role. From his perspective, the government could exert control over the social structure, product pricing, and healthcare services, playing an active role in the community.[17]

Ayatollah Khomeini used metaphors in his critical writings to highlight the division of Iran and the world into two separate groups; the "Oppressor" and the "Oppressed". This division helped to define the Islamic community (Ummah) both in Iran and the Muslim world. According to Khomeini, staying in Iran under an unlawful leader, which according to him "a leader with no knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence" was tantamount to remaining under oppression. Khomeini maintained strong intellectual ties with Jalal Al- Ahmad and Ali Shariati, two highly influential figures during the pre-revolutionary period. They were staunch proponents of the theory of " Westtoxification." Until the uprising in Iran, these oppressed Iranians endured the rule of the dictatorial Shah. As Enayat has noted, the term "mazlum" can have two distinct meanings: it can refer to an oppressed individual, or it can describe a person who chooses not to act against the will or decisions of others. Adib-Moghaddam[18] adds that even when one is oppressed, their passivity may not stem from timidity or fear, but rather from a sense of generosity and forbearance. This term may not be immediately clear, but it holds constructive implications. Therefore, Khomeini and other philosophers sought to redefine the meanings of "irritated" and "oppressed" to encompass individuals who tolerated oppression. Khomeini also preferred to use synonymous phrases like "Mustakbar" to further distinguish between oppressors and the oppressed. These metaphors found application in global relations as well. Regardless of Iran's specific circumstances, the terms "Mustakbar" and "oppressor"

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[16]   Seyed-Gohrab, A., "Khomeini the Poet Mystic.", *Die Welt des Islams*, 51(3-4), (2011), 441.

[17]   Behrooz, M. "Factionalism in Iran under Khomeini.", *Middle Eastern Studies,* 27(4), (1991), 602.

[18]   Adib-Moghaddam, A. *Iran in world politics: The question of the islamic republic.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2010, 64-65

could denote any entity wielding supremacy, while "the oppressed" could encompass the entire Islamic community that supported the revolution.[19]

The latter two declarations by Khomeini were further reasons related to how government services had to accompany him to find solutions for multifaceted and comparative matters. The target of the first declaration was a response to queries forwarded by the head of the state radio. Khomeini's declaration cited that several programs were educational and satisfactory, but occasional minor complications needed attention. He underlined two critical points: The individual chairing the program ought not to be an outsider. The audience should not perceive the programs with lust.[20] Khomeini's position could be best understood from the perspective of the authority of "betweenness" bestowed by the circumstances of his exile. When Khomeini stayed in Najaf, away from Iran, it became clear that he occupied a twofold cultural position, straddling the "there and here" of a lifecycle. This state compelled distance but also ensured communal support through the ingrained and strong religious factions in the Iraqi hawza (institutes), a liminal space where he protected himself while symbolizing his continuous attachment to his nation. Likewise, his strong leadership activities reflected his ongoing non-alignment and orientation with the neighborhood hosting him.[21] However, the issue of discrimination within the elite class and Islam's role in Iran's recent history was minimized. By examining who Khomeini and his group were, it becomes evident that, regardless of the strong networks through which the Iranian rebellion spread, Khomeini and his group stood out. If combined with contextualization efforts, the immediate expressions of Iranian clerics who, in one way or another, stayed in Najaf or traveled to Iraq before 1978, could help in reconstructing the documented social dynamics at work in the Hawza[21].

The second declaration was a response to a letter from the Guardian Council's assistant. This response was particularly significant because the inquiry had been raised by a conservative political group and was now being countered by this group. Lotfollah Safi's question revolved around whether he had elaborated on his recent declaration about the new labor law. After the declaration, Safi noted that some individuals had suggested that the country might replace any Islamic rule with

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[19]   Abed-Kotob, S. *The accommodationists speak the goals and strategies of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt.* International Journal of Middle East Studies, 27(3), (1995), 446.

[20]   Behrooz, M. "Factionalism in Iran under Khomeini." *Middle Eastern Studies*, 27(4), (1991), 603.

[21]   Corboz, E., "Khomeini in Najaf: The Religious and Political Leadership of an Exiled Ayatollah.", *Die Welt des Islams*, 55(2), (2015), 223.

economic, agricultural, social, labor, and commerce laws.[22] Therefore, Khomeini extended the concept of "Wilayat al-faqih," expanding the influence and scope of jurists. He convened all spiritual intellectuals to oversee the realm's parliamentary and executive branches, ensuring that the rules and regulations adhered to Sharia laws. However, this change in position developed and occurred when he was in Najaf and put into practice through the revolution. On the other hand, Mavani[23] states that Khomeini returned to his preferred jurists, emphasizing the role of supervision and establishing the "Islamic Republic" between 1977 and 1980. Furthermore, while staying in Paris in 1978, he made it clear that he had a limited role in the position of supervisory leadership, focusing on humanity's best interests rather than seeking or accepting any official government position. He would involve himself in situations where he perceived deceit and dishonesty that could harm public wellbeing. However, this position was rarely consistent, as when he was still in Najaf, he strongly supported "wilayet al-faqih," stating that "they are responsible for protecting Islam, and this task is significant and obligatory for them, even more so than fasting and prayer."

2. Political and Ideological Thoughts of Hassan al-Banna

In this study, we analyze the second political and ideological thinker, Hassan al-Banna. Hassan al-Banna founded the Society of Muslim Brotherhood, known as Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun, in 1928. Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun's fundamental goal is to transform societal change gradually over time. At the core of Hassan al-Banna's ideology, there is no presence of violence. There is a distance maintained from political parties; therefore, it is appropriate to evaluate Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun not as a political party but as a community or association. He assumed leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood with the aim of advocating for a strong Muslim identity. Al-Banna emerged as a rival to both communist and nationalist al-Wafdists in Egypt. He played a prominent role as an ideologue within the Muslim Brotherhood and died in 1949. In 1953, Sayyid Qutb joined Jama'at al Ikhwan al-Muslimun. Sayyid Qutb's ideas are not widely embraced due to the fact that his thoughts have evolved into an ideology that generates violence in the name of Islam. While Jama'at al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun follows a softer ideological perspective, Sayyid Qutb adopts a more rigid Islamic ideological stance. Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb followed the intellectual lineage of Jamal al-

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[22] Behrooz, M. "Factionalism in Iran under Khomeini.", *Middle Eastern Studies,* 27(4), (1991), 603.

[23] Mavani, H., "Ayatullah Khomeini's Concept of Governance (wilayat al-faqih) and the Classical Shi 'i Doctrine of Imamate.", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 47(5), (2011), 808.

Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh. They also strategically opposed British colonialism in Egypt.

The ideology of Hassan al-Banna and his discourse included Sharia and Sufism as a cornerstone, which provided a crucial dimension to the tradition of Islamic political struggle. As per the Muslim Brotherhood, Islam is a complete system that directs all aspects of life, including individual and society, as well as material, political, personal, and spiritual dimensions. With a significant Muslim population worldwide, there was a resurgence of demands for Islam to provide solutions to society's problems. Whether it was the conflict following Egypt's defeat by Israel in 1967 or issues like inadequate housing in 1993, activists turned to Islam as a societal, economic, political, and divine source of solutions. Some Islamists argue that only Islam can address Egypt's grievances, ushering in a return to both collective and individual levels of Muslim faith.[24]

Muslim Brotherhood initially defined itself as a charitable or reformist community rather than a spiritual global movement. According to Hassan al-Banna[25], *identified Muslim Brotherhood as a Sunni, Salafi, Sufi, political, and sporting community as well as introduced it as academic and cultural society, an economic company or a social ideological system.* However, it later transformed into a political party, which posed challenges in managing emerging differences without leading to conflict or fragmentation. Many political observers noted the apparent contradiction between Hassan al-Banna's antagonistic stance toward political parties, which he deemed as arrogant projects of politicians diverting the nation from its struggle against the British. The Muslim Brotherhood's historicalization of al-Banna's aversion to political parties aimed to clarify this apparent contradiction.[26]

Muslim Brothers emphasized the separation between popular rule and a Sharia-based system. They argued that the governance of a Muslim society should be based on the choices and consent of its members, allowing for diverse systems and techniques tailored to specific circumstances, places, times, and living conditions. They advocated for a constitutionalist approach to addressing opposition, emphasizing multiplicity and spending considerable effort to dispel notions of conflict. In contrast, they asserted that Islam was an intellectual and political model that

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[24] Hibbard, S.W., "Religious politics and secular states: Egypt, India, and the United States." *JHU Press.* (2010), 1.

[25] Hasan el-Bennâ, *Mecmû'atü Resâili'l-İmâm eş-Şehîd Haşan el-Bennâ*, Beyrut, 1384/1965, 248-250.

[26] El-Ghobashy, M., "The metamorphosis of the Egyptian Muslim brothers.", *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* 37(3), (2005), 383.

respected humanity and disregarded differences in color, language, and race. They called upon the Muslim Brothers to be open-minded and treat everyone with respect, refraining from insolence and arrogance. This call aimed to challenge the Muslim Brothers' self-perception as a political group.[26]

Hassan al-Banna published a leaflet titled "A Memo on Spiritual Teaching." In this leaflet, Al-Banna discussed the decision of the Italian Fascist Government to modify the curriculum for the new generation by increasing the emphasis on spiritual education within the general schooling system. The leaflet clearly outlined the content and objectives of these spiritual teachings. The Muslim community had eagerly anticipated the new educational program proposed by the regime. However, according to Mura,[27] the reports in the newspapers about the new plan were everything they had feared.

As Al-Banna stated, these concerns were primarily localized at the time. The leaflet did not only address those in charge of Muslim children's affairs but also ministers, governmental bodies, the King, and the scholars of Al-Azhar, as pointed out by Kallander.[28] In this context, the 1929 pamphlet highlighted that the draft law introduced by the Ministry contained content that was impractical, pointless, and unproductive. This might sound familiar to those in the teaching profession today as a matter of judgment.

In the late 1920s, the Ministry of Education in Egypt and civil servants had not yet established the level of equality that is taken for granted today. Consequently, these terms were viewed with envy, especially when people realized that a 23-year-old provincial teacher with only two years of practical teaching experience had articulated such sentiments. The leaflet of June 1929 provided a solution to the enigmatic aspects of the 1930 investigation, as well as shedding light on the behavior of Hassan al-Banna. However, it also raised another mystery: why did Al-Banna omit any mention of the leaflet in his autobiography? In other words, why did he not recollect the first-time publication, despite the fact that his remarks and claims were inherently questionable in the long run?[29] Human memory is often described as unreliable, especially when forgetting serves a particular purpose. Why does it seem appropriate to forget the 1929 pamphlet? Ahmad al-Sukkari, a co-author of the leaflet, openly confronted Hassan al-

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[27] Mura, A., "A genealogical inquiry into early Islamism: the discourse of Hasan alBanna.", *Journal of Political Ideologies,* 17(1), (2012), 67.

[28] Kallander, A., *Justice Interrupted: The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Middle East*, by Elizabeth F. Thompson, 2015, 29.

[29] Jansen, J. J., "Hasan al-Banna's Earliest Pamphlet.", *Die Welt des Islams*, (1992), 255.

Banna in the spring of 1947 and was subsequently expelled from the Muslim Brotherhood. Up until 1947, Al-Sukkari had been a close friend and dedicated supporter of Al-Banna, contributing significantly to the Muslim Brotherhood's activities. He served as both the deputy of the Muslim Brotherhood group and the group's political relations officer simultaneously. Al-Sukkari considered himself the political leader of the Muslim Brothers, with Al-Banna primarily providing spiritual guidance during the years 1945 to 1947. Consequently, Al-Sukkari made the decision to challenge Al-Banna's leadership position within the group. Al-Banna's autobiographies, however, make no mention of the critical role played by his friends during the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood. Nonetheless, it is possible that the rivalry between Al-Banna and Al-Sukkari led Al-Banna to suppress his recollection of the June 1929 pamphlet, which Al-Sukkari had assisted in creating[29].

Hassan al-Banna is known as an advocate of Islam who sought to find a lasting solution to the dissatisfaction among Muslims in Egypt. He appealed to many dissatisfied members of the public and conveyed the message that Egypt needed to understand Islam in the context of contemporary conditions and utilize it as a guiding force for its development. Al-Banna cleverly framed his creed or ideology as a genuine alternative path to freedom, thereby addressing the growing social unrest in Egypt. Consequently, Soage[30] notes that Al-Banna's spiritual advocacy marked the beginning of the politicization of Islam, injecting it with a new dynamism that would eventually propel it to the forefront of Egyptian public discourse. During this period, however, Al-Banna refrained from explicit political participation, primarily to avoid any constitutional measures aimed at restricting organizations deviating from the established socio-religious framework, which would later pose a challenge to the inconsistent and troubled political landscape[31].

Al-Banna criticized Egyptian politicians for thoughtlessly emulating the West while neglecting Islamic morality and culture. His writings explicitly elucidated some of his themes in support of his desire to unite individuals who propagated political and religious messages to resist colonial occupation from the West and its way of life[31].

Hassan al-Banna dedicated himself to fostering unity within the Muslim community. To achieve this goal, he referenced several traditions of the Prophet, cautioning strict punishment for those who sowed discord in the nation.

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[30] Soage, A.B.,. "Ḥasan al-Bannā or the Politicisation of Islam.", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions,* 9(1), (2008), 23.

[31] Levy, R.A., "The idea of jihād and its evolution: Ḥasan al-bannā and the society of the Muslim brothers.", *Die Welt des Islams*, 54(2) (2014), 145.

Consequently, Hassan al-Banna openly opposed party politics in Egypt. He believed in upholding the traditional system and argued that it aligned with Egyptian law, as both the traditional system and Egyptian laws were rooted in Islamic principles. He vehemently discouraged the concept of partisanship, which was an integral component of the existing regime. As noted by Soage,[32] Hassan al-Banna advocated for a single party to represent the entire country. He contended that Egyptian society had been adversely affected by the proliferation of political parties.

Contrary to this perspective, the entities Hassan al-Banna deemed as political parties were not, in fact, political parties. They lacked comprehensive agendas and policies, functioning more as factions driven by individual differences. His apprehension primarily stemmed from the presence of numerous such factions in Egypt. This concern was not unfounded, especially considering that the three major opposition groups, often viewed as factions, had broken away from the regional scene. Nevertheless, despite the dominant mainstream status of the ruling party, which consistently secured over 70% of parliamentary seats in six consecutive parliaments, al-Banna did not feel compelled to align with any particular region. He cautiously accepted Egypt's constitution but evaluated it critically due to its lack of clarity in several sections and a failure to provide a clear declaration of its fundamental principles, which he believed weakened the standing of the Muslim society.[33]

Al-Banna emphasized that the Muslim religion holds significance in society, whether the beliefs of other Muslims remain active or not. He believed that people in the Eastern world were deeply rooted in faith, and he encouraged them to overcome adversities and foster prosperity and victory through their faith. Al-Banna urged his followers to become steadfast supporters of Muslim beliefs. Such support, he argued, not only fosters a sense of unity with fellow believers but also contributes to the cause of Islamic revival through personal dedication to humanity. In this manner, he aimed to cultivate a collective identity among his followers, motivating them to act on its behalf.[34]

Al-Banna asserted that Islam comprises a comprehensive doctrine that governs all aspects of life, both in the present world and the hereafter. Consequently, he

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[32]   Soage, A.B., "Ḥasan al-Bannā and Sayyid Quṭb: Continuity or Rupture?", *The Muslim World*, 99(2), (2009), 297.

[33]   Al-Abdin, A. Z. "The Political Thought of Ḥasan Al—Bannā.", *Islamic Studies*, 28(3), (1989). 223-224.

[34]   Levy, R.A., "The idea of jihād and its evolution: Ḥasan al-bannā and the society of the Muslim brothers.", *Die Welt des Islams,* 54(2) (2014), 146.

believed that one could find solutions to all problems within Islam. However, Hassan al-Banna cautioned against the misconception that mere prayers to Allah make one the truest believer. He stressed that members of the Muslim Brotherhood should resist the allure of worldly desires and, instead, embrace the moral values, faith, and virtues inherent to Islam.

3. Political Comparison of Khomeini and al-Banna's Ideological Approaches

Ayatollah Khomeini and Hassan al-Banna, as significant figures in Islamic thought and movements, operated in different geographical and sectarian contexts but pursued similar ideological goals. Khomeini, grounded in Shia theology, established the system of Velayat-i Faqih (Guardianship of the Jurist) in Iran, emphasizing the central role of the religious leader in state governance. This system aimed to integrate religion directly into state affairs, making Islam a decisive force in political life. Khomeini's ideology highlighted the absolute authority of the religious leader over society and the preservation of Shia values. Furthermore, during the revolutionary process, he adopted an anti-imperialist stance, striving to free Iran from Western influence and establish an independent Islamic state.

In contrast, Hassan al-Banna advocated for Islam as a comprehensive way of life within the framework of Sunni Islam and founded the Muslim Brotherhood to promote this vision. Al-Banna emphasized that religious and moral values should be integrated into individuals' daily lives, asserting that Islam is not just a system of worship but also a social and political order. Through the Muslim Brotherhood, he aimed to educate and transform society according to Islamic principles. Al-Banna's ideology was also rooted in anti-imperialist principles, opposing Western colonial policies. However, he adopted a more inclusive understanding of nationalism, advocating for unity and solidarity within the broader Muslim ummah (community).

Both thinkers believed that religion should play a central role in social and political life and fought for this cause. Khomeini's revolutionary approach, based on Shia theology, and al-Banna's reformist approach, grounded in Sunni Islam, sought to achieve similar objectives through different methodologies. In this context, their ideological approaches provide significant insights into the role and influence of Islam in the modern world. The ideas of Khomeini and al-Banna have left a lasting legacy for Islamic movements and continue to shape the ideological foundations of contemporary Islamic activism.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Ayatollah Khomeini and Hassan al-Banna emerged as two significant figures who profoundly influenced Islamic political thought and movements in the 20th century. Their ideologies and actions not only shaped the societies they directly engaged with but also left a lasting impact on the broader Muslim world.

Ayatollah Khomeini stands out as a pivotal leader of the Iranian Revolution, which successfully overthrew the Shah's regime in 1979. By 1962, Khomeini had established himself as a formidable and unyielding opponent of the Iranian monarchy. His discourse effectively mobilized the Iranian populace by framing the struggle in terms of "the oppressors and the oppressed" (Mostazafan and Mostakbaran), thus galvanizing widespread support for a new Islamic identity. Khomeini's success was rooted in several key concepts of Shiite intellectual tradition, including the occultation (gaybet), the guardianship of the jurist (Walayat-i Faqih), and the deputyship (naib). These concepts were not merely theoretical but were actively employed by Khomeini to challenge and dismantle the existing political structures. His ability to consolidate society around religious principles and his charismatic leadership were instrumental in gaining support from both religious and secular groups. Khomeini's primary goal was to safeguard Shiites and Muslims worldwide, exporting Iran's revolutionary values to other societies. His ideological framework has since become the foundation for subsequent Shiite political theories, particularly the concept of the Shiite Crescent, which continues to influence regional geopolitics.

On the other hand, Hassan al-Banna, as the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, played a crucial role in the development of modern Islamic political thought. Al-Banna's vision was centered on the reformation of hearts and souls, guiding individuals towards a devout life under the principles of Islam. He organized the Muslim Brotherhood to embody the values of a virtuous society, emphasizing the importance of unity and moral integrity. Al-Banna's ultimate objective was the establishment of a genuine Islamic state and order, free from the influences of secularism. He advocated for the unity of faith and leadership, the integration of religion and state, and the reestablishment of the caliphate as a symbol of Islamic unity. His ideology underscored the comprehensive nature of Islam, encompassing all aspects of life, including prayer and jihad. Al-Banna's work provided a framework for

an Islamic state governed by Sharia law, aiming to serve as a natural and unifying force for the Muslim ummah.

Both Khomeini and al-Banna contributed significantly to the discourse on Islam and ideology, albeit in different contexts and with distinct methodologies. Khomeini's approach was deeply rooted in Shiite theological concepts and aimed at a revolutionary transformation of the state, while al-Banna's efforts were focused on gradual societal change through the reformation of individual and collective Muslim identity.

Their legacies continue to resonate in contemporary Islamic movements, highlighting the enduring interplay between Islam and political ideology. The study of their thoughts and actions provides valuable insights into the ways in which Islamic principles can be harnessed to address modern political and social challenges. By examining the contributions of these two influential figures, we gain a deeper

understanding of the complexities and potentials of political Islam in shaping the future of Muslim societies.

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