

Doctrine; Ideology or cause: Part one

Introduction

To have a cult, it is necessary to have a charismatic leader, but that is not enough. At least not at the beginning; to be able to attract and recruit disciples the leader has to have a message, a doctrine, or an ideology or a cause. The cause or doctrine is important as a foundation for a new logic and beliefs and it might even be necessary and important later, for gluing members together in upheavals and times of uncertainty, for example in the case of illness, imprisonment or disappearance of the leaderⁱ.

What sort of doctrine a cult leader needs to have depends on what sort of cult he is going to have and the character of the pool that he wants to fish from. If he wants to fish among young Muslims, and misuse their misery and their disadvantages, he should at least pretend that his doctrine or message is somehow related to 'Islam'. Of course how bizarre his doctrine might be, and how different his message and tactics are from the same ideology, does not matter as such, as after recruiting, he can still call his version of that doctrine the 'true', 'real' and authentic one and reject all other interpretations.

Many cult leaders have chosen to call their doctrine the same as beliefs and ideologies that exist in their society as this makes it easier to recruit. Or they might build their cult's doctrine on the basis of popular beliefs already available in the society, for example a religion such as Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, or Islam, or a political philosophy such as Trotskyism, Stalinism or Maoism. Though some cult leaders might at least originally believe in the doctrine that they associate themselves with, the majority of them can only believe in themselves and what they feel is beneficial for them, and their objectives, at the time and place. Therefore I believe recognising, naming or introducing a cult through the doctrine of that cult, or believing that certain doctrines are the reason why we have a cult, or even worse, equating an ideology to what cult leaders introduce and define as their doctrine, is as irrelevant or even stupid as I call my table 'Marx' and whatever is on my table as 'Marxists'ⁱⁱ.

What cult leaders choose as their doctrine, or even their message, is not as important as how it is used within the cult to manipulate the mind of disciples. One of the conclusions of research into cults, by a team of scientists is *'that the real issue of the religious cult question lies not in their theologies, but in their practices. We feel the basic questions are whether or not life within the groups is physically or mentally healthy, and whether or not these groups will have any long-range detrimental effects on our society or our nation.'*ⁱⁱⁱ

Within MEK, they misused Islamic text to force us to believe in the priority of leadership over everything else^{iv}; to give the leader a blank canvas for doing anything and behaving as he likes^v. MEK used a sentence attributed to Imam Hussein; 'Life is belief and Jihad'^{vi} to force us to leave our family, friends, jobs, education, and normal life, and live in total mental isolation from ordinary life and people. Carol Giambalvo, an ex-member of WDU (a Marxist cult) explains how the leader of that cult used Marxist Maoist literature to force her disciples to believe in:

- absolute respect for leadership;

- the concept of "proletarian class standpoint" as the measuring stick of all practice and development;
- the cadre ideal, embodied in strict discipline and a 24-hour-a-day commitment;
- the use of criticism/self-criticism as the mechanism for change;
- The necessity of building and defending the party.

She says: *'Sometimes, these founding principles were presented in documents written by Baxter {the cult leader}. More often, they were hammered at in study and/or criticism sessions led by Baxter. ... She translated the abstract ideal into the living organization. She manipulated language in order to call on the good and the noble in each person, while she held forth the promise of fulfilment, to be achieved through dedication, hard work, discipline, and sacrifice. A careful reading ... of Baxter's guidance to her flock will reveal the double-bind, black-is-white thinking that led the WDU and those members come to thrive on: Be harsh to find goodness. Suffer to find happiness. Work hard and be disciplined to find freedom. Ruthlessness is kindness. Change yourself to fit the mould or be banished to the selfish fate of the rest of the world.'*^{vii}

To recruit new members what is important is not the type of doctrine, but the ability of cult leaders to alter a common belief into something new, perhaps more attractive, to younger generations and beneficial to the cause. They might make these alterations in different ways: they can use a new kind of language to twist and change that common belief, or pick and mix ideas from that doctrine or different ideologies, or they can take the part of that common belief which is beneficial to the cult's goals and then use it for creating a new idea. Then they can use this 'new doctrine' for the purpose of attracting people toward the cult, soliciting and later for mind control of the disciples.

Janja Lalich, an ex-member of DWP (another Marxist cult), writes: *'One of the things that cults do well is the construction of inspiring and exciting alternative worldviews. They do this passionately and with great skill, and the most successful of them are also skilled at creating internally consistent social and cultural contexts to make these worldviews visible and attractive both to their members and to their audiences.'*^{viii}

The message or doctrine of cult leaders might seem strange, unreal, ambiguous, and contrary to common beliefs to the general public, but they will seem rational and consistent for their audience; this is what is important for cult leaders. Steven Hassan, an expert in cults describes the characteristics of Cult's doctrine as: *"The most effective cult doctrines are those" which are unverifiable and invaluable*^{ix}. *... They may be so convoluted that it would take years of effort to untangle them. The doctrine is to be accepted, not understood. Therefore, the doctrine must be vague and global, yet also symmetrical enough to appear consistent. Its power comes from its assertion that it is the one and only truth: that it encompasses everything. ... Cult doctrine always requires that a person distrust his own self. The doctrine becomes the "master program" for all thoughts, feelings, and actions. Since it is the Truth, perfect and absolute, any flaw in it is viewed as only a reflection of the believer's own imperfection. He is taught that he must follow the prescribed formula even if he doesn't really understand it. At the same time he is told that he should try to work harder and have more faith so he will come to understand the truth more clearly.*^x

Pick, Mix and Match:

This is essential to understand how cult leaders use a part or parts of a common belief or an ideology and build their own doctrine from those parts. Bin Laden took only one interpretation of the concept of 'jihad' from the whole religion of Islam and called his doctrine true 'Islam'. David Koresh took a few sentences from King James's version of Bible, interpreted it as he wished and called himself the son of God. Many Marxist cult leaders take the concept of 'vanguard' from teaching of Lenin and build their cult of personality around that idea and call their brand of Marxism as the only real one. There is an expression among Muslims explaining what I want to say: They say once someone came to a Muslim and told him 'Even your prophet and your Koran says 'there is no God' (La Elah) why do you insist in believing in God? The Muslim answers back: Yes but you didn't read the second part of the sentence; as the whole sentence is like this: 'There is no God but the God' (La Elah a E' La lah). Main stream believers of a faith or an ideology, while individually might not observe or understand every detail of that belief or ideology, but still when they accept it, they understand that they have to accept that idea in its totality. When they don't observe part of that idea, they admit that it is their own personal choice, not that the idea is what they think is right. Cult leaders on the other hand with their 'black and white' worldview toward everything including their doctrine, cannot accept that there might be different interpretations of that idea or belief. They reject all other interpretations and call theirs as the real and true one.

Another difference between a cult leader's doctrine and any other popular beliefs, religions, ideologies, or philosophies, is that the former one is like those children's toys called 'transformers'; the whole or any part of it can be changed and take new shape when and where the cult leader wishes so^{xi}. While at least the main part or fundamentals of the latter ones are fixed and are almost pure from other beliefs. Of course popular beliefs, ideologies or philosophies will change as well, but not due to the personal wishes or personal interests of the one who is suggesting or introducing those changes. Changes will happen because of popular interest, a change of time, people, culture, people's understanding, their education, or their need. Cult leaders see themselves as the owner of everything, including their doctrine, so they don't feel there is any boundary to limit them in what they can say or do, including any changes they might wish to make within their doctrine^{xii}.

An example: MEK's original Ideology

As an example of picking, mixing and matching to create a new doctrine, let us look at MEK's ideology, or at least what it was at the beginning:

Professor Abrahamian describes MEK's ideology as : *{Mojahedin's} ideology can be described at best as a combination of Islam and Marxism. ... a Mojahedin handbook published on the eve of the Islamic Revolution declared: "we say 'no' to Marxist philosophy, especially to atheism^{xiii}. But we say 'yes' to Marxist social thought, particularly to its analysis of feudalism, capitalism, and imperialism."^{xiv} The same theme was further elaborated in a Mojahedin pamphlet published immediately after the revolution. Beginning with the premise that Marxism is a "complex ideology" containing a "scientific" as well as a "philosophical" component, the pamphlet stressed that the Mojahedin organisation from its very inception had accepted much of its science - of course, in an "un-dogmatic manner" - but had rejected most of its philosophy, its denial of the soul and the afterlife, and its dismissal of all religions as the opiate of the masses. The pamphlet concluded by declaring that "scientific Marxism was compatible with true Islam and that it had inspired many intellectuals in Iran as well as progressive*

working-class movements in other parts of the world.”^{xv} The original Mojahedin handbooks argued that God had not only created the world, as all monotheistic religions believed, but had also set in motion the law of historical evolution. Historical evolution had created private property, class inequality, and had supplanted the early egalitarian communities with class-divided in egalitarian societies. Class divisions had brought into being oppressive states, false ideologies, and fundamental contradictions between owners and workers and between the “modes” and the “relations” of production. These fundamental contradictions had generated historical dynamism, propelling qualitative changes out of quantitative ones and ensuring the destruction of all outdated social systems, such as slavery, feudalism and capitalism, and the eventual appearance of the just, egalitarian society in which, as the Koran had promised, “the masses” (mostazafin^{xvi}) will inherit the earth’. The Mojahedin termed this law of evolution “historical determinism” (jaber-e tarikhi), and viewed it, together with the concept of class struggle, as an integral part of Islam. As Hanif Nejad declared in his last testament: “To separate the class struggle from Islam is to betray Islam.”^{xvii}

‘The ideology of the Mojahedin was thus a combination of Muslim themes; Shii notions of martyrdom; classical Marxist theories of class struggle and historical determinism; and neo-Marxist concepts of armed struggle, guerrilla warfare and revolutionary heroism. ... From Marx they obtained their perception of economics, history, and society, especially the concept of the class struggle. From Lenin they acquired the economic interpretation of imperialism and revolutionary contempt for all forms of reformism^{xviii}. From Che Guevara and Debray, they learnt the contemporary arguments about Third World dependency and the New Left polemics against the old communist parties, Finally, from Marighella and Guillen^{xix} they obtained a modern version of the Bakuninist strategy for making revolution. According to this strategy, once a small but well-organized and highly dedicated group of armed revolutionaries dared openly to assault the authorities, their heroic example inspires others to follow suit until eventually the whole state disintegrates^{xx}. In this way, the nineteenth-century Russian anarchist notion of ‘propaganda by deed’ entered Iran and inevitably reinforced the traditional Shii concept of heroic martyrdom.’^{xxi}

‘Although the Mojahedin were consciously influenced by Marxism both modern and classical, they vehemently denied being Marxists; indeed, they denied even being socialists. Three considerations prompted this denial. First, the Mojahedin sincerely believed that human beings had a spiritual dimension - a soul, an afterlife, and an inherent drive to seek God - a notion which could not be reconciled with Marxist philosophy. ... Second, many of the Mojahedin came from bazzari homes where Shiism was a crucial part of family culture and where Marxism had been considered since the early 1940s to be the main ideological threat to Islam. ... Third, the Mojahedin were convinced that the Iranian masses, as well as the bazaar community, considered Marxism to be synonymous with atheistic materialism; and understood atheistic materialism to be synonymous with greed, self-interest, corruption, permissiveness, promiscuity, hedonism, paganism - in short, with moral degeneracy. ... Rajavi admitted years later, the organization avoided the socialist label because such a term conjured up in the public mind images of Atheism, Materialism, and Westernism.’^{xxii}

As it was explained by Abrahamian, MEK’s ideology is a mixture of ideas from Islam, Marxism, Maoism and later Liberalism. Shah was the first who pointed out this mixture of Ideology of MEK to isolate them from masses of Muslims in Iran. MEK, in responded in a booklet that was printed at the time and then reprinted after the revolution, answering back to the ‘accusation of the Shah’:

'Recently the propagandists of the Shah's anti-people regime have been talking of "saboteurs", "terrorists", "non-Muslim thieves", and "country less, apostate people". Who are these people? What lies behind these royal deceits? ... The inhuman regime, under the leadership of this treacherous and ignoble Shah, wishes to conceal his involvement in the killing of innocent revolutionaries in Iran. This time, ... the agent of colonialists and those who wish to preserve their advantageous status quo, desire to suck the blood of those freedom fighters who are truly Muslims: the blood of the Mojahedin-E- Khalgh. Yet, the regime is frightened by the anger of the Muslim masses, and tries therefore, to brand [the Mojahedin] as 'non-Muslims' and 'apostates'^{xxiii}.

In the same book they tried to distinguish their Islam as true Islam and separate it from other forms of Islam. In their view *'false Islam is based on the exploitation of man by man.'* *'But the Islam of the Prophet Mohammad (Ppuh) is the only true Islam. The true Islam is a revolutionary Islam and is not compatible with or comparable to the weakness and spinelessness of the Muslim Ummat'^{xxiv}. The Islam which Prophet Mohammad brought would never provide land to Zionists for them to cultivate and produce food for their armies to better kill the hungry Palestinian masses. Under the Islam taught by Prophet Mohammad, the treacherous Shah and his exploitative guests would not serve themselves 50 year old French champagne with which to become intoxicated. The Islam which the prophet Mohammad brought is revolutionary and it is for precisely this reason that the Iranian Muslims are joining the revolution. ... We are revolting today, as Islam has always done, to break down the obstacles blocking Allah's path. You are doomed to defeat, as those before you were doomed. As the Qu'ran says: "Those who reject the truth and hinder man from the path of God, their deeds will be rendered astray." (Koran; S: XLVII, V: 1) Allah has therefore given Muslims assurance of victory in striving in his way".*

Later in an interview with Fred Halliday, on behalf of MERIP, Rajavi was asked: *'You are accused by your opponents of being "Islamic Marxists." What is your relation to Marxism?'* He replied: *'There are two things which I would like to make absolutely clear. The first is that we are not Marxists: we reject the materialism of Marxism. But we are willing to discuss with Marxists. The sixth Imam sat in the kaaba at Mecca and debated with the materialists. Secondly, we are not allied to the Soviet Union. We are an independent organization.'^{xxv}* We have to notice that during this interview he lived in Paris, therefore he tried hard to separate himself from Soviet Union. And again to make MEK's Islam acceptable to his audience in the west, he differentiated MEK's Islam from as he calls it 'Khomeini's Islam'. In the same interview, he was asked: *'How do you distinguish your Islam from that of Khomeini? You say you want an Islamic regime in Iran, but have not the Iranian people had enough of Islamic Politics?'* He replied: *'We should not confuse the problem of reactionary politics with that of the clergy as such. People can be against reactionaries, but not against Taleqani, who was the father of the Mojahedin. The key question is one of class, not of clothing. Just as some people confuse Judaism with Zionism, so they may be tempted to mix the problem of Islam with that of some reactionary akhunds (Footnote: Akhund: Preacher.) We do not consider Khomeini to be a true Muslim or an Imam. He is a murderer, and moshrek - a polytheist. ... The battle between ourselves and Khomeini goes right back to the beginnings of Islam. His is static, traditional and anti-scientific. The Islam we want is nationalist, democratic, progressive..'*

Again take note that this interview is after Rajavi left Iran and became a refugee in Paris, therefore new terms and definitions came along for his 'Islam', such as 'Democratic Islam'. He started using

terms such as Nationalism, very attractive among Iranians abroad, contradictory with their earlier emphasises on Ummat Islami (Islamic people). Also, as we will see later, just a few years earlier to this interview they were calling Khomeini, Imam (Islamic leader) and were saying that the true Islam is an "anti-Imperialism Islam".

Ideas borrowed from Islam:

Martyrdom

Cult of 'Martyr worshipers'

Use of martyrs; for Recruitment, as a propaganda tool, for mind manipulation, forcing members to remain in the group, ... :

The reason MEK was so successful in recruiting tens of thousands of sympathizers after the revolution, I believe was due to different parameters. These include: - the environment of **revolution**, which makes people ready for change and accepting of new ideas and ready for sacrifice. – **Uncertainty** about everything, which attracts people, especially young ones, toward political and ideological groups, including destructive cults, for finding an answer to all their questions. – **Belonging** and the need of people to belong to an idea, a group, a party or a cult, as they have lost most of the attachments and beliefs that they used to cherish and respect. But MEK, on top of all these elements available to all different parties that mushroomed in Iran after the revolution, could use their martyrs in full for recruiting.

Up to now I have read and researched about many destructive cults, many terrorist organisations, many ancient ideological cults and groups, but still I have not seen any group misusing their martyrs as much and as effectively as MEK in their propaganda, for their recruitment and also as a tool in influencing new members and later for brainwashing of older members. Eventually they have changed their martyrs and their names into a chain that stops members from leaving the cult, even if they find out that they have been deceived about almost everything. After the revolution, all the leader's speeches, MEK's books and their newspapers were full of photos, stories, poems etc. about their martyrs. Soon each of MEK's martyrs changed, in the mind of members and supporters, into a saint, a hero, a superman, a symbol of intelligence, courage, honesty, etc. The image of their martyr's grew so much, that members and supporters started believing that the legitimacy of any group or party in ruling people, didn't depend on the popularity of that group or party, or their ability to give the right answer to the ills of the society, but on the number of their martyrs. Soon MEK were using Martyrs as arguments and their words as logic and right, for forcing members to accept anything.

To show how martyrs were used, let me give you a few lines from Rajavi's speeches given in memory of the martyrdom of the organisation's founders. In this case you will see how 'martyrs' were misused to influence the audience in favour of more executions of the Shah's officials by the revolutionary courts. This is because there was a tendency in the revolutionary council and new government of Iran to stop or lower the number of executions of Shah's remnant, against the desires of MEK, and under international pressure.. Rajavi started his speech with these lines: *'Those who are killed fighting for God, do not call them dead - They are alive, but you cannot understand. ... In the name of God and in the name of the heroic people of Iran, and in the name of martyrs who fell to the ground and lay in their own blood. In the name of the clenched fists rose today against*

American Imperialism! Long live the Imam Khomeini who exposed the main enemy of the people! ...
' . Then after building his foundation he went toward his main objective in this speech: *'Tree of freedom ... grows stronger through the blood of the martyrs! With their own lifeblood they watered that tree and that tree will blossom with beautiful blood red roses! The roses of Mohammad, Abraham, God, and the roses of the people! Why? Because these are the words of pure people that like a clean healthy tree are strongly rooted! Not the words of counter-revolutionaries who are like a rotten tree with weak roots unable to support it. Isn't that correct? ... When a nation prefers death to surrender from that moment it cannot succumb! From that moment it will be unconquerable! This is the sacred secret of victory. ... do we now expect America to be happy on account of these executions, and are we expecting them not to curse our revolution and our Imam! Surprise, surprise - this is not the logic of history, the feeling and reactions of colonialists and colonies are different. They are quite opposite to each other. ... In fact the opposition shown by Imperialism and Zionism and their attacks are enough proof for the necessity of these courts. This is the reason why we congratulated the people of Iran and the Imam Khomeini. The displeasure of Zionism and Imperialism is a compliment to us **this is the logic!**'^{xxxvi}*

MEK's use of 'Martyrs', not only does not end after recruitment, but it magnifies through all the different stages of mind manipulation. 'Martyrs' are misused for recruitment, for political advancement and blackmail; their pictures especially photos of dead young children were used in the streets of European and American towns and cities to solicit money from passer-by's. To influence their supporters in ignoring organisation's or leader's mistakes and wrong predictions, again names and particulars of their 'Martyrs' are the sole answer to any unanswerable question, of which there are many within MEK. Even now when all their calculations in leaning on the regime of Saddam Hussein to survive have gone wrong, their answer to their members is welcoming death and suicide. They create new 'martyrs' and new sympathy among their supporters and perhaps blackmailing Iraqi's new government, International community, to achieve their goals?

MEK has sent many young people to their death, most of the time in vain. It has carefully documented their names, pictures, their life stories, and up to now they have printed these collections as their 'martyrs', as far as I know four times in Farsi and English, French and perhaps other languages as well. In their propaganda they multiply even this fabricated number of deaths by ten and claim that they have as many as one hundred thousand martyrs.

If you remember that according to their logic the number of martyrs mean legitimacy and if with almost seventy 'Martyrs' of the Shah's era, they thought they had the right to claim the leadership of the revolution and the country, surely with this high number of deaths, they think they can claim the leadership of the whole world, history and perhaps a few other planets.

Jihad

Rules of Jihad;

Muslims generally realize that **Jihad** has its rules and conditions. In Quran God has emphasized that no one should violate these rules and over run them. **Abu Baker** the first Caliph after prophet, referring to Quran and the prophets sayings, instructed those who wished to consider themselves Muslim soldiers, *'Do not betray; do not carry grudges; do not deceive; do not kill children; do not kill elderly; do not kill women; do not destroy beehives or burn them; do not cut down fruit bearing trees; do not slaughter sheep, cattle or camels except for food. You will come upon people who spend their*

lives in monasteries, leave them on what they have dedicated their lives.^{xxxvii} Furthermore **'Ali** the fourth Caliph set more rules to put a stop on killing, including safeguard of POWs. He says: "No one turning his back shall be pursued; No one wounded shall be killed; Who ever throws away his arms is safe." 'Ali had pardoned with goodness. The dead from both sides were buried, only captured arms and animals could be held as war booty.^{xxxviii}

Islam of MEK, can be explained in short in only two words: 'Jihad' and 'Martyrdom'. They easily forget about all other teachings of Koran, talking about mercifulness and compassion that start as attributes of God, at the beginning of each chapter of Quran, and they limit their interpretation of Islam to a few sentences about defensive wars against oppressors. Then they generalise it to all different situations and in dealing with everybody, murdering ordinary people including Muslims who don't agree with them violating all rules of Jihad explained above. In one hand they make Islam so complex and rapped in mystery and complexity, not understandable by anybody, on the other hand altering the meaning of complex ideas such as Jihad and Martyrdom^{xxxix} into simple idea of 'kill' and 'be killed'.

This is how 'Jihad' has been described by MEK: *'this is a sacred war and an answer to God's commandment, which, in blaming a group of opportunistic people, is brought out in the Koran: 'Why should ye not fight in the cause of God and in the cause of those who being weak, are ill-treated and oppressed? Men, women and children cry, 'Will our Lord rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors, and rise up for us from thee, one who will help?' (Koran: S.IV,V.75) ... 'Fight them, and God will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame and help you to victory over them.' (Koran: S. IX, V.14)*^{xxx} As one can see they have taken part of a long story and have interpreted it as they wished and have concluded: *'From Islamic Ideology point of view; antagonistic class contradictions till the end of exploitation of man by man will remain, these contradictions are not as such that can be resolved without use of armed fist of Mujahidin; in another word; revolutionary wrath is necessity of the solution to the class war.*^{xxxi} They also claimed a Muslim has to be against Imperialism and America and whoever doesn't match with this description, is betraying people and Islam. *'We declare that without a decisive revolutionary action against all manifestations of this devilish power (Imperialism under leadership of the United States) there will be no chance of happiness for the people nor satisfaction of the Creator nor the introduction of the true face of Islam nor a move towards the monotheism and social unity ... all that has been woven will come apart ... and we will be faced with dominance of a higher class or group over another.*^{xxxii} And when, in 1981 after their failed uprising against the government they started their Terrorism or as they later called it 'revolutionary terrorism' or 'arm struggle' suddenly the definition of a Muslim changed from 'being oppose against 'exploitation' or 'Imperialism' into being against 'Khomeini Regime'.

Imam; vanguard; the leadership:

Here comes the third concept that they have borrowed from Shii Islam: the concept of Imam or the leadership and they proclaim that in the war between good and evil, no one can be silent and has to take sides and follow the leadership of the struggle; they say: *'To be silent before the oppressor is no different than cooperation with him. To be silent before this power-ridden aggressor {that can change in time} means only subjugation. On the other hand, rioting and mere shouting at the aggressor will not be effective unless it is based on a well-evaluated plan and program. It is because*

of the opening of correct and effective means of fighting against the aggressors and injustice, that the vanguard of the movement, the superior, most intelligent, most devoted and bravest sons of the people, {i.e. MEK} have accepted the responsibility of forging this road.^{xxxiii}

MEK, again with its interpretation of Islamic texts, has forced all of its followers to believe in priority of leadership over everything else^{xxxiv}; to give the leader a blank canvas for doing anything and behaving as he likes.

In a little book about how to learn ideology, they explain: *'Revolutionary ideology of Islam can be formularised and compiled only by Muslim revolutionaries; we repeat: formularisation of real monotheism's world view can be done only by real monotheists.*^{xxxv}

Rajavi as 'ideological leader' of MEK claimed that only he is able to understand the MEK's doctrine and Koran. They have used the Islamic concept of 'Ejtehad' (the one who can understand Quran and explain it to the others) to explain this idea to new recruits and members: *'The correct way to study Islamic texts is to keep to the following guidelines: first, place the texts in their true historical, especially socio-economic, context; second, be willing to learn from the experiences of revolutionary movements in other part of the world; and third, keep in mind that these texts do not merely interpret the world, but interpret the world in order to change it and establish a nezam-e tawhidi {monotheistic order} which - according to the Mujahidin - would be a definition including a classless society.'*^{xxxvi} As you can see to be able to understand Koran and Islam, according to MEK, one has to know about the history of Islam, be able to analyse social, cultural and class structure of Arabia during time of prophet, know about all other revolutionary movements and their experiences and have no class tendency himself. Obviously, as they concluded, not everybody is able to achieve these levels of expertise; therefore it is the responsibility of the leadership to explain it to the others and other's responsibility to follow him.^{xxxvii}

Greater Jihad in the service of the mind manipulation:

Here comes an interpretation of MEK from another Islamic concept, this time, the **great Jihad**. While it is the great one, it will become in the service of the lesser one (Jihad or war between good and Evil) and also in the service of mind manipulation by forcing members into daily self criticism and confessions. Greater Jihad is based on sayings of prophet Mohammad, as when he finished lesser Jihad announced that it was now the great Jihad, i.e. fighting against evils within yourself starts. In this way MEK claims that its mind manipulation is based on a new 'Islamic' concept and philosophy, and a very important one, as greater jihad. To realize the twist, one might recall the following saying about **Ali** the fourth rightly guided caliph, who in the battle field had to choose between greater and lesser jihad and he chose the first one. They say: "Ali was fighting with an enemy who spat on him; Ali took his sword and did not strike him. When the war ended, the companions asked him why he did not strike that person, so he said: 'when he spat on me, I was afraid to strike him out of egoistic revenge for myself, so I pulled my sword out. I wanted this to be for the sake of God.'

How can you go through greater Jihad or cleanse yourself from wrong teachings of the society? In MEK, first they teach that you have been wrong until choosing to follow MEK. All your wants, desires, hopes, understandings, even emotions, feelings and your logic were all wrong and perhaps

sinful. You have to accept that you have been manipulated by the society based on exploitation and run by bourgeoisie. To be worthy of reaching the 'god-like' status, you have to cleanse yourself from your past. How? By sacrificing that starts from simple material ownership up to giving up your personal emotions and your sex life, by confessing and repenting daily for your sins and eventually sacrificing your life in the path of 'God' that can be read as the path of MEK and its leader.

ⁱ 1994; when Rajavi felt that many members, were losing their faith in him and was certain that sooner or later they would leave the cult because they were living in Europe and America, mostly in touch and association with ordinary Iranian abroad, and were far from him and isolation of Iraq, suddenly he remembered that the ideology of MEK is Islam. While on one hand he was advising us for political reasons and also for the recruitment of Iranians living abroad to pretend to be westernised, liberal, ... on the other hand to hold on to us, he introduced a strong code of 'Islamic moral' and behaviour, such as no male and female member should sit or walk beside each other, or be alone anywhere, no touching and shaking hands between opposite sexes; absolute observation of 'Islamic traditions' such as beating ourselves in Ashora; ... I guess now when he is vanished in Iraq, again they might have introduced absolute observation of 'Islamic customs' in Iraq to glue members together in his absence.

ⁱⁱ As I strongly feel it is stupid to call Christianity as what David Koresh was teaching to his disciples, or claim Socialism means whatever the teaching of Jim Jones or Islam is Islam of Bin Laden and Masoud Rajavi were.

ⁱⁱⁱ Carroll Stoner and Jo Anne Parke; 'All Gods Children: The Cult Experience Salvation or Slavery?' Chilton Book Company; 1977; P: xvi

^{iv} Original MEK's publication; 'Lessons from Koran'; P: 15, 16

^v As later I will explain that we have to give him 'signature of sins' meaning that he can make any mistake or commit any sin but 'leaving the struggle against Iranian Regime'.

^{vi} MEK's publication; 'Advices for Ideological work'; spring 1979; P: 10

^{vii} Carol Giambalvo; 'The Cadre Ideal: Origins and Development of a Political Cult', CSJ 9-1 1992; Sent: 08 August 1999; This article is an electronic version of an article originally published in Cultic Studies Journal, 1992, Volume 9, Number 1, pages 1-77.

^{viii} Janja Lalich - 'Pitfalls in the Sociological Study of Cults' - She was a member of the Democratic Workers Party (DWP), a highly restrictive political cult for ten years. Benjamin Zablocki & Thomas Robbins; 'Misunderstanding Cults; Searching for objectivity in a controversial field'; University of Toronto Press; 2001; P: 123

^{ix} Eric Hoffer, 'The True Believer' (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), P: 77; Cited from: Steven Hassan; 'Combatting Cult Mind Control'; Park Street Press; 1988; P: 79

^x Steven Hassan; 'Combatting Cult Mind Control'; Park Street Press; 1988; P: 79

^{xi} As Jim Jones's ideology changed completely or as we will see how Rajavi changed the main parts of MEK's doctrine.

^{xii} As we saw Abrishamchii called Rajavi the sole interpreter of MEK's ideology which, by the way, they call the 'pure' and 'real' Islam. Ideological Revolution; speech of Mehdi Abrishamchii; published by MEK; November 1985; P: 59

^{xiii} Please take notice that during Shah's era; young students and intellectuals (MEK's pool of fishing) had tendency toward Islam and to fight for the cause of Islam. Some ideas of Marxism such as social justice were very popular among them, while Liberal capitalism, nationalism, secularism and atheism that were mostly encouraged by the ruling elite, were considered as Shah's and western values were therefore rejected. While later when Rajavi wanted to recruit Iranians living abroad, in love with Western values, suddenly MEK stopped talking about Marxist's 'scientific' achievements; or governing the country on the basis of Islamic values. Instead they started using the slogans; 'Freedom', 'liberal democracy' and 'separation of church and state'.

^{xiv} Mojahedin Organization, Tarikhcheh, jariyan-e kudeta va khatt-e konuni-ye Sazeman-e Mojahedin-e Khalq-e Iran -A short history, the coup incident and the present policy of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran- 1978, p 10, 12. Please take note that all books written and published by MEK after the execution of the other leaders during Shah's era, were either written by Masoud Rajavi or approved and edited by him. As Abrishamchii explains after the death of Hanif Nejad, called by Masoud Rajavi the 'first ideological leader' of the organisation, Rajavi became the only interpreter of MEK's ideology. 'Ideological Revolution; speech of Mehdi Abrishamchii; published by MEK; November 1985; P: 59

^{xv} Mojahedin Organization, Amuzesh va tashrih-e ettela'iyeh ta'yin-e mavaze'-e Sazeman-e Mojahedin-e Khalq-e Iran dar barahbar-e jariyan-e oportunistha-ye chppnama - An explanation of the communiqué defining the position of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran on the matter of pseudo-leftist opportunism- 1980, p35-40

^{xvi} mostazafin - a loose term used to depict the general populace: the meek, the poor, the masses, the powerless, the disinherited, the exploited, the dispossessed and, for some, the sans-culottes and the wretched of the earth.

^{xvii} Quoted in the historical bankruptcy of the petit-bourgeois perceptions of Islam', Mojahed 119 - 7 May 1981 all cited from: Ervand Abrahamian; 'The Iranian Mojahedin'; Yale University Press; 1989; P: 93

^{xviii} Also the idea of superiority of vanguard or 'asl'e Bagha'a Pishtaz' or survival axiom of the vanguard.

^{xix} a Spanish anarchist living in South America

^{xx} The last time they used this argument was in 1988 when they predicted that if with their few thousand combatants, they attack Iran from Iraq and with help of Iraqi army, people will follow them and they can create an avalanche overthrowing the

Iranian government. We all know the result of this prediction of Mr. Rajavi; resulting death of more than one thousand combatants, one quarter of MEK's members at the time.

^{xxi} Ervand Abrahamian; 'The Iranian Mojahedin'; Yale University Press; 1989; P: 100

^{xxii} 'Interview with Masud Rajavi' -repr. from Links-, MEK's publication; Nashrieh 31 - 19 March 1982 Cited from: Ervand Abrahamian; 'The Iranian Mojahedin'; Yale University Press; 1989;; P: 100, 101

^{xxiii} The Statement of The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran; In response to the recent accusations of the Iranian regime. MEK's publication, first edition 1977 by the liberation movement of Iran abroad; reprinted by MEK after the revolution; summer of 1979; P: 1

^{xxiv} Ummat might be defined as Society, but in ideological terms it means much more than even a nation; it means a Muslim society that can be considered as an individual or a united body of Muslims with its own united culture, belief, body and soul, and with united history and destiny.

^{xxv} Interview of Fred Halliday with Masoud Rajavi; Merip Reports March-April 1982 P8-15

^{xxvi} MEK's publication; The Speech given by brother Mojahed Masoud Rajavi; on the 4th of Khordad (25th May 1979); Spring 1979; P: 7, 11

^{xxvii} Heirs of the prophet Muhammad by Barnaby Rogerson P 162

^{xxviii} Heirs of the prophet Muhammad by Barnaby Rogerson P 298

^{xxix} To learn more about complexity of Jihad and Martyrdom you can refer to my speech in INFORM 5/5/2007; text of speech can be found at: <http://www.banisadr.info/SeminarLondon.htm>

^{xxx} The Statement of The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran; In response to the recent accusations of the Iranian regime. MEK's publication, first edition 1977 by the liberation movement of Iran abroad; reprinted by MEK after the revolution; summer of 19?? P: 7

^{xxxi} MEK's publication; 'About disarmament'; April 1980; P: 6, 7

^{xxxii} MEK's publication; The Opinion of the People's Mojahedin of Iran About the Referendum and the way of establishing an Islamic Republic; 1979; P: 14, 15

^{xxxiii} The Statement of The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran; In response to the recent accusations of the Iranian regime. MEK's publication, first edition 1977 by the liberation movement of Iran abroad; reprinted by MEK after the revolution; summer of 1979; P: 17

^{xxxiv} Original MEK's publication; Lessons from Koran; P: 15, 16

^{xxxv} MEK's publication; Advices for Ideological work; spring 1979; P: 36

^{xxxvi} MEK Publication; Cheguneh Quran biamuzim - How to study the Koran- 1980, vol, I, P: 25, 26

^{xxxvii} MEK Publication; Cheguneh Quran biamuzim - How to study the Koran- 1980, vol, II Dynamism of Koran; P: 64