

The Public Diplomacy and its Relationship with Efficient Governance in Islamic Republic of Iran Based on the Theory of the Jurist's Authority

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Abstract

One of the important issues in social sciences is the question on how a theory is developed in practice. The way a theory can create basic changes in operational milieu is of great importance in political-social theories. The present study aims at investigating how the theory of the jurist's authority – as a theory of governance in the modern plural and complicated world – can extend to the multilayer and plural operational milieu. The question of the present study is focused on effectiveness of the theory of jurist's authority on promotion of efficiency of public diplomacy (including important spheres of political activism) as

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well as religious activism (IRI) in the international system, and answers the question of through what parameters this effectiveness occurs. It seems that the theory of jurist's authority as the most important part of the religious governance can affect the sphere of public diplomacy through its effective tools and variables. This affects the public diplomacy through "producing operational software and sources of soft power", "creating common understanding and organizational cooperation of agents", "creating discourse and institutions", "desirable imaging and giving credit", and "enjoying attraction in messaging and creating common understanding among nations".

Keywords

theory of jurist's authority, governance, efficiency, public diplomacy.

Introduction

Political theories are able to continue in two spheres of theory and practice when they prove the correspondence between their veracity and reality. Correspondence of veracity causes the application of theory to come under trial in various spheres. Applying the theory in subsidiary spheres and creating mutual strengthening relationship between theory and practice promotes the theory in question to the level of discourse and, as a result, common sciences are created therein. These common sciences can answer the crises and challenges facing the political-social life of a society. When the theory and the discourse emerged out of it can answer those challenges, we will observe theoretical expansion and efficiency in agency. The theory of “the jurist’s authority” (*wilāyat faqīh*) as a theory of governance must be able to explain the process of effectiveness in the practice sphere in order to prove its correspondence with veracity and create the strengthening relationship of the two spheres of theory and practice and, finally, turning into the dominant discourse.

In the present study, we attempt to explain the relationship between spheres of theory and practice by assessing the theory of “*wilāyat faqīh*” in regard with public diplomacy. Since the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* is realized in the sphere of practice through the institution of *wilāyat faqīh*, the aforementioned assessment must consider the practical capacities of *wilāyat faqīh* in addition to its theoretical capacities. The public diplomacy is formed by the relationship of one country with the people of other countries through non-governmental agents alongside governments. For realization of public diplomacy, this relationship must lead to affecting the people out of the inland borderlines and influencing their hearts and brains, because in today’s plural and complicated international system, the agents must enjoy enough power for persuading global thoughts and attracting international

companions. This is because in the contemporary world, it is not enough for the countries to defend their borders or watch up their skies and seas to ensure and realize their national security; rather, they need to make efforts for reconstructing, stabilizing and improving an effective image outside their official borders. The role of the instrument of public diplomacy in creating a desirable image of a country outside its borders has always made various countries and theoreticians explain variables affecting it.

The institution of *wilāyat faqīh* as the most important part of the structure of Islamic governance has the capacity to affect the sphere of public diplomacy through its special instruments and effective variables. However, this necessitates rereading of the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* and explanation and analysis of the role of its indices and instruments from the perspective of being effective in the efficiency of public diplomacy. The issue in this study is how the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* will affect the increase in level of efficacy of the public diplomacy. The main and central question here is that through which indices the formation of this effectiveness occurs in promotion of efficacy of the public diplomacy. By efficacy in this article, we mean analysis of the indices and instruments of the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* for desirable effectiveness on public diplomacy in order to promote the quality of realization of the goals and mission of the Islamic government in the international arena.

The article has been organized on the basis of the following hypothesis: “The theory of *wilāyat faqīh*, due to its important status and unique function in the structure of government, can be effective in various dimensions of governance including the efficacy of diplomacy”. The findings of this article show that the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* is effective in promoting the level of efficacy of public diplomacy through producing the operational software and soft sources, creating common understanding and organizational cooperation

of agencies, creating discourses and institutions, making desirable images and granting credits, enjoying attractions in messaging based on political values, and creating common understanding among nations. Each of these indices removes or reduces, from a negative point of view, one of the main and major challenges of governance; and from the positive point of view, it prepares the ground for explanatory – not normative – policy-making in the agency of IRI in the contemporary international system. We will point to both of them during our discussion. Besides, the indices of efficacy of public diplomacy based on theory of *wilāyat faqīh* can extrude the theory from the sphere of abstraction and prepare the ground for possibility of operational definition. The present study gathers library data and through the method of descriptive-analytical processing. To organize this study, first we explained the conceptual construct among the fundamental concepts of the study and, then, we investigated and analyzed the relationship among the indices of governance based on *wilāyat faqīh* for efficacy of the public diplomacy.

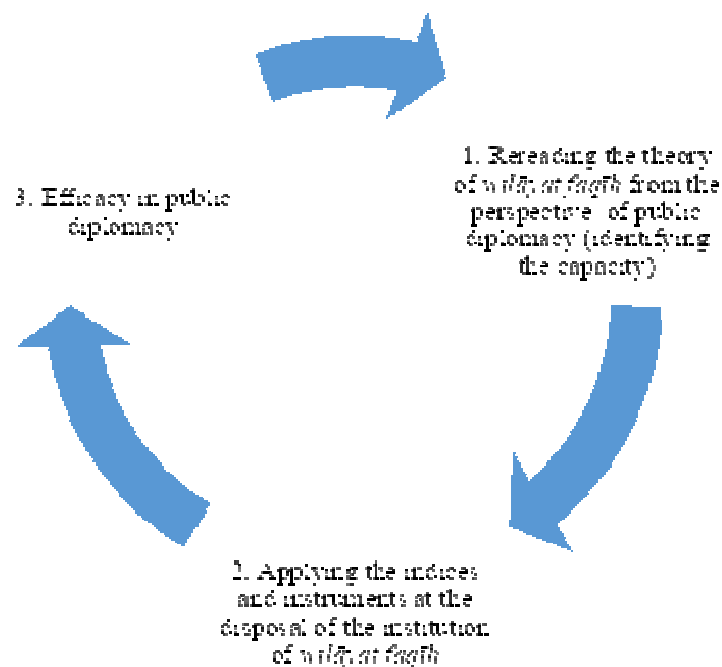
1. The conceptual framework of the study: mutual strengthening of the *wilāyat faqīh* and diplomacy

The main goal of the present study is to identify the capacity of the components of governance for adding the existing potentials in the system of Islamic governance in order to further and fulfill the goals and policies of the Islamic government in the international arena. Thus, three main concepts of governance based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh*, public diplomacy, and its fruit, i.e. efficacy, are the three central concepts of this study. We must note that the process of this effectiveness is in a way that first the instruments and indices of the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* as the main variable in producing power in the governance system of Islam are reread. Then, these capacities are used in public diplomacy and, in the next step, their output is used in

the sphere of efficacy and stability of power of foreign politics of Islamic countries in the international arena. In the second cycle, the amount and level of efficacy are returned as a feedback to this theory so that the capacity of the instruments and indices of the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* may be reread. The establishment of Islamic government in Iran is among the most important evolutions in the recent centuries; and the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* is the central theory of the Shiite discourse regarding the theories of governance in the jurisprudence of state. The theory of *wilāyat faqīh* is a method of transcendental governance based on a divine value system founded for the worldly and otherworldly felicity of people in one geographical sphere of a broader sphere. According to this type of governance, God is the true ruler of the people, and the embodiment of this governance is in the form of governance of a man over people based on the divine criteria. Thus, since the origin of governance is, in the longitudinal form, God and man (the Prophet, Imams and the authoritative jurist), the right to this governance belongs to God, the prophets and their divine successors and, in the time of Occultation, the authoritative jurist; and the exertion of that governance is done through public votes. (Amid Zanjani, 1377 SH, vol. 1, p. 79). The governance based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* after the victory of Islamic Revolution opened a new season in the sphere of discussions on political jurisprudence, and Imam Khomeini was one of the most prominent theoreticians of it in the contemporary era. It was a theory that could become inspiring for Islamic movements in the recent decades in the international arena by establishing a political system in Iran. It also played a role in theorization in the major level of the international arena by institutionalizing the status and power of the Islamic country of Iran in the higher level, and affected its foreign relations and international activities. It also prepared the ground for presence and institutionalization of the position of the Islamic state of Iran in the

sphere of decision-making in the international scenes. The existence of such a capacity and influence in the domestic and international levels makes it necessary to – again – identify and analyze its role and influence in various dimensions of governance including the foreign policy as one of the important rubrics of the jurisprudence of state. On the other hand, continuous offenses from beyond the borders of the Islamic country of Iran for managing the public thought and influencing them to lead them towards predetermined goals through various tools and methods doubles the importance of dealing with dimensions of public diplomacy and how to use it in view of the capacity of governance in Iran. This is because the main goal of all these offenses is to show the inefficacy of the Islamic regime for accessing its goals and policies in the international arena through various methods including application of public diplomacy as a tool for exerting soft power. Today, issues such as dispatching students to foreign countries and admitting fellowships, dispatching reporters, intra-cultural relations, holding various artistic feasts and various conferences as well as broadcasting audio and video programs and creating websites and social networks are all among capacities considered and used in line with furthering the goals and policies of states in the form of public diplomacy. Thus, the authorities in this arena define public diplomacy as relations focused on national interests through establishing relations with people outside the geographical borders. This type of diplomacy consists of a series of new strategies and tactics at the service of the system of foreign policy and national interests of a country, and mainly attempts to increase its influence in the public thoughts in other countries and attract more and more adherents for its views (Va'izi Vahedi, 1389 SH, p. 12). Accordingly, the central goal of public diplomacy is exerting influence (on minds, hearts, perceptions and behaviors). Public diplomacy considers not only a change in perceptions, but also a change in behaviors, and

success in exerting that influence will lead to promotion of national image overseas (Nancy Snow, 2009, pp. 587-588). Thus, considering the importance of the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* and necessity of rereading its effects in various dimensions of governance system as well as the prominent and strategic position of public diplomacy in diplomatic relations of countries as an important tool at the service of soft power, in the present article, we have tried to scrutinize the existing indices and tools in the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* to identify its capacity for formation of an efficient public diplomacy. To achieve this goal, we must identify – in the first step – the issues in the public diplomacy and, then, go to the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* as the main element of the structure of the Islamic state to identify and analyze the capacity of the indices and tools at the disposal of this institution in order to activate the foreign policy in applying this soft tool in the international arena.



2. The indexes resulted from the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* and public diplomacy

Governance based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* after the victory of Islamic revolution opened a new chapter in the discussions on political jurisprudence, and Imam Khomeini was one of the most prominent theoreticians of this idea in the contemporary era. He could put forward this theory as a practical political theory in opposition to mainly western existing theories. After that, many authorities and experts among the Islamic scholars – including both Shiites and Sunnites – as well as the Iranian and foreign university thinkers commented on it. All those who have judged this theory – including both opponents and proponents – have well seen it in the form of a theory, and no expert has cast doubt on its being a theory from the perspectives of structure and content. Indeed, they have accepted it not just as an opinion, but as a theory (Rahdar, 1390 SH, p. 45). From another perspective, the increase in the influence of public beliefs and behaviors in the political and social relations on the one hand, and the speed in the nation's awareness of events on the other hand have connected their perception and have made the international system a network. In such an atmosphere, public diplomacy is among the instruments used today as a soft instrument for managing the mentalities of other nations and there is a transition from hardware to software in it. The existence of such a capacity caused governments to seek to produce effective variables in the international arena and pursue a mechanism in practice that can provide the requirements of public diplomacy and prepare the ground for its efficacy in the international arena. Then, we have tried to analyze and investigate the indices of governance based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* and the public diplomacy simultaneously so that it may clarify the formation and the quality of each effect of the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* on promotion of efficacy of public diplomacy. The most important

indices resulted from the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* that can have direct effect on efficacy of public diplomacy are “capacity of creating operational software for decision-making and producing soft sources”, “capacity of creating common perception and organizational cooperation of agencies”, “enjoying capacities of creating discourse and institutionalizing”, “desirable imaging and obtaining the trust of the public thoughts”. We will deal with each of these capacities in the next sections.

2-1. The capacity of creating operational software for decision-making and producing sources of soft power

Decisions-making can be considered as the most vital moment for a political system. Decision-making is a sphere of political science that has aroused much discussions, and numerous works have been written in the discipline of international relations. The main questions in this realm are posed as follows: “Is decision-making focused on power or focused on structures and institutions, or even on persons?” and “which of the variables has the most effect in decision-making?” In other words, in decision-making in foreign policy, one must consider its process. If we want to put forward the discussion on *wilāyat faqīh* and public diplomacy, one of the theoretical challenges is how and through what process decision-making occurs in the government based on *wilāyat faqīh*? The claim is that the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* prepares the ground for decision-making by giving operational software and can facilitate this decision-making by producing the sources of power. For instance, one of the most important sources of soft power is “power of trust”. This power is, on the one hand, the product of a series of religious, historical, and personal characteristics of the authoritative jurist (*walī faqīh*) and, on the other hand, is the product of its special legal status in the theory of *wilāyat faqīh*. Clearly, lack of any of the capacities strengthening the theory of

wilāyat faqīh – including its religious originality, the positive function of jurists throughout Islamic history, and finally, the moral features of two of its instances in the experience of Islamic Republic – reduces its power of trust even if we consider the authoritative jurist’s legal status. This is while the public diplomacy, more than any structural and material factor, is founded on trust.

The intellectual foundations and structure as well as the beliefs of the statesmen and politicians play the major and decisive role in decision-makings. Wicklein says, “Most politicians put the issue of national interests at the top of their tasks; and according to George Conan, just through national interests one can perceive other political issues” (Wicklein, 1372, p. 16). While this theory suggests a reality based on the behavior of most politicians in the international arena, it is not a general and irrefutable judgment, and – at least – the politicians of the ideological and value states can specify other tenets as the foundation of their behavior and decision-makings in their foreign policy (Haqiqat, 1374 SH, p. 26-27).

Similarly, we must note that a public diplomacy, however active and strong, cannot sell a non-favorite product and a bad policy. Selfish policies, without paying attention to others’ interests and values inconsistent with human personality will undermine the soft power instead of reinforcing it (Nye, 2004, p. 198). Evaluating and comparing countries from the viewpoint of the quality and quantity of their soft power necessitates a similar and effective model. For this purpose, various models have been presented to analyze the soft power. Among these models, Joseph Nye’s model explains the sources of soft power of countries in a threefold framework. One of them is the political values and domestic policies of countries such as the type of government, ideological attractions, the models of political system and the form and structure of political and legal system of a country (Sheikh al-Islami and Nouri, 1396 SH, vol. 1, p. 201). Accordingly, the type of governments

and the bases of their legitimacy make the basis and method of behaving in their foreign policy different – just like their domestic policy. The existence of value and divine attributes such as justice in the Islamic ruler based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* and the sanctity of its position – which is the position of lieutenancy of Infallible Imam in the Shiites' view – distinguishes him from the leaders of other governments, and brings about a new value system in the structure of government. The authoritative jurist as a political leader at the top point of power enjoys a mutual spiritual, emotional and deep relationship with his followers, which is found less in other systems. Since public diplomacy seeks to exert effective and purposeful influence on public foreign thoughts, not merely to establish a relationship, the authoritative jurist's moral and non-profiteering interaction in governance based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* – as the top of the power hierarchy in the Islamic regime – attracts the nations' spirits due to the capacity of attraction in the message he sends in a milieu wherein the dominant intellectual trend in states is focused on colonializing and exploiting nations. And due to this cultural attraction, not only he affects their public thought, but also attracts their hearts. On the other hand, efficient public diplomacy requires a comprehensive look and must enjoy the greatest number of addressees and the least level of rejection. Thus, the activity of public diplomacy must be consistent with the universal values respected by most people regardless of their race, gender and religious beliefs or – at least – have no negative sensitivity to them (Sheikh al-Islami and Nouri, 1396 SH, vol. 1, p. 46). Since defending Muslims' interests and their lands is not temporary, it is necessary to pursue this principle with certain strategies and methods (Haqiqat, 1387 SH, p. 116). Anti-oppression and justice-seeking values and paying attention to the weak and oppressed people of the world are all among universal values always emphasized by the authoritative jurist and pursued as a strategic policy in the arena

of foreign policy (Imam Khomeini, 1395 SH, vol. 19, p. 199).

In explaining the above discussion, it is necessary to note that today, the governments – as demanded by requisites of managing the society desirably – must on the one hand consider the fixed norms of political system in their decisions and policies; and on the other hand, they must consider the necessary flexibility in facing the difficulties and for resolving them rightly. The role of the scientific system of jurisprudence in administering the religious government and enjoying the capacity to respond properly to the needs of the government enable the jurist responsible for administering the government to use the principle of legal reasoning (*ijtihād*) as the motivating force of Islam for escaping the dead ends in various affairs including the sphere of foreign policy. Thus, some consider the legal reasoning free from jurisprudential analogy as the best solution for various difficulties. This – throughout the history of Islam and with continuous reasoning by the knowledgeable jurists – is adjusted to altering and evolving instances and fulfills various needs by inferring religious laws (Jawadi Amoli, 13778 SH, vol. 1, p. 283). The existence of the tool for inferring the Islamic laws based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* enables the jurist to face the newly emergent political phenomena and not to oppose applying new tools in foreign policy, enabling him to prepare the ground for growth of that phenomenon by relying on the capacity of this element based on Islamic values. According to what we stated up to now, the authoritative jurist can use public diplomacy as a new tool in the international arena and clarify the position of that tool in relation to other elements of governance through theorizing in major affairs of political system with a systematic approach to jurisprudence in all aspects. The main feature of systematic nature in reasoning approach to the authority based on governmental jurisprudence – compared to rival theories – is considering the proportionality of reasoning to administration of government (jurisprudence of system)

in addition to paying attention to the epistemic system governing jurisprudence (system of jurisprudence) (Izadi and Taqizada, 1399 SH, p. 72). Similarly, the reasoning tool enables the Islamic ruler to produce sources necessary for efficacy of public diplomacy in international arena by using soft capacities and cooperative structures of religion.

Numerous examples of soft power can be presented in relation to the type of action of the IRI and governance based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh*: the IRI leader's assistance to famine-stricken Muslims in Somalia ensuing aggravation of the drought crisis and official invitation to Iranian nation for participating in that humanitarian affair in the atmosphere of silence and passivity of international institutions was an example of humanitarian and non-profiteering action of IRI government under the leadership of the authoritative jurist, acted in direct interaction with foreign nations (Ayatollah Khamene'i's website, 1390/09/05). Initiation in establishing Imam Khomeini's Relief Committee by the Supreme Leader of IRI in 1357 SH is another sample to be investigated. That committee is among the organizations playing a silent but considerable role in public diplomacy of IRI. It is an organization aimed at supporting and assisting the deprived and weak people, and helping them in becoming self-sufficient. Its activities at the end of 1360s extended to overseas regions, and its charity offices were established in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and later on countries such as Comoros, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone (Asghari-rad, 1390 SH, p. 103). Some of the sources of producing soft power can be seen in establishing international schools and universities such as al-Mustafa International University, diffusion of relief institutions such as Imam Khomeini Relief Committee in the Islamic world, expanding the capacity of security forces such as Quds Army for securing the surrounding environment, establishing the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Denominations for resolving the disagreements among Islamic

denominations and removing the backgrounds of schism among them, establishing the World Forum of Ahl al-Bayt for reinforcing capacities of followers of Ahl al-Bayt, and the like.

It is noteworthy that although it is a necessary condition – in other opinions in the sphere of the authoritative jurist’s latitude in the Islamic state – for authoritative jurist to have power of legal reasoning, with the existence of minimal approach to jurisprudence in those opinions for entering various arenas of human life and the dominance of this view over their reasoning system, the jurist lacks the motivation necessary for producing science in facing with new issues in various arenas, and even regards entering those arenas as unnecessary and wrong. And in case he enters the sphere of resolving governmental issues, he will limit himself to obligation laws and seeks to resolve governmental problems with logic and rules of individual jurisprudence, while social management necessitates paying attention to meta-individual and institutional behaviors. On the one hand, the holistic approach and the broad sphere of the ruler’s entrance into various issues of the Islamic regime based on governmental jurisprudence as the software of the Islamic government give the jurist ruler instruments – in the position of legal reasoning – that enable him to affect the efficacy of public diplomacy by developing the capacity of governance. This is because from the perspective of governmental jurisprudence, the needs of the society – from the formation of government and enacting laws to enforcing them – must be extracted and produced from inside the *Shari‘a*. (Khorasani, 1392 SH, p. 60). The governmental decree, specifying the expediency, considering the elements of time and place, and paying attention to criteria of laws as well as purposes of religious laws in the process of legal reasoning are among components whose application by the authoritative jurist can amplify his role-play in various arenas including public diplomacy and make jurisprudence objectivity side of society like the international

arena (Moradi Ariyan, 1400 SH, p. 44). Martyr Motahhari believes that “basically, the mystery of legal reasoning is in adjusting general instructions to new issues and changing events. The real expert in legal reasoning is the one who has gained the key to interpretation of issues and is naturally able to change the decrees accordingly (Motahhari, 1341 SH, p. 58). An example of efficacy and influence of governmental decree in public diplomacy can be found in the time of hajj as one of the important capacities for exerting public diplomacy and direct facing with other Islamic nations. For instance, the authoritative jurist guarded the criteria of hajj laws including declaring aversion towards polytheists – especially in conditions wherein the Saudi government hindered hajj rites due to its anti-religious political approaches – to heighten people’s religious confidence to this status in the minds of all Muslims believing in that Quranic decree and prepare the ground for closer relationship between Muslims and the Iranian Supreme Leader’s center as well as the Shiites.

Another sample of important indices of efficient public diplomacy is making desirable images of religious values in the minds of other nations and other religions. Thus, if practicing a necessary religious law leads people to avoid religion, according to the jurisprudential rule of ‘not abhorring religion’, we must refrain from practicing it until public thoughts are justified about Islamic laws and limits as well as the reason for that law, except for those laws that the Holy Legislator is never pleased to give it up. (Montazeri Najafabadi, 1409 AH, vol. 2, p. 501). Thus, stopping enforcement of some Islamic punishments such as cutting one’s hands, retaliation with sword, or stoning that may – in the present time – create negative image [of Islam], the authoritative jurist can use his latitude and consider the expediency of society order to enforce those laws and limits or turn them into alternative punishments. Accordingly, Imam Khomeini – in the early years of Islamic Revolution – unofficially prevented enforcement of stoning

punishment (Mousavi Tabrizi, 1394 SH, p. 2). It is noteworthy that the authoritative jurist's decree can affect public diplomacy both positively and negatively, and thereby make it disciplined and restricted in line with the expediency and preservation of Islamic regime. For instance, we may refer to Imam Khomeini's decree regarding sanctioning Muslims' political and commercial relations with Israel. Since Israel is – in Muslims' view – a usurper state oppressing Palestinian Muslims, Muslims welcomed Imam Khomeini's decree – especially in comparison to the treacherous policies of some Islamic scholars and rulers in interaction with Israel or being silent before it – and it attracted their special trust towards Imam Khomeini.

2-2. The capacity of creating common understanding and organizational cooperation of agencies

Following the events occurred in the sphere of international relations based on the discourse and interpretive theories and approaches, emphasis on non-material factors in regionalist theories has increased. Based on these theories, instead of emphasis on objective criteria in regional studies founded on geography and material dependence, reliance is put on cognitive ideas and images, on discourse ideas such as power of language, on culture, and generally on non-material and ideal structures in regional studies (Dehqani Firouzabadi, 1389 SH, p. 110). Accordingly, to create common understanding among Muslim nations and all liberty-seeking people of the contemporary world, we may use the capacity of teachings that heralds “the idea of ultimate victory of the truth force, peace and justice over the force of falsehood, warfare and oppression, global spread of Islamic faith, complete and all-out establishment of human values, formation of utopia and desirable society as well as enforcing this public and human idea by a sacred and high-level personage called Mahdi in frequent Islamic traditions.” (Motahhari, 1379 SH, p. 5).

The theory of *wilāyat faqīh*, due to the ability to make objective the system of imamate and nation as the discourse of the Shiite political-social system in the Occultation period, defines the Islamic leader in line with the very role of the Prophet except his role in receiving divine revelation. On the other hand, by defining the concept of nation in link with special belief and ideology with no relation to land and nation in its modern sense, grants an important capacity and function to the institution of *wilāyat* as the index of identity for Muslim nations in the Occultation period. This brings about regional and meta-regional convergence with it. This is because the doctrinal unity is the most important source for soft power in the Islamic world. This is a capacity that even the non-Muslim politicians were aware of its value. Thus, Churchill, the first who suggested the formation of European Union, has stressed on the principles of Christianity and common cultural points as the foundation of European Union (Naqibzada, 1387 SH, p. 35). Based on the ideal principle of “one global Islamic state” founded on “the imamate-nation system”, all those who believe in Islam must be put under the governance of one central state and the scope of Islamic government must be as broad as the presence of Islamic nation. Lingual difference or natural vicissitudes or even international borders do not determine the borders between the Islamic lands and infidels’ lands; rather, they are specified by the scope of Muslims’ environment. The model that – based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* – has Islamic transmitted justification and is consistent with the auditory evidences as well as the traditions that emphasize the uniqueness of Imam also negate the multiplicity of imamate (Montazeri, 1408 AH, vol. 1, p. 419). Quite clearly, this convergence prepares an important foundation for exerting public diplomacy in the international arena. This is because the authoritative jurist with his leadership role and by creating and reinforcing the common

understanding among the Muslims and freedom-seeking nations of the region forms an identity in the world wherein masses of people feel being together, belonging to one another and sharing common values and interests. Clearly enough, in such a context, nations can better interact and converse with one another and thereby influence one another. Direct conversation and meetings with masses of people, especially the elites of the Islamic countries, through a variety of means such as sending annual messages in hajj ritual is among the important capacities for creating common understanding among Muslims. The leaders of Islamic Revolution [of Iran] have used this capacity by sending messages to great congress of hajj since 1368 SH. Indeed, these messages play the role of a manifesto in the public diplomacy. Sending a religious-political message from the authoritative jurist to the Islamic nation was among the innovations of the IRI supreme leader, and no other head of the Islamic countries do this, except the king of Saudi Arabia who issues an appreciation message. Giving a lecture in Arabic in Friday Prayer, declaring position in important events of the region including revolution in Egypt and Islamic awakening, and writing an open letter addressed to youths in Europe and North America are all instances of active reaction as the authoritative jurist in Islamic regime in the international arena in the form of public diplomacy. It can be used for creating common understanding among nations to produce regional and meta-regional convergence.

One of the most important challenges related to activism in international arena is that every political unit takes numerous actions in regard with diplomacy; however, many times those actions have neutralized one another instead of synergizing, and they have even resulted in reverse and unwelcome situations (Qashqavi, 1389 SH, p. 66). The existence of harmony and synergy as well as common understanding

among agencies of various sections in the framework of a single structure in the national level is one of the requisites of an efficient public diplomacy. On the other hand, in the efficient public diplomacy, tactics must follow the strategy. Presenting conflicting messages from a single source undermines the legitimacy of efforts (Sheikh al-Islami and Nouri, 1396 SH, vol. 1, p. 45). Ross believes that effective public diplomacy necessitates intra-organizational harmony inside the whole state. Although various messages, languages, addressees, and forms of activities and media will be different in various sections of state and other institutions, all must enjoy one comprehensive plan for public diplomacy in foreign policy (Sazmand and Barati, 1393 SH, p. 53). Thus, for an efficient public diplomacy, in addition to existence of major policies, implementing them must also be in line with strategic policy-making of the country. Among the most important ways for realization of this important idea, in the system of Islamic governance, is using capacities of leadership institution based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh*. This is because according to what we find in explanation of the structure of Iranian Islamic government based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* in constitutional law, the ruling jurist – while enjoying narrower scope of latitude in execution compared to other powers such as executive power (i.e. the state) – enjoys more basic power. Accordingly, in the political system of IRI, the leadership institution is the highest official in the country and the main decision-maker in issues pertaining to foreign policies. Some of these issues have been mentioned in constitutional law, including declaring war or peace in foreign relations (constitutional law, 1368 SH). In the Islamic society, the legitimacy of all state machinery is due to its relationship with the authoritative jurist. And this institution is like a spirit in the body of regime. It has a broad scope that leads to God's authority as well (Behrouzi-lak, 1385 SH, p. 80). According to this theory, since

jurisprudence and jurist enjoy an active approach in the governance system, and since they consider – in an *a priori* form – their duty to be leadership of the society, regard entering the spheres such as public diplomacy – which enjoys an important role in the contemporary world in furthering the goals and spreading religious values – necessary. Backed up by their power and defined latitude based on theory of *wilāyat faqīh* with its uniting capacity among other powers and state or public organizations, they play their role by creating connected attitude and common perception of international issues as well as synergy of all components of government and Islamic society, and thereby bring about the efficacy of the public diplomacy in the sphere of foreign policy. Among the objective samples of this important issue in Islamic government on the part of the Islamic rulers of Iran, we may refer to the approval of statute of Organization of Islamic Culture and Communications by the IRI Supreme Leader in 1375 SH in line with integration and concentration of affairs pertaining to propagations abroad. This plays an important role for creating the context of common understanding and organizational cooperation of state machineries in the sphere of international activities including public diplomacy, because before it, about 12 various organizations and institutions would play role in the sphere of cultural activities abroad. Classifying them under one organization with certain goals is an important step for uniting and synergizing as well as avoiding parallel work of the similar systems in the international sphere, including public diplomacy.

2-3. Enjoying the capacities of creating discourse and institutionalizing

One of the major challenges facing the political theories is the question of whether it is possible for them to turn into a dominant scientific discourse. The experience of most political theories – out of

the borders of governance – shows that if a theory cannot turn into a discourse and then become dominant, i.e. respond to the crises of the sphere of practice, it cannot continue or – at least – it loses the mutual strengthening between the spheres of theory and practice. In other words, among the factors of efficacy of public diplomacy is ability in creating discourse and – thus – institutionalizing. A political theory turns into a discourse when it is replicated through institutions. This can make the appeal of the message and the value governing the discourse more perpetual and can deepen the effect of its imaging. The position of leadership in the governance based on the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* is the axis of legislation and leading in various domains of social-political life, and one of its important domains is foreign policy (Dehqani Firouzabadi, 1389 SH, pp. 254-261). The institution of *wilāyat* supported by the theory of *wilāyat faqīh* and making use of the important political position defined in power is the connecting point around which all the material and spiritual capacities of the government orbit. Thus, the Islamic ruler lucidly explains the values and goals of the Islamic government, delineates the perspective and proclaims the major policies in various domains of governance system, and adjusts the strategic plan proper for those policies by the responsible institutions, and is able to prepare the necessary means for synergy of the capacities in order to make discourse and institutionalize the public diplomacy. By relying on the intellectual richness of the revolution and based on its special value system, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always sought to create a conceptual rebirth proper for its value and conceptual system, in a way that it may organize – by its special lexical creation and development in a lingual context – a new discourse, and take measures for proper institutionalization of that fundamental value system. In that context, the role of the authoritative jurist will be fundamental in formation of that process. For instance, in the recent years, the Islamic Republic of Iran – despite the attacks

from enemies in various arenas including the sphere of economics, and despite challenges and sanctions – could neutralize a large part of these threats by relying on its internal capacities. A part of the process of this operation became possible through capacity of making discourse in line with reinforcing national self-esteem by relying on the internal capacity and competence. Thus, applying words such as “resistance economics”, “we can” and “using internal production” by the Supreme Leader of IRI delineated a new discourse in the economic literature of the country for continuing the national and economic authority. Applying these words and the leader’s emphasis on these keywords became the manifestation of a new discourse that showed concepts and indices as well as new policies in the sphere of national economy in the internal domain and economic diplomacy in the international domain (Sami’i Nasab and Salami, 1393 SH, p. 318).

It is noteworthy that the political status of *wilāyat faqīh* based on this theory was – in addition to its influence in the public section – effective on non-governmental institutions, and caused the expansion of instruments of public diplomacy in the international domain by identifying and introducing the skills and talents as well as the effective sources in the public and elite organizations in the Islamic society. As an example, we may refer to the role and mission of the IRI leadership as an axis of unity effective in formation of the discourse of resistance by using the people’s capacities as well as the military capabilities of the Islamic Iran. This discourse was able to affect the public thoughts of people in countries such as Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and the like in order to attract their attention to Islamic revolution of Iran regardless of the positive or negative views of their governments. And this caused the formation of public institutions and liberation movements such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, Ansarollah in Yemen, Fatemiyoun in Afghanistan, Zeynabioun in Pakistan, and al-Hashd al-Sha’bi in Iraq; and this promoted the level

of Iranian diplomacy in the region from the level of active diplomacy to super active diplomacy.¹ In the sphere of public diplomacy, some countries consider reducing religious challenges between two countries for improving their situation in the public thoughts of another society; and for this purpose, they concentrate on infiltrating in the mentality of the great religious and philosophical personages of those countries (Asghari-rad, 1390 SH, p. 92). Accordingly, among the capacities of discourse created by the two leaders of the Islamic revolution – always emphasized in various statements during the forty years of Islamic revolution – is promoting the discourse of unity and necessity of dialogue and formative interactions between the elites and special personages of the Muslim nations based on religious commonalities and their unity in confrontation with oppressors and arrogant powers of the world. This caused – in the scientific aspect – the formation of common Islamic institutions in the public and elite levels (elite diplomacy) such as World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Denominations as a non-governmental group in the elite section of the Islamic countries.

3-4. Desirable imaging and obtaining the trust of the public thoughts

Desirable imaging and formation of the public thoughts is among the indices of a successful public diplomacy, because the public diplomacy aims at creating a desirable image of a country for the foreign addressees and reducing the probable gap between the existing image and the desirable image among the people of other countries.

1. In general, there are three types of diplomacy in countries: active, passive and super active. According to super active diplomacy, countries are seeking to define action, compile rules and array international scenery for establishing their favorite order. According to active diplomacy, countries are seeking to use the existing opportunities optimally in line with their national interests and goals. In the passive diplomacy, the passive reaction to international events and behaviors is the daily and case form (Hosseini-zadegan and Hosseini Karani, 1390 SH, p. 140).

Accordingly, the goal of strategic communications among nations is creating a desirable general image (Rahmani, 1394 SH, p. 78). Existence of Document of Future Perspective and upstream documents in public diplomacy in order to create harmony and align the capacities of institutions and organizations responsible on the one hand and stability in policies on the other hand are among the factors creating a desirable general image in short term and, following it, accessing the trust of public thoughts of nations in the long term. The change of states and disagreement of political trends governing the affairs sometimes precede a change in methods and policy of administering the countries; however, sometimes these differences and disagreements may lead to a change in principles of administering the country's affairs and risk the stability of the society and, accordingly, affect the country's foreign policy and foreign trust. Thus, according to the article 110 of the constitutional law, specifying the general policies of the regime is up to the Islamic leader, enacted and declared after consultation with Expediency Discernment Council. The public diplomacy as an important arena in international communications, with a more continuous and deeper effect compared to the traditional method of diplomacy, fulfills the national interest and Islamic values and spreads them in the international arena. This necessitates – in a general perspective – major principles and policies unalterable with change in states and change in political orientations, and enjoys stability in policy-making. Basically, gaining the trust of the public thoughts in the form of public diplomacy necessitates – in addition to transparency in policies – continuity and stability. This important idea in the structure of Islamic government is realizable by the authoritative jurist. Accordingly, the public diplomacy cannot gain – by itself – the public trust among the addressees abroad. Rather, it is necessary to apply some harmony among the general policies of a country and its public diplomacy as well as the policies pertaining to applying this

tool in the international arena (Hadian Vahedi, 1388 SH, p. 99). Thus, on many occasions, an unconsidered action will overshadow all the efforts made in long term in the form of public diplomacy. Therefore, the Islamic ruler appointed on the basis of the theory of *wilāyat faqīh*, due to placing in the heart of power with his latitude in specifying general policies on the one hand and guaranteeing it on the other hand, plays an important role in efficacy of public diplomacy. For instance, the policy of anti-tyranny and helping the underprivileged of the world and confronting the arrogant powers are among the important general policies in the Islamic regime.¹

Transparency of this policy as a strategic policy from the onset of formation of the Islamic movement under the leadership of Imam Khomeini on the one hand, and persistence on it during forty years of the Islamic revolution's lifetime in the international arena, on the other hand, have resulted in attracting the public thoughts in libertarian nations to the goals and ideals of the Islamic revolution of Iran more than past, just as the non-interfering policy regarding the internal affairs of other countries on the one hand and taking the impartial policy in struggles among countries on the other hand are among the strategic foreign policies of the Islamic government. Therefore, enforcing mediatory policy for resolving the issues of the region by the Supreme Leader of IRI is among the strategic policies used as diplomatic activities for making desirable image and attracting the trust of public thoughts of other nations. For instance, we may refer to the important role of the political positions of the Supreme Leader of IRI in the recent events of Karabakh region, events that led

1. In delineating this policy, Imam Khomeini says, "the Exalted and Almighty God has willed to grant the earth to the underprivileged and oust the arrogant powers. And we rose for this, and we will support all oppressed nations. And all oppressed nations must oust the oppressors from the history." (Imam Khomeini, 1395 SH, vol. 10, p. 229).

to disputes and disagreements between Armenia and Azerbaijan states. Those positions were benevolent both for the two struggling parties and for the whole region and confirmed with the principles of international laws. This is because he considered the continuation of Karabakh's crisis as the cause of terrorists' rush into Caucasus that would prepare an excuse for Zionists' infiltration into the region. On the other hand, in a part of his message, he stressed on providing the security of the Armenian people of Karabakh, which shows the religious values of Islam denouncing and forbidding any form of transgression to the minorities as a major policy (IRI Supreme Leader's lecture in 1399/13/8). Similarly, the priority of paying attention to Muslim neighbors, supporting them, and avoiding national and religious biases in political and economic relations are among the strategic policies of the Iranian Supreme Leader. An evidence for this claim is hosting two millions of Afghan and Iraqi refugees ensuing internal and external wars. In line with the policy of good treatment with Afghan refugees as a Muslim nation suffered from hardships, we may refer to the Supreme Leader's historical command, in 1394 SH, for supporting Afghan children, after which they can keep on their study even if they lack any legal identity documents for their presence in Iran. Thus, the responsible institutes have to register them in Iranian schools. Evidently, the reflection of enforcing such policies on the part of the highest personage in a country is much effective in creating a desirable image and attracting the trust of public thoughts of Afghan subjects inside and outside the country.

Conclusion

The public diplomacy as an important arena in international relations with a more continuous and deeper effect compared to the traditional diplomacy methods and fulfilling national interests and Islamic values

and spreading them in the international arena requires, in a general perspective, some major principles and policies not subject to alteration with changes in states and various political orientations. Thus, it must enjoy stability in policy and policy-making. In principle, acquiring the trust of public thoughts in the form of public diplomacy necessitates, in addition to transparency in policies, continuity and stability. The Islamic ruler can realize this important idea in the structure of the Islamic government based on the *wilāyat faqīh*. The major and decisive role in decision-makings returns to the intellectual foundations and structure as well as the beliefs of the statesmen and politicians. The necessity of existence of value attributes such as justice and moral interactions as well as non-profiteering approach of the authoritative jurist as the head of the power pyramid in the Islamic regime attract the public hearts – in addition to affecting them – through the appeal of the message he communicates. The imamate-nation system is the Shiite political-social system in the Occultation period; and in the theoretical model of *wilāyat faqīh*, the institution of *wilāyat* as the identity-giving index for Muslim nations enjoys a great capacity and function in formation of the regional convergence. It defines a leadership role for the jurist and through creation and reinforcement of common understanding among Muslim nations and all libertarians it will form an identity in the world wherein people will feel togetherness, belonging to one group and sharing common values and interests. Thereby, they will prepare a more favorite ground for interaction and dialogue for desirable influence in the context of public diplomacy. The speed of nations' awareness of events has caused a connection between their perceptions and has turned the international system into a network. Paying attention to the role of public diplomacy in creating a desirable image for a country abroad forced various countries and theoreticians to make greater efforts to

produce and increase the variables affecting it. The theory of *wilāyat faqīh* as the main variable in producing power in religious state is among the important capacities that can increase the efficacy of this tool in practice. Existence of the tool for legal reasoning and holistic approach as well as the broad scope of the ruler's entrance into various issues of the Islamic regime based on the governmental jurisprudence as the software of the Islamic state for the authoritative jurist enables him to face rightly with the newly emergent phenomena. It also enables him not to oppose applying new tools in foreign policy and prepare the ground for growth and development of public diplomacy by relying on the capacity of that component based on Islamic values. It enables him to use soft capacities and participatory structures of religion to produce the soft sources necessary for efficacy of public diplomacy in the international arena and play his role in efficacy of public diplomacy by using tools such as governmental decrees and specifying expediency – in the position of legal reasoning – through developing the capacity of governance. The institution of *wilāyat* based on this theory plays its role by making use of its uniting capacity – among other powers, institutions, and public and private organizations – by creating a connected attitude and common perception of international issues as well as synergy of all elements of the Islamic government and society in the framework of one single organization in the national level. It creates a common perception and organizational cooperation among the agencies of the Islamic regime to bring about the public diplomacy in the sphere of foreign policy. Based on this theory, the institution of *wilāyat* makes use of its important political position in power as the connecting link and common point around which all material and spiritual capacities of the government gather. It explains lucidly the values and goals of the Islamic government, delineates the perspective and proclaims the

major policies in various spheres of the governance system, and adjusts the strategic plan proper for those policies through the responsible institutions to prepare the necessary tools for synergy of capacities in order to create discourse and institutionalizing the public diplomacy.

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