

GENEALOGY OF ALI SHARI'ATI'S REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT IN ISLAM AS A RELIGION OF PROTEST

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ABSTRACT

This work examines the genealogy of Ali Shariati's thinking within the framework of Islam as a religion of protest. Ali Shariati, a Muslim intellectual from Iran, viewed Islam not merely as a spiritual and ritual system, but as a liberating force that sided with the oppressed. Ali Shariati's interpretation of Islamic teachings is formulated radically and historically, drawing on the struggles of the prophets against structural injustice, which he identifies as the sins of tyranny. Among these are authoritarian power, exploitative capitalism, and cultural hegemony. The approach used in this work is philosophical hermeneutics. The researcher processes data beginning with data inventory and classification, in-depth analysis of essence, and critical reflection on data organization. The final results in this article provide a dialectical mapping of spirituality and revolution, particularly about Ali Shariati's thoughts on the Iranian Revolution. Additionally, this work reaffirms the importance of critically examining Islam in terms of liberation and social critique.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ali Shariati is an Iranian Islamic philosopher who has a revolutionary style of thought. Ali Shariati's thought introduces an Islamic perspective that becomes a style of renewal in responding to the social context. Ali Shariati makes civilization the main object in assessing social dynamics. Ali Shariati's thought consistently demonstrates a strong orientation toward the oppressed and marginalized segments of society. The notion of "civilization" is often used by the powerful to mask oppression under the guise of progress (Shariati, 1979b: 3).

Ali Shariati introduced an interpretation of Islam that emphasized its social and political dimensions. Ali Shariati thought appeared during a period marked by inequality

and authoritarian oppression. This context served as a main backdrop for his interpretation of Islamic teachings as a means of advocating for oppressed communities. Islam in Ali Shariati thought was understood not merely as a religion concerned with personal spiritual life. Rather, Islam is regarded as a religion that encourages active participation in resisting structural injustice within society. This became the foundation of the concept of progressive Islam, which seeks to challenge the dominance of secular capitalism. Ali Shariati responded that this approach combines the intellectual heritage of Islamic thought with Marxist-inspired critique as a foundational framework to emphasize resistance against the penetration of neoliberal values in the Muslim world (Bryd,2016:287).

Ali Shariati thought that emphasizing Islam was a religion protest that urged the community to undertake class struggle by resisting all forms of oppression and injustice. Ali Shariati urged Muslims to understand true Islam not as a passive religion confined by the rules of authority. This situation formed the basis of Ali Shariati's critique aimed at preventing and challenging efforts to maintain the existing power structures. Muslims in this situation have a role to act actively, take a clear stance, and be grounded in a commitment to justice (Shariati,1979a:11-12). Drawing on historical analysis, Ali Shariati framed Islam as a religion of protest within the context of the struggle for justice. Islam role. As a religious protest to awaken a sense of justice and to oppose all forms of exploitation and oppression. Indeed, Ali Shariati firmly rejected any compromise with tyranny in the absence of a guaranteed and rightful sense of justice. Ali Shariati use of the Prophet Abraham's struggle (the Abrahamic faith) exemplifies his efforts to destroy idols and denounce falsehood and injustice; Prophet Musa (Musa Religion) wich fight firaun with ambition and the power; The Prophet Jesus (the faith of Jesus) opposed the hypocrites and false religious authorities, while the Prophet Muhammad (the faith of Muhammad) confronted the Quraysh, who served as extensions of the brutal Arab and non-Arab rulers (Shariati,2014:.36).

Ali Shariati seeks to promote a clear and reflective understanding of social realities. In addition, Ali Shariati also gives serious attention to oppression and injustice as societal afflictions. According to Ali Shariati, such conditions must be eradicated through a social struggle oriented toward justice and collective liberation. Ali Shariati concern with social problems established him as a key figure in the reform of Islam in the context of modern life. He employed interpretations that integrated both Western and Islamic thought. Ali Shariati initiated a reformist approach to social thought aimed at uncovering social realities through modern Islamic perspectives. Ali Shariati proposed a radical thesis that had a significant and wide-reaching impact on Islamic civilization during his time (Syariati,1991: 7).

Ali Shariati describes the world of Islam in a socialist way, through the application of Marxist theoretical perspectives. In the scholarly works of Ali Shariati, his thought consistently conveys a message aimed at establishing a classless communal society. However, Ali Shariati proved his standing from Marxism by framing Islam as a pathway out of the dilemmas of capitalism. Islam is not merely a religion, but a comprehensive path intended to elevate humanity from degradation toward a life of spiritual and divine

fulfillment (Sarjana,2017:192-193). Moreover, the social reflection in Ali Shariati's thought is articulated as the third world's need for two simultaneous revolutions. These include a national revolution to resist imperialist domination and a cultural revolution to revive indigenous culture, heritage, and national identity. This entails, on one hand, a national revolution aimed at resisting imperialist domination, and on the other, a cultural revolution focused on revitalizing indigenous culture, heritage, and national identity (Abrahamian,1982:24).

Ali Shariati thought related to Islam not only articulating a superficial ideological framework in the interpretation of Marxist theses. Ali Shariati, in contrast, positions Islam as a new framework of thought and intellectual tradition for the redefinition of socio-political and cultural paradigms (Arjomand,2022: 720-721). For Ali Shariati, the revolutionary ideas within Islam serve as an alternative foundation for pursuing social revolution while preserving Islamic values. Islam as a religion has revolutionary authority that interprets the political context in a way to protest social injustice. Using an Islamic perspective, Ali Shariati assesses that social revolution is not only political change. Rather, it entails a profound transformation of social and economic structures that creates space for the oppressed to assert their political rights.

Ali Shariati also criticized the prevailing condition of religion and philosophy at that time was that they were primarily utilized as instruments for legitimizing authority. Using the study of prophet Muhammad SAW, Ali Shariati frames the concept of the “revolutionary” as a response to the social impasse that ought not to occur (Shariatil,1982:5). Ali Shariati assert In the context of “revolution,” Iran’s condition could only be redeemed through a social movement grounded in *tawhid* as the foundational principle as a manifestation of collective existentialism (Machlis,2014:184-185). Ali Shariati’s thought gives rise to a social call to reevaluate the message of Islam about its three core principles. First, Islam must serve as a sociological framework rather than remain confined solely to metaphysical concerns. Secondly, Islam experienced a decline due to an overly negative attitude toward a life influenced by foreign beliefs that diverged from the core of Islam. Third, the pedagogical methodology employed by the *akhund* is no longer relevant to the conditions of the contemporary era (Fischer,1980:166).

This research aimed to explore and elaborate on the thought of Ali Shariati comprehensively, with a particular emphasis on the depth of his intellectual contributions and their significance within contemporary Islamic discourse. In a deep study of Shariati, thought becomes important because it offers the perspective that Islam is not merely a system of spiritual beliefs; rather, it also encompasses a transformative dimension that can serve as a means for promoting just social change. Thus, this study aims to demonstrate how Shariati’s thought can serve as a critical foundation for understanding and applying Islam in the context of struggles against injustice, oppression, and socio-political stagnation.

II. METHOD

The present study employs a philosophical hermeneutic model as its research methodology (Baker & Zubair, 1980:108-113). During the research phase, the author

engages in exploratory studies to delve into Ali Shariati's thoughts. The research process involves several stages, including data inventory and classification, essence data analysis, and compilation of systematic findings. Ultimately, the meticulously organized literature references are examined through a critical reflection approach to uncover innovative interpretations of Ali Shariati's ideas.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Figures Who Influenced the Revolutionary Thought of Ali Shariati

Ali Shariati was born on November 24, 1933 in Khurasan, Mazinan. Ali Shariati was raised by a respectable family with a cultured education and religious rituals. Since childhood, Ali Shariati has been influenced by knowledge from education and understanding directly from his parents. Ali Shariati's family has an orientation of thought that considers Islam not limited to past beliefs. Instead, Islam is a tradition of thought oriented towards thinking about itself. The rest of Islam must relate to reading a social doctrine and philosophy to adjust to the times (Mashadi,2011:121). Since childhood, Ali Shariati's thoughts have begun to take shape to provide a universal space for discourse on the social world. Ali Shariati reached maturity and maturity of thought when he pursued his doctoral education at the University of Paris, France. During his studies, Ali Shariati conducted various intellectual dialogues with the Western tradition of thought, which informed his view of Islamic society (Saleh M,2018:183).

The idea of human value influenced Ali Shariati during his studies. Ali Shariati uses it to dissect the dimension of the spirit, which includes the discourse of man as a caliph on the face with the advantage of reason. Ali Shariati's thinking views the existence of human subjects with responsibilities and their capabilities as Muslims to contribute and play an active role in the tasks of the caliphate (Shariati,1980:8-9). Ali Shariati also interpreted the Islamic tradition of placing humans as default creatures. This condition makes humans need God as the first teacher of humans on earth. Then, education complements the logic and reason of human thinking through interpreting divine values with sharia, which is believed relatively (Shariati,1980:8-9).

According to Ali Shariati, the relationship between God and humans can be interpreted as a manifestation of humanism. This initial discourse in Ali Shariati's thought makes humans need a basis of trust, shaded in the value order. Human needs in this value order require humans to determine the attitude of defense of humanity itself based on justice (Shariati,1996:47-49). This humanism discussion leads to Ali Shariati's commitment to conveying that every individual has an obligation to a sense of social responsibility, with the superiority of reason and morals, humans have the role of enlightening civilization to bring the spirit of renewal to the comprehensive conditions of the Islamic world (Shariati,1995a:27-28).

Ali Shariati's discourse on humanism transcends the confines of traditional paradigms of thought. Instead, there are thoughts from Western philosophers who have an essential role in formulating the revolutionary side. Marx's thought was present at the beginning of the influence of Western philosophy that Ali Sahriati read, which made the starting point of class analysis. In reading Marx, Ali Shariati interpreted Marx's thought

by arguing in the form of "*integrated Marxist class analysis with Islamic symbolism*" (Arjomand,1988:84-85). This interpretation is associated with Ali Shariati through the resistance of the lower class to the spirit of sacrifice. Ali Shariati's interpretation of Marxism incorporates emotionally and spiritually powerful symbols of sacrifice. Ali Shariati discusses Marxism and Shi'a Islamic history by integrating theological and moral frameworks. Throughout Shia history, Imam Husayn is made the subject of Marxist interpretation because of his firm stance as a fighter for truth against tyranny. This historical interpretation generates new arguments regarding the role of injustice as a foundational symbol that incites resistance in Islam.

Ali Shariati's discourse on interpreting Marxism also helped bridge leftist thought with Islamic spirituality. Ali Shariati underscores the importance of mass mobilization in the struggle against injustice through his reinterpretation of Islam's revolutionary ideology. The main objective of Ali Shariati's thought is an urgency to reformulate religious symbols in a political and social space (Arjomand,1988:84-85). On the other hand, Ali Shariati's reading of Marx's thought formulates the notion of "*correctly diagnosing the ills of capitalist society*". Ali Shariati's reading means that Marx's thought strongly encourages the analysis of humanism resulting from the operation of capitalism. However, Ali Shariati also provided criticism by "*ignoring the spiritual needs of humanity*." This criticism shows Marx's failure to review human needs in the spiritual. With this criticism, Ali Shariati thought of humans as economic, social, and spiritual beings who need a moral foundation and higher purpose. Marx's influence on Ali Shariati helped synthesize Islamic ideas and progressive thinking that not only created a social revolution based on economic justice (as Marx thought). However, there is also a foundation of spiritual values derived from Islam as a challenge to modernity without eliminating divine values (Shariati,1980:15-17).

Ali Shariati's strict reading of Marxism can be refuted by talking about Islam long before Marxist theory developed. For Ali Shariati, before Marx's thought, Islamic civilization had already clearly discussed social justice and the struggle against tyranny (Shariati,1980:34-36). With the thought of Marx for Ali Shariati, there is a step of adaptation to the spiritual dialectic. The framework of Marxism, when integrated with the hermeneutics of the verses of justice in the Qur'an, provides a revolutionary presentation that speaks of justice, spiritual purification, and moral liberation (Dadashi,2006:221-223). The framework of Marxism frames the Islamic narrative that should be the attitude of the ummah. Ali Shariati concludes that the spirit of Islam must be revolutionary by siding with the oppressed or *mustad'afin* (Rahnema,2013:143-144).

Ali Shariati's academic journey also opened up a spiritual journey. After learning Marxist thought, Ali Shariati needed a special domain in exploring humanism. His interactions with academics and educational colleagues in France provide new exposure to the study of existentialism. One of the figures who attracted Ali Shariati's attention was Jean-Paul Sartre. Ali Shariati's admiration for Sartre's existentialism helped open a division of interpretation on radical freedom, individual responsibility, and authenticity (Rahnema,2013:100-102). Ali Shariati argues that this division of interpretation is the adoption of Sartre's concept of freedom in the Islamic view through free will that is

subject to divine values. The existentialist interpretation requires responsibility as a social and ethical foundation, not for individual humans, but a review of the relationship between society and God. In the end, Sartre's thought brings realization to humans authentically. This realization becomes the concept that a Muslim must be conscious of not getting caught up in religious formalities and rejecting traditional pessimism that justifies oppression.

Ali Shariati engaged with Sartre's thought critically without embracing it. Due to the need for an emancipatory framework, Ali Shariati "Islamized Sartre's thought" by rejecting secular and atheistic modes of argumentation. Instead, Ali Shariati wants to prove that existentialism in Islam is needed to become an active revolutionary community (Rahnema, 2013:100-102). Ali Shariati explicitly tries to prove the clarity of Sartre's existentialism, which is not merely trapped in the narrative of the word "revolutionary". Instead, there needs to be a detailed social analysis to determine social conditions that allow revolutionary action to be carried out. In Ali Shariati's reading of Sartre, there is an interpretation related to the human condition that requires existentialism as a liberation from human sacrifice. According to Ali Shariati, liberation does not simply entail freedom in general but refers explicitly to the discipline of human desires as a framework for a meaningful life (Shariati, 2021a).

Fundamentally, Sartrean's influence on Ali Shariati's thought opens a new dimension related to the tradition of Islamic thought. As a form of renewal of Islamic thought, Ali Shariati dialogues with Western thought to determine Islamic existentialism. In the Islamic context, this existentialism stems from the existence of human passions that require restrictions as a bridge of justice. Ali Shariati argues that this human limitation necessitates making God Almighty a belief in placing limits on human life by making morals and religious beliefs the basis for action (Sabara, 2016:226).

After understanding Sartre's thoughts, Ali Shariati felt that there was a lunar dimension to answering social problems. Ali Shariati realized that revolutionary action and existentialism have not been able to answer the paradigm of Islamic society, which is trapped in the use of religion as a tool of capitalism. Then, Ali Shariati realized that the psychological dimension must be dissected separately. To dissect the psychological dimension, Ali Shariati read a thesis on decolonization by Frantz Fanon. At first, Ali Shariati read "*The Wretched of the Earth*" while studying in France. This work studies the psychological revolution from mental colonization as a form of human consciousness (Rahnema, 2013:271-274).

Ali Shariati's works do not explicitly explain Frantz Fanon's influence directly. Instead, Ali Shariati's readers attribute the continuity of the psychological analysis of the two figures as an influence. Ali Shariati explicitly read Fanon's work to find the psychological dimension. After reading his work, Ali Shariati realized that the psychological dimension has quite an impact on the actions of capitalism. Ali Shariati, in reading Frantz Fanon, found capitalism to have developed in the era of colonialism. However, Ali Shariati does not read Frantz Fanon's "Colonialism" in the raw. Instead, Ali Shariati dissects it using the historical basis of the Algerian Revolution. In this social

phenomenon, the struggle starts from the existential and produces free will as a moral responsibility (Ahmed,2021.).

The meaning of this "moral responsibility" is translated by Ali Shariati in the psychological dimension as a movement to gather mass consciousness in believing and realizing the ideology reproduced by capitalism (Ahmed,2021). Ali Shariati gets the interpretation of Frantz Fanon's thought that humans need to build political and cultural awareness as a form of emancipation. The influence of this interpretation is enough to inspire Ali Shariati to take strategic steps to raise Islam from colonization. The reading of Frantz Fanon's work made Ali Shariati adopt the existence of a liberation struggle, which is interpreted as "jihad". Reflecting on oppressive social conditions, "jihad" here is translated not only as a spiritual experience. Instead, it is a form of social and political experience to liberate from structural oppression (Rahnema, 2013: 125-126). This psychological dimension is central to the integration of religion and politics. This religious realization requires Islam to be active and justice-oriented. As for politics, Islam here makes Muslims subjects who must face the structure of oppression and need to fight actively collectively to build a just society (Abedi & Legenhausen,2005:47-48).

The psychological dimension is the basis that has quite an impact on determining the direction of the reproduction of the ideology initiated by Ali Shariati. However, in reading the Islamic world, Ali Shariati feels he has a shortage, especially in understanding "social struggle". In addition, Ali Shariati also needs Islamic figures who can be a reference in religious intellectual action. Confusion in getting a reference to this Islamic figure led him to understand the operational logic of progressive thought. This need made Ali Shariati begin to recognize Muhammad Iqbal as an Islamic thinker who could suppress social autonomy against capitalism (Boroujerdi,1996:97).

Ali Shariati adopted Iqbal's approach by making the cultural and spiritual dimensions a representation of consciousness. In addition, Ali Shariati's consciousness aligns with Iqbal's thinking in the Islamic world. Ali Shariati agrees with Iqbal's thesis that views the Islamic world as experiencing stagnation. In Iqbal's thinking, the Islamic world tends to experience passivity because religious discourse only stops at formalism. As a result, the transformational spirit in Islamic teachings is neglected (Boroujerdi,1996:97). This critical study of Iqbal's thought impacts Ali Shariati to make Islam a force of social liberation and not just a spiritual doctrine that tends to be passive. The style of Ali Shariati's thought not only imitates Iqbal's revolutionary style but also develops Islamic thought as civilization progresses. Ali Shariati refined his thoughts on the Islamic world to make faithful Islam a religion of struggle and anti-capitalism (Shariati,1979a:45).

Through Iqbal's influence, Ali Shariati defined the revolutionary power of Islam itself. Islam is not about personal worship. Instead, there is collective worship, namely, gathering strength to favor justice in the social and political spheres. Ali Shariati's argument explicitly rejects the practice of Islam at that time, which was full of fatalistic passivity. Returning to humanism, Ali Shariati becomes a Muslim subject as a responsible human being. Therefore, collective worship in favor of justice is the obligation of all Muslims (Dadashi,2006:77).

To make it easier to adapt to the integration of the influence of Western thought and Islam, Ali Shariati came up with the thesis of dividing the Islamic world into three models. Among them are revolutionary Islam (Abu Dhar), royal Islam (Muawiyah), and corrupt Islam (Marwan). This division is intended to classify the condition of the Islamic world. For Ali Shariati, in his book *Tasyayu' Alawi wa Tasyayu Safawi*, it is explained that the Islamic world, which often experiences social stagnation, forces Muslims to live in three choice models. These three choice models refer to Islam's orientation, which is divided into the defense of justice, social transformation, and moral decline (Shariati,1995b:27).

The division of the Islamic world into three orientation models is not merely intuitive. Instead, different figures inspire and reference Ali Shariati in formulating his thesis. Starting with the model of revolutionary Islam, the meaning of "revolutionary" symbolizes the characteristics of Islam presented by Abu Dhar. Abu Dhar's thought upholds social justice, making him famous as the "first Islamic communist." However, the meaning of "first Islamic communist" is not in adherence to Marxian ideology but in actions and thoughts that uphold the struggle for social justice (Shariati,2006:22-30).

Ali Shariati admired Abu Dharr, especially in interpreting the verse in the Quran that prohibits the accumulation of wealth. In addition, Abu Dharr, during the caliphate of Uthman bin Affan, often asked critical questions about the meaning of the Quran. Abu Dharr saw that the Quran did not consist only of verses that favored the scholars. Instead, some verses emphasize the favor of the small community and justice itself (Shariati,2021a). The influence of Abu Dharr's critical interpretation gives Ali Shariati a revolutionary character foundation. For Ali Shariati, the figure of Abu Dharr is not just a revolutionary figure, but also needs to be introduced as a prototype revolutionary Muslim (Rahnema, 2013: 111-115).

Abu Dharr's role in social liberation aroused Ali Shariati's conviction to conduct social analysis to awaken political awareness and social justice. Abu Dhar's thought symbolically references resistance, which is interpreted as a religious duty. However, the symbolization interpreted by Ali Shariati is not superficially a "resistance" trap. Instead, it needs to be translated with a sociological foundation that does injustice in social space as a result of structural reconstruction. The existence of efforts to create an unjust society is the result of the authorities' performance. Therefore, Ali Shariati found that to take a stand for justice, political consciousness is needed to build a vision rooted in social justice, spirituality, and Islamic ethics (Rahnema,2013:111-115).

Having found the revolutionary side in Abu Dharr, Ali Shariati needed a political foundation from Islam itself. Something that Abu Dhaar protested and considered unfair, phenomenologically, should not happen organically. Instead, there is a structural effort that is inherited. Ali Shariati found that Islam existed after the prophetic period and that Islam experienced symbolization from a social movement to a kingdom (Rahnema,2013:118-120). Ali Shariati interprets this change as the hijacking of political Islam, which explicitly makes Islam a tool of power. Islam, which fights for justice, equality, and devotion, was reduced during the Muawiyah era. Ali Shariati's historical

reading at that time emphasized the existence of Islam as an instrument of power due to the need for dynastic legitimacy (Shariati,2006:47-58).

The leadership of Islam under Muawiyah made Islam, which was initially a caliphate system, turn into a hereditary monarchy system. For Ali Shariati, this condition is a symbol of Islam that has crossed over from the initial spirit of civilization (Shariati,2006:47-58). For Ali Shariati, the actions believed to be "political" by Muawiyah would only make Islam necessary for the parties concerned. The historical circumstances at that time prove that most of the direction of the Islamic movement was translated by Muawiyah as a family "tool" in power. The Islamic movement was translated by Muawiyah as a family "tool" in power.

Ali Shariati deeply interprets historical studies during the Muawiyah period as the beginning of Islamic civilization experiencing a decline. Ali Shariati provides evidence by using a criticism of religious symbols. During Muawiyah's time, religion was used as a political tool that made moral considerations and Islamic values covered by the ruler. As a result of this political effort, Ali Shariati believes that if Islamic beliefs are used as a political foundation. Then, the enemies of Islam may be their brothers who use piety and monotheism as "weapons" against true monotheism (Shariati, 2014:55).

The comparison of the symbolization of Islam between Abu Dharr and Muawiyah for Shariati shows the existence of separate interests behind the "pride of Islamic symbols." The comparison of these two figures is an ideological deviation that makes Islam a service to dynastic interests. Through the dialogue and debate between Abu Dharr and Muawiyah, Ali Shariati formulated his thought that Islam, which is used for politics in favor of the group, would contradict the principles of deliberation and equality in Islam in the prophetic era (Shariati, 2021a). Islam, which became an instrument of power in Muawiyah's leadership, made Islamic life aristocratic. Islam only became a complement and a source of stability of power. As a result, during Muawiyah's time, there were social problems in the form of discrimination, oppression of small communities, and blatant violations of Islamic teachings (Shariati,2021b)

Starting from the symbolization of Islam, Ali Shariati criticizes social phenomenology by opening up revolutionary and political dimensions. Between these two dimensions, a social contradiction stems from the meaning of Islam itself. For Ali Shariati, the history of Islam indirectly shows evidence of moral genealogy. Ali Shariati's thinking in the context of Islamic symbolization also provides a materialistic history of Islamic darkness. Besides revolutionary and political Islam, for Ali Shariati, symbolization has a more dangerous meaning. Ali Shariati also presents how Islam can grow to be exploitative through the figure of Marwan. Islamic civilization in the Marwan era used an extension of political symbolization by interpreting the Koran to accumulate wealth. In addition, Ali Shariati's criticism of the symbolization of Islam in the Marwan era made Islam not oriented towards civilization. Instead, it was oriented towards aristocratic power for the sake of wealth (Shariati,1980:124-126).

Ali Shariati symbolized Marwan's actions in his time as corrupt Islam. This is evidenced by Marwan's attempt to use Islam as a tool and status to legitimize power. Islam in that historical period had completely lost its moral essence (Shariati, 2006:60-63).

Marwan, who transformed Islam into a state, used ceremonies and symbols as a means of social legitimization. However, the actions taken by Marwan negated and emptied the dimensions of social justice taught by the Prophet. Ali Shariati's sharp criticism of Marwan's actions made Islam favor a series of means and ambitions of power. Religion, which is all social and revolutionary, emphasizes formality in rituals, symbols, and legalism. The actions taken by Marwan made tyranny grow, and the tendency to abuse power increased (Shariati, 2006).

Ali Shariati criticized the development of Islam in the era of Marwan's leadership for not being based on the teachings of the Prophet. Islam, which subjugated the people through dogma and the fear of sin, made the society at that time a crisis of empowerment and enlightenment. Ali Shariati considers the influence of Marwan's thoughts and actions quite relevant with its adjustments in each era (Shariati, 2006). Based on a critical reading of the genealogy of the history of Islamic civilization, Ali Shariati feels that the revolutionary spirit needs to be restored by default. Starting from Abu Dharr's Islam, Muawiyah's Islam, and Marwan's Islam, the context of Islamic needs in contemporary society is critically interpreted by Ali Shariati to be re-oriented to the oppressed community. The critical reflection by Ali Shariati makes the existence of Islam necessary to continue to develop. Islamic teachings conceptualize social conditions as a space for social worship by consistently upholding social justice as a moral and religious obligation, integrating religious principles with social activism, and critically evaluating political authority. Ali Shariati's genealogy of thought towards the influence of Western thought and the history of Islamic civilization is well integrated into the thesis of liberation theology. In addition, this liberation theology is also known as "Socialist Islam." It is a development of Islamic renewal that still sides with the oppressed and makes "social worship" through critical oversight of the country's socio-political conditions.

3.2 A Critique of Traditional Islamic Views and Orthodox Scholars

Ali Shariati developed his thesis of "Leftist Islam" by applying it to the socio-political conditions of Iran. He interpreted the recurring turmoil in Iran as a consequence of the performance of the clergy. Moreover, Ali Shariati accused certain members of the clergy of distorting Islamic teachings by reproducing narratives that undermined their revolutionary essence. Such actions by the clergy, according to Shariati, rendered Islam a "dead religion," one that failed to challenge or confront the injustice of the ruling regime (Azra, 1996:79). From the socio-political condition in Iran Ali Shariati He viewed the clergy as attempting to reduce Islam—particularly within the Shi'a tradition—from its inherently revolutionary perspective to a more passive and conformist interpretation. The clergy allied with the ruling authorities transformed Shi'a Islam into a conservative worldview, departing from its original spirit of resistance and social justice. As a result of this interpretation of Islamic teachings, religion was suppressed through doctrines that emphasized acceptance of benevolence and paternalism, all within the constraints of imposed luxury and social hierarchy.

The position of Iranian clerics within this feudal structure enabled them to pursue material gain for personal benefit, all under the guise of religious doctrine. Iranian clerics.

During that period, they possessed various forms of wealth derived from public almsgiving and zakat contributions. According to Ali Shariati, the authority and influence held by these clerics were the result of power relations orchestrated by the regime, which sought to systematically reproduce its ideology through the instrumentalization of religion (Azra,1996:79). Ali Shariati criticized In the dissemination of ideology by the clergy in politics, a counter-narrative regarding Islam emerged. Ali Shariati mendefinisikan ulang islam dalam orientasi “syi'ah” secara revolusioner. Furthermore, Ali Shariati instructed in a political way To his followers, he instructed them to pay attention to the poor communities. Syiah Islamic New Movement. This reflects the necessity for a new political structure that aligns with its original teachings Shariati further emphasized that an intellectual Islamic political movement was more needed by society than a political movement led by the clergy. Due to a crisis of trust in the clergy, whose teachings obscured the meaning of revolutionary Islam, a political crisis also ensued (Viviani,2017:83-84).

The close association of the clergy with the elite sparked significant resistance from a disappointed public dissatisfied with the teachings they received. The emergence of Ali Shariati served as an antithesis to this social condition, thereby capturing the attention of the broader public. Ali Shariati was regarded as a savior in response to a series of exploitative actions carried out by the clergy. Ali Shariati's capabilities in integrating the influence of Western scholars and Islam, enabling society to embrace a new ideology that positions Islam as inherently revolutionary. Enabling society to embrace a new ideology that positions Islam as inherently revolutionary. One Iranian cleric, Muthahhari, regarded Ali Shariati's statements as an exploitation of Islam for personal political purposes. The debate between Ali Shariati and Muthahhari became unavoidable. Consequently, the authorities, in collaboration with the clergy, formulated policies through fatwas that prohibited the reading, purchasing, and selling of Ali Shariati's works (Rahmena,1996:234).

In response to the fatwa policies issued by the clergy, Ali Shariati called for a dual revolution. This revolution aimed to transform the national condition, challenging the politicized and corrupt form of Islam that failed to serve the people. Meanwhile, the social revolution represented the objective of jihad to defend the oppressed communities. For Ali Shariati, as a Third World country, Iran ought to undertake this dual revolution to end the domination of imperialism and capitalism. Additionally, there were other objectives rooted in the social context, including the restoration of authentic Shi'a Islamic culture, the reaffirmation of national identity, and the pursuit of profound social transformation to build a just society (Abrahamian,1982:26).

Ali Shariati's ideas, which captured public attention, also contributed to raising social awareness regarding the orientation of mass movements. Rewrite into English academic style. Reproduction of the idea from Ali Shariati this produced a tangible impact on power beyond mere textual criticism. Ali Shariati thought it was widely accepted by a disillusioned public and utilized as an alternative ideological framework to raise awareness, aiming to place humanity as the central focus of enlightenment, civilization, and justice (Bayat,2005:895-896). Subsequently, Ali Shariati's ideas became

widely recognized under the concept of “returning to the self.” This concept also encouraged individuals to employ their rationality when engaging in discussions about tawhid (the oneness of God). For Ali Shariati, tawhid is not merely a subject of scientific and analytical discourse but a theology that reflects the ideological needs of the world. His success in influencing the dimension of tawhid within his critique of the clergy demonstrated a tangible shift in which the clergy were no longer trusted for their teachings on tawhid (Syari’ati,2001:73-76).

Ali Shariati reinforced his critique by moving beyond mere rhetorical frameworks. Instead, he actively encouraged the emergence of reformist factions to pursue significant transformative change. Ali Shariati strengthened his critique by refusing to remain confined to rhetorical discourse. Rather, he advocated for the formation of reformist movements committed to enacting substantial and profound change. Ali Shariati fought clergy domination by contrasting “Muhammadan Islam” (pure and revolutionary) with “Safavid Islam” (bureaucratic and conservative), he highlighted the ideological divergence within Islamic interpretation. As a consequence of Ali Shariati’s efforts, there was a mobilization of young intellectuals who actively supported the development of social and political awareness among Iran’s youth, particularly within student and educated circles (Akhavi,1990:104).

Ali Shariati also delivered a sharp critique of the madrasa system, which was highly glorified by the conservative clerical establishment. For Ali Shariati the madrasa is viewed as a symbol of conservatism and intellectual backwardness within Islam. This was the result of a mindset and level of human resource development that were incapable of addressing the diverse challenges of the contemporary era. Moreover, this critique serves as evidence that the clergy sought to impose dogmatism on society through the educational system. Ali Shariati vocally opposed the concept of the madrasa on education reform, which necessitated a more contextual, critical, and scholarly approach (Akhavi,1990:104).

Starting from the education system, Ali Shariati also criticized the conservative clergy for monopolizing the concept of tawhid due to their close ties with power. This clerical monopoly over tawhid resulted in societal control that encouraged a secular worldview, separating humans from God. Shariati rejected this secular scandal by asserting that tawhid affirms the inseparability of humans from God. For him, God is both the origin and ultimate purpose of human existence. Through tawhid, the discourse on humanity emerges, portraying humans as responsible beings (khalifah), free agents, and holders of spiritual and social missions. Shariati further emphasized that Islam does not acknowledge any intermediary between humans and God. Moreover, Islam rejects class distinctions that monopolize spiritual relationships, thereby organically fostering principles of egalitarianism and personal responsibility within society (Akhavi,1990:234).

Ali Shariati’s critique of the clergy was not driven by political animosity. Rather, his criticism stemmed from the trap of stagnation and the hegemony of Islam and politics under the guise of conservatism and sanctity. As a result of the clergy’s political actions, the collective consciousness of the Muslim community experienced stagnation, particularly in confronting the influence of global economic-political hegemony. From

Shariati's critique emerged a new thesis known as the interpretation of Islam as a middle path, which positions Islam neither as conservative revivalism nor as liberal secularism. Instead, Islam must assert its identity in response to the world's crises by integrating religious culture with a spirit of social change. Shariati's thesis also emphasized the emancipation of the oppressed, the use of religion as a tool for liberation rather than subjugation, and a revolutionary interpretation of Islam (Bryd,2016:287).

Ali Shariati's political efforts aimed at Islamic reform emphasized a flexible Islam capable of addressing social contexts by the needs of the times. The reform movement led by Shariati and his supporters bore similarities to the history of the Catholic Reformation in the medieval period. Drawing on this historical element, Shariati's reform movement succeeded in awakening the community's consciousness to return to the essence of Islam. The reforms initiated by Shariati did not merely raise awareness; they also ignited revolutionary ideas. Beginning with a critique of the clergy, Iranian society increasingly became conscious as educated youth began to liberate themselves from dependence on the dogmatic interpretations of conservative clerics (Bryd,2016:184).

Ali Shariati's series of critiques sparked leftist and existentialist thought, motivating educated youth to actively engage in the struggle for social justice by opposing a government that tended to instrumentalize Islam for political purposes. As these educated youths increasingly understood the realities of Iran, they became more revolutionary, viewing revolutionary action as a form of "jihad." Through a revolutionary interpretation of Islam, acts of resistance and liberation were framed as a religious necessity to protect social victims from the oppressive systems of capitalism and corrupt governance (Fischer,1980:184).

3.3 Islam as a Protest Movement and Ideology of Liberation from Injustice

Ali Shariati's critique of the clergy marked the beginning of the thesis that Islam functions as a religion of protest. The failure of the clergy to teach an Islam that supports the oppressed and marginalized communities was seen as a glaring anomaly. The conservative Iranian clergy's actions contributed to societal stagnation. Moreover, their proud alliance with the ruling powers led to the interpretation of Islam as "Islam Safar wa Zuru" (a false Islam that deceives the people). For Ali Shariati, Islam needed both reform and revolution by returning it to its "original Islam" – one that is liberating and committed to justice (Akhavi,1990:146-147).

Ali Shariati mobilized protest as a form of jihad in response to the clergy's monopoly over Islam, tailored to the interests of the ruling authorities. Influenced by the ideas of Al-Afghani, Shariati employed protest as a revolutionary means of resistance alongside educated youth. The primary goal of this protest was social justice, beginning with calls for the reform of education and religious institutions. Shariati urged his followers to liberate humanity and build a just society, regardless of the revolutionary measures required (Akhavi,1990:146-147). The reproduction of revolutionary ideology accompanied the revolutionary actions. Ali Shariati called upon his followers to engage in social protest as an expression of Islam understood as a religion of protest. The clergy aligned with the ruling elite tended to support capitalist and tyrannical agendas. This

condition resulted in Islam in Iran becoming an elite possession rather than belonging to a just and equitable society (Shariati,1979a:11-12).

The protest movement led by Ali Shariati was framed within the prophetic mission. For Shariati, the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) exemplified a political and social movement, preventing Islam from being confined solely to spiritual matters. The revolutionary Islam of the Prophet's time prioritized justice, equality, and solidarity with the oppressed as the core objectives of jihad. Through this critical reflection, Shariati advocated for a radical reinterpretation of Islam as a religion of protest aimed at transforming unjust social structures. In Islam, the concept of justice should inherently be social justice, rooted in the core teachings of the faith. However, the conservative clergy's alignment with ruling powers distanced Islam from this principle of justice. Instead, Islam was co-opted as a religion of the status quo, impeding the possibility of social transformation (Shariati,1979:11-12).

Clerics who side with ruling authorities effectively embody the concept of "taghut," employing the Qur'an to justify tyrannical rule, oppressive systems, and the subversion of fundamental principles of justice. "*Taghut*" Ali Shariati interpreted this as a symbol of systemic oppression. Whether under feudalism or capitalism, the ruling authorities consistently orient their power toward the perpetuation of oppression (Shariati,1979a:21). Ali Shariati further argued that feudalism produces rigid class structures, while capitalism results in the proliferation of poverty. Consequently, society's most vulnerable become victims, receiving no genuine support or advocacy. For Shariati, this is precisely where religion must take a stand. Islam, as a religion of protest, fundamentally aligns itself with the oppressed. Moreover, Islam holds the potential to become a dynamic force by driving social change oriented toward justice.

Islam is a protest religion to systematically critiques and addresses the needs of resistance against those who have massive wealth. For Ali Shariati, protest inherently carries a political charge. However, alongside its political dimension, there is also a material aspect related to the accumulation of wealth (Shariati,1979:47). The clergy aligned with the ruling powers in Iran during that period institutionalized Islam. They tended to exploit power relations for personal gain and to legitimize authority as a means of survival. Ali Shariati rejected both the clerical interpretation of Islam and their actions, viewing them as distortions of Islamic teachings. Clerics who exploited the faithful without moral grounding or critical reflection effectively became embodiments of "taghut." For Ali Shariati, Islam must actively protest all forms of clerical misconduct and to oppose the status quo.

Ali Shariati's conception of Islam as a religion of protest also instilled a strong sense of faith among his followers. For Shariati, the alliance of the clergy with ruling powers must be actively resisted through protest. While the clergy inevitably seek compromise to suppress such protests, Shariati asserted that Islam as a religion of protest must uphold the struggle and reject any form of compromise with the elites (Shariati,2014:36). Ali Shariati also demonstrated to his followers that Islam did not originate solely within the circles of clerics and mystics who withdrew from worldly affairs. Rather, Islam emerged from social struggle. As a religion of protest, Islam arose

out of the need for the marginalized to be liberated from oppression, poverty, and injustice (Shariati,2014:36-37).

Reflecting on Islamic civilization during the prophetic era, the focus was on the life of the community rather than political power. The trap of Islam becoming an institutionalized and status quo religion only facilitates the emergence of tyranny within structures of power, economy, and culture. To prevent and transform this potential operational logic, Islam as a religion of protest serves as a means of liberation and revolution against flawed religious orders (Shariati,2014:36-37). The existence of Islam as a protector of the status quo is perceived by some as a Pauline religion, regarded as the true faith by certain groups. Therefore, Islam as a religion of protest represents a contestation of religious interpretations and embodies divergent orientations within the faith (Shariati,2014:38).

The religious conflict between competing interpretations has led to societal divisions in Iran. According to Ali Shariati, within a humanistic framework, every individual is free to make their own choices. However, from the perspective of justice, individuals will employ their rationality to embrace Islam as a religion of protest, independent of institutional power relations. Islam, as a religion of protest, has its historical roots in the prophetic era, embodying both social action and social worship. Oriented toward the pursuit of justice, Islam as a religion of protest is not merely an ideology but a revolutionary movement willing to sacrifice much to restore Islam to its true and rightful essence (Shariati,1979a:53).

Ali Shariati critiques the way politics, which should serve as a fundamental arena, has become merely a domain of vested interests for the ulama. While politics ought to be a foundational space, the ulama, who are expected to advocate for this fundamentality, fail to side with the people. Ali Shariati criticizes the ulama's logic of power for being trapped within Western political traditions. In response, his concept of Islam as a religion of protest offers an antithesis rooted in Eastern political tradition, which should uphold universal morality inseparable from religious values and ethics (Fischer,1980:155).

Ali Shariati's social movement, grounded in the notion of Islam as a religion of protest, aims to demonstrate that "truth must be spoken directly in the face of power," rather than becoming power itself. In Shariati's vision, Islam as a religion of protest carries a distinct aspiration: to serve as a force of global resistance, a conjunctural project for the liberation of the Third World, and a foundation for mass moral protest that determines the trajectory of political continuity (Dadashi,2008:101).

IV. CONCLUSION

The discourse of Islam as a religion of protest stands as a central thesis and source of pride for Ali Shariati in interpreting Islam in light of contemporary developments in the social sciences. This conceptualization distinguishes Shariati's thought, offering a unique framework for addressing the problems facing Islam as a religion in modern socio-political contexts. For Ali Shariati, the problem of Islam does not lie within the religion itself, but rather in the teachings conveyed by self-interested actors. Despite the varying social contexts, Shariati's revolutionary thought, particularly his conception of

Islam as a religion of protest, serves as a critical framework for self-reflection among those who exploit Islam for political purposes. Through this discourse, the issue of Islamic interpretation is reframed around the question of alignment: to whom does Islam truly serve? Shariati substantiates this argument by analyzing the condition of Iranian clerics and Islamic history, thereby establishing boundaries for subjective interpretations of the faith.

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