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**Study**

## **The Akhbaris and Politics in Iran:**

**A Study On the Nature of the Political Dispute  
Between the Akhbaris and the Valayet-e Faqih  
Current**



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### **Disclaimer**

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The Akhbaris are one of the most powerful religious currents in Iran and they have considerable influence on the Hawaza in Iran. This has implications for politicians and politics in the country. The current has shifted from a school of jurisprudence that has its origins, and rules in understanding texts and jurisprudence - to a general current resembling an ideological trend. It has transformed from a school with hierarchical rules and restrictions into a popular and public platform. As a result, the Akhbaris have influenced most currents and other schools even if they did not adopt all of their arguments.

The revisions within this current have contributed to the setbacks it experienced after the Iranian revolution in 1979, and the disappearance of its clerics and theorists from the religious and media scene in Iran as well as its dormancy in favor of theorists of the revolution and the new religious elite. The Akhbaris dominated the Shiite religious scene for over two hundred years after it was first established by Istarabadi, before his inactivity due to interrelated factors. Some of the reasons for its decline were external such as political interference to strengthen the fundamentalist current at the expense of the Akhbari current. The other reasons were internal such as the current holding firmly on old narrations without acknowledging changing religious and social realities. Therefore, the current as well as Istarabadi was incapable of providing juristic opinions and fatwas for the general public. The role of the fundamentalist movement grew in significance when it adopted *ijtihad* and responded to the needs of the people. The Hawaza and the religious scene would not have developed in Iran without this current along with its ideas shaping the internal interactions of the Hawaza.

Even if this trend is considered weak and ineffective in contemporary Shiite literature, observers of its ideas can see its impact on the Shiite arena in general, and the Iranian arena in particular, and can recognize its effectiveness on the Shiite community at the juridical and political levels. It can be said that it is a scholastic current because it has been exposed to violent attacks after the Iranian revolution in

1979. The greatest theorists of the Velayat-e Faqih current, Morteza Motahari accused the current of infiltration and distortion during the early phases of its formation. These accusations and attacks which continued against the Akhbaris after the revolution indicate its effectiveness in the Hawaza and the threat it posed to the fundamentalist current that dominated the Hawaza. However, it is extremely difficult to engage and interact with a current which has no state legitimacy.

In this research, we seek to identify the areas of disagreement between the Akhbaris and the Iranian ruling system after the revolution, as well as to understand the balance of power within the original Shiite environment. The Akhbaris consider themselves as the authentic current in the Shiite Hawaza in general, and the Iranian arena in particular, where it originated, proliferated and expanded. However the Velayat-e Faqih current considers itself to represent the Shiite doctrine and to be an extension of the Infallible Imam current. There is a traditional, third, Hawaza current that tries to survive within the Al-Hawazi scholastic circles without engaging in religious-political issues with these two main currents. Consequently, conflict emerged among the currents over who represents the Shiite doctrine and which one of them represents the legitimate Shiite current.

## I- Introduction

The Akhbaris are a Shiite movement with its name stemming from al- Akhbar,<sup>(1)</sup> which refers to the narrations/stories received from the imams of Ahl Al-Bayt. The stories are perceived by the current's followers as *hujja* [pretext] and they cannot be violated or dealt with in accordance with 'Islamic jurisprudence principles of deductive reasoning.' These principles are Sunni in origin and deductive reasoning must be avoided. According to some of the Akhbaris, being in contradiction with the public is a "pretext" and to other Akhbaris is *morajah* [likely applicable].<sup>(2)</sup>

The narrative approach of the Akhbaris can explain the current's method in dealing with texts. The classification of modern texts is

limited to selecting the correct one according to the point of view of the classifier, not gathering all or most of the correct narrations based on the quality of the narrators —which is related to the process of generating fiqh and acknowledging general rules and principles.

While some researchers attribute the emergence of the Akhbari current to Sheikh Muhammad Istrabadi (1033 AH / 1624 CE), Istrabadi himself attributes the Akhbari current to the prevailing current before the occultation, and the era of the minor absence. Senior Imams adopted this approach of the Akhbaris including two Shaykhs belonging to the Sadiq family:<sup>(3)</sup> al-Shaykh al-Sadiq, the father of al-Shaykh al-Sadiq, and Muhammad ibn Ya'qub ibn Ishaq al-Kulayni.<sup>(4)</sup>

If we acknowledge that the *Two Sadiqs*, al-Kulayni, and other men of the narrative approach are affiliated to the Akhbaris, their selective approach to narrations, indicates their jurisprudential exertions and approach in dealing with texts. It also reflects that they do not merely collect narrations for generating fiqh, which is the responsibility of a fundamentalist jurist, but rather they promote narrations as a means to express their doctrine and positions. However, Mohsen Kadivar rejected the fact that al-Kulayni was affiliated to the Akhbaris, because he called for checking the credibility of narrations with the Holy Qur'an, according to an order issued by Ahl Al-Bayt. This however contradicts the Akhbaris' approach of understanding the Qur'an through narrations, not the other way around.<sup>(5)</sup>

However, when Istrabadi had some sort of rapprochement with al-Kulayni and the fundamentalists, he sought to establish common ground on general issues not on every single issue, and not to agree on each issue separately, as was the case with the fundamentalists as well.

According to Istrabadi, the Akhbaris have two branches: an old one with its roots going back to Ahl al-Bayt and the Infallible Imams. This branch followed their path, until it was defeated and its science and methods of dealing with texts were circumvented. The other Akhbari branch is a modern one working to revive the old Akhbari branch to

restore the centrality of Ahl al-Bayt and the Infallible Imams, away from Sunni interference and jurisprudential endeavors which hinder the direct citing from the Infallible Imam!

How was a coup against the old Akhbari branch carried out to transform it into an outcast or faded entity on the sidelines of the doctrine, after it was its main body, its beating heart, and its original representative according to the Istrabadi perspective? Schmidtke and others argue that Istrabadi “distinguished in his books between the doctrine of the modernist Imami in *Ilm al-Kalām* and the principles of jurisprudence and the doctrine of the latter. Whereas the principles of belief and the principles of jurisprudence of the modernist were adopted entirely from the narrations of the Infallible Imams, the latter argued that mental reasoning is limited in the ways of reaching knowledge in these two sciences. From Istrabadi’s opinion, this change took place gradually in the fourth century AH / 10<sup>th</sup> century AD, when Muhammad bin Ahmed Al-Iskafi (340/951) and Ibn Abi Aqil al-Omani (340/951) adopted mental reasoning in *Ilm al-Kalām* and *Taqiyya* principles, then al-Shaykh al-Mufid, without knowing that they really did it according to *Taqiyya*, extensively relied on mental reasoning in *Ilm al-Kalām* and fundamentalism.”<sup>(6)</sup>

The struggle for originality began, which led to disputes among the hawaza currents. Although this led them to consider themselves as the pioneers of original Shiism, however, the fundamentalists consider the Akhbari phenomenon extraneous to the doctrine, which emerged with Istrabad’s narrations, and they also believe that there is no connection between them and the later Imams, neither in the level of their narrations nor in their approach.

The Akhbaris called the old scholars “the mayor of the Akhbaris” and “the chief of the Akhbaris” and so on such, as the Sadiqs and others,<sup>(7)</sup> in an attempt to consolidate the originality of the current and link it with the founders.

The fundamentalist current, in contrast, attempted to eradicate the originality of the Akhbaris, and undertook research to refute their

statements which was published in fundamentalist books. However, the one who extended the scope of attacks against them in the late ages and “Islamic” Iran was Shaykh Morteza Motahari (one of the theorists of the revolution and a student of Khomeini). This violent attack of Motahari against the Akhbaris was not based on pure scientific reasoning. It was fraught with political reasoning, a clash over representation, existence and effectiveness, and a struggle over the spheres of Taqlid.

Motahari believed that the Akhbaris did not exist as a disciplined scholastic school in the history of the Shiite Hawaza, and that Akhbari principles such as believing that the orthography of Quranic verses is not *hujja*, i.e., an authoritative argument, in addition to rational evidence,<sup>(8)</sup> and the impermissibility of deductive reasoning and imitating someone who is not infallible had never been known in the works of past scholars. The purpose of old Imams was to embark upon modernizing and articulating narratives, i.e. narrative aspects. They issued fatwas only in accordance with those narrations, but the proliferation of hadith at the time and the presence of Imams necessitated the need to counter Ijtihads, as well as the proliferation of different sects and restoring the legitimacy of the original Akhbari current.<sup>(9)</sup>

We note that the aforementioned argument of Motahari has been mentioned in one of his books on the state and the revolution, which suggests that the Akhbaris were an impediment to both: the state and the revolution. Without referring to a source, Motahari granted the Akhbaris the legitimacy of originality, or at least the legitimacy to expand and exist, although he sought to deny their existence. However, the Akhbaris only claim for the centrality of narrations, which are sufficient for them in issuing fatwas similar to the old scholars who did the same.

On the other hand, the Akhbaris being content with narrations without adopting principles and self-evident and unanimous rules of fundamentalism caused problems related to contradictory or

different narrations. As a result, this matter led to disagreements even among the Akhbaris themselves. Then, every scholar will prefer one narration over the other based on his *ijtihad* and perspective. Thus, claiming that resorting to pure narratives prevents disagreements or leads to the desired objective as was the case with the Infallible Imams has no scientific basis.

### ***The Dimensions of Distinctiveness Between the Akhbaris and the Fundamentalist Currents***

A number of religious differences led to political differences between the Akhbaris and the theorists of the revolution in Iran. It exposed them to permanent intellectual persecution, in spite of their limited presence on the margins of sectarian life, as a result of the systematic oppression they were subjected to.

These differences between the two parties are extensive and complex, and the religious authority Ja`far al-Sabhani (who is seen as a fundamentalist and follower of the Iranian political system) has limited them to 40 issues, or a few principles.<sup>(10)</sup> Here are the most important principles on which the two sides diverged:

**1- Discarding the Fundamentals of Islamic Jurisprudence :** One of the most important reasons for the distinctiveness between the Akhbari and fundamentalist movements in general, including its traditional and dynamic segments, is that the Akhbari current rejects the principles of Islamic jurisprudence as a whole, even after it has been adapted in accordance with the principles of the Jaafari school, because it – according to the Akhbaris – is derived from Sunni jurisprudence.<sup>(11)</sup>

The difference between the two parties is deeper than only disagreeing over the principles of jurisprudence. However, the Akhbaris reject any kind of *ijtihad* if the text or the narration is available. In contrast, the fundamentalists believe in the limitations of narrations and the primacy of facts, so *ijtihad* is inevitable.

According to this Akhbari position, clerics will not have authority

over the people. They call for further postulates when they say that everyone can review texts without a mediator so that they can attain the truth, because there is no *ijtihad* when the text is received from the infallible.<sup>(12)</sup> This position may not necessarily lead to all clerics and jurists being sidelined, and all ordinary people resorting directly to the texts. I do not think that this is the goal that the Akhbaris are looking for. Rather, they may have intended to liberate the *Moqalid* from submitting completely to the fundamentalists' hegemony and power.

**2- The Centrality of Narrations:** Istrabadi states that the first Shi'a imams — who claimed their affiliation to the Akhbari current, such as the Sadiqs, al-Kulayni, and others— believed that “The theoretical Sharia laws, whether they are principles or sub principles, must be generated from *al-itra al-tahira* [the Holy House, i.e. of Ali bin Abi Taleb]<sup>(13)</sup> which depends neither on Qur'anic verses nor on deductive reasoning, but rather on narrations only.”<sup>(14)</sup>

According to Istrabadi the narrations include all the absolute rules that replace “mental imaginations.”<sup>(15)</sup> These mental imaginations are the principles of jurisprudence, semantics and syntactic, and all fields related to *Uloom-ul-aalah* [auxiliary sciences] because the fatwas according to them are based on clear evidences that have become peremptory with the help of clues. Also, he claimed that the four hadith books were binding in nature.

Muhammad Amin Istrabadi said, “One of the evidences of the authenticity of the four hadiths according to our old clerics, is that we firmly believe a lot of men who were the followers of our Imams including the group who were approved by the first trustworthy men that they only transfer the authentic hadith according to old clerics, and spent 300 years in taking rulings from Imams, peace be upon them. They also wrote what they heard from them, and presented their work to them. The followers also have other followers who adopted their ways. This approach continued up to the time of the three Imams.”<sup>(16)</sup>

Based on his statement that the four narration books are peremptory not only in their entirety, but also in their elaboration, he abolished *Ilm al-Rijāl* [Biographical evaluations also known as the science of narration]. They said that the books of narrations, especially the four books, were inevitably issued by an Infallible Imam. Therefore, no one would deny their authenticity or question their series of narrations. Therefore there is no need for *Ilm al-Rijāl* or *Dirāyat al-ḥadīth* [It is concerned with the narration and comprehension of hadiths], since these books were collected during the era of the Imams, and people used them, rendering any modifications or alterations to these books impossible.

However, this argument did not appeal to Mortaza Motahari, who attacked this approach by saying: “Some impostors took advantage of this case and put in the accounts what they wanted of lies without facing any opposition from the Akhbaris. This position has really brought shame on us. Without the Mujtahideen’s opposition to this current, it would have caused trouble to Muslims to this day.”<sup>(17)</sup>

**3-The Task of the Jurist:** The task of the jurist for the Akhbaris is the transmission of the opinion of the Infallible Imam without imposing his opinion. According to the Akhbaris, the jurist’s mission is limited to merely being a narrator of the hadiths of the Prophet and the Infallible Imams. The main idea of the Akhbaris was: Why should the ordinary, adult, and fallible person do his best in comparing himself with the infallible?<sup>(18)</sup> This is considered by some as a natural reaction to what the scholars of the Safavid state did for the sake of making justifications for the Safavid sultans.<sup>(19)</sup> But even when the Akhbari scholar or jurist only collects narrations, as we have pointed out earlier, he will face profound problems related to ending up with a group of contradictory narrations. Therefore, he will be forced to select specific narrations. Collecting all narrations will lead to having a group of contradictory narrations. He can avoid this end by resorting to selecting the narrations he believes to be suitable for his argument and then he can interpret them. However, this approach might work for some narrations but not all narrations.

**4- Anti-Rationalism:** Fundamentalists consider the Akhbaris in the contemporary Hawzian school as a current which is against rationalism. This is the common image of the Akhbaris within scholarly circles. This image was entrenched by the systematic scientific distortion of the Akhbari school by philosophers and theorists of the state's loyalists group [Velayet e-Faqih followers], especially in contemporary Iran.

This image of the Akhbaris is not free from simplicity and reductionism. According to Robert Gleave, we find in Akhbari texts "a complex and detailed discussion related to the credibility and authenticity of the sources of revelation. Through the interaction of the Akhbaris internally and their intentions, their message can be understood or made understandable." With regard to reason, according to the Akhbaris "It is not totally unacceptable, but there is a modification of its functions and a limitation of its powers."<sup>(20)</sup>

## **II- The Differences Between the Akhbaris and Contemporary Iran**

There is a disagreement between the Akhbari school and contemporary Iran which is no less deep than the historical Akhbari-fundamentalist dispute. It can be said that the historical dispute had almost faded but it has been fueled by contemporary Iranian philosophers belonging to the state's loyalist group. It can also be said that the dispute between the two sides was considered by some as theoretical rather than being real. Or at least, it is a dispute on the margins of the doctrine rather than around core issues and its necessities, as we find in the statements of Mirza Al-Isfahani in ancient times, and the statements of Ayatollah Hussein Montazeri,<sup>(21)</sup> and Ayatollah Muhammad Said Al-Hakim in contemporary time. We find that these disputes are due to the complete dependence of the fundamentalist school with all its wings on the men of the early and later Akhbaris, such as al-Kulayni, Tabarsi, al-Kāshānī, and Nematollah Jazayeri, and others. This underscores the nature of the conflict between the two schools and the possibility of coexistence.<sup>(22)</sup> There are many fundamentalists who have been exercising a practical approach close to the Akhbaris

in accepting many narrations and tales without critical observation or *ijtihad*.<sup>(23)</sup>

However, the contemporary Iranian religious elite had an alternative opinion towards the Akhbaris due to deep differences that could not be tolerated by this elite. In fact these differences are due to its rapprochement to the Iranian government not to the Akhbari school. The Iranian government exerts all efforts possible to represent religion and doctrine. It is concerned about any model of knowledge clashing with it in terms of knowledge particularly in those areas which exclusively belong to it, and are under the authority of the supreme leader alone. No one can dispute that power. Moreover, the Iranian government derives its violent approach towards the Akhbaris from the Safavid model, which was also hostile to the Akhbaris. This resulted in the fundamentalist school's victory against them.

The most important reason for the disagreement between the two sides, the Akhbaris and the Velayat-e Faqih followers, which loyalists considered a blow to the foundations and identity of the contemporary Iranian state after the revolution 1979, is that the Akhbaris reject the philosophical and gnostic basis of the state. The contemporary Iranian state has adopted a school of *Transcendent Theosophy* for its identity. Its founder Mullah Sadr severely opposed the Akhbari current, and it in return responded with the same hostility, that led to the resurfacing of this historical tension. Mulla Sadr describes the Akhbaris by saying: "We have been plagued with a group of weird understanding whose eyes are blinded to the lights of wisdom and its influence. Their minds are tired, like the sight of bats, so they do not realize the light of knowledge and its effect. They believe that thinking of divine matters and forethought divine creatures are *bid'ah*. They consider that contradicting the public trend conditions is a delusion and a deception. They weigh equally between what is obligatory and possible and old and modern and thus their reasons were only limited to the creation of objects and related matters. Their thinking and reason did not live up beyond the scope of these dark structures."<sup>(24)</sup>

Majlesi, who is affiliated to the Akhbari current, issued a fatwa in 1106 AH / 1694 CE to Shah Husayn Safavid against Sufism from Isfahan, the capital, prohibiting the performance of dhikr, and the practice of every tradition related to Sufism.<sup>(25)</sup> This indicates the position of the Akhbari school toward the Gnosticism adopted by the contemporary Iranian state. This is one of the most important features of the existing differences between the Akhbaris and the Iranian government, Khomeini and the supreme leader who succeeded him.<sup>(26)</sup> Perhaps the exclusion of Sufism is one of the main reasons for Motahari's attack against the Akhbaris, because it undermines the identity of the ruling religious elite after 1979. It is known that the school of Sadr-ol-Mote'allehin is the dominant one in the contemporary Iranian arena. Khomeini and Tabatabaei made a significant contribution to this school.<sup>(27)</sup> Therefore, an attack or the underestimation of this school is considered as a criticism of Khomeini, who revived, adopted and approved it in his approach and post-revolution system.<sup>(28)</sup>

Paradoxically, the Akhbari current in this position converged with Gnosticism and the philosophy of the Najafi hawaza and the unchanging traditional current because Najaf rejects rhetorical and philosophical reasonings. The Najafi Hawaza believes that it undermines and distorts the process of jurisprudence, which provokes state loyalists. The validation of the supreme leader is based on philosophical and gnostic evidence more than textual evidence, and thus the Akhbaris have been seen as real opponents.

The Akhbaris, according to some, through rejecting logic, philosophy and Sufism, aim to abolish the strict religious Marjaya of the clergy, which obliges Taqlid and closes the door for the public to consider texts leading to a divergence between the Akhbaris and the fundamentalists. This approach leads to the authority of clerics being destroyed, and thus impacts their centralization of power and financial position.

The Akhbaris assert that "juristic authority is only limited to the

Absent Imam. He is considered the owner of guardianship at this time. Therefore, there is only one Mujtahd practically where the believers should imitate him and follow him: the Absent Imam. This position of the Akhbaris posed a threat to the social status of highly qualified jurists, due to their insistence on the ability of the believer to attain salvation through deep meditation on the sources of religion represented in the Qur'an and Sunnah,"<sup>(29)</sup> without the need for jurists.<sup>(30)</sup>

It can be said that the dispute between the two sides is related to elementary issues, at least from the point of view of the ruling Iranian religious elite. Istrabadi, the founder of the Akhbaris, was accused by the theorists of the Iranian revolution of being "an unknown agent who lived away from the central Shiite capitals."<sup>(31)</sup>

However, it cannot be said that all fundamentalists adopted a negative stance against the Akhbaris, but the relationship between the two sides almost converged and the dispute was only related to scientific and political history. However, the theoreticians of the Iranian ruling system led by Morteza Motahari distorted the image of the Akhbaris, increasing the gap between the two sides and<sup>(32)</sup> killed any chance of rapprochement, especially between the fundamentalist wings of Iran and the Akhbari current. However, the wings of the fundamentalists outside Iran, and specifically in Najaf, believe that there is no need for this deep and raging dispute between the two sides, nor any scientific justification, because the modern senior scholars are both from the fundamentalist and the Akhbari schools. The fundamentalist's demand to open the doors of *ijtihad* is limited to a few issues, in which no explicit text has been transmitted from the Infallible Imams.

The person who tried to put together and converge the two points of view, and concluded that the dispute was not real but rather a verbal dispute since the source of the dispute was unidentified, was<sup>(33)</sup> the religious Marja, ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Saeed al-Hakim. However, these clerics are mostly from Najaf, or Qom and are not

affiliated entirely to the loyalist line, such as Waheed Khorasani and others.

### **III- The Akhbaris and Political Theory**

The relationship between the Akhbaris and the Shiite political authority in Iran, whether the Safavids, or contemporary Khomeinism, was not good. It was mostly tense for religious and even political reasons. The Akhbaris did not believe in a state due to the absence of the Infallible Imam, nor did they think about the form of the government, and the conditions of the ruler in the absence of the Infallible Imam. One of the conditions to be an imam under traditional Shiite jurisprudence is that he must be infallible, and he will overwhelm the land with justice after it has been filled with injustice. In other words, their political theory does not differ from the position of the taqlidi group and the fundamentalist hawaza during the absence of the Infallible Imam. The Akhbaris and traditional fundamentalists intersect against the loyalist current which did not like this position and did not accept it doctrinally. The Velayat-e Faqih followers (loyalists) are not only in conflict with the Akhbaris but also with those who do not believe in the guardianship of the supreme leader.

The Akhbaris considered any political authority that speaks in the name of the Infallible Imam during his absence as an illegitimate authority, which violates and takes away his powers. Haydar Hoballah said, "Akhbaris with their historical model did not have a good relationship with authority. I focus here on the internal sectarian authority or the Shiite authority. Isolation from the power will lead to a special evaluation of the ruler's actions. This will reinforce the process of criticism for any religious justification of the ruler who in some way may eliminate the dynamic elements of juristic and legal minds, because he will consider them as outside the scope of the text. The lack of understanding of the rulers needs and lack of understanding of the opposition's concerns may sometimes lead to a disruption in the movement of the opposition class, and may lead to hopelessness in the existing model. The religious mind refers to

his favourite period or history in order to adopt and live by which in return aids the growth of the Akhbari mentality. We expect the team that does interact with power to have a negative reaction towards it, which will strengthen the core of the Akhbari mind.”<sup>(34)</sup>

In my opinion, however, the issue is more serious than proving one's existence on the ground, and the lack of understanding of the authorities regarding the concerns of the opposition or vice versa. It is not also temporary or circumstantial as much as it is a real difference over the fundamentals between the two sides, which created a mutual lack of understanding. It erupted as a natural consequence of the fundamental differences between them, the will of each party to monopolize the representation of the doctrine, and the dominance of the party that holds authority over the other that does not control the state and authority. Consequently, this brought the dispute between the two sides into the public realm.

To further understand the nature of the conflict between the current Iranian political system and the Akhbari current, we must understand the nature of the historical conflict between them. In fact, it is centered on models or the representation of the doctrine, regardless of persons and the state, because the historical conflict between the models has extended to the contemporary Iranian political and religious scene.

### **1- The Akhbaris and the Safavid Dynasty**

Although the Akhbaris do not believe in politics in the absence of the Infallible Imam, there are intertwined reasons that led to their involvement with politics. Some of these reasons are attributed to the scholar or jurist. He looks for some personal benefit from the political authority which is good at co-opting scholars to confirm its legitimacy. This matter was recognized in the context of the history of religious institutions in general. The sources of revenues for scholars were either gifts which influenced their scientific works and fatwas, or a stipend from the Bayt al-mal and the political authority supervised this, or an amount from the *Awqaf* that was most often

supervised by influential political figures, or volunteers. Their financial incomings were subject to rationing and interference from the state apparatus. The most famous dispute in this regard, with ongoing implications for the Shiite political and juristic scene to this very day, is what happened between Karaki and Sheikh Ibrahim Al Qatifi on the legality of gifts given by the sultan (the shah) to jurists. Gifts refer to fixed payments that jurists receive which are similar to a salary.

The most important factor for the Akhbari rapprochement with the Safavid political authority was their clash with the fundamentalist current which led to a limitation of the latter's popularity and then to the exclusivity of the Akhbari religious and spiritual leadership, because they realized that non-rapprochement with the Safavids facilitated the dominance of the fundamentalist movement with some of its wings converging with power. Thus they seized religious government institutions. In addition, the Akhbaris cooperated with the Safavid authority after relations between the Safavids and the fundamentalists worsened. Therefore they did not distance themselves from political power in all stages of history, but for the most of it, not because they were political opponents, but because their political discourse, the jurisprudence of waiting for the Infallible Imam, is not accepted widely by political authorities that look for any party to legitimize their rule, not vice versa.

In some stages, the political authority considered that the Akhbaris were a safe current, and the guarantor of its continuity, since it had no interest in governance and the state, nor in overseeing the work of the Shah.

According to some, "Shah Abbas (1629 AD) invented the reality of excluding the scholars from the state's decisions by supporting the currents that rivaled the fundamentalism of Najaf. Therefore, he favored Shia Salafism in order to promote the idea that Shiism is a purely religious matter and unable to challenge the complexity of earthly authority. It is more appropriate for Shiism to take care of what

matters to the individual's religious personal life, and its connections that would contribute to realize the identity of their affiliations in order to be attached to the imams, and their news, visits, and blessings to believers. This is an Akhbari methodology, although fundamentalism still maintains it, with a difference in its implementations. Here we see the impact of political issues significantly when one of the fundamentalist scholars responded with a book whose introduction was dedicated to the Sultans of India, Abdullah Qutb Shah (1672 AD). This was an attempt by the fundamentalist current to provoke India against Iran, which ostensibly supported the Akhbaris at that time."<sup>(35)</sup>

Did the Akhbaris try to seize power when the fundamentalists under the Safavids weakened? Jawad Shebar said "No, the Akhbaris did not have an intention to seize power. At the same time, they did not indicate at all that the authority of the Safavids is a legitimate authority. The fundamentalists made fatwa for this issue. They considered the state power as coercion. However, it is not one of their tasks to fight nor to oppose it. On the contrary, it is a must to cooperate with authority absolutely."<sup>(36)</sup>

This means that the Akhbaris did not have a political vision for the state and government. On the other side, the fundamentalists were interfering in politics with different propositions, especially as this wing believes in dualism of the jurist and the sultan. It calls for their partnership and cooperation in governance and state administration. This wing has roots that refer back to the investigator Al-Karaki,<sup>(37)</sup> who disturbed the political authority in many stages. Therefore, he supported and strengthened the Akhbari group at one time.

The Akhbaris won the battle for a long time, until the fundamentalists won again when al-Wahid Bihbahani entered into arguments with the leader of the Akhbaris in Karbala, Sheikh Yusuf al-Bahrani. Bihbahani and the other fundamentalists thereafter won finally.

Finally, it can be said that the rapprochement between the Akbaris and politics was not strategic but rather largely pragmatic, in order to preserve their reputation and fight the fundamentalists through the

use of political power. There was no change in the approach that they adopted because of politics. They returned to the hawaza and religious study without losing popularity because of their political work. Their political participation helped them to re-emerge in the current era under various names and derived from the Akhbari system their understanding and deductive logic, such as the deconstructionists, the Shirazis, and other currents. The fundamentalists themselves were even influenced by the Akhbari methodology on many issues.

## **2- The Al-Akhbari and Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist**

The theory of Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist is based on interests, philosophical, and gnostic evidence more than on transferring evidence. This contradicts the position of the Akhbaris — or what is commonly known about them — in excluding philosophical and gnostic evidence in deriving Sharia laws.

The Akhbaris also believe that there is no government in the absence of the Infallible Imam, because the establishment of the government requires an infallible presence at the top of it so it is not exposed to human interference or characterized as being unfair. This is not possible except via the Infallible Imam.

If we claim that the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist with its Khomeini and non- Khomeini style is an odd concept, although it is mentioned in the literature of some old scholars, it was not central or integrated within the Shiite doctrine. It was marginal like the rest of the marginal opinions and claims that can only be activated with changes in *ijtihad*, traditions and norms. Even if the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist is activated, it cannot be transferred from the margins to the core of the doctrine, or transferred to the necessities and postulates. If we say that the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist is an odd concept, we will find an aversion and objection from the Akhbaris to the whole theory since it is an anomaly to Shi'a jurisprudence, and has no extensions or roots in the old Shiite jurisprudence mentality, or the textual and transmission heritage of the Infallible Imams.

Therefore, the Akhbaris believe that any government established in

the absence of the Infallible Imam, and any imam of that government, is a violator of the powers and rights of the Infallible.<sup>(38)</sup> They inferred from al-Sadiq's statement "Every flag that is raised before the rise of the ruler, its owner is a tyrant and not worshipping God."<sup>(39)</sup>

According to some, the Akhbaris, "Throughout history, they were the *Intezar* [waiting] group, or historical determinism, as it is called, represented by the emergence of Imam al-Mahdi, where justice is achieved and the land is filled with justice and equality, as it has been filled with injustice and oppression."<sup>(40)</sup> The Akhbaris were not the only group that represented the *Intezar Approach* [those who wait for the return of Imam al-Mahdi], but the origin of the traditional fundamentalist school followed the same approach as well. The traditional fundamentalist school tackled the *Intezar Approach* from a juristic perspective, more than the Akhbaris who adhered to narrations without evaluating the knowledge behind them. This is despite the fact that some wings of the fundamentalists participated in political authority throughout history. Those who were involved in political power at some stage were not representative of the doctrine at that time.<sup>(41)</sup>

When the Safavids managed to shape the mindset of some of the fundamentalist jurists, Mullah Istrabadi —the leader of the Akhbaris —had reacted to the jurists' interference in politics and their justification for the sultans' actions.<sup>(42)</sup> The intervention and justification made by Al-Karaki was like a coup against inherited Shiite principles.

The Akhbaris rejected the theory of Al-Karaki and the alliance between the jurist and the sultan that he founded. Here, the bitter struggle between the fundamentalists and the Akhbaris took a systematic scientific approach under a deductive reasoning system. In fact, the conflict had some political roots in the context of the imamate, influence, rapprochement with those in power and the necessity of a government in the absence of the Infallible Imam.

#### IV- The Akhbaris: Between Latency and Extinction

The Shiites in the Arabian Peninsula – especially Bahrain – were the first to side with the modern Akhbari group that was crystallized by Istrabadi, and then this was adopted in the rest of Iraq and Iran itself.<sup>(43)</sup> Some researchers believe that the Akhbaris have diminished or their methods and theses have dissipated today. In reality, the Akhbaris still exist, despite the dominance of the fundamentalist trend in its two parts: traditionalist and activist — that believe in the *Intezar Approach* just like the Akhbaris. However, the core spirit, writings, classifications of the Akhbaris are still active in the Hawaza with their various directions. It is impossible to disassociate from the Akhbari heritage, especially the narrations, because it forms the Shiite heritage in general at the level of narration.

One thinker answers the question, is there an Akhbari school today? By saying, “We may use two approaches: the historical reproduction, and the abstraction approach.” In the first approach, we study the old Akhbari movement well known in the history of Shiism. Then we look at our contemporary reality to find another identical version of this movement. We may see that the Akhbari school declined, but it certainly did not disappear, contrary to what some researchers believe.<sup>(44)</sup> In the second method, we review the history of the Akhbaris, but we should consider the historical model as an original copy, to apply it on the contemporary model. Instead, we should strip this history from the formal elements of historical space time and take the essence of this movement and its core. Then we should look for an alternative version of it in our reality.”<sup>(45)</sup>

According to these two approaches, the Akhbari mind may be adopted by fundamentalists, modernists, and interpreters. It is not necessary to find differences and dichotomy between these parties, as happened in some historical incidents. Today there can be an Akhbari tendency within the thought of the prevailing fundamentalist school. Many contemporary fundamentalists accept the Akhbari opinion. They prefer using narrations over deductive reasoning. They restrict the

work of the mind to limited aspects, which exclude it from the sphere in which it is supposed to be, of being a source of legislation parallel to the Holy Quran and the Sunnah.<sup>(46)</sup> We see this in the mentalities of many contemporary fundamentalists, for example Kamal Al-Haidari states that the imams recognize the unseen, by depending on weak narrations if they were measured in accordance with the fundamentalist school of thought.<sup>(47)</sup> In addition, Khomeini believed that the imams are created from light, but there is no authentic and explicit evidence provided by the fundamentalists.<sup>(48)</sup> However, these thoughts have no root in the early Akhbari philosophy, but rather in extremist thinking that Mohsen Kadivar called: *The Forgotten Reading*.

There are a number of intellectual currents today that can be counted under the methodological umbrella of the Akhbaris, or that intersect with it in determinants that cannot be ignored, such as the Shirazi current whose founder, Muhammad Al-Shirazi, believed in the Akhbari method for addressing many issues, as one of his students said.<sup>(49)</sup>

It cannot be said that the Shirazi current is a copy-cat of the Akhbari school of thought because when a current spreads it definitely will generate new ideas, and sub-principles become principles and vice versa. The Shirazi current, even if it belongs to the Akhbari school, also founded the theory (Shura of jurists) which is used against Khomeini and the loyalist current. It is considered the practical and powerful alternative that many Iranian opponents call for, even from outside the current. Therefore, Iranian authorities sought to limit the Shirazi current because it differed from the original Akhbari school on shunning politics. The Iranian deconstruction current is affiliated — according to many investigators — to the Akhbari current. Even if it denies its connection to it, it converged with the Akhbari current on the greater part of their intellectual system. They were considered fundamentalists in several axes such as:<sup>(50)</sup> modifying narrators, screening novels, and the approved deductive reasoning. If they had adopted the same fundamentalist jurisprudence, they

would have been Akhbari at the same time by rejecting philosophy and Gnosticism as tools for *ijtihad*. The deconstruction theorists claim that the deconstructive current is different from the Akhbaris in terms of the fundamentals. It is based on doctrines and theology without using philosophy and Gnosticism. Away from the currents affiliated to the Akhbaris, this school, without its branches, is present in Shiite capitals and in the scholastic Hawaza as well. Rather, Qom is the Akhbari home, according to one of the current's sheikhs.<sup>(51)</sup>

### **Conclusion: Akhbaris and Revolution**

The important question at the end of this study, is that if the Akhbari current is of such strength, originality and historical depth in the state and doctrine, and if it possesses significant followers and supporters as it claims, then what is its position on revolutions —whether at the level of participation or taking the lead— in order support a political current, or to assume power?

In fact, the issue of the revolution itself is not a concern of the Akhbari current, nor does it represent a cognitive, or a philosophical concern. The Akhbari school of thought does not deal with revolutionary jurisprudence for several reasons: The current is essentially waiting and follows the theory of waiting on the level of political theory, and it does not believe in the work of politicians in the absence of the Infallible Imam. It also is not a hierarchy at the administrative level. It does not have a single religious Marjaya , like the general situation of the marja which has several religious marjaya where people have the choice to follow any of them. It does not have political leadership. Therefore, the current does not have the ability to carry out a revolution by itself, because it is not a single bloc. Its ideas are not strong enough at the theoretical level – which are ambiguous in some central issues and implementation.

There are Akhbari wings or other wings influenced – most likely – by the Akhbaris that adopted the revolutionary approach against the Iranian government, even in terms of thought and theory. The Shirazi movement, which was influenced by the Akhbaris after

its experiences, changes and fragmentations, collided with the Guardianship of the Jurist government. The Iranian government has arrested a number of people from the religious leadership of the Shirazi current in Qom on a frequent basis including: Hussein Al-Shirazi who described Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei as the Pharaoh of the times, and a dictator. Warrants were issued from the religious court for his arrest. This has been repeated against him and others as well.<sup>(52)</sup> The Shirazi's political position does not stem from the fact that they are Akhbari as much as it expresses the fluidity of their ideas, and the overlapping of a large number of ideas and theories, along with political, religious, and modern changes. These transformations resulted in the emergence of new currents that cannot be placed within a specific Shiite wing, yet they can be affiliated to one of them merely for their great numbers and intersections.

Finally, the Iranian state considers the Akhbaris as a threat, not because of their revolutionary literature that does not exist, but due to the struggle of representing the sect and defining its necessities which the current works strongly on, particularly to develop Shiite public awareness on these issues. The Akhbaris have influenced the doctrinal and Shiite arena. They have created an anti-government current. This in itself raised the concerns of the Iranian ruling system that seeks to monopolize both religion and power, because they are integral pillars of the Velayat-e Faqih approach.

Iran also intentionally neglected to consider the current as a source of knowledge for the Hawaza and the state. It also did not list it as one of the wings of the Shiite doctrine whether in its old or modern form. Regardless of the validity of the Akhbaris' proposals, Iran sought here to entrench the interests and pragmatism of the ruling elite. The problem of the Iranian government with the Akhbaris is that it is not a political authority, as is the case with the Safavids which managed the relationship between the Akhbaris and the fundamentalists, and used each of them according to benefit the special interests of the governing body at the time. At the same time, the contemporary

Iranian authority is a political and religious authority. Therefore, it does not adopt or support a particular current at the expense of another because the ruling system itself is an independent current. And thus it runs its intellectual and hawaza rivalries under the umbrella of political power, which was not the case in Shiite political history. Therefore, the improvement of the relationship between the Akhbaris and the ruling religious elite in Iran in light of the current philosophy of the government is far-fetched, and it seems impossible, unless there is an intellectual regression and real review of the foundations upon which the Iranian political system is built. This of course will not be realized currently due to the presence of the first generation of the revolution who established the state in its current form, and its cultural patterns. Therefore, any regression will be considered a defeat for the revolution and the Khomeinist model, for the benefit of other models that have always been opposed by the ruling elite.

## Endnotes

- (1) Shiite jurists have agreed to adopt the word *Al-Akhbar* -the plural of the word *Khabr*- but as not the word *Al-Ekhbar*.
- (2) Review: Sheikh Muhammad Reza al-Muzaffar, *The Origins of Jurisprudence* (Beirut: Dar El-Taref, 2011), 2/233. Some of their sayings, "Do not adopt what the people agree on, because wisdom is to disagree with them." Review: Dr. Mohsen Kdiour, *The Forgotten Reading, Re-reading The Twelve Imams Theory, Righteous an Holy Diligent Scholars. Or: The Understanding of Early Shiites of the Origins of the Imamate*, i / Alintishar Alarabi Foundation 2011, 156.
- 2 Todd Lawson says, "The word " *Al-Akhbari* "was taken from the word used to refer to thousands of narrations (*Al-Akhbar* and *khabr* as a singular). Sometimes it is called hadiths that were saved for us. These include not only the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, but the thirteen Infallible Imams, meaning the Twelve Imams and Fatima. Review: the female authority and the status of Fatima in one of the works of Al-Bab Almobakrah , a study included in the book: *The Most Knowledgeable Among the Shiites*, 188.
- (3) Before aberration took place in the Shiite line, according to Istrabadi.
- (4) Istrabadi, *Civil Benefits* (Islamic Publishing Organization), 91.
- (5) Mohsen Kadivar, *The Forgotten Reading* (Beirut: Intishar Alarabi, 2011) 155.
- (6) Sabine Schmidtke, *Marja in the History of Ilm al-Kalām*, trans Osama Shafi'a, presented by the scholar Hassan Al-Shafi, i / Namaa Center for Research and Studies 2018, 2/780.
- (7) Hassan Mufid, "The Fundamentalist Current of Mirza Al-Isfahani," in *Mirza Al-Isfahani, the Pioneer of Deconstruction in Religious Knowledge*, (Beirut: Al Hadara Center , 2014), 187 et seqin.
- (8) If we claim that the *Akhbary* current was not a disciplined scientific school, it will include the *Taqlid* current itself, which has evolved over time. It has witnessed profound transformations in its knowledge structure, and its vision of religion and the state. Along with the non-opposability of rational evidence that Motahari accuses *Akhbary* of, the fundamentalists themselves even disagreed on a comprehensive prohibitive definition to this rational evidence. Therefore, what is perceived as rational argument by some was not accepted by others, due to the disagreement over the definition of the term , the differences about the area of the conflict, and then liquidity of the aforementioned ideology was attached to almost all currents, whether at the theoretical level or implementation level.
- (9) Morteza Motahhari, *Revolution and the State*, 391.
- (10) Grand Ayatollah Jafar Sobhani, *Fundamentalist Letters*, (Al-Imam Al-Sadiq Qom Foundation, 48.
- (11) Sadr al-Din Fadlallah, *Introduction to the Fundamentals of Jurisprudence* (Beirut: Dar Al-Hadi, 2002), 79, 83.
- (12) Lindas Wahlberg, "The Most Knowledgeable Among the Shiites ... A Study Around Marjiaa of Taqlid Foundation," 188.
- (13) *Istrabadi, Civil Benefits*, 91.
- (14) Kamal al-Haydari, "Shiites Between the Fundamentalist School and *Akhbary* School," published episode on *YouTube*, February 29, 2016
- (15) *Istrabadi*, 92.
- (16) *Istrabadi, Civil Benefits* ( Najaf ND), 371. Quoted from: Muhammad al-Sayyad, "Evidence of the Qur'an Between Sunnis and Imami Shi'a," 179.
- (17) "Morteza Motahari: Criticism of Religious Thought," *The International Institute of Islamic Thought*, 2011, presented by Muhammad Imara, 142.

- (18) *Theology of Political Shiism*, 338
- (19) Wajeeh Kawtharani, "Al-Faqih and Sultan," *Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies*, 2015, 177.
- (20) - Robert Glef, "Consistency and Creativity of Shiite Thought ... The Relationship Between Akhbary and Deconstruction School," *Al-Basayer Magazine* 2 no 49, Twenty second Year 2011AD, 40.
- (21) Ayatollah Hussein-Ali Montazeri said, "The ancient jurists did not adopt *qiyās*, *Istihsan* and mental approach. Rather, they did not even go beyond the words of the narratives. If they had agreed on *fatwah*, they would have received evidence from the Imam without being received to us." See: Haider, *Love of God*, Tahreer: *The Jurisprudence of the Hijab in Islamic Law, New Readings*, Tal-arabi Intishar Foundation 2012, (A study by Shaykh Ahmad Abdini , entitled: "The Veil and Shaking Hands of Women, one Fatwa and Multiple Readings", trans. Matar Al Hashemi). The words of Ayatollah Montazeri were echoed by his student Kadir in *Forgotten Reading*, which indicates the originality of Akhbary, or its existence back in the times as a strong school, unlike what is promoted by some his modernity and sudden emergence on the religious and Hawazi scene.
- (22) - There were in fact major differences that occurred historically between the two Akhbary and fundamentalist currents which escalated to conflict and mutual violence between the two parties. At the same time, we do not deny the scientific dispute between the two schools, as well as the differences of opinion between people and Ahl al Hadith found in all sects. The exaggeration and revival of this dispute in later times was deliberate. Likewise, these historical differences involved other scholastic factors that exacerbated them, such as politics, the struggle for influence, religious and societal authority and others – which are too numerous to mention here.
- (23) - Ahmad Al-Katib, *Religious Marjia and Development Prospects*, 2nd ed. (Arab Scientific Publishers 2007), 140.
- (24) -Mulla Sadr, *The Books / 5-6*.
- (25) Ahmad Kushti, *The Conflict Between Al-Akhbaries and Fundamentalists Within the Twelver Shi'a Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Al-Khobar: Takween , 2015), p. 48.
- (26) Yasser Al-Habib, "Khomeini and Ibn Arabi are Sufi Heretics" *YouTube*, December 18, 2013, <http://cutt.us/D4Ieh>
- (27) An interview on the cultural scene in Iran, Haydar Hoballah: an interview with Asharq al-Awsat No. 9123, 11-20-2003.
- (28) Mohammad al-Sayyad, "The Evolution of a Contemporary Philosophical Lesson in Iran," *Ida'at*, May 11, 2019. <https://cutt.us/8eKaP>
- (29) Linds Wahlerg ed., *The Most Knowledgeable Among the Shi'ites in the Traditional Marja'a Foundation*, trans. Hanaa Khleif, )Academic Center for Research, 2017(, 188.
- (30) This position is very close to the position of Ibn Hazm al-Zahiri and his school. He says that "there is no opinion on religion, and no one can use *Ijtihad* depending on his opinion ." Muhammad Abu Zahra, *Ibn Hazm*, I Dar Al Fiker , 328. Ibn Hazm says that the commoner has the right to ask the jurist about his evidence, and if the evidence was found in book and the Sunnah only , he will adopt it, otherwise he will not. Ibn Hazm calls for not mediating between the commoner and the religion of God by depending on the evidences of imam's words as religion. See: Abu Zahra, *Ibn Hazm*, 240.
- (31) Motahari hints at Istrabadi's being an agent for unknown parties, according to Motahari "He lived in Mecca and Medina, and history of course does not clarify the contacts and relationships of this person during that period. Although he was Shi'ite, he strongly attacked the senior Shi'ite scholars." *Criticism of Religious Thought*, 140. Jawad Shabar responds to this accusation by saying: "There are many publications that accuse the proponents of innovative ideas or escalating the problems by linking them to the conspiracies of the authorities and being agents." These publications also accuse Istrabadi of

being anonymous. These accusations were also thrown at Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, Afghani and others. These were attempts to undermine these personalities for getting involving in intellectual debates." *Theology of Political Shiism*, 336, footnote.

(32) Morteza Motahhari criticizes Akhbari, and he has attributed all of the problems which affected the doctrine in the ancient and the modern time to him. He regrets the consolidation of their approach in the later centuries by saying, "It is a matter of regret that the intellectual approach of Akhbary was reinforced in the late centuries among the Shiites." Shiites Akhbary believe that considered thinking and delving into divine knowledge a bid'ah and a delusion. This approach is undoubtedly a kind of deviation from the purified biography of the imams of this doctrine." Review: Majeed Mohammadi, *The Approach of Contemporary Religious Thought in Iran*, trans. Hussein, See : Sadiq al-Abadi, (Arab Network for Research and Publishing and International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2010), 141.

(33) Hitham Muzahim, *The Evolution of the Shiite Authority*, 189. And see: Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Saeed al-Hakim: *Fundamentalism and Akhbary Between Names and Reality* (Najaf: al-Nasher 1420).

(34) Haydar Hoballah, "Akhbary Mentality, the Basics of Knowledge and Environment of Emergence," *Al-Manhaj Magazine*, no. 47, (Fall 2007). See: Mohammed Alsulami, and Muhammad al-Sayyad, *Iran's Supreme Leadership Usurped Power: Shite Political Controversy Between Arab and Iranian Religious Authorities* (Riyadh: The Arab Gulf Center for Iranian Studies, 2017), 92 et seq.

(35) Salah Jawad Shubbar: *Theology of Political Shiism Between the Right of God and the People and the Reality of Practice*, 339. See: Al-Sulami and al-Sayyad, *Iran's Supreme Leadership Usurped Power*, 94.

(36) Salah Jawad Shubbar, *Theology of Political Shiism Between the Right of God and the People and the Reality of Practice* (Lebanon : Al-Rafidayn 2017), 344.

(37) The majority of the fundamentalist wing even today still believes in non-participating in politics until the appearance of the Infallible Imam, and that there is no Guardianship of the Jurist except for *ijtihad* matters only.

(38) Ahmad Al-Katib, *Evolution of Shiite Political Thought*, 196. Ahmed Kushti, *The Conflict Between Akhbary and Fundamentalists*, 2nd ed. (Al-Khobar: Takween for Studies and Research, Saudi Arabia), 121.

(39) Al-Kulayni: Al-Kafi, 8/295, and Al-Hur Al-Amili: Shia means 11/37, and Al-Majlesi: Bahar Al-Anwar, 25/114.

(40) Ali Ibrahim Darwish, *Politics and Religion During Establishment of the Safavid State* (The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies), 308.

(41) In this regard, it is important to review the political theory of the masses of the Taqlidians in: Al-Sulami and al-Sayyad, , 2017.

(42) - Wajih Kawtharani, *Faqih and Sultan*, 177.

(43) Javad Shubbar, *Theology of Political Shiism*, 337.

(44) Mohsen Al Asfour says, "In any case, the domination of the fundamentalists does not necessarily mean that the school of Akhbary has ended, vanished, and demolished as some would like to tell himself , because Akhbary heritage is still prevalent and dominant in the investigation and publishing centers, public and private libraries, and it represents more than 90. The movement of its printing and promotion are getting more and more active day by day," interview with Ali Al-Dureidy, *Hajr Al Thakafia*, previous.

(45) . Haydar Hoballah, "Akhbary Mentality, The Basics of Knowledge and Environment of Emergence," *Al-Manhaj Magazine*, no. 47 (Fall 2007).

(46) Ibid. Tawfiq Al-Saif, *The Age of Transformations* (Al-Khobar: Alintishar al-Arabia Foundation, 2016), 207. A group of authors: *The Approach of Rationality in Islamic speech*, ( Beirut: Alintishar al-Arabia Foundation, 2014), 345.

- (47) Kamal Al-Haydari: "How the Infallible Imam Gets Knowledge," an episode posted on YouTube, September 29, 2015. <http://cutt.us/zNNB>
- And: "The Knowledge of the Imams of the Unseen is not Extremism," an episode posted You Tube, 1/3/2014, <http://cutt.us/pUW6J>
- (48) Hassanein Heikal, *The Cannon of the Ayatollahs* (Cairo: Dar Al-Shorouk, 2009, 182). And Khomeini says: "One of the necessities of our doctrine is that our nation has a status that a close king, nor a prophet cannot reach , and they were here before the world as lights staring at the throne of God." Mesbah Al-Hidaya to The State and the Caliphate, I / Tehran D.T., 53, and Muhammad Emara, "The Historical Roots of Persian Shiism," *Al-Azhar Magazine*, December 2014, 239.
- (49) Ahmad al-Katib, *Shiite Religious Marja and Prospects for Development*, 148.
- (50) Muhammad Reda Al-Hakimi, *The Deconstructive School*, translated by Abdul-Hassan Salman and Khalil Al-Issami, presented by Abdul-Jabbar Al-Rifai, I / Dar Al-Hadi, Beirut, 2000 AD, 155.
- (51) Mohsin Al Asfoor: Qom is the home of Akhbay and the power of the fundamentalists lasted 70 years, (an interview conducted by Ali Al-Dairi), *Hajr al- Thakafia Network*. <http://cutt.us/iPk5t>
- (52) Mohammed Alsayyad, "The Iranian Political System and the Shirazi Marjaia: Repression and Employment," *International Institute for Iranian Studies*, March 10, 2018, <https://cutt.us/ysAjd>



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