Research Article

The Role of *Taqiya* in Islamic Movements

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Abstract

Taqiya (religious reservation)[2] is a natural reaction and conforms to the individual's discretion or that of the minority, which is done on the basis of expediency and aims at rejecting the corruption or attracting the others' affection. This rule is often used in interaction with opponents and in the form of two types of "apprehensive *taqiya*" and "tolerating *taqiya*". This article aims at revealing the positive roles of *taqiya* in movements and seeks to prove that in the opposition between *taqiya* and the factors creating a movement, there is not just a negative role for *taqiya*, i.e. stagnation and standstill. Rather, on the contrary, the positive roles of mobilizing, converging, immunizing, and the like – which create movements and lead to interaction with movements – are to be considered as well. These positive roles are studied through an analytical-descriptive method. Indeed, *taqiya* as the strategy of contention is a rational and timely subject, playing various roles in movements depending on the demands of the time. Of course, sometimes it gives up the expediency due to the priorities.

Keywords

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2. In Islamic jurisprudence, concealing one's religious beliefs in order to protect one's life, prestige, properties, etc. is called *taqiya*.

Introduction

The duty of the jurisprudence is determining the legal decree and the religious dos and don'ts regarding the behaviors of real and legal persons in various issues and according to legal foundations. Accordingly, we must say that the interactions of the individuals, groups, countries, and international institutions, including the Islamic movements, are formed on the basis of jurisprudential foundations. In this regard, in the Islamic jurisprudence, some rules have been designed for behaviors that lead to establishment of groups and movements as well as adjusting the relations and interactions between them and the states, rules that govern on them like laws. Besides, those rules contribute to legitimizing, organizing and stabilizing the interactions. This order and convergence with *Shari'a* will have no result except achieving the goals and, finally, efficiency. It is evident that those organizing rules have a considerable effect in the speed of the agents of the Islamic state in easy and right access to the legal rules and their goals.

One of the Muslims' behaviors whose start and continuation requires legal decree is the creation of Islamic movements. These movements, mainly formed as the result of crises in the Islamic societies, are reformative movements for achieving the Islamic desirable regime and society. These crises are mostly the products of infiltration of the colonialism and the confrontation of the Islamic countries with western civilization, domestic despotism and mustiness as well as getting far from Islamic teachings. These crises cause the elites of the societies, who are concerned with religious matters, to move on the basis of divine teachings. The well-known statement uttered by Imam Ali suggests the responsibility of that group. "If it was not for the sake of no Allah's pledge with the learned that they should not accept the gluttony of the oppressor and the hunger of the oppressed, I would cast the rope of the camel of caliphate on its own

shoulders…" (Sharif, R., sermon 3, p. 49). Altogether, since these crises in the Islamic societies are plenty, and the entrance of the scholars and the elites for resolving them are based on the rules and regulations originated from religion, it is necessary to make the elites and the founders of the movements familiar with the dimensions of the '*taqiya* rule' and its role in mobilizing people.

The *taqiya* rule is among the rules that prepare the ground, by protecting the life and identity of the individuals and groups and affiliating them, for founders of the movements to achieve their goal. It also gives an ultimatum to the combatant individual and groups as well as the heads of the movements by determining the legal decree. Besides, it clarifies the duty of the Islamic countries in providing these groups with material and spiritual support and, in general, facing and interacting with them in the international arena.

1. Generalities

1-1. Concepts

1-1-1. Islamic movements

Islamic movements can be defined as public and organized reformist movements that seek to change the status quo into a desired situation according to Islamic laws and instructions, in various intellectual, doctrinal, political and social dimensions through peaceful or non-peaceful methods in the Islamic societies (Amiri, 1389 SH, p. 13).

1-1-2. *Taqiya* rule

A jurisprudential rule is a general principle proved through religious evidences and can be adjusted to its instances directly, just like adjusting a natural universal idea on its instances (Mustafawi, 1421 AH, al-Qawā'id, p. 9). Since a rule is used as the criterion for understanding the legislator's view, it must be proved with jurisprudential evidences to be approved and practical. Today, in all societies, some rules govern

as laws. In Islamic societies, Muslims sometimes use the jurisprudential rules in the texts of law and sometimes as the basis for the legal articles. One of these rules is the '*taqiya* rule' with its active role in the interpersonal, political and social relations of the Muslims. Using *taqiya*, individuals can prevent definite decline of their individual, political and social identity or their thoughts, and it helps them to continue their political, social or physical life and their thoughts.

Literally, *taqiya* means prevention or self-protection; and terminologically, is means "accompaniment and association with individuals in what they believe, and giving up what they deny to avoid their evil" (Ameli Makki, vol. 2, p. 155). In other words, "[it means that] the person states a decree contrary to reality or do an action contrary to the principle of *Shari'a* to protect his own life, prestige or property or that of others" (Imam Khomeini, 1363 SH, p. 128).

Before investigating these definitions, it is worth noting that jurists have done classifications for *taqiya* from various perspectives. These classifications include 'hidden' and 'expressive' form the viewpoint of how to perform it; 'apprehensive' and 'tolerating' from the viewpoint of the motivation (Makarem, 1380 SH, vol. 1, p. 410); and 'apprehensive', 'tolerating' , 'compulsive' and 'hidden' from the viewpoint of essence (Imam Khomeini, 1363 SH, p. 9). Besides, one of the following five decrees from the viewpoint of religious decree: obligatory, illicit, recommended, and abominable (Sheikh Ansari, 1370, p. 320).

In analyzing the abovementioned definitions, it seems that the purpose of *taqiya* is not just repulsing an evil. Accordingly, the above definition does not include tolerating taqiya, because the tolerating *taqiya* aims at attracting individuals' affection, not rebuffing their evil (Imam Khomeini, 1363 SH, p. 17). One may say that *taqiya* is the persons' natural or precautionary reaction – or that of a minority group – in order to confront opponents indirectly or attract them based on expediency. It is worth noting that the jurists have referred to the goal

of *taqiya* in defining it. Accordingly, it is better to define it in a way that it includes two main goals of repulsing the evil and corruption as well as attracting the individuals and their affection. Three types of *taqiya*, i.e. apprehensive, repulsive and hidden are for rebuffing evil; and the tolerating *taqiya* is for acquiring affection and friendship. Accordingly, the *taqiya* used for repulsing evil is permitted in emergency states, and it will be forbidden when the emergency is absent (Makarem, 1380 SH, vol. 1, p. 415), while the tolerating *taqiya*, which is used for attracting interest and affection, is not dependent on emergency and – as jurists say – does not require a runaway or constraint. Of course, *taqiya* of the first type will not be permitted if there is a runaway (*mandūḥa*). In the second type, however, even if there is a runaway, it is permitted if there is a typical expediency (i.e. it is expedient for the typical instances or individuals) (Imam Khomeini, 1420 AH, p. 77). An instance is saying a congregational prayer with the Sunnites, which has been considered as advisable in hadiths (Hurr Ameli, 1409 AH, vol. 2, p. 471). That is, although the person can repeat his prayer in another time, it is not necessary to do that according to most of these jurists.

As to the evidences of *taqiya*, we must say that firstly, the *taqiya* rule is a rational rule, because its foundation is the rational rule of 'priority of more important over the important'. Indeed, in *taqiya*, the dilemma is between harming one's soul, property or prestige and the peripheral obligation according to one's denomination; and every wise person dictates the priority of the more important matter (Muhaqqeq Sabzewari, Muhadhdhab al-Aḥkām, vol. 15, p. 239). Firstly, *taqiya* has been common among many nations since long ago. Secondly, there are numerous verses in the Quran referring to that rule. Thirdly, many traditions transmitted by the Infallibles are among the evidences for it. Here, we just refer to two hadiths. Imam Sadeq says, "Anyone who has no *taqiya* has no faith" (Majlesi, 1403 AH, vol. 72, p. 394). "God has

allowed *taqiya* in anything wherein the man feels constrained" (Hurr Ameli, 1409 AH, vol. 16. P. 214).

According to jurists' view, *taqiya* is a secondary decree that is issued often in emergency cases. This decree is alterable on the basis of variables such as type, goal, dissimulator, the other party, place, time and the like (Imam Khomeini, al-Rasā'il al-'Ashr, p. 13).

1-2. The goals of *taqiya* in Islamic movements

Taqiya is a means used for achieving the goal; and according to the Qur'anic verse and traditions, it is a means for leading a purposeful man to his end (Khamene'i, 1396 SH, p. 337). In a general look, we can divide these goals into three major groups: protection, attraction and infiltration (Safa'i Ha'eri, 1380 SH, p. 160). These goals are there in the Islamic movements as well, and are related more to the statements and behaviors of the rulers, leaders of the groups and general activities of the movements. In the goal of "protection", the following ends are sought: protecting the individuals' life, property and prestige; reinforcing movements; religion and the Shiite school; the Shiites' identity; the limits and borders of the security of the Islamic land; preserving and promoting the military power in war; protecting the Islamic regime and its authority; reinforcing liberating movements and the like. In the goal of "attraction", by attracting and gathering the dispersed and disgusted forces in individual, social and international interactions, we must seek to unite and affiliate individuals including Muslims, Shiites, and convergent groups and countries in global policies. And in the goal of infiltration, in the foreign dimension, we must seek to gain information by infiltrating in the informational systems of the enemy – and even the friendly countries – and in the domestic dimension, we must seek to protect the high interests and expediency of the Islamic state by infiltrating into the groups, societies and parties.

2. The scope of *taqiya* and assessing the possibility of its application in movements

2-1. The scope of *taqiya*

As to the generality and specificity of the evidences of *taqiya*, Imam Baqer says in a hadith, "God has allowed *taqiya* in anything wherein the man feels constrained" (Hurr Ameli, vol. 2, p. 214). Here, Imam has included any occasion of constraint under the title of *taqiya*. Besides, this includes all types of *taqiya* except those instances that are out of the circle of generality and specificity due to certain reasons (Imam Khomeini, al-Rasā'il al-ʿAshr, p. 10). In addition, "No matter the person from whom we avoid through *taqiya* is infidel or Muslim, or is an opponent or a proponent, and the fact that many evidences of *taqiya* are related to dissimulating the opponents do not restrict taqiya to these occasions, for these traditions has nothing to do with restricting *taqiya* to opponents" (Imam Khomeini, p. 11). In general, the addressee of the *taqiya* may be a doctrinal or non-doctrinal opponent (Safari, 1381 SH, p. 211).

Another point to be noted about the scope of *taqiya* is that *taqiya* as mentioned in jurisprudence has been discussed, due to the individualism of the jurisprudence, with an individual view. Besides, in the individual attitude, the negative and preventive aspects of *taqiya* have been considered more than the positive and motivating aspects. Similarly, in jurisprudence, *taqiya* has been posed in relation to doctrines, while it is a rational decree and is applicable to other issues as well, as is confirmed by the Infallibles' way of life. However, the evolution that happened mainly after the revolution with leading the jurisprudence into the social and political scenes was also effective in entering the *taqiya* into these arenas. This is attested by the maximum usage of this rule in the political and social scenes. In addition, the use of the positive aspect of *taqiya* also increased. Especially usage of tolerating *taqiya* by the leaders of the revolution and other jurists in regard with the Muslims' unity broadened the capacity of this rule.

Accordingly, the scope of *taqiya*, in its positive and negative aspects, in various discussions including the political, social and the like, especially in the issues related to the Islamic movements and interactions of the Islamic states with Islamic movements and other states in the international arena became widespread among the jurists.

Another point is that although *taqiya* is hidden and the concealment lies inside it, by considering the tolerating *taqiya* and its goal, which is attracting and giving affection, it is clarified that *taqiya* also involves the other party's being informed or uninformed of reality. That is, the opponent may be informed of the person's *taqiya*, but due to some reasons, the mere appearance of the person may be sufficient for him. This is assumable in tolerating *taqiya*.

2-2. Assessing the possibility of applying *taqiya* in creating and continuing the movements.

Is *taqiya* applicable to movements? Is this application a positive one or a negative one?

As an introduction, it is worth noting that the context of formation of the Shiite and Sunnite movements is often the existence of domestic crises originated from the weakness of the states in facing with the dominance of the foreigners and colonialists as well as getting far from the Islamic foundations and rules (Bana'i, 1390 SH, p. 77). These crises have caused the formation of most movements, especially their initial core, to be accompanied by *taqiya*. Besides, the continuation of the movements is possible just on the basis of *taqiya*. These crises include the crisis of illegitimacy of the political regime, the existence of political economics, paying no heed to Islam and Islamic culture on the part of various regimes, struggling with western ideas and the manifestations of the western civilization, and the like. Some of the movements have a synthesis of these factors. An example is the Islamic movement of Iran that welcomed the positive aspects of the western

civilization while having a critical look at it and rejecting its negative aspects. As Imam Khomeini says, "We accept the western civilization, but reject its corruptions" (Imam Khomeini, Ṣaḥīfayi Imām, vol. 6, p. 276).

In the first look at movements from the perspective of the *taqiya* rule, a negative correlation or a contrast comes to mind. This is because *taqiya* means self-control and is often done through concealment, while a movement is created by expressing one's beliefs overtly and resisting oppression, not silence and concealment. According to this view, we must say that not only *taqiya* has no room in movements, but also it hinders them. Of course, this does not mean that *taqiya* has nothing to do with the movements; rather, it shows its negative effect on them. *Taqiya* has a negative effect on movements, because concealment and secretiveness hinder the *taqiya*. In other words, inciting others to show overt reaction and to reveal and express their beliefs against oppression and undesirable behaviors – which is a necessary condition for a movement – is inconsistent with *taqiya*. Accordingly, we may say that the negative effect of *taqiya* on movements is stasis and stagnation.

However, the positive application of *taqiya* in movements leads to the formation and continuity of them. That is, *taqiya* does not have merely the negative and preventive role for beginning and continuing a movement; rather, it has the positive application and role, leading to its continuity and its coming out of the dead end. We will deal with this fact in the next discussions.

Now that many applications of *taqiya* in movements are clarified, we must deal with the question of whether the role of *taqiya* rule in movements is a tactical role or a strategic and planning one. In other words, if our look at *taqiya* is a tactical look, it is used just in special occasions and temporarily. But if our look is a strategic one, it will have a planning and perpetual role. In answering this question, we must say that *taqiya* is – from one perspective – a tactic, because it is a

secondary jurisprudential decree, not a primary one. And a secondary decree is a temporary one and dependent on its necessity and its criterion. This is while the primary decree is a perpetual and fixed one. Thus, we must say that *taqiya* is a tactic, not a strategy. From another perspective, however, some types of *taqiya* – such as tolerating *taqiya* – are not dependent on emergency and necessity. The goal of this type of *taqiya* is also unity among Muslims, which is a typical expediency that must be the Muslims' perpetual strategy and plan. Thus, in this view, *taqiya* is a strategy. Also in the views presented by Infallible Imams, tolerating *taqiya* is a strategy, not a tactic, as it is clarified from Imam Sadeq's answer to Mu'awiya bin Wahab. Ha asked Imam how we should associate with a group that does not share our beliefs. Imam answered, "Look at your Imams; follow them and act as they do." Then he added "I swear God that Imams go to visit their sick people, take part in their funeral ceremonies, etc." (Hurr Ameli, vol 12, p. 6). In this hadith, Imam refers to his own strategy and perpetual behavior in interacting with opponents.

According to what we said, some types of *taqiya* are strategy and plan, such as tolerating *taqiya*, while others are based on necessity and emergency and, hence, are considered tactics, because persons and groups use them just in certain occasions and temporarily. One may say that considering most types of *taqiya* and emergencies, *taqiya* is in principle a tactic; and this is not inconsistent with its being promoted to a strategy in line with higher expediency. Anyway, we must note the point that the tactical or strategic state of *taqiya* in an occasion must continue up to the end. Indeed, we may not consider *taqiya*, first, as strategic and perpetual in an occasion and, after a while, consider it tactical and temporary, changing its decree in the pass of time.

In confirming the tactical state of some types of *taqiya*, Ayatollah Khamene'i believes that Ahl al-Bayt – and following them the jurists – have used a tactic called *taqiya* according to which they would hide

many of the Shiite truths to protect the foundation of the Shiite society and the Shiites' lives. In some cases, they have even stated things opposing their own beliefs (Khamene'i, lecture on 04/28/1365 SH).

3. Occasions of forbidding *taqiya* in movements (the role of negating taqiya in movements)

In all religions, denominations and schools, including the sacred religion of Islam, honesty and stating the truth is a principle and telling lies is forbidden and indecent. This is a rational decree as well. Accordingly, the primary decrees of the Islamic jurisprudence regard telling lies as illicit. Thus, *taqiya* is a secondary decree contrary to the principle, which is allowed in certain cases with certain reasons. And in case there is no justified reason for *taqiya*, it will be forbidden and illicit. That is, the main role of *taqiya* is the forbiddance it creates and – thereby – prevents stating the truth. This is how *taqiya* is formed. In that case, *taqiya* has lost its priority, and the primary decree of forbiddance of *taqiya* returns to the scene. In other words, in case there is a contrast between *taqiya* and starting or continuing a movement, *taqiya* will be forbidden in favor of movements and vice versa according to the rule of "more important and important". In jurisprudential investigations regarding the Islamic movements, we find cases wherein the religious law issues a decree on forbiddance of *taqiya* and priority of starting, announcing or continuing a movement in accordance with the rule of priority of 'more important' over the 'important'. This is because *taqiya* has a negative effect on the movement and priority of movement over the *taqiya* causes the forbiddance of *taqiya*. Here, we deal with cases that gain priority in contrast to *taqiya*, have a negative effect on it and make it forbidden. Indeed, these cases are the negative role or effect imposed on *taqiya* on occasions when there is a contrast between *taqiya* and the movements.

3-1. Opposition to the ends of religion

Protecting religion is among the goals and ends of the *Shariʿa,* and it is the end of the combat in many Islamic movements. In case it is inconsistent with *taqiya*, this issue is prior to it, and the negative effect of this contrast leads to negation of *taqiya*. That is, if *taqiya* harms the main goals of religion and is somehow in contrast to those goals, there is no room for *taqiya*. For example, one may seek to invite to the divine religion – which is a sacred goal – through perfidy, telling lie, deception and trickery in the form of *taqiya*. This *taqiya* is forbidden because the means is in contrast with the goal. According to Ayatollah Khameneʾi, "if someone wants to achieve his goal by opposing the principles of his goal, this is not called *taqiya* in the logic of the Islam and Shiʿism. For instance, suppose one wants to be the leader of the Islamic society, and the necessary condition for leadership is piety and justice. If he furthers his goals and becomes the leader through impiety and injustice, he will oppose the principles determined for the leadership of the Islamic society in Islam and in the Quran" (Khameneʾi, 1396 SH, p. 335). He continues to say, "In the logic of Islam, what leads the man to his goal must not be contrary to the goal; it must not be unsacred and impure" (Khameneʾi, 1396 SH, p. 340). Accordingly, *taqiya* in movements, if it opposes the goals and ends – which is indeed in contrast to the goals of the Islamic movement – is forbidden. In other words, in the contrast between starting or continuing movements and *taqiya*, if *taqiya* (in the form of silence or concealment) is inconsistent with the ends of religion, while the goals of religion call for the believers' movement and activity, the movement that is in line with the goals of religion is certainly prior to taqiya that prevents the movement and is inconsistent with the goals of religion.

3-2. Possibility of apparent combat

Combating oppression is among the definite principles of religion

and is prior to many religious obligations. Many movements are created for negating oppression and enforcing the Islamic laws; and *taqiya* is an excuse for silence against oppression. Accordingly, if it is possible to fight against an oppressor, fighting is prior and it is an obligation for the person. And in the case where there is a contrast between this obligation and *taqiya*, combating is prior to *taqiya*. Evidences such as the rule of justice, enjoining good and forbidding evil and tens of verse and traditions give priority to fighting against oppressors, give it priority to *taqiya*, and – consequently – forbid *taqiya*. Accordingly, one of the obstacles of formation or continuation of the Islamic movements against oppression and corruption is *taqiya*; thus, if combating is possible, *taqiya* will be forbidden and illicit. Ayatollah Khamene'i says, "If one is not to combat the oppressive system of a ruler, it is necessary to do *taqiya* for protecting one's life, just like Imam Baqer and the early years of Imam Sadeq's imamate when they were not to do uprising due to lack of force and necessary means. But if the ground is prepared for struggling – whether because the oppressive system murders the individuals or the Shiites start combating – there will be no room for *taqiya* anymore" (Khamene'i, lecture on 15/08/1379 SH). In explaining the hadith "When taqiya causes the bloodshed, it is not permitted. I swear God if [in that case] you were asked to assist us, you will say we won't do that; verily, we do *taqiya*" (Hurr Ameli, vol. 16. P. 234), Ayatollah Khamene'i says, "This sentence means since the present time is the era of no struggle between the rulers and the Shiites, we made *taqiya* obligatory. But if the ground is prepared for uprising, no *taqiya* is permitted any longer" (Khamene'i, lecture on 15/08/1379 SH).

To sum up, if the ground is prepared for explicit and clear expression of the position of the opponents, it is necessary for those who establish a movement to proclaim their position against the

oppressive ruler. In that case, silence – for doing *taqiya* – is assisting the oppressor and hence forbidden.

3-3. *Taqiya* in the principles of Islam

Many Islamic movements and uprisings are created for reviving the principles and foundations of Islam. Accordingly, some groups of Muslims have risked their lives by forbidding *taqiya* for themselves and uprising against the ruling regime. Imam Khomeini – in early stages of his movement – considered *taqiya* as an illicit practice and told religious scholars, "The gentlemen must consider the fact that the principles of Islam are in danger, the Quran and the religion are in danger. Thus, *taqiya* is forbidden and it is obligatory [for us] to express the truths, no matter what happens" (Imam Khomeini, 1368 SH. Vol. 1, p. 40). Elsewhere, he calls out, "I swear God the one who does not call out is sinful. I swear God the one who does not call out has committed a major sin" (Imam Khomeini, 1368 SH. Vol. 1, p. 105). Thus, in an opposition between *taqiya* and the principles of Islam, *taqiya* loses its priority and proclaiming one's position is permitted or even obligatory; hence, *taqiya* is forbidden in such cases.

3-4. Opposing the principles of the movement

Sometimes, *taqiya* is opposing the basic principles of the movement. That is, practicing *taqiya* would hinder the movement and achieving its goals. In such cases, it is necessary to first discern the priority of the issue on the basis of religious criteria and according to the rule of "more important and important", which is a rational rule and is among the bases of *taqiya*. If the movement has priority, *taqiya* is not practiced, because it has a negative effect on the movement. Imam Khomeini's shout on the silence of the religious scholars was due to this fact: "Woe to us, woe to these silent scholars, woe to the silent Najaf, woe to the silent Qom! Today, silence is accompaniment with

the oppressive regime. Don't be silent!" (Imam Khomeini, 1368 SH. Vol. 1, p. 12).

3-5. Risk to the individuals' life

Protecting individuals' lives is one of the priorities in the Islamic laws. Some tinkers have even considered it among the ends of *Shariʿa* (Muhammad bin Makki Ameli, n.d., vol 2, p. 20). Except for some special cases, this issue is prior to other issues. The jurists also believe – based on the authentic hadiths such as "when *taqiya* leads to losing one's life, there is no *taqiya*" (Hurr Ameli, vol. 11, p. 483) – that persons' lives are prior to *taqiya*. In an interpretation of the above hadith, Ayatollah Khameneʾi says, "Due to the importance of blood, we give up the ruling reason (traditions permitting taqiya). That is, if doing taqiya leads to bloodshed, *taqiya* will no longer be permitted… The purpose of *taqiya*, in hadiths, is the ability to protect one's life. But if the situation is such that protecting the person's life is not possible anymore, *taqiya* would be nonsense" (Khameneʾi, lecture on 8/15/1379 SH).

Now in the contrast between *taqiya* and this religious obligation, since the creation or continuation of movements may endanger the individuals' lives, we must say if *taqiya* on the part of individuals and groups who seek to start movements and uprisings against the ruling regime causes struggles and bloodshed of the innocent people, *taqiya* will not be permitted. In that case, the individuals have the duty to give up *taqiya* and explicitly announce their position to prevent shedding the blood of the innocent people. In other words, if announcing the position of the opponent groups prevents shedding the blood of an innocent person, *taqiya* will be forbidden and announcing the position will be obligatory. On the contrary, if *taqiya* causes prevention of bloodshed and saves the lives of individuals, it will be obligatory and, consequently, starting a movement and announcing positions will be forbidden.

3-6. Having no effect

Sometimes, *taqiya* and concealment has no effect in starting or continuing the movement. Besides, it may have no effect in the treatment of the ruling system with these groups. For example, the ruling system may have precise information on facilities and abilities of the movement and its opponents. In that case, not only is there no goodness in *taqiya*, but also expressing the reality is – primarily – necessary. Similarly, in some cases, expressing the truth is more beneficial than concealing it. In such cases, *taqiya* is also forbidden and announcing the movement's positions is necessary.

3-7. Political and international considerations

Political and international considerations may also be effective in announcing the groups' beliefs and expressing their positions clearly. In that case, there is no permission for *taqiya* and it is forbidden and unlawful.

4. Positive roles of *taqiya* in Islamic movements

In discussion on the role of *taqiya* in Islamic movements, we must first note that *taqiya* plays role both in starting the movements and in continuing them. It plays a variety of roles in each of these arenas. Here, we refer to some of them.

4-1. The Immunizing role

Taqiya – due to fearing of a superior power – may have an immunizing role for an individual, a group or a country. Regarding the movements, there are two types of immunity: internal or domestic and external or international. Besides, since movements are objections to the status quo due to the corruption and weakness of the state and disappointment from reformation on the part of rulers, there are inevitable internal risks for those who establish the movements. And

this is followed by their *taqiya*. *Taqiya* creates immunity for the establishers. In the international level, there may be risks in interactions between countries and movements. Examples are the governments' fear of unsettling their interactions in the international arena, or emergence of wars among countries by revealing their assistance to some movements. Accordingly, the interactions and behaviors of the combatant groups in facing the governments are done in the form of *taqiya*. In practice, *taqiya* may affect the positive and negative interactions of combatants with countries and the countries with one another, and erupt in another form. In other words, countries or movements may temporarily give up their beliefs, functions and behaviors or manifest them in another form to keep immune from major harms.

In these interactions, *taqiya* serves as a shield for protecting the lives of individuals, the doctrines, the country, the collective and group identity and the like against the harms of the oppressive rulers. It also keeps the movements immune from the attacks of the opponents to individuals or their group identity. Similarly, the purified Imams would sometimes issue fatwas according to the opinions of the Sunnite scholars to protect the organization and solidarity of the Shiite movement and prevent the schism among Muslims (Ayatollah Khamene'i, 1397 SH, pp. 486-487).

4-2. The converging role

One of the most important roles of *taqiya* is its converging role, which leads to the unity and solidarity of the forces of movement. That is, due to a higher expediency of the movement, individuals and groups, and in the international arena, the government has the duty to tolerate and not insist on its positions in accepting or compromising on beliefs opposing the reality or opposing its own beliefs. The tolerating *taqiya* often plays this role. And this is one of the signs of

flexibility of religion. This leads to the peaceful coexistence of the Muslims and their solidarity. According to Imam Khomeini, "Perhaps the mystery of all these encouragement and advising to do tolerating *taqiya* in hadiths is considering the Muslims' expediency to make them achieve solidarity through tolerating *taqiya* and not to come under the domination of infidels. And this [type of] *taqiya* is beneficial for the Shiites; and if they were acting in opposition to it, they would be subject to extinction" (Imam Khomeini, 1368 SH. Vol. 1, p. 70).

The Holy Quran advises the Prophet to come to convergence even with non-Muslims, remembering him to invite the people of scripture to unite on common points: "Say, 'O People of the Book! Come to a common word between us and you…'" (The Quran, Āl-'Imrān: 64). This verse advises [the Prophet] to converge with non-Muslims with the aim of the theists' unity against the polytheists and, besides, it orders [Muslims] to accept the people of scripture in the Islamic country as *dhimmī* and create security for them just by paying a little money [as *jiziya*], all aiming at convergence and unity of the monotheists.

Preserving the unity and solidarity of the Muslim groups and monotheist groups against oppression and corruption, and victory over the common enemy requires putting aside minor religious differences to achieve the high goals of the movement through tolerating the followers of other religions and associating with them kindly. The scope of this toleration involves various dimensions of individuals, groups and countries in the domestic and international levels including cultural, political, social, economic, military-security and other arenas. For instance, Ayatollah Khamene'i addresses the guests in the Ahl al-Bayt Conference and says, "We as the dependents of Shi'ism must feel and announce – by all means – that we believe in solidarity in the Islamic world and unity of the followers of the mottos 'There is no god Except Allah' and Muhammad is Allah's messenger. Today, we must become the initiator of unity in the world, just as all great Imams

(Peace Be Upon Them) were always the agents of unity and solidarity" (Aatollah Khamene'i, lecture on 3/4/1396 SH).

He continues his lecture by adducing the glorified verse 46 of the chapter Anfāl ("and do not dispute! or you will lose heart and your power will be gone") to emphasize creation of unity and affection towards other Islamic denominations: "Do not let the enemy misuse you. Do not let the enemy weaken and destroy your brethren with your hands. Regard all people in the Islamic world as your brethren" (Khamene'i, 3/4/1369 SH). All these also apply to the movements.

4-3. The mobilizing role

The secret formation of the central core of a movement is mixed with *taqiya*. The theoretical and practical *taqiya* create a sense of security in the person, leading to the promotion of collective thoughts, and making others join the movement. This is a mobilizing factor. *Taqiya* prevents the individual or group from stasis, mobilize them towards their goal, and this leads to a movement. "We understand from the traditions that *taqiya* is a means for leading a purposeful man towards his goal." (Khamene'i, 1396 SH, p. 340). This means that "*taqiya* is not along with stagnation, retard, or withdrawal; rather, it is a sign of resistance for achieving one's goal." (Khamene'i, 1396 SH, p. 340).

4-4. The leading role

Taqiya is the factor leading persons towards a goal. This is because movements – due to combating the dominance of oppression and corruption – cannot continue their move towards their goal in a clear manner. Thus, they pursue their goal in the form of *taqiya* with a lower speed. Thus, *taqiya* furthers the movement. In other words, with *taqiya* the combat continues in another form or another path and leads the movement towards its goals. In interpreting *taqiya*, Ayatollah Khamene'i believes that, "it means the individual steps forward and

strikes a blow to the enemy secretly and without attracting the enemy's attention" (Ayatollah Khamene'i, 1396 SH, p. 340). Some assume that *taqiya* is a compromise with the oppressor, while this is not true. Rather, [in *taqiya*] the combat continues in another form and with a lower speed. Martyr Motahhari believes that the decree on the principle of combating the oppression is not alterable, but its form can be changed with *taqiya*. According to him, "the requirements of time can affect the form of the combat. The requirements of time can never have the effect of allowing compromise with the oppressor at a time and not allowing it in another time. No; reconciling with the oppressor is never allowed in any time, any place and in any form. But the form of combating can alter. Combating may be overt or it may be covert and concealed" (Morteza Motahhari, 1368 SH, p. 97).

Apart from what we stated up to now, we may say that calling *taqiya* the 'shield' in hadiths such as "*taqiya* is the believer's shield" (Hurr Ameli, vol. 16, p. 227) also suggests that *taqiya* is the factor for furthering the cause, because a shield is used for advancing and combating, not stagnation and withdrawal. In interpreting this hadith, Ayatollah Khamene'i says, "The shield pertains to the battlefield and martyrdom is the result" (Khamene'i, lecture on 3/4/1369).

Taqiya is a shield that protects an individual, a group or a country against enemy's blows. Thus, *taqiya* is a factor leading the person to the goal, not a factor for stagnation, stasis and withdrawal. The tolerating *taqiya* also has the leading role.

4-5. The continuing role

Just as *taqiya* has a role in creating movements, it also has a role in continuing them; that is, the movement does not remain fixed; rather, it continues with *taqiya*. And even it may play a more important role in that arena. The continuing role is possible with both types of *taqiya*. On the one hand, the tolerating *taqiya* helps the movement to continue

for achieving the common goal by tolerating those who have different thoughts and beliefs participating in the movement. On the other hand, concealing the beliefs – which is done by apprehensive *taqiya* – prevents the owners of power and the opponents from explicit opposition and obstruction. And this also help the movement to continue in a lower gear. In a reference to the combatants' *taqiya* in Imam Khomeini's movement, Ayatollah Khamene'i says, "When we did *taqiya*, it meant that we would blow the enemies with our sword but in a way that the enemies would neither see the sword nor would he see the hand holding it. They would understand neither the rising of the sword, nor lowering it. They would just feel the pain. The individuals would prepare – for example – [revolutionary] manifestos secretly in secret houses and with many considerations ad precautions, manifestos that – when distributed – would discredit the regime" (Ayatollah Khamene'i, 11/9/1368 SH).

4-6. The honoring role

Honor means impenetrability. We may well say that the most important factor for the impenetrability of the movements is *taqiya*. And this is somehow created by both types of *taqiya*: apprehensive and tolerating. On the one hand, in the apprehensive type of *taqiya*, the minority that seeks to protect its beliefs among the majority has no way other than *taqiya* to remain intact and prevent its defeat resulted from the enemy's infiltration. On the other hand, the tolerating *taqiya* attracts individuals and groups and forms a coalition with them to add a large population to the movement. This will also lead to the honor and invincibility of the movement.

4-7. The Concealing role

One of the issues that the establishers of the movements must pay heed to is concealing and not revealing their plans, abilities, facilities,

and human resources. The beginning of the movement and formation of its initial core must be done with secrecy and in a hidden manner. The Prophet would also secretly invite, in the first three years of his invitation, to Islam just his associates and those who can be his assistants in forming the initial core of the pious people: "Warn the nearest of your kinsfolk" (The Quran, Shu'arā: 214).

Since the intelligent services of various countries often seek to obtain information about the opponents, especially the groups and movements created in countries, to fight them, the Muslim combatants must conceal their plans and abilities according to the rule of *taqiya*.

4-8. The formalizing role

Taqiya, especially in its tolerating form, helps the formalization of the movements. That is, the tolerating *taqiya*, which is called also *taḥbībī* (affective) *taqiya*, attracts – through toleration and forgiveness – the majority's affection towards the minority group, proximity of hearts, reduction of enmities, and – consequently – attracting the positive view of the majority regarding the minority's desires. Attracting the positive view of the majority is a step towards mutual understanding and communicating the minority's message to the majority group and has beneficial results in various societies. The power created through attracting the view of the majority not only frightens the enemies and opponents, but also may cause the minority group to be accepted by the majority group of opponents. For instance, Ayatollah Boroujerdi's tolerating *taqiya* with the Sunnite scholars caused al-Azhar university, as the greatest and the most authentic scientific center of the Sunnites, acknowledge the Shi'ism as one of the Islamic denominations, dealing with promoting the Shiite scholars' jurisprudential works (Ali Bana'i, 1390 SH, p. 31). In short, the minority that establishes a movement can practice tolerating *taqiya* and attract the majority's affection and positive view to force the government to acknowledge its formality.

4-9. The role of getting out of isolation

The dominant majority often seeks to isolate and marginalize the opponent minority. Accordingly, the religious leaders would order the Shiites – for preventing them from being isolated in societies where the majority consisted of non-Shiite Muslims – to practice *taqiya* and accompany the majority. Similarly, in the non-Muslim societies wherein the Muslims were minority, the leaders would order them to associate with the non-Muslims, overlook the manners that do not harm religion, and even participate in their collective affairs not opposing the basic principles of religion, such as the congregational prayer or hajj rituals of the Sunnites. Today, the enemies of Shi'ism – like Wahhabis – are waiting for an opportunity to isolate the Shiites by their absence in hajj, as the public show of the Muslims, to issue a judgment as to their infidelity, and struggle the Shiite movements as infidels in the Islamic countries. Similarly, in the non-Muslim countries, participation of the Muslim minority in wars waged against the country by paying taxes to the non-Islamic government all are necessary to prevent Muslims' political and social isolation. Today, an example is Muslims' participation in collective campaigns in non-Muslim countries such as elections and specifying candidates for Parliament. In discussing the movements, the tolerating *taqiya* gets the minority, who opposes the regime and seeks to start a movement, out of the isolation.

4-10. The reserving role

Reserving forces and storing facilities are among the roles of *taqiya*. That is, until the time is suitable for overt struggle, the forces and facilities are reserved by *taqiya* so that they may not be wasted. An example is the Prophet's behavior in the first three years of his prophetic mission when he used secret propagation to form the initial core of the Muslim's community and reinforce them. The Prophet's

companions protected both themselves and the Prophet in silence and *taqiya* and reserved their forces and facilities to prepare the ground for combating the polytheism and doing overt propagation. Otherwise, the Prophet's enemies would prevent the formation of the Muslims' initial core by threatening and subornation. This is true about the movements as well.

4-11. Obliteration of hatred

The tolerating *taqiya* helps to attract individuals by tolerating and winning the opponents' affection and by living with them peacefully; and this leads to obliterating hatred in the society. In discussion on movements, the tolerating *taqiya* on the part of an objecting minority who seeks to start a movement against the government leads to attracting the majority's affection. Besides, in long term, it will lead to mental preparation of the public for hearing the voice of the movement and accepting its cause.

Conclusion

Taqiya is a rational decree and has been present in all nations. It is quite different from lying and deception forbidden in all religions. The Islamic law has allowed it for special conditions – temporarily – and specified certain criteria for it, which are determined according to sublime expediencies. This rule, in its jurisprudential record, has been used in 'tolerating' and 'apprehensive' forms in most individual interactions with opponents or the oppressive ruler, and sometimes in confronting the enemy. However, it is a general rule and can be used in a variety of individual, social and international interactions in different arenas. On many occasions, it may be necessary to make use of this rule in combating the oppressive rulers to avoid their evil and save the innocent lives. Since telling the truth and expressing reality is a principle, and giving priority to the 'more important' affair over the

'important' one as a rational judgment is the basis of the rule, then in a contrast between *taqiya* and various issues, it is necessary to assess the importance and priority of the two sides and choose the more important one. In the discussion on the movements, in some cases the movement is prior to *taqiya* and forbids it, while on other occasions, *taqiya* is prior to the overt expression of the movement. In the later cases, *taqiya* plays role in movements that helps them to further their cause, roles such as immunizing, convergence, mobilizing, getting out of isolation, and the like.

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