THE INTRA-ISLAMIC CONFLICTS AND THE SHIFTING DYNAMICS
OF THE MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX
FROM THE IRAQ WAR TO THE RISE OF ISIS

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ABSTRACT

THE INTRA-ISLAMIC CONFLICTS AND THE SHIFTING DYNAMICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX FROM THE IRAQ WAR TO THE RISE OF ISIS

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This thesis aims to analyse the impact of intra-Islamic conflicts on the security interactions in the Middle East regional subsystem in the context of the ongoing structural transformation of the region. This study will evaluate two main narratives concerning the role of the sectarian identities on the intra and inter-state security dynamics: 1) Deep Sunni-Shīʿī antagonism as a primordial conflictual factor in the Middle East 2) Sectarian strife has a secondary impact on the ongoing conflicts and is mainly a cover for geopolitical interests. Considering the chronological approach of the study, the author firstly examines the history of the transformation of the intra-Islamic relations from the intra-state conflict within the framework of the Arab and Turkic Muslim states to the inter-state conflicts following emergence of the Safavid state in Iran. Secondly, the research analyses the transformation of Iraq to the only Shīʿī Arab state, the rise of Sunni and Shīʿī Jihadist organizations in the context of the Syrian civil war and the Yemeni crisis in which has obtained an inter-state dimension. From this analysis, the research tries to portray the complex nature of the conflict through the integration of theological, sociological, historical and geopolitical aspects into one united vision.

ÖZ

İSLAM İÇİ ÇATIŞMALAR VE ORTADOĞU BÖLGESEL GÜVENLİK KOMPLEKSİNİN DEĞİŞEN DİNAMİKLERİ: IRAK SAVAŞINDAN IŞİD'İN YÜKSELİŞİNE KADAR

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Bu tez, bölgede devam eden yapısal dönüşüm bağlamında, İslam içi çatışmaların Orta Doğu bölgesel alt sistemindeki güvenlik etkileşimleri üzerindeki etkilerini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, mezhepsel kimliklerin devlet içi ve devletler arası güvenlik dinamikleri üzerindeki rolüne ilişkin iki ana diskuru değerlendirecektir: 1) Orta Doğu'da öteden beri süregelen bir çatışma faktörü olarak Sünni-Şii karşıtlığı 2) Mezhepsel kimliklerin devam eden çatışmalar ve çoğunlukla jeopolitik çıkarlar için araçsallaştırılması. Çalışmanın kronolojik yaklaşımı göz önüne alındığında; ilk olarak, Arap ve Türk-İslam devletlerindeki mezhepsel çatışmaların Safevilerde Şii faktörün belirgin bir şekilde ön plana çıkmasından sonra devletler arası bir düzlemde çatışma unsuru olarak devam etmesi incelenecektir. İkinci olarak, Sünni-Şii çatışması niteliği kazanmış olan 2003 sonrası Irak'taki çatışmalar, 2011'de başlayan Suriye iç savaşı, 2014'te IŞİD'in "İslam halifeliğini" ilan edişi ve devletler arası bir boyut kazanmış olan Yemen krizini analiz edecektir. Bu tezin araştırma sorusu, konunun teolojik, sosyolojik, tarihi ve jeopolitik yönlerini bütünleşik bir incelemeye tabi tutarak, Sünni-Şii çatışmasının karmaşık yapısını tek bir çerçeve içerisinde tasvir etmeye çalışacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mezhepsel Aidiyet, Bölgesel Güvenlik Kompleksi, İran, Suudi Arabistan

In memory of

my late grandfather, Abdülgaffar Gaffari

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CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship but Allāh, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh. Every practicing Muslim knows these words, no matter what country in the world he lives in, and no matter what language he speaks. Antagonisms between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah begin with this brief declaration of faith: The Shīʿah add the words and *I bear witness that Ali is the friend/representative of Allāh.* The assassination of Caliph/Imam Ali and the slaughter of his son Hussein became a prologue to the civil war within the Muslim community, which split a single community - *the Ummah* - into Sunnis and Shīʿah. This split predetermined the division in the propagation of the Islamic doctrine. At some stage, Sunni and Shīʿī Islam began to develop almost independently of each other, and differences in dogma and rituals were formed.

The differences between two major currents of Islam have been perceived as the cause of intra-state and inter-state conflicts in the Middle East. In the contemporary era, the turning of Iraq as the only Shīʿī Arab state and the rise of Sunni and Shīʿī Jihadist organizations in the context of the Syrian civil war and the Yemeni crisis has led to this perception that the Sunni- Shīʿī strife is something to blame. However, in the case of Iraq, prior to the 2003 US-led invasion, religious affiliation played a secondary role in the country. During the Iran-Iraq war, Shīʿī soldiers actually fought with each other, and the issue of citizenship rather than faith was in the first place. It was only after Saddam Hussein's Sunni army officers were banned from serving in the armed forces of the new Iraq that they began to join the ranks of the Sunni Jihadists on a massive scale. Until then, they hadn't even thought about whether they were Sunnis or Shīʿah.

A half century ago, the issue of Sunni- Shīʿī conflict was barely mentioned. Iran was one of Washington's main allies in the region. Saudi Arabia considered

Nasser's Egypt as its number one opponent and was waging a proxy war against it in Yemen. The Arab countries unanimously designated Israel as the absolute enemy, while at the same time waging a war of influence to make the best use of this lever. What was then called the "Arab-Israeli conflict" was, in everyone's mind, the geopolitical epicentre of the Middle East. Half a century later, what is now called the "Israeli-Palestinian conflict" has been marginalized and following the Iraq War, the outbreak of the Arab Spring, the Syrian civil war and the Yemeni crisis that have ensued a new regional subsystem is being developed which according to some is primarily based on the Sunni- Shīʿī divide in an interstate level.

The complexity of the Middle East policy is not limited to the confrontation between Sunnis and Shīʿah, but it has a significant impact on what is happening, and without taking this factor into account it is impossible to get a complete picture of the situation. We can talk about the intertwining of contradictions - religious, political, historical and geopolitical conflicts. On one hand, there is an argument that perceives sectarian strife as a primordial conflictual factor in the Middle East. This view argues that the sectarian identity influences the public consciousness and the decision-making process in foreign policy, in which results in a course of ideological and sectarian security policy on behalf of Middle Eastern states. For instance, the paradigm of sacrifice inherent in Shīʿī faith predetermined such peculiarity of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran as firmness in defending its position, inadmissibility of abandoning the basic principles of its policy, and its readiness to pay any price in the name of the Shīʿī state interests, and the ideals of the Islamic Revolution. In an Iran as a "stronghold of the Shīʿah", the Ayatollahs consider it their duty to protect Shīʿī Muslims around the world and accuse Sunni countries in the region of oppressing them and spreading Sunnī jihadism.

On the other hand, there are often opinions that sectarian disagreements are only a cover for true political interests. Iran says that the outside powers are dividing the Ummah by planting seeds of sectarianism: According to the Iranian thesis, which

is also supported by some influential academics in the West, there is a strong public policy effort by the U.S. to convince the international community that the political turmoil and the bloody conflicts in the Middle East are part of a deep Sunnī-Shīʿī antagonism. This is a consequence of the desire of the U.S. and its allies to remove responsibility for interference in the internal affairs of the countries of the region, for double standards and doubtful alliances with the most reactionary regimes and radical groups, including extremists and foreign terrorists. The provocation of intra-Islamic hostility appears to have been initiated to achieve the following objectives: destruction or weakening of Iran's strategic partners in the region, i.e. the government of the Assad regime in Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon, increased pressure on the Shīʿī majority government in Iraq, further isolation of Iran in the Persian Gulf and the region in general. This thesis aimed to explore what impact the split between Sunnis and Shīʿah had on the conflicting situation in the region and what the reasons were. In other words, from the two above-mentioned arguments which one is accurately explains the nature and roots of the ongoing Intra-Islamic rivalry in the Middle East.

In this context, the study of Sunni-Shīʿī relations at the present stage is extremely relevant, as they reflect the geopolitical and geostrategic rivalry in the region and the changing configuration of interstate alliances. After the events of the Arab Spring, several conflicts broke out in Iraq, Syria, and later Yemen, one of the reasons given for which is the sectarian strife. Moreover, there are several other hot spots, namely Lebanon, and Bahrain, where representatives of the two largest trends within Islam are likely to encounter social unrest and political instability. In order to find ways to resolve these conflicts, it is necessary to perform an in-depth study of the origins, nature, and peculiarities of the development of Sunni-Shīʿī relations, which also determines the importance of this research topic.

The research on Sunni-Shīʿī relations is of particular interest due to a gap in available literature on intra-Islamic dynamics. At a time when the "Islamic factor" is increasingly influencing the domestic and foreign policy of the Muslim states, the identification of the main features in the relations between Sunnis and Shīʿah is

of utmost relevance, especially for the Turkish Republic, which has been intensely engaged in the Middle Eastern in the aftermath of the Arab Spring.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the nature and scope of intra-Islamic conflicts in regional and multilateral relations in the Middle East in the context of the ongoing structural transformation of the region. The subject and purpose of the study predetermined the following tasks:

- To analyse the historical stages of Intra-Islamic conflict;
- To study the sociological context of intra and inter-tribal dynamics during the early period of Islamic history;
- To explain the role of the sectarian identities in the inter-state conflicts during the imperial period;
- To examine the role of the secular modernization project of the Turkish Republic on the easing of intra-Islamic conflicts in the Middle East;
- To describe the emergence of the phenomena of the political Islam and the impact of the Islamic Revolution in Iran on the growing role of the religious factor in the societal and inter-communal relations in the region;
- To evaluate the fall of "Sunnī Iraq" and the rise of the Shī'ī political actors following the US-led invasion of Iraq;
- To analyse Sunni insurgency in Iraq and its transformation to the worldwide network of the Islamic State militants,
- To explain the causes and consequences of the structural changes in the security interactions in the Middle Eastern regional subsystem;
- To explain the role and place of Sunnī-Shī'ī confrontation in the post-Arab Spring conflicts in the Middle East and the emergence of the failed states in Iraq, Syria and Yemen;
- To evaluate the major hotspots of further aggravation of sectarian antagonism and its impact on destabilization of the social and political situation in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Methodological basis of the research is composed of analytical approach, deductive research technique, sociological approach, chronological method of

historical research and comparative theological analysis, as well as quantitative methods of data and indicators analysis. The author examines the intra-Islamic conflict as an unfinished process. To compare the religious and political doctrines of Sunni and Shīʿī Islam it is expedient to use methods focused on the use of available scientific knowledge, such as analytical and deductive methods. The application of the chronological method of historical research allowed the author to formulate a periodization of the intra-Islamic conflicts, as well as to highlight the stages of development of confrontation between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah at the present stage.

The doctrinal and religious practice of Islam is well researched in various disciplines of social sciences. Among scholars of Islam works of R. J. Abisaab, F. Ajami, O. Bengio, A. Billingsley, G. Bowering, N. Cigar, L. Clarke, H. Corbin, J. L. Esposito, R. N. Frye, I. Goldziher, L. Hazleton, M. Kadivar, A. Knysh, W. Madelung, M. Mozaffar, V. Nasr, O. Roy, D. J. Stewart, R. Takeyh and others are used in this research. Documents of international organizations, in particular, resolutions of the UN General Assembly, are also being referred. In addition, due to the geopolitical aspect of the research topic and ongoing course of security interactions in the Middle Eastern regional subsystem, journalistic sources such as interviews, statements, speeches, officials addresses, and clergy statements have been used in this work. The mentioned literature is representative and allows for a thorough and in-depth study of the chosen topic.

There are several factors that determine the academic originality of the present research. First, the intra-Islamic conflicts is considered in a comprehensive manner, in particular, in the context of the shifting dynamics of the regional security architecture taking place in the Middle Eastern regional subsystem. Second, the research proposes the author's periodization of the history of Sunni-Shīʿī relations from the time of the Prophet's demise to "the Shīʿah revival" and rise of the worldwide Sunni insurgency and of the Islamic State with its sharp antagonism towards non-Sunnis. The author also integrates the sociological studies regarding the principles of heredity in pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabia into

discussions concerning the candidacy of Muhammad's successor. Moreover, the author has tried to portray the nature of the conflict through integration of theological, sociological, historical and geopolitical aspects into one united vision.

CAHPTER 2

THE INTRA-ISLAMIC CONFLICT: THEOLOGICAL ROOTS AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. The Crystallization of the Sectarian Strife
2.1.1. The Proto-Shīʿah: The Partisans of ʿAlī

In this work, the Sunnī-Shīʿī relations will be considered in the process of division of the Muslim community (*ummah*) that began after the demise of the Prophet Muhammad in 632; an intra-religious strife that has not been resolved to this day. During this period, relations between the two main currents in Islam have passed through several stages. The first stage (632-661) is a hidden confrontation within the *ummah* between the group, which will later be called *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah* or the Sunnis, and the group called *Shi'atu ʿAlī* or the Shīʿah.[1] The Shīʿah are often referred by the Sunnis as *Rawafid*, because they reject the legitimacy of the rule of the righteous caliphs of Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān as well as the rule of the Umayyads and Abbasids.

In determining the date of the beginning of the schism between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah, we proceed from the fact that ʿAlī's first followers, although lacking the political organization and ideological basis for unification, stood out from the general mass of Muslims at that time, as Prophet Muhammed passed away.[2] However, there is another view that disputes this approach and stresses that the ʿAlīd movement was crystalized during the reign of the Caliph ʿUthmān (644 -

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[1] Lesley Hazleton, *After the Prophet: The Epic Story of the Shia-Sunni Split in Islam* (New York: Doubleday Books, 2009), 32.

[2] Wilferd Madelung, *The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1.; Charles Hauss and Melissa Haussman, *Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2012), 366.

656), because it was then that the process of consolidation and rapprochement of various adherents of ʿAlī and their transformation into a socio-political category of persons begun in which were committed to empower ʿAlī with the supreme authority of the early Muslim community.[3] Nevertheless, it seems to be more in line with the objectives of this study, to consider the beginning of the Sunnī Shīʿī rifts with the statement of ʿAlī's supporters that it was him and not Abū Bakr who Prophet Muhammad wanted to see him as his successor, that is, in 632.

The main contradiction between the two groups was the issue of power succession following the death of the Prophet Muhammad,[4] who did not make any orders either on his successor or on the principle of replacing the head of the community.[5] This is not surprising, since the nomadic Arabs of the Arabian Peninsula did not inherit the post of chief of the tribe. In his book Political Succession in the Arab World, Anthony Billingsley notes that "the Arab tribal approach to succession is a mix of the dynastic and the democratic."[6]

Prophet Muhammed by not designating a successor left the community with more than one option. As a result, immediately after his death, there were fierce disputes over the right to succession to the post of spiritual and secular leadership of the community. In this stage, the right to supreme power had become the main problem around which all religious and political disputes would be conducted. The open struggle for power was accompanied by a sharp polemical confrontation, during which the religious and political views of rival groups were formed.

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[3] Madelung, 1.

[4] Barry Rubin, *The Middle East: A Guide to Politics, Economics, Society and Culture* (London: Routledge, 2015), 327.

[5] Although the Prophet did not appoint anyone specific as caliph after himself, he said that his successor should come from Quraysh.

[6] This democratic approach can be observed in the tribal majlis in some Middle Eastern Arab societies. See, Anthony Billingsley, *Political Succession in the Arab World: Constitutions, Family Loyalties and Islam* (London: Routledge, 2009), 75.

It is important to note that, according to the Qurʾān, every power on earth, entitlement of specific persons to rule over people is only a temporary guarantee coming from Allāh.[7] The real power belongs only to God,[8] because the Lord in Islam is one and only, so the whole power is one and indivisible and cannot be divided into types or categories, secular or spiritual.[9] "The prophet himself, and all the more so a caliph, sultan, king, imam, master, father or husband can command only as a function of commands given by God."[10]

The first supporters of ʿAlī who perceived him as the rightest heir to the Prophet had a crucial role in organization of the Partisans of ʿAlī. These included Ammar Ibn Yasir, Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, and most importantly Salman the Persian. When the first caliph was elected in 632, al-Miqdad Ibn al-Aswad along with Salman supported the candidacy of ʿAlī as opposed to Abū Bakr.[11] Abu Dharr, one of the Prophet's earliest Sahabah who contributed to the revolt against Othman also campaigned ardently for ʿAlī's right to the caliphate. Even in the Umayyad citadel, Damascus, and in the presence of Muʿāwiyah himself, Abū Dharr, in his sermons,

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[7] For example, these Qur'anic verses state the indivisibility of God's power: Yunus (Jonah) - 10:65: "All power and honor belong to Allah." Fatir (The Originator of Creation) - 35:10: "to Allah belong all glory and power."

[8] In addition, the Quran uses various terms to denote the unified and boundless power of Allah, which are often interpreted in a very broad sense. Quran uses different terms such as al-Hukm, al-Amr, and al-Mulk to designate authority and power.

[9] As Mehdi Mozaffari notes, "the Qoran materializes, concretizes, and politicizes Allah, while at the same time rendering him inaccessible and untouchable. In this paradox/miracle lies the source of the dynamism of the concept of Allah, present and occult at the same time". See Mehdi Mozaffari and Michel Vale, "Authority in Islam," *International Journal of Politics* 16, no. 4 (1986): 21, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40428291.

[10] Laoust, *Les fondements de l'autorité dans le "Minhaj" d'al-Hillï*, p. 175. In Mozaffari and Vale, 21.

[11] Matti Moosa, *Extremist Shiites: The Ghulat Sects* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 346.

spoke against the luxury and greed of the ruling upper classes, and against the hereditary right to the Caliphate of ʿAlī and his sons from the daughter of the Prophet, Fatima, - Hassan and Hussein. Muʿāwiyah sent Abū Dharr to Medina, but there he also continued his sermons, the key link of which was the idea of the superiority of close physical kinship with the Prophet over the nobility and companionship of the him.[12]

2.1.2. The Problem of Succession: A Socio-Political Analysis

The difficulties encountered in determining the principle of succession to power in the Muslim caliphate are related to the fact that by that time the clan institutions had already been undermined and the social classes had not yet been established. As Fred M. Donner mentions, the new state created by Muhammad has begun to go beyond the tribal characteristics of Arab life. Tribes and tribal loyalties, of course, remain in place, but are imposed on them in a broader order that links individuals and groups within the Islamic State in ways that cross tribal boundaries - through ideological elements such as common faith and legal authority and through practical measures like taxation, administration and military service.[13]

While the growth of the Muslim state has been characterized by a gradual expansion beyond the limits of tribal authenticity, it has also meant the emergence of an increasingly distinct ruling elite in the Islamic state. With the increasing importance of the institutions of state control and centralization, the new ruling elite has defined itself more clearly.[14]

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[12] Together with the rise of political Islam in Iran, the image of Abu Dharr has been portrayed as a hero of social justice. In his works ʿAlī Shariati presents Abu Darr as a model for Muslims in the modern world. See: John McHugo, *A Concise History of Sunnis and Shi'is* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2018), 237.

[13] Fred M. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 75.
[14] Ibid.

The specificity of the transition period was that the social and political interests of groups representing the main competing forces of Arabia were colliding; these groups were:

- a conservative group, including tribal nobility, clinging to the past and its former privileges and values;
- the emerging Muslim elite, which felt a real opportunity to gain power and dominate by appealing to its services to Islam;
- and finally, the nomads, which had been harmed by both groups, although it was the nomads that had won military victories and wealth for both groups.[15]

The reason why, among Arabs who did not recognize the principle of succession to power in the pre-Islamic period, it was possible for the Shīʿah to appeal to this principle only ten years after the Prophet's death, is the change and expansion of the base of the ʿAlīd movement after the transfer of the center of the Muslim community from the Medina to Iraq, the population of which was relatively recently converted to Islam and in a large majority recognized the hereditary principle of the transfer of power.

The problem of supreme authority has for centuries been a pressing and acute one, not only because of the political ambitions of rival communities and groups, but also because in the eyes of believers the legitimacy and righteousness of the leadership served as safeguards of the righteousness of their lives and vice versa. The struggle against "illegal" and "unrighteous" rulers became the ideological slogan of the Khawariji and Shīʿī movements.

To understand the origins of the subsequent development of the cult of Imams in Shīʿite religious consciousness, it is essential to give a brief historical depiction of

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[15] The ruling elite's desire to control nomads and their contempt for the nomadic way of life has led them to reserve command positions in the army, governorates and other important positions in the developing state apparatus as far as possible for settled people. Nomads seem to have been seen as questionable reliability or inappropriate lineage, even though they had a vested loyalty to the Muslim state in the past. Donner, 264.

the death of Imam ʿAlī. In 657, at Battle of Ṣiffīn, the army of ʿAlī met with the Syrian-Arab army of Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān ("hypocrites"). On the second day of the battle, the right wing of ʿAlī's army defeated and squeezed out the army of Muʿāwiyah. A detachment of "Qurʾān readers" (Qurra), who knew the Qurʾān by heart, was in ʿAlī's army. Those were courageous and vigilant fighters. Muʿāwiyah was saved from total defeat by a cunning: he ordered to attach the scrolls of the Qurʾān to the spears of his soldiers and called for "the judgment of the Book of God". ʿAlī had to stop the battle and, under the pressure of his own counsellors, was forced to agree to arbitration by umpires. This led to a split in the ranks of the Shīʿites and the appearance of the Khawārij, the earliest Islamic sect.[16] In 661, when ʿAlī was leaving the mosque in Kūfah, he was fatally wounded in the head by the sword of a Kharijite assassin, Ibn Muljam al-Murādī. Summarizing the efforts of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, it is possible to say that in the described epoch the ascetic spirit of ʿAlī and his companions, ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir, Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān, Abū Dharr al-Ghifari and Mālik b. Hārith al-Nakhaʿī, entered into confrontation with the Umayyad aristocracy, which has embarked on a course of social stratification and urbanization of the Arab society.

The assassination of Caliph ʿAlī in 661 and the rise of the Umayyad dynasty, which was hostile to Prophet Muhammad, complicated the problem of power: according to part of the community, the Umayyads usurped the supreme authority, and from that moment on forces within the community commenced their struggle against the "wicked" dynasty and for the return of power to the Ahl al-Bayt, the Prophet's family. Anti-Ummayad propaganda fuelled the fears of Muslims, preaching that the "wicked" Umayyads had pushed the ummah away from the "path of the righteous."[17]

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[16] The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Kh'rijite | Islamic Sect," Encyclopedia Britannica, last modified April 30, 2013, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Kharijite.

[17] Alexander Knysh, Islam in Historical Perspective (London: Routledge, 2015), 119.

As already noted, the main difference between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah was the different interpretation of the concept of power in the Muslim community-state. As for Sunnī Islam, it is characterized by a "communal" view of the nature of power, which implies that the caliph, the head of state, was elected by the community ("ummah") from among its most worthy members. The caliph was supposed to monitor the accurate implementation of the divine law, but had no right to cancel, change and reinterpret its provisions. In fact, the power of the first Muslim dynasties was not based on ties with Allāh, but on ties and a treaty with the community.

For the Shīʿah, for whom imams are mediators between Allāh and men, the so-called "sacred" notion of the nature of power, according to which the right to power is conditioned by belonging to the Prophet's family and his descendants, prevailed.[18] For the Shīʿah, the imam is also the successor of the Prophet in the organization of human affairs - in leading them, bringing them to grace, establishing righteousness, eliminating injustice and enmity between people.

Intensive development of the doctrine of imamate began with the appearance of works devoted to the justification of ʿAlīds' rights to supreme authority. At that time, the interpretation of individual verses of the Qurʾān in favour of ʿAlī and his descendants gained political significance. As a result, the idea that the Imamate belongs to the ʿAlī's family by virtue of a "divine establishment" was developed.[19] However, the principle of the transfer of supreme authority within the family has not been established from the outset. With the natural fragmentation of the ʿAlī's clan, the number of potential contenders for Imamate has also grown, resulting in the separation of a number of denominations within Shīʿī Islam.

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[18] Husain Nasr, *Expectation of the Millennium: Shi'ism in History* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 103; Fouad Ajami, *The Vanished Imam: Musa al Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 141-142.

[19] Knysh, 168.

The principle of the transfer of right to Imamate from father to son was not accepted by the Shīʿah. Therefore, after the death of each imam, there were disagreements among his followers about the successor, about the right to imamate. Thus, each of the ʿAlīd branches, defending the right of its claimant to power, brought to the doctrine of the Imamate its own ideas.[20] This has ultimately led to dogmatic divergences within Shīʿī Islam, weakening its opposition to Sunnī Islam. Sectarians of different sects understood the principle of imamate transfer differently, interpreted the rights and duties of imams, their personal qualities, the possibility of cooperation between imams and the ruling dynasty, their attitude to "unjust rulers", etc. in their own way. However, all the Shīʿah were united by the recognition of the need for an Imamate as a "divine establishment" and the exclusive right of ʿAlī's family to it.[21]

In turn, according to the Sunnī tradition, "the caliph is there to guarantee the carrying out of Islamic obligations, to represent and embody in his person the duties of the Islamic community."[22] "The Caliph represents the state's judicial, administrative, and military power. As ruler he is nothing but the successor of the one who preceded him, having been designated as such by a human act (election, or nomination by the predecessor), and not entitled by the qualities inherent in his personality. Most importantly, the caliph of the Sunnis has no authority to dispense spiritual instruction."[23] It is important that although the Prophet did not appoint

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[20] Lynda Clarke, *Shi'ite Heritage: Essays on Classical and Modern Traditions* (Global Academic Publishing, 2001), 85.

[21] Knysh, 99.

[22] Ijnās Jūldtsīhar, Ignác Goldziher, and Andras Hamori, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 182.
[23] Jūldtsīhar, Goldziher, and Hamori, 183.

anyone specific as Imam after himself, he declared that "the Imam who come after him shall be of the Quraysh".[24]

The idea of the "divine nature" of the supreme authority, which defined the entire religious concept of Shīʿī Islam, was perceived at different times in various forms of religious consciousness but was always fanatically defended and advocated by adherents of this trend in Islam. This, in turn, predetermined the special status and boundless power of imams as infallible and with special knowledge. The Imam of the Shīʿah thanks to the personal qualities God has implanted in him, is the leader and spiritual instructor of Islam, the heir to the Prophet's office. He rules and teaches in the name of God. As Goldizher puts it, "the Imam represents divinely sanctioned sovereignty. But there is more: his superhuman qualities elevate him above the rest of mankind. He is superior to them not only by virtue of his hereditary and innate, rather than conferred, office, but also by virtue of his substance."[25]

Postulating the divine nature of power, modern Shīʿī apologists proclaim the practice of the Prophet Muhammad, his deputies and Shīʿī imams, who did not separate religion from politics within Islam, as an ideal model of governance. They view "Islamic rule" as a kind of "marital union" of religion and politics, bound together and legitimized by the will of Allāh and therefore indissoluble. Thus, at this stage, the first factor that determined the split of Islam and became the main difference between Sunnī and Shīʿī doctrines was the question of the succession of power.

2.1.3. The Islamic Caliphate and the Shīʿī Opposition

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[24] Henry Corbin, *Temple & Contemplation* (London: Routledge, 2013), 104. As Corbin notes, the Imamate of an Imam, even though he were an Arab, would be neither legal nor legitimate if he were a non-Qurayshite.

[25] Jūldtsīhar, Goldziher, and Hamori, 183.

The second stage (661-1258) is the "opposition" period in Sunnī-Shīʿī relations. It is important to note that during this stage the struggle of the two branches of Islam was mainly conducted within one state - the Islamic Caliphate - and had not yet acquired an interstate character.

With the arrival of the Umayyad dynasty after the murder of ʿAlī, the material and social status of numerous relatives and followers of ʿAlī - the Shīʿah - deteriorated dramatically, which led to an exacerbation of the struggle between them and the ruling clan and intensified anti- Umayyad propaganda. Iraq, which had already lost its position as the centre of the Caliphate and the privileges associated with that status, proved to be a fertile ground for this propaganda and turned to a hotbed for pro-ʿAlīd sentiment.[26] In addition to regional and tribal rivalries between al-Sham and Iraq, the latter became the base for an ʿAlīd movement, a socio-political movement that defended the hereditary principle of the transfer of power in the Prophet's family.[27] In this regard, many of those dissatisfied with the power of the Umayyad caliphs, i.e. oppositionists, including both Persians and Arabs, became supporters of the ʿAlīd claim.

At this stage of the deepening of tensions between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah, an extremely important event in the history of Shīʿī Islam has taken place. On the night of October 10, 680 (10 Muharram 61 AH), near the town of Karbala, the atrocious murder of Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet and son of ʿAlī, took place. According to numerous testimonies gathered by historians, the small army loyal to Hussein composed of 72 soldiers - 40 infantry and 32 horsemen, attacked by an overwhelmingly superior army comprising of five thousand soldiers.[28]

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[26] Knysh, 114.

[27] It is important to emphasize that since the announcement of Yazid, son of Muʿāwiyah, as the heir to power during the lifetime of "the ruler of the faithful", all subsequent caliphs were no longer elected as before, but were determined or appointed on the basis of either the will of the predecessor or the membership of the contender in the ruling clan or dynasty.

[28] Ron Geaves, *Islam Today: An Introduction* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), 25.

On the day of remembrance of Imam Hussein, Ashura, mourning ceremonies are held which are accompanied by ritual public outpourings of grief, blood donations and self-flagellation. The death of Hussein contributed to the religious and political unification of ʿAlīds and their supporters. Hussein has become a symbol of the Shīʿī movement and one of the most significant figures in the Islamic world. Over time, the Shīʿah have given the image of their main martyr a mythical character, endowed with supernatural powers, and the history of his life has been overgrown with numerous legends and stories about miracles.[29]

The idea of the glory of martyrdom, embodied in the tragic fate of the members and descendants of the ʿAlī family, has been and still is one of the guiding principles for the Shīʿah in various ways. Characteristically, the motive of martyrdom was not developed in the Sunnism, as Sunniism later became the official state or dominant religion in most Muslim countries. Shīʿī, on the other hand, has always been in opposition to the official authorities, and its adherents have been discriminated against, which has placed a special emphasis on the culture of martyrdom.[30] In this context, martyrdom has become a culture comprising of values and a way of life which aims to achieve "both mundane and divinely ordained goals."[31]

It is also important to note that at this stage of the split between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah there was a precedent of unification of two anti-Ummayad forces – Sunnī

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[29] Amin S. Isaloo, *Power, Legitimacy and the Public Sphere: The Iranian Ta'ziyeh Theatre Ritual* (Oxfordshire: Taylor & Francis, 2017), 89.

[30] Madawi Al-Rasheed and Marat Shterin, *Dying for Faith: Religiously Motivated Violence in the Contemporary World* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009), 120. The culture of martyrdom has had a deep impact on political mobilization of the Shiʿah in the modern Middle East. For example, most of Lebanese Shīʿī militants who were killed in July 2006 war did not have a standard military training and were between 18 and 25 years old. These militants with a strong faith on the Shīʿī concept of martyrdom, believe that they should sacrifice themselves so that the Shīʿism could be protected.

[31] Ibid.

Abbasids, the future rulers of the Islamic Caliphate, and Shīʿī ʿAlīds. During the first half of 8th century, the Abbasids are becoming the actual organizers of the movement to overthrow the Umayyads. Without speaking openly about their claims to the Caliphate, they seek to equate their rights with those of ʿAlīds, as members of the Prophet's family.[32]

After the fall of the Umayyads and the coming to power in 749 of the Abbasid dynasty, there was a final split between the opposing religious and political movements in Islam. As the Sunnī majority of the Caliphate recognized the legitimacy of the Abbasid coming to power, steps have been taken to gradually transform Sunnī Islam into an official religious framework for the state. Although the Caliphate of the first Abbasids still remained as a semi-secular state by inertia as the Umayyad Caliphate, the new rulers did everything to find the attributes of theocratic power. As the notable Hungarian scholar of Islam, Ignáz Goldziher, puts it, "the 'Abbasids proclaimed that upon the ruins of a government which the pious had denounced as ungodly, they, the 'Abbasids, were establishing a regime in harmony with the sunna of the Prophet and the requirements of divinely revealed religion."[33] At the same time, Sunnism has become the embodiment of the ruling circles, and Shīʿī Islam has become the embodiment of religious opposition and instability.

It was under the Abbasids that numerous instances of violence against the Shīʿah took place: in particular, the Shīʿī militant movements were suppressed. This has led to the formation at this stage of several other important dogmatic differences between Sunnī and Shīʿī. Thus, the principle of "taqiya" - "reasonable concealment of one's creed" - was elevated to the rank of one of the guiding principles of Shīʿism for the sake of personal security and the interests of the community of like-minded people as a result of the secret nature of Shīʿī propaganda and periodic

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[32] Clarke, 80; Hazleton, 220.

[33] Jūldtsīhar, Goldziher, and Hamori, 45. "The Abbasids wished to be not merely kings, but primarily princes of the church. Unlike the Umayyads, they conceived of their caliphate as a state of the church, in the government of which the divine law was the sole guideline."

harassment to which Shīʿī were subjected.[34] For the Sunnis, however, the question of the permissibility of denying their faith externally is, in fact, only of theoretical importance, since they traditionally represent the overwhelming majority in Islam and, until recently (the prosecutorial course of Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki in 2006-2014), they were not discriminated against much.

During the second stage of Sunnī-Shīʿī divide there were some cases of increasing influence of the Shīʿah in the Islamic Caliphate and even the formation of states with Shīʿī dynasties at the head. During the reign of al-Mahdi (775-785), there was a complete and final separation between the ʿAlīds and the Abbasids, and the beginning of its own Shīʿī history as a movement of followers of ʿAlī and his descendants, which resulted in a formalized Shīʿī religious and political system of dogmas. During the reign of Mahdi, the Persian Shīʿī dynasty of Barmekids emerged, which was in power until the arrival of the legendary caliph Harun al-Rashid.[35]

Under al-Mamun, there was also a pro-Shīʿī state policy. Al-Mamun adopted moderate Shīʿī concepts compatible with Sunnī principles such as:

- the adoption of the Shīʿī thesis on the creation of the Qurʾān,
- the adoption by the Caliph of the title of Imam, who was tasked by Allāh to educate the community,
- the government of Mecca was entrusted to an ʿAlīd.[36]

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[34] Etan Kohlberg, *Belief and Law in Imāmī Shīʿism* (Variorum Publishing, 1991), 38.

[35] The Arabs generally belonged to the Sunni sect and could not stand the rule of the Shīʿī Barmekids at the court of Harun-al-Rashid. The leader of the Arab group, Fazl-bin-Rabi, the Chamberlin, secretly gave Harun al-Rashid false news that the Barmekids were preparing for a revolt that would lead to the collapse of the caliphate. See: Mohammad Arshad, *An Advanced History of Islam* (MI: Ideal Publications, 1967), 289.

[36] Arshad, 298.

The Caliph applied these measures to unify the divisive Muslim ummah in ideological terms. It is important to note that al-Mamun's successors, using his tactics, sought to destroy the political Shīʿī Islam by suppressing the Shīʿah political activism, but satisfying some of their religious demands. The Shīʿah reacted with a deep sense of betrayal and with division on how to counter such betrayal.[37]

In the 8th century, the Shīʿī movement split into two main currents; "moderate" and "extreme". The "moderate" the Shīʿah include Zaydis and Twelvers. The other trend was represented by the so-called "extreme" the Shīʿah (Ghulat), who deified the ʿAlīd imams, and Ishmaelites, whose teachings were so deeply separated from the main tenets of Islam that, in fact, they became an independent sect.[38] In turn, these branches were divided into numerous communities.

Thus, a special system of Shīʿī religious and political dogmas developed by the end of the 9th century. During this period, the early stage of formation of the Shīʿī ideology was completed. The early Shīʿī theorists eventually gave it a form in which it found its way into the consciousness of various social groups in the Islamic Caliphate and became the ideological banner of a number of major opposition movements. From an ideological point of view, the most effective threat to the Islamic Caliphate from within the Islamic community was the evolution of Shīʿīsm in the ninth and tenth centuries.[39] The following facts testify to the viability of this ideology:

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[37] Hazleton, 200.

[38] Regarding deification of ʿAlī by Ghulat, an interesting view has mentioned by William Montgomery Watt. According to Montgomery, "most of the Arab tribes who lived in al-Kūfah after the Islamic conquest of Iraq were Monophysite Christians from Yemen who emphasized the divinity rather than the humanity of Jesus. After the conversion of some of these tribes to Islam, they became ʿAlī's the Shiʿah and found in him a charismatic leader homologous to Christ." See: Moosa, xx.

[39] John L. Esposito, *The Oxford History of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 44.

- From 789 until 921, the Zaydi Idrīsid dynasty ruled in the territory of Morocco.[40]
- In the period between the Arab and Turkish conquests, the strongly pro-Shīʿī Būyid Dynasty (945–1055) ruled in western Iran and Iraq.[41]
- The Ismāʿīlī Fāṭimid dynasty ruled over a realm in North Africa and later the Middle East between 909 and 1171 AD and attempted to supersede the ʿAbbāsid caliphs as the supreme power of the Islamic world.
- The Nezāri Ismāʿīlī state on the territory of Iran with its centre in Alamut. The fear that Nezāris of Alamut inspired gave them a power that lasted until 1256.[42]

2.1.4. Divergence Between Schools of Islāmic Jurisprudence

Confronted with instability and social-religious factionalism among Muslims, the early history Islam witnessed the emergence of various madhab (schools) of thought within Islamic jurisprudence and the beginning of the process of divergence between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah on issues of Fiqh. This period of divergence characterizes the second stage of the sectarian strife.

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[40] The founder of the Idrīsid dynasty, Idris Ibn Abd Allah Ibn Hasan Ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, was one of the few survivors of *the Battle of Fakhkh*, in which many of the ʿʿAlīds were massacred by the ʿAbbāsid forces. As Richard N Frye mentions, the battle of Fakhkh, though of little military importance, seems to have taught the ʿʿAlīds the lesson of the "Abbasid revolution": that any effort to forge a new caliphate should seek refuge in frontier regions that are less accessible to the caliphate's main army and where permanent armies accustomed to continuous warfare have little loyalty to a distant caliphate. From the battlefield in Fakhkh, the founder of the Idrīsid dynasty fled to Morocco and Yahya bin Abd Allah bin Hasan fled to Dailam, where he was the first of many ʿAlīds to receive support from the warriors of the South Caspian coast. See: Frye, R. N. (1975). *The Cambridge History of Iran: From the Arab Invasion to the Saljuqs*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, p. 68. For detailed historical information see: Aḥmad ibn Sahl Rāzī and Māhir Z. Jarrār, *Akhbār Fakhkh: Wa-khabar Yaḥyá ibn ʿAbd Allāh wa-akhīhi Idrīs ibn ʿAbd Allāh : intishār al-ḥarakah al-Zaydīyah fī al-Yaman wa-al-Maghrib wa-al-Daylam* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1995).

[41] The Buyids instituted the Shīʿī rituals as we know them today. Hazleton, 207.

[42] The existence of these states is an example of those rare situations when the Shīʿah sought domination over the Sunnis.

During the Abbasid period, the majority adopted Sunnī Islam, especially of the Hanafi and Shafi'i schools. But as mentioned earlier oppositional Shīʿīsm also spread.[43] Let's examine the basic principles of the most authoritative madhhabs within Sunnī and Shīʿī Islam to understand what issues they have different opinions on.

The first Sunnī school, the Hanafi madhab founded by Abu Hanifa an-Numan ibn Thabit (d. 767), a merchant who studied and taught in Kūfah, Iraq. Among the first Muslim scholars, he was looking for new ways to apply the principles of Islam to everyday life. The Hanafi school eventually became the most ubiquitous and influential of the madhabs, preferred by the Abbasids, the Saljuqs and the Ottoman Turks.[44] The Hanafi practice spread eastward through South and Central Asia to China. In the Middle East, it remains the most recognized school among Sunnī Muslims in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel-Palestine and Egypt. Due to its presence on the Indian subcontinent, it was a major influence in the development of "the Anglo-Muhammadan Law," Applied in British colonial courts in India.[45] Its distinguishing features are the following:

- Abu Hanifah advocated legal reasoning by analogy (Qiyas), which became generally accepted over time, however his liberal approach to personal opinion and legal preference (Istihsan) drew criticism from the Traditionists.[46]

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[43] Frye, 206.

[44] This school of jurisprudence formed the basis for the *Majalla*, the Ottoman Civil Code of 1876.

[45] Paula Y. Skreslet and Rebecca Skreslet, *The Literature of Islam: A Guide to the Primary Sources in English Translation* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 79.

[46] Esposito, 113.

- The Qurʾān is accepted as an absolute source of law. Sunnah is accepted as an independent source, but only after to conduct a careful selection process for hadith;

- The consensus opinion (al-Ijma) inherited from predecessors is taken into account only if it comes from the same people who are considered as transmitters of reliable hadith;

- The Hanafi school has maintained its comparatively liberal approach to this day;[47]

- The Sunnī Hanafi faith is non-hierarchical and decentralized, and this has made it difficult for contemporary regimes to integrate Hanafi religious leaders into a strong political system.

The second Sunnī madhab, the Maliki school, founded by Malik ibn Anas al-Asbahi (ca. 715-95), led the Traditionist movement in Mecca and Medina. It quickly spread to the whole of Arabia, then to Egypt, the Maghreb and Andalusia (Muslim Spain). In the medieval period, the Maliki madhab was also used in parts of Muslim-dominated territories in Europe such as Spain and Sicily. This school is still the most influential legal philosophy of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and parts of West Africa; It is also well known in the Gulf states.[48] The second largest of the four schools of Sunnī Islam, Maliki madhab is followed by about 25 percent of Muslims.[49] The peculiarities of the Maliki madhab:

- Compared to the three other Sunnī madhabs, Maliki school is distinguished mainly by the sources it uses to derive judgments. While all four Sunnī schools use the Qoran as their main source, followed by the Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammed, Ijma and Qiyas, the Maliki school draws ruling based

[47] Ibid.

[48] Skreslet and Skreslet, 83.

[49] John Pike, "Maliki Islam," GlobalSecurity.org, last modified May 7, 2011, https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-maliki.htm.

on the practice of the people of Medina (amal ahl al-medina). Sometimes this source prevails over the Hadith, since the practice of the people of Medina was regarded as a "living Sunnah".

- Notwithstanding its Traditionist orientation, the Maliki School has over time adopted a number of important teachings that are inherently eclectic and flexible, offering more open jurisprudence in many respects than other madhabs.

- While the leading schools have also recognised public interest considerations (istislah) as a source of law, due to its strong utilitarian orientation they have inclined in general to impose various conditions on it. It is only the Maliki madhab who advocated it as an independent source of law, which is why the considerations of public interest are regarded as Maliki's contribution to the *usul al-fiqh*.[50]

- The Maliki law forbids an individual to appoint himself administrator of a religious trust, and most madrasas have been sponsored by the ruler, the only person who could afford such large sums.[51]

- The Maliki school recognizes women's right to divorce without husband's consent under a type of divorce known as *Khul*. That is why the reformist legislation in many Muslim states have adopted Maliki fiqh regarding issues of divorce.[52]

- Notwithstanding the above differences in jurisprudence, there are some minor differences in the manner in which people prefer to pray. According to the majority of Maliki ulama, the hands should be placed on the sides during prayer; something similar to the prayer performed by the Shīʿah.

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[50] Esposito, 123.

[51] Esposito, 127.

[52] Esposito, 126.

The third Sunnī madhab, the Shafii school of law, developed by the successors of Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafii (767-820) whom is considered the first systematic legal theorist in Islam.[53] One of the most remarkable followers of the Shafii school was prominent and influential Persian philosopher and theologian Muhammad al-Ghazali (1058-1111).[54] The Shafii madhab is dominant school of Islamic law in Indonesia, Malaysia, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and among Kurdish tribes of the Middle East. The basic principles of the Shafii are as follows:

- The madhab recognizes five sources of jurisprudence: the Qurʾān, Sunnah, ijma, the individual opinions of Sahaba and, finally, Qiyas.
- Shafii only used hadiths that were scrupulously sahih (authentic), and rejected the conditions set by Abu Hanifa or Malik in this regard.
- Shafii considered Qiyas as a valid method in the deduction of laws, he nevertheless considered it inferior to the evidence established by a companion's opinion.
- The principle of Juristic discretion (istihsan) is completely rejected.
- The Shaf'i School is considered the least restrictive Sunnī school.

The fourth canonized Sunnī madhab, the Hanbali school, is named after al-Shafii's student Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855). The school originated in the 9th century as a religious and political movement and only at the beginning of the 11th century was formed into a dogmatic school. Before the House of Saud was founded on the Arabian Peninsula, the school had no political patronage or any serious political support. As a matter of fact, the school's legitimacy was not accepted by all. Currently, it is considered the smallest of all Sunnī schools, and is mainly found in Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The main principles of the Hanbali madhhab include the following:

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[53] Esposito, 96.

[54] Regarding al-Ghazali's influence on Islamic philosophy see: Frank Griffel, "Al-Ghazali," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, last modified 2016, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/al-ghazali/.

- At the theological level Ibn Hanbal disapproved of almost all speculations that went beyond what was explicitly stated in the Qurʾān and Hadith.[55]

- In politics, Ibn Hanbal was a quietist Sunnī. According to all reports he recognized ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib as the legitimate fourth caliph, against those who believed that Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān (661-80) was directly the successor of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (644-56). However, he strongly rejected Shi'i allegations that some of the companions had been unjust, especially those who welcomed the first and second caliphs and opposed ʿAlī.[56]

- Ahmad b. Hanbal recognized as Imam of his time the one who was the subject of general agreement among the community.

- The Hanbali madhab is considered the toughest in terms of social and personal rules.[57]

- According to legal sources, Shīʿi's testimony is often disregarded by Saudi courts or has less weight than Sunnī testimony.[58]

- Denial of any innovations (bid'ah) in the field of doctrine and law without direct justification in the Qurʾān and hadith;

- Recognition of the community's consent (al-ijma), limiting it to the first generations of the Prophet's companions and followers.

The notion that Twelver Shīʿism should be regarded as the fifth madhhab[59] has sometimes been highlighted as an important issue to be addressed during the

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[55] Christoper Melchert, "Ahmad b. Hanbal," in *the Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 25.

[56] Bowering, 25.

[57] John Pike, "Hanbali Islam," GlobalSecurity.org, last modified May 7, 2011, https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-hanbali.htm.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Due to the fact that the founder of the Jafarite school has the status of purity from the point of view of Shi'a Islam, theologians and jurists of this kind doubt whether it is lawful to call him a

history of the Islamic world.[60] As for the madhhabs within Shīʿī Islam, the major one is the Jafarite religious-legal school, which is also recognized by the Sunnis along with the four above-mentioned madhhabs. Currently, all Twelver the Shīʿah adhere to the Jafarite school. The main differences between the Jafarites and adherents of the Sunnī madhhabs are as follows:

- The Shīʿah consider the Qurʾān and the Sunnah or practice of the Prophet to be the foundational sources of divine revelation, however their particular versions of the Sunnah sometimes diverge from those accepted by the generality of Sunnī jurists in significant respects.[61] As Sunnah of Prophet, the Shīʿah recognize only those hadiths that are transmitted from the words of members of the Prophet's family.[62]

- Adherents of the Usulite tradition recognize four sources of law - the Qurʾān, the Sunnah, al-Ijma and al-Aql. However, the Akhbarites reject the possibility of using rational methods to formulate legal norms, acknowledging that only the Qurʾān and Sunnah could provide such norms.

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mazhab. After all, from a terminological point of view, a madhab is a school that has developed a certain methodology for extracting the precepts of Islamic law from its primary sources (the Koran and the Sunnah), which may be correct or erroneous. However, according to the general opinion of Shīʿī theologians and lawyers, all twelve Imams are sinless and did not bring any subjective assessments to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad but kept it in its authentic form.

[60] Nadir Shah Afshar, who ruled Iran from 1736 to 1747, sought to have Twelver Shīʿī to be recognized as the madhhab of Ja'fari. He made several attempts to convince the Ottoman Sultan to acknowledge Shīʿī as a fifth madhhab. In the aftermath of the takeover of Iraq, Nadir Shah convened a debate in Najaf 12 December 1743 between Sunni and Shīʿī scholars within his realm, during which Shīʿī scholars renounced what were seen as heresical views. See, Devin J. Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shiite Responses to the Sunni Legal System* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1998), 112.

[61] Noel J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law* (London: Routledge, 2017), 105.

[62] The Jafarites in no way reject such a widely recognized source of Islamic law as the Sunnah. They interpret the concept broadly to include not only the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, but also those of his family, Fatima Zahra and the twelve Imams. This nuance is linked to the teaching of Imamat and the belief that the members of the Muhammad family were cleansed of sins and therefore kept the Sunnah in its authentic form.

- The Jafarite school has since 874 embodied an irrefutable ideal that awaits the return of the hidden Imam for its fulfilment. During the extended interregnum, the task of explaining the law has been the prerogative of the mujahideen, and while they have been considered as agents of the Imam and working under his influence, their use of human reason ('aql) to determine the law has been accepted as indispensable and justified. [63]

It is important to note that within the branches of Shīʿī faith- Zaidiyyah and Ismailism - there were formed their own principles of interpretation of Shariah norms, taking into account the dogmatic peculiarities of these beliefs.

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[63] Coulson, 108.

2.2. The Manifestation of the Intra-Islamic Conflicts in the Inter-State Level
2.2.1. The Ottoman-Safavid Rivalry and the Shīʿī Jurists of Lebanon

From 1258 to 1501 a period of a decline in intensity of conflict between Sunnī and Shīʿī sects can be observed. The fragmentation and endless internecine wars in the territory of the former Islamic Caliphate, the invasion of the Mongols[64] over a long period of two and a half centuries have distracted the attention of Muslims from internal strife. There were only occasional instances of Sunnī-Shīʿī antagonism.

As the conflict between the Ottomans and the Safavids broke out in the 16th and 17th centuries, the Ottoman Sultan and the Safavid Shah each referred to themselves as the ruler of Islam. This conflict between them was expressed in terms of clash between two major Islamic sects.[65] The Ottoman-Safavid rivalry which later on will have a decisive role to play in intensifying the confrontation between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah and the beginning of the fourth stage in intra-Islamic conflicts; This stage can be called the "imperial" period, which was marked by the Sunnī-Shīʿī confrontation in the interstate stage.

The majority of Iran was still Sunnī at the turn of the 16th century, however, the path to Shīʿītization of Iran had been prepared when Sunnī Islam lost its dominant position during the fifty years of Mongolian domination. This was followed by the spread of the various Sūfī orders with their pro-ʿAlīd tendencies in the 15th and 16th centuries and finally when a number of Ilkhans converted into Shīʿīsm.[66]

In Safavid Iran, shortly after Shah Ismail I ascended the throne, all the regions under the control of the Safavids were forced by him to accept Twelver Shīʿism.[67]

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[64] For further study on the Mongol invasion and its impact on the Islamic world see, Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

[65] Ann K. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (London: Routledge, 2013), 212.

[66] Lambton, 264.

[67] Rula J. Abisaab, *Converting Persia: Religion and Power in the Safavid Empire* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2004), 8.

This process was perceived extremely negative by the Ottoman Empire: There were persecutions of the Sunnis, which often led to uprisings on the outskirts of the state and served as an excuse to invade the country.[68] His immediate heirs also tried hard to turn the numerous tribal groups and social classes of Persia into Twelver Shīʿism, trying, though not always successfully, to suppress shamanism and Sufi folk expressions.[69]

The early Safavid rulers' attitude towards the Sunnī populace of Iran was intricate and complex. Among the Iranian high-ranking elite, Sunnī bureaucrats were tied to the state' political interests and economic benefits. Overall, as long as the Sunnis abstain from publicly displaying their religious affiliation, they largely remained unharmed. However, there was a systematic effort by the Safavids to convert Sunnī Muslims to Shīʿīsm among the lower classes of the population.[70]

To strengthen its foundations, the early Safavid state sought prestigious religious leaders who could consolidate its foundations by adopting a uniform and standardized system of Shīʿī religious practice and a cohesive Sharia-based religious vision. The founders of the Safavid Empire sought to transform their unorthodox religious power to a state-controlled Shīʿīsm, just as several Arab theologians of Jabal 'Amil were leaving Ottoman territory. During this period, the Shīʿī jurists of Jabal 'Amil have been crucial in establishing the legitimacy of the Safavid state, strengthening the ideological opposition to the Ottomans and Uzbeks

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[68] On the eve of his campaign against the city of Tabriz, Shah Ismail was warned by his advisors about the dangers of proclaiming Shīʿī as the religion of the empire in the city, where two-thirds of the population was Sunni. Though he convinced them of his power to suppress any resistance, he nevertheless had to worry. Soon he was comforted by a dream in which Imam ʿAlī advised him of a strategy to defeat his enemies, the Aq Qoyunlu: "Let Qizilbash be present in the mosque fully armed, keeping the attendees surrounded; if anyone tries to take a step during the reading of the hutba, Qizilbash will be able to contain the situation." See, Roger Savory, *Iran Under the Safavids* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 28.

[69] Abisaab, *Converting Persia,* 8.

[70] Abisaab, *Converting Persia*, 26.

as well as advocating the conversion of a significant percentage of the Iranian population to Shīʿīsm. They have also contributed to the development of a considerable body of Shīʿī literature both in Arabic and Persian.[71]

There were a series of historical circumstances that led to this exodus of Shīʿī jurists who were unable to find a professional opportunity for their expertise and implement their Shīʿī legal decisions within the Ottoman legal system. Moreover, some "Amilian scholars who were actively applying ijtihad were subjected to serious scrutiny and there were cases in which Shīʿī jurists were killed by the Ottoman officials, including the prominent scholar al-Shahid al-Thani.[72] In this stage, the Safavids realized how much they could take advantage of the application of ijtihadi rationalism to define their dynastic authority and portray an impression of Islāmic "authenticity" against their arch enemy in the West.[73] The Safavids placed their highest reliance on these Lebanese jurist families and among them particularly on the Karaki family. During this phase of state-sponsored Shīʿītization of Iran, the Lebanese al-Karaki family staunchly tried to implement Jafari law as the backbone of the new Shīʿī state.[74]

As a result of Ottoman Empire's coercive measures against his teacher, al-Shahid al-Thani, al-Harithi left Jabal Amil for Iraq and finally settled in Iran. In order to assimilate Iranian society into Shīʿī legalism, al-Harithi began to propagate Shīʿī

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[71] Devin J. Stewart, "An Episode in the ʿAmili Migration to Safavid Iran: Husayn b. ʿAbd al-Samad al-ʿAmili's Travel Account," *Iranian Studies* 39, no. 4 (2006): 481, doi:10.1080/00210860601005070.

[72] As Abisaab notes, although the Ottoman repression of Shīʿī subjects was evident at large, its magnitude, extent and repercussions in terms of the migration of "Amilian scholars" should be re-evaluated in the specific social context of Jabal 'Amil and Iran. See, Rula J. Abisaab, "The Ulama of Jabal ʿAmil in Safavid Iran 1501–1736: marginality, migration and social change," *Iranian Studies* 27, no. 1-4 (1994): 104, doi:10.1080/00210869408701822.

[73] Abisaab, *Converting Persia,* 139.

[74] Abisaab, *Converting Persia,* 140.

ideology and traditions. While al-Karaki had argued that the observance of the Friday prayer was not mandatory for the Shīʿah and was only allowed in the presence of a jurist acting as the imam's deputy, al-Harithi had convinced Shah Tahmasb that the Friday prayer offered a potent weapon directed at the Ottomans and Uzbeks, since it enhanced the Islāmic character of the Safavid state.[75]

In 1517, the title of Caliph of all Muslims passed from the last representative of the Abbasid dynasty, Al-Mutawakkil III (d. 1543), to the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Selim I, which strengthened the Sunnī position against the Safavids. There was also the Mughal Empire on the side of the Sunnis, which ruled Indian territory between 1526 and 1857.[76]

The Safavids initiated a long process of merging Shīʿīsm and the Iranian ethnonym: Shīʿīsm gradually became one of the most prominent components of the Iranian nation's self-identification. In the 18th century, with the emergence of the Qajar dynasty, this "assimilation" of Shīʿī Islam and Iranian identity was finally accomplished: Shīʿī Islam was institutionalized and took the form of a hierarchized clergy.

It is important to note that the confrontation between the Safavid state and the Ottoman Empire was not purely confessional in nature. Sunnī-Shīʿī antagonism only fuelled conflict between two powerful medieval empires fighting for dominance in the Asian arena. In the same way as the Safavids, the Qajars competed with the Ottoman Empire for leadership in the Middle East and spiritual supremacy in the Islamic world.

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[75] Ibid.

[76] It is noteworthy that these major powers of the East, Safavids, Ottomans and Mughals all belonged ethnically to the Turkic tribes that originated from Central Asia and established Turkic rule in the Iranian Plateau, Asia Minor and India. However, despite this shared ethnic roots Shīʿī Safavids were in conflict with both its brethren neighbours to the west and to the east. See, Stephen F. Dale, *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

2.2.2. The Impact of Atatürk's Secular Modernization Project on the Easing of Sectarian Antagonism

Sectarian strife has long been a feature of relations between Turkey and Iran. These two states have been developing their relations on the basis of the premise of a split in Islam following the Turkish conquest of the Levant in the early 16th century as well as the recognition of the Shiite legal system by the Safavid Empire as the official legal framework of the state. The sectarianization of the official state policy in the imperial period had separated the Middle East between the two extremes from the 16th century to the beginning of the 20th century. The fifth stage, as the period of the easing of the intra-Islamic confrontation starts with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey under the guise of its founding leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

A great admirer of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Reza Shah of Iran sought to include his country in the path of national and secular modernization. The initiation of the modernization of Iran under Reza Pahlavi naturally weakened the position of Shīʿism in the spheres of public and political life of the state. In the framework of the shared vision of secular modernization, the two leaders built a strong cooperative partnership. The short-term cordiality in mutual relations has faded after this shared vision of secular modernisation lost its power in Iran after the fall of Muhammed Reza Shah. It should be noted that only during the period of 1923 to 1979 Turkey and Iran did not witness a major sectarian conflict, which was the characteristic feature Turkish-Iranian relations during the imperial period.[77]

The Shah's attempt to side-line the clergy from power only resulted in a convergence of Shīʿī Islam with revolutionary forces, and the Shīʿī clergy's rising influence over the dissent movement which led to the 1979 Islamic Revolution against the "unlawful rule" of the secular Pahlavi rule. Following this

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[77] See, Akın Ünver, "How Turkey's Islamists Fell out of Love With Iran," *Middle East Policy* 19, no. 4 (2012): xx, doi:10.1111/j.1475-4967.2012.00563.

revolutionary shift in Iran, the new ruling elite initiated a process of undoing the secular achievements of the Pahlavi era. The revolutionary Shīʿī clergy did not confine their anti-secular efforts to Iranian territory. Tehran openly denounced Reza Shah's close working relations with Atatürk and has tried to export its reactionary vision to Turkey.

Finally, it is necessary to remind that Saudi Arabia was established on the territory of the Arabian Peninsula in 1932, in which the King of al-Saud dynasty was the keeper of two Muslim shrines - the cities of Mecca and Medina. As a result, Saudi Arabia replaced Turkey, which became a secular republic in 1923, as a defender of Sunnī Islam and later the main counter force to the Shīʿī Iran. It can be said that with Turkey continuing in the path of sectarian neutrality, now the old sectarian rivalry between Turks and Iranians have been shifted to a tense Saudi-Iranian "cold war."

2.2.3. The Shīʿī Activism in Iraq and Lebanon and the Shīʿī Revolution in Iran

The final and sixth stage is a period of politicization of Islam and internationalization of Sunnī-Shīʿī relations, which became a significant international political factor after the Islamic Revolution of Iran and the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988).

In the last, sixth stage of the Sunnī-Shīʿī confrontation, it is logical to identify some kind of turning points: the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and the beginning of the civil war in Syria.

The Iranian Revolution, which was driven by socio-economic and political reasons, took a religious Shīʿī form and triggered the politicization and internationalization of the confrontation between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah. Since the Shīʿah in most of the Islamic world constitute the most disadvantaged and suppressed segment of the population, they were vulnerable to the calls made during the Iranian revolution. However, as Olivier Roy notes, the Islamism

radicalization[78] of the Shīʿī communities had started long before the Iranian Revolution.[79] In the 1950s, the grassroots Islamism wave swept through the Shīʿī communities of the world from its nexus in Najaf and Karbala, making changes on a local basis, and through local agents, without being a consequence of the Iranian revolution. Such changes could be seen as a manifestation of Imam Musa al-Sadr's socio-political activity in Lebanon, Sayyid Balkhi's sermons in Afghanistan and Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr's political and ideological campaign in Iraq.[80] The Iraqi Al-Daʿwa movement was founded around 1960 and Ayatollah Baqir al-Sadr wrote some fundamental texts of revolutionary Shīʿīsm as early as 1960. The 1979 Islamic Revolution of Iran only turned and used the restless Shīʿī communities of indigenous movements into the strategically important area of Iranian influence.[81]

Thus, it can be said the Islamic Revolution in Iran is a result, not the commencement, of an intensification of Shīʿī activism, triggered by modernization and religious revival in the mid-twentieth century, which is aimed at providing greater opportunities for them to realize their economic, political, social and cultural rights. At the same time, it was the victory of the revolution under Islamic slogans in Iran and the establishment of a regime under which power fell into the

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[78] Among the factors contributing to this "Islamic awakening" are the following:
1. The obvious signs of the crisis of both capitalist and socialist models of development, which were the focus of the political elite in most Muslim countries;
2. The humiliating defeat of Arab countries in the Six Day War with Israel in 1967, which undermined the influence of nationalist (secular) ideologies, including Baathism among the general population of Muslim countries, which led people to turn to Islam in their search for answers to the most pressing questions of our time;
3. The failure of the interstate unification processes in the " Islamic world " at a like Arab unity and Maghreb integration in the face of ever-growing complexity of integration processes in the West;
4. There has been significant financial assistance and a degree of political support from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya and other countries that, in their foreign policy, have been committed to Islamic solidarity and have actively assisted Islamist movements in the Arab world.

[79] Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 187.
[80] Roy, 188.

[81] Ibid.

hands of the Shīʿī clergy, the construction of a state based on the "Islamic" model, the confrontation of the new Iranian regime with the U.S. and its proclamation of a foreign policy course for the formation of the "Islamic world order" - all this made a great impression on the masses in other Muslim countries, significantly reviving interest in Islam, especially among the youth. There has been a sharp increase in the activity of movements throughout the Islamic world and beyond, which have become known as "fundamentalist" movements in the West.

It is noteworthy that the emergence of the "Islamic factor" in world politics was connected with the phenomenon of the so-called "Shīʿī resurgence", which began on the wave of the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran.[82] The success of this revolution has led to an increase in the activities of the Shīʿī communities in the Arab East, who have realized that change is possible and that the Islamic alternative to capitalism and socialism is not only an option that is realistically achievable, it also constitutes an effective alternative. There were several notable manifestations of Shīʿī political activism in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution:

1- In 1979, the Shīʿī minority of Saudi Arabia's restive Qatif region took to the street and a popular uprising occurred.

2- The intensification of the Shīʿī opposition in Bahrain in 1981 and then in 1989.

3- In 1982, Hizballah, a Shīʿī organization, was established in Lebanon, which later became a part of the Lebanese government after gaining seats in the parliamentary elections

4- In 1990, the Shīʿī uprising against the Saddam Hussain regime erupted in Iraq

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[82] Interestingly, the roots of the main ideological dogmas of the Islamic Revolution in Iran date back to early Islamic tradition. Shīʿī ideologues in Iran, including Ayatollah Khomeini, in their sermons and works constantly referred to the fundamental works of medieval Shīʿī figures, such as the ʿAlīd historian and commentator of the Koran from Kūfah, Jabir b. Yazid al-Kuʹfi, who was one of the first to interpret some of the ayats of the Koran as a reference to ʿAlī bin Abi Talib.

We should not forget that a few years before the 1970 events in Iran, the Alawite Assad clan headed by Hafez Assad came to power in Syria, which undoubtedly strengthened the "Shīʿī camp" in the confrontation with the Sunnis.

In recent years, we have seen significant examples of Shīʿī revival. First, it is worth mentioning the role of Shīʿī armed groups (Mahdi Army and others) in the armed confrontation between the United States and its allies in Iraq (2011-2013). Second, during the Arab Spring 2011, the "Shīʿī factor" was clearly visible in countries such as Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, as it was the Shīʿī population of these countries that became the main force of public protest in the face of discrimination. Finally, the Yemeni crisis, which began in 2015, is also linked to the struggle of the Zaydi Houthis against the country's ruling regime.

The current escalation of Sunnī-Shīʿī antagonism was a consequence of the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. The overthrow of the Sunnī government led by S. Hussein, and then the transfer of power to the Iraqi Shīʿī community, which has shaken a stable balance of power in the region and hit the " sore points " in relations between the two largest currents in Islam.

The Shīʿah of Iraq, oppressed by the Sunnī minority for years, have not remained idle: Discrimination against the Sunnī population has begun; particularly against former Baath Party members, who have been banned from holding any senior positions in the government or the armed forces.

The civil war in Syria, which began as a result of the popular protests of the "Arab Spring", has drawn the countries of the Persian Gulf into the Sunnī-Shīʿī confrontation. Two temporary coalitions were formed: on the one hand, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar supported anti-Assad forces, and on the other hand, Iran and Hizballah supported the ruling regime in Damascus in order to preserve the Tehran-Damascus-Beirut axis.

CAHPTER 3

THE SECTARIAN STRIFE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE MIDDLE EASTERN REGIONAL SECURITY COMPLEX

3.1. The Intra-Islamic Conflict in the Context of Civil War

3.1.1. The Rise of the Shīʿah in Iraq and the Sunnī Insurgency

The Shīʿī Islam had been incorporated into the strong system of Arab tribal values in Iraq, which it has proved difficult to transform. The geopolitical position of Iraq, the rise of Najaf and Karbala, the transformation of these cities into the main centres of Shīʿī Islam in a Sunnī country, and the relatively late conversion of Iraqi settled tribes to Shīʿī Islam - all these factors have determined the peculiarities of Shīʿī of Iraq. As Yitzhak Nakash notes, Despite the fact that the adoption of Shīʿism has taken place in Iraq over the course of the Shīʿī history, it was primarily limited to urban areas, which was inhabited by only a small percentage of the Iraqi population. In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that the Shīʿah never came close to constituting the majority of the Iraqi population up until the nineteenth or even the twentieth century.[83]

The conflict over power between the Shīʿah and the Sunnis escalated in the 1940s and 1950s as a consequence of the sharp rise in the number of educated young the Shīʿah who had the capacity to challenge the Sunnis to hold positions in government and the public sector. Inter-group tensions reflected the increasing frustrations of the Shīʿah in the face of not being able to have a fair share with the

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[83] The majority of Sunni Arab tribes in Iraq converted to Shīʿism on a massive scale, mainly in the late 19th century, which resulted in the Shīʿī share rising to 53% and 56% of the population in 1919 and 1932 respectively. Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 25.

Sunnis. There was also a Sunnī concern about being submerged by the Shīʿī majority.[84]

To the Shīʿah, the formation of the modern Iraq has brought significant challenges and has exacerbated the issue of the Shīʿī identity. While Iraqi the Shīʿah have sometimes asserted their sectarian identity, they have not been so inclined as to call for autonomy or a possible integration between Iraq and Iran.[85] They have rather asserted their Arab origins and tried to reconcile their sectarian identity within the Iraqi state framework. This point was not perhaps anywhere more evident than during the Iran-Iraq war, where the Shīʿah, most of whom formed the infantry corps of the Saddam's army, proved that their loyalty to the Iraqi state outweighed their sectarian affiliation with Iran.[86] However the Baathist regime's indignation of the people caused the largest popular uprising against the ruling regime took place in Iraq since the republic's establishment. During this period, Saddam's regime, led the country to a crushing defeat in the war of 1991, huge loss of life and economic devastation. The then President of the United States, George Bush, also played a role at the time when the uprising took place. At the beginning of 1991, he called on Iraqis to stand up to Saddam Hussein, and promised to help the rebels. Although the people did come forward, the American help never came, and the uprising was brutally suppressed.[87]

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[84] Nakash, 125.

[85] It should be noted that the two leading Shi'ite political parties, SCIRI and Da'wa have long-estab lished relations with Iran and allied themselves with Tehran during the Iran-Iraq War. However, the majority of Iraqi the Shīʿah did not share similar political stance with pro-Iranian Shīʿī organizations. See, Roy Takeyh, "Iran's New Iraq," *The Middle East Journal* 62, no. 1 (2008): xx, doi:10.3751/62.1.11.

[86] Nakash, 138.

[87] The repression that followed the uprising was especially brutal in the two Shīʿī holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. A campaign to subdue the Shīʿī opposition, which Saddam Hussein considered to be the most significant popular threat to his regime, had targeted clerical institutions and influential clerical families since the uprising.

After the suppression of the uprising, which was accompanied by a huge number of civilian casualties, some 500,000 people fled to Iran. Only the intervention of the UN and the anti-Saddam coalition's belated response prevented the rebellious the Shīʿah of Iraq from being exterminated. In August 1992, the governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and France, with the approval of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Security Council, established a no-fly zone for Iraqi combat jets south of the 36th parallel in southern Iraq, which prevented Baghdad from subjecting the Shīʿah to aerial bombardments.[88] The defeat of the Shīʿī uprising in 1991 did not mean that they stopped fighting for the overthrow of the ruling regime. In our view, it can hardly be assumed that the development of the Iraqi Shīʿī movement has only been caused by neighbouring Iran, although Iran's influence is undoubtedly evident here as well. The disparity of the Shīʿī community in Iraq and the brutal methods used by the authorities to suppress the Shīʿī mass demonstrations are the main reasons that pushed them to actively fight against Saddam's regime.

The struggle of the Shīʿah in the last years of Saddam Hussein's regime has become part of the opposition movement in Iraq. The Iraqi Shīʿī Movement headed by the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), founded in 1982, and led by Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim.[89] The Shīʿī armed opposition had long fought for the establishment of an Islamic state in Iraq inspired by Iran. Relying on the territory of Iran, it carried out sabotage and terrorist activities mainly in the south of Iraq and in its central part. However, it was neither possible to overthrow nor to weaken the Baath regime. The collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime has intensified Shīʿī political activism as the Shīʿī opposition leaders began to return to Iraq.

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[88] John Pike, "Confrontation With Iraq - Background," GlobalSecurity.org, last modified May 7, 2011, https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/iraq_back.htm.

[89] SCIRI was essentially formed by Tehran, and its armed wing, the Badr Brigade, was trained and supplied by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps. Takeyh, 24.

What the Iranian revolution has not succeeded to achieve, the Shīʿī rise following US-led invasion of Iraq was to take place. The threat that the Shīʿī resurgence represents for Sunnī Arab leadership and for Sunnī vision of political identity and power is not any different from the threat posed by the Iranian revolution. The revolution in Iran was aimed as well to dismantle the hegemonic control of the Sunnī Arab establishment. However, the contrast lies in the fact that the Shīʿah were a more radical and anti-American force after the revolution, and it appears that the opposite is true now.[90]
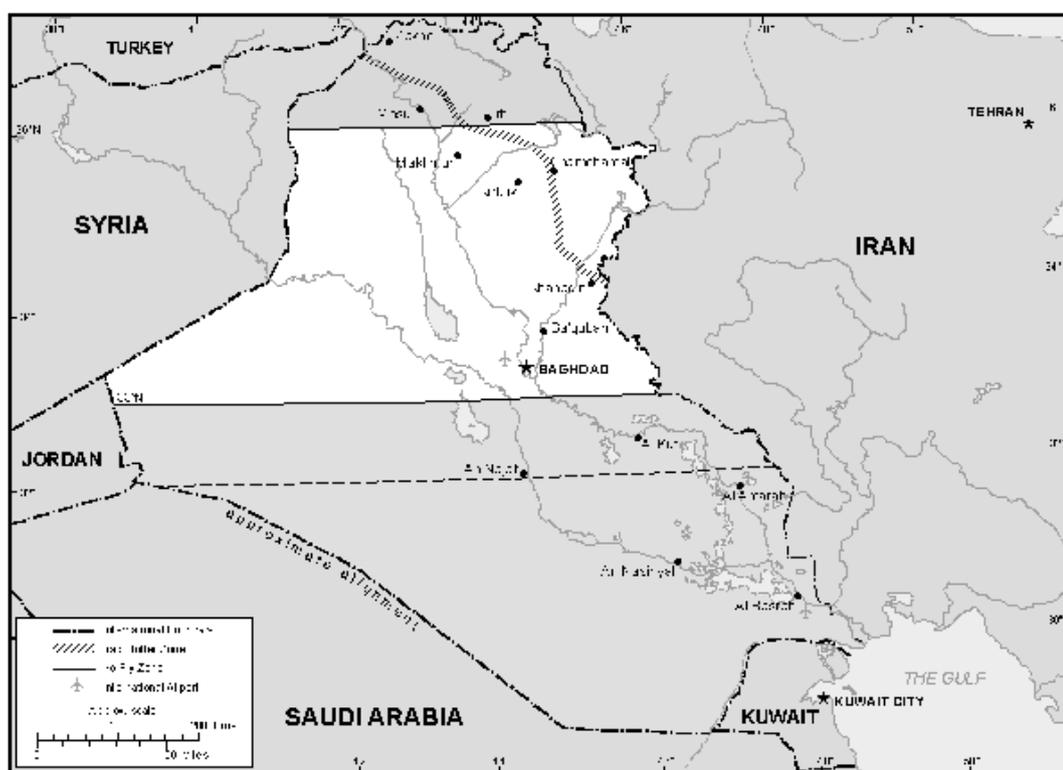
Figure 1. No-fly zone for Iraqi combat jets south of the 36th parallel in southern Iraq

It seems that the confrontation between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah was inevitable, especially after jihadi Islamists from all over the Islamic world began to flock to Iraq and formed the Al-Qaida in Mesopotamia (Iraq). Like the mujahideen and Taliban who fought against Soviet troops in Afghanistan, the militants in Iraq are

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[90] Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007), 240.

known for their brutality. Uniting with local Sunnī guerrilla groups, they began to massacre the Shīʿah, while striking sensitive blows against Western coalition positions.

The Iraq war provided a new arena for this militancy to express itself. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi went to Iraq with the specific purpose of confronting the United States and providing al-Qaeda's global war against America with a new venue. In Iraq's sectarian divide, Zarqawi and his extremist followers saw an opportunity.[91]

The implications for Iraq are perhaps particularly visible in Saudi Arabia, a state with a restless Shīʿī minority and a prolific Salafist movement connected to al-Qaeda and the Iraqi rebel movement. Saudis fought and died in Iraq and later in Syria in the toll of thousands. The financiers of this recruitment, training and mobility from Saudi Arabia to Syria and Iraq are not clear. Still, there is evidence that both Saudi Wahhabi and Salafist clerics called on them to march on the Sunnī jihad that is positioned itself in a furious antagonism towards the Shīʿah and Americans.[92]

Gradually, when the United States was able to reach out to hostile tribal and clan leaders in Iraq, considerable changes took place within the Iraqi Sunnī community. Leaders of the Sunnī nationalist movement and al-Qaeda began to fight for primacy. The Sunnis realized that Shīʿī militias were overtaking them, and began

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[91] Nasr, 242.

[92] Abdel Aziz Issa Abdul-Mohsin Al-Muqrin, the leader of the al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia, expressed his motivation for the jihad in no uncertain terms, reacting to what he saw as unwelcome changes in his local society and to aggression from the West. As far as the United States was concerned, he was particularly incensed by the fact the U.S. forces had had the audacity (jurʾa), as he termed it, to establish military bases in "Muhammad's Peninsula," a place especially holy to Muslims, which they then had used to attack Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, he accused Americans of plundering the country's wealth and of setting their agents in place.30 At the same time, Al-Muqrin was also reacting to what he perceived as a secularization of life in his country, which he blamed on U.S. pressure, and to the greater acceptance of the Shiʾa. Abd al-Aziz Al-Muqrin and Norman Cigar, *Al-Qaʾida's Doctrine for Insurgency: A Practical Course for Guerrilla War* (Lincoln: Potomac Books, 2009), 9; Nasr, 242.

to consider Iran, which had been supporting Iraqi the Shīʿah, a greater threat than the United States.

Thus, through its atrocities against the Iraqi population, al-Qaeda pushed Sunnī activists to the point where they decided to unite with the Americans to fight against their fellow believers in al-Qaeda. The As-Sahwa (Awakening) movement was formed, bringing together tens of thousands of fighters. Such an unexpected alliance helped the American troops to reverse the course of the war and avoid a repetition of a situation like Vietnam.[93]

The elimination of Iran's main regional rival, Saddam Hussein, opened the way for Tehran to expand its presence in the Middle East. It was the American intervention in Iraq that created the conditions for turning Iran into a regional heavyweight.

The Americans, needing the support of influential and authoritative forces in Iraq and striving to neutralize the threat to the U.S. military presence in Iraq, "decided to attract the majority of the Iraqi population, by empowering the country's the Shīʿah". In this way, Washington turned the anti-American resistance of the Iraqi population into a Sunnī-Shīʿī confrontation. However, Washington underestimated the potential of Shīʿī religious parties and the importance of their close ties with Iran. Consequently, between 2005 and 2017, Iraq had been in the midst of a civil war between the Sunnis and the Shīʿah. During this period, the intercommunal conflict in Iraq has led to the radicalization of political parties and armed groups on both sides. The Government of Nuri al-Maliki was never truly willing to

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[93] The influence of tribal leaders on the recruitment process for the police and the army was evident immediately. By November 2006, after agreements had been reached with tribal shaykhs, there were three thousand new recruits in the local police in Al-Anbar, representing a thirty-fold increase from May of that year. After Shaykh Abu Risha and his peers urged tribesmen to join the police, in Ramadi alone 4500 signed on." Where earlier there had been barely a dozen recruits, by 2008 the police in the province numbered 24,000. Similarly, there was a rapid standing up of Sahwa militia units. While there were some urban nontribal Sahwa militias in Baghdad, the Sahwa organizations were overwhelmingly tribally based, and commanders of the Sahwa units were ordinarily tribal shaykhs or notables (terms such as Sahwa commanders and shaykhs are used interchangeably in this study). Iraqi sources highlighted the essentially tribal basis of this organization, often calling it the "Tribal Sahwa" (al-sahwa alasha' iriya).', Norman Cigar, *Al-Qaida, the Tribes, and the Government: Lessons and Prospects for Iraq's Unstable Triangle* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2012), 35-36.

integrate the Sunnī community into the political and economic life of the country, and as a result, there remained a deep split between the Shīʿī and Sunnī elites.[94] As the Irish journalist Patrick Cockburn pointed out, "the Shīʿah in Iraq have gained power, but not control of the situation".[95]

Forbidding the former members of the outlawed Baath Party to hold any significant positions in the state has primarily affected the Sunnis. They also suffered from the American occupying authorities' decision to refuse to keep the remained troops of the defeated army of S. Hussein and to dissolve the officer corps. As a result, many Iraqi army officers were forced to join Sunnī militant groups and would later be recruited by the ISIS.

The situation had deteriorated with the Islamic State's rise in the country's territory. The IS has gained strength and influence since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. The group fought against anti-Saddam coalition forces and its internal allies. The Iraqi insurgency followed the decisions of the Iraqi interim administration to deny the rights of Baath Party members who were prohibited from holding public office and to disband the Iraqi army and security services. This was followed by the formation of armed rebel groups. Al-Qaida in Mesopotamia was at peak in 2006 and 2007, but after the successful U.S. counterterrorism operation, Tribal Awakening, which sought to provide security in the Sunnī regions of Iraq, the group's activities were curtailed. After the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq at the end of 2011, the group's military activity increased again and was aimed mainly at the Shīʿī population of Iraq.

In 29 July 2014 the IS declared the establishment of a caliphate in the insurgent-controlled territory of Iraq and Syria. Taking advantage of the dissatisfaction of the

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[94] In response to all this, Prime Minister Maliki's reaction was to gain as much authority as possible and bypass agreements that would distribute power. Maliki's efforts to monopolize power - albeit less effectively than his critics claim - alienated powerful Shīʿī individuals, parties and religious institutions. Patrick Cuckburn, "The Shiʿi are in power in Iraq – but not in control," *The Independent*, March 6, 2013.

[95] Ibid.

Iraqi and later Syrian the Sunnis with the existing governments, the "Islamic State" immediately gained a fairly broad social support, especially among the low-income Syrian-Iraqi the Sunnis. In the areas controlled by the IS, there had been populist activities that have impressed millions of the Sunnis in Iraq and Syria: Arrangements were made for the free distribution of medicines and food, sweets and toys for children, the introduction of strict measures to counter crime and chaos that grew during war, and the provision of allowances and other privileges to the families of the killed insurgents, among others.[96]

The immediate goal of the organization was to create an Islamic Sunnī state in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon, living according to the laws of Sharia. ISIS had planning to expand the territory of the Islamic State to the borders stretching from Spain to China.[97] The IS seeks to establish some governance structures and a rigid version of sharia in the territory under its control. To accomplish its mission, the IS has adopted a tactic of creating an effective control zone, killing or imprisoning militants from other rebel groups who do not agree to join the IS, as well as foreign journalists, humanitarian workers, etc. Imprisonment occurs for violations of sharia law, including crimes such as cigarette smoking, as well as disagreement with the ISIS commands or membership in other rebel groups.

ISIS was not just a terrorist movement, but an insurgency operating under the classic strategy of "Clear, Hold, Build."[98] Several factors explain the sustainability of ISIS's hold over its controlled territory; ISIS held six out of ten oil fields in Syria and several smaller fields in Iraq. The group had targeted other rival groups,

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[96] Eckart Woertz, "How Long Will ISIS Last Economically?," CIDOB, last modified October 2014, https://www.cidob.org/publicaciones/serie_de_publicacion/notes_internacionals/n1_98/how_long_will_isis_last_economically.

[97] Jacques Neriah, "The Structure of the Islamic State (ISIS)," Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, last modified September 8, 2014, http://jcpa.org/structure-of-the-islamic-state/.

[98] Woertz, ISIS.

such as Jabhat al-Nusra for control of the fields. ISIS holding control of oil and gas fields delivered energy to the government in Damascus, which oversees the gas network and power plants. Keeping up commercial energy ties with the Assad regime brings another dimension to the opaque patterns of collaboration and conflict between the two sides.

Funds donated from foreign countries constituted another source of ISIS funding. Wealthy donors from the Gulf sheikhdoms and even the Gulf states themselves particularly Saudi Arabia and Qatar exposed to have had financing jihadist groups in Iraq and Syria.[99]

Interestingly, the common position of Tehran and Washington with respect to the "Islamic State" had been observed, since both powers cannot allow the formation of a Sunnī jihadist state on the territory of Syria and Iraq, but the motives of Iran and the United States are different. For Iranians, first of all, the IS triumph will mean a severe defeat of the Shīʿī world, which has recently begun to occupy a strong position in the world arena in historical terms. In Tehran's view, the IS is a Sunnī instrument of Washington and Riyadh against the Shīʿah and particularly Iran. Secondly, Iran fears that the Shīʿī shrines in Iraq will be destroyed, in particular, the Imam ʿAlī's shrine in Najaf and Imam Hussein's shrine in Karbala. Third, Iran has been concerned about destabilizing Iraq as it does not want to be surrounded by "failed states " After all, Tehran has enough problems on the Iranian-Afghan border. It is much more important for Iran to achieve a decisive influence on Baghdad and try to direct its policy in the desired direction. Here the advantage of the Islamic Republic is the anti-American sentiment that reigns

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[99] A leaked e-mail sent by Hillary Clinton on 17 August 2014 to her campaign manager, John Podesta, who was then Barack Obama's advisor, admitted that Qatar and Saudi Arabia were "secretly providing financial and logistical support to ISIS and other radical Sunni groups in the region." See, Wikileaks, "Hillary Clinton's leaked emails," Wikileaks, last modified August 17, 2014,
https://wikileaks.org/podesta-emails/emailid/3774.

among the majority of the Iraqi population, including the Shīʿah, who are not inclined to appreciate that the Americans liberated them from Sunnī rule.[100]

For the U.S., forming a Taliban-like state in the heart of the Middle East is tantamount to the postmortem triumph of Osama bin Laden. This state would had been, among other things, pose a threat to one of Washington's partners and allies in the region, Saudi Arabia. The U.S. administration justifiably expects that Baghdad will not be able to renounce its alliance with the United States both for security reasons and because of the need for economic assistance. Moreover, without an alliance with Washington, the Iraqi authorities were and are unlikely to be able to resist the influence of Iran, which is trying to regain its role as the central authority for the Shīʿī faith. Neither Washington nor Tehran were interested in the complete collapse of Iraq, although such a scenario was deemed possible.

3.1.2. "The Shīʿī Factor" in the Context of the Syrian Civil War

Protests that began in Syria in 2011 in the wake of the Arab Spring events quickly escalated into a violent confrontation between the government forces of President Bashar Assad and various opposition forces. Already in 2012, we could talk about a full-scale civil war, which involved a variety of forces fighting each other, entering into tactical alliances and forming their own ad hoc coalitions, and then moving to armed struggle with each other. In fact, there is not a single war in Syria, but three: the first is between government forces and the opposition to the Assad regime, the second is between the moderate secular opposition and Islamists, and the third is between Islamist groups themselves.[101]

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[100] Tim Arango, "Iraqi Shiite Anger at U.S. Remains Strong," The New York Times, last modified November 8, 2011, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/09/world/middleeast/iraqi-shiite-anger-at-united-states-remains-strong.html.

[101] The roots of the Syrian civil war date back to the Ottoman domination of the Syrian lands. At that time, representatives of Alawites, occupied a marginal position in Ottoman Syria. In a book entitled Ta'rikh al-'Alawiyyin, the Alawi historian Muhammad Amin Galib al-Tawil stated that when Selim I triumphed in Syria, he engaged in an anti-Nusayris campaign. In the Aleppo area,

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As mentioned above, there is no unity in the Sunnī camp. The crisis situation in Syria serves as further evidence of that. Thus, although Saudi Arabia and Qatar shared the goal of overthrowing the Al-Assad regime, they disagreed on what should follow the overthrow. Qatar supported the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and wanted them to come to power after the fall of the current Government. This scenario would have had consequences such as the triumph of Salafist Islam in Syria and Qatar's geopolitical leadership. In turn, because of its old enmity with the Muslim Brotherhood, Saudi Arabia could not arrange for a Qatari version of the scenario. Both countries were striving to achieve the goal of overthrowing Bashar Assad providing serious financial assistance to certain groups of so-called "rebels". Until a sudden change of leadership took place in Doha, leading to the country's withdrawal from the Syrian conflict, Qatar was a leader in supplying arms to the Syrian opposition. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, which monitors arms transfers, Qatar has sent the largest number of weapons to Syria, as more than 70 military cargo flights only between April 2012 and March 2013.[102]

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according to al-Tawil, forty thousand Nusayris were killed, and later another ninety-four thousand Nusayris were executed by the Ottoman Sultan. The Nusayris were in a continuous situation of insurrection against the Ottomans throughout the nineteenth century. Two main factors contributed to this. The first was that Nuasyris avoided paying the Ottoman taxes and argued that the taxes applied were too heavy and that they were not able to pay it. The Ottomans attempt to conscript Nusayris to the military also caused a rebellion. Yvette Talhamy, "TheFatwas and the Nusayri/Alawis of Syria," *Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 2 (2010): 181-184, doi:10.1080/00263200902940251. This situation changed after the formation of the French occupation of Syria: the Syrian army's officer corps consisted of graduates of military schools, most of whom were Alawites. After French occupation, the Sunni population of Syria did not want to send their sons to military schools of the occupying force. Composed mainly of Alawites, the French controlled officer corps quickly became the dominant political force in Syria.

[102] Roula Khalaf and Abigail F. Smith, "Qatar Bankrolls Syrian Revolt with Cash and Arms," Financial Times, last modified March 16, 2013, http://ig-legacy.ft.com/content/86e3f28e-be3a-11e2-bb35-00144feab7de#axzz5yrA89QWq.
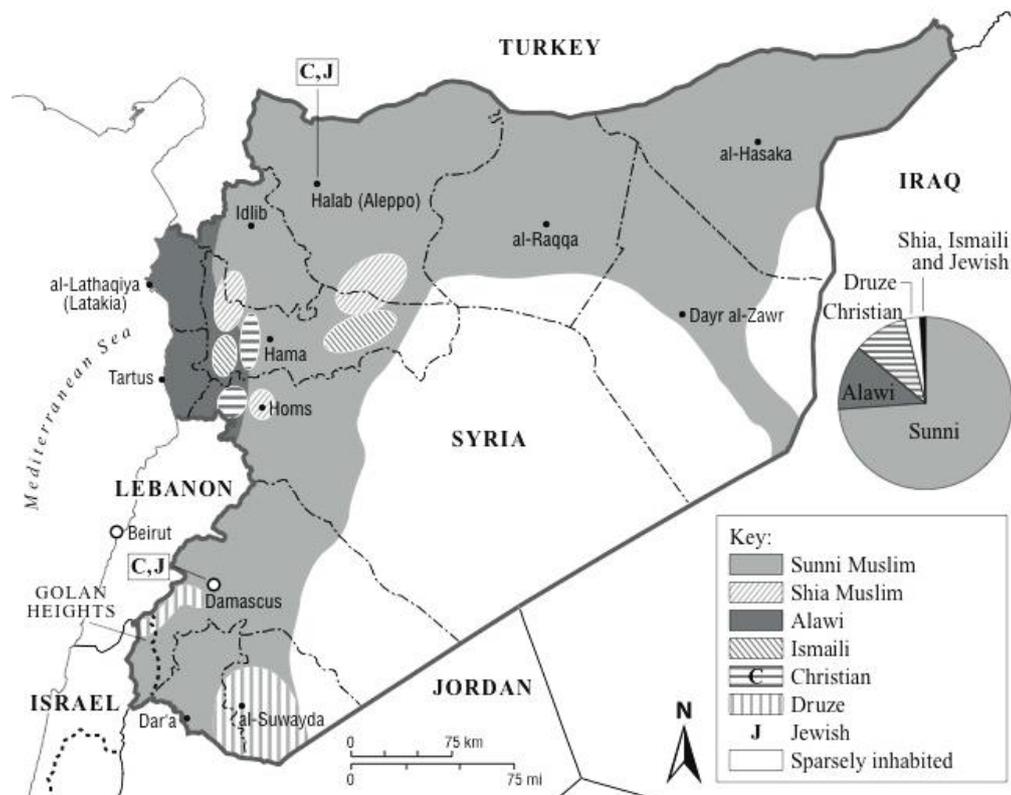
Figure 2. Syria's Religious and Sectarian Divisions[103]

Let's analyse the voting of Muslim states of the Middle East and North Africa on the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic at the sessions of the UN General Assembly.[104] Analysis of the table shows that Iran, as a traditional ally of the Syrian regime, has consistently opposed the adoption of resolutions condemning human rights violations in Syria during the civil war.[105] Lebanon, as Syria's closest neighbour and a country where the pro-Iranian Hezbollah party has a

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[103] Seth Kaplan, "Syria's Religious Demography," *fragilestates.org*, n.d.https://www.fragilestates.org/2012/02/20/syrias-ethnic-and-religious-divides/.

[104] The United Nations, "The United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Situation of Human Rights in the Syrian Arab Republic (A/C.3/72/L.54)," ESubscription to United Nations Documents, last modified October 13, 2017, https://undocs.org/A/C.3/72/L.54.

[105] *The United Nations, "The Committee Vote on Resolution No. A/C.3/72/L.54,",* 2017, https://unwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Screen-Shot-2017-11-21-at-7.20.31-PM.png.

parliamentary influence, has consistently abstained from voting in order not to cause discontent among its partners, including among European countries.

It is important to note that although the Syrian crisis is one of several issues that deepens the separation of the Sunnis and the Shīʿah, the alliance between Damascus and Tehran, despite the proximity of the Alawite faith to Shīʿī, was dictated not by religious solidarity, but by demands for geopolitical expediency. For Tehran, it was the key to the spread of Iranian influence in the Arab world and the possibility of creating a rear springboard for the pro-Iranian movement of Hizballah in Lebanon. Damascus' desire to establish alliance relations with Iran was dictated by three factors: First, in the context of the Assad regime's tough confrontation with Sunnī Islamic fundamentalists inside the country, it was necessary for the Baathists to secure the support of the Shīʿī fundamentalist regime in Tehran in order to avoid accusations of apostasy; Second, the Shīʿī movement of Hezbollah became a major ally of Damascus' dominance over Lebanon; third, both states were bringing together hostile relations with Saddam's Iraq. Moreover, such solidarity between Iran and Syria has once again led many politicians and researchers to talk about the dangers of creating a "Shīʿī crescent" in the Middle East. However, Iraq, also included in this "crescent", voted on the Syrian resolutions in the UN General Assembly quite differently, even though the government of Nuri al-Maliki was pursuing a pro-Syrian policy inside the country. This is due to the longstanding antagonism between Iraq and Syria, a traditional rivalry between these countries for influence in the Arab world. Again, the Shīʿī factor is not a determining factor.[106]

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[106] Another example of geopolitical rivalry between Iraq and Syria manifested itself after 2009 bomb attacks in Baghdad. The Prime Minister of Iraq, Nuri al-Maliki, challenged the Syrian government regarding why it harbours hostile armed groups that Iraq accuses of carrying out bombings on its soil. In a statement that was seemingly conflating up rhetoric in an increasingly tense row between the two states, Maliki further stated that neighboring countries could not use the justification of the United States military invasion of Iraq as an excuse to back rebels against Iraqi authorities as American troops departed from Iraqi cities by June. "Why must they insist on safeguarding armed organizations and those sought by Iraqi courts and INTERPOL on the Syrian territory? Maliki was quoted from his office when he said. RFE/RL, "Iraq's Al-Maliki Demands Syria Explain Aid To Militants," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, last modified September 3, 2009, https://www.rferl.org/a/Iraqs_AlMaliki_Demands_Syria_Explain_Aid_To_Militants/1814248.html

3.1.3. Yemen Crisis: Geopolitical Rivalry and Sectarian Antagonism

Yemen, along with Tunisia and Egypt, has become a country with which a series of revolutions began in the Muslim world, which went down in history as the Arab Spring. At that time, President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had ruled the country for 32 years, was successfully overthrown and replaced by Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, elected by the people.

However, the victory of the revolution and the fall of the dictator did not bring the country any democratic transformation or improvement in the lives of ordinary citizens. On the contrary, a 25 million-strong Muslim state has become a springboard for religious sects, which, according to analysts, have more weapons in their hands than regular army units. The so-called Houthis, a group belonging to the Shīʿī branch of Islam, captured the capital, Sana'a, as well as the presidential palace. Sunnī President Hadi, fearing for his life, was forced to flee.

The Yemeni events opened up a large geopolitical rivalry between two competing states for leadership in the Islamic world. These are Shīʿī Iran and Sunnī Saudi Arabia. Analysts believe that the Houthis were able to overthrow the ruling regime thanks to the large-scale support of Iran, which generously supplies the militants with weapons. The Islamic Republic of Iran is more interested than ever in extending its ideology to other countries. First and foremost, Iran is trying to spread its influence countries like Yemen and Bahrain, where the Shīʿah make up the majority. At the same time, Saudi Arabia, with its sacred sites of Mecca and Medina, considered the cradle of Islam, wants the same thing - to consolidate its leadership in the region.[107] Moreover, the sharp decline in oil prices, which began with the proposal of Saudi Arabia, was a desire not only to strengthen its own influence in the global oil market, but also to weaken the economy of oil-producing Iran.

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[107] Alan Sipress, Laris Karklis, and Tim Meko, "Five reasons the crisis in Yemen matters," The Washington Post, last modified June 8, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/world/why-yemen-matters/.

The real problem for the state was also the heterogeneous religious composition: 52% are Sunnis and 46% are Shīʿah. Although Yemeni Shīʿī- Zaydis are traditionally among the most moderate Shīʿī, now they have started to become radicalized under Tehran's revolutionary doctrine. The radical Shīʿah now occupy areas in the south and west of Yemen one by one. In Sana'a, their slogans hang: "Death to America, death to Israel, the curse to the Jews, the victory of Islam. These words echo the official doctrine of Iran.

The sectarian composition of Yemen puts country under influence of three main forces: a pro-Iranian Shīʿī rebel group, a Saudi-funded Sunnī force, and militants from al-Qaeda, which has long and firmly entrenched itself here. With the end of the Cold War and rise of Salafi Islamism tensions increased between Zaydi and Salafis, who criticized Zaydi doctrine and rituals. In addition, the Salafis have launched a campaign to attract Zaydi youth into their ranks. These young people were attracted to social assistance programmes, slogans for the correction of existing community orders and morals based on the principles of the Qurʾān and Sunnah, and access to Salafi schools and the opportunity to receive secondary religious education, which in Yemen has traditionally been the prerogative of descendants of the Prophet. Initially, the Yemeni government supported the Zaydis in their opposition to the Salafis: The Houthi movement was allowed to establish religious schools and teach Zaidi students under its own programs. It seems fair to say that the temporary rapprochement of the Yemeni authorities with the Houthis was a typical manifestation of President ʿAlī Abdullah Saleh's policy of "manoeuvring" between supporters and opponents of rapprochement with Saudi Arabia. Later, however, the Houthis were accused of having ties with Shīʿī Iran and receiving financial and military assistance from Tehran, as well as of preparing for a revolution to revive the Zaydi Imamate that existed in Yemen until 1962.[108]

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[108] Zaydi Imamate of Yemen have established a combination of religious and secular rule in some parts of the country since 897. The Zaydi rule survived many challenges during its history however it ended with the the Republican Revolution of 1962. Zaidi theology differed from that of the Sevenner or Twelver Shīʿah. It emphasises the material presence of an active and visible imam as
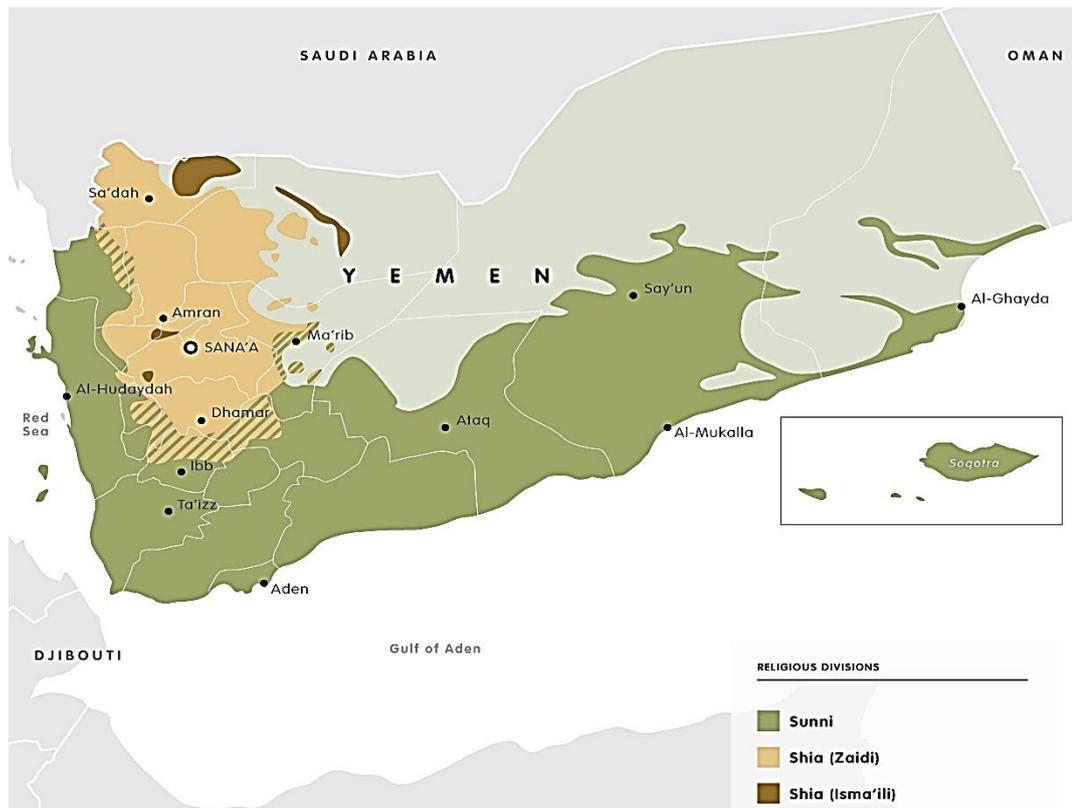
Figure 3. Yemen's religious divides[109]

Both the Saudi and Yemeni governments accuse Iran of secretly transporting weapons across the Red Sea. In October 2009, the Yemeni navy reportedly intercepted an Iranian ship carrying weapons. Yemen's state-controlled press claimed that the Houthi rebels were being trained overseas in a camp maintained by Iran in Eritrea. Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh claimed members of Iran-backed Hezbollah militia from Lebanon would teach them. The Yemeni authorities claimed that the long-time leader of the Houthi rebels, Hussein al-Houthi, used to visit Qom, one of the holiest cities in Shīʿī Iran. None of these allegations were confirmed by independent observers until 2009, and the Iranian government denies any involvement. In 2012, however, US and Indian officials

the leader of the community. The imam was supposed to be well versed in religious sciences. He was supposed to prove his suitability as the head of the community, including in the case of necessity, especially during the battle.

[109] "Religious divisions." *European Council on Foreign Relations*. 2019. https://www.ecfr.eu/mena/yemen.

confirmed that not only were telephone calls between smugglers and the Iranian al-Quds unit regarding the supply of Kalashnikovs and RPGs tapped, but deliveries were also intercepted. Smuggling of explosives is also said to have been attempted.[110]

The events in Yemen are a cause for serious concern in Saudi Arabia, which, perceiving the crisis in the neighbouring country as a direct threat to the internal stability of the ruling regime of the Al-Saud House, accuses its sworn enemy, Iran, of financial and military support for the rebels. According to Riyadh, Tehran is seeking to create a Shīʿī bridgehead in the south of the Arabian Peninsula. Saudi Arabia has always viewed itself as a guarantor of stability in Yemen and a defender of the Sunnī majority. However, in our view, Riyadh's fears are exaggerated, and Riyadh sees Tehran's hand as allegedly trying to destroy Saudi Arabia and establish complete dominance over the region's oil and gas resources through its Shīʿī allies from Yemen to Hezbollah in Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, the Kingdom's Eastern Province and Bahrain. However, it should not be forgotten that there are many internal problems in Iran, including the fact that the country has suffered from international sanctions for many years.

3.2.   Sectarian Consciousness as a Source of Political Destabilization
3.2.1.   The Cracks in the Lebanese Confessional System

Lebanon's systematic socio-political instability has turned it into a playground loaded with weapons in the midst of a population characterized by a mosaic of diverse faiths and religious beliefs. This parliamentary republic with its vibrant religious composition has sacrificed common interests for the benefit of particular ethnic and religious interests and clients. Eighteen religious communities are recognized in Lebanon, and so far, there is no single dominant one. At least three communities - Shīʿī, Sunnī and Christian - have equal influence on the political

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[110] Eric Schmitt and Robert F. Worth, "Aiding Yemen Rebels, Iran Seeks Wider Mideast Role," The New York Times - Breaking News, World News & Multimedia, last modified March 15, 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/15/world/middleeast/aiding-yemen-rebels-iran-seeks-wider-mideast-role.html.

situation, but it is important to emphasize that in Lebanon, members of different faiths live side by side, and there is little or no purely Shīʿī, Sunnī or purely Christian neighbourhood in the country.[111] These factors have led to violent acts and even local and regional civil wars at the peak of tension. The victims, missing persons and refugees have long been an integral part of the overall picture in the country. It is an open-air bazaar for arms dealers of all kinds, where the various clans and communities divide the areas of territory where they thrive through shadow economies in this Middle Eastern "Switzerland".

In 1932, at the time of the French mandate, Lebanon's first and only national census was conducted, identifying six major religious communities. The largest community consisted of Maronite Christians (28.8%), followed by the Sunnī Muslim community (22.4%) and the Shīʿī community (19.6%). This census has considerable significance for contemporary Lebanon. According to the census, at the time of Lebanon's independence from France in 1943, Maronites accounted for 30.4% of the population, the Sunnis for 21.3%, and the Shīʿah for 19.3%.[112] These figures became the basis for the distribution of positions based on the principle of confessionalism. According to this principle, only a Maronite Christian could be president of Lebanon, as well as a Sunnī Muslim prime minister and a Shīʿī Muslim speaker of parliament. The seats in the parliament, as well as in the government, were distributed between Christians and Muslims in a ratio of six to five. Over time, however, the demographic balance between the three largest communities has changed significantly: The numbers of Christians and Muslims have become roughly equal, with the number of Shīʿī Muslims generally increasing much faster than the number of the Sunnis. Therefore, to avoid political unrest, since the mid-1950s the Lebanese authorities have refused to release data on the number of different religious groups.

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[111] David S. Sorenson, *Global Security Watch—Lebanon: A Reference Handbook: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2009), 49.

[112] Sorenson, 13.

The mechanism introduced at the Ta'if Conference after the end of the Lebanese Civil War redefined the confessional balance in Lebanon's political system in favour of Muslims: the Maronite community retained the post of president, but the powers of the prime minister and the speaker of parliament were significantly expanded, and the ratio of Christians to Muslims in the parliament became one-to-one. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that, to date, any one of the three dominant confessional groups in Lebanon has outperformed the other two in influence.

The sectarian government system only intensifies inter-Muslim tensions in Lebanon.[113] The Lebanese Shīʿah is not content with their share of power. They have complained that Sunnis have received the largest proportion of political offices assigned to Muslims under the confessional system. The Sunnis of Lebanon considering their education level and presence in the urban centres had been well-represented in the political level. However, the Shīʿah mainly living in rural Lebanon historically have been under-represented.[114] This issue became aggravated in the second half of the twentieth century; in the aftermath of the 1979 Islamic

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[113] Jeffrey M. Shaw and Timothy J. Demy, *War and Religion: An Encyclopedia of Faith and Conflict [3 volumes]* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2017), 484.

[114] Sorenson, 55.
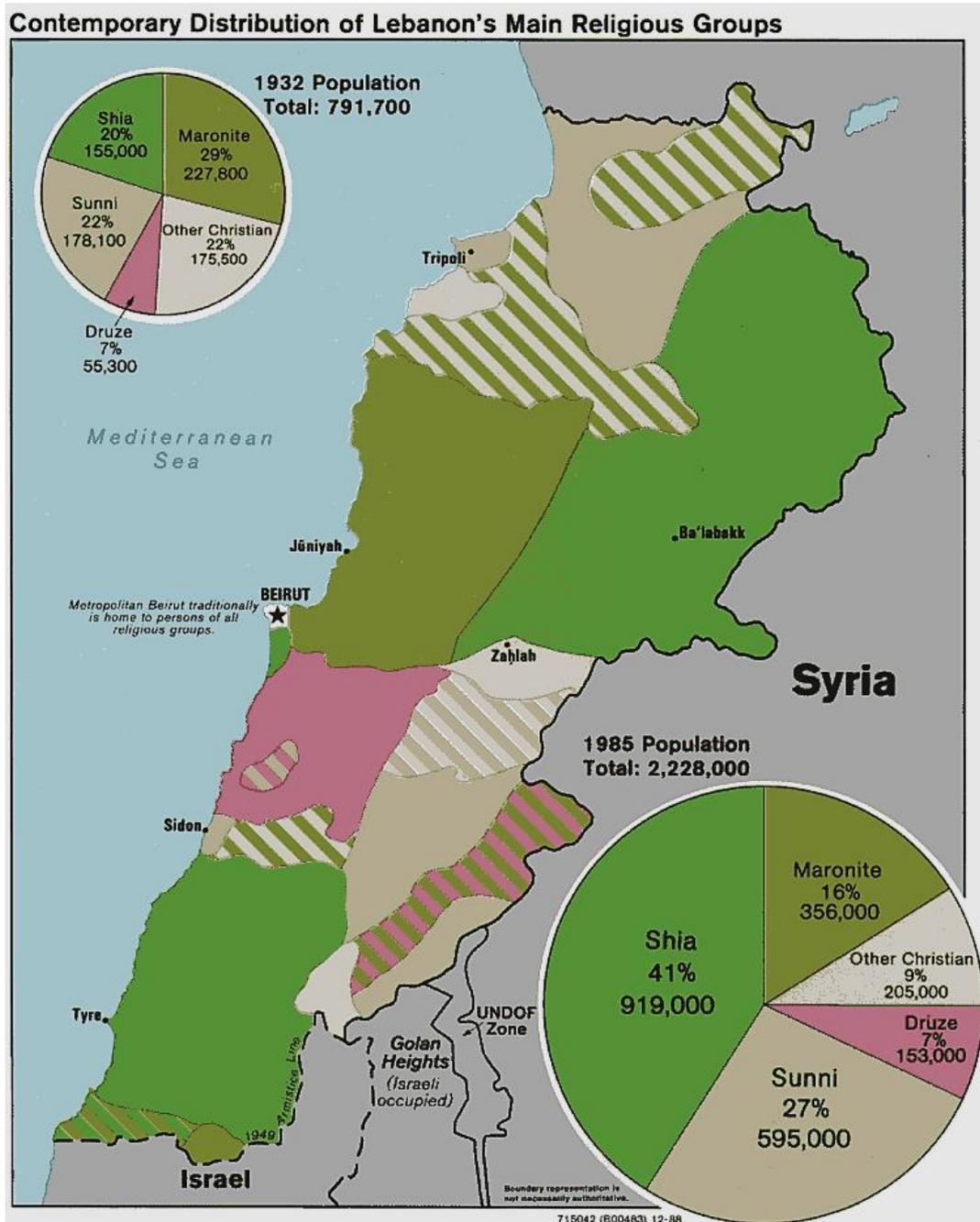
Figure 4. Contemporary distribution of Lebanon's main religious groups[115]

Revolution in Iran, the Shīʿah of Lebanon has tried to overturn from their marginality into an active participation in the Lebanese politics.

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[115] "Contemporary distribution of Lebanon's main religious groups." *United States. Central Intelligence Agency.* 1988. https://www.loc.gov/resource/g7471e.ct002750/.

The Islamic Revolution in Iran which recognized Shīʿī Islam as a universal solution to the ideological, doctrinal and practical basis of the social life galvanized the Shīʿī community in the region and more particularly in Lebanon. On the military front, following the Israeli operation of Peace in Galilee in 1982, Iran dispatched IRGC fighters to the Bekaa Valley in order to train the resistance forces against Israel.[116]

Iran also developed a network of educational, humanitarian and financial assistance, and aimed to spread the ideas of the revolution in Lebanon. With the financial support of Tehran and Damascus, Hezbollah was able to develop its military and civilian platforms, which later (in the 1990s) became the basis for its transformation from a paramilitary group into a full-fledged political party. At the same time, it is not certain that Hezbollah was entirely dependent on Iran or Syria.

The end of the Iran-Iraq war in August 1988 and Iran's refocusing on its domestic policy prompted Hezbollah to do the same, but the ties continue. Iran designates Hassan Nasrallah as the head of Lebanese Hezbollah. Iran had a huge impact on the ideological foundations, as well as on the structural and operational characteristics of the Hezbollah. According to Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General Naim Kassem, the reason for Iran's natural proximity to Hezbollah is not only a general commitment to Shīʿī, but rather an acknowledgement of the Velayat-e-Fakih ideology, a convergence of views on the ideal social order, the denial of the hegemony of a single superpower, and support for liberation movements against Israel.

Under Mohammed Khatami's presidency (1997-2005), relations with Hezbollah continued, but President Khatami opened up relations with all Lebanese communities, and in particular with Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. The 2005 election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad restored ties with Hezbollah. Following the July 2006 war with Israel, Iran has been participating in the

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[116] Shaw and Demy, 485.

reconstruction of the damaged areas and promoting solidarity on issues of resistance to Israel and foreign hegemony.

Shīʿī militias aimed not only at armed struggle against Israel, but also at promoting their representatives to the highest levels of government, a condition that would later be enshrined in the Taʾif Accord. Lebanon's Hizbullah, acting as an independent player, is now influencing regional conflicts such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Syrian civil war. Hezbollah's growing influence has raised serious concerns among the Sheikhdoms of the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia.

The entry into war of Hezbollah alongside the Syrian regime troops provoked the outrage of its adversaries. For the Lebanese Shīʿī organization, this is undoubtedly a turning point in its history: as it gradually increased its military involvement in Syria, it has become more and more influential over the wider operation filed. Hezbollah is no longer just Lebanon's most powerful military actor, but a political force capable of imposing its agenda on the national stage. The Shīʿī organisation is now an essential non-state actor in the Middle East; a point that Hassan Nasrallah has understood well. This charismatic leader now stands as a direct opponent of the Saudi Arabia, vilifying Riyadh's war in Yemen and Saudi financial support for anti-Assad factions in Syria.

Under threat perception from rising Iran-Hezbollah axis, Riyadh began to fuel Sunnī-Shīʿī strife and anti-Shīʿī sentiment in Lebanon. Saudi-financed elements inside Lebanon, have repeatedly attempted to drive Hizballah out of the country's political scene and undermine its armed wing. These attempts have been intensified after the outbreak of Syrian civil war and Hezbollah's involvement in favour of the regime. Lebanese society have been divided into two opposing camps and Hezbollah had to make a difficult choice here: Some Lebanese perceived the events in Syria as a result of the West's subversive activities against

another Arab state, while others supported the opposition in the fight against the Assad regime.[117]

3.2.2. The Shīʿah of Bahrain: A Suspected Majority Under Siege

The geographical concept of "Bahrain" used to be much broader in terms of territory than the present-day state in the Gulf Archipelago of the same name. Originally, up to the 16th century, the province of Bahrain (Iqlim al-Bahrain) was meant to be a relatively large area that stretched from the north of Basra along the western coast of the Gulf and included the present-day territories of South Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, the Saudi eastern region of Al-Ahsa and Al-Qatif, as well as the entire al-Awal archipelago (present-day Bahrain). However, by the 18th century, this geographical name only applied to the archipelago. Nevertheless, the concept of Bahrain as a larger territory is reflected in many marine charts and atlases of European cartographers of the 17th-18th centuries. All this has also defined the self-consciousness of the local Shīʿī population, which calls itself "Baharna". This feature is also noted by linguists who define the colloquial language of the Shīʿah of Bahrain and the eastern province of KSA as a Bahraini dialect (Bahrani), distinguishing it from the colloquial language of the local Sunnis - the Arabic dialect of the Gulf Arabic/Khaliji, which has more similarities with the dialects of Qatar, Kuwait and some internal north-eastern regions of Saudi Arabia bordering Najd. Although, it is worth noting that with modern urbanization, many dialectal differences are erased, and educated populations in both communities, both in the Saudi Eastern Province and Bahrain, actively use literary Arabic to communicate.

Nevertheless, all these features determine the identity of a certain part of the Bahraini Shīʿī community that considers itself an indigenous coastal population, unlike the Sunnī Bedouin tribes that came from the inland regions of the Arabian

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[117] In this bipolar confrontation and rise of religious tensions, Lebanon's Christians are the most vulnerable segment, as it is surrounded by Muslims inside and by Islamic States threat along Lebanese borders. For example, Lebanese Christians were concerned that Saudi Arabia was supporting radical Sunni Islamist groups in the country, while the Shīʿah were Iran's protégé. It appears that if Lebanon is drawn into Sunni- Shīʿī confrontation and armed struggle between Islamic movements, it is Christians who will suffer the most, whatever side they choose.

Peninsula. It is the reference to the ancient history of Iqlim al-Bahrain that is used by some Shīʿī intellectuals and activists, both in present-day Bahrain and in the eastern Saudi province, as an ideological basis for confronting the Sunnī authorities. Therefore, the ideas of creating the "great (ancient) Bahrain (al-Bahrain al-Qadim)", which would include the territories of the present eastern province of Saudi Arabia and the kingdom of Bahrain, have been popular in some intellectual circles, notably at present. Moreover, for the Shīʿī opposition, the historical memory is particularly relevant today that the current ruling Al Khalifa dynasty is, in their view, "strangers" and "aliens" from the Bedouin federation of the tribes of Utbah (Bani Utbah), which usurped power in the archipelago of Bahrain in 1783 and having taken it away from Iran. Therefore, the Iranian propaganda of restoration of historical justice has found a warm response among the Shīʿī population of Bahrain, many of whom are of Iranian origin.

It was these above-mentioned characteristics that led to the fact that Bahrain and Saudi Arabia faced a number of common problems, which characterized the specifics of the Arab Spring in these countries. When, in addition to the demands for change, economic and social freedoms, as was the case in most other Arab countries, the protests had a clear religious connotation - the elimination of discrimination on the basis of religion. However, while Saudi Arabia as a whole managed to maintain control over the situation in its eastern province, which was largely facilitated not only by strict police measures, but also by the efforts of the local political religious elite, which did not want to further escalate and conflict with the authorities, in Bahrain the beginning of 2011 the situation began to take a serious turn, threatening to get out of the control of the authorities, and even lead to the overthrow of the ruling Al Khalifa dynasty.[118] For Riyadh, every

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[118] Prince Muhammad bin Nayef, then Crown Prince, who had long been voicing Riyadh's fears of "turning the Shīʿī crescent into the full moon", played the role of "hawk", wishing to bring order to the Kingdom of Bahrain with an iron hand. It is believed that it was he who led the "regional counterrevolution". This is indirectly confirmed by the words of one Saudi cleric, Sheikh Muhsin Al-Awaji, who at that time was close to the Crown Prince, that "the royal family would in no way have allowed the overthrow of the Al Khalifa dynasty, they simply could not allow it. Mohsen M.

achievement of the Bahraini opposition movement, primarily the Shīʿī part of it, was perceived as a direct threat to the national security of the kingdom. Saudi authorities feared that the country's eastern Shīʿī population in the oil-rich areas, related to Bahrain's Shīʿī families, would be affected by a "protest infection" from a neighbouring state that would shake the credibility of the Saudi ruling regime. Saudi also believes that the Shīʿī offensive in Bahrain will automatically turn into a strategic Iranian offensive in the Gulf region. On this basis, the Saudi Arabian government decided to act by force, not only immediately neutralizing any manifestation of solidarity of its people with the Bahraini the Shīʿah, but also militarily supporting the Sunnī ruling dynasty of Bahrain on behalf of the GCC.

Figure 5. Map of Bahrain by French cartographer Jacques-Nicolas Bellin (1703−72)[119]

At present, Bahrain's the Shīʿah are discriminated against in socio-economic terms.[120] They live in more difficult conditions, tend to have low incomes, have

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Milani, "Iran and Saudi Arabia Square Off," Foreign Affairs, last modified October 12, 2011, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2011-10-11/iran-and-saudi-arabia-square.

[119] "Map of the Arabian Coast, Red Sea, and Persian Gulf," Qatar Digital Library, accessed October 6, 2019, https://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/qnlhc/12896.

difficulty in taking up leadership positions, and there are virtually no Shīʿī in the military or security services. Moreover, the authorities have adopted a policy of demographic engineering against the Shīʿī population.[121] However, it is important not to exaggerate the degree of discrimination against the Shīʿī population of Bahrain. For example, the post of Deputy Prime Minister and a number of ministerial posts in the country are held by the Shīʿah; representatives of the Shīʿī community are members of the Consultative Council and top-level judges. In addition, there are sometimes the Sunnis in the ranks of the Shīʿī political parties, and among the influential Shīʿī religious figures there are those who can directly express their views on the directives of the Sunnī monarchy. It is also important that during the Arab Spring protests, Sunnī and Shīʿī positions were very close: representatives of both currents spoke with one voice for political change under the slogans: "Not Sunnī, not Bahraini, not Sunnī, not Shīʿī - national unity. It should also be taken into account that not all the Shīʿah supported the protests, as there is a wealthy Shīʿī elite (clans of Al-Jisha, Al-Arraid, etc.), close to the royal family of Al-Khalifa is loyal to its policy.

Although the Arab Spring demonstrations in Bahrain began as peaceful marches and protests for the rights of the majority of the population, since 2012 there have been several incidents that have been treated by the authorities as aggressive

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[120] Bahrain's society is built on a strict hierarchy. At the top of the socio-political ladder is the ruling Al-Khalifa family and its main Sunni allies. The rest of the Arab Sunni Muslim clans are located on the lower level. Next comes the so-called "hawala", a family that emigrated to Bahrain from Iran over the past 100 years and has Arab Sunni ancestors. At the fourth stage is the clan of Baharna, the Arab Shīʿī, who have lived in the territory of the modern kingdom since ancient times. At the base of the pyramid there are Persians, among which there are both the Sunnis and the Shīʿah.

[121] The naturalization policy pursued by the country's government is causing indignation among the Shīʿah. Repeatedly, there have been popular protests calling for an end to the granting of citizenship to migrants from Arab countries, as well as Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, who are Sunni Muslims in their religious affiliation. According to the demonstrators, the Government's naturalization policy was aimed at changing the religious composition of the country and therefore the electorate. "Citizenship As a Bahraini Government Tool," Stratfor, last modified September 21, 2012, https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/citizenship-bahraini-government-tool.

terrorist acts against the state. As the protest wave grew, the regime's desire to characterize the situation in the country as an aggravation of inter-confessional conflicts and to bet on Sunnī population to suppress opposition sentiments also intensified. Thus, the two largest Sunnī Islamist parties, which initially expressed support for the demands for reform, issued a joint statement affirming their loyalty to the Al-Khalifa dynasty and denouncing "irresponsible attempts to undermine the unity of the country". In turn, the famous Sunnī sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi expressed his support for his fellow believers, calling the events in Bahrain not a "people's revolution", as in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, but a "sectarian revolt" supported by external forces, i.e. Iran.[122]

Iran, which the ruling family in Bahrain considered to be one of the main actors in the conspiracy, repeatedly denied any involvement in the Bahrain events and criticized both the repressive actions against the demonstrators and the foreign intervention of the Saudi-led GCC forces. The Iranian Foreign Ministry called the foreign intervention in the events in Bahrain unacceptable and its potential repercussions. Iranian Defence Minister Ahmad Vahidi, in turn, said that the presence of foreign troops in Bahrain "would increase tensions and jeopardize the stability and security of the region, "which would become a center of brutality, hostility and clashes if such careless initiatives, which lack legitimacy, become the norm".[123]

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[122] In Iraq, demonstrations were also held against repression of Bahraini Shīʿah and harsh criticism was expressed of both the Bahraini monarchy and Saudi Arabia. Even some influential Iraqi Shīʿī politicians, comparing the positions of the United States and European countries in relation to the "Arab Spring" in Bahrain with their speeches on popular protests in other countries of North Africa and the Middle East, said that the West pursues a policy of "double standards". Tim Arango, "Shiites in Iraq Support Bahrain's Protesters," The New York Times, last modified April 1, 2011, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/02/world/middleeast/02iraq.html.

[123] Semira N. Nikou, "Iran Warns Gulf on Bahrain," The Iran Primer, last modified March 24, 2011, https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2011/mar/24/iran-warns-gulf-bahrain.

We should mention terrorist activities of some Shīʿī organizations in include Saraya al-Ashtar, Saraya al-Mukawama al-Shaabiya, the February 14 movement and others. The Shīʿī al-Wifaq party failed to condemn the radical methods of some groups and to distance itself from the events, which led to the court's ruling in June 2016 to close down the party and confiscate its property. The party was accused of links to terrorists and incitement to interreligious hatred. The political leader of Al-Wifaq party, Sheikh Ali Salman, has been imprisoned since December 2014. The lack of a clear line between moderate and radical movements does not favour moderate movements. At the end of May 2017, the left-wing and secular Wa'ad Party, whose representatives expressed support for al-Wifaq, was banned when it came under pressure.[124]

Sheikh Isa Kasem is one of the most authoritative and influential Shīʿī religious figures in Bahrain. Some call him an Ayatollah. Isa Kasem received his religious education in the largest Shīʿī centres in Najaf, Iraq, and then in Qom, Iran, after which he returned to Bahrain and preached in his native Diraz. Many Shīʿī ulema refrain from political activism, limiting their activities to the religious sphere, but Sheikh Isa Kasem has supported the reformist movement in Bahrain and the Al-Wifaq party.

It should be noted that Shīʿī religious figures, supported by the Bahraini authorities and funded by them, do not receive broad popular support - the Shīʿah of Bahrain value the independence of the ulema. Isa Kasem participated in the creation of the Council of Ulema of Bahrain in 2004, the aim of which was to maintain the unity of the community, protect Islamic identity and ensure spiritual leadership. On the eve of Kasem's trial, the Bahraini ulema called for protests to protect their

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[124] Sheikh Isa Kasem was charged with links to radical groups, financial fraud, tax evasion and money laundering for the benefit of Iran and Iraq. The recent unrest in Bahrain is due to the trial and his supporters' opposition to the decision. For example, the dispersal of an illegal demonstration outside the home of Isa Kasem resulted in the killing of five people and the detention of 286 accused of terrorism. "Five Killed, Hundreds Arrested In Bahrain At Shi'ite Protest; Iran Blames Trump," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, last modified May 24, 2017, https://www.rferl.org/a/five-killed-hundreds-arrested-shiite-protest-bahrain-iran-zarif-blames-trump--/28505701.html.

religious rights. The Haq and al-Wifaq parties condemned the verdict on Sheikh Isa Kasem and called on the international community to put pressure on the Bahraini authorities.[125]

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[125] His supporters protested against this accusation by organizing rallies outside his home in the village of Diraz.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

While it has centuries-old roots, the role of religion in the intra and interstate dynamics in the Middle East has grown stronger over the past half century. Egypt's peace treaty with Israel caused Cairo to lose its leading role in the region. Moreover, it declared the demise of secular pan-Arab state model which in turn strengthened the role of religion in domestic and foreign affairs of the Arab states. Meanwhile the U.S., Saudi Arabia and Pakistan provided funding, weaponry, intelligence and logistics to the mujahideen in their war against the anti-religious Soviets in Afghanistan. At the same time, the Shīʿī revolution eliminated secular rule of the Pahlavi monarchy and converted Iran to a revolutionary theocratic state. This provided the Twelver Shīʿism a new representation, a new discourse, and a new mission aimed at exporting its ideology throughout the Middle East. With entering into a war with the revolutionary regime in Tehran, Baathists Iraq bear the cost of blocking the Ayatollahs' efforts to export their own model throughout the Arab Middle East.

Following the fall of Saddam's regime, the rivalry between Shīʿī Iran, which has sought to export its revolutionary model, and Sunnī Saudi Arabia, which has tried to spread its Wahhabi beliefs to a wide audience, has been proven to be the most significant aspect of the shift in the regional dynamics. In its discourse, however, Tehran avoids confining itself to the narrow rhetoric of sectarianism. It emphasizes the resistance against American imperialism and Israel in an effort to win the support of the Arab populations.

The sectarian discourse in Syria took on a new significance with the start of the Arab Spring. While the first mass demonstrations were seen as multi-confessional, the regime's response was to impose sectarian elements on them from the very

beginning. In the Sunnī districts, the regime aggressively cracked down on the protests, while it allowed them to take place in the neighbourhoods of other communities. This is designed to reduce popular dissent to a sectarian position defended by the Sunnī majority which threatens the rest of the population. The support of several Sunnī powers, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar on the one hand and the involvement of Hezbollah and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in the other hand have transformed a struggle against an oppressive regime into a Sunnī- Shīʿī conflict.

Thousands of Lebanese, Iraqis, Hazaras, Pakistanis and even Indians in Syria are mobilized by Tehran to defend the Assad regime on the grounds of being a part of the Shīʿī community. In turn, Sunnī extremist groups such as the Islamic State have been recruiting new members to fight against the Rafidis. Here we have a Shīʿī jihad confronted against a Sunnī jihad. The two are in a state of competition in terms of agitation, religious rhetoric and terminology.

In Iraq, the rise of the ISIS and its mass killings of the Shīʿah has created a sense of revenge among the Shīʿī community. As a result, several armed groups have been created. A large part of them respond directly to Tehran's orders. While this mission is now being completed, the country finds itself in a contradictory condition: the Shīʿah are now even more powerful, and the Sunnis seem even more marginalized. This is not a sign of a possible long-term peace in Iraq. These two conflicts have enabled Tehran to open a "Shīʿī highway", linking Iran to the Mediterranean, and building on the Shīʿī Iran's links with its co-sectarian communities in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.

Perceiving sectarianism as the root cause of the ongoing conflicts is not supported by academics and political analysts. Some prefer to frame the conflict as a cold-war conflict between Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, the two narratives are not incompatible. The manipulation of community affiliations and religious concepts has strengthened the collective sectarian identity of others.

As a result, the creature has partly escaped its creators. However, the two narratives are not incompatible.

The events of the Arab Spring have been a catalyst for the destructive processes of the emergence of the failed states, and the ongoing confrontation between influential players in the Middle East. The combination of these events has contributed to the further polarization of community affiliations, making the Sunnī-Shīʿī conflict the new geopolitical epicentre of the Middle East. The agreement between the Sunnī and Shīʿī communities is now the main condition for peace in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, three countries that constitute the geographical heart of the Cold War between Riyadh and Tehran. While the stakes of this confrontation are more a matter of political considerations than a question of metaphysical controversies, it must be said that the actors' narratives are full of religious references aimed at legitimizing the fight against the other.

It should be noted that, the intensity of the sectarian conflict is not the same in different geographical areas. It is irrelevant in many countries and does not provide an understanding of the issues at stake in a significant part of the contemporary conflicts in the Arab world. Both the Shīʿī and the Sunnī blocs are themselves divided into different alliances that cannot be perceived as a one united block against the other.

The manipulation of community affiliations and religious concepts has strengthened the collective sectarian identity of others. As a result, the creature has partly escaped its creators. While it is necessary to go beyond the actors' narratives, they should not be neglected. Certainly, the name Sunnī-Shīʿī conflict contributes to giving an imperfect vision of reality. Admittedly, its use can contribute to distorting the debate by suggesting that the heart of the problem is not purely and simply a political one. Consequently, it can under no circumstances be used as a single framework for the assessment of the situation.

The Shīʿī revival for some, *the Shīʿī crescent* for others, the deadly conflicts that have shaken the regional stability since the Islamic Revolution in Iran have

highlighted the centuries-long Intra-Islamic rivalries. Behind this sectarian quarrel, however, lies the struggle for the emancipation of a fringe of the population, a minority in the Arab world, long repressed, on the one hand, and on the other hand, linked to Tehran's hegemonic quest in the Middle East.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Araştırma Yöntemi ve Literatür Taraması

Araştırmanın metodolojik temeli analitik yaklaşım, tümdengelim araştırma tekniği, sosyolojik yaklaşım, tarihsel kronolojik yöntem ve karşılaştırmalı teolojik analizin yanı sıra nicel veri ve göstergeler analizini kapsamaktadır. Bu çalışmada, İslam içi çatışmalar devam eden bir süreç olarak incelenecektir. Sünni ve Şii İslam'ın dini ve siyasal doktrinlerini karşılaştırmak için analitik ve tümdengelimli yöntemler dahil mevcut bilimsel verilerin kullanımına odaklanan yöntemler tatbik edilecektir. Tarihsel kronolojik yönteminin uygulanması, yazarın İslam içi çatışmaların periyodikleştirilmesini formüle etmesine ve Sünniler ile Şiiler arasındaki ilişkilerin gelişme aşamalarını vurgulamasına olanak sağlamamıştır.

İslam'ın doktriner ve dini pratiği sosyal bilimlerin çeşitli disiplinlerinde kapsamlı incelemelere tabi tutulmuştur. Bu çalışmada özellikle R. J. Abisaab, F. Ajami, O. Bengio, A. Billingsley, G. Bowering, N. Cigar, L. Clarke, H. Corbin, J. L. Esposito, R. N. Frye, I. Goldziher, L. Hazleton, M. Kadivar, A. Knysh, W. Madelung, M. Mozaffar, V. Nasr, O. Roy, D. J. Stewart ve R. Takeyh'in eserlerinden faydalanılmıştır. Uluslararası örgütlerin belgeleri, özellikle BM Genel Kurulu kararlarına da referansta bulunulmuştur. Ayrıca, araştırma konusunun jeopolitik yönü ve Orta Doğu bölgesel alt sistemindeki güvenlik etkileşimlerinin devam eden seyri nedeniyle, röportajlar, konuşmalar, resmî açıklamalar ve din adamlarının ifadeleri gibi kaynaklara da yer verilmiştir. Söz konusu literatür seçimi araştırma konunun ayrıntılı ve derinlemesine çalışılmasını sağlamaktadır.

Mevcut araştırmanın akademik özgünlüğünü belirleyen çeşitli faktörler vardır. İlk olarak, İslam içi çatışmalar, özellikle Orta Doğu bölgesel alt sisteminde yer alan güvenlik mimarisinin değişen dinamikleri bağlamında, kapsamlı bir şekilde ele alınmaktadır. İkinci olarak, araştırmada, Sünni-Şii ilişkilerinin kronolokik tarihini

Peygamberin vefatı zamanından "Şia'nın Yükselişi", küresel boyut kazanan Sünni ayaklanması ve IŞİD'in Sünni olmayanlara karşı tekfirci tutumuna kadar özgün bir peryodikleştirmeye tabi tutulmuştur. Araştırma, ayrıca İslam öncesi ve erken İslam döneminde Arap Yarımadasındaki aşiretlerinde aşiret reisinin yerine geçecek olanı tayin etme ilkeleriyle ilgili sosyolojik çalışmaları, Hz. Muhammed'in halefinin adaylığı ile ilgili tartışmalara tatbik etmiştir. Ayrıca yazar, teolojik, sosyolojik, tarihsel ve jeopolitik yönlerin birleşik bir vizyona entegrasyonu yoluyla çatışmanın doğasını tasvir etmeye çalışmıştır.

Arka Plan ve Araştırma Soruları

Allâh'tan başka ilah olmadığına ve Muhammed'in Allâh'ın Elçisi olduğuna şahitlik ederim. Hangi ülkede yaşarsa yaşasın, hangi dilde konuşursa konuşsun her Müslüman bu kelimeleri bilir. Tarih boyunca Sünniler ve Şiiler arasındaki ihtilaflar bu kısa iman beyanında Şiilerin şu kelimeleri eklemesiyle başlar: "*…ve Ali'nin Allâh'ın dostu/temsilcisi olduğuna tanıklık ederim.*" Halife/İmam Ali'nin öldürülmesi ve oğlu Hüseyin'in katledilmesi, tek bir toplumu -*Ümmeti*- Sünnilere ve Şiilere bölen İslam içi çatışmalara zemin oluşturdu. Bu bölünme, İslam doktrininin yayılmasından önceki kopuşu şekillendirmiştir. İslam Tarihin sonraki aşamalarında Sünni ve Şii İslam, birbirinden neredeyse bağımsız olarak gelişmeye başlamış, sadece kendine özgü dogma ve ritüellerinde farklılıklar oluşmuştur.

İslam'ın bu iki ana akımı arasındaki farklar Orta Doğu'daki devlet içi ve devletler arası çatışmaların nedeni olarak algılanmıştır. Günümüzde, Irak'ın tek Şii Arap devletine dönüşmesi ve Suriye iç savaşı ile Yemen krizi bağlamında Sünni ve Şii cihatçı örgütlerin yükselişi, Sünni-Şii ihtilaflarının bu çatışmaları körüklediği algısını şekillendirmiştir. Bununla birlikte, Irak örneğinde olduğu gibi -2003 ABD işgalinden önce-, mezhepsel aidiyetin toplumların nezdinde ve siyaset arenasında ikincil bir role sahip olduğu bir gerçektir.

İran-Irak savaşı sırasında her iki ülkede yer alan Şii askerler birbirleriyle savaştılar. İran yönetimi Iraklı Şii askerlerin kendilerine karşı savaşmayacakları hesaplarını yapsa da Iraklılar milli kimliğin mezhepsel aidiyete ağır bastığını

göstermiş oldular. Fakat, Baasçı ordu subaylarının Saddam sonrası yeni Irak'ın silahlı kuvvetlerinde hizmet etmeleri yasaklandıktan sonra, bu askerlerin Sünni cihatçıların saflarına katılmaya başladığı bilinmektedir.

Elli yıl önce, Sünni- Şii çatışması Ortadoğu'nun gündeminde değildi. İran, Washington'un bölgedeki başlıca müttefiklerinden biriydi. Suudi Arabistan, Mısır'ı bir numaralı bölgesel rakip olarak görmekte ve Yemen'de Kahire'ye karşı vekalet savaşı yürütmekteydi. Arap ülkeleri İsrail'i mutlak düşman olarak ilan ederken, aynı zamanda Filistin meselesini en iyi şekilde kullanmak için bir nüfuz savaşı yürüttüler.

1950'li yıllarda "Arap-İsrail savaşları", Orta Doğu'nun jeopolitik merkezi olarak görülürken, yarım yüzyıl sonra, artık "İsrail-Filistin" arasında bir çatışmaya indirgenerek marjinalleştirildi. Irak Savaşı'ndan sonra, Arap Baharı'nın patlak vermesi, Suriye iç savaşı ve yemen krizinin yol açtığı değişimler, yeni bir bölgesel alt sistemi şekillendirmiştir.

Ortadoğu jeopolitiğinin karmaşık durumu Sünniler ve Şiiler arasındaki çatışmayla sınırlı değildir, ancak mezhepsel kimliklerin olup bitenler üzerinde önemli bir etkiye sahip olduğu ifade edilebilir. Günümüz Ortadoğusu'nda bu faktörü hesaba katmadan mevcut durumda büyük resmi tasvir etmek mümkün olmayacaktır. Arap Baharı sonrasında dini, siyasi, tarihi ve jeopolitik nitelik taşıyan çekişmelerin iç içe geçtiğinden söz edilebilir.

Bu kompleks durumu açıklamaya çalışan iki argümandan söz etmek mümkündür. İlk olarak, mezhep çatışmalarını Orta Doğu'da süregelen bir çatışma faktörü olarak algılayan bir argüman öne çıkmaktadır. Bu görüş, mezhepsel kimliğin dış politikada kamu bilincini ve karar verme sürecini etkilediğini ve bunun da Orta Doğu ülkeleri adına ideolojik ve mezhepsel bir güvenlik politikasının şekillendiğini savunmaktadır. Örneğin, Şii inancının temelinde bulunan direniş paradigması, İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'nin dış politikasındaki dik duruşu, devrimin temel ilkelerinden vazgeçmenin kabul edilemezliği ve Şii devlet çıkarları ve İslam

Devrimi'nin idealleri adına ağır bedeller ödemeye hazır olduğu şeklinde tezahür eder. İran'ın dini tabakasını temsil eden Ayetullahlar, "Şiiliğin kalesi" olan İran'da, Sünni devletlerin Şii azınlıkları marjinalize ettiğini ve Sünni cihatçılığını yaymakla itham ettikleri bu devletlere karşı Şii Müslümanları korumayı kendi misyonları olarak benimsemişlerdir.

Öte yandan, mezhepsel ihtilafların sadece gerçek siyasi çıkarlar için bir kılıf olduğu yönünde görüşler vardır. İran, dış güçlerin mezhepçiliğin tohumlarını ekerek Ümmet'i böldüğünü söylüyor: Batı'daki bazı nüfuzlu akademisyenler tarafından da desteklenen İran tezine göre, Orta Doğu'daki siyasi kargaşa ve kanlı çatışmalarda süregelen bir Sünni-Şii karşıtlığının başat sebep olarak algılanmasının arkasında ABD ve müttefiklerinin bölge ülkelerinin içişlerine müdahalesi sonucu ortaya çıkan kaotik tabloda izlerini ört bas etme çabaları yatmaktadır.

Bu argümana göre, Batı'nın İslam içi düşmanlık provokasyonu şu hedeflere ulaşmayı amaçlamaktadır: İran'ın bölgedeki stratejik ortaklarının yok edilmesi veya zayıflatılması, Esad rejimi, Lübnan Hizbullahı ve Irak'taki Şii siyasi oluşumlar ve milis güçler üzerindeki baskının artması, İran'ın Basra Körfezi'nde ve bölge genelinde daha fazla tecrit edilmesidir.

Karşıt argümanlar ve çelişen diskurları incelemeyi amaçlayan bu çalışma, Sünniler ve Şiiler arasındaki bölünmenin bölgedeki çatışma ortamı üzerinde nasıl bir etkisi olduğunu ve buna zemin hazırlayan unsurları analiz etmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, yukarıda bahsedilen argümanlar, Orta Doğu'da devam eden İslam içi rekabetin doğasını ve kökenini, tarihi ve teolojik bağlamda incelenecektir.

Bu bağlamda, Sünni-Şii ilişkilerinin, bölgedeki jeopolitik ve jeostratejik rekabeti ve devletlerarası ittifakların değişen dinamiklerini ne biçimde etkilediği son derece önemlidir. Arap Baharı'ndan sonra Irak, Suriye ve daha sonra Yemen'de devam eden çatışmaların ardındaki nedenlerden biri de mezhepçi eğilimlerin olduğu ifade edilmektedir. Dahası, İslam'ın en büyük iki akımının mensupları arasında toplumsal huzursuzluk ve siyasi istikrarsızlıkla karşılaşma olasılığı yüksek olan

Lübnan ve Bahreyn gibi risk alanları da incelenecektir. Bu çatışmaları çözmenin yollarını bulmak için, Sünni-Şii ilişkilerinin kökeni, doğası ve özellikleri hakkında derinlemesine bir çalışma yapmak gerekir, bu da bu araştırma konusunun önemini belirler.

Sünni-Şii ilişkilerinin tetkiki, İslam içi dinamikler konusunda mevcut literatürdeki boşluk nedeniyle özellikle üzerinde odaklanılması gereken bir husustur. Mezhep faktörünün Müslüman ülkelerin iç ve dış politikasını giderek daha fazla etkilediği bir dönemde, Sünni-Şii ilişkilerinin temel özelliklerinin belirlenmesi, bilhassa Arap Baharı sonrasında bölgemizde aktif bir dış politika izleyen Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devleti açısından son derece önemlidir.

Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı, bölgenin devam eden yapısal dönüşümü bağlamında Orta Doğu'daki bölgesel ve çok taraflı ilişkilerde İslam içi çatışmaların niteliğini ve kapsamını belirlemektir. Çalışmanın konusu ve amacı gereği aşağıdaki konular ele alınacaktır:

- İslam içi çatışmanın tarihsel aşamalarını analiz etmek;
- İslam tarihinin erken dönemlerinde aşiret içi ve aşiretler arası dinamiklerin sosyolojik bağlamını incelemek;
- Osmanlı-Safevi rekabetinin devletlerarası düzlemde değerlendirip mezhepsel kimliklerin rolünü açıklamak;
- Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin seküler modernleşme projesinin Orta Doğu'daki İslam içi çatışmaların hafifletilmesindeki rolünü incelemek;
- Siyasal İslam olgusunun ortaya çıkışını ve İran İslam Devrimi'nin bölgedeki mezhepsel kimlikler ve farklı mezhep mensupları ilişkileri üzerindeki etkisini tanımlamak;
- "Sünni Irak"ın çöküşünü ve ABD'nin 2003 Irak işgalinden sonra Şii siyasi aktörlerin yükselişini değerlendirmek;
- Irak'taki Sünni ayaklanmaları ve bunun dünya çapındaki IŞİD militan ağına dönüşümünü analiz etmek,

- Orta Doğu bölgesel alt sistemindeki güvenlik etkileşimlerinde yapısal değişikliklerin nedenlerini ve bu değişikliklerin yol açacağı sonuçları açıklamak;
- Sünni-Şii çatışmasının Arap Baharı sonrası jeopolitik gelişmeler üzerindeki rolünü ve Irak, Suriye ve Yemen'de çökmüş devletlerin ortaya çıkışını açıklamak;
- Mezhepçiliğin daha da şiddetlenmesinin olası göründüğü Lübnan ve Bahreyn'deki sosyal ve siyasi durumun istikrarsızlaşmasını değerlendirmek.

Araştırma Sonuçları

Bu araştırma konuyu çok boyutlu incelmeye tabi tutarak aşağıdaki sonuçlara varmıştır:

- Asırlık kökleri olsa da Ortadoğu'da dinlerin iç ve devletlerarası dinamikler üzerindeki rolü son yarım yüzyıl içinde daha da güçlenmiştir. Din faktörünün Ortadoğu siyasetinde yükselişe geçmesinin birçok nedeni olsa da 1970'lerde gelişen hadiselerin etkisinin daha ağır olduğu düşünülmektedir. Bu dönemde, Mısır'ın İsrail ile yaptığı barış antlaşması Kahire'nin bölgedeki lider rolünü kaybetmesine neden olmuştur. İsrail karşısında yenilgiye uğrayan Arap devletler, laik pan-Arap modelinin sona erdiğini ilan etmiş oldular ve bu da Arap devletlerinin iç ve dışişlerinde dinin rolünü perçinledi. Bu arada ABD, Suudi Arabistan ve Pakistan, Afganistan'daki "din düşmanı" Sovyetlere karşı verdikleri savaşta mücahitlere finansman, silah, istihbarat ve lojistik imkân sağladılar. Aynı zamanda İran'daki Şii devrim, Pehlevi monarşisinin laik yönetimini ortadan kaldırmış ve İran'ı devrimci teokratik bir devlete dönüştürmüş oldu. Bu, Oniki İmam Şiiliğine yeni bir temsil, yeni bir söylem ve ideolojisini Orta Doğu'ya ihraç etmeyi amaçlayan yeni bir misyon sağladı. Baasçı Irak'ın, Tahran'daki devrimci rejimle savaşa girerek, Ayetullahların Ortadoğu ülkelerine kendi modellerini ihraç etme çabalarını engellemeye

çalışması Tahran'daki uç unsurların güçlerini pekiştirmesiyle sonuçlanmış oldu.

- Arap Baharı olayları, çökmüş devletlerin ortaya çıkışı gibi yıkıcı süreçlerin ve Ortadoğu'daki aktörlerin devam eden rekabetlerinin şiddetlenmesi için bir katalizör olmuştur. Bu olayların etkileşimi, farklı mezhepsel kimlikler daha da kutuplaşmış ve Sünni-Şii çatışmasını Ortadoğu'daki jeopolitik çekişmelerin merkezi haline getirmiştir.

- Saddam rejiminin çöküşünden sonra, devrimci modelini ihraç etmeye çalışan Şii İran ile Vahabi/Selefi inançlarını geniş bir kitleye yaymaya çalışan Suudi Arabistan arasındaki rekabetin, bölgesel dinamiklerde kaymaya neden olduğu görülmüştür. Ancak Tahran, söyleminde kendisini mezhepçiliğin dar alanına sınırlandırmaktan kaçınmış ve Arap nüfusunun desteğini kazanmak için Amerikan emperyalizmine ve İsrail'e karşı "direniş" söylemine yönelmiştir.

- Suriye'deki mezhepsel aidiyetler, Arap Baharı'nın patlak vermesiyle birlikte yeni bir anlam ifade etmeye başlamıştır. İlk kitlesel gösterilerde farklı kimliklerin bir araya gelerek değişim talep ettiği görülürken, rejimin tepkisi en başından beri onlara mezhepsel etiket empoze ederek muhalefeti mezhepçiliğe itmek olmuştur. Sünni bölgelerde rejim protestoları agresif bir şekilde bastırarak radikalize edilmesini tetiklerken diğer toplulukların rejim taraflarında yer almalarını sağlamıştır. Bu şekilde rejim, "Sünni isyancılar" karşısında nüfusun geri kalanın tehdit altında olduğu algısı yaratmış ve muhalefeti mezhepçi-aşırılıkçı bir konuma indirgemiştir. Bir yanda Suudi Arabistan, Katar, diğer yanda Hizbullah ve İran Devrim Muhafızları'nın müdahalesiyle birlikte, halkın baskıcı rejime karşı mücadelesini Sünni- Şii çatışması kisvesinde bölgesel bir vekalet savaşına dönüştürmüştür.

- Suriye'deki binlerce Lübnanlı, Iraklı, Hazara, Pakistanlı ve hatta Hintli Şii milis, Esad rejimini Şii toplumunun bir parçası olduğu gerekçesiyle savunmak için Tahran tarafından savaşa seferber edilmiştir. Buna karşılık, IŞİD gibi aşırılık yanlısı gruplar, "Rafızilere" karşı savaşmak için yeni

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üyeler devşirmeye yönelmiştir. Burada "Sünni cihada" karşı bir "Şii cihadı" ortaya çıkmış her iki grup, dini söylemler ve mezhepsel terminoloji açısından bir rekabet içerisine girmiştir.

- Irak'ta IŞİD'in yükselişi ve Şiilere karşı katliam uygulamaları, Şiiler arasında bir intikam duygusu yaratmıştır. Sonuç olarak, büyük bir kısmı Tahran'ın emirlerine tabi olan çok sayıda mezhepçi milis örgütler oluşturulmuştur. IŞİD'in püskürtülmesinin ardından Sünnilerin taleplerinin Bağdat yönetimi tarafından dikkate alınması gerekirken ülke kendisini çelişkili bir durumda bulmuştur. Merkez karar alıcı bürokrasi Şiilerin eline geçmiş ve Sünniler daha da marjinalleşmiş görünmektedirler. Bu durumun, Irak'ta kalıcı bir barışı sağlayamayacağı açıktır.

- Suriye ve Irak'taki bu kaos ortamından faydalanan İran'ın, Tahran'ı Akdeniz'e bağlaması, Irak, Suriye ve Lübnan'daki Şii topluluklarla olan bağlantılarını pekiştirmek için bir Şii koridorunu açmasına olanak sağlamıştır.

- Birçok akademisyen ve siyasi analist, mezhepçiliği, devam eden çatışmaların temel nedeni olarak görmemektedir. Bu görüşe göre, çatışma Suudi Arabistan ile İran İslam Cumhuriyeti arasında bir soğuk savaştan ibarettir. Bu diskur ile mezhepçiliği ana çatışma nedeni olarak gösteren diskur arasında bir bağlantı kurulabilir. Mezhepsel aidiyetlerin ve dini kavramların manipülasyonu, her iki tarafın da kolektif kimliğini güçlendirmiştir.

- Sünni ve Şii toplumlar arasındaki gerginliklerin yatışması, Riyad ile Tahran arasındaki Soğuk Savaş sahası olan Lübnan, Suriye ve Irak'ta barışın temel şartıdır.

- Bu çatışmanın temelinde, metafizik tartışmalardan çok jeopolitik rekabetin bulunmasına karşın, aktörlerin söylemlerinde mücadeleyi meşrulaştırmaya yönelik dini referanslarla zenginleştirilmiş anlatılar şekillendirmişlerdir.

- Mezhep çatışmasının yoğunluğunun farklı bölgelerde aynı şiddette olmadığı unutulmamalıdır.

- Hem Şii hem de Sünni blok, birbirlerine karşı tek bir birleşik homojen blok olarak algılanmamalıdır.

- Velayet-i Fakih rejimi 1979 devrimi sonrasında yayılmacı siyasi ideolojisi gereği İslam dünyasının liderliğine soyunsa da buna düşünsel bir temel geliştirememiştir. Bu çabasında başarısız olan İran, doğal olarak bölgedeki Şiilere odaklanıp, Tahran güdümlü ağlar geliştirerek, Şiiler üzerindeki nüfuzunu artırmaya çalışmıştır. Bölge ülkelerindeki Şii toplulukların içinde bulundukları kötü sosyo-ekonomik şartları, kendi amaçları doğrultusunda kullanmayı başaran İran, laik Şii akımlar ve Şii ilim havzalarına yön verecek siyasi düşünce üretiminde ise umduğu başarıyı sağlayamamıştır.

- Şiiliğin bir ideoloji ve siyasal mobilizasyon aracı olarak ortaya çıkmasından itibaren geleneksel otoriteler, farklı ekoller ve yeni siyasi örgütler arasında derin görüş ayrılıkları meydana gelmiştir. Şiiliğin, devlet ideolojisine dönüşmesi ve Şii temelli fıkıh kurallarına göre devletin yönetilmesi, aynı gelenekten beslenen farklı güç odakları arasındaki rekabeti daha keskin hâle getirmiştir. Bu noktada devlet, fıkhî ve siyasi yorumların çeşitliliğini de kendi otoritesine yönelik bir tehdit olarak algılamıştır. Buna bağlı olarak ortaya çıkan çeşitli düşüncelerin kanaat önderleri, devlet uygulamalarını Şii fıkhına aykırı bulabilmekte ve devlete karşı muhalefete başvurmaktadır.

- Şii siyasi düşüncesi sahasında fikri üstünlük kuramayan İran, Şii gençliğinin mezhepsel aidiyet duygularını kabartarak Iraklı kimliğini geri plana itmeyi amaçlamıştır. Nuri el-Maliki gibi Tahran güdümlü politikacıların Sünni Iraklılara siyaset kapısını kapatması ve milliyetçi kimliğiyle öne çıkan Şii politikacıları pasifize etmesi, İran'ın söz konusu stratejisi kapsamında değerlendirilebilir. IŞİD gibi örgütlerin ortaya çıkışı İran'ın mezhepsel kimlikler üzerinden kurduğu stratejinin, Şiiler nezdinde kısmi destek bulmasına zemin hazırlamıştır.

- Beyrut ve Bağdat gibi ülke sınırları dışındaki Şiileri domine ettiğini her fırsatta göstermeye çalışan İran, varlığını borçlu olduğu Şii düşüncenin ana

karargâhı olan Kum'da varoluşsal bir problem yaşayarak meşruiyet kriziyle karşı karşıya kalmıştır.

- Son olarak, Şii bloğun İran liderliğinde homojen bir cephe olarak algılanmasına karşın, Ortadoğu genelindeki Şii toplulukları farklı siyasi eğilimleri barındırmaktadır. Uzun zamandır mezhepsel kimliği bastırılmış ve yönetici tabaka tarafından sosyoekonomik baskılara maruz kalmış Şii toplulukların İran İslam Devrimi sonrasında İran'ın hegemonik arayışlarının hedefi haline gelmesi, bu toplulukların çifte mağduriyetine neden olmuştur. Zira bir taraftan bu toplulukların demokratik talepleri "İran uzantısı" olmak yaftasıyla engellenirken, diğer taraftan Tahran'ın dayatmaya çalıştığı Velayet-i Fakih ideolojisine boyun eğmeyen Şii düşünürler de İran destekli örgütlerin hedefi haline gelmiştir.

APPENDIX B: TEZ İZİN FORMU/THESIS PERMISSION FORM

TEZ İZİN FORMU / THESIS PERMISSION FORM

ENSTİTÜ / <u>INSTITUTE</u>

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences ☐

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Enformatik Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Informatics ☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Marine Sciences ☐

YAZARIN / <u>AUTHOR</u>

Soyadı / Surname   : KHODABANDEH LOUI
Adı / Name   : HADI
Bölümü / Department   : Middle East Studies

TEZİN ADI / <u>TITLE OF THE THESIS</u> (**İngilizce** / English) : The Intra-Islamic Conflicts and the Shifting Dynamics of the Middle East Regional Security Complex from the Iraq War to the Rise of ISIS

TEZİN TÜRÜ / <u>DEGREE</u>**: Yüksek Lisans** / Master ■   **Doktora** / PhD ☐

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