Spragens's Explanation of the Mystic Revolution Theory of Lili Eshqi

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Abstract

The explanation of the Iranian Islamic Revolution, considering its unique worldview and dimensions compared to other revolutions, requires its own specific conceptual foundations and components. One of the theories of revolution that seeks to highlight the unique characteristics of the Islamic Revolution by emphasizing its metaphysical aspects and Shia mystical concepts, and thus attract the attention of many revolutionary theorists, is the Mystic Revolution Theory of Lili Eshqi. This article attempts to unveil and provide a comprehensive explanation of Lili Eshqi's Mystic Revolution Theory inspired by Thomas Spragens' explanatory model. Based on this, the main question of this research is, 'How is the issue, the causes of the issue, the ideal society, and its realization in Lili Eshqi's Mystic Revolution Theory explicable?' The results indicated that a sense of alienation among the people of Iran during the Pahlavi era as the issue, and factors such as Western cultural and geographical imperialism, the anti-religious actions of the Pahlavi Shahs, the unsuccessful experience of the Constitutional Revolution, and the August 28th incident as causes or factors in creating the issue. Furthermore, the ideal society at that time is an Iranian-Shia society that is distinctively Iranian and independent of foreign domination, and ultimately, the solution to reaching this ideal society lies in loyalty to the symbols and teachings of the revolution.

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Introduction

The Iranian Islamic Revolution is one of the most unique human phenomena in the contemporary world, which challenged the prevailing discourses and methods of study at the time of its occurrence, which were mostly Marxist and materialistic. As a result, new methods of study emerged to provide a meaningful understanding of the revolution. These new perspectives were sociocultural theories that, while recognizing the role of symbolic factors in the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution, still acknowledged the significance of objective factors and economical developments such as relative deprivation, uneven development, and so on.

In 1990, amidst these various approaches and discourses, an Iranian author living in France named Lili Eshqi drew the attention of most revolutionary theorists with her book "Event in a Time of Non-Time," which offered a mystical perspective on the Islamic Revolution. Eshqi attempted to prove her main hypothesis, the mystical nature of the Islamic Revolution, by drawing on concepts from Shia mysticism such as the concept of the Imam, Ashura, Karbala, the incident, and the existential movement.

Given Eshqi's unique and particular approach to the Islamic Revolution, the explanation of her theory can assist scholars and researchers of the revolution in providing a better understanding of its nature, causes, roots, and objectives. Therefore, the authors seek to answer the fundamental question of how, according to Thomas Spragens' explanatory model, the issue, the causes of the issue, the ideal society, and its realization are explicable in Lili Eshqi's mystical theory.

1. Research Background

The most important work that has been particularly scrutinized by researchers in the present background is the book "A Time of Non-Times: Imam, Shia, and Iran" by Lili Eshqi (1999 AD/1379 SH), translated into Persian by Ahmad Naqibzadeh. In this book, the author presents a perspective and narrative of the Islamic Revolution, in which she believes the secret of the revolution, is hidden within the heart of Iranian metaphysics. She attempts to explain the unique characteristics of the Islamic Revolution by utilizing Shia mystical symbols, including the concept of the Imam, Shia, existential movement, incident, transient time, and perpetual time.

Another work related to a lecture given by Lili Eshqi in 1999 at the invitation of the Islamic Mysticism Group at the Imam Khomeini Research Institute, was later revised and published as an article titled "A Time of Ours Between Times: Imam, Shia, and Iran" in the Matin Journal.

In this article, an attempt is made to revisit the book by Lili Eshqi, with an emphasis on concepts such as the incident and existential movement.

The next work is an article titled "Event in a Time of Non-Times: A Reinterpretation of Lili Eshqi's Subjective Theory of the Iranian Islamic Revolution" by Habibollah Fazeli (2006 AD/1385 SH), which aims to present a summary of the book "A Time of Non-Times."

In addition to these three works, there are articles related to the categorization of existing theories of the revolution that briefly refer to Lili Eshqi's mystical theory. These include:

1) The article "Reflection of the Iranian Islamic Revolution in Theories of Revolution; the Birth and Formation of the Fourth Generation of Revolution Theories" by Dr. Mohammad Baqer Khorramshad (2004 AD/1383 SH);

2) The article "Typology of Revolution Theories" by Mostafa Malakoutian et al., (2012 AD/1391 SH);

3) "Examination and Critique of the Foundations of Skocpol Social Revolution Theories" by Mahdi Taheri et al., (2011 AD/1390 SH);

4) "The Impact of the Iranian Islamic Revolution on Theories of Revolution" by Mohammad Hossein Panahi (2006 AD/1385 SH).

As it is evident, comprehensive research aimed at unraveling Lili Eshqi's mystical theory regarding the Islamic Revolution has not yet been conducted. Therefore, the present study aimed to provide a relatively accurate understanding of the nature, dimensions, and roots of the Islamic Revolution from Lili Eshqi's perspective, using an innovative approach (applying Thomas Spragens' theoretical model).

2. Theoretical Framework: Fourth Generation Theory of Jack Goldstone

Among the prominent theorists of revolution, Jack Goldstone has attracted much attention from researchers of revolution and various social science disciplines due to his relatively comprehensive categorization of revolutions. In his book "Revolutions: A Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Study," Goldstone initially divided the theories of revolution in the 20th century into three generations: the natural history generation of revolutions, the general theories of revolution, and the structural theories of revolution. However, with the occurrence of new generations of revolutions, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, he recognized the inadequacy of the previous theories and deemed a reconsideration of revolution theories necessary (Goldstone, 2001: 140-141). In other words, Goldstone's acknowledgment of the failure of the aforementioned generations of theories to comprehend and explain the Islamic Revolution

led him to propose a fourth generation of revolution theories. Subsequently, he organized the four generations of revolutions as follows:

The first generation, the natural history generation of revolutions, focuses on studying revolutions during the 1920s and 1930s. This generation should be considered descriptive, as it primarily aimed to describe revolutions (Goldstone, 1980: 425-426), focusing on observable characteristics in specific societies, such as France, without demonstrating the formation of underlying revolutionary factors (Mushirzadeh, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 168). The theorists of this generation include Gustave Le Bon, Charles Abram, and Crane Brinton.

The second generation, the general theories of revolution, encompasses theorists between the 1940s and 1975. This category of theorists prioritized explaining the reasons and timing of revolutionary conditions over merely describing the process of revolutions (Goldstone, 1980: 427). In this generation, theorists such as James Davis and Ted Robert Gurr sought the roots of revolution in the minds of the masses. Charles Johnson and Smelser, with a sociological perspective and utilizing the concept of social system equilibrium influenced by the functioning of sub-systems, and finally, others such as Charles Tilly and Huntington, considered revolutions as a kind of political struggle among rivals (Goldstone, 1980: 433). In summary, this generation of theories focused on "Factors" rather than "Description" of the process of revolution; factors such as psychological, systemic imbalance, or political conflict for confronting or seizing power.

The third generation, the structural theories of revolution, considered structures as the main factor of revolution. The theorists of this generation, which emerged after 1970, mainly focused on the social structure of peasantry, international developments and pressures, the organization of military forces, and the behavior of elites in explaining the causes of revolutions (Goldstone, 1980: 435). Scholars of this generation of theories included individuals such as Jeffrey Paige, Trimberger, Eisenstadt, and most importantly, Ted Skocpol (Foran, 1993:1).

The fourth generation, the spiritualist theories of revolution, emerged after the Islamic Revolution. Goldstone recognized the need for a new generation of theories to explain this revolution, which included elements such as culture, ideology, leadership, revolutionary mobilization, ideals, and other similar concepts (Goldstone, 2001:139). As a result, a new framework for analyzing revolutions was formed through criticism of existing perspectives on new revolutions (Malakoutiyan et al, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 345). Notable theorists who emerged with a new approach to explain the Islamic Revolution include John Foran and Michel Foucault.

Foran introduces the element of "Culture" into his analysis of third world social revolutions, considering the political cultures of resistance and opposition movements. Similarly, Foucault viewed the Iranian Revolution through a spiritualist lens, considering it a unique and novel phenomenon. He emphasized a conceptual idea called "Collective Will" as the driving force behind the formation of the Islamic Revolution, negating the centrality of material and economic motivations (ibid: 231). Additionally, Foucault interpreted the 1357 revolution as a "Spiritual response to a soulless world." (Quoted from Khorramshad, 2004 AD/1383 SH: 107)

During these theoretical debates, Lili Eshghi presented her particular understanding of the Islamic Revolution to the field of revolutionary studies at the time, garnering attention. Her approach and method were so distinct and profound that she soon gained significant recognition in the field. Eshghi believed that her theory's distinction and innovation lay in its focus on mental and subjective conditions, as opposed to the prevailing theories that primarily focused on the objective conditions of revolution. Influenced by Shia mysticism, Eshghi believed that the secret of the Iranian revolution should be sought not in the "Mulk" but in the "Malakut." She considered the kingdom to be "This World" and introduced the realm beyond as the transcendent reality (Eshghi, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 178).

French thinker Christian Jambet, in the introduction to a book he wrote at the time, stated, "Lili Eshghi seeks to find the secret of the Iranian revolution in the heart of Iranian metaphysics." (Eshghi, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 23)

It should be noted that Eshghi does not overlook the tangible developments such as the pervasive imperialism of the Pahlavi era, the corruption of the Shah's dynasty, and the Western philosophical-geographical onslaught (Fazeli, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 76).

To advance her theory, Eshghi employs a kind of religious symbolism, including "Imam," "Ephemeral Time and Eternal Time," "Event," and "Existential Movement." In brief, her explanation of these symbols is as follows:

Imam: One of the main concepts in Lili Eshghi's mystical theory of the Islamic Revolution is the concept of "Imam." According to her, "It is futile for anyone to understand this revolution without risking the tortuous road of knowing the Imam." (Eshghi, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 179) Eshghi believes that in Shia Islam, there is a concept called Imam and a position called Imamate with two fundamental functions. Firstly, the Imam is the place of manifestation of God's light, and getting closer to God is facilitated through the Imam, and love for God takes shape in love for the

Imam. The second function is related to the role of the Imam in relation to the divine word, meaning that if the Prophet (PBUH) is the agent of the revelation of the word of God, i.e., the word of God comes down from above through him, the Imam is the interpret. Thus, when people want to reach the truth of God's word and move towards the divine (God), they are forced to resort to the Imam (ibid: 179-181).

According to the above mentioned, Eshghi establishes a relationship of "This is the Same" between the Imam and the founder of the Islamic Revolution (Imam Khomeini) by emphasizing such a role and importance for the impeccable Imam in Shia culture. She believes that "Imam Khomeini, in the stature of a fighting Imam in Shia metaphysics, awakened the dormant conscience of Shia and explicitly, as an Imam's spokesman, spoke of new logic and possibility, after which, without his own intention, Shia saw him worthy of the title Imam." (ibid: 179)

Ephemeral and Eternal Time: Lili Eshghi seeks to explain her second theoretical concept by distinguishing time into two categories. Time: The remaining time, which is the same as the current time, the historical or calendar time that we all spend every day, but the remaining time (the time of the Malakut) is woven from a different warp and weft. It is a kind of timeless or eternal time that is considered as a rupture in ordinary and normal time, and it becomes the origin of a new path. In this time, it is the soul that manifests itself exactly in contrast to the ephemeral time in which the body becomes spiritual (Korban, 1964: 18).

Event: Eshghi considers the Islamic Revolution of Iran as an event. Here, the event means the convergence of two times, through which people enter a new era. In this time, people no longer act rationally, but rather passionately. According to the author, this stage is a stage of bewilderment and "Becoming out of oneself." (Eshghi, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 174)

Eshghi says, "I saw the Islamic Revolution of Iran as an event; an internal event that happened to our nation. Our nation acted in such a way that the whole world was amazed, and I imagine even we ourselves were amazed at how people poured into the streets and showed courage. When I say the revolution is an event, this is the meaning I have in mind." (ibid: 176)

Existential Movement: Lili Eshghi believes that the Islamic Revolution, while being an event, is also an existential movement. In her view, the Iranian people, who for years had been affected by the dominance and interference of great powers, had their existence (identity) negated. Through an existential movement and under the leadership of Imam Khomeini, they were reborn and declared their existence (Eshghi,

1999 AD/1378 SH: 174), because existence is not equal to having flesh, skin, and bones (ibid: 181).

Karbala and Ashura: Regarding the role and position of Karbala and Ashura in the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution, Lili Eshghi believes that during the revolution, the people of Iran felt that it was the time of Ashura, and the scene of Karbala was reenacted. She says, "During the revolution, suddenly the event of Karbala and Ashura became very close to the people of Iran, to the extent that Iranians did not feel events that happened, for example, fifty years ago in Iran, as close as they felt the event of Karbala." (ibid: 189-192)
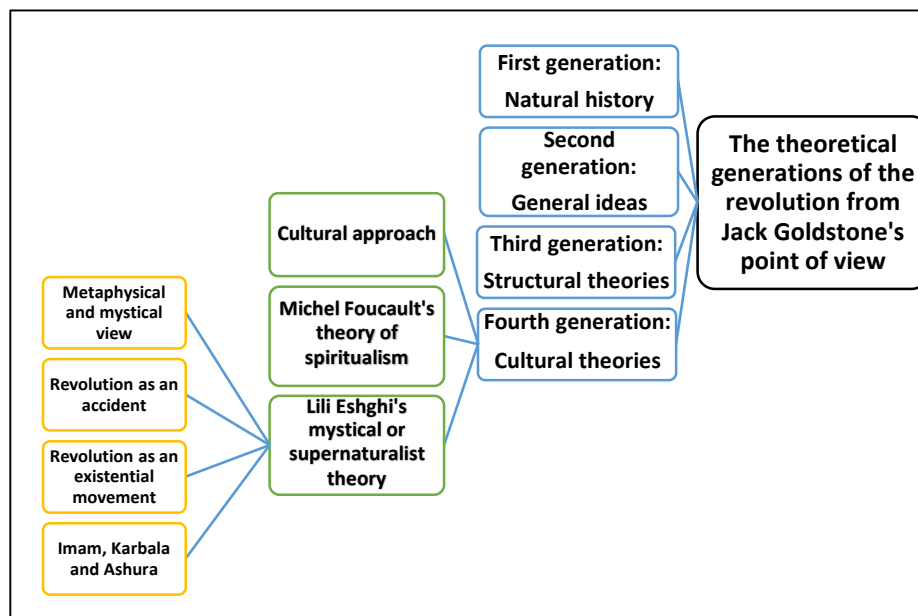

Figure 1: The theoretical model of research

3. Research Method: Spragens' Explanatory Model

Thomas Spragens (1917-2006), a political philosophy professor in America, has proposed a method of inquiry in his famous book "Understanding Political Theory" to study and understand the logical thinking of political thinkers. According to Spragens, the purpose of political theories is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the deficiencies and shortcomings of society and to offer solutions to overcome these issues and the roots of disorder (Spragens, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 13). In clearer terms, Spragens believes that although political theorists have major differences in style and concepts, they all deal with the same fundamental issues and have adopted a relatively uniform method to respond to these issues. From this perspective, political theorists go through relatively distinct and similar stages in their mental

activities from the beginning to the end of presenting their views. These stages include: Observing disorder, identifying its causes, reconstructing society, and ultimately offering solutions (Spragens, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 38-41).

Spragens considers the observation of "Crisis" or "Disorder" as the starting point of political theory. Every scholar begins with the question of which problem to address. Until there is a crisis and disorder, there is no theory (Spragens, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 91). Spragens says, "Political theories are like pearls." His meaning is that theories do not come into existence without a motivating factor (observing crisis or disorder). Most political theories, or at least most passionate theories, are written to address certain real and urgent problems, and it is on this basis that political theorists, due to the practical necessity of understanding those political problems that have become a headache and have captured many individuals, are forced to write (Spragens, 2008 AD/1389 SH: 43).

The second stage, following the observation of disorder, is the search for the causes of disorder. According to Spragens, all political theorists have started from observing disorder in political-social life. He says, "Observing disorder stimulates and excites human reason and emotion and propels him towards the second stage, which is the recognition of causes." (Spragens, 2008 AD/1389 SH: 43) It is in this stage that theorists, as analysts, search for the main causes of problems and instabilities that are often hidden from sight; because, without an understanding of the real causes of disorder, political theories will remain unable to provide solutions and strategies to confront the problems that have arisen (Spragens, 2008 AD/1389 SH: 93).

In the third stage, the time comes to ask the question: If there is an undesirable situation (or disorder) in society, then 'What is the desirable situation and ideal order?' In response to this question, the theorist must move beyond mere existence and, while imagining an ideal city, also present it to the audience (Spragens, ibid: 80-115). An ideal society here is one that is devoid of current problems and instabilities (Shiroudi et al., 2017 AD/1396 SH: 140). Spragens writes about this: "The theorist does not merely describe the world as it is. Certainly, they start with describing the world, but they must also define the world as it should be. The theorist carefully examines the disorder and crises of the political system and then presents a plan in which all the disorders are resolved." (Spragens, ibid: 21)

The final stage or the fourth step of Spragens is the presentation of treatment. In this stage, interaction occurs, and reality and illusions collide (Enayati Shabkalai, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 3). According to Spragens' model, in this stage, the theorist must present the solutions for rebuilding society;

because if the theorist does not present the treatment after going through the stages, they have not fulfilled their mission. This stage is related to presenting what should be proposed to eliminate disorder and practical solutions that are explicitly or implicitly recommended to address the existing problem (Spragens, ibid). Spragens' crisis theory is presented in the following pattern.
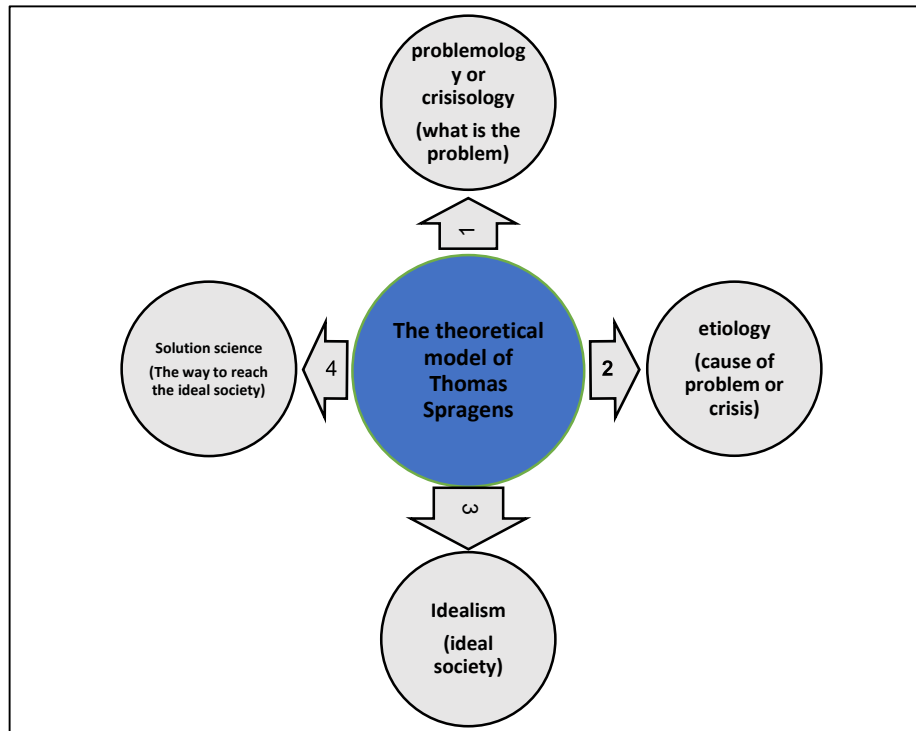

Figure 2: Spragens' explanatory model

4. Spragens Level of Lili Eshghi Revolution Theory

Through the application of Spragens' explanatory model and levels, the following four findings were obtained in explaining the mystical theory of Layli Eshghi:

A) The Feeling of Emptiness as a Problem or Crisis

For revolutions to occur, specific conditions, requirements, and issues are necessary, and until those conditions and requirements are met, societies do not move towards revolution (Tousi, 2020 AD/1399 SH: 211). According to Lili Eshghi, on the eve of the Iranian revolution, the western estrangement had led Iranians to feel degraded and to abandon their identity in such a way that "Iranians during the time of the Shah had become estranged and exiled in their own homes." (Eshghi, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 67) Furthermore, in her view, the Shah's actions had allowed the West to dominate the Iranian identity philosophically and

geographically. Based on this, there was a serious need to return to their own identity (ibid: 69). Lili Eshghi describes the atmosphere of those days - the time of the revolution - as follows: "Today I say: People could not find their question or thought they had lost their question. The revolution may have been an answer to a question without content; in response to this troubling question of 'Who am I?' A question that led a nation towards divine turmoil and the answer was: I am the one who no longer accepts that the situation returns to the same old way. That's it... There was an empty wish, a wish for existence..." (ibid: 41)

Therefore, Lili Eshghi considers "Emptiness" to be the most important factor in the disorder of that period and believes: "What was sought in the Iranian revolution was a kind of return to oneself or a return to Iran, which Imam Khomeini led. Returning to oneself, in her view, means "Returning Iran to the Iranians" and freeing them from the West, which was destroying their existence." (ibid: 67) Based on this, Lili Eshghi considers western estrangement, eastern degradation and abandonment of identity, existential estrangement, corruption of the Shah's dynasty, and the sale of the country by the Shah to imperialism, and, in a spiritual sense, "Emptiness" to be the most important issue of the pre-revolutionary era in Iran.

B) The Onslaught of the West and the Shah's Actions as the Causes of the Problem

According to Spragens, the response that is presented in the stage of observing disorder itself gives rise to further questions. Simply observing inaccuracies does not provide any practical guidance. As he states: "When the theorist identifies irregular conditions, the logic of observation dictates that the background of the observation should also be examined. The question raised here is, if the situation is irregular, 'What are the reasons for it?'" (Spragens, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 79)

Lili Eshghi considered the feeling of emptiness as the disorder of that era, but 'What was the true reason for this feeling of emptiness?' 'Why did the Iranians of that time feel estrangement and emptiness?' Eshghi says: "The geographical and philosophical onslaught of the West had caused a kind of feeling of being estranged foreigners and a sense of degradation and abandonment of identity, in the hope of building a great civilization." (Eshghi, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 76)

Eshghi considers the relationship with the West in terms of surrender to it, as well as the dependence and lack of independence of Mohammad Reza Shah, the Constitutional Revolution, and Mossadegh's movement as two almost unsuccessful experiences as effective factors in the sense of identity crisis of the people of that time. She considered Mohammad Reza Shah's change of the origin of history as another factor of the identity

crisis or emptiness of Iran at that time, and she sees this action of the Shah as a change in the origin of Iran's identity. She says: "After Islam, Iranians placed the origin of our history in the Prophet's migration.

This was done by the Iranian humanity fourteen centuries ago, and we have no right to change it. One nation has done this for fourteen centuries, and no one has the right to change it. Such changes seriously endanger a nation and the nation defends itself. The Shah did not understand that the ancient culture and spirit of Iran is not absent from our Shia religion. Our civilization today encompasses all the different periods of Iranian civilization. Separating two parts in one soul is a mistake and dangerous. It is as if this nation has been another nation." (ibid: 198)

Eshghi points to the Shah's actions for covering up the weaknesses and failures of the Qajar and Pahlavi governments, such as boasting about the glories of Cyrus and Darius (ibid: 198). She does not overlook concrete factors of dissatisfaction and identity crisis of that time, such as modernity and its repercussions, as well as discrimination and injustice. She says: "Modernity in its own society led to the emergence of contradictions and social conflicts between different classes and strata of society. Something that did not exist in our country before and its introduction had a significant share in creating dissatisfaction and occurrence of revolution at that particular time.

The modernization of society in a positive direction - the establishment of schools and universities - itself turned into one of the most influential factors in creating dissatisfaction in society. During Mohammad Reza's time, universities were active, and people saw that such an opportunity was available to some strata to enter university; but 'Were a few veiled women able to have the opportunity to study at the university?' About 90% of women were excluded from society. Dissatisfaction slowly took shape in them, questioning why I cannot have an independent career while maintaining my Hijab and reach a much higher position in the professional field. These very things that led to the modernization of our society further intensified the dissatisfaction of the people." (ibid: 199)

Based on Eshghi's perspective, the reasons and roots of the crisis and disorder during the Pahlavi era can be attributed to these factors: the onslaught of the West geographically and philosophically, the sense of degradation resulting from dependency, submission and lack of independence of Mohammad Reza Shah, the nation's unsuccessful experience in the Constitutional Revolution and Mosaddegh's movement, the change of the Islamic calendar to the Shah's calendar, boasting about the glories of Cyrus and Darius, modernity and its anti-religious repercussions, discrimination and injustice.

C) Iranian Society with Iranian-Shia Intellectual Tools as an Ideal Society
According to Spragens, "When the theorist sees his society in disarray, he must show what kind of organized society it is. If he sees irrationality, madness, and repression, he must precisely show what rationality and lack of repression mean." (Spragens, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 120) Based on this, in the third stage, the question that preoccupies the theorist is 'What is the good and desirable society now that the current society is bad and undesirable?' Here is where the theorist must strive to demonstrate the nature of a good political system (ibid: 120).

Upon examining Eshghi's theory, concepts such as the ideal society and its synonymous terms are not explicitly mentioned in her book or speeches, but with careful consideration of her views, it becomes apparent that the ideal society of that time is a society specific to Iran. That is, an "Iran that has emerged" which will seek to draw its tools from Iranian-Shia thought, not from this or that country.

According to Eshghi, "In order for our thinking to become more fertile and creative day by day, we do not necessarily have to read Kant, Rousseau, and Voltaire, but it is enough to re-read the words of our own great thinkers and artists with a new perspective that we have inherited from the incident. We see that many interesting concepts of philosophy and art today are present in them. The thoughts of certain Western philosophers, sociologists, or psychologists can be useful to us only when we first enrich ourselves with our cultural heritage and then engage in dialogue with them, not imitate them." (ibid: 191-192)

Regarding cultural independence and liberation from the intellectual hegemony of outsiders, she says: "The words of Imam Ali (AS) are our heritage. We must come to the field with our own heritage and put what we have as the tools of our work and life. With our own tools, we can reach creativity, not with the tools sent to us from the other side of the world. If we take our heritage in hand, understand it well, and work with it, we can go forward and see what others have said and what opinions they have... If we say from the beginning that what we have is useless, superstitious, old-fashioned, and irrelevant, we have paralyzed ourselves." (ibid: 192)

It is clear that Eshghi's ideal society is not a closed society, as she believes that in order to form a lawful and freedom-loving society; it is worthy to use the theories of other nations as well. What she finds disagreeable is the compulsion to necessarily use them as a model. According to her, "We do not have to imitate a model of democracy and then after fifty years end up in the same deadlocks. We can sit and define a civilized and freedom-loving society. The lesson of the revolution is all of this. The revolution was all of this." (ibid: 192)

Eshghi believes that "Existence" takes priority over any plan. From this perspective, planning before "Existence" is nothing but a delusion. In a revolution, a nation must first come into existence, stand on its own feet in society, grow and develop, live with its own values, not accept humiliation, express its own opinions in its destiny, and experience it. In short, the ideal society according to Eshghi is a civilized and freedom-loving society that is intellectually and culturally independent and not under the domination of outsiders, does not follow common democratic models, is thoughtful, does not turn its back on its spiritual assets, and puts the Quran at the forefront of its work.

D) Loyalty to the Revolution as a Means of Healing or Reaching the Ideal Society

According to Eshghi, the main crisis and problem of that era was the feeling of non-existence among the people of Iran, and the factors of this crisis were the denial of Iranian-Shia identity throughout history and the imposed defeats on Iran. The ideal society or imaginary order of that era is a society where there is no disorder, no colonization, where Iranians exist in the framework of their Iranian-Shia identity.

The final question here is 'How to achieve such a society from Eshghi's perspective?' 'What can be the ways to reach such a society?'

Lili Eshghi believes in a two-stage revolution. She argues that the first stage, which is the stage of coming into existence, is completed after the departure of the Imam, and then the Iranian nation enters the second stage. The second stage is the "Continuation of the existence of this created nation." At that time, the realization will occur that the plans, designs, and goals adopted are not incompatible with the principle of existence (the first stage of the event). In this case, this event will be completed, and Lili Eshghi's ideal society will be realized.

According to Lili Eshghi, the purpose of the revolution was to enable society to take new and independent steps, rather than remaining stagnant in the same state as the early days forever. The issue today is not who is revolutionary, but who is loyal to the revolution, meaning which movement represents the logical continuation of the revolution. The logical continuation of the revolution is not the repetition of the same actions. The logical continuation of the revolution is moving towards the capabilities that the revolution desired to give us (ibid: 189-190).

According to Lili Eshghi, reaching the ideal society is not much more than two things: First, we must exist, and second, we must continue our existence. Regarding the first stage (as mentioned), Shia existence emerged without choice and in a loving manner, without knowing what it was doing. This is the first and most important solution to coming into

existence or achieving the ideal society. This mystical and divine step concludes with the departure of the Imam.

In the second stage - after the departure of the Imam - Shia must take the second step, which is the continuation of "Existence." All planning, economic, cultural, and political goals are meaningful in this stage. Continuing to existence means not allowing and not planning anything that is incompatible with our existence, meaning plans that guide us back to the time before existence. After we have come into existence, we must preserve it, and in today's terms, after the revolution, we must remain revolutionary.

Lili Eshghi considers certain characteristics as necessary for the successful second stage. She believes in the importance of recognizing the equality of individuals in benefiting from the talents of life, regardless of whether that person is a villager or a palace dweller, a woman or a man. There should be an effort to cultivate talents, even those that remain hidden due to deprivation of proper conditions.

Lili Eshghi states that these characteristics are essential for achieving the ideal society and claims, "These, in my opinion, are the meaning of being revolutionary, and this was present in the person of Imam Khomeini to perfection; belief that the people know more than they say, belief in the known and unknown knowledge of the people and trusting it is very rare and requires a lot of courage, being revolutionary means this." (ibid: 200)

Accordingly, it can be said that Lili Eshghi sees reaching the ideal society as loyalty and adherence to the teachings of the revolution. As

long as policies and adopted plans are not incompatible with the revolution, the ideal society will continue to exist.
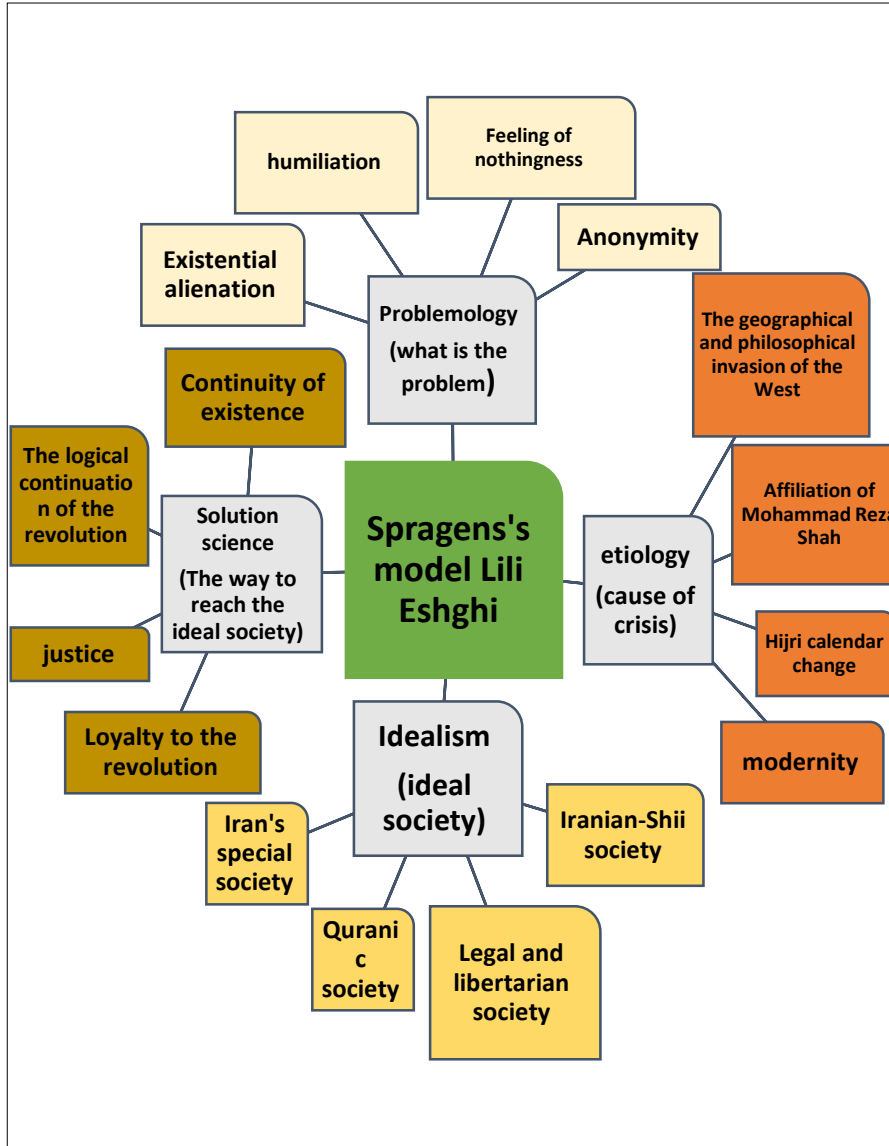

Figure 3: Design Sragens pattern of Lili Eshghi Revolution Theory

Conclusion

The occurrence of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1357 had profound effects on the prevailing discourse and research methods of its time. These effects were so deep and fundamental that renowned theorists such as Jack Goldstone acknowledged the necessity of reconstructing new theories to understand the roots of the Islamic Revolution, paving the way for the

entry of meaningful and mystical theories into the field of revolutionary studies. One of these new, particular, and thought-provoking theories regarding the Islamic Revolution is the mystical theory of Lili Eshghi, which has been discussed in this paper.

Lili Eshghi claims that the essence, roots, and goals of the Islamic Revolution must be sought within the heart of Iranian metaphysics, a point that none of the revolution theorists have addressed. The researchers of the present study, by utilizing Thomas Spragens' theoretical model, extracted the following elements as issues, causes of the issues, ideal society, and ways to achieve it, in order to comprehend the dimensions of Lili Eshghi's mystical theory:

Lili Eshghi, while exploring Iranian Illuminationist metaphysics, states that Iranians during the time of the Shah felt a sense of alienation and non-existence in their own homes. Based on this, she considers the "Sense of non-existence" as the most important issue or crisis, along with factors such as the Western geographical and philosophical onslaught, the relationship with the West leading to dependence and lack of independence under Mohammad Reza Shah, the failure of the Constitutional Revolution and Mosaddegh's movement, and anti-identity actions of Mohammad Reza Shah, such as changing the historical origin from the Islamic calendar to the Shah's era, as effective factors in creating the problem and crisis among the people of that time.

The ideal and utopian society of that time, according to Lili Eshghi, is a society in which the lost existence of Iranians is revived, and all the factors mentioned as causes of disorder are eradicated. Eshghi considers "Reading the Quran with a new perspective" and "Living with one's own culture" as other characteristics of that ideal society. Ultimately, she sees the solution to achieving such a society as "Continuation of existence" or simply "Loyalty to the revolution," and believes that any action or movement in line with loyalty to the Islamic Revolution is a step towards stabilizing and strengthening the ideal society.

In conclusion, it must be said that explaining the Islamic Revolution in terms of its essence, roots, dimensions, and even its achievements, without considering its teachings and intellectual, ideological, and mystical backgrounds, will not yield accurate results.

Therefore, the authors of the present study have endeavored to focus on a specific theory regarding the Islamic Revolution, in order to, to some extent, address some of the specific characteristics of the Islamic Revolution, while also considering the attention of other researchers of the revolution in presenting specific explanatory frameworks for the Islamic Revolution.

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