

When Motherhood Meets Social Protest:
Fatima Through the Lens of Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Shariati

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Introduction

The Iranian Revolution is one of the most influential events in the history of the modern Middle East. Ayatollah Khomeini, the primary leader of the revolution, was able to rally a large number of Iranians from various ideological and socioeconomic backgrounds in demonstrations against Mohammad Reza Shah. The use of religious symbolism was pervasive in Khomeini's speech, engendering a feeling of Islamic unity among Iranians. Iranian women's involvement in this revolution was one of the largest in Iran's history, as never before had women participated to such a great extent in broad-scale social struggles (Tabari 1982, 22). This female involvement was central to the messages of Khomeini and other Muslim intellectuals, such as Ali Shariati, despite deviations in their greater Islamic ideologies. In changing social climates, the role of women becomes central, as their representation in society becomes an indicator of larger societal transformations. In response to the influx of Western values from the Shah, the role of Iranian women became an important marker for Iran's Islamic character. Therefore, extensive focus was targeted towards women adhering to a motherhood ideal so as to indicate a moral society following Islamic values. To better represent this ideal, Khomeini and Shariati focused on Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Mohammad, as a source of imitation for Iranian women to follow.

Shi'i symbolism was extensively used during the Iranian Revolution and the Iran-Iraq War. These symbols can ignite a stronger emotional reaction to a cause and engender a more committed sense of duty to a movement, while simultaneously providing an air of authority for the leaders who utilize them. They generate feelings of Islamic unity and identity, especially in opposition to unwanted societal influences, such as the reforms of the Pahlavi regime in Iran,

which attempted to transform the economic and social makeup of Iran. From the outset, Khomeini and Shariati extensively used religious rhetoric in motivational speeches because of its effectiveness in confronting the influx of Western values and engendering a national cohesion among Iranians (Shariati 1996, 55). This rhetorical method proved successful, as the strong adherence to a socially conservative message had been absent in other social movements throughout the twentieth century (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1990, 346).

The large-scale participation of Iranian women in the revolution indicated various ideals that were being pursued regarding the future of Iran after the Shah. Nevertheless, Muslim women from rural backgrounds chanted beside educated women from the city in favor of the same socially conservative figure, Ayatollah Khomeini (Mahdi 2004, 433). Khomeini and Shariati focused large parts of their messages on the importance of the women's involvement in this movement. A core reason for this emphasis was the women's role in maintaining the integrity of a pure Islamic society; the state of a woman was, and continues to be, one of the strongest determinants of the moral state of an Islamic society (Moghadam 1993, 243). The motherhood motif acted as an important model for Iranian women to follow, as it characterized morally upright behavior that adhered to Islamic gender norms.

These two leaders expressed these motherhood ideals through the use of Islamic historical figures, such as Fatima, the most revered female figure in Shi'ism. Fatima was important because her maternal qualities could be emphasized for women as they undertook their formidable role as critical participants in a strong Islamic state. Fatima's virtuous motherhood focused the leader's emphasis on the importance of the domestic sphere, and therefore established the roles that women were to adopt under the ideals of Khomeini and Shariati.

Past Scholarship

While conducting my background research on the topic of motherhood in revolutionary social movements, I came across three secondary sources that greatly contributed to my thesis. The first article that was relevant to my work was Ahmad Ashraf's article entitled "Theocracy and Charisma: New Men of Power in Iran." In his work, Ashraf addresses the charisma that Khomeini embodied, which enabled him to appeal to Muslims and Iranians on a large scale. Khomeini held a certain religious authority, that blessed him with a "gift of grace," making his messages all the more powerful, as it generated tremendous acceptance levels within Iran. Khomeini was so powerful because he came to Iran's attention at a time of crisis when the country was undergoing extensive societal and political change. These developments necessitated the emergence of an individual who could quell the anxieties of many Iranians. What is missing in Ashraf's analysis is a more detailed look at the use of religious charisma, such as Islamic historical characters and martyrdom, as a way to add a stronger level of commitment to the revolution. The paper instead focused on societal institutions and their organization, as well as policies implemented by Khomeini after he gained power in 1979, which served as essential to my idea, as I contextualized the thought of the speakers (Ashraf 1990).

The article entitled "Rhetorics and Rights of Identity in Islamist Movements," by Valentine Moghadam addresses the themes of a centralized focus on gender roles in times of societal change. The rise of Islamist movements around the world has been a product of a community's struggle with both unwanted external influences, such as capitalist and imperialist interventions, and social crises, such as economic distress. These responses engender a politicization of gender roles, signifying a greater power struggle in society. Societal movements emerge to centralize the emphasis on the domestic sphere and women's roles in society, as

societal leaders view women as defining the parameters of their Islamic community. The morality of a community is tied to women, and in times of social change, the cultural identity of a movement is of peak concern (Moghadam 1993).

Islamic women became the model to address these issues, as their roles signified greater societal change. Much attention was extended towards female dress and appearance, since a woman's identity signifies the prevailing ideology in a society. When a woman adopts certain values, it signifies that society at large was also embracing these changes as being in accordance with their value system. For example, when women in Iran adopted Western modes of dress, it indicated a greater acceptance of these Western interventions, and thus reflected a changing of Iran's values and religious beliefs. In response to this, societal leaders exert greater attention on the importance of the domestic sphere, bringing about a return to more traditional roles for women. Women respond to these ideals in various ways, depending on their more religious or secular disposition (Moghadam 1993).

Moghadam addresses the underlying reasons behind the importance of women in times of social change, but does not address *how* these ideas were implemented, and does not relate them to any specific societal contexts. If these ideas were so central to the focus of Islamic movements, then my question is how they were expressed in a way that would be persuasive to women.

Building off of the idea of the importance of women's roles in an Islamic society is Kamran Scot Aghaie's book *The Martyrs of Karbala: Shi'i Symbols and Rituals in Modern Iran*. Aghaie explains the development of the Karbala narrative from the time of the Prophet Mohammad to post-Iranian Revolution in Iran. When Shi'ism became the state religion in Iran during the sixteenth century, it became central to defining Iran's identity and in creating social

cohesion. The Karbala narrative developed over time to eventually become politicized, allowing it to be appealed to in order to support certain societal agendas. For example, Shi'i rituals were used to mobilize Iranians against unpopular state structures, as evidenced in the years leading up to the revolution, when Moharram rituals were organized in conjunction with protests against Mohammad Reza Shah (Aghaie 2004).

Pertaining to this thesis more specifically, Aghaie also addresses the emerging gender discourse that occurred in the twentieth century. This discussion promoted women's role as static ideals that served to preserve the Iranian cultural identity. While men were expected to adopt societal transformations and take on more activist roles, women were largely confined to the private sphere. The use of Islamic figures, such as Zaynab and Fatima, came about during these years, as they acted as models for women to emulate (Aghaie 2004).

Although there are many similarities between my thesis and Aghaie's work, I deviate in areas to create a more in-depth picture of religious symbolism and approach it in a way that fills in the gaps of Aghaie's analysis. Aghaie analyzes the use of Karbala symbols to address these gender roles, but he does not correlate them with the centrality of the motherhood motif. Motherhood is central to female imagery in the revolution, as it represented the responsibility that Muslim women were expected to undertake in society. The importance of this theme is evident because both Shariati and Khomeini emphasize this role even though they had very different stances on the formation of an Islamic state.

Argument

My argument focuses on the extensive rhetorical use of Fatima by Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Shariati in the 1979 revolution and the Iran-Iraq War. Fatima's symbolic presence in

Iranian society was center stage during the revolution. Her character was important for many reasons, but primarily because of her role as a virtuous mother in Islamic history, in addition to her symbolic malleability based on the ability of societal leaders to mold her to specific ideals depending on the ideological views and political goals of the speaker. The role of women in a changing Iranian society became central, resulting in a focus on motherhood as an ideal for women. Fatima's maternal nature, in addition to a range of additional characteristics, were all expressed by Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Shariati, but were utilized in such a way so as to conceive of distinctly different Islamic states. Regardless of their approach to Islam, Fatima's maternal qualities were central to both leaders' messages because of the overarching importance of the mother figure as an indicator of an aspirational moral society.

To reach this conclusion, I delved deeply into the primary source works of Ali Shariati and Ayatollah Khomeini to understand their approach regarding women's roles in Iranian society. By analyzing their speeches, lectures and writings, I was able to pick out the themes regarding women, motherhood and Fatima to better understand the stances they took on these issues. In both cases, the figure of Fatima was central, because she represented a societal acceptance of the vulnerability that women experience in the face of the infiltration of various foreign or corrupting influences. The clear links between the persistence of a moral Islamic society and the controlled nature of women are present in both Khomeini's and Shariati's works, as women became the discursive battleground by which a society would be judged. Khomeini and Shariati rallied women behind these messages through their extensive rhetorical techniques that included the utilization of martyrdom symbolism, vagueness and religious authority.

Primary Sources

Primary sources constitute a core part of my thesis, as they provide the thoughts and beliefs of the leaders of interest in my thesis. I reference the speeches, lectures and sermons of both Ali Shariati and Ayatollah Khomeini to better grasp approaches to issues surrounding women's enfranchisement, motherhood, the Shah's infiltration in Iranian life and symbolism as an effective tool for mobilization.

The primary work on Khomeini that I address is *The Position of Women from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini*, which is a compilation of all of his speeches pertaining to women. I also reference *Governance of the Jurist* and *Imam Khomeini's Last Will and Testament*, which are additional speeches regarding the future of the Islamic state of Iran. *The Position of Women from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini*, published in 2001, consists of more than one hundred pages filled with excerpts of Khomeini's speeches addressing women spanning from a couple of years before the revolution to the period of the Iran-Iraq War. The bulk of my primary references in the text of my thesis come from this compilation, as it includes extensive thoughts regarding women, Fatima, motherhood and the Islamic state that Khomeini appeals to both before and after the Iranian Revolution. *Governance of the Jurist*, which was published in 1970, address all of the intricate details that describe the future Islamic state under the reign of Khomeini, and covers topics such as the importance of adhering to both Islamic practice and an Islamic body of laws so as to form a true Islamic Republic. Khomeini also mentions Fatima and her status as a sacred being in Islam that Muslims should emulate. *Imam Khomeini's Last Will and Testament* is a final plea for Iran's adherence to Islam against the enemies of the world, as it was published in 1989 after the Iran-Iraq War, and the year that Khomeini passed away. Khomeini appeals to the members of the Islamic Republic of Iran as responsible for emulating the Imams, whom Muslims

should follow in thought and deed. Khomeini again references the use of female models, such as Fatima and Zaynab, whom he believes should be imitated to continue the success of the Islamic State. Together these three sources provide a comprehensive understanding of Khomeini's overall ideas on women and Fatima, and illustrate many of Khomeini's symbolic messages and their appropriate contexts.

In regards to Ali Shariati, I primarily cite his compilation of lectures entitled *Fatima is Fatima* and *Shariati on Shariati and the Muslim Woman*. *Fatima is Fatima* portrays Shariati's depiction of a woman's role in his ideal Islamic society through the implementation of various characteristics of Fatima, who Shariati believed to represent all that was pure and pious regarding women's behavior. Shariati covers topics such as women's search for self-identity, their role in the public sphere and the history of Fatima, including various characteristics that made her important, such as her strong work ethic, important role in the Islamic familial line, and personal adherence to a mandate to spread the message of Islam after her father's death. It also concerns Shariati's disdain for the state of Iran under both the "Westoxication" pushed by the policies of the Pahlavi regime, and the obsolete form of Islam pushed by the ulama. An additional compilation of Shariati's works is *Shariati on Shariati and the Muslim Woman*, translated by Laleh Bakhtiar. This work consists of a compilation of journal entries, letters, public lectures, and other primary writings of Shariati. Themes emerge that address the role of Fatima, the importance of women, the downfall of Iran under the Shah's regime and the grip of power that the ulama held.

Structure and Methodology

The first chapter is devoted to the presence of religion in social change. I start out by providing historical background information on the social and political state of Iran in the second half of the twentieth century. Section one of this chapter addresses religious networks, authority and symbolism in the Iranian context. All of these resources and tools were critical to the promotion of Islam in a changing social climate. This is the broadest section, as it addresses general Iranian trends that were not necessarily specific to the two individual subjects of my thesis, but provide critical background context. The second section looks at the rhetorical techniques of Khomeini more specifically, as he was the most prominent leader of the revolution. This section addresses aspects of Khomeini's charisma, revolutionary and political approaches and vagueness in speech, all of which contributed to his mass appeal to all types of Iranians and promoted his religious message.

The second chapter addresses women in Islamic contexts. Section one of this chapter tackles the issue of women holding a preservationist role in Islamic societies, and their importance to maintaining cultural integrity and morality. The second section looks at how these ideas were implemented through rhetoric surrounding Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Mohammad. Fatima was an ideal model to depict the importance of motherhood in the Iranian Revolution and Iran-Iraq War. These religiously conservative ideals pushed by the ulama and Muslim intellectuals largely restricted women to the private sphere, thus contradicting many of the reforms of the Pahlavi Shahs. These values secured the household as the pure arena by which a society would maintain its Islamic integrity. I added a comparative approach by paralleling the ideological changes in Iran with those that occurred in Indonesia during the nineties, so as to elucidate the prevalence of this idea beyond the confines of one Islamic country. These ideas

were expressed through Islamic figures, such as Fatima, as a way to strengthen and legitimize the ideas. These Islamic figures are so important because they can transcend time and place, and therefore are able to continuously appeal to differing cultural situations, as their incorruptible qualities are not contingent upon certain worldly states. For example, figures such as Fatima were characterized differently depending whether Iran was at war, peace, or in the midst of a revolution.

The third and final chapter takes an in-depth look at the primary sources of Shariati and Khomeini to validate my thesis surrounding the motherhood paradigm in the revolution and its link to Fatima. After giving a brief ideological background of both leaders, I address three key themes among their works regarding women and motherhood. Shariati is of key importance because he was a very influential speaker in the years leading up to the revolution. His ideas of independence, agency, and self-empowerment resonated strongly with all types of women, as it deviated away from the more socially conservative viewpoints of the ulama or the imperialistic reforms of the Shah. As a leader of the revolution, much of this section is devoted to both what Khomeini said in his public speeches to Iranians and the political and institutional changes that were the result of these ideas. Khomeini was excellent at speaking in ways that were not completely in line with his legal actions once he became Supreme Leader. Therefore, an understanding of his viewpoints is critical to realizing the power of Khomeini's strategic use of symbolism to achieve his goals. The first theme that I address is women's social responsibility in an Islamic society. This pulls from much of the discussion from Chapter 2. The second theme is motherhood more specifically, and how these leaders mold and define this image in their works, incorporating figures like Fatima. The final theme is the purity of the home, which substantiates the importance of motherhood.

I believe that it is necessary to make two important disclaimers for my thesis. First, as much of my thesis is built off of the primary works of Ali Shariati and Ayatollah Khomeini, it is important to mention that I am reading translations from Persian to English, and therefore I need to take into consideration possible changes in meaning based on the translation process. Second, I am taking the approach of the two religious theorists in this paper, and therefore I am largely leaving out a core female perspective. The goal of this thesis is not to actually address how women responded to the messages of Shariati and Khomeini or what they specifically thought and felt in this revolution, but instead to see what were the rhetorical techniques of the leaders, and how did these signify an underlying approach to women and motherhood. Therefore, women are not the primary agents in this thesis, but instead are approached as recipients of this utilization of religious symbolism by societal leaders. Therefore, an active female voice is not a central motif of this work.

Ultimately, my thesis addresses the extensive use of female symbolism in the revolution as emblematic of the importance of women to an Islamic society. This female involvement was so critical because of the importance to religious leaders in maintaining women in a “preservationist” state and therefore immune to competing ideologies, such as those pushed by Mohammad Reza Shah. The significance of this factor, therefore, established maternal symbolism as a central theme in the revolution, which was presented by religious leaders through the figure of Fatima, regardless of their approach to an ideal Islamic state.

I. Rhetoric and Revolution

The power of a leader is not solely found in the substance of his messages, but rather is also reflected in the methods of presentation. Khomeini and Shariati utilized various religious tools to rally Iranians in favor of their societal ideals. As Khomeini was the leader who actually took the role as the Supreme Leader once the Shah was deposed, more of the focus in this chapter is on Khomeini, who was a master orator in the revolution and the Iran-Iraq War. Khomeini's strength was not only a product of the messages that he was promoting to Iranians, but was also a consequence of the religious networks and rhetorical techniques that he pulled from to spread his message in a powerful way. Section one addresses the efficacy of the mosque network, the appeal to religious authority and the use of religious symbolism as a means to motivate Iranians behind a specific cause. Section two tackles the rhetorical techniques specific to Khomeini, and which led him to be such an influential figure in Iran. Together, these religious resources and rhetorical tools bolstered the appeal of an influential figure who could engage Iranians from all backgrounds.

Background Context

Immense social change was taking place in Iran in the second half of the twentieth century. For much of this period, Iran had been under the power of the Pahlavi regime, with Reza Shah and his son Mohammad Reza Shah having ruled Iran for several decades. These two leaders attempted to change Iran in a way that would promote secular values. A shift towards urbanization, high literacy rates and a turn away from Sharia law towards European legal models (Keddie 2006, 89) were coupled with mandatory unveiling of women (100) and overall suppression of oppositional groups (136). By the 1950s and 1960s, Iranians were noticeably

distressed by the Pahlavi regime. In a firm push for rapid social change, Mohammad Reza Shah, who reigned from 1941-1979, initiated a “White Revolution” in Iran. The main aspects of this revolution included women’s suffrage and land reform, which took a great deal of land away from the ulama and put it under the power of the state (145). Many Iranians approached the adoption of these reforms with hesitation because these changes primarily benefitted the upper classes of society, while leaving the urban workers, farmers, and bazaar class relatively disenfranchised (102). The Pahlavi regime, which held power in Iran throughout most of the twentieth century, initiated many changes as a way to appease the West generally, and the United States specifically.

By the time of the revolution, the regime had created many societal tensions that contributed to its monopoly over power in Iran. For example, an increase of the income gap was coupled with high unemployment and extensive urban overcrowding, thus pressuring many Iranians to feel aggravated by the regime (168). Between 1925-1941, Reza Shah nationalized much of Iran, but strongly oppressed any opposition to his cause (88). These nationalization efforts created animosity between the ulama and the Shah, as much of the land was taken away from the clergy, thus preventing the clergy from collecting religious land taxes (Martin 2003 p. 22). In addition, the Sharia courts were abolished in 1939 (Keddie 2006, 90). Opposition groups started forming more actively in Iran. The religious clergy – who had lost land that had been critical to their power and their financial stability due to taxes – as well as Muslim intellectuals, started to become more vocally opposed to the reforms of the Shah (Martin 2003, 22-24). The distress of these groups and others culminated in the Iranian Revolution in 1979, which deposed the Shah and resulted in the formation of an Islamic regime in Iran with Ayatollah Khomeini as the Supreme Leader.

In the years before the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Shariati came to the fore as vocal opponents to the regime of the Shah. Ayatollah Khomeini, who eventually overthrew the Shah and became the Supreme Leader in Iran, was educated in Qom as a cleric, and believed that the infiltration of Western values had weakened the morality of Iran (32). He pushed for the ulama to have a greater role in society, and upon gaining power in 1979, he made Iran an Islamic State, with Sharia law central to its doctrine, as Sharia addressed every social demand of an individual and therefore constituted a complete social system (121). Ali Shariati was a Muslim intellectual and theorist who had studied at the Sorbonne in Paris. This European education gave him a stronger social justice approach to religion as well as a desire to apply Islam in a way that meets with the modern demands of twentieth century society (Emami 2001, 102-104). Therefore, Shariati was exceedingly opposed to the ulama, as he saw their values as obsolete in a modern Iran. Shariati also opposed capitalism and the “Westernization” of Iran, as he saw it as taking away the power of the individual and putting it in the hands of consumerism (Kashani-Sabet 2005, 14-15).

Khomeini remained as Supreme Leader in Iran until his death in 1989. During the eighties, he led Iranians in a long war against Iraq, fought largely over territorial disputes. This war was promoted as a defense of Islam, and it positioned martyrdom as central to securing Iran’s success. This appeal to religion against the “corrupt” regime of Iraq gave rise to moral duties for Iranians to follow (Takeyh 2010, 366). Human wave assaults were central, with hundreds of thousands of Iranian men sacrificing their lives for the Iranian cause (369).

Section I: Religious Networks, Authority, and Symbolism

Iran's religious establishment had tremendous resources at its disposal to promote Khomeini and a future Islamic state in the years of the revolution and the Iran-Iraq War. These tools could be effectively used to extend far past the reaches of the government and undermine the policies of the Shah. The breadth of the mosque network, power of religious authority and the appeal to religious symbolism all combined to powerfully reach the hearts and minds of Iranian revolutionaries both prior to and after the revolution.

The mosque network was, and continues to be, an extremely powerful institution in Iran. The pervasive network enabled the ulama's messages to reach all corners of Iran and influence urban and rural Iranians alike. The clergy's partnership with various urban sectors of the economy, such as the bazaar and merchant classes, allowed for the development of mutually beneficial economic and informational support systems. For example, popular events such as the *hajj*, or pilgrimage, brought together religion and trade in a synergistic manner (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1990, 354). These sectors could support one another in times of economic distress. This was especially important during the years of the Pahlavi regime when the wealth disparity increased between the rich and the poor, creating an opening for the mosques to take on the role of charity for the disenfranchised (Martin 2003, 24-25). This position enabled the mosque network to serve as the unchanging focal point for the lower and rural classes of Iranian society; clerics were the individuals responsible for the dissemination of interpretations regarding political reforms and societal changes occurring in Iran in the twentieth century (Swenson 1985, 125).

Not only was the mosque network a powerful tool for the dissemination of ideas and collaboration, but it was also relatively untouched by the Shah's regime, enabling it to be largely

unaffected by the mass propaganda campaigns supported by the government. In fact, the mosque network remained the only nation-wide organization independent of the state during the later years of Mohammad Reza Shah's reign (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1990, 352). This network represented an Iran free from the fetters of the Pahlavi regime, and thus exemplified the national identity of Iranians that many felt they had lost. Although it professed religious beliefs that might have appeared socially conservative in relation to the Pahlavi regime, the mosque network was clever in its making use of modern technological advances that benefitted its cause. For example, the adoption of audio cassette tapes to disseminate information allowed Khomeini's ideas to spread throughout Iran even at times when he was exiled from the country, as he was for many years pre-revolution. The relationship the mosques maintained with certain segments of the economy allowed, for example, the street vendors to surreptitiously sell these cassettes under the ignorance of the Shah's regime (357-358).

The structure of the mosque network enabled a strong diffusion of revolutionary ideas throughout Iran. However, the clerics themselves also played a large role in spreading these ideas, as they oftentimes spoke to the masses through sermons, prayers and lectures. This constant communication helped clerics to develop an oratory style that could appeal to Iranians from both urban and rural backgrounds. Their simple speech and ease of communication did not isolate illiterate and uneducated Iranians, standing in contrast to the elitist mentality and sophisticated political jargon of the Shah's regime, which could not be understood by most Iranians (346).

The religious education of clerics gave them immense amounts of authority on religious issues. This authority enabled clerics to gain a strong following through their words and messages reflecting their understanding of *ijtihad*, or religious interpretation (352). This status in

society enabled clerics to utilize religious symbolism as an additional tool of mobilization, which reinforced their influence through the appeal to Shi'ite symbolism for political mobilization (Ashraf 1990, 146). Religious symbolism motivated Muslims by associating political participators with historical Islamic figures. This symbolism was especially powerful through the martyred paradigm. Martyrdom is a central theme in Islam generally, and Shi'ism specifically, as it was an act undertaken by historical Shi'i heroes in attempting to legitimize their branch of Islam. Martyrdom is a powerful way that a Muslim can claim his or her loyalty to Islam. It is believed that martyrs are guaranteed access to paradise, as their sins are immediately absolved by the act (Aghaie 2005, 95).

Martyrdom strengthens both the sense of duty to act and the societal cohesion in Muslims. Through martyrdom, a community strengthens its identity, and reasserts a tradition, as it focuses the attention on Islamic history (Dorraj 1997, 490). Shi'i martyrs helped to foster in Iranians a sense of an Islamic duty to take action, especially against the "satanic" Shah that Khomeini and the ulama so vehemently condemned in persuasive messages. The policies enacted under the Pahlavi regime created an "internal culture shock" in Iran, generating a sense of alienation among Iranians, in addition to instilling a sense of cultural inferiority from the influx of Western influences (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1990, 345). The Shah's oppressive police force, known as the SAVAK, pervasive corruption and Western imposed reforms made Iranians feel like aliens within their own nation. These grievances in turn led to stronger religious activity and feelings of piety in the country, as many Iranians considered Islam as a way to defend their religious and cultural identity (Surdykowska 2012, 146): "religious language is the 'language of choice' for the expression of the deepest needs of ordinary people throughout the world – the need for identity, relationship and the discovery of meaning. It is the language of the oppressed"

(Swenson 1985, 132). These reforms, which created an unfamiliar feeling for many Iranians, consequentially engendered a turn to more religiously conservative sentiments, much to the chagrin of the secularization efforts of the Shah. Quick societal changes oftentimes bring about a return to tradition by a country's citizens, in an attempt to connect back to one's understanding of the world around them (Tabari 1982, 24).

The religious establishment appealed to religious symbolism, but it was Khomeini who truly politicized these concepts and used these models as propaganda tool for the revolution (Swenson 1985, 134). Khomeini created a revolution of martyrs, linking Islam's historical martyrs to the political actions of Iranians in the revolution. This stance gave rise to the idea of martyrdom as an omnipresent theme throughout Iran in the years of the revolution and especially during the Iran-Iraq War (138). Khomeini pushed for Moharram rituals to be infused with political messages, linking certain aspects of the Shah's regime to the atrocities faced by Husayn's army in Karbala. Karbala was the name of the desert where the Battle of Karbala took place in the year 680 AD when Husayn and his army were martyred when supporting the Ahl al-Bayt's succession claim against the Umayyad Caliphate. They were martyred at Karbala after ten days of truce with the Umayyads when Husayn refused to support Yazid, the second Umayyad caliph (Aghaie 2004, 80). Moharram is a month of mourning in recognition of the days at the Battle of Karbala before Yazid, an Umayyad caliph, killed the Shi'i martyr Husayn (9).

These martyrdoms were appealed to in a manner intended for maximum political effect. For example, in historical Shi'ite writings on martyrdoms, such as the martyrdom of Husayn, his actions were depicted as passive and pietistic, which stood in contrast to many of the modern and politicized renditions used by Khomeini and others during the revolution (Dorraj 1997, 496). It was not until the twentieth century that the Battle of Karbala was used for a greater political

purpose, as previously it had been drawn upon for its soteriological rather than political dimension (Aghaie 2004, 88). During the years leading up to the revolution, the ulama, under Khomeini's guardianship, organized mass protests around key Shi'ite events. By having protests in conjunction with Islamic rituals, revolutionary leaders exposed the egregious nature of the Pahlavi regime, which had outlawed mourning gatherings on the theory that they were fanatical in nature and therefore unfit for a burgeoning modern society (Moallem 2005, 67).

By placing protests on or near Shiite events, a calculated religious dimension was added to the revolutionary messages. Protestors chanted "Husayn was martyred, overthrow the Shah!" and approached the SAVAK wearing shrouds to represent their willingness to die for the Iranian cause (Surdykowska 2012, 158). An important distinction needs to be made in that martyrdom in this context does not solely mean to kill oneself, but can also mean emulating past martyrs. Various interpretations exist regarding the breadth of martyred acts. Shariati, for example, depicted martyrs as those who had sentiments or intentions counting as "martyrdom" (73), while Khomeini believed that martyrs included those who had made spiritual sacrifices (78). This extension of martyrdom opened up the way for all protesters to feel a connection with martyrs.

The profound emotions connected with martyrdom are central to their mobilization. Muslims experience the stories of martyrs through analogies, which teach them to develop a certain emotional response to their experiences. This training makes the path of self-sacrifice and other actions relating to martyrdom more acceptable, as the emotions are already present in their hearts and minds. Khomeini's speeches validated the emotions that were to be connected to references to martyrdom: "Many of us have been killed ... however, every drop of a martyr's blood makes one's blood boil, stirs up the fire in human hearts which is directed against injustice" (117-118). In these revolutions, it was the protesters who represented martyrs like Ali,

Husayn, and Zaynab, and the Shah who represented the antithesis to these characters, such as Yazid. Therefore, his tyrannical and impious caliphate represented all that was wrong in Islam (Aghaie 2004, 9). These associations created an important dichotomy, as it set the stage so that those who did not fight in the revolution were heathens who supported the regime of the Shah (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1990, 363). The protesters were therefore participating in a heroic act against the most hated individual in Shi'i history, not just as mere protesters against a Western regime, but one instead connected to a higher and more divine power. By protesting in the name of Islam, Iranians were securing the destiny that had been taken away from them by foreign intervention, thereby establishing a revival of Persian culture and a rejuvenated concept of their own spiritual heritage in twentieth century Iran. Khomeini not only saw martyrdom as an option, but viewed it as the path that everyone should take: "In the Muslim tradition martyrdom is seen as life ... one should not be afraid of martyrdom. When we achieve martyrdom, our soul will become free and we will reach the highest truth" (Surdykowska 2012, 79).

To Shariati, martyrdom enabled Muslims to rise above the toxic material world and elevate themselves to an ideal path. He used this slant to rally different groups, such as the students and intellectuals around a religious cause. By connecting intellectuals to religious protestors, he was asking them to renounce their Western adopted material values, as symbolism was a way to pull the youth away from the enticing influences of capitalism (Dorraj 1997, 510). Shariati also valued martyrdom, specifically the martyrdom of Husayn, because he viewed it as a conscious decision made by the individual, as its acceptance immediately diminished once it is imposed on an individual. This links to Shariati's push for Muslims to choose for themselves and interpret Islam in their own light, which would enable them to decide if martyrdom is right for them. Husayn's martyrdom is special in the mind of Shariati, and most Muslims, because he

could have abstained from joining in battle, but instead took action in the name of Allah in favor of a conscious personal sacrifice (Surdykowska 2012, 73). Husayn went into the Battle of Karbala knowing that he was to die, but fought anyway, which was an action that separates his martyrdom from that of other Imams (70).

Religious rhetoric involving the idea of martyrdom was so widely used by leaders of the revolution that it became institutionalized, as it was deemed an act applicable to everyone who was participating in the protests. Khomeini utilized this widespread use of martyrdom by linking the actions of all protesters to the acts of Husayn and Ali, relating their role in society to carrying on these characters' messages and values (Surdykowska 1985, 80). This "democratization of martyrdom" helped to bring about a mass participation in the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime among all Iranians, as it increased the emotions and level of commitment linked to the ideology of the revolution (Ashraf 1990, 146). Shariati furthered this institutionalization of martyrdom in his established slogan for the revolution: "Every place should be turned into Karbala, every month into Moharram, and every day into 'Ashura.'" With this mindset, anyone could relate his or her own revolutionary actions to a martyr. This slogan was so popular that Khomeini adopted it as a foundation for the revolution, embracing it as a mindset that could and should be applied to any event and day in the revolution (Aghaie 2004, 100).

Not only was martyrdom institutionalized among many ideologues and religious leaders during the revolution, but the stories were molded depending on the speaker. There is a prevailing understanding of the events that took place at the Battle of Karbala. Husayn Kashefi wrote the most canonical version of the story of Karbala, but certain values that he emphasized were altered depending on the needs of the speaker. These religious stories tend to have a core-narrative that was relatively similar regardless of the political and religious leaning of the

speaker, but also include a meta-narrative, which was the greater narrative context that was altered depending on the sociopolitical discourse (107). The alteration in the meta-narrative in Shi'i historical events enabled these depictions to be made relevant to various situations and sociopolitical leanings. For example, Shariati, who was influenced by more liberal and Marxist ideals, placed an emphasis in his depiction of Karbala on a universal class struggle with a strong anti-imperialist sentiment (103). From his point of view, it was a class-based struggle against corruption from both the ulama and the West that was the true genesis for the revolution (125). Therefore, even though Kashefi, Khomeini, and others also utilized the core parts of martyrdom stories, they could be shaded in certain ways similar to the molding of Fatima to appeal to the desires of the speaker.

Section 2: Rhetorical Techniques

In addition to the broader influence of religion, Khomeini used specific rhetorical techniques that strengthened his religious message. Specifically, his politicization of religion, emotional pull and enigmatic nature all contributed to his rhetorical prowess. Khomeini is known for having strong charisma. Charisma is strengthened when an individual comes to the fore at a time of social instability. In Iran, social distress was manifesting itself through revolutionary opposition to the Shah. Times of instability bolster charisma, as the chaos in society makes leaders who emerge under such conditions appear to be “supernatural,” as they can rise above the social disruption and find solutions for an aggrieved population (Ashraf 1990, 143). When anxieties are high, and it seems like one's identity is at stake, an individual who can pull through and propose solutions appears talented and his actions auspicious.

Many Muslims viewed Khomeini in a divine light, and some even believed that he occupied an exalted status on par with the twelve Imams. After Khomeini's death, in fact, he was deemed the "fifteenth infallible," a prophet-like status similar to the rank achieved by the family of Mohammad, Fatima, and the Imams (114). This "Imam" status was unique to Khomeini as it was a status superior to many other clerics in Iran at that time. This can possibly explain Khomeini's religious association as more of a divine being rather than solely a cleric, such as his being called an "Imam," instead of just another cleric from Qom (Hendrick 2013, 78). Iranians not only bestowed upon him these accolades, but he also promoted his religious knowledge by deeming himself an *'arif*. An *'arif* is an individual whose knowledge extends beyond the regular human, allowing one to actually "discern the relationship between Creator and creation and the non-existence of diversity," and therefore utilize a whole new vocabulary to mobilize people (Martin 2003, 40-41). This status and the charisma that Khomeini embodied came about at a time of peak societal crisis in Iran that was causing psychological distress for Iranians over issues such as loss of one's identity. Khomeini came to the political forefront in Iran at a propitious moment, when crisis was enveloping the country, thus enabling him to capitalize on the distressed sentiments of many Iranians (Ashraf 1990, 119).

Khomeini's take on Shi'ism supported a more revolutionary approach than that endorsed by the majority of the more conservative clerics in Qom. Most of the clerics in Iran chose to remain separate from politics, and if they were not completely separate, then many chose to be acquiescent to, or collaborative with, the Shah's regime (119). Khomeini was, in fact, the only cleric who rose to the high office through a political mobilization of Iranians, using his large student base as a support system to link the religious and political realms. His students encouraged this meshing of the religious with the political because they were concerned with

modern societal problems that had not been addressed by certain parts of the clergy (120).

Khomeini, with the support of his student base, wanted the clergy to be more active in politics, as he opposed the mere succumbing to, or separation from, the policies of the Shah (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1990, 356). He associated the ulama with social change, instead of being an obsolete point of religious reference focused on pedantic legal reasoning that was outdated and non-relatable to many Iranians.

In addition to the politically charged assertive nature of Khomeini, the manner in which Khomeini spoke and the compelling nature of his words helped to garner support among Iranians. Elizabeth Bucar compares his method of speech to the Aristotelian idea of “enthymeme.” Enthymeme is a mode of rhetoric in which the “heart of the speaker must reflect and consider the particular circumstances of the audience to persuasively respond to that context ... identifying the ‘opportune’ of a particular rhetorical situation” (Bucar 2006, 97). Khomeini was very aware of the sentiment of Iranians. He utilized this understanding through his messages by focusing on establishing a genuine cultural identity at a time when Iranians felt they had been stripped of their integrity from the widespread adoption of Western ideals, creating a widespread sense of alienation in one’s own country: “Khomeini’s extraordinary demotic appeal lies in interpreting and articulating the feelings and aspirations of millions of Iranians who were intended and unintended victims of modernization” (Swenson 1985, 125). Khomeini did not want his discourse to support simply pan-Islamist or anti-modernization sentiments, but something more true and genuine to the Iranian identity; he wanted to establish an Iranian “self-consciousness” (Zickmund 2003, 26). Enthymeme is powerful not only because it uses emotion to generate action, but also because it achieves a state of persuasion through the omission of details, facts, and logic (Bucar 2006, 108). The intended vagueness of Khomeini’s arguments

enabled him to appeal to almost all Iranians without isolating various groups. He garnered their support by not actually directly addressing the specific goals, struggles, or sentiments of any individual group. If Khomeini were to have divulged a detailed mapping of the form that his Islamic government would take, then he would surely have isolated many of the groups that supported him in Iran. The simplicity and commonly understood form of speech that Khomeini utilized, when coupled with a flexible subject matter that could be altered depending on the audience, enabled Khomeini to maintain a united following behind his ideology that could be tailored when needed (Martin 2003, 128). This vagueness was strategically enacted as a precarious balancing act, as different groups were to be engaged at specific degrees so as not to lose the faith of other groups. For example, the concealment of Khomeini's more radical intentions was minimized so as not to isolate the mainstream ulama, as he was generally more political and militant in thought than what many of the clergy supported (Ashraf 1990, 132-140). At the same time, he did not involve the ulama to such an extent as to ostracize the students and the intelligentsia. This balancing act was conducted with a great amount of thought so Khomeini could simultaneously support various, and oftentimes divergent, groups in Iran while not isolating any of them from the goals of the revolution.

II. Importance of Women to an Islamic Society

During the years of the revolution, a focus on female participation was central. Ayatollah Khomeini used extensive rhetoric focusing on the importance of Muslim women for the preservation of Iran's moral society. The weight of this importance was not limited to the views of Khomeini, but has been a trend in several Muslim communities, as women have oftentimes been characterized as indicators of an Islamic society's moral character (Moghadam 1988, 243). The idea holds that if a woman is not appropriately controlled, then an Islamic society will unravel into chaos. One way to help define this idea was to focus messages on the importance of motherhood, which centralized the importance of women in the domestic sphere. This feminine ideal generated an interesting tension for women, as they were expected both to uphold the values of an Islamic society and act as key determinants in its moral constitution, while simultaneously being expected to succumb to confining societal roles. Khomeini and Shariati exemplified this motherhood ideal through an appeal to Fatima, as she was a model who embodied various ideals that exemplified the politics of domesticity.

Section 1: Politics of Domesticity

Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah both placed women's suffrage and enfranchisement as central to their platforms. Iranian women were encouraged to adopt Western forms of dress, study in universities that had become de-Islamized because of the nationalization projects and enter the work force on never before seen levels (Keddie 2006, 99-100). Although the reforms affected all members of society, it was women who were strongly targeted by the ulama as the individuals to oppose the changes initiated by the Shah. They were expected to hold

more traditional and Islamic positions in society as a means of counteracting the effects of the Pahlavi regime, whether it be through dress, presence in the public sphere, or motherhood. Iranian men, on the other hand, were expected to hold activist and political roles as they addressed their grievances with the regime. In this way, they were adopting modern forms of nationalist and liberal identities. Regulation over gender roles thus became a method of undermining the power of the regime (Aghaie 2004, 114).

Cultural “authenticity” in many Islamic movements is often linked to an image of woman unsullied by Western education and the modern world. The preoccupation with women’s appearance and women’s bodies signifies the central responsibility assigned to women in the Islamist restructuring of power, culture, and society. (Moghadam 1993, 246)

Iran’s religious establishment grew anxious as a result of the female reforms of the Shah, despite many of them being superficial and not actually creating significant societal change (Girgis 1996, 1). These policy changes brought women more strongly into the public sphere, and thus shifted the primary attention away from their fundamental role of being at home with children. In the sixties and seventies, the clerics and Muslim intellectuals started to publicly challenge the consumerism and secularism of the Shah’s regime (Kashani-Sabet 2011, 208). The ulama attempted to delegate women as much as possible to the home out of anxiety arising from their potential position of power. This unease signified the belief in the underlying danger inherent in a woman; if a woman were to be set free, then a society would be unchained (Moghadam 1988, 224). Not only society’s morals would be let loose, but it would also lose parts of its identity. An adoption of these values by women would signify a larger societal shift in favor of external, or in this case the Shah’s, influences, resulting in a subsequent letting go of tradition, identity and authenticity (Aghaie 2004, 115). Women’s roles thus became highly politicized and centralized: “the centrality of gender to the construction of the Islamic political

discourse thus changed that which had been marginal, secondary ... and discredited into something that was to be central, primary, immediate, and authentic” (Najmabadi 1998, 60).

In the wake of the revolution, the ulama promoted restrictions towards women regarding their adoption of certain Western ideals, from their presence in the public sphere and the work place, to dress (Aghaie 2004, 114). These anxieties manifested themselves into law once Khomeini gained power in 1979. Sharia law replaced any European civil code in Iran. Women were banned from many areas of study and thus could not work in a variety of professions, while also being prohibited from participating in sports (Mahdi 2004, 434). The Family Protection Act was quickly repealed. This act, which was implemented under Mohammad Reza Shah in 1967, had enabled women to have greater equality in private and familial affairs, such as greater autonomy in the ability to divorce husbands, the opportunity to have custody over a child, while also making it more difficult to sanction polygamy in marriages, among other reforms (Moghissi 1994, 45). Khomeini also reinstituted the chadur, or veil, as an obligatory form of dress for women. The chadur, therefore, was reestablished as a symbol of an absence of agency for women, in a manner similar to the Shah’s mandatory *un*-veiling policies enacted in 1936 (39). To Khomeini, applying mandatory chadur laws and counteracting the reforms under the Family Protection Act actually worked to boost the status of women in Iran. It was necessary to control women, as they inherently represented disorder and evil, and thus needed to be protected by societal laws in order to retain their virtuous status (Girgis 1996, 2).

With this, the home became the pure and infallible arena, as it was the realm in which the family, and by extension society, was raised, resulting in the necessary preservation of this area for the moral development of Iranian life (Tripp 2006, 169). This area needed to remain pure and unaffected by outside forces. This is because just as women were given the responsibility of

upholding society, they were also able to tear it down, thus placing them in a very vulnerable position. Colonialist pressures, for example, viewed the targeting of women as central to their strategic methods, as women were the best “tool for subjugation” and could help to destroy the country’s culture (Najmabadi 1998, 60). As different ideologies targeted women, protection by society seemed critical. Rhetoric equating women with homeland and a strong pride for the family took center stage (Moghissi 1994, 62). Because women represented society’s virtues, they were expected to not only to remain at home so as to focus on molding their families into moral human beings, but were more symbolically envisioned as uniting and nurturing the Iranian community at large.

As the female was increasingly identified as the core of the family unit, she also emerged as a politically galvanizing symbol for the group she represented. With the establishment of the matriarchal figure at its center, what might otherwise be just another political faction was transformed into a spiritual family ... the social group that creates the deepest affective bond among its members. (Thurklill 2007, 68)

The idea surrounding the importance of women to the preservation of an Islamic society is not exclusive to twentieth century Iran, but has extended to other societies as well. In this thesis, the focus remains on Islamic communities, and therefore, a similar case of social anxiety over the state of women occurred during a political regime change in Indonesia in the nineties. In the article, “Gendered Anxieties: Islam, Women’s Rights, and Moral Hierarchy in Java,” Clarissa Adamson analyzes Indonesian society after the fall of President Suharto in 1998. President Suharto led a relatively repressive regime in Indonesia for about thirty years. Once he resigned his power, women’s advocacy groups emerged along with general societal responses in favor of democratic change and greater equal rights (Adamson 2007, 6). Java’s male Muslim population responded to these developments with a great amount of anxiety, as they believed that the preservation of a gendered “moral hierarchy” in society was critical to protecting the ethical

integrity of their community (8). This hierarchy related to the idea that an Indonesian woman's place in society was not only critical to the safeguarding of a sound Islamic family, but vital to a healthy nation as well, thus resulting in the insulation of women from Java's more democratic reforms (9).

During Suharto's reign, many of his policies stressed women's roles as a linchpin to the security of Indonesia. These ideas focused on the importance of motherhood, which was claimed to aid in the harmony of Indonesian society.

Women as mothers and wives were models of good value, order, and containment of sexual desire. In a developing consumer world, with women leaving their homes to work, they were also potentially abandoning the moral education of their children and the sanctity of the family. Women were thus held responsible as both the managers of family morality and symbols of national and familial vulnerability. (31)

Suharto concretely pushed these symbolic ideals through extensive social programs and government propaganda, promoting the critical link between women, the family and the nation (16).

Besides the presence of a large-scale revolution, there are many parallels between the regime change in Indonesia and the social upheaval in Iran. In both instances, a shift in political power brought about new questions about how society should be organized. Both the removal of a repressive leader and the implementation of the negatively ascribed imperialist influences of the Shah generated a greater emphasis on stronger religious values as a defensive measure to this change. Although these ideals were held by society at large, they greatly affected women, as religious leaders viewed Muslim women as representing the moral backbone of society. Therefore, women personally experienced the moral anxiety felt by many societal members regarding their potential power, resulting in greater restrictions on the roles that they could hold.

The household, therefore, became a central part of this idea, as the motherhood ideal supported these ideal Islamic gender roles.

Section 2: Fatima

The motherhood ideal by itself was not necessarily a strong enough image to rally women behind this confining societal role. To strengthen the image of the mother and help to further define how women should act in Islamic society, revolutionary leaders and Islamic theorists utilized historical Islamic symbols as models that Iranian protesters were encouraged to emulate. Although women are the focal point of my thesis, these symbols were relatable to the overall Iranian population, as both male and female symbols were used extensively.

When referenced in times of social change and crises, religious symbols can serve as important tools for social leaders, as they can help illustrate an individual's desired societal outcome. By connecting a protester in a revolution to the character of Husayn, Ali, Zaynab, or Fatima, many of whom are considered martyrs in Shi'i history, the level of commitment from protesters can increase markedly, as not only are they fighting for their country and the state of their government, but also their Islamic identity and Iranian authenticity (Dorraj 1997, 512). The sterling quality of these symbols, in conjunction with their ability to be utilized in numerous social situations, accumulated in the pervasive propagation of these models during the revolution.

The applicability of these characters to situations outside their historical context was facilitated by the ambiguity behind the historical events in which they took part. Shi'i stories are recounted time and time again in a fluid manner so as to be applicable to various social contexts. Through a range of interpretations, historical facts are selected or omitted, thus creating an

ambiguity that surrounds the actions and thoughts of these characters, creating an air of mystery around their stories. These numerous interpretations are what enabled these figures to be molded to many different circumstances. For example, Fatima sometimes is remembered at the events of Karbala, even though historically she was believed to not be alive during the battle: “In many remembrances of Fatima, the constraints of time and place do not apply to God or the holy members of the Prophet’s family. Fatima is a central figure in this great episode of Karbala, but she is present in the form of a non-temporal spirit” (Aghaie 2005, 100). This concept was common in Islamic interpretation, and is documented in the generally accepted representation of the Battle of Karbala written by Husayn Kashefi in 1502 entitled “The Garden of the Others.” In Kashefi’s depiction, Fatima had a central role in the events of the Karbala battle, even though she was believed to have died 47 years prior to this event (Aghaie 2004, 93). The lack of importance of the historical accuracy of these characters opened up a sense of immortality around them. It allowed leaders to relate Fatima to Karbala, and thus bring stronger images together. Because a variety of interpretations ensued, and therefore factual details were less important, these characters were able to rise above many contradictions that might be used against them, resulting in their immunity to tarnishing in the minds of Muslims. This was a critical factor in the continuing references to these figures. They could not be blemished in ways that other societal factors routinely are in the minds of a country’s citizens, such as secular governmental policies: “Governments create tragedies. They commit murders. But the people continue to seek this movement throughout its history. The fate of their heroes has not been forgotten” (Shariati 1980, 39). There is a powerful transcendent nature to these models, as they could be molded depending on the context to achieve a given end.

As Iranian women were critical participators in the revolution, the application of female symbols was of paramount importance. Therefore, Fatima al-Zahra, the youngest daughter of the Prophet Mohammad, became a central symbol for both the revolution and the Iran-Iraq War. Fatima is constantly referred to as the blessed embodiment of what it means to be a woman, a mother and the “most noble of human conceptions” (Aghaie 2005, 134). She was not only adored by her father and regarded as an ideal mother who raised important leaders in Shi’i history, but also exhibited a range of revered characteristics that could be either focused on or minimized depending on the usefulness of the situation (Kashani-Sabet 2011, 210).

Fatima was set apart from other Muslim women from her birth. Her birth was welcomed by the angel Gabriel and holy women, whose presence was believed to destine Fatima to carry out Mohammad’s sacred line, making her maternal function essential (Kashani-Sabet 2005, 6-7). Her childhood was characterized by the strong relationship she had held with her father. The Prophet treated Fatima with a great amount of deference and respect, which was an anomaly when compared to the way women were generally treated in pre-Islamic times. In fact, the burying of daughters alive was a common practice at that time, as it was frequently the most secure and fiscally sound solution for a family (Dabashi 2005, 125). Not only did the Prophet honor Fatima, but she was also portrayed as pure in physical body, as theologians presented her image as untainted in both manner and bodily constitution. Any physical actions that are usually represented with an impure woman, such as menstruation and blood loss during pregnancy, were absent in Fatima’s historical accounts, opening the opportunity for both her physical body and spirit to represent “theological, political, and communal purity” (Thurkill 2007, 43).

An important characteristic of Fatima was her importance to the Prophet’s familial line. She was not only the sole surviving heir of the Prophet, but also the wife of Ali, who was a

central martyred figure in the Shi'i succession claim to legitimacy and the mother of the martyrs Husayn and Zaynab (95). After the death of Husayn, Fatima's role as a critical link in Islam expanded as her maternity solidified her as the cornerstone of the Imamate (19). Once the Prophet passed away, Fatima was expected to continue to spread his message. She was encouraged to speak out against the first caliphs Omar and Abu Bakr, and communicate to them about the Shi'i interpretation of the rightfulness of Ali to take power (Shariati 1980, 206-208). Therefore, the importance granted to her by the Prophet, the purity she held in bodily form, and the importance she had in the Islamic genealogy as the link to Ali and the family of the Prophet, all resulted in Fatima being an emblematic model of core importance for Shi'i imitation.

Fatima has also been viewed as embodying characteristics that many women have been taught to emulate in order to become ideal Muslims. One reason why Fatima was able to gain a mass appeal in the revolution and garner support from all types of Iranian women involved the various characteristics she embodied that could be applied to a broad range of aspects of a woman's life. These overarching qualities of Fatima were therefore altered to fit the needs of twentieth century Iranian society and link to the ideals of a specific religious leader. Fatima was emulated for her piety, struggle, pain, and maternal nature, which when used together, created mass appeal for her image, especially as it was used by leaders, such as Khomeini, as a symbol that stood in stark contrast to anything related to the "evil" Shah (Shirazi 2011, 113). These character traits gained or lost emphasis depending on how well they applied to the current societal situation (Kashani-Sabet 2005, 2). Even if they were emphasized at different times, their intentions might have been skewed. For example, during the years leading up to the revolution when Iranians felt that their identity was being threatened by imperialist powers, the motherly role of Fatima was of critical concern as a way of uniting Iranians together and creating a sense

of fortitude at a time when Iranians felt like aliens in their own country. An absence of social cohesion in Iran due to the reforms of the Shah created the opportunity for a return to Islamic figures that could define the Iranian identity in an authentic way (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1990, 347). Leaders associated this role with Fatima, as she was represented as helping to define the community of Iranians, and engender a sense of unity in a place devoid of certain identities through her association as a mother and unifier of an Islamic community (Kashani-Sabet 2011, 210).

During the Iran-Iraq War, Fatima's role was extended past her motherly role to her military nature, as governmental propaganda portrayed her as an Islamic militant, with her image being constantly depicted in posters, street art and pamphlets as shown in Figure 1. In this poster, Fatima is portrayed as a militant woman rallying Iranian women behind her, as she brandishes a gun and dons a chadur (Aghaie 2005, 134, 172-174). This does not mean that her maternal nature was minimized, however, as Fatima gained an even greater resurgence as a quintessential mother during the war as she was depicted as encouraging women to send their children off to fight and become martyrs for the Iranian cause (Shirazi 2011, 111), as seen in Figure 2 (Aghaie 2005, 172-173). Therefore, the motherhood mystique was not lost, and the "sacrificing mother" became even more central, as the new Islamic Republic required the upbringing of virtuous citizens who would rightfully defend and represent Iran (Gheytanchi 2001, 561).

Fatima's warrior-like nature was not the strongest image that one associated with her, and was more relatable to the actions of her daughter Zaynab. This resulted in a strong shift to Zaynab as a model during the war rather than Fatima. Government propaganda defined Zaynab as the ideal feminine symbol of war. She was viewed as a more appropriate motivational military tool for a war because of her embodiment of bravery, martyrdom, and sacrifice through her

involvement in the Battle of Karbala (Shirazi 2011, 113). Zaynab is remembered for her sacrifice of her brother and sons to the Battle, and Iranian women grieved with her over lost loved ones in war (Surdykowska 2012, 37). Khomeini alludes to this specific sacrifice in his “Last Will and Testament,” recited in 1989 in honor of the women who served this purpose.

These [women] who are unable to fight have served behind the front lines with such distinction and valor that has shaken the heart of the nation ... We have repeatedly witnessed them cry out, as did Zaynab, with pride that they have lost their sons in the way of Allah and the beloved Islam and are willing to sacrifice everything else they have. (Khomeini 1989, 14)

III. Women and Fatima from the Views of Shariati and Khomeini

Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Shariati were important proponents of social change during the time of the revolution and the war in Iran. Their messages spread far and wide, appealing to Muslims and secular intellectuals alike, but were especially pertinent to women. Both leaders focused on the importance of women adhering to Islamic values. Through the figure of Fatima, these leaders were able to persuasively advance their Islamic goals. Although they had different approaches to the nature of an Islamic state, commonalities were persistent in their works regarding the motherhood motif. To illustrate the importance of motherhood, Shariati and Khomeini engaged in rhetoric that incorporated various aspects of motherhood. First, Shariati and Khomeini emphasized the importance that women held in Islamic communities as linchpins of a moral society. If women were not adhering to certain societal roles, namely motherhood, then the downfall of an Islamic community would be imminent, as its future leaders would be deprived of appropriate nurturing. This idea led to a focus on the actual motherhood roles that women were to adopt. For Shariati and Khomeini, this role varied, with Shariati extending the idea beyond raising children to also protecting and Islamic society. Because mothers were so important, the household became a pure arena through which a family, and therefore society, would be carefully nurtured and ultimately thrive.

Personal Ideologies: Shariati

Shariati had a very strong following of young Iranians and intellectuals. They supported his moderate Islamic message that both retained Islam's core values while also adapting it in ways that related to twentieth century demands. Shariati's devotees shared a feeling of alienation in a country that was quickly becoming deprived of its Iranian and Islamic identity due to the

rapid influx of the Shah's reforms. They foresaw in Shariati a fresh perspective that brought back Iran's identity, but not in a framework that was seen to be out of touch, such as the occasional obscurantist interpretations advanced by some of the ulama (Tripp 2006, 179). The more moderate religious views of Shariati were influenced by his European education. Shariati studied in Paris at the Sorbonne under the guidance of intellectuals such as Louis Massignon. Massignon encouraged in Shariati a belief in social justice as a key principle for a religious society, thus imbuing his religious message with a stronger socio-political mission (Emami 2011, 103). Branching off of this idea was a Marxist undertone; Shariati believed that through hard work, an access to education and the creation of a social product, one could most effectively contribute to society (Akhavi 1988, 407). With the combination of a central focus on production in addition to the promotion of the integration of a classless society that was to be ruled by intellectuals as opposed to the religious ulama, the opportunity for the formation of a successful Islamic society would be formed (Ashraf 1990, 132).

In Iran, the ulama exercised complete control over *ijtihad*, or the interpretation and understanding of Islamic law. Muslims without official religious training were therefore unable to interpret Islamic messages for themselves, which monopolized religious judgment and understanding under the control of the ulama. This prevented most Muslims from applying Islam in a way so as to work with his or her individual needs. Shariati wanted all Muslims to be able to use *ijtihad* to interpret Islam for themselves. He viewed this flexibility as a way for Islam to be reformed to fit the needs of modern Iran, as the current control that the ulama held over Islamic interpretation prevented Islam from appropriately acclimating to societal change (Akhavi 1988, 416). Shariati's focus therefore emphasized the spread of knowledge as a way to include the masses in a greater attainment of self-understanding, agency and empowerment. Power in the

hands of Iran's citizens was important because it was an educated citizenry that would pave the way for a successful revolution against both the Shah and the stagnated Islam of some of the ulama, resulting in a unified societal body (Akhavi 1988, 416).

Shariati interprets Islam under the belief that Muslims should have complete control over their destiny, thus placing the capability of this religious agency upon a Muslims' ability to personally interpret their own religion (Dabashi 2005, 115). This type of agency separates a Muslim's actions from prevailing social orders, as it pushes them to follow a path not necessarily stemming directly from that before them. Shariati believed that Muslims should not be set out on predetermined paths, but instead should be powerful agents in the determination of their own destiny. This independence will lead to a successful revolution, as Muslims will no longer be adhering to ancient social values, but actually will hold ideas that will be relatable to revolutionary goals (Shariati 1980, 67). A young Muslim was not put on this earth to simply be a carbon copy of his or her parents and elders, devoid of personal understanding and reasoning, but instead should be able to choose his or her own path and interpret Islam in a way that works with personal needs. This fluidity in Islamic interpretation was what would enable Islam to evolve over time and respond effectively to modern societal demands (Dabashi 2005, 123). When religion is adopted in an imitative way, it cannot reform itself, and therefore becomes obsolete in light of new societal trends and challenges. Because Shariati believed that the present generation should not simply follow the past generation, but should revitalize Islam to meet modern demands, he opposed the notion of *taqlid*, or the imitation of leaders, as this method did not allow for innovation or intellectual stimulation (Akhavi 1988, 416). This viewpoint was important during the years leading up to the revolution because it was a time when it was becoming clear that the strain of Islam advanced by much of the ulama was becoming dated and

contradictory to the needs of Iranians, as it was not effective in competing with the reforms of the Shah. Many protesters needed something more relevant to their revolutionary aims, and like Shariati, they believed that Iran was being “captured by ancient, declining, solidified, deviated traditions and thus can no longer effectively confront the dangers of the superpowers” (Shariati 1996, 62).

These ideals resonated strongly with many Iranian women. Shariati presented these ideas in many lectures that were compiled in his famous work *Fatima is Fatima* in 1971 (Kashani-Sabet 2005, 13). Shariati’s approach, with the incorporation of Fatima as an ideal model for the roles of women in an Islamic state, was appealing to many Iranian women. It was when the teachings of the ulama were recognized in Iran that women were denied everything from human rights, education, and the freedom to develop, all of which Islam purported to offer women (Shariati 1980, 108). Iran’s state under the control of the ulama meant that a woman’s power was limited, her education was almost completely absent, her freedom was taken away, and therefore she was expected to solely grow up in her family’s home “without breathing any fresh air” (110). This religiously conservative mentality placed women in the same category as an uncontrollable animal, who needed to be kept separate from society so as to preserve her piety and virtuousness: “the only thing to do is keep her in a cage ... Her chastity is like dew ... when it sees the sun, it is gone” (115). Shariati’s ideology was not limiting with respect to the advancement of women in education, agency, and action, and presented her with the respect and equality of all Muslims. When society, however, allowed this interpretation to be determined by the ulama, Iranian women were left bereft of all of these values.

In Shariati’s view, the capitalist ideology was just as objectionable as the views of many members of the clergy. To Shariati, the capitalist economic make-up of American society set the

stage for the sexualization of women for profit and gain. Through this ideological platform, a woman loses the virtuous status that Shariati's version of Islam would grant her in favor of the materialist interests of society.

Women are no longer creatures who excite the imagination nor speakers of pure feelings ... They are no longer spoken of in terms of mother, companion, center of inspiration and mirror of life nor are they faithful. Rather, as an economic product, women are bought and sold according to the positive-negative qualities of their sexual attractions. (101)

A Western societal model replaced the value a woman attained through Islamic piety with her financial capacity, which was encouraged by Freudian ideals of a hyper-sexualized society. The conservative values pushed by the ulama in Iran were limiting Iranian women's self-awareness to a degree that enabled Freudian to enter into Iranian society. Because capitalism engenders a state in which materialism is in charge, the individual is therefore no longer an agent of his or her own actions, and is thus entangled in a "straitjacket of deterministic behavior" (Akhavi 1988, 412). If women were to be liberated, then they would be able to confront these forces more capably, and not allow capitalism to become prevalent within Iranian society (Shariati 1996, 62).

To Shariati, both the conservative and Western influences in Iran presented women as a commodity, a simple object that is passed between family and husband, and therefore deprived of certain rights and values granted to others in society. In a conservative society, the woman moves between her husband's and father's houses as if under an agreement between a buyer and a seller, and in Western society she is an instrument for entertainment (Shariati 1980, 101). In both instances, the opportunity for individual agency is lost, as the woman is merely a follower of various influences, but does not take an active role in determining her own place in society. By following Shariati's prescribed path, however, a woman is given a choice. Women were to participate in public life in a way that would not take away their roles as mothers and not make

them inactive (Keddie 2006, 205). She does not merely comply with forced upon molds, but chooses the path that she herself desires to take: “She wants neither the model of the traditional ... nor the model of the modern degraded woman. She wants the face of a Muslim woman” (Shariati 1996, 67).

His idea centered on forming a new path for women to take, which was not the traditional path that constrained women or the Western capitalist path that lowered women to the status of a sexual being, but instead presented a third alternative. This third option would give women the ability to cast off the forced identities pushed on her by the West and traditionalists and choose the path that works for her in a changing social climate that could be separate from family, tradition, and history (Shariati 1980, 121). To adopt this outlook, a certain reconstruction of ideas surrounding Islamic innovation was necessary. However, as Shariati lamented, the ulama was limiting this agency regarding the interpretation and dissemination of religious knowledge, therefore stunting the educational development of women. As they were limited in their access to education, they were not able to gain the same sense of self-understanding and necessary independence that would enable them to branch away from their familial environment (Kashani-Sabet 2005,16).

Personal Ideologies: Khomeini

The power of Ayatollah Khomeini in swaying religious conservatives, feminists and liberals alike is evident in the overwhelming support for the revolution and the subsequent successful overthrow of the Pahlavi regime in 1979. Khomeini promoted messages of equality and freedom, enabling him to appeal to a wide range of Iranians and gain their support in the protests. Khomeini’s message and rhetoric profoundly affected an enormous number of secular,

liberal and progressively minded individuals who supported him in hopes of a society that would appeal to all of their goals. This audience might not have been sold on his more traditionally Islamic values in the absence of the manner in which he packaged his message.

However, Khomeini's societal changes once he came to power in Iran in 1979 took away many of the gains for women under the Shah with respect to gender equality, participation in the workforce and access to higher education. These realities dismayed many women – Muslim and non-Muslim alike – who had participated in the revolution and had come to view Islam under Khomeini as the alternative to the repression of the Shah (Sedghi 2007, 194). Khomeini was extremely opposed to the influence of the West on Iran's society. To Khomeini, the Shah had demoralized Iranians, and corrupted them with consumerism. In a manner similar to Shariati, the Shah's values had made a woman a commodity, as she was expected to solely promote goods or herself (Khomeini 2001, 4). The Shah's regime represented all that was wrong with society. Khomeini's future Islamic Republic, on the other hand, represented the pure and virtuous manifestation of an Islamic society. This explicit "us vs. them" paradigm was intended to create a starker contrast between the authentic identity of Iran and the foreign policies of the Shah. Throughout Khomeini's speeches there is a pervasive idea of "the oppressors vs. the oppressed," "the pious vs. the evil," and "the right vs. the wrong." America was evil, the Shah was Satan, and any of his Western-inspired policies were immediately un-Islamic, imperialistic, and therefore anti-Iran. In contrast, Khomeini and his ideology for Iran represented all that was good, wise, and pious in modern society (Zickmund 2003, 29). This idea extended to Khomeini's representation of women. Khomeini regarded anything endorsed by the Shah to be inherently evil, resulting in the belief that the greater opportunities for gender equality advanced by that

regime – such as the minor advancements prescribed for women in the Shah’s “White Revolution” – were blasphemous (Moghissi 1994, 61).

Therefore, anyone who was in favor of the Shah automatically represented anti-Iran. Khomeini pushed Fatima’s image in a way so as to drive home this critical distinction. Fatima represented her individual self, but more generally she also represented the Prophet’s family, and those within the family were with Islam and those outside of the family were against Islam. Fatima’s status was therefore central to the characterization of the Islamic community. This concept was applied in Islamic society from medieval times, when religious authors utilized Fatima as a community identity marker, as she and her family were a signifier by which to separate Shi’ism from other Islamic sectarian groups (Thurkill 2007, 91). Fatima brought together this community, as she had been quoted as stating: “The Imamate exists for the sake of preserving order among the Muslims and replacing their disunity with unity” (Khomeini 1970, 24). Those protestors who were involved in the revolution represented Islam and those who did not participate were immediately against everything that Iran stood for. As a consequence, this created a much stronger push for involvement in the revolution, because by not participating, an Iranian was seen as acting contrary to all that Iran stood for

Social Responsibility

Shariati’s writings contained messages that linked Muslim Iranian women to the continuation of a moral Islamic society. For women to be able to tackle this responsibility, the opportunity for a pursuit of education and independent agency needed to be made available. Shariati admonished the ulama for not appropriately spreading Islamic knowledge and opening up educational opportunities for women. These limitations prevented women from nourishing

their minds, especially in terms of Islamic learning, and thus infringed upon their freedom to develop (Shariati 1980, 108). Fatima had a fair amount of agency regarding the choices that she made in life, which linked well with Shariati's ideal for women. He emphasized individual actions taken by Fatima as a way to illustrate this important independent consciousness. One of the central ideas of Shariati's thinking is the pursuit of self-determination, dignity and agency. In his ideology, a Muslim should not simply follow the paths of his or her ancestors, but should pursue independent learning and Islamic understanding. This would be possible through stronger access to education. Fatima is always eager to learn and develop, and therefore is a critical character in this search for self-awareness and agency because she is constantly in a search for self. The idea of "Who is Fatima?" was a prominent theme in Shariati's lectures: "They [Muslim women] want to decide for themselves. They need a model, an ideal example, a heroine ... for them the problem of 'Who am I?' How do I become? Is urgent. Fatima, through her own 'being,' answers their questions" (20). Shariati wanted Muslim women to make the choice themselves, and to forgo previously molded paths from the ulama, the West or familial tradition. With an appropriate education that paves the way for the development of self-awareness, Shariati believed that Iranian women would accomplish this goal.

Fatima's continual self-development was so important because she had immense burdens in her life. Not only was she the daughter of the Prophet, and therefore an important figure in the spreading of Mohammad's message, but also the wife of Ali, who was a central figure in Shi'ism. Ali brought with him struggles that transferred to the life of Fatima: "She [Fatima] knew that the hand of destiny made Ali like an anvil which must bear all strokes, tortures, and hardships. Thus by selecting a warrior like Ali as a husband, Fatima shouldered a great intellectual, human and social responsibility" (Shariati 1996, 69). Despite Fatima's difficult life,

she continuously responded with immense grace and perseverance, as she knew she had this responsibility, and was aware that she would constantly be in a state of becoming without a sense of peace (Shariati 1980, 159). In Shariati's work, he includes first-person interactions between the Prophet and Fatima, which addressed directly Fatima's importance to Islam, and the responsibility that she held as the Prophet's daughter: "But, you, my daughter, will be the first person from among my family who will come after me and will join me ... Are you not satisfied, Fatima, that you will be the leading women for these people?" (183). This idea of continuing Islam's message is completely on the shoulder of Fatima, in a manner similar to the achievement of the ideal Islamic state dependent on the role that Muslim women play in society. Shariati emphasized that women in twentieth century Iran were under a similar pressure, in that their roles and actions were critical to the success of the Islamic state. If women allowed either the capitalist or conservative model to form them, then they were merely succumbing to their own shortcomings, and would be passively continuing the subjugation of their gender based on outdated superstitious values (Kashani-Sabet 2005, 16).

The social responsibility of a woman, however, should never fully replace the moral and ethical behavior that she should exhibit as part of her Islamic responsibility in society. Fatima is a good role model as she represents a Muslim woman who exemplifies both a sound ethical purity and a strong social responsibility (Shariati 1980, 202). Fatima embodies this ideal example because she does not simply sit back and accept life's burdens, but instead faces with a persistent strength the immense struggles that have befallen her in life. Fatima has an amazing ability to see through the propaganda and politics she is faced with, while refusing to capitulate when confronted with the oppressive pressure from the Caliphate after the death of her father (207).

For women to be valued to this extent, men needed to accept these responsibilities as well. Women were to be revered, and men should remove themselves from a place of honor and bow their heads to women (136). Fatima's relationship with her father helped to illustrate this value and importance to women, and undermine the more sidelined roles for women in Islamic society. Shariati, therefore, emphasized the interactions that Fatima held with her father.

It is recorded that the Prophet would kiss the face and hands of Fatima. This sort of behavior is more than just the relationship of a kind father and his daughter ... such behavior in an environment strikes a revolutionary blow to the families and inhumane relationship of that environment. (135-136)

Shariati appealed to the Prophet's deferential and respected treatment towards Fatima as a way to instill his ideas in how women should act and be treated so as to achieve a similarly noble and respected state in Islamic society. In establishing the necessary dignity of a woman in society, and representing it through the character of Fatima, Shariati in effect attempted to break down the conservative norms controlling Iran that sustained the outdated and marginalized roles towards women from early Islamic times, and instead alter the image to a more respectable attitude towards women (Dabashi 2005, 125).

These ideas of breaking free from the chains of traditional and Western molds meshed well with Shariati's revolutionary rhetoric in the years leading up to the revolution. Fatima was the link from her early years, just as Iranian women were the link in the revolution: "When she was a small girl of around ten years ... Fatima felt herself responsible for the destination of the Islamic Revolution" (Shariati 1980, 69). It was through adopting Shariati's interpretation of a woman's role, that a Muslim woman would be able to achieve independent thought and agency. By following simply the ideals of the Shah or Khomeini, she would never be able to develop herself and follow her own ideas, but instead would be simply a puppet for various ideologies.

Khomeini also promoted messages of women as critical indicators of a moral society. In a manner different from Shariati, however, this responsibility called for greater restrictions on women if it was to be honored. By placing a greater amount of control over the actions an Iranian woman could take in society, Khomeini believed Islam was elevating a woman's status to something that could not be tarnished, not unlike the symbols that he so frequently referenced (Khomeini 2001, 32). To help mold this image, Khomeini greatly emphasized Fatima, as she was an extremely relevant symbol in establishing this revolutionary ideal. Khomeini directed a great deal of focus towards the sacred status Fatima embodied, which he contended was on a level with that of the Prophet and the Imams. In Khomeini's public speeches, he claimed that Fatima was not only an ordinary woman, but was a sacred being as well, who just happened to appear in this world as a human (9). This spiritual status was so esteemed that in the mind of Khomeini, if Fatima were to have been born a man, she would have been a Prophet or Imam, as she possessed the same spiritual states achieved by these Islamic figures (Khomeini 1970, 36).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Khomeini enacted many reforms once he took power. These legal reforms that Khomeini took were steps to help form his ideal Islamic Republic in which Khomeini relegated women predominantly to the domestic sphere. During the years leading up to the revolution, Khomeini needed women to be active participators in the revolution, and therefore his verbal messages belied many of these concrete legal acts. He targeted his central message around the pivotal role that women held in determining Islam's state in society: "A woman was the gateway between a flourishing Islamic society and a failing one; honorable actions would deem women as blessings, and immoral actions characterize her as the source of complete evil" (Khomeini 2001, 33). At this time, Khomeini's messages centered on the idea of equality between men and women and individual freedom of choice, noting that gender should

create no difference in human rights or the control over one's destiny. Men and women had the same rights, as long as they observe Sharia law (35). They were "equal," but only certain women were worthy enough to represent Khomeini's revolution. He wanted not just any Iranian woman to participate, but one who would most accurately embody Islam, or more specifically, those women who donned traditional Islamic clothing: "The women who contributed to the revolution were and are, women in Islamic dress, not elegant women all made up like you, who go around all uncovered, dragging behind them a tail of men ... They never did anything good, not those. They do not know how to be useful, neither socially, nor politically, nor professionally" (Girgis 1996, 2).

After the revolution, Iran became embroiled in war. The Iran-Iraq War brought about various changes in terms of the requirements of Iranians. They were now expected to protect their country and contribute to the fight against Iraq. Khomeini maintained the motherhood ideal, but expanded it in ways not seen during the revolution. To rally women behind the war, Khomeini spread messages of warrior-like women who promoted "lion-hearted" efforts to release Islam from the subjugation of foreigners and return it to Iran (Khomeini 2001, 19). In Khomeini's "Last Will and Testament," he emphasized the necessary participation of women in the war effort, and the subsequent reverence they gained in taking action: "Those women who have served behind the front lines with such distinction and valor that has shaken the heart of the nation with joy and delight while making the hearts of enemies ... with anger and frustration" (Khomeini 1989, 14). In the words of Khomeini, women formed the vanguard that men followed into battle, raising them to the status of not only models for other women to emulate, but also for men to aspire to as well (Khomeini 2001, 17). Women were critical to the success of the

revolution and war. If women did not uphold certain roles and values, then they would undermine a whole generation, and by extension the Islamic community.

Despite the many messages of bravery, participation and power of women, Khomeini viewed women as being first and foremost mothers. The morality of society is dependent on women; their status is so high in Islam because they are the only individuals who hold this power: “The rectitude or immorality of a society stems from the rectitude or immorality of women in that society. Women are the only individuals who can bestow upon society individuals raised in their care whose deeds can be a blessing to communities and can inspire perseverance and lofty human values, or can have the opposite effect” (39).

Images of Fatima were not absent in post-revolution Iran. Her maternal characteristics were continually emphasized, as they were especially evident through Khomeini’s proclamation of national “Women’s Day” in Iran being placed on Fatima’s birthday. In order to truly acknowledge the greatness of Fatima and the many struggles that she endured, Iranians, both men and women alike, needed to imitate her in thought and action (15). In Khomeini’s many speeches on “Women’s Day,” throughout the years that he governed Iran, he mentioned both Fatima and her daughter Zaynab, relating their life to the female participators in the revolution and the war, adding a critical level of commitment and importance to female participation in support of Khomeini’s leadership in the war and revolution: “It is the day commemorating a woman whose daughter stood against tyrannical rulers ... she was not afraid, she held her ground and condemned him ... this is what women should be like ... this is how the women of our day are. They stood against the tyrant with clenched fists carrying their infants in their arms and helped the movement” (17).

Motherhood

Motherhood was central to Shariati's interpretation of Fatima. His more moderate Islamic viewpoints conflicted with the many views of Islamic scholars, who adopted the approach of seeing motherhood as the only path for women, under the belief that if a woman enters the work force or focuses on personal education, then she will disregard her primary duty of raising children (Shariati 1980, 110). Shariati viewed motherhood as beyond simply raising and educating children, as it also was a role that protected the Islamic family, and by extension the nation. Shariati emphasized this through Fatima, in that as a young girl, she was referred to as the "mother of her father" (148). She was constantly by her father's side, and protected him against his adversaries in the early years in which he spread his message: "whenever he [the Prophet] falls he becomes like a bird that has fallen out of the nest ... Fatima throws herself upon her father. With all of her strength, she protects him" (188). In this way, the motherhood ideal was not only seen as raising children, but also protecting the Prophet, and as an extension protecting the future of Islam. This responsibility was not only placed on Fatima, but she also perceived it herself: "I can no longer bear all of these difficulties. He is my father. I am his mother. If he leaves me in this city with all the uproar of the people!" (183). Motherhood, for Shariati, therefore not only was the actual raising of children, but protection of the Islamic message. It was not a monolithic idea shared by all Islamic theorists, but was fluid depending on the messages of the speaker.

Khomeini more narrowly defined his motherhood ideal. He did not want women to expand beyond raising and educating children. Khomeini opposed the many progressive reforms established under the Shah, especially concerning the presence of women in public life, as they were contrary to Islam. To bring women out of the house and into the public sphere, such as

through the promotion of higher education and availability of greater employment opportunities, would bring about the downfall of the ideal Islamic society. By bringing women into offices and away from their children, the workplace would become corrupt, and the children would remain uncared for (Khomeini 2001, 73). When women remained separate from their homes, it would result in disastrous effects on children: “Major complexes are created when a child is separated from his mother. A child needs his mother’s affection, therefore this profession ... is your [Iranian women] primary one: to give your child his primary training” (75). Any specific additional roles that Khomeini identified for women were less of additional roles, and more of extensions of the motherhood role. Teaching children is an extension of a mother’s role of raising her children, thus not providing legitimate alternatives for women (84). Under the Pahlavi regime, women’s stronger presence outside of this role had tainted their fundamental roles. Like Shariati, Khomeini believed women had turned into objects under the Shah, which deprived women of all of the freedom they had been granted from Islam: “He [Mohammad Reza Shah] turned women into dolls, whereas women are human beings, great human beings ... women are the educators of society. It is from the laps of women that true human beings originate ... a country’s success or its misfortune depends on women” (16).

Motherhood extended to the Iran-Iraq War as well, as depictions of women at this time were filled with motherhood imagery even when addressing areas concerning participation in the war effort and its political and territorial aims. When mothers were participators in the demonstrations, they were portrayed as having one hand up in the air, and one hand holding onto their child (100). Even in times of war, women could not be separated from their children. A figure that was representative of this image of mothers, together with their children, in times of war was Zaynab. As aforementioned, Zaynab was known for her participation in the Battle of

Karbala where she was martyred, in addition to her willingness to sacrifice her family members to be martyred in battle (Shirazi 2011, 113). This idea of being a willing mother was evident in Khomeini's speeches, as he commented on them in his closing remarks in his "Last Will and Testament:" "we have repeatedly witnessed them [women] cry out, as did Zaynab, with pride that they have lost their sons in the way of Allah and the beloved Islam and are willing to sacrifice everything else they have" (Khomeini 1989, 14). These women were valuable like Zaynab because as mothers they were willing to sacrifice their sons to the Iranian cause. In order to have sons to give, they needed to appropriately raise them as mothers. By conducting themselves in the manner of Zaynab, women were not only protestors in a war over territory, but also personified a past martyr and thus acted in the way of God (Khomeini 2001, 29).

Sacred Home

As noted before, motherhood roles were concentrated around the domestic sphere, which became a pure arena through which the family, and by extension society, would thrive. Shariati did not approve of retaining women in the home as inactive individuals without education or thought – a deplorable practice that he said had been wrongfully endorsed in the teachings of the ulama (Shariati 1980, 110). If opportunities are not made available for women outside their homes, then they needed to maintain a life of integrity inside it, and become active individuals inside their own homes. Through this, a woman will warrant for herself a great amount of praise, for in working in her home, she is neither vacantly-minded nor allowing freedom to be taken from her, but is utilizing what is given to her for a productive and independent purpose. The women that Shariati and his version of Islam praise are those who take advantage of the opportunities available to them, and do not sit idle without work or thought. If women do not

have access to education, for example, then they should work hard in the house (112). As previously mentioned, Shariati placed considerable emphasis on hard work and production, which were values that related to his Marxist ideals. Therefore Fatima's perseverance and work ethic were the focus of his message. Shariati mentioned Fatima's actions inside the home, such as grinding the wheat, baking the bread, and bringing water (157). In this way, he was able to extend the woman's role in the domestic sphere beyond being passive and restrained; if a woman is to remain in the domestic realm, then she should be expected to work hard, whether through pursuing independent education, raising children or participating in manual labor. This idea was strengthened as Shariati contrasted it with those women in society, such as those under capitalist social influences, who were lacking in individual purpose or drive and who "chose rather than create," by succumbing to material over productive interests (Kashani-Sabet 2005, 18). In Shariati's mind, they represented individuals who provided nothing to society, epitomizing the downfall of capitalism and thus acting as the antithesis to his ideal Muslim woman.

The house was the place where the family prospered. It was where Fatima and Ali raised their children who eventually became important martyrs in Shi'i history. It is where Fatima raised Zaynab, and therefore the greater Islamic community was nurtured: "From every corner of Fatima's house, a symbol and an embodiment of humanity appears" (Shariati 2015). But, if used incorrectly, a house could become a prison, as women in homes without access to education or opportunities for self-development would be deprived of their rights (Shariati 1980, 111).

To Khomeini, the household represented a symbol of a united country. It was an infallible arena, in which the family, and by extension, society would prosper. To retain this purity, no governmental intervention should extend into the home. In Khomeini's Islamic state, the government would not reprimand a Muslim for what they did inside their homes. However, as

Islam covers all aspects of a Muslim's life, then Islam should litigate how they should act in all areas of their lives, including in the private sphere. The home, therefore, would be untouched by any government, but filled with Islam (Khomeini 2001, 63). The house of Ali and Fatima became a prime example for this home, as it stood for a sacred space to nurture humankind: "may the blessings and peace of God be made upon this small room, which was the place where the light of divine majesty was made manifest and was the nursery of the elite children of mankind." In this way, the home was viewed in a manner similar to Shariati. The household generated prosperity for humanity, and was where the light of God was manifested and centralized. Khomeini illustrates divine interventions manifesting in the household of Ali and Fatima. The roof of the home is depicted as the "Throne of the Lord of the world," which is where angels would come down and bring revelations to Fatima and Ali. God would draw back the curtains of the home and see the power of Mohammad present inside of it (13). Therefore, the home was a pure and divine realm that was to be untouched. As mothers raised and taught children inside these walls, their importance was amplified through the power of the home.

Conclusion

Iranians overwhelmingly came together in 1979 to remove Mohammad Reza Shah from power in favor of a religious regime led by Ayatollah Khomeini. Khomeini's fundamental theme of the need for a united Iran to wage a religious war to protect itself against outside imperialist forces ran like a thread through the many public messages that he delivered during the revolution and the Iran-Iraq War. His rhetorical references to Shi'i figures captured the public's imagination and helped to instill a stronger sense of urgency in the protesters. By relating their efforts to the actions of the Shi'i figures of Husayn, Ali, Fatima, or Zaynab, Khomeini was able to galvanize the level of commitment and sense of duty of his followers (Sreberny-Mohammadi 363). The protesters were not simply fighting against a secularized regime, but instead were battling for the very preservation of the Islamic nation itself.

Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Shariati were important figures in this revolution. Khomeini, who was a member of the ulama, supported a more traditionally Islamic approach since he wanted to mandate Sharia law and apply it to all aspects of an Iranian's life, as the completeness of this set of laws would, in his view, constitute a complete social system (Khomeini 1970, 20). Ali Shariati opposed the teachings of the ulama and wanted the opportunity for religious interpretation to be spread to the people, thus opening up the opportunity for a successful revolution against an imperialist power (Shariati 1980, 67). Despite core differences in their Islamic ideologies, Khomeini and Shariati both focused great attention on women's roles in the future of Iran and the formation of an Islamic society.

Women are core indicators of the morality of an Islamic society. Oftentimes, it is the women who are targeted by regimes and leaders to define the prevailing ideologies of a society

(Moghadam 2003, 244). Women are both extremely powerful and vulnerable. As indicators of a society, they hold the power to identify its values. However, if they abuse this power and do not conform to certain ideal societal roles, then the morality of society can be threatened. Therefore, women were pressured by the ulama and Islamic theorists to adhere to preservationist roles that emphasized the importance of tradition over modernity. Societal leaders supported the idea that if women were to adopt a Western lifestyle, it would naturally follow that the Shah's reforms would gain greater acceptance within society as a whole, thereby weakening the Islamic consciousness (Aghaie 2004, 114). This anxiety was evident in the writings of Khomeini and Shariati, as they both emphasized women as the linchpin to a religiously fundamentalist society. Upon taking an in-depth look at the primary lectures, writings and sermons presented by Khomeini and Shariati, I was able to understand their approach to Iranian women and the reasons behind the extensive focus on motherhood as a way to drive home their message.

Shariati valued motherhood, but saw it in a different way than that contemplated by many members of the ulama. Shariati's Western education instilled in him influences that pushed him to apply Islam in a way that worked within a modern-day context. He advocated against the powerful role of the ulama in society, as it was monopolizing religious interpretation and not appropriately making this information available to the masses (Akhavi 1988, 416). Shariati's approach encouraged Iranian women to gain a stronger understanding of Islam and to be active members of their society in both the private and public sphere. To be a passive woman, who either simply adhered to the values advanced by the ulama or blindly followed the consumerist orientation of the Shah's regime, was not the path that women should take. Instead, they should take active roles as women who contributed in a meaningful manner to the overall welfare of society (407).

For Khomeini, women's importance required that they conduct most of their actions within the domestic sphere; if women neglected their fundamental role of raising children, then over time society would become much more vulnerable to threats of corruption and immoral conduct (Khomeini 2001, 33). From Khomeini's viewpoint, fulfilling their traditional maternal roles raised women to an esteemed, and almost incorruptible, status. Over the course of the revolution, the maternal "ideal" was invoked repeatedly by Khomeini as a means of uniting Iran against the forces of the Shah. After the revolution – and continuing throughout the Iran-Iraq War – motherhood imagery was evoked again and again to strengthen the resonance of the message that women should have no qualms about sending their children off to combat as martyrs (22). Although some women came to hold a more militant role, this was never achieved at the expense of the motherhood ideal, which remained strong throughout these events.

For both of these leaders, these ideals were illustrated through motherhood imagery and an appeal to Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Mohammad, as a model whom women should emulate. Therefore, extensive rhetoric was focused on the importance of women to a sound Islamic society, the role that they should take as mothers and the purity of the household that they were dedicated to preserve. Together, they presented an image of what women should represent in society. Fatima was an important model for this ideal because she embodied various characteristics that appealed to these leaders. Fatima's various attributes were either emphasized or left out depending on the ideologies of the speakers. For example, Shariati focused great attention on Fatima's work ethic, as his Marxist leanings valued the creation of a social product. Shariati also promoted Fatima's role as "mother of her father," to extend the motherhood imagery to a more protectionist ideal, that protected not only the family but the Islamic community as a whole. Khomeini frequently made reference to the "militant" Fatima during the

Iran-Iraq War as a means of encouraging women to participate in the war effort, with governmental propaganda depicting her as chanting and brandishing guns (Aghaie 2005, 172-174). However, the motherhood role continued to be an important theme in war-related propaganda, with women being encouraged to use their position within the family to urge their children to participate in the war effort – if necessary, at the cost of their lives. Indeed, women were routinely pushed to send their children off to be martyrs for the war effort. Fatima, as a mother, served as a critical role model in this respect, as was true for her daughter Zaynab (Shirazi 2011, 111).

Looking forward, this work sets the stage for more detailed interpretations of religious messages in times of social change. It outlines the importance of religious symbolism in Islamic movements and elucidates the effect that these religious appeals can have on protesters and war efforts. As this work largely focuses on the messages of Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Shariati, further research should be done that not only addresses the views of these male leaders but that also explores the ways in which women responded to their messages. How did Iranian women view these appeals to Fatima? Did they actively embody her attributes in their own actions? What work was actually produced *by women* about the importance of Fatima, as opposed to that produced *by the male leaders*? Delving into these questions will be a valuable next step if I were to continue this research, as it is important to look at both sides of every story and not simply to accept one set of views as the definitive interpretation of societal ideals.

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Figure 1:



POSTER FOR THE WOMEN'S REVOLUTION, 1979

Figure 2:

