

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

Historically, Iran and Israel have been in the complex relations among the international regime. Although both are geographically located in the Middle East, both quite different characteristics based on the population. Iran is notable as the only country in the Middle East with a Persian-majority population and one of the few predominantly Shia Muslim nation. It often leads to friction in its relations with Middle Eastern states primarily Arab and Sunni Muslim.¹ Both Iran and Israel stand out as exceptions to the prevailing norms of Sunni Muslim and Arab-majority countries in the region. The diplomatic relations between both nations is particularly distinctive. Throughout history, the Persian and Jewish peoples have shared a long tradition of interaction and cooperation, lasting thousands of years.² However, this relationship transformed dramatically from close friendship to intense hostility following the Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979.³ This abrupt shift significantly altered the political dynamics in the region and introduced an international dimension that highlights the

¹ Mhd Ilham, "STATUS QUO KONFLIK IRAN - ISRAEL (2005-2018)," *Majalah Ilmiah Tabuah: Ta'limat, Budaya, Agama dan Humaniora* 23, no. 1 (June 19, 2019): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.37108/tabuah.v23i1.213>.

² Khotibul Umam, "Rivalitas Arab Saudi, Iran, dan Israel di Kawasan Timur Tengah," *POPULIKA* 10, no. 2 (July 8, 2022): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.37631/populika.v10i2.509>.

³ "(PDF) Iran, Israel, and Zionism since the Islamic Revolution - From Rational Relations to Threat and Disaster," accessed May 28, 2024, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325975597_Iran_Israel_and_Zionism_since_the_Islamic_Revolution_-_From_Rational_Relations_to_Threat_and_Disaster.

complexity and multilayered nature of interactions between these two countries within the broader context of the Middle East.⁴

The success of the Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979 significantly influenced the rise of political awareness and instilled a sense of confidence among Muslim nations worldwide. The revolution encouraged states and governments to adopt Islamic law and to pursue the establishment of governance and political systems that are both democratic and aligned with Islamic principles.⁵ This commitment served as a characteristic of Iran, where the state embraced a model of religious ideologization to solidify its religious ideology. According to Geiger, ideology is a coherent system of ideas that addresses social reality and is logically derived from its foundational assumptions. Over time, this ideology develops as independent of any particular individual's influence, serving as a reference for interpretation, commentary, and indoctrination.⁶

In the context of Iran, Ali Merad examines the ideology of Islam as an endeavor to transform Islamic through into norms and values that shape the social and political order.⁷ Iran sought not only to implement Islamic law in daily life but also to weave

⁴ "From Alliance to Order: Iran's Axis of Resistance Policy towards the Middle East | Request PDF," accessed April 21, 2024, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336441989_From_Alliance_to_Order_Iran's_Axis_of_Resistance_Policy_towards_the_Middle_East?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19.

⁵ Wisnu Fachrudin Sumarno, "Sejarah Politik Republik Islam Iran Tahun 1905-1979," *SANGKÉP: Jurnal Kajian Sosial Keagamaan* 3, no. 2 (July 24, 2020): 145–58, <https://doi.org/10.20414/sangkep.v3i2.1931>.

⁶ A. Riza, "Menakar Ideologi Republik Islam Iran: Kontestasi Antara Ideologi Dan Pragmatisme Dalam Politik," *Al-Daulah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Perundangan Islam* 7 (January 9, 2018): 279–301, <https://doi.org/10.15642/ad.2017.7.2.279-301>.

⁷ Idil Akbar, "Khilafah Islamiyah: Antara Konsep dan Realitas Kenegaraan (Republik Islam Iran dan Kerajaan Islam Arab Saudi)," *Journal of Government and Civil Society* 1, no. 1 (February 22, 2018): 95, <https://doi.org/10.31000/jgcs.v1i1.265>.

Islamic principles into the country's political and governmental framework. During the reign of Shah Pahlavi, the influence of Western culture led to a decline in the prominence of Islamic values within society.⁸ However, through this new approach, Iran has successfully established a system where religion and politics are interconnected by positioning Islamic ideology as the foundational basis for the state's policies and actions.

This integration gave Iran a distinctive identity on the international stage, demonstrating how it uniquely combines religion with governance. Additionally, this approach has influenced political and social dynamics for other Muslim countries. The resulting polarization positioned Islam as a significant force to counterbalance Western political dominance. The Iranian Islamic Revolution became a pivotal lesson for Muslims worldwide, inspiring them to regain confidence in their faith. It emphasized that Islam goes beyond mere religious practice; it represents a comprehensive way of life that includes both worship and the organization of society. Consequently, the revolution served as a reminder to Muslims of their potential to once again lead the world and develop a noble Islamic civilization.

Khomeini had a distinct view of democracy, asserting that Islamic democracy fundamentally differs from the liberal democracy commonly practiced in Western countries. He believed that freedom within a democracy must be both regulated and limited by law, especially Islamic law. The freedoms granted to the people should be exercised within the boundaries established by Islamic law and the country's

⁸ Surahman Amin, "REPUBLIK ISLAM IRAN (NEGARA MODEREN ISLAM SYIAH)" 8 (2016).

constitution, ensuring that religious values and constitutional integrity are upheld to the highest standards.

The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran embodies this unique duality. Iran as an Islamic country relies on all aspects of life such as laws and policies on the principles of Sharia law. On the other hand, Iran also incorporates democratic principles into its governmental structure, which is evident in the presence of electoral mechanisms that allow the people to choose the leaders and participate in the political process.⁹ Iran aims to blend two seemingly contradictory systems: a government based on religious law and elements of modern democracy.¹⁰ The Constitution of Iran is designed to strike a balance between religious obligations and democratic rights, ensuring that freedom and justice can be achieved while respecting the religious values that form the foundation of the state. This approach reflects Iran's effort to develop a unique model of governance that combines Islamic principles with modern democratic aspirations.

The implementation of the concept of Wilayatul Faqih within Iran's political framework has had a profound impact on the nation's foreign policy. This principle, which entrusts the highest authority to an Islamic jurist, significantly influences Iran's reactions to global issues and the foreign policy approaches of Western nations.¹¹ Ayatollah Khamenei, serving as the Wali Faqih, has consistently condemned policies

⁹ Riza, "Menakar Ideologi Republik Islam Iran," 280.

¹⁰ Seyed Mohammad Lolaki, *Diverging Approaches of Political Islamic Thought in Iran since the 1960s* (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2020), 133, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-0478-5>.

¹¹ Mukhlis Latif et al., "The Nature of the Position of Wilayatul Faqih in the Iran Islamic Constitutional System: The Essence of Ayatollah Khomeini's Thoughts," *RES MILITARIS* 12, no. 4 (December 23, 2022): 2051–67, <https://resmilitaris.net/index.php/resmilitaris/article/view/2043>.

issued by the White House related to Islam and the Middle East. His criticisms extend beyond specific policies to encompass a broader rejection of Western propaganda and the idea that politics should be divorced from religion.¹² Khamenei's views and political strategies play a pivotal role in shaping Iran's foreign policy on the international stage. Even today, Iran's foreign policy often reflects a revolutionary spirit, which, while seemingly responsive to external actions, is deeply rooted in a long history of foreign intervention and domination.

Over the past 40 years, Iran has markedly increased its political influence in the Middle East. A central strategy in this expansion has been the cultivation of close relationships between militant organizations and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force (IRGC-QF).¹³ These alliances have enabled Iran to assert significant influence in various regional conflicts and support groups that align with its interests. In the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ascended to the position of Supreme Leader, fostering ambitions to inspire revolutions in neighboring countries.¹⁴ This vision was grounded in the desire to disseminate the ideals of the Islamic Revolution and to challenge the hegemony of Western powers in the region. To realize this vision, Khamenei established the IRGC-QF as a pivotal entity for upholding and promoting the principles of the 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution. The Quds Force has been instrumental in supporting Iran's allies and

¹² Riezky Poetra Phoenna, "PERUBAHAN KEBIJAKAN LUAR NEGERI IRAN DI ERA PRESIDEN HASSAN" 19 (2016).

¹³ "Iranian Revolution - HIS 100 - Perspectives in History - Research Guides at Southern New Hampshire University," accessed April 21, 2024, <https://libguides.snhu.edu/c.php?g=1184812&p=8902717>.

¹⁴ "Iran's Revolutionary Guards | Council on Foreign Relations," accessed April 21, 2024, <https://www.cfr.org/background/irans-revolutionary-guards>.

proxies throughout the Middle East, thereby reinforcing Iran's influence in the region while advancing its revolutionary ideals.¹⁵

On Monday, April 1, 2024, the Syrian Ministry of Defense announced that at approximately 5:00 PM local time, Israel launched an attack on the Iranian consulate situated in the upscale Mazzeh district of Damascus.¹⁶ Since the onset of the Syrian civil war 13 years ago, Israel has conducted hundreds of strikes targeting various entities associated with Iran and Iran-backed groups in the region. This includes operations against Hezbollah fighters from Lebanon, who receive support from Iran. The frequency and intensity of Israeli strikes have escalated following the outbreak of the war in Gaza. However, this incident marks the first time Israel has targeted an Iranian diplomatic mission in Syria. Iranian state media reported that the attack resulted in 13 fatalities, including seven members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and six Syrian nationals. Among the deceased were two high-ranking commanders: Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Zahedi and Brigadier General Mohammad Hadi Haji Rahimi. According to Zahedi, who was the leader at the Quds force, the IRGC's task was to spy on mission in Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon.

¹⁵ "Iranian Revolution - HIS 100 - Perspectives in History - Research Guides at Southern New Hampshire University."

¹⁶ mediaindonesia.com developer, "Data Fakta Serangan Israel terhadap Konsulat Iran di Suriah," accessed July 17, 2024, <https://mediaindonesia.com/internasional/662951/data-fakta-serangan-israel-terhadap-konsulat-iran-di-suriah>.

1.2 Research Problem

Considering the aforementioned background, the problem can be articulated as follows:

How were the implications of the Wilayatul Faqih system to Israeli airstrike on the Iranian Embassy in Damascus in April 2024?

1.3 Research Purpose

This research analyzes Iran's response to the Israeli airstrike on its embassy in Damascus in 2024, viewing it as a form of deterrence based on the concept of Wilayatul Faqih.

1.4 Research Uses

1.4.1 Academic Uses

The benefits of this research for academics are as follows:

1. To contribute the knowledge and understanding of Wilayatul Faqih's policy in response to Israeli air attacks on the Iranian Embassy in Damascus in 2024.
2. To provide valuable insights for scholars of international relations, especially those with a focus on international security.

1.4.2 Practical Uses

This research aims to provide practical benefits for all parties involved with the issues being studied and the subjects discussed. It is hoped that the findings will be useful and applicable to those affected by the research topic.

1.5 Literature Review

1.5.1 Previous Research

Previous research entails the researcher's endeavor to identify comparisons by analyzing the findings of studies that have focused on similar themes. This process enables researchers to effectively situate their new topics and issues, thereby ensuring the originality of their work. In this section, the author will present several research articles and academic writings related to the topic at hand. Below are some of these articles:

The first research referenced in the previous section was a journal by Mukhlis Latif, Muhammad Mutawalli, Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin, and Sabara, titled "*The Nature of the Position of Wilayat al-Faqih in the Iranian Islamic Constitutional System: The Essence of Ayatollah Khamenei's Thoughts.*"¹⁷ This journal outlines Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's perspective that Wilayat al-Faqih serves as a form of sovereignty, granting the authority to govern the country in political matters, as well as to supervise, implement, and enforce Islamic law and Sharia. A faqih, or expert in Islamic law, holds the responsibility to interpret the various methods of Sharia enforcement within the country while consistently upholding Islamic Sharia as an essential foundation.

The two studies share a common theme in their examination of Wilayat al-Faqih's policies regarding the enforcement of Islamic law and sharia. However, Mukhlis Latif and his colleagues provide a broad overview of these policies in Iran

¹⁷ Latif et al., "The Nature of the Position of Wilayat al-Faqih in the Iran Islamic Constitutional System."

without exploring specific examples. In contrast, the current research emphasizes retaliatory attacks as a consequence of the Wilayatul Faqih policy, offering concrete instances of how this policy is implemented with such attacks. This research aims to delve deeper into how the principles of Wilayatul Faqih are applied in particular contexts and their implications for political dynamics and law enforcement in Iran. The author references Mukhlis Latif's work to enhance the understanding of the Wilayatul Faqih concept within Iran's constitutional framework.

The second study is a journal by Seyed Kazem, titled "*Contraction and Expansion of the Powers of the Agents of the Islamic System Based on the Theory of Velayat-e Faqih*."¹⁸ This journal investigated the boundaries of contraction and expansion of agent power as defined by the theory of Velayat-e Faqih, or Wilayat al-Faqih. It articulates that Velayat-e Faqih encompasses a broad spectrum of considerations regarding divinity, justice, and the welfare of the Islamic Republic and its society. In certain contexts, decision-making must be entrusted to religious authority, extending beyond the realm of governance. Although both studies address policies related to Wilayat al-Faqih, they differ in their focal points. The earlier research concentrated on the limits of contraction and expansion of the power held by the Shah or Imam, while this current study focuses on the Wilayat al-Faqih policy's response to Israeli air attacks on the Iranian Embassy in Damascus in 2024. Seyed Kazem's research serves as a crucial reference for understanding decision-making

¹⁸ Seyed Bagheri and Seyed Kazem, "Contraction and Expansion the Powers of the Agents of the Islamic System Based on the Theory of Velayat-e-Faqih," *Journal of Islamic Political Studies* 3, no. 5 (March 1, 2021): 83–99, <https://doi.org/10.22081/jips.2021.72282>.

dynamics in Iran, particularly about the roles of the President and the Supreme Leader as embodiments of Wilayat al-Faqih policy.

The third study is a journal titled “*Examining the Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran Regarding the Israeli Attack on the Consulate from the Perspective of International Law*,” written by Alireza Ebrahimi.¹⁹ This research examines Article 51 of the United Nations (UN) Charter, which pertains to the right of states to undertake retaliatory attacks. The study highlighted on the significance of a nation’s territorial integrity in preserving peace and security in the Middle East, particularly in light of the shortcomings of international justice in addressing crimes committed by Israel, including the genocide against the human rights of Palestinian.

In the journal, Ebrahimi identified comparable cases, such as the retaliatory strike by Iran in response to the Israeli attack on its embassy in Damascus. A key distinction highlighted in this work is the differing policy foundations; Ebrahimi’s analysis is grounded in Article 51 of the UN Charter, while the author’s research primarily centers on Wilayatul Faqih policies. These aimed to achieve peace and security through counterattack initiatives, reflecting their broader implications. Ebrahimi’s research saw how Iran employs principles of international law alongside its domestic policies in response to Israeli attacks.

¹⁹ Alireza Ebrahimi, “Examining the Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran Regarding the Israeli Attack on the Consulate from the Point of View of International Law,” 2024.

The fourth research study referenced by the author is a journal titled “*Investigating the Role of Retaliation in Protecting Human Rights*,” authored by Abdualsmad Yosufi and Adel Sarikhani.²⁰ This journal delves into the various dimensions of religion and human rights, particularly in the context of the interplay between retaliation and human rights. It posited that there is no fundamental disparity between reason and sharia concerning retribution aimed at protecting life and the public interest. According to the law of retaliation do harm to person is unacceptable, as every individual possesses a dignity that must be upheld. In cases of killing, the law dictates that the perpetrator should face the death penalty. This ruling is regarded as both just and prudent, as it is viewed as the most effective means of safeguarding human life and physical integrity.

The journal emphasizes the common ground between reason and sharia in terms of retaliation as a mechanism for protecting an individual’s right to life. However, it places a greater focus on the relationship between laws of retaliation in international law and sharia law. In contrast, this research focuses on the study of Iran and its strategy for protecting national interests through the Wilayat al-Faqih policy adopted by the country. The author draws upon the research conducted by Yosufi and Sarikhani to enhance understanding of the laws of retaliation as they pertain to both international law and Sharia law.

²⁰ Abdualsmad Yosufi and Adel Sarikhani, “Investigating the Role of Retaliation in Protecting Human Rights,” *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 11, no. 5 (May 7, 2024): 194, <https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v11i5.5781>.

The latest research cited by the author is Haydar Oruc's work titled "The Current State of Israeli-Iranian Escalation amid Rhetoric of Provocation, Self-Defense, and Retaliation."²¹ This study investigated how the risks associated with the conflict between Israel and Iran have progressed beyond traditional proxy wars and developed into confrontations between the two countries. The research highlighted that Israel has undertaken significant risks in its attempts to provoke Iran, aiming to draw the nation into open conflict. In pursuing this strategy, Israel leverages the international system and legal frameworks as tools to further its objectives.

This research indicates that Israel's attack on Iran's diplomatic mission inadvertently provides Iran with the opportunity to assert its right to self-defense under international law. Conversely, Iran's subsequent actions give Israel a rationale for a retaliatory strike. The author examined the risks and consequences arising from this conflict through the lens of specific concepts that bolster the arguments made. A significant finding is the application of the Wilayatul Faqih concept as the cornerstone of Iranian policy, which has profound implications for understanding the dynamics and strategies Iran employs in this dispute. To enhance this analysis Haydar Oruc's research is strongly correlates with author's idea on a nation's right to defend itself according to international law.

After reviewing various studies on related topics, the author determined that the specific focus of this research had not been previously addressed by others. The examination of the existing literature revealed a gap, as there has been no analysis

²¹ Haydar Oruç, "The State of Latest Condition in the Israeli-Iranian Escalation Amid Rhetoric of Provocation, Self-Defense and Retaliation," April 30, 2024.

specifically discussing the implications of the Wilayatul Faqih system about Israeli air attacks on the Iranian Embassy in Damascus. This pointed out that this research is original and important for future studies. This research is expected to provide valuable insights into the political dynamics and military strategies between Israel and Iran, as well as their implications for international relations and regional stability.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

1.6.1 Retaliation Concept

Thomas Schelling, a renowned scholar in the field of international relations, articulates a profound concept of retaliation in his influential work, *“The Strategy of Conflict.”* In his analysis, Schelling illustrates how parties may determine the conflict by constraining the options available to their opponents. He underscores the significance of responding decisively to aggression, positing that in many instances, retaliatory force proves more effective than merely attempting to contain an attack. Schelling offered a nuanced understanding of the complexities of retaliation, emphasizing that uncertain threats of retribution can often be more intimidating and credible than explicit threats of retaliation. For him, retaliation extended beyond the mere application of force; it encompasses the strategic use of threats and countermeasures as means to prevent escalation that could lead to war. In conclusion, Schelling asserted that retaliation is a vital component in efforts to resolve conflicts and avert large-scale wars.²²

²² “The Strategy of Conflict,” Harvard University Press, accessed May 31, 2024, <https://www.hup.harvard.edu/books/9780674840317>.

The strategy of retaliation is familiar for conflict resolution strategy. It involves responses to an opponent's actions with similar actions. The fundamental idea is that proportional responses can help prevent opponents from escalating the conflict further. Retaliation has been a topic of study and controversy in conflict literature for many years. Some thinkers argue that retaliation can trigger escalation, leading to a dangerous cycle of violence that is difficult to halt. Conversely, others believe that retaliation is often necessary to defend oneself and protect the interests of a country or group. Discussions about the effectiveness and long-term impact of retaliation strategies incorporate considerations of ethics, international law, and the psychological dynamics of armed conflict. By examining the complexities through the concept, we can gain a better understanding of how retaliation strategies can either resolve conflicts or exacerbate them.

The concept of retaliation is prominently displayed in Iran's response to Israeli air attacks. Wilayatul Faqih, which allocates supreme authority to Iran's religious leader, positions the country to take decisive action in defense of Islamic interests and to respond to any acts of aggression against the nation or its broader Islamic objectives. From the viewpoint of the Iranian government, guided by the Wilayatul Faqih doctrine, retaliating for the Israeli attack on the Iranian Embassy in Damascus can be interpreted as an attempt to uphold the nation's honor and interests, as well as to demonstrate a willingness to react to assaults on its diplomatic facilities.

Imam Rouhollah Khomeinei in his book *Tahrir Al- Vasilah* Vol-II section eight- discourse on defence.²³ There are two categories of defence. The first category concerns the defence of the Islamic territory and its boundaries, while the second category concerns the defence of that's Muslim own self, etc. According to QS. Al-Maidah verse: 33 about the law of combat and the punishment of combat. Khomeinei said that Defensive jihad is not only required in the face of direct threats to the Islamic state, but also in response to attacks on symbols of sovereignty and religion, including embassies that are considered extensions of the state's territory. In this context, Iran's retaliatory strikes can be seen as a form of sharia obligation to defend the honor of Islam and protect the interests of Muslims. In addition, the doctrine of Wilayat al-Faqih gives the Supreme Leader of Iran the authority to determine when and how defensive jihad should be carried out, including in the form of military retaliation against foreign attacks.

This application of retaliation highlights the complexity of regional dynamics and power competition between Iran and Israel in the Middle East. Iran's retaliatory measures are also a means of reinforcing its standing in the region, signaling to Israel and other actors that Iran will not tolerate threats to its national interests. Furthermore, such actions can bolster the legitimacy of the Wilayatul Faqih regime in the eyes of its supporters, showcasing the country's readiness and capability to protect Islamic interests through tangible responses. Therefore, this situation provides a clear

²³ Imam Rouhollah Khomeinei, *TAHRIR AL-VASILAH*, vol. II (Tehran: Institute for Compilation & Publication of Imam Khomeinei's Works, 2002), 331.

illustration of how the concept of retaliation is integrated into Iran's foreign policy, as influenced by the Wilayatul Faqih doctrine.

1.6.2 Wilayatul Faqih Concept

The concept of Wilayat al-Faqih, or Islamic law intimately linked to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Khomeini played a pivotal role in developing and popularizing this idea, particularly through his writings and speeches during the 1970s, a critical period leading up to the Iranian Revolution in 1979. One of his most significant contributions is the book *Hokumat-e Islami: Velayat-e Faqih* (Islamic Government: The Guardianship of Jurists), in which he articulately outlines his vision for an Islamic government. Khomeini argued that an ideal government should be led by a qualified expert in Islamic law, known as a faqih.²⁴ Who possesses a profound understanding of sharia. He believed that a country lacking a vigilant leader to uphold law and order would ultimately witness the decline and obsolescence of the Islamic faith. In his view, without proper maintenance, religious rites, and Islamic institutions would risk losing their significance or being negatively transformed. He contended that without the guidance of a competent faqih, genuine religious customs, and practices could either disappear or be distorted by deviants, as well as by atheists and non-believers who seek to dilute or alter the core tenets of Islamic teachings. Thus, Khomeini stressed the necessity of a leader who not only

²⁴ M. Mahtab Alam Rizvi, "Velayat-e-Faqih (Supreme Leader) and Iranian Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis," *Strategic Analysis* 36, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 112–27, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09700161.2012.628471>.

comprehends religious principles but is also committed to protecting and reinforcing Islamic values within governance.²⁵

The concept of Wilayatul Faqih, which places an Islamic jurist as a supreme leader with the authority to guide the country based on Islamic principles, has greatly influenced Iran's foreign policy, including its military response to attacks. The case of Iran's retaliation of the Israeli airstrike on the Iranian embassy in Damascus can be seen as a direct implication of this policy. Under the leadership of Wilayatul Faqih, Iran served not only as the state, but as the protector for Muslim communities, especially the Shiites, as well as the interests of Islam throughout the world. This means that Iran feels a responsibility to protect its allies and respond to threats against them or against important symbols, such as embassies.

Wilayatul Faqih underscores the importance of defending and protecting Muslims worldwide.²⁶ The attack on the Iranian embassy in Damascus was perceived as an assault on the symbols of the nation and on Islam itself. As a result, Iran's response aims to convey that aggressions against Iran or its allies will not be tolerated. Within the Wilayatul Faqih framework, the supreme leader (faqih) holds the authority to determine the appropriate actions necessary to uphold and expand the influence of Islam. The counterattack against Israel can be interpreted as a strategic decision by

²⁵ Latif et al., "The Nature of the Position of Wilayatul Faqih in the Iran Islamic Constitutional System."

²⁶ Bagheri and Kazem, "Contraction and Expansion the Powers of the Agents of the Islamic System Based on the Theory of Velayat-e-Faqih," March 1, 2021.

Iran's supreme leader to demonstrate resolve and impartiality in addressing the enemies of Islam.²⁷

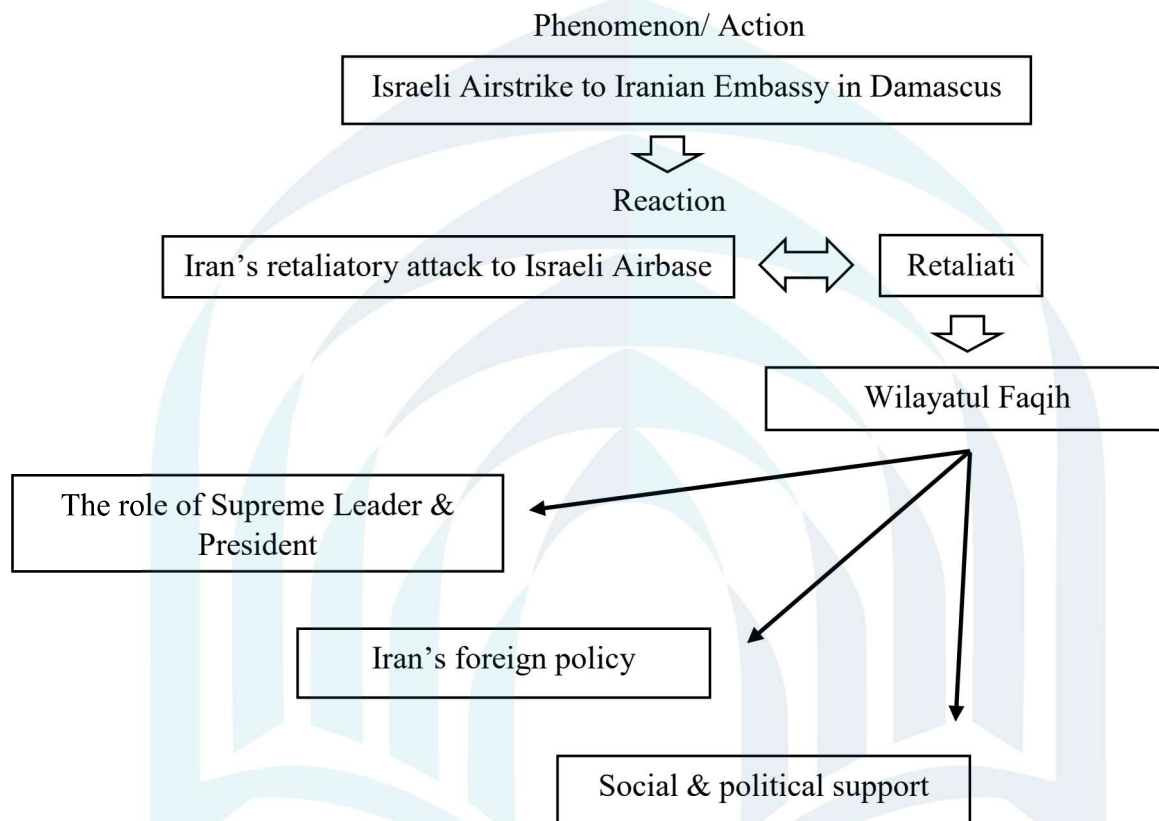
Iran fosters strong connections with Syria, which is governed by the Alawite regime, a branch of Shiite.²⁸ This allegiance to its allies embodies the Wilayatul Faqih principle, emphasizing solidarity among Muslim and Shia nations. Through its retaliatory actions, Iran showcases its support for Syria while reaffirming its role as a regional power. This response further illustrates how Iran, within the framework of Wilayatul Faqih, aims to maintain and extend its influence in the Middle East. Presenting itself as the foremost protector of Shiite and Islamic interests, Iran maintains that any attack on its interests will be countered with decisive measures to defend its authority in the region.

Israel is frequently regarded as a pivotal opponent for Iran, due to the policies concerning colonization to Palestine and its close relationship with the United States. Within the framework of Wilayat al-Faqih, any Israeli aggression that threatens Iran or its allies necessitates a decisive response. This approach underscores Iran's commitment to not remaining passive in the face of actions perceived as detrimental to Islam and Muslims. As such, the concept of Wilayat al-Faqih is pivotal in shaping Iran's foreign policy and military strategies.

²⁷ Mohsen Sharifi and Seyyed Hassan Malaekheh, "Velayat-e Faqih in Political Thought of Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Javadi Amoli," *International Journal of Political Science* 9, no. 3 (2019).

²⁸ David Ottaway, "Iran and Syria at the Crossroads: The Fall of the Tehran-Damascus Axis?," n.d.

1.6.3 Concept Operationalization



1.7 Hypothesis

The system of Wilayatul Faqih centralizes ultimate authority in the hands of Iran's Supreme Leader, who possesses the power to shape both foreign and military policy. This structure indicates that any attacks on Iranian interests, particularly those involving the Revolutionary Guards, are viewed as significant threats warranting a decisive response. Grounded in the principle of active defense, Iran frequently reacts to such assaults with actions designed not only to safeguard its interests but also to bolster its regional standing. This approach often entails increased support for the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria and for militia groups like Hezbollah. Incidents targeting high-profile members of the Revolutionary Guards, such as the attack on the

Iranian consulate in Damascus, would likely incite retaliatory measures from Iran. The country aims to showcase its strength and convey to Israel and its allies that such assaults will not go unanswered. This research illustrates how the policies of one nation can exert influence over the policies of others. The Israeli airstrike on the Iranian Embassy in Damascus, for instance, played a significant role in shaping Iran's foreign policy responses, in line with the Wilayatul Faqih framework adopted by the Iranian state.

1.8 Research Methodology

1.8.1 Research Design

The research method employed in this study is a descriptive qualitative textual approach, incorporating both descriptive and interpretive analysis. The primary aim is to analyze the efforts made by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to mitigate the impact of Israeli actions against Palestinians. Qualitative methods are selected for this study to achieve a deeper understanding of the implementation of existing guidelines, which enables researchers to effectively oversee the research process and its outcomes. Moreover, this research utilizes a systematic review methodology, wherein the author summarizes various articles pertinent to the topic under discussion. The information collected for this study is secondary and encompasses a wide range of resources, including studies, scholarly articles, research journals, publications, books, regulatory documents, and news articles sourced from the internet and informal journals.

1.8.2 Research Object

The research object will focus on the retaliation attack policy as an implication of the Wilayatul Faqih system.

1.8.3 Data Collection Technique

Library research is a process of collecting library information about research objects from various sources, such as indexes, reviews, journals, and reference books.

1.8.4 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique uses descriptive research techniques which carry out research in a structured and systematic manner by connecting all existing variables, then drawing conclusions based on the questions that have been prepared in the problem formulation and summarizing them into one conclusion in CHAPTER 4

1.9 Writting Systematic

The structure of this research consists of four chapters:

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the author will explain the background, problem formulation, research objectives and benefits, literature review, conceptual framework, hypothesis, research methodology, and writing structure. This chapter will serve as the foundation for the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER II : Iran's Retaliation to Israeli Airstrikes on Damascus in 2024

In this chapter, the author will begin by discussing the political dynamics between Iran and Israel after the Iranian Islamic Revolution, which served as the main foundation for the establishment of the Wilayat al-Faqih system as the basis of governance. This will be followed by an explanation of the Israeli airstrike on the Iranian Embassy in Damascus and will conclude with Iran's response to the attack.

CHAPTER III : The Implication of the Wilayatul Faqih System on Israeli Airstrike to Iranian Embassy in Damascus 2024

In this chapter, the author will explain the concept of *Wilayat al-Faqih* in Iran's governance system, followed by its implications in responding to the Israeli airstrike, and concluding with the perspective of Islamic politics on the *Wilayat al-Faqih* system.

CHAPTER IV : Closing

The final chapter contains the conclusions drawn from the previously discussed chapters and the findings that address the research questions.

