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Author(s): Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi

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The Establishment of the Position of Marja'iyat-i Taqlid in the Twelver-Shi'i Community

Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi

Nineteenth-century Iran witnessed the advent of a new socioreligious institution. While the theory of a divinely appointed Imam (*Imām al-Manṣūb*) increasingly became eschatological in nature, a highly centralized religious position came into being whose source of power was not to be found in the classical Shi'i doctrine. The position of *marja^c-i taqlīd* is a product of several religious developments that characterized the nineteenth-century Shi'i community. The prevalence of the Uṣūlī school and the formulation of two important doctrines, i.e., *a^clamīyyat* (more knowledgeability) and *vilāyat-i faqīh* (the governance of the jurist) are held as three major juridical impetuses underlying the birth of the institution of *marja^cīyyat-i taqlīd*. Therefore, we will first deal with the Uṣūlī process, then the doctrines of *a^clamīyyat* and *vilāyat-i faqīh*, then with the qualifications of a *marja^c*, and the question of who the first *marja^c* of the Twelver-Shi'i community was, and finally the place of *marja^c-i taqlīd* in the political life of Shi'i Iran.

A. THE PREVALENCE OF THE UṢŪLĪ SCHOOL IN THE TWELVER SHI'I COMMUNITY

Uṣūl implies the doctrine of the "principle" of Muslim jurisprudence, and *ʿIlm al-Uṣūl* is generally considered to be the science of the proofs which lead to the establishment of legal standards. The proofs, according to Twelver Shi'i

Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi is a Ph.D. candidate in the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University.

are: the Qur'ān, the traditions of the Prophet and the Imams, *ijmāʿ*, and *ʿaql*. *Ijmāʿ* is the unanimous consensus of a group of Shi'i *mujtahids* which conveys the word of the infallible Imam. *Ijmāʿ*, because it expresses the Imam's opinion, is considered to be proof.¹ *ʿAql* may be translated as intellect, but, technically, in the Shi'i jurisprudence it applies to the four practical principles (*uṣūl-i ʿamaliyya*), namely, *barāʿat* (immunity), *iḥtiyāt* (precaution), *takhyīr* (selection), and *istiṣḥāb* (continuity in the previous state).² These principles should only be employed by qualified jurists when other religious proofs are not applicable. In fact, these principles are no more than speculative reasoning (*ẓann*). Placing juristic speculation on a par with explicit proofs was objected to by the Akhbārīs, another branch of the Shi'i school.

In contrast to the Uṣūlīs, the Akhbārīs rely primarily on the traditions (*akhbār*) of the Prophet and the Imams as the source of religious knowledge. Opposing Uṣūlī and Akhbārī currents were apparent in Twelver Shi'ism from its beginning, although they multiplied in the course of time. In the first juridical period (fourth and fifth centuries Hijrī) the Twelver jurists of Iraq, including Shaykh-i Mufīd (d. 413/1021), Sayyid-i Murtaẓā (d. 436/1044), and Shaykh-i Tūsī (d. 460/1067) adopted and introduced the principles of *uṣūl* under the influence of both Shāfiʿī and Muʿtazilī doctrines. Shāfiʿī (d. 204/819) is known as the first Muslim jurist who wrote the principles of Islamic jurisprudence in his *ar-Risāla*. Muʿtazilite logical approach to Islamic thought helped the formation of Shi'i scholastic theology (*ʿilm al-Kalām*). Under such influences Sayyid-i Murtaẓā wrote the first Shi'i book on *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, namely *adh-Dharīʿa*. It was Shaykh-i Tūsī, however, who established these principles in his treatise *ʿUddat al-Uṣūl*.³

In contrast to the above Iraqi circle of Shi'i ulama, the Qum and Ray Twelver jurists such as Kulaynī (d. 329/940) and Ibn Bābūya Ṣadūq (d. 381/991) leaned toward a more traditionalist position.⁴ Nevertheless, neither the term "Akhbārī" nor its categorical differences with Uṣūlī appeared in the early works of the Twelvers. Shaykh-i Tūsī referred to Akhbārīs as *aṣḥāb aj-jumal*, literalists who stopped short of reasoning by basing the fundamentals of religion on the text of reported *ḥadīth*.⁵ Akhbārīs and Uṣūlīs as two antagonistic factions are first mentioned by ʿAbd aj-Jalīl

Qazvīnī (d. 565/1170), an Ithna^cshari writer who characterizes Akhbārīs as narrow traditionalists.⁶

The second wave of the Uṣūlī trends, which shaped the third juridical stage, occurred in the Mongol period. In this period the principle of *ijtihād* was applied to Shi'i jurisprudence. According to Ayatullah Muṭahharī, Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325) was probably the first jurist among the Shi'is who used the term *mujtahid* in a sense of one who deduces a religious ordinance (*ḥukm-i sharī^c*) on the basis of the authentic arguments of the SharīCa.⁷

In the first stage, *ijtihād* as well as *qiyās* (analogy) were not appreciated by the Shi'is. Shaykh-i Tūsī negated both *qiyās* and *ijtihād* in his famous book *Uddat al-Uṣūl*.⁸ But Ibn al-Muṭahhar employed *ijtihād* as meaning disciplined reasoning based on the SharīCa. He also developed the principles of *ʿilm al-Uṣūl* in order to introduce more legal and logical norms.⁹ This led the meaning of *ʿilm al-Uṣūl* to extend beyond the four principal sources of the SharīCa.¹⁰ By carefully studying Ibn al-Muṭahhar's perception of *ijtihād*, we notice that Ibn al-Muṭahhar differentiates between *ijtihād al-mukallafīn* and *ijtihād al-mujtahidīn*. He does not appreciate the former and evaluates the latter as a striving that leads to speculation (*ẓann*) not to knowledge (*ʿilm*).¹¹ In fact, Ibn al-Muṭahhar is the first Shi'i jurist who manipulated *ijtihād* as a prerogative of the ulama. The principles of *ijtihād* and *taqlīd* are fully formulated by ʿAmilī (1011/1602), who devoted an independent chapter to the above-mentioned topics.¹²

The Uṣūlī trend lost momentum in the eleventh century Hijrī, largely because of an Akhbārī resurgence through the work of Mullā Amīn Astrābādī (d. 1033/1623). But time was on the side of the Uṣūlīs, thanks to the prolonged concealment of the Imam of the Age and the growing need for the wider interpretation of the SharīCa.

The emergence of a pragmatic jurist, Āqā Bāqir Bihbihānī (1118/1706 - 1208/1793) in Karbalā, not only helped the Uṣūlī school to re-establish itself, but it also gave the school a new momentum. Bihbihānī enjoys the title of founder (*mu'assis*) of a new stage in Twelver-Shi'i jurisprudence, although he was never considered to be a brilliant scholar like Ibn al-Muṭahhar or Shāhīd ath-Thānī. His significance lies

in the practical method that he used to win popular support against the Akhbārīs and to eliminate them in Iran and Iraq. In pre-Qajar periods, the question of Akhbārism was a matter of orientation and style, but Bihbihānī, by refuting the Akhbārīs, managed to outlaw them as heretics.

Bihbihānī's lifelong argument with his rival, Shaykh Yūsuf Bahraynī (d. 1172/1758), centered on the problem of the validity of the mujtahids' speculative reasoning after the gate of the acquisition of knowledge was closed by the occultation of the Twelfth Imam.¹³ Bihbihānī set forth the validity of the mujtahid's speculation and the validity of his general knowledge (*ʿilm-i ijmālī*) in a way which had no precedent in Shi'i jurisprudence.

It is proverbial among ulama that the gate of acquiring knowledge concerning religious ordinances (*aḥkām*) is closed (upon the absence of the Imam). How? We see a large number of *aḥkām* which become known after effort. This is true despite the fact that effort leads to speculative reason (*ẓann*) which is neither proof (*ḥujjat*) nor beneficial; despite the fact that Akhbārīs claim that the gate of acquiring knowledge is not closed and it is a matter of controversy; and despite the fact that in many cases we know things without searching, because they are obvious. We say that no speculations are proofs, nor may *ijmāʿ* (which is reversible by contradictory *ijmāʿ*) nor even self-evidency (*bidāha*) amount to absolute proof. It is only the *mujtahids'* speculation acquired after endeavour (*ijtihād*) that weigh as proof.¹⁴

Bihbihānī's conviction of the mujtahids' ability to establish proof led him to consider the mujtahids as vicegerents of the Prophet (*khalīfat ar-Rasūl*), but he did not elaborate on this theme, as Narāqī (d. 1245/1830) and Khomeini later did. What Bihbihānī gained was not merely the establishment of the validity of juristic *ijtihād*, but also the necessity to emulate the most learned mujtahid by ordinary *mukallafs*.

B. THE ADVENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF A^CLAMIYYAT

The concept that the jurist (whose pronouncements set binding patterns for regular *mukallafs*) must be the most

learned mujtahid has developed within the Uṣūlī context of the nineteenth-century Twelver-Shi'i community.¹⁵ It provided one of the most necessary bases for the official hierarchy of religious leadership. The notion of "the most learned mujtahid" does not appear in juridical works in the early phases of Ithnā^casharī development. However, the roots of such a concept can be found in certain classical Islamic principles: for example, an Imam must be superior and the most learned person. This is true because, according to reason, a more knowledgeable person is generally preferred over a less knowledgeable one (*tarjīḥ al-fāḍil ^calā 'l-maf-ḍūl*). This issue first appeared in early Islamic scholastic theology (*^cilm al-kalām*). Twelver Shi'i jurists of the Mongol period justified the Shi'i Imams' unique position by using this principle.¹⁶ According to Qāḏī Nūrullah Shush-tarī's (d. 1019/1610) definition, the Imam's superiority should be evident in terms of knowledge, piety, and bravery.¹⁷

Two centuries later, the jurists of the Qajar period, after having established the principle of *taqlīd* in its broad sense, started to accept the *marj^c-i taqlīd* as being of the same superior level of knowledge (*^cilm*) as the Imam.¹⁸ The term *a^clam*, as referring to the Shi'i ulama, first appeared in *Ma^cālim al-Uṣūl* by ^cAmilī. But he seems essentially to have been concerned with the quality of being more precise in reporting traditions.¹⁹ However, the way in which Shaykh-i Anṣārī (d. 1281-/1864) was accepted as the Most Learned mujtahid at the death of Shaykh Najafī Iṣfahānī (d. 1266/1849)²⁰ shows us that the idea of the mujtahid being the most learned scholar, in its full sense, was already established. Moreover, Shaykh-i Anṣārī claimed *ijma^c* on the necessity of emulating the most learned mujtahid.²¹ In the late nineteenth century we find that Āyatullah Ṭabāṭabā'ī Yazdī (d. 1338/1920) clearly defined the principle of *a^clamīyyat*. According to Āyatullah Yazdī, it is obligatory to follow the most learned mujtahid of the time. The most learned mujtahid (*a^clam*) is he who is most informed about the rules and sources of jurisprudence and is most capable of deducing religious ordinances.²²

In addition to stating the doctrine of *a^clamīyyat*, Āyatullah Yazdī also introduced the obligatory nature of *taqlīd*, and he concluded that any religious performance by a *mukallaf* without the guidance of a mujtahid is unacceptable.²³ It must be stated that such an emphasis on the

principle of *taqlīd* is peculiar to the Qajar period. The obligation of *taqlīd al-mujtahid* (to find a mujtahid in order to follow his directions) was presented to Twelver Shi'ism by prominent jurists of the Mongol period such as Ibn al-Muṭahhar and Shahīd ath-Thānī. The one who elaborated on this issue, however, is Shaykh Ḥasa ḌĀmilī (d. 1011/1602).²⁴

C. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE
OF *VILĀYAT-I FAQĪH*

The fall of the Safavids coincided with a resurgence of the Uṣūlī school, and this helped the ulama of the Qajar period to enhance their interpretive position. The ulama's new status was reinforced by Fath ḌAlī Shah's personal habit of obtaining formal authorization (*izn-i salṭanat*) from the ulama to rule the country. The shah's attitude apparently encouraged some sort of formulation of the juristic basis for rule although Fath ḌAlī Shah was in reality no less despotic than other Iranian monarchs. It was then that Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī (d. 1245/1830) opened the chapter of *vilāyat-i faqīh*, which had no precedent in Twelver Shi'i jurisprudence.

Mullā Aḥmad Narāqī, benefiting from the strong Uṣūlī methodological trend of his time, formulated the hitherto obscure notion of *vilāyat-i faqīh* into a doctrine. He argued forcefully for the right of the mujtahid to act as a successor to the Imam and vested him with all the power of the Imam. To do this, Narāqī based his argument on the authority of traditions, *ijmāc*, and *caql*.²⁵ He cited nineteen traditions; most of them were re-expressed in the works of later ulama such as Āyatollah Khomeini.

Before Narāqī, the idea of *vilāyat-i faqīh* had not received independent attention in the juristic literature. The notion of the Imam's deputyship (in either specific cases or in the context of general agency) was little more than an obscure formula based on the sporadic claims of the ulama. These claims were scattered throughout different chapters of *fiqh*, such as *qazā'* (judgment), *jihād* (holy war), *khums* (an Islamic tax) and *ijtihād* (juridical endeavor), and they were primarily intended to clarify the role of jurists in certain particular cases. Therefore, the nature

and scope of the ulama's role in the above-mentioned cases remained uncertain and controversial.

For example, Ibn al-Muṭahhar's reliance on the concept of Imams as being designated and infallible nullified the concept of *nā'ib-i Imām*.²⁶ Shahīd ath-Thānī identified *nā'ib-i Imām* with general deputies like the *faqīh*; but the extent of this agency was hardly applicable to governance or *vilāyat-i ʿamma*.²⁷ Āqā Bāqir Bihbihānī tried to introduce the idea of the *faqīh* as the Prophet's caliph, but he did not elaborate on this subject.²⁸ Generally speaking, from the seventh to the twelfth century Hijrī the concept of the ulama's *vilāyat* appeared as an occasional deputyship. In fact, it was a provisional formula for solving specific juristic problems.

The significance of Narāqī's work is twofold: first, he dealt with the *vilāyat-i faqīh* as an independent topic; and under this subject, he compiled all traditions and juristic reasoning known to him to confirm the ulama's rights and duties in respect to *vilāyat*. Secondly, he distinguished between governance (*vilāyat-i ʿamma*) and special cases of trusteeship (*vilāyat-i khāṣṣa*), while emphasizing the jurists' rights on both levels. This unprecedented task was executed in his last work, namely *ʿAwā'id al-Ayyām*. This is a traditionally well-reasoned work concerning the rules of Shi'i jurisprudence (*qavā'id-i fiqh*). In topic No. 80, Narāqī states:

Our purpose here is to expose the jurists' *vilāyat* who are the Imam's deputies and rulers during the absence of the Imam, and to determine whether their *vilāyat* is general (*ʿamma*) in the same way as it was principally presumed for the Imams. In short, what is their *vilāyat* about?²⁹

As for the jurists' duty over people's affairs and over what they have full and all-embracing *vilāyat* we--by divine grace--say that a just jurist's *vilāyat* lies in two matters. First, every *vilāyat* possessed by the Prophet and the Imams (who were the sovereigns and pillars of Islam) is bestowed upon the jurists as well, except what is excluded by juridical proof such as *ijmāʿ* (consensus) or *naṣṣ* (established text).... Secondly, every action concerning the people's faith

and worldly affairs is necessary and inescapable according to reason and habit or according to *Sharḥ* (law).³⁰

To establish the above-mentioned claim, Narāqī presented a traditional validation as the first step. He tried to collect the authoritative traditions to support the jurists' *vilāyat*. He brought up nineteen traditions; most of them based directly or indirectly on the authority of Imam Jaḥfar Ṣādiq. The only relevant prophetic tradition, which is recorded in both Sunni and Shi'i sources, is as follows.

"O God, bless those who succeed me." The Prophet repeated this twice and was then asked who would be his, i.e., the Prophet's successors. He answered, "Those who come after me, transmit my traditions and practices and teach them to the people."³¹

According to the Sunni evaluation, this *ḥadīth* is void and false.³² Nevertheless, Narāqī (and especially Ayatollah Khomeini in his writings) made extensive use of this tradition regardless of the Sunni evaluation.³³

Another authoritative tradition is a report of Ibn Ḥanẓala from Imam Jaḥfar Ṣādiq: "Whoever has had his dispute settled by the ruler of his judge, whether right or wrong, has actually had his dispute settled by the *ṭāghūt* (a tyrannical ruler whose rule is against the divine law). This tradition, which is graded as *maqḅūla* (acceptable), first appeared in *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfī* by Kulaynī.³⁴

Another important tradition is the well-known signed decree (*tawqīḥ*) by the Twelfth Imam addressed to a devoted Shi'i, Iṣḥāq Ibn Yaḥqūb. The latter had raised the question: "Who should be approached during your [the Imam's] absence when at the same time some of your cousins deny your existence?"³⁵ The Imam replies: "In the case of newly occurring events, you should turn for guidance to those who relate our traditions, because they are my proof to you, as I am God's proof to them."

Since this tradition was delivered by the Imam's second special deputy, Narāqī judges it to be a connected transmission (*muttaṣil*). Khomeini re-emphasizes that it was recorded by Ibn Bābūya Ṣadūq, and related by Shaykh-i

Tūsī, Ṭabarsī, and Ḥurr-i CĀmilī, all reliable authors. Neither Narāqī nor Khomeini, however, has concerned himself with the problem of the incompatibility of the ulama's *vilāyat-i cĀmma*, as they understood it, and the delegation of power to the four special deputies. Because of their direct access to the Imam, the special deputies have been considered as the vicegerents most qualified to perform the Imam's *vilāyat*. However, the problem which basically results from Narāqī's interpretation of the jurists' *vilāyat* had not arisen at the time of the occurrence of the above-mentioned tradition.

In addition to traditional proof, Narāqī took his stand on two other juristic proofs: *ijmāc* (consensus) and *bidāha* (self-evidency). As for *ijmāc* Narāqī said: "There is an *ijmāc* since numerous ulama specified it to be so, so it effectively becomes an established fact."³⁶ This interpretation seems to derive from Narāqī's own personal conviction, since his disciple, Shaykh-i Anṣārī denounced such *ijmāc* a few years later and called it *qawl-i mashhūr* (circulated words).³⁷

To support his argument, Narāqī turned to self-evidency, which indicates rational reasoning (*dalīl caqlī*).

It is obvious and understood by every common or learned man, that when the messenger of God is on a trip, someone behind him is assigned as his substitute, successor, trustee, proof.... This person will accrue all the power that the Prophet enjoyed over his community. There is no doubt that most *nuṣūṣ* [established texts] concerning the *awṣiyā'* [heirs in authority] of the infallible Imam imply the transfer of all power, not merely some of it. This becomes clear especially in connection with the traditions concerning the rank and place of jurists, who are the most excellent men after the Imams. The superiority of the jurists over common men is like that of the Prophet over the lowest member of the community.³⁸

It is evident from Narāqī's account of *vilāyat-i faqīh* that he had an image of an ideal governance by the *faqīh*. But it is not clear whether the *faqīh*'s governance, which Narāqī called *salṭanat ash-shar'iyya*, should replace the ruling

government or function parallel to it. During his life, Narāqī challenged temporal power on some occasions; nevertheless, his generally good relations with Fath^c Alī Shah and his granting of permission to the monarch to rule Iran suggest that Narāqī did not consider the shah to be a usurper. It is probable that Narāqī considered a *Shar^ci* (religious) governance parallel to *Curfī* (temporal) government as a possible solution.

D. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A MARJA^c

A *marja^c* has to be learned in Arabic, logic, theology, exegesis, traditions, and jurisprudence, or more precisely *fiqh* and *uṣūl al-fiqh*. He must have demonstrated his knowledge and established for himself a scholarly reputation through a number of licenses, held from reputable ulama, and through his teachings, lectures, and writings. These qualifications, in addition to certain personal features such as maturity, intelligence, belonging to the male sex, legitimate birth, piety, and a just nature were necessary to attain this prestigious position. Other features such as "not being a wealth lover" are included in a *marja^c's* qualifications as cited by some authors.³⁹

On the issue of *marja^cciyyat*, a number of technical details were involved, besides the religious qualification. The most important characteristic was the *marj^c's* ability to pay the student's bread money (*pūl-i nān-i ṭullāb*). In order to meet this requirement, the *marja^c* should reside in the religious cities such as Najaf and Qum. Also, he must have an ability to raise money in terms of *khums* and *sahm-i Imām* (the Imam's share). Therefore, the position of *marja^cciyyat*, besides being the most learned jurist, had other responsibilities which had little to do with his command of the *Sharī^ca*.

E. THE FIRST MARJA^c OF TWELVER SHI'I COMMUNITY

There is a controversy over the question of the first *marja^c*. Since this institution developed smoothly, its coming into existence was not felt at times. Most traditional as well as modern scholars of Shi'i history tend to simplify this entire process by listing all prominent Shi'i jurists--

from the time of Kulaynī to Khomeini, as *marja*^c.⁴⁰ Some open-minded ayatollahs, such as Ṭaliqānī, Jazā'irī, and Muṭahharī published articles at the death of Ayatollah Burūjirdī (1240sh/1961) and discussed the novelty of this institution.⁴¹ Their objective was to change the idea that the position of *marja*^c must be occupied by a single person. The translation of their articles by Ann Lambton⁴² threw a new light on the understanding of the history of the institution of *marja*^c*diyyat* for Western scholars. It is established today that the concept of *marja*^c*diyyat-i taqlīd* had never been brought up in the pre-Qajar periods. Even the title of mujtahid in its new Shi'i sense did not exist before the days of Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī. In the early phases, the doctrine of *Imāma*, its infallibility and its necessity, was so prevalent that none of the fallible *mukallaf* (even a learned one) could claim legal validity for his opinions.

After establishing the fact that the institution of *marja*^c*diyyat* originated in the nineteenth-century Shi'i community, the problem still remains as to who was the first *marja*^c. The main controversy revolves around two prominent jurists: Shaykh-i Anṣārī (d. 1281/1864) and his immediate predecessor, Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥasan Najafī Iṣfahānī (d. 1266/1849). It is worth mentioning that neither Bihbinānī, who re-established the Uṣūlī position, nor Narāqī, who formulated the doctrine of *vilāyat-i faqīh*, assumed the title of *marja*^c. Some experts on Shi'i history believe that Shaykh-i Anṣārī's widely recognized religious leadership gave rise to the position of *marja*^c.⁴³ A number of biographers such as the late Shaykh Āqā Buzurg Tih-rānī have claimed that Shaykh M. H. Najafī Iṣfahānī was a *marja*^c before Shaykh-i Anṣārī.⁴⁴

By a careful study of the history of recent ulama we have discovered that the position of *marja*^c, occupied by a single mujtahid, was an essential component of the institution of *marja*^c*diyyat-i taqlīd* in the nineteenth-century Shi'i community. The religious center of Iṣfahān had deteriorated in importance after the death of Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Shaf-tī in 1262/1845. In the same year, the Najaf center lost Shaykh Ḥasan Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', leaving behind Shaykh Najafī Iṣfahānī as the sole supreme mujtahid for a period of six years. As mentioned above, when there were several Twelver

Shi'i religious centers operating at the same time, this prevented any one individual, e.g., Narāqī or Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', from being recognized as *marja*^C although the time was ripe after Bihbihānī's rise.

F. THE PLACE OF *MARJA*^C-I *TAQLĪD* IN THE
POLITICAL LIFE OF SHI'I IRAN

The *marāji*^C have played an important role in the political life of Shi'i Iran. They strongly resisted foreign economic and political influences.⁴⁵ They collaborated with Iranian liberal forces to serve the cause of justice (*ḥadl*) and constitutionalism (*mashrūṭa*).⁴⁶ Most important, they played a powerful role in balancing monarchical absolutism in Iran. In fact, in the absence of any strong public institution in the Iranian political structure, the people sought to resort to the religious traditions in order to check monarchical absolutism. The social forces of Iran supported this new-born institution (*marja*^C*ciyyat*) as a weapon in their struggle against tyranny and absolutism; however, these forces have also been placed in the unfortunate position of having to fight against the tyranny of supreme mujtahids.

The suppressive aspects of supreme mujtahids are particularly noticeable in their attitude toward Sufi, Shaykhī, and Bābī heterodoxies. During the Qajar period, we witness numerous religious innovations that are centered mainly on the problem of the transfer of the Imam's power. Concepts such as *vilāyat-i ṣūfī* (sufi's governance), *shi'a-yi kāmīl* (perfect Shi'i), *rukn-i rābi*^C (fourth pillar), and *bāb* (gate) signify the effects of the prolonged absence of the Imam and the assimilation of alternative replacements for the Imam. The ulama reacted against this and claimed the rational transfer of the Imam's knowledge to mujtahids.⁴⁷ Here we see that the principle of *aḥlamiyyat* became a constituent part of the institution of *marja*^C*ciyyat*.

The ulama often enjoyed the support of ruling governments who felt more threatened by popular Sufi and Shaykhī groups than by top mujtahids.

In addition to government support, the ulama benefited from their close ties with the merchants and the guild classes

(namely bazaar classes). The question of how the ulama could win this support (while the bazaar's loyalty to Sufi and *futuvvat* principles was the major cause of the popularity of Shi'ism in Iran during pre-Safavid periods)⁴⁸ is still debatable. The answer may lie in the fact that the mujtahids were in daily contact with bazaar people, who felt alienated from the state and did not trust their officials. Moreover, the intuitive methods of the Sufis and Shaykhīs were applicable for a group of distinctive people (*khavāṣ*) only, while the mujtahids offered practical solutions comprehensible by the populace (*ʿavām*). However, the affiliation of bazaar and mosque in the Qajar and Pahlavi periods helped the mujtahids and the *marājiʿ* to depose of their opponents, and to mitigate the influence of the rival Sufi and Shaykhī groups.

Nevertheless, before the recent revolution in Iran, *marjaʿiyyat* had not yet been considered as a substitute to monarchism. The people supported the *marājiʿ* (and in some cases made the ulama act in their interest) in order to check the despotic regime, not to replace it. The occupation of state offices by ulama under the guise of *vilāyat-i faqīh* brought a new era to the function and goals of the institution of *marjaʿiyyat*, which can only be judged with time.

NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION AND DATES

The system of transliteration of this work is that of the Library of Congress as adopted by the Institute of Islamic Studies. Words or phrases common in both Persian and Arabic have been rendered according to their Persian pronunciation unless they are used in an Arabic sentence or phrase. For example, *vilāyat-i faqīh* appears as *wilāyat al-faqīh* in an Arabic sentence. Nevertheless, the vowel of the Arabic definite articles has been given the value "u" in Persian names and words such as Faḏlullah, ʿAbdullah, and Āyatullah. Most of the names of classical and medieval authors like Shaykh-i Tūsī are recorded according to their Persian usages. However, names like Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī and Shahīd ath-Thānī appear in their more recognized Arabic forms. Words such as Imam, sultan, ulama, and Sufism are Anglicized unless they are used in a Persian or Arabic phrase such as *qiṣaṣ al-ʿulamāʾ*.

The main consideration throughout has been to convey the exact phonetic structure. Therefore the consonant "h" (originally the feminine "t") in the end of words like Shi'i, *ḥisba* and *ghayba* do not appear where they are not pronounced. Also the last consonant in *fuqahā'* does not appear where it is in the possessive case, e.g., *fuqahā's* right.

The English equivalent of Arabic and Persian words are often mentioned in brackets. Dates have generally been cited according to both the lunar Islamic and the Christian calendar. Nevertheless, the contemporary time period has been recorded in the text according to the solar Islamic calendar and marked with "sh." However, the Christian calendar remains unchanged.

NOTES

1. Maḥmūd Shibābī, *Taqrīrāt-i Uṣūl* (Tehran: Farbud, 1965), pp. 114-4.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 117-20.
3. Murtaẓā Muṭahharī, "Ilhāmī az Shaykh aṭ-Ṭā'ifa," *Hizāra-yi Shaykh-i Tūsī* (Qum: Dār at-Tablīgh, 1970), Vol. II, p. 45.
4. See Muḥammad Ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfī*, ed. M. B. Kamara'ī (Tehran: Islamiyya, 1963), Vol. 1, Introduction and pp. 12-14. Also see Abdulaziz Sachedina, *Islamic Messianism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981), pp. 30-35.
5. See Shaykh aṭ-Ṭā'ifa Tūsī, *ʿUddat al-Uṣūl* (Tehran, 1894), pp. 53-54. Also see Murtaẓā Muṭahharī, "Ilhāmī az Shaykh aṭ-Ṭā'ifa," *Hizāra-yi Shaykh-i Tūsī* (Qum: Dār at-Tablīgh, 1970), ed. ʿAlī Davānī, Vol. 2, p. 44.
6. See ʿAbd aj-Jalīl Qazvīnī, *Kitāb an-Naqḍ* (Tehran, 1952), ed. Muḥaddith, pp. 12, 256, 291, 304 and 492.
7. Muṭahharī, "Ijtihād dar Islām," *Marjaʿiyyat va Rūhāniyyat* (Tehran: Intishārāt, 1962), p. 42.
8. Shaykh-i Tūsī, *ʿUddat al-Uṣūl*, Vol. II, pp. 109-110.

9. See Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, *Tahdhīb al-wuṣūl ilā ʿilm al-uṣūl* (Tehran: Dār al-Khilāfa, 1890).
10. Abu'l-Qāsim Gurjī, "Nigāhī bi Taḥavvulāt-i ʿilm-i uṣūl," *Majalla-yi Dānishkada-yi Adbiyyāt* (Tehran, 1973), p. 39.
11. Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, *al-Alfayn* (Najaf: Ḥaydariyya, 1969), ed. M. M. Khursān, pp. 9, 40, 82, 285 and 290.
12. Shaykh Ḥasan ʿĀmilī, *Maʿālim al-uṣūl* (Tehran: Shāfiʿī, 1959), p. 416.
13. Āqā Bqir Bihbihānī, *Risālat al-Ijtihād wa'l Akhbār* (Tabʿ-ī Maḥallī, 1895), pp. 1-20.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
15. Consult Murtaẓā Jazā'irī, "Taqlīd Aʿlam yā Shūrā-yi," *Marjaʿiyyat va Rūhāniyyat*, pp. 216-231.
16. Consult the following sources: Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, *Kashf al-Murād* (Mashhad: Muhammadiyya, n.d.), p. 240; Naṣīr ad-Dīn Tūsī, *Talkhīṣ al-Muḥaṣṣal* (Tehran, 1980), ed. A. Nūrī, p. 206; Fāḍil Miqdād Suyūrī, *Kitāb al-Nāfi Fī Sharh Bāb al-Ḥādī-cashar* (Tehran: Muṣṭafavī, 1979), p. 66.
17. Nūrullah Shushtarī, *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq* (Tehran: Islāmiyya, n.d.), Vol. II, p. 319.
18. See A. Narāqī, *Manāhij al-Aḥkām* (Tabʿ-ī Mahallī, 1896), pp. 275-7.
19. See Ḥasan ʿĀmilī, *Maʿālim al-uṣūl* (Tehran: Shafīʿī, 1959), p. 435.
20. Murtaẓā Anṣārī, *Zandiqī-yi Shaykh-i Anṣārī* (Ahvāz: Ittihād, 1960), pp. 72-5.
21. Shaykh Murtaẓā Anṣārī, *al-Ijtihād wat-Taqlīd* (Egypt: Bulaq), p. 35.
22. Muḥammad Kāzim Ṭabaṭabā'ī Yazdī, *ʿUrwat al-wuthqā* (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyya, n.d.), p. 4.

23. *Ibid.*
24. See Āmilī, *MaĀlim al-Uṣūl*, pp. 425-43.
25. See Narāqī, *Āwā'id al Ayyām* (Qum: Maktaba Basīratī, 1903), pp. 185-205.
26. Ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, *Tadhkirat al-Fuqahā'*, Vol. I (Tehran: Murtaẓavī, 1955), pp. 452-3.
27. Shahīd ath-Thānī, *Sharḥ al-LumĀa*, Vol. I (Tehran: Āilmiyy, 1929), pp. 255-65.
28. Muḥammad Bāqir Bihbihānī, *Risālat al-Akhbār wa'l Ijtihād*, p. 9.
29. Narāqī, *Āwā'id al-Ayyām*, p. 185.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 187 and 188.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
32. Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn Ālbānī, *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth aḍ-ḍaĀifa* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1979), pp. 247-9.
33. See Ruhollah Khomeini, *Vilāyat-i Faqīh* (Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1979), pp. 74-81.
34. Muḥammad Ibn YaĀqūb Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfī* (Tehran: Islāmiyya, 1963), Vol. I, p. 113.
35. See Ibn Bābūya Ṣādūq, *Ikmāl ad-Dīn wa Itmām an-NiĀma* (Tehran: Islāmiyya, 1960), ed. Kamara'ī, Vol. II, pp. 160-61.
36. Narāqī, *Āwā'id al-Ayyām*, p. 188.
37. Shaykh Murtaẓā Anṣārī, *al-Makāsib* (Tabriz: MaṭḥĀat IṭṭilāĀat, 1955), pp. 153-5.
38. Narāqī, *Āwā'id al-Ayyām*, p. 188.
39. Ṭabaṭabā'ī Yazdī, *al-Āurwat al-Wuthqā*, p. 5.

40. For example, see Michael Fischer, *Iran, from Religious Dispute to Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 251-4. Also see Abd al-Hadi Ḥa'iri, "Shīcism and Constitutionalism in Iran," Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University (Montreal, 1973), pp. 124-8.
41. Consult Murtaza Mutahhari, *Marja'iyat va Rūḥāniyyat*.
42. See Ann K. Lambton, "A Reconsideration of the Position of the Marja' al-Taqlīd and the Religious Institution," *Studia Islamica* 20 (1964), pp. 115-35.
43. See Ḥa'iri, "Ansārī," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition, Supplement (1980), pp. 75-7.
44. Shaykh Āqā Buzurg Tihirānī, *Ṭabaqāt al-A'clām* (Najaf: Cilmīyya, 1954), Vol. I, pp. 310-13.
45. Cases at point are Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī's (d. 1312/1894) *fatva* on prohibition of Tobaccos, Mīrzā Muḥammad Taqī Shīrāzī's (d. 1338/1919) *jihād* proclamation against British mandatory role in Iraq. Consult 'Alī Davānī *Nihzat-i Rūḥāniyyūn-i Iran* (Tehran: Bunyād Imām Rizā, 1979), Vols. I and II.
46. Cases at point are Akhūnd-i Khurāsānī and Mīrzā-yi Nā'inī's cooperation with Iranian constitutionalist. See Ḥa'iri, *Shi'ism and Constitutionalism in Iran*.
47. For example, look at M. B. Bihbinānī, *Risālat al-Akḥbār*, pp. 6-17; and Narāqī, *Manāḥij al-Uṣūl* (Tehran: Ṭab'ī Maḥallī, 1809), p. 277.
48. The *Futuvvat-Nama-yi Chitsāzān* may symbolize the Sufi and Bazaar interrelationships. See *Rasā'il-i Javān-mardān*, ed. Murtaẓā Ṣarrāf, intro. Henry Corbin (Tehran Department d'Iranologie de l'Institut Franco-Iranien, 1973), pp. 226-239.