The Quran: Contemporary Studies
Homepage: https://qns.journals.miu.ac.ir
ISSN (Print): 2981-0566
ISSN (Online): 2981-0574

Typology of *Ṭāghūt* in the Quran and Strategies for Confronting it, with Emphasis on the Quranic Thought of Martyr Imam Khamenei

Hujatullah Mehrabi Koushki [1]✉

1. Corresponding Author, Assistant Professor, Al-Mustafa Higher Education Complex, Isfahan, Iran. Email: mehrabi6363@yahoo.com

Article Info

Article type:
Research Article

Article history:
Received:
23 January 2026
Received in revised form:
10 February 2026
Accepted:
10 March 2026
Available online:
16 March 2026

Keywords:
Ṭāghūt,
The Quran,
Typology of *ṭāghūt*,
Divine guardianship,
Martyr Imam Khamenei.

ABSTRACT

The concept of *ṭāghūt* is among the fundamental concepts of the Quran in delineating the boundary between monotheism and polytheism, faith and unbelief, and divine guardianship and non-divine guardianship. In its Quranic usage, this concept is not confined merely to historical idols; rather, it encompasses any authority, power, movement, or structure that removes human beings from servitude to God and directs them toward obedience to other than Him. Accordingly, a re-examination of the modes of manifestation of *ṭāghūt* and the Quranic methods of confronting it—particularly with emphasis on the thought of Martyr Imam Khamenei—constitutes a scholarly and epistemological necessity. Employing a descriptive-analytical method and drawing on library-based sources, the present study seeks to explicate the concept of *ṭāghūt*, classify its manifestations in the Quran, and derive strategies for confronting it. The findings indicate that *ṭāghūt* in the Quran can be identified in three principal forms: *ṭāghūt* as a false object of worship, *ṭāghūt* as a non-divine authority of judgment and arbitration, and *ṭāghūt* as a deviant guardian, ruler, and leader. The Quran also presents a coherent set of strategies for confronting *ṭāghūt*, the most important of which are: disbelief in *ṭāghūt* and the negation of its legitimacy, practical avoidance and distancing from it, and refraining from inclining toward, relying on, or placing trust in oppressors. According to Martyr Imam Khamenei's Quranic thought, *ṭāghūt* should be understood not only in terms of its historical manifestations but also as appearing in contemporary political, cultural, and civilizational forms; consequently, resistance to it constitutes a fundamental pillar in the realization of social monotheism in the modern world.

Cite this article: Mehrabi Koushki, H. (2026). Typology of *Ṭāghūt* in the Quran and Strategies for Confronting it, with Emphasis on the Quranic Thought of Martyr Imam Khamenei. *The Quran: Contemporary Studies*, 5 (15), 118-147. https://doi.org/10.22034/qns.2026.23970.1175

© The Author(s).
Publisher: Al-Mustafa International University.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22034/qns.2026.23970.1175

Introduction

The concept of *ṭāghūt* is one of the foundational and key concepts in the semantic system of the Holy Quran; it is a concept that occupies a central place in drawing the boundary between faith and unbelief, monotheism and polytheism, guidance and error, and also in explaining the human relationship with power, obedience, servitude, and guardianship. In Quranic usage, the word *ṭāghūt* does not refer merely to an idol or to a stone or wooden deity; rather, it encompasses any being, person, movement, intellectual authority, political power, or social structure that exceeds divine limits and prevents human beings from following the path of servitude to God. Therefore, examining this concept is not merely a narrow lexical or exegetical discussion, but a means of understanding an important part of the Quranic worldview in the domains of belief, society, and politics. In the thought of the martyred Supreme Leader, *ṭāghūt* is also not merely a historical phenomenon, but includes every non-divine authority that leads human beings to obey other than God; for this reason, in Quranic logic, true faith is not realized without disbelief in *ṭāghūt*, the negation of its guardianship, and the rejection of its sovereignty and judgment.

The main issue of this research is that, despite the great significance of the concept of *ṭāghūt* in the verses of the Holy Quran, this concept has in many studies either been examined in a fragmented and limited way, or only some of its historical manifestations have been considered. For this reason, a comprehensive explanation that can coherently present the relationship between the conceptual analysis of *ṭāghūt*, its modes of manifestation, its relation to concepts such as guardianship, servitude, and recourse to judgment, as well as the Quranic methods of confronting it, is rarely found. The present study seeks to partly address this gap and to examine *ṭāghūt* not merely as a word, but as a pattern of deviation, a logic of domination, and an anti-monotheistic structure within the Quranic system. This approach gains even greater

significance by emphasizing the thought of the Supreme Leader, because in this intellectual framework, *ṭāghūt* is not limited to the idols of the pre-Islamic era or the tyrannical regimes of the past, but is also recognized in new forms of political, cultural, and civilizational domination.

The necessity of this discussion becomes even clearer when one considers that a proper understanding of *ṭāghūt* also helps clarify many related concepts. In the Holy Quran, belief in God is coupled with disbelief in *ṭāghūt*; this juxtaposition indicates that faith is not merely verbal or inward acceptance of God, but also entails the rejection of the authority, obedience, and allegiance of any power or system that is incompatible with truth. In this regard, the statements of the martyred Leader emphasize that monotheism is not confined to belief in God alone, but is realized through disbelief in *ṭāghūt* and through the refusal to worship anything other than God. On the other hand, in the contemporary era, where forms of domination, arrogance, intellectual coercion, and cultural and political hegemony have taken on more complex forms, revisiting the concept of *ṭāghūt* in light of Quranic verses and with emphasis on the explanations of the martyred Supreme Leader can play an important role in analyzing new phenomena and understanding the relationship between a believing society and deviant powers. For this reason, this research is significant not only in theoretical and exegetical terms, but also from social and intellectual perspectives.

Literature Review

The research background of this issue has been examined in lexicographical sources; however, no direct attention has been given to its threefold manifestation or to strategies for confronting it. In academic studies, several articles have also been written on this subject. These include “An Examination of the Concept of *Ṭāghūt* in the Quran

with Reference to Quranic Exegeses" (1997) [in Persian] by Muḥammad Riḍā Mashā'ī (Shahāb), in which eight Quranic verses are analyzed and *ṭāghūt* is interpreted as "idol" and in other meanings determined by context; "A Qualitative Content Analysis of Quranic Verses Concerning *Ṭāghūt* and Their Educational Implications" (2021) [in Persian] authored by ʿAlī Sarlak as the corresponding author, which refers to the broad concept of *ṭāghūt* as the front opposed to truth and examines the educational effects of resistance against it; and "The Path to Dignity in the Quran: From Compromise with *Ṭāghūt* to Resistance for Truth" (2025) [in Persian] by Muḥammad Ḥusayn Bakhshiyān, which discusses the spiritual and material effects and blessings of confronting *ṭāghūt* for the Islamic society, such as divine assistance and heavenly blessings.

Although these studies occasionally refer to some instances of *ṭāghūt*, they do not provide a systematic account of its three general manifestations, nor do they comprehensively and independently organize the Quranic strategies for confronting it. The present study seeks to address this gap by conceptualizing *ṭāghūt*, examining its semantic developments, collecting and analyzing its instances within three broad manifestations and domains, and then extracting strategies for confronting it from within the verses and exegeses of the Holy Quran. Another distinguishing feature of this research is that it advances this analysis with emphasis on the thought of the martyred Supreme Leader—an intellectual framework that rereads *ṭāghūt* in doctrinal, social, political, and civilizational domains, thereby opening new horizons for a contemporary understanding of this Quranic concept.

This study seeks, first, to clarify the lexical and terminological meaning of *ṭāghūt* in the Holy Quran; then to identify its manifestations and instances in the divine verses; and, in the next step, to extract and analyze the Quranic strategies for confronting it. In this process, the relationship of *ṭāghūt* to such concepts as faith, disbelief, guardianship

(*wilāyah*), servitude, seeking judgment, and recourse to illegitimate arbitration (*taḥākkum*) will also be examined, in order to show how the Quran delineates the boundary between the camp of truth and that of falsehood. Accordingly, the central question of this research is: What is the meaning of *ṭāghūt* in the Holy Quran, and what strategies does the Quran provide for confronting it? In line with this question, several subsidiary questions are also raised: What is the lexical and terminological meaning of *ṭāghūt* in the Quran? What are the most important instances of *ṭāghūt* in the Quranic verses? What relationship does this concept bear to faith, disbelief, *wilāyah*, and *taḥākkum*? And what methods does the Quran introduce for rejecting and confronting *ṭāghūt*?

The methodology of this study is descriptive-analytical and based on library research. In this approach, the verses related to *ṭāghūt* are first identified and collected, and then their meanings, contexts, and implications are examined through the use of lexicographical sources, exegetical works, and contemporary studies. The data are analyzed qualitatively, with an effort to arrive at a comprehensive picture of the place of *ṭāghūt* within the Quranic worldview by taking into account the contextual flow of the verses and the views of Quranic exegetes. In addition, in the section emphasizing the thought of the martyred Supreme Leader, his statements and messages are also employed in order to clarify the relationship of this concept to its contemporary instances and formulations.

1. The Conceptual Framework and Semantic Scope of *Ṭāghūt* in the Quranic Epistemological Paradigm

Within the Quranic epistemological paradigm, *ṭāghūt* is not merely a descriptive term or a limited label for certain historical instances; rather, it is one of the foundational concepts that plays a central role in understanding the relationship between truth and falsehood, faith and

disbelief, and monotheism and deviation. Reflection on the usages of this term, as well as on its lexical and exegetical elaborations, shows that in Quranic logic, *ṭāghūt* is not a static or rigid concept. Rather, it designates every form of transgression beyond proper bounds, rebellion against the limits of truth, and the emergence of authorities and centers of power that set themselves up against divine centrality. For this reason, examining the meaning of *ṭāghūt* is not merely a lexical discussion; rather, it constitutes a fundamental point of entry for understanding the mechanisms of deviation within the intellectual and social order of the Quran.

In lexical etymology, *ṭāghūt* is derived from the root *ṭaghā / yaṭghā*, a root that denotes "exceeding proper bounds" or "going beyond measure" (Farāhīdī 1988, 4:435). This fundamental meaning offers a clear picture of the nature of *ṭāghūt*: transgressing boundaries, breaking limits, and surpassing the measure established for a being or an act. A Quranic witness to this meaning appears in the expression *ṭaghā al-mā'* ("the Flood rose high"), as in the verse, *"Indeed when the Flood rose high…" (Quran 69:11),* where the water is described as rising beyond its proper limit (ibid). From this perspective, *ṭughyān* originally signifies a destructive kind of excess—an excess that, once it exceeds its limit, disrupts the natural order and desired equilibrium. By the same token, the extension of this meaning into the human and epistemic sphere indicates that *ṭāghūt* signifies a form of rebellion that crosses the bounds of truth and adopts an oppositional stance toward it.

This lexical core is also preserved at the terminological level, though it is accompanied by a clearer evaluative orientation. Thus, in its technical definition, *ṭāghūt* is applied to one who exceeds proper bounds in matters of "evil" or "reprehensible conduct" (Jawharī 1986, 6:412). On this basis, *ṭāghūt* is not merely a person or thing that transgresses a limit; rather, it transgresses a limit in such a way that the result falls within the sphere of deviation, evil, and corruption. Accordingly, the

concept of *ṭāghūt* in the Quran should be understood as one that is rooted in "exceeding due bounds" while, in the evaluative sphere, referring to a form of active and consequential deviation.

From the perspective of word formation, Ibn Manẓūr's analysis adds that this term was originally on the morphological pattern *faʿalūt*, and that its initial form was considered to be *ṭaghyūt* or *ṭaghawūt*; then, in the course of phonological development, the letter *yāʾ* or *wāw* was advanced before the *ghayn* and subsequently transformed into an *alif* (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 15:9). Although this explanation is morphological in nature, when considered alongside the view of Abū Hilāl ʿAskarī, it helps illuminate the place of this word in religious language. ʿAskarī explicitly states that *ṭāghūt*, because of the "grandeur of its form," is more eloquent than *ṭāghī*; for this reason, its usage became more widespread (ʿAskarī 1979, 242). This point shows that *ṭāghūt* is significant not only semantically, but also in terms of its expressive force and rhetorical capacity; it is a powerful and prominent term that, in Quranic and exegetical discourse, has come to bear a broader semantic load than *ṭāghī*.

In this connection, some lexicographers and semantic scholars have extended the scope of *ṭāghūt* beyond the meaning of a "doer of transgression" and have also applied it to any "object of worship other than God" (Rāghib Iṣfahānī 1991, pp. 242, 520-521). This semantic expansion is highly significant, for it shows that in Quranic logic *ṭāghūt* is not merely a description of behavior, but may also indicate a "status" or "position" — a position in which something or someone stands before God as an object of obedience, veneration, or worship. Within this horizon, *ṭāghūt* becomes a concept that encompasses both "rebellion" and "deviant authority." Thus, the semantic range of *ṭāghūt* extends beyond an act or attribute and develops into an influential center within human religious and social life.

This expansion in conceptual meaning is also clearly reflected in the identification of its instances. Lexical sources have applied *ṭāghūt* to numerous referents, each representing a particular dimension of deviation and rebellion. Among these, *Lāt* and *ʿUzzā* are cited as examples of false deities (Farāhīdī 1988, 4:435). Likewise, Satan is regarded as one of the instances of *ṭāghūt* (Azharī 2000, 8:153-154), which in itself shows that *ṭāghūt* is not restricted merely to objects of worship, but also includes sources of temptation and misguidance. The *kāhin* (soothsayer) is also counted among the instances of *ṭāghūt* (Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād 1993, 7:60), indicating that any claimant to guidance or special knowledge who diverts human beings from the path of truth may fall within this category. In addition, "two Jews named Ḥuyayy b. Akhṭab and Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf, idols, human beings, and rebellious jinn" have likewise been mentioned as instances of *ṭāghūt* (Azharī 2000, 8:153-154). Similarly, the sorcerer and rebellious jinn are included within this semantic range (Rāghib Iṣfahānī 1991, 521). In some reports, "the head of the Christians" (Azharī 2000, 11:8) and "rebellious People of the Book" have also been counted among its instances (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 8:444).

This diversity of referents reveals a highly fundamental point: within the semantic framework of the Quran, *ṭāghūt* is not a closed or one-dimensional concept confined merely to an "idol" or a "stone deity." Rather, it is a comprehensive designation that may be applied to any being, person, authority, or center that, in relation to truth, assumes a position of transgression, misguidance, rebellion, or opposition. Thus, on one level, *ṭāghūt* may refer to a false deity; on another, to Satan as the source of temptation and seduction; and on yet another, to a human being or rebellious current that, by claiming authority, obstructs the path of divine guidance. What unites these various instances is not their outward form, but the role and function they perform in transgressing the bounds of truth and disrupting the proper relation of servitude to God.

From this, it may also be understood that in Quranic logic, *ṭāghūt* is not merely a description of an individual rebel; rather, it has the capacity to denote an ongoing current and mechanism of deviation. When a term can be applied alike to idols, Satan, soothsayers, sorcerers, rebellious humans and jinn, and even oppositional groups or figures, it becomes clear that the Quran and the exegetical tradition are dealing with a concept that, rather than remaining confined to a particular individual or object, represents a general pattern of deviation and false authority. In other words, *ṭāghūt* may be understood as a designation for any center of power or authority that stands in opposition to the sovereignty of truth and assumes an antagonistic role in the realms of belief, obedience, or the direction of human life.

The divergence of views among lexicographers is also clearly reflected in the works of Quranic exegetes. As has been explicitly noted, this diversity and divergence of opinions is found not only in lexical works, but also in books of *tafsīr* "in much the same way, and indeed on an even broader spectrum" (Ṭabarī 1991, 5:83-84). This point indicates that *ṭāghūt* is one of those Quranic concepts which, because of its semantic breadth and its applicability to multiple referents, has given rise to a wide range of interpretations and applications in the exegetical tradition. At the same time, one of the major tendencies among exegetes has been to relate *ṭāghūt* back to "objects of worship other than God, such as idols" (ibid), an interpretation that is consistent with the views of Rāghib Iṣfahānī and ʿAskarī concerning the application of *ṭāghūt* to anything worshipped besides God (see ʿAskarī 1979, 242).

Nevertheless, the totality of the lexical and exegetical evidence shows that reducing *ṭāghūt* merely to an "idol" or a "tangible object of worship" is not consistent with the actual range of this concept. For the very sources that emphasize its application to objects of worship other than God also mention, alongside them, Satan, the soothsayer, the

sorcerer, rebellious jinn, rebellious People of the Book, and specific individuals (see Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 8:444). Accordingly, within the Quranic conceptual framework, *ṭāghūt* should be understood as a concept that extends beyond the level of "false worship" to encompass all forms of "false authority," "misguiding leadership," and "organized or influential rebellion against the truth."

Therefore, if we wish to formulate a conceptual synthesis of *ṭāghūt* on the basis of these lexical and exegetical data, we may say that, within the Quranic epistemological paradigm, *ṭāghūt* denotes anything or anyone that exceeds the divinely ordained limit, operates within the sphere of evil and deviation, and, as an object of worship, a source of authority, or an agent of misguidance, diverts the human being from the orbit of servitude to God. On the one hand, this concept is grounded in the root notion of *ṭughyān*—transgression and exceeding due bounds (Farāhīdī 1988, 4:435); on the other hand, in its terminological definition, it is associated with "excess in evil and reprehensible conduct" (Jawharī 1986, 6:412). *Ṭāghūt* includes every object of worship other than God as well as a wide range of human, non-human, and collective manifestations. For this reason, *ṭāghūt* should be regarded as one of the key concepts for understanding the Quranic logic of the confrontation between truth and falsehood—a concept that plays a decisive role, both at the doctrinal level and at the social and guidance-oriented level, in identifying the front that stands in opposition to monotheism (Mahdavī Rād & Shujāʿī 2023, 28).

2. A Typology of the Manifestations of *Ṭāghūt* in the Holy Quran

After clarifying the conceptual framework of *ṭāghūt* and establishing that this term, in lexical and exegetical sources, has been applied to a range of referents such as idols, Satan, the soothsayer, the sorcerer, rebellious human beings, rebellious jinn, certain leaders among the People of the Book, and other centers of deviation, it is now possible to

proceed to a more precise stage in the Quranic analysis of this concept. At this stage, *ṭāghūt* is understood not merely as a general term, but as a reality that assumes diverse manifestations within the religious and social life of the human being.

Reflection on the Quranic verses and the exegetical discussions related to them shows that in the Quran, *ṭāghūt* appears in at least three principal capacities:

1. *Ṭāghūt* as an object of worship,
2. *Ṭāghūt* as ruler and judge, and
3. *Ṭāghūt* as guardian and authority (*walī*).

This threefold typology, in fact, represents three levels of the influence and operation of *ṭāghūt*: at the level of belief and worship, at the level of judgment and the regulation of social relations, and at the level of authority, guardianship, and the shaping of identity and civilization.

What makes this classification significant is that it demonstrates that, in the logic of the Quran, *ṭāghūt* is not merely a "false deity." Rather, it may appear in the form of false divinity, in the guise of deviant political and judicial authority, or in the form of a guardianship and patronage that leads human beings from light into darkness. From this perspective, *ṭāghūt* is a concept that simultaneously encompasses the sphere of belief, the structure of power, and the system of social guidance. For this reason, confronting it cannot be reduced merely to the level of ritual worship.

2.1. *Ṭāghūt* as an Object of Worship

The first and most fundamental manifestation of *ṭāghūt* is its appearance in the position of an "object of worship," that is, when something or someone is placed in the position of worship, veneration, and devotional obedience, thereby usurping the exclusive station of God. This meaning is especially evident in verse 17 of *Sūrat al-Zumar* and in the related concepts associated with it, where avoiding the

worship of *ṭāghūt*, alongside turning back to God, is presented as a sign of guidance and glad tidings. On this basis, *ṭāghūt* in this capacity refers to anything worshipped besides God, whether such worship takes the explicit form of idol worship or assumes more complex forms of sanctified obedience and devotion to other than God.

In the interpretation of these verses, emphasis has been placed on the breadth of this meaning. At this level, *ṭāghūt* is not confined to stone idols or tangible objects of worship; rather, it encompasses "every object of worship other than God." Accordingly, avoiding it means distancing oneself from every form of polytheism, idolatry, Satan-worship, and even worship of the ego or caprice (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 19:411). Along the same lines, the worship of *ṭāghūt* is not reduced to prostration and bowing; rather, any form of obedience to other than God that in some way takes on the character of worship and submission falls within its scope (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2008, 18:51).

This analysis is fully consistent with what was established in the preceding lexical and exegetical discussions. As noted in lexical sources, *Lāt* and *ʿUzzā* have been counted among the instances of *ṭāghūt*. At the same time, it was previously mentioned that Abū Hilāl ʿAskarī and Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī explicitly state that *ṭāghūt* applies to every object of worship besides God. Therefore, when more recent exegeses also understand *ṭāghūt*, in its capacity as an object of worship, as a designation for every non-divine object of worship, they are in fact extending the same earlier conceptual core rather than introducing a meaning foreign to the lexical tradition.

In terms of concrete referents, idols are the clearest examples of this manifestation, and in exegetical works *ṭāghūt* has indeed been applied to all false deities and idols (Ṭabarsī 1993, 3:101). Yet its scope does not remain confined to idols. Satan, too, is presented as one of the principal instances of *ṭāghūt* in the position of an object of worship (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 3:418). This point is also consistent with the

lexical reports, since in earlier sources Satan was explicitly counted among the referents of *ṭāghūt*. The significance of this instance lies in the fact that it shows *ṭāghūt* as an object of worship is not necessarily an inanimate being or a ritual symbol; rather, it may be an active source of temptation and deviation before which the human being, knowingly or unknowingly, bows in submission.

Moreover, base desires (*havā-yi nafs*) is also regarded in exegetical analysis as one of the instances of *ṭāghūt*. This means that if a person, instead of following God, becomes captive to his own desires and makes them the criterion for decision-making and existential orientation, he has in fact submitted to *ṭāghūt* (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 19:411). This interpretation expands the horizon of understanding *ṭāghūt* from the realm of external objects to the inner domain of the human being, showing that *ṭāghūt* may exercise dominion not only over the exterior of human life but also penetrate the inner layers of will and desire. It is precisely at this point that the concept of *ṭāghūt* as an object of worship becomes far deeper than the mere notion of historical idol worship.

As a result, *ṭāghūt* in the position of an object of worship refers to any reality that, in some way, occupies the place of worship, obedience, or absolute following and diverts the human being from pure monotheism. On this basis, idols, Satan, base desire, and every false object of worship all fall under this manifestation. The common feature among these instances is that they all create a displacement in the relationship between servant and object of worship; by removing divine centrality, they establish an alternative authority. From this perspective, the Quranic command to avoid the worship of *ṭāghūt* is not merely an invitation to abandon a few historical symbols; rather, it is a continuous call to safeguard monotheism against every deviation-producing devotional authority.

2.2. *Ṭāghūt* in the Position of Ruler and Judge

The second major manifestation of *ṭāghūt* in the Quran is its appearance in the position of "ruler and judge"; that is, where *ṭāghūt* stands not as an object of worship, but as a reference point for judgment, the regulation of relations, the settlement of disputes, and the exercise of social authority. This meaning is especially evident in verse 60 of *Sūrat al-Nisā'*, where the Quran reproaches those who, despite claiming faith, seek to refer their disputes to *ṭāghūt* for judgment, even though they had been commanded to disbelieve in it. At this level, *ṭāghūt* is no longer merely an object of worship; rather, it becomes the authority to whom people appeal for adjudication and the source of ruling and judgment.

In explaining this position, exegetes maintain that since *ṭāghūt* derives from *ṭughyān* and means exceeding the proper limit, anyone who judges by other than the truth and violates the boundaries of divine justice is *ṭāghūt* (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2008, 4:178). This analysis corresponds closely to the lexical meaning of "exceeding the limit" previously reported from Farāhīdī. In other words, just as *ṭāghūt* in the sphere of belief crosses the boundary of monotheism, in the sphere of ruling and judgment it crosses the boundary of justice and truth. Thus, the shared element in both positions is the same "transgression of the divine limit," though here its social and institutional form becomes more prominent.

In this same context, *Tafsīr-i Nimūnih*, citing a tradition from Imam Ṣādiq (a), states: "Whoever judges by other than the truth and people seek his judgment is *ṭāghūt*"[1] (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 3:446). This statement presents the concept of *ṭāghūt* in the position of judgment with particular clarity and practical force: *ṭāghūt* is not merely someone who commits injustice personally; rather, any authority that removes the right of judgment from the divine orbit and to whom people then

---

1. «الطاغوت كل من يتحاكم اليه من يحكم بغير الحق».

refer becomes an instance of *ṭāghūt*. In this way, *ṭāghūt* in this position becomes closely connected with the question of the legitimacy of ruling and the source of authority.

Regarding the occasion of revelation of verse 60 of *Sūrat al-Nisā'*, *ṭāghūt* has been applied to certain Jewish leaders to whom weak-faith Muslims or hypocrites would take their disputes for judgment, despite having been commanded to disbelieve in *ṭāghūt* (Yaʿqūbī 2004, 2:464). This point, on the one hand, accords with the earlier lexical reports in which two Jewish figures, Ḥuyayy b. Akhṭab and Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf, were mentioned as instances of *ṭāghūt*; on the other hand, it shows how a historical referent can shed light on the broader meaning of the verse. In fact, the reference to Jewish leaders in the occasion of revelation does not restrict the concept of *ṭāghūt*; rather, it presents one concrete instance of it.

Exegetes have explicitly stated that the ruling of the verse is not confined to that specific event or period. Rather, it is a general and transhistorical ruling. Therefore, referring to false rulers and unjust judges in every age is an instance of seeking judgment from *ṭāghūt* and is incompatible with the reality of faith (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2008, 4:178). The importance of this point lies in the fact that *ṭāghūt* in the position of ruler and judge is a recurring structure in human life, not a phenomenon limited to the past. Wherever the authority of judgment distances itself from truth and rules according to other than truth, the ground is prepared for the manifestation of *ṭāghūt*.

The result of such recourse for judgment has also been carefully depicted in exegetical works. Referring to *ṭāghūt* is described as a "Satanic trap" that diverts the human being from the straight path and casts him into distant byways (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 3:446). Likewise, accepting the judgment of *ṭāghūt* has been regarded as a sign of hypocrisy and weakness of faith (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2008, 4:180). These points indicate that seeking judgment from *ṭāghūt* is not merely a legal

or political error; rather, it inflicts a deep injury upon the interior of faith and upon the human being's relation to divine guidance. For this reason, *ṭāghūt* in the position of ruler and judge is not only a threat to social justice, but also a threat to the spiritual and faith-based health of society.

If the instances discussed earlier are reread within this framework, it becomes clear that the "soothsayer," the "sorcerer," and certain "rebellious human beings" may also, in some way, fall within this sphere; for all of them possess a form of false authority that draws the human being out of the orbit of divine judgment. Thus, *ṭāghūt* in the position of ruler and judge refers to every center of judgment and non-divine authority that does not derive its legitimacy from truth, yet in practice installs itself in the position of final arbiter.

2.3. *Ṭāghūt* in the Position of Guardian and Patron

The third fundamental manifestation of *ṭāghūt* in the Quran is its appearance in the position of "guardian" and "patron." This position is depicted most explicitly in verse 257 of *Sūrat al-Baqarah*: *"…As for the faithless, their patrons are the Rebels, who drive them out of light into darkness…"*[2] *(Quran 2:257).* In this position, *ṭāghūt* is neither merely an object of worship nor merely a judge; rather, it assumes the guardianship of human beings. That is, it brings the direction of their movement, the framework of their perception, the horizon of their choices, and the path of their living under its domination. From the statements of the Martyr Leader, it is inferred that pilgrimage to Mecca (*ḥajj*), understood as a battleground against *ṭāghūt*, transcends ritual formalism and functions as a collective act of resistance to the guardianship (*wilāyah*) of illegitimate authority, reaffirming divine sovereignty. In this framework, *ṭāghūt* is conceived not merely as an idol but as a systemic force that shapes the political and cultural

---

2. ﴿…وَ الَّذينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِياؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُمْ مِنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُماتِ…﴾ (البقرة/۲۵۷)

orientation, perception, and choices of the ummah. Contemporary crises and external interventions in the Islamic world are thus interpreted as manifestations of this enduring hegemonic guardianship. Since the Quran deems reliance upon oppressors incompatible with faith, meaningful reform of the Muslim community requires conscious disavowal of intellectual and political dependence on dominating powers and the rearticulation of collective life around the principle of *tawḥīdī* independence. (Khamenei, Message to the Great Hajj Congress, 21October 2012 CE; https://khl.ink/f/21361).

In *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, it is explained under this verse that *ṭāghūt* here is the predicate of "guardians," and that the disbelievers have counted them among rational beings and accepted their guardianship (Ibn ʿĀshūr, n.d., 24:50). This analysis shows that the guardianship of *ṭāghūt* is not merely imposed from without; rather, it also contains an element of acceptance and submission to false authority. In other words, *ṭāghūt* in the position of guardian becomes active when an individual or a society accepts it as its intellectual, cultural, or practical patron.

Tafsīr-i Nimūnih likewise explains that *ṭāghūt* includes "tyrannical rulers, arrogant powers, and rebellious human beings" who take control of affairs and lead their followers astray (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 2:280). This interpretation is clearly connected to the range of referents found in the lexical sources; for there, too, "rebellious humans and jinn," as well as "rebellious People of the Book," were counted among the instances of *ṭāghūt*. In light of the verse on guardianship, it becomes clear why such individuals and groups fall under the category of *ṭāghūt*: because they move beyond mere individual deviation and, by occupying the position of leadership and guardianship, lead others as well along the path of darkness.

From the statements of Martyr Imam Khamenei, it is inferred that *ḥajj* is not merely an arena for individual devotion but a collective return from the *wilāyah* of *ṭāghūt* to divine sovereignty. Since the

essential function of *ṭāghūtī* guardianship is described as leading people "from light into darkness," *ḥajj*, through its rituals and communal practices, represents the reverse movement—guiding individuals and the Muslim community from conditions of subjugation, exploitation, and marginalization toward faith, awareness, and dignity. By fostering brotherhood, moral insight, struggle, and disavowal of satanic forces, the pilgrimage counters the hegemonic influence of oppressive powers that seek to shape the perceptions and choices of societies. In this sense, the reform of both the individual and the *ummah* through *ḥajj* signifies a return to the light of *tawḥīd* and the restoration of the community's authentic moral and spiritual identity (Khamenei, Message to the Great Hajj Congress, 21 October 2012; https://khl.ink/f/21361). For this reason, exegetical works state that *ṭāghūt* may be applied to the "leader of the people of disbelief" or to "well-known oppressors" who prevent people from the path of truth and exercise false guardianship (Yaʿqūbī 2004, 2:452).

This position of *ṭāghūt* is, in fact, the point of connection between the two preceding positions as well. For what, in the position of an object of worship, draws the human being into submission before other than God, and what, in the position of ruler and judge, compels him to accept judgment by other than truth, appears in the position of guardian and patron as an all-encompassing domination over the course of individual and collective life. In other words, the guardianship of *ṭāghūt* is the comprehensive and final form of *ṭāghūt*'s influence: an influence that transforms belief, organizes social behavior, and darkens the human being's horizon of guidance.

In contrast to this guardianship, the Quran speaks of the guardianship of God, which brings human beings out of darknesses into light. Thus, the central opposition in this section is the opposition between two forms of guardianship and two systems of guidance: divine guardianship, which opens the path of growth, light, and

liberation, and the guardianship of *ṭāghūt*, which draws the human being toward darkness, dependency, and deviation. From this perspective, true faith is not completed merely by negating false objects of worship or abandoning illegitimate judgments; rather, it requires severing oneself from the guardianship of *ṭāghūt* and entering under the guardianship of God (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 2:280).

Summary

The cumulative result of Quranic and exegetical evidence shows that *ṭāghūt* in the Noble Quran is not a simple or one-dimensional concept. Rather, it is a multilayered and dynamic reality that manifests itself in three principal positions: object of worship, ruler/judge, and guardian/patron. In the position of object of worship, *ṭāghūt* includes every non-divine object of worship—from idols to Satan and even more inward forms such as base desire. In the position of ruler and judge, *ṭāghūt* applies to every false authority of judgment and power that transgresses divine limits and calls people to itself instead of God and His Messenger. In the position of guardian and patron, *ṭāghūt* refers to rebellious currents and leaders who take charge of human beings' guardianship and lead them out of light toward darknesses.

If these three manifestations are considered alongside the instances derived earlier from lexical and exegetical sources, it becomes even clearer that, through the concept of *ṭāghūt*, the Quran seeks to identify not merely a few scattered phenomena, but an entire "network of deviation." This network appears at times in the sphere of worship, at times in the sphere of power and judgment, and at times in the sphere of guardianship and patronage. Yet in all of these forms, its principal function remains the same: to remove the human being from the orbit of monotheism and draw him into the domain of darkness. In light of these considerations, the contemporary reformulation of *ṭāghūt* in the words of the Martyred Leader may be expressed as follows: on the

social and political level, *ṭāghūt* appears in the form of tyrannical and arrogant powers, and through mechanisms of domination, it reproduces weakness, subjugation, and exploitation. *Ḥajj* functions as a strategic arena for rejecting "modern *ṭāghūt*"—manifested as systemic global arrogance and hegemony. By integrating spiritual devotion (*taqarrub*) with the political disavowal of structural oppression (*barā'ah*), the pilgrimage mandates that the *ummah* actively oppose exploitative power dynamics, thereby reclaiming its monotheistic independence and agency from foreign domination (Message to the Great Hajj Congress, 21 October 2012 CE; https://khl.ink/f/21361).

For this reason, human salvation in the logic of the Quran depends upon severing ties with all of these *ṭāghūtī* spheres and returning comprehensively to divine authority. That is why "disbelief in *ṭāghūt*" and "faith in God" are mentioned side by side, and neither reaches completion without the other (Yaʿqūbī 2004, 2:464). Consequently, the typology of the manifestations of *ṭāghūt* is not merely a theoretical classification; rather, it is a means of attaining a deeper understanding of the Quran's logic of guidance and of recognizing the multiple forms of falsehood in human life.

3. Quranic Strategies for Confronting *Ṭāghūt*

Relying on the Quranic teaching which posits that the struggle against *ṭāghūt* is not merely a theoretical construct but rather necessitates a 'strategic framework' anchored in the sovereignty of *tawḥīd* (monotheism), one may argue that the contemporary vocation of intellectuals and the elite is to transcend the passivity of the era of foreign hegemony and join the grand front of the struggle against the *ṭāghūt* of our time—namely, the global empires of wealth and power and the system of arrogance (*istikbār*). Indeed, just as the Holy Quran outlines the path to emancipation from the domination of oppressors through the establishment of a divine value system, the Islamic

Revolution of Iran has, by founding a system based on the spirituality and piety of Imam Khomeini, effectively operationalized this 'strategic framework' for confronting *ṭāghūt*. Consequently, today, not only the Iranian nation but awakened nations across the globe—drawing inspiration from this revolutionary path—are dismantling the palaces of *ṭāghūtī* domination. By grasping the truth of the victory of blood over the sword, they have linked the monotheistic strategy of 'renouncing *ṭāghūt*' to the sphere of global uprisings and the advancement of human dignity (Khamenei, Message on the Occasion of the First Anniversary of the Passing of Imam Khomeini, 31 May 1990; https://khl.ink/f/2316).

These strategies are organized on three levels—"doctrinal," "behavioral," and "structural/legal"—so as to remove the believer from the sphere of *ṭāghūt*'s influence. In what follows, these three foundational strategies will be examined on the basis of Qur'anic verses and exegetical discussions.

3.1. The Doctrinal Strategy: The Priority of "Disbelief in *Ṭāghūt*" over "Faith in God"

Verse 256 of *Sūrat al-Baqarah* reveals the Quran's first and most fundamental strategy for confronting *ṭāghūt*: *"…So one who disavows the Rebels and has faith in Allah has held fast to the firmest handle for which there is no breaking…"*[3] *(Quran 2:256).* This verse establishes a logic that may be called "purification before reconstruction"; a logic in which negation precedes affirmation, and disbelief in *ṭāghūt* is a necessary condition for faith in God.

Some exegetes have emphasized that the precedence of "disbelief in *ṭāghūt*" over "faith in God" in the structure of the verse indicates an existential necessity, not merely a rhetorical order. So long as the "stranger" has not been expelled from the house of the heart, true faith

3. ﴿...فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فقد استَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقى لاَ انْفِصامَ لَها...﴾ (البقرة/۲۵۶)

will not become established within it. “Holding fast” to the divine handle has two stages: first, releasing false bonds, and then attaching oneself to the truth; for the heart cannot simultaneously accept two contradictory authorities (Fakhr Rāzī 1999, 7:16).

“Disbelief” in this verse does not mean simple denial; rather, it means covering, rejecting, and taking an active stance against falsehood. This “sacred disbelief” is the condition for the validity of faith. A faith that does not maintain a clear boundary against *ṭāghūt*, from the Quranic perspective, lacks salvific efficacy (Yaʿqūbī 2004, 2:464). In contemporary instances, every form of alignment with oppressive structures—even if justified in terms of expediency or necessity—stands in conflict with this “sacred disbelief” whenever it leads to accepting their authority. Based on the fundamental principle that in Quranic thought and the intellectual foundations of the Martyr Leader, disbelief in *ṭāghūt* stands alongside faith in God, and disavowal of *ṭāghūt* constitutes the primary condition for salvation and deliverance, it must be understood that contemporary idols no longer manifest as wooden or stone effigies, but rather emerge in the guise of modern ‘idols of wealth and power’ and global arrogance (*istikbār*). Indeed, just as the Holy Quran emphasizes the necessity of identifying and rejecting the specific idols of every era, modern confrontation with *ṭāghūt* necessitates the recognition of the coercive power of imperialist hegemony—namely, the United States—which, by dominating the cultural, political, and economic spheres, imposes a form of ‘political worship’ and unconditional obedience upon nations. Consequently, to attain the salvation promised in the Quran, the repudiation of these modern idols and the transcendence of imperialist hegemony are indispensable steps toward the perfection of faith and the actualization of the sovereignty of *tawḥīd* (Khamenei, Message to the Great Hajj Congress, 16 June 1991; https://khl.ink/f/2464).

In contrast to such a stance, the Quran promises a clear consequence: attachment to the "firmest handle" that is never subject to collapse. To rely upon *ṭāghūt* is to rely upon something perishable and breakable, something that may collapse at any moment; but to reject it and bind oneself to God is to connect oneself to an inexhaustible power (Qarā'atī 2004, 1:408). In the narrations, this bond has also been interpreted as the *wilāyah* of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (a), which itself shows that the "*ʿurwat al-wuthqā*" (firmest handle) is not an abstract concept; rather, it is manifested in the form of divine leadership and rightful authority (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2008, 2:276).

3.2. The Behavioral Strategy: Comprehensive Avoidance and Distancing

The second Quranic strategy in confronting *ṭāghūt* is a behavioral one, which may be described as "comprehensive avoidance and distancing." This strategy is articulated in verse 36 of *Sūrat al-Naḥl*, where the Noble Quran summarizes the essence of the mission of all divine prophets in two commands: *"…Worship Allah, and keep away from the Rebels (Ṭāghūt)…"*[4] *(Quran 16:36).* These two commands are two sides of the same coin: sincere servitude before God, and total dissociation from every center of rebellion and transgression.

Some exegetes emphasize that "avoidance" (*ijtināb*) in this verse goes beyond simple opposition or a merely verbal stance; rather, it means complete dissociation, such that one places oneself on one side and *ṭāghūt* on the other (Qarā'atī 2004, 8:155). This distancing includes abstention from polytheism, idol worship, and—more importantly—submission to anti-divine powers (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995, 19:411). A point the Quran explicitly underscores is that the "worship of *ṭāghūt*" is not confined merely to bowing and prostration. According to exegetical teachings, every form of obedience to a tyrannical ruler is, in reality, a

4. ﴿...اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَ اجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوت...﴾ (النحل/۳۶)

kind of worship of him (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2008, 18:51). Accordingly, avoiding *ṭāghūt* means breaking the chains of obedience to oppressive structures—whether that obedience takes the form of political cooperation, silence in the face of injustice, or compliance with the commands of institutions devoid of divine legitimacy.

This strategy is further completed in verse 113 of *Sūrat Hūd*, where the Quran declares: *"And do not incline toward the wrongdoers, lest the Fire should touch you, and you will not have any friend besides Allah, then you will not be helped"*[5] *(Quran 11:113).* Inclination (*rukūn*) upon something signifies settling with it through affection for it and attentive listening to it. It has been narrated from the Infallibles (a) that *rukūn* signifies affection, counsel, and obedience (Ṭabarsī 1993, 5:305-306). Any form of inclination or reliance toward oppressive forces inevitably leads to spiritual and moral corruption, symbolized by the "touch of the Fire." Such reliance is not limited to direct participation in oppression but includes benefiting from, cooperating with, or showing attachment to unjust individuals, governments, or deviant political groups. From this perspective, association with oppression represents a deviation from the path of truth and justice, shaping one's actions, thoughts, and conduct in accordance with the logic of tyranny (Muṣṭafavī 2020, 4:236).

This verse prohibits every form of dependence, inward inclination, and conciliatory compromise toward oppressors, and shows that avoidance of *ṭāghūt* must be internalized within the deepest behavioral and emotional layers of the believing person. ʿAllāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī states:

> *Rukūn* (inclining) toward the wrongdoers constitutes a form of reliance upon them arising from an inner disposition of attachment toward them—either in matters of religion, such as presenting certain religious truths in a way that benefits them, or concealing

5. ﴿وَ لا تَرْكَنُوا إِلَى الَّذينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ وَ ما لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِياءَ ثُمَّ لا تُنْصَرُون﴾ (هود/۱۱۳)

some of those truths whose disclosure would be detrimental to them; or in the sphere of religious life, by allowing them a degree of involvement in the administration of the religious community through authority over public affairs, or through a form of affection that leads to social intimacy and influence over the vital affairs of society or the individual (Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1996, 11:50-51)

In light of the principle that Islam is the religion of *tawḥīd*—the liberation of human beings from servitude, obedience, and submission to anything or anyone other than God—it becomes evident that the concept of *tawḥīd* in Islamic thought is inseparably linked with the rejection of *ṭāghūt*. Based on the words of the Martyr Leader, Imam Khamenei, it can be deduced that the true essence of Ḥajj rests upon two fundamental pillars: "drawing near to God" (*taqarrub*) and "disavowal of *ṭāghūt* and Satan" (*barā'ah*). This dissociation is not merely an individual or devotional act; rather, it entails severing all material, intellectual, and political ties with non-divine currents and systems of domination. Within this framework, *tawḥīd* signifies breaking the hegemony of satanic powers, freeing oneself from fear of arrogant oppressors, and trusting in the divine promise of the victory of the oppressed over the *ṭawāghīt*. Hence, within the logic of *tawḥīd*, Ḥajj becomes a sphere for renewing allegiance to divine sovereignty and negating *ṭāghūtī* domination—a path through which dignity, independence, and the realization of God's promises for the Muslim community can be attained. (Khamenei, Message on the Occasion of the First Anniversary of the Passing of Imam Khomeini, 31 May 1990; https://khl.ink/f/2316).

3.3. The Structural/Legal Strategy: De-legitimization and Denial of Validity

The third Quranic strategy in confronting *ṭāghūt* is a structural and legal one, which may be described as "de-legitimization and denial of validity." This strategy is articulated in verse 60 of *Sūrat al-Nisā'*,

where the Noble Quran sharply condemns those who seek judgment from *ṭāghūt*: *"Have you not regarded those who claim that they believe in what has been sent down to you, and what was sent down before you? They desire to seek the judgment of the Rebel, though they were commanded to defy it, and Satan desires to lead them astray into far error"*[6] *(Quran 4:60). Taḥākkum*—that is, seeking adjudication from *ṭāghūt*—in reality signifies acceptance of its legitimacy and authority. Whoever takes a dispute or case before an unjust ruler has, in practice, granted him weight and recognition, even if he verbally claims faith. Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī in *Tafsīr-i Mihr-i Qur'ān* states: "The universal and eternal ruling of the verse for all Muslims across all eras is that recourse to unjust rulers and seeking judgment from the *ṭāghūt* is fundamentally incompatible with faith in God and His scriptures. … The arbitration of *ṭawāghīt* and the rebellious who judge according to other than the Truth constitutes a form of social regression, the corrupting effects of which—manifest in injustices and societal disorder—are evident to all" (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2008, 4:178). This reality has clear contemporary manifestations; among them are the formal registration of contracts and documents in the judicial and administrative institutions of systems lacking divine legitimacy, bringing claims before courts affiliated with *ṭāghūtī* governments, participation in elections that affirm the legitimacy of a false structure, and accepting the adjudication of international organizations founded upon a secular legal order. All of these, regardless of outward intention, confer legal and practical validity upon *ṭāghūt*.

The word *yazʿumūn* in the verse—meaning "they claim" or "they suppose"—indicates that recourse to the judicial and political structures of *ṭāghūt* exposes hypocrisy, for genuine faith stands in fundamental contradiction to accepting false authority (Qarā'atī 2004, 2:93; Yaʿqūbī

---

6. ﴿أَ لَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِما أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَ ما أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُريدُونَ أَنْ يَتَحاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَ قَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَ يُريدُ الشَّيْطانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلالاً بَعيدا﴾ (النساء/۶۰)

2004, 2:464). Moreover, the Quran presents every justification that grants legitimacy to *ṭāghūt*—whether in the form of baseless expediency calculations or fear of consequences—as a satanic snare meant to lead people far astray (Ṭabarsī 1993, 3:102). The thought of the martyred Leader likewise follows this Quranic line: turning away from the power of *ṭawāghīt* and tyrants, dissociating from America and Zionism, and rejecting their political authority and sovereignty are among the strategic forms of confronting *ṭāghūt* (Message to the Great Hajj Congress, 21 October 2012 CE; https://khl.ink/f/21361). Thus, the Quranic strategy at this level is one of "active negation." That is, the believer must not only refrain from referring to *ṭāghūt*, but must also, by rejecting these structures, openly declare their invalidity (Fakhr Rāzī 1999, 10:121). This position is not merely a negative or abstentionist posture; rather, it is a practical declaration that the only legitimate authority is divine authority, and that every judgment outside it is devoid of true validity.

Summary of Strategies

The Quranic system of confronting *ṭāghūt* begins with a great "no" — disbelief in *ṭāghūt* — continues through behavioral distancing (*ijtināb*), and is completed by structural de-legitimization through the rejection of *taḥākkum*. Together, these three strategies protect both the individual and society from the influence of *ṭāghūt* and clear the path for the elevation of the front of truth and the Muslims.

Conclusion

This study sought to free the concept of *ṭāghūt* from being confined to historical examples and to reread it as a living, ongoing concept applicable to the realities of every age. It became clear that, in the Quranic logic, *ṭāghūt* is not merely a name for silent idols of the past;

rather, it is a title for any rebellious structure that stands against divine limits. Such a structure may appear as an object of worship, a ruler and judge, or a guardian and patron, drawing human beings away from monotheism toward obedience to other-than-God.

This threefold typology, in effect, reveals three levels of *ṭāghūt*'s penetration into the creedal, individual, political, social, and cultural spheres. It also enables more precise identification of its contemporary manifestations, from intellectual and media domination to non-divine systems of judgment and power. The findings further showed that the Quran does not stop at describing *ṭāghūt*; rather, it presents the believing human being with a coherent, multilayered framework for confronting it: first, *ṭāghūt*-opposition at the level of belief and the heart, meaning the rejection of every non-divine authority and the inner purification from accepting domination other than God; second, *ṭāghūt*-avoidance at the level of behavior, meaning practical boundary-setting and conscious distancing from centers of rebellion; and third, *ṭāghūt*-rejection at the level of structure and law, meaning refusing to refer judgment to, or confer legitimacy upon, false systems.

Together, these three strategies present a clear image of Quranic resistance: a resistance that is not merely negative, but constructive, identity-forming, and liberating. In light of the martyred Leader's thought, it also became more evident that *ṭāghūt* is a transhistorical concept, appearing in every age with a new face but a single essence. Thus, the Quranic teaching on *ṭāghūt* is not a museum concept, but an analytical tool for recognizing, delimiting, and resisting contemporary structures of domination — a tool that can play a decisive role in rebuilding monotheistic identity and establishing the authority of truth in both individual and collective life.

References

Qarai, Ali Quli. Trans. (2005). *The Quran: With a Phrase-by-Phrase English Translation* (2nd ed.). London: ICAS Press.

Azharī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad (1421AH/2000). *Tahdhīb al-lughah*. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-ʿArabī.

ʿAskarī, Ḥasan b. ʿAbdullāh. (1400AH/1979). *Al-Furūq fi al-lughah*. Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīdah.

Bakhshiyān, Muḥammad Ḥusayn. (1404Sh/2025). The Path to Dignity in the Quran: From Compromise with Ṭāghūt to Resistance for Truth. *Muballighān,* (319), 93-105. https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/2350659

Fakhr Rāzī, Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar (1420AH/1999). *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr (Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb)*. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-ʿArabī.

Farāhīdī, Khalīl ibn Aḥmad (1409AH/1988). Kitāb al-ʿAyn. Qum: Hijrat Publications.

Ibn ʿĀshūr, Muḥammad Ṭāhir (n.d.). *Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Tārīkh.

Ibn Manẓūr, Muḥammad ibn Mukarram (1414 AH/1993). *Lisān al-ʿArab*. Beirut: Dār Ṣādir.

Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād, Ismāʿīl ibn ʿAbbād. (1414AH/1993). *Al-Muḥīṭ fī al-lughah*. Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kitāb.

Jawharī, Ismāʿīl ibn Ḥammād. (1407AH/1986). *Al-Ṣiḥāḥ*. Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm lil-Malāyīn.

Khamenei, Sayyid Ali. *Daftar-i ḥifẓ wa nashr-i āthār-i Āyatullāh al-ʿUẓmā Khamenei* [Office for Preservation and Publication of the Works of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamenei]: https://farsi.khamenei.ir

Maḥdavī Rād, Muḥammad ʿAlī; Shujāʿī, Ḥusayn. (1402Sh/2023). Rereading the Meaning and Reference of Ṭāghūt in the Holy Quran by the Historical-Etymological Approach. *Qur'ān and Ḥadīth Historical Studies*, 29 (76), 13-31. https://sanad.iau.ir/en/Journal/qhs/Article/1001236

Makārim Shīrāzī, Nāṣir. (1374Sh/1995). *Tafsīr-i Nimūnih* (2nd ed.). Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyyah.

Mashā'ī, Muḥammad Riḍā. (1376Sh/1997). An Examination of the Concept of Ṭāghūt in the Quran with Reference to Quranic Exegeses. *Islamic Studies,* (37-38), 7-32. https://www.noormags.ir/view/fa/articlepage/54781

Muṣṭafawī, Ḥasan. (1442AH/2020). *Al-Taḥqīq fī kalimāt al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (6th ed.). Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah.

Qarā'atī, Muḥsin (1383Sh/2004). *Tafsīr-i Nūr.* Tehran: Markaz-i Farhangī-yi Dars-hā-yi az Qur'ān.

Rāghib Iṣfahānī, Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad. (1412AH/1991). *Al-Mufradāt fī gharīb al-Qur'ān*. Damascus: Dār al-Qalam.

Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī, Muḥammad ʿAlī. (1387Sh/2008). *Tafsīr-i Qur'ān-i Mihr*. Qum: Pazhūhish-hā-yi Tafsīr va ʿUlūm-i Qur'ān.

Sarlak, ʿAlī; ʿAsgarī, Zahrā. (1400Sh/2021). A Qualitative Content Analysis of Quranic Verses Concerning Ṭāghūt and Their Educational Implications. *The Knowledge Studies in The Islamic University*, 25 (88), 815-828. https://www.ensani.ir/fa/article/586945

Ṭabarī, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. (1412AH/1991). *Jāmiʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah.

Ṭabarsī, Faḍl ibn Ḥasan. (1372Sh/1993). *Majmaʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (3rd ed.). Tehran: Intishārāt-i Nāṣir Khusraw.

Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn. (1417AH/1996). *Al-Mizān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (5th ed.). Qum: Daftar-i Intishārāt-i Islāmī.

Yaʿqūbī, ʿAlī-Akbar. (1383Sh/2004). *Tafsīr-i Kawthar*. Tehran: Nashr-i Ṣā'ib.