



## The Shi'i Perception of Jihad

*Assaf Moghadam*

### Introduction

The concept of jihad has generated a storm of interest in recent years, particularly in the Western world. While the concept of jihad and its meaning in Islam is often misunderstood, an even deeper lack of knowledge is apparent over how Shi'a Muslims relate to the concept of jihad. The purpose of this study is hence to examine the concept of jihad as it is approached by the Shi'a stream within Islam.

Following a brief overview of the concept of jihad and its multivalent significance in Islam, this study provides a discussion of how the concept is understood and practiced among Shi'i Muslims. A subsequent section will examine thoughts on jihad as espoused by three leading Shi'i thinkers who set the stage for the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.

The study concludes that while the doctrines of Shi'i and Sunni jihad have much in common, the Shi'i conception of jihad is heavily influenced by Shi'i perceptions of historical suffering, leading its exponents to emphasize those grievances and myths that have had a particular impact on their identity, including injustice, tyrannical rule, dignity, humiliation, and resistance. The difference between the Shi'i and Sunni doctrines of Islam remains one of words rather than of deeds.

### The Multivalence of Jihad

A proper discussion of the Shi'a view of jihad requires an explanation of the meaning of

jihad, a concept aptly referred to by Bruce Lawrence as a "multivalent category of reference within the Islamic symbol system."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, few concepts that have been used as prolifically as jihad have been so little understood.

The word *jihad* stems from the Arabic and means to strive or to exert oneself, and is rooted in the verb *jahada*.<sup>2</sup> Jihad involves a "determined effort,"<sup>3</sup> directed at an aim that is in accordance with God's command and for the sake of Islam and the Muslim *umma*, and hence praiseworthy. These efforts take two general forms, the first being the peaceful form of a "struggle" against one's evil inclinations (sometimes referred to as the 'greater jihad,' or *mujahadat al-nafs*).<sup>4</sup> The second is the jihad of the sword, sometimes referred to as the 'smaller jihad,' which is intended at defending the "House of Islam (*dar al-Islam*)<sup>5</sup> from invasion of non-Islamic and heretical (*kufi*) forces.<sup>6</sup> The term jihad, according to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, can and should be applied to a variety of exertions aimed at reaching what he calls an "equilibrium within the being of man, as well as in the human society where he functions and fulfills the goals of his earthly life."<sup>7</sup> Fulfilling the jihad, which is commanded upon all Muslims, leads to the realization of complete integration and unity (*tawhid*).<sup>8</sup>

In its proper form, and in order to distinguish it from the wars of pre-Islamic Arabia, jihad in Islam is *jihad fi sabil Allah*, i.e. jihad in the way of, or for the sake of, God. It is this attribute of jihad, which distinguishes it from wars fought

for the sake of personal ends such as glory or booty.<sup>9</sup>

On the subject of jihad, the Quran offers what at times seem to be conflicting pronouncements. More moderate descriptions of jihad emphasizing a passive endurance of persecution dominate the earlier Meccan verses, while the later Medinan verses tend to stress a jihad more inclined to ward off aggression, and at times permitting it.<sup>10</sup> Verses in the Quran relating to the jihad deal with a variety of issues, encompassing fighting, the treatment of prisoners of war, truce, neutrality, military methods, initiation and termination of war, and the spoils of war.<sup>11</sup>

The doctrine of jihad presupposes the existence of a unified Islamic state that governs the entire *umma*. It is the latter's duty to expand the territory of this state, aiming to eventually bringing "the whole earth under the sway of Islam and to extirpate unbelief."<sup>12</sup> That expansion is a collective duty of the *umma*, and presupposes the existence of a legitimate caliph.<sup>13</sup>

### The Shi'i Perception of Jihad

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It must be recognized that the Shi'i conception of jihad is intimately tied to Shi'i perceptions of historical suffering and grievances.<sup>14</sup> The incident that proved most formative for Shi'i identity-building was the martyrdom of Hussein, the Prophet Muhammad's grandson, on a desolate plain in Karbala in today's Iraq in 680. Hussein contended the accession to the caliphate of the new Umayyad leader, Yazid I, by virtue of his descent from the Prophet. Near Karbala, Hussein, a small band of followers, and members of his household were besieged and finally massacred by Umayyad forces on Ashura, the tenth day of the month of Muharram.

Ever since that fateful Ashura, the martyrdom of Hussein at Karbala has become a central component of Shi'i identity and has imbued Shi'i awareness, in the words of Martin Kramer, with an "emotive drama of martyrdom."<sup>15</sup> Moreover, Yann Richard remarked that the martyrdom of Hussein—the only living grandson of the Prophet—"has become the

prototype of every struggle for justice, every suffering."<sup>16</sup> To this day, Shi'i pilgrims visit shrines associated with the battle of Karbala.<sup>17</sup> The emotive drama of Shi'i suffering also finds expressions in Shi'i rites marking the Ashura, when self-flagellation is often used as a sign of mourning.

Apart from martyrdom, an additional element in Shi'i doctrine that had a direct bearing on how Shi'is understand jihad is the Occultation (*ghayba*) of the Twelfth Imam. According to the dominant Twelver (*Ithna-Ashari*) denomination within Shi'ism, there have been twelve Imams since Muhammad's death—descendants of the prophet's family who were the "rightful spiritual and worldly heirs of the Prophet's authority,"<sup>18</sup> and hence the true leaders of the Islamic *umma*. Shi'is emphasize the persecution and eventual murder of these rightful Imams by the reigning caliphs, who thus deprived the Imams of their right to assume the caliphate. Unlike his eleven predecessors, however, the Twelfth Imam is believed to have been taken into occultation by God in 874 to thwart yet another murder of a rightful Imam. In 941, the last time that the "Hidden Imam" had been seen, he entered the Great Occultation. Shi'is believe that the Hidden Imam is alive and will eventually return as the Mahdi, "the one guided by God"<sup>19</sup> who will usher in the End of Days "to fill the world with justice and equity."<sup>20</sup> In Shi'ism, it is the Hidden Imam who holds true worldly authority, but in his absence it was the *ulama*, the learned ones, who took over this task until the occulted Imam's return (*raj'a*).

Shi'a perceptions of its suffering have over the time been accompanied by the feeling that the source of Shi'i agony—the Sunni usurpers of the real Islam—need to be battled. It is in this duality of suffering and resistance that modern Shi'i identity is properly understood. Moojan Momen, for example, describes as a "strange paradox in Shi'i Islam" the existence of these two contradictory attitudes: on the one hand, Imams are praised for enduring suffering; on the other hand, Hussein, the great hero of Shi'ism, is praised for standing up to tyranny and fighting in the face of overwhelming odds against him.<sup>21</sup>

Given this historical conditioning of a Shi'i identity marked by grievances, the variance between Shi'i and Sunni perceptions of jihad should come as no surprise. Nevertheless, the degree to which Shi'a and Sunni perceptions of jihad differ from one another are the substance of ongoing debate.<sup>22</sup>

In Shi'ism, the notion that jihad, at least in theory, requires the return of the rightful Imam crystallizes as the key difference between Sunni and Shi'a views on jihad. Following the Occultation of the Twelfth Imam, Shi'i theory holds, no lawful expansionist jihad can be fought.<sup>23</sup> Despite the fact that Shi'i theory puts expansionist jihad on hold, this theoretical notion of a time-out as long as the Twelfth Imam is in his *ghayba* has not been strictly adhered to by all Shi'i thinkers and leaders. During the Qajar period of Iran, for instance, Sheikh Ja'far Kashif al-Ghita (1812-13) announced that during the occultation, the duty to defend Islam through jihad rests upon the *mujtaheds*.<sup>24</sup>

These seemingly contradictory arguments regarding jihad are rooted in the fact that the very question over authority during the Twelfth Imam's absence is still disputed. Mehdi Abedi and Gary Legenhausen elaborate on the different strands of opinion regarding rightful rule in the absence of the Hidden Imam. They explain that while some have deemed as illegitimate any attempt at replacing the Imam's authority by that of another entity, some Shi'i rulers, and especially the shahs during the Safavid Empire (1502-1779), have claimed to reign as the representatives of the Hidden Imam, while even receiving support in their claims from among the *ulama*.<sup>25</sup> Today, the dominant view among contemporary Shi'i scholars is that "the responsibilities of the Imam may fall upon lesser souls during his absence."<sup>26</sup>

Since the question over the rightful authority during the absence of the Twelfth Imam has never been settled to this day, the question of whether it is legitimate to wage jihad in the Imam's absence has been similarly inconclusive.

It should be recalled here again that only expansionist or "offensive" jihad is regarded by most Shi'i thinkers as unlawful as long as the Twelfth Imam is absent.<sup>27</sup> Hence, defending the

*umma* against an outside attack remains obligatory,<sup>28</sup> and the question of what constitutes an "attack" on Islam therefore appears to stand at the pivot of the controversy within Shi'ism over whether and under what conditions jihad in the military sense—justified as a defense against a foreign attack—needs to be waged. Abdulaziz Sachedina points out that one Shi'i interpretation of jihad that dates back to early Islamic times permits the 'jihad of the Sword' even against fellow Muslims "if the latter are engaged in spreading discord in the earth."<sup>29</sup>

### Exponents of the Shi'i perception of Jihad

#### Ali Shariati—Jihad and Shahadat

In his speech "jihad and Shahadat,"<sup>30</sup> Ali Shariati (1933-1977), an Iranian sociologist born near Mashad, draws a distinction between jihad on the one hand, and *Shahadat* on the other. Shariati describes a *shahid* (literally "witness") as a person who "negates his whole existence" for a sacred ideal and goal. The ideal embodiment of the notion of the *shahid* is Hussein, the son of Ali, who sacrificed himself at the Battle of Karbala, and through this very act became sacredness himself, Shariati argues.

Shariati distinguishes two kinds of *shahid* personified, on the one hand, by Hamzeh, and on the other hand by Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet. Hamzeh died a hero, going into battle "to achieve victory and defeat the enemy." He became a *shahid* dying for the cause of his personal belief, and his act is an "individual shahadat." Hussein, meanwhile, "consciously welcomes death" by negating himself. He is not killed accidentally, but "rebels." *Shahadat* means more than "to be killed," and involves an issue that is being "covered up" (such as the truth, or an injustice), "and is about to leave the realm of memory..."

Having used the examples of Hamzeh and Hussein, Shariati then juxtaposes jihad and *Shahadat*. Hamzeh, he writes, is a *mujahed* (i.e. a person engaged in jihad) who was killed in the midst of jihad, whereas Hussein was a *shahid* even before he was killed. How so? Shariati argues that from the moment that Hussein refused to swear

allegiance to Yazid before the governor of Medina, he consciously chose his own death, hence negated himself. “A shahid,” Shariati writes, “is a person who, from the beginning of his decision, chooses his own shahadat, even though, between his decision-making and his death, months or even years may pass.” The key difference is that while “Husayn has chosen shahadat... Hamzah has been chosen by shahadat.” While in the case of the death of Hussein, death is an “ideal,” the “destination,” and “an ideology,” in Hamzeh’s case death is “an accident” and a “tragedy.”

#### Ayatollah Sayyid Mahmud Taleqani

Another prominent commentator on the concept of jihad in Shi’ism is the Iranian cleric Ayatollah Sayyid Mahmud Taleqani (1910-1979), who elaborated on his view regarding jihad in a speech also titled “jihad and Shahadat.”<sup>31</sup>

Taleqani opens his long speech by saying that “God has created a power in man’s instinct which is called ‘anger,’ whose function Taleqani describes as safeguarding the right to live, dignity, and nationality. Anger, however, must be guided by divine legislation in order not to become deviant. Jihad must be *jihad fi sabil Allah*, i.e. jihad in the name, or for the sake, of God—the way of God being the “well-being and betterment of human society.”

The polar opposite, the wrong way to struggle, is *taghut* (from *tughyan*—rebellion, outburst), Taleqani says. Taghut is a “selfish person,” one who “overflows from his rightful social limits.” jihad and *taghut* form a dichotomy in as far as a struggle can only be one or the other, because if people are not guided by God, they will be “possessed by *taghut*.”

Taleqani then proceeds to group jihad into four categories: First, jihad waged against foreigners in order to “remove those obstacles which are placed before those who cannot see the truth”; second, jihad to protect Islam and Islamic countries, which involves the defense of one’s rights and dignity; third, jihad against protected minorities (*dhimmi*) if they rebel against the Muslim law and “become hostile (*muharib*)”; and finally jihad against the despots.

Taleqani says that the Islamic sources command that “jihad cannot be for the sake of strengthening the government of a tyrant, sultan, or imam. But it is recommended for us to fight alongside a just sultan and to defend him.” Hence, if a just ruler leads the Muslims, jihad is required on all Muslims. But much like the leader, the *mujahed* himself must be pure, or the jihad is not just. He must worship God, free himself from his material possessions, and “prostrate himself unto God.”

#### Ayatollah Murtaza Mutahhari

Another predominant Shi’i commentator on jihad is Ayatollah Murtaza Mutahhari (1920-1979), whose teachings have greatly influenced many Shi’is, including Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. His pamphlet titled “jihad: The Holy War of Islam and its Legitimacy in the Quran” consists of four lectures.<sup>32</sup>

On the legitimacy of jihad, Mutahhari argues that a purely aggressive war—such as in pursuit of greed, territory, over-ambition, or as a result of a feeling of one’s own racial superiority over another group—is incorrect, even evil. However, if a war is undertaken in order to defend one’s land, property, freedom, or self-esteem, then war is legitimate, even “commended and necessary for human existence.”

While Mutahhari agrees with Christianity that “Of course peace is good,” he holds that at times, religions themselves are faced with aggression, and “sometimes the reply must be given by force.” Alternatively, the religion will suffer humiliation and misery. “Such a submission in the face of force can never be called peace.”

Jihad is obligatory when another party is guilty of a “gross injustice towards another group of human beings,” and Muslims have the power to come to the aid of the latter—be they Muslims or non-Muslims, but especially when they are Muslims. In this case, the liberating Muslims need not even wait for the oppressed group to invite any help from the outside.

The defense of humanity and human rights is, for Mutahhari, the most superior jihad. He believes that the ‘jihad’ of the European countries,

who rushed to the aid of Algeria during its war with the French, was holier than the jihad that the Algerians themselves waged, “because Algerians were defending the cause of their own rights, while the cause of the others was more ethical and more sacred than that of the Algerians.”

## Conclusion

This study has placed the concept of jihad in the context of Shi’i doctrine. It allows us to reach several conclusions about the Shi’i conception of jihad.

The discussion of Shi’i theory on jihad, and particularly an analysis of the views expressed by the three Shi’i thinkers featured in this study suggest that just as jihad is a multivalent concept in Islam at large, so does Shi’ism offer a range of interpretations of jihad within its doctrine. The Shi’i conception of jihad, therefore, is itself multivalent.

Shi’i and Sunni doctrines of jihad have at least as much in common as they are different. Sunnis and Shi’is, for instance, are all obliged to defend their religion, lives, territory and property. In contrast to Sunni doctrine, however, Shi’i doctrine demands that jihad be put on hold until such time that the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam returns from his *ghayba*, and this key difference to Sunni views of jihad is the most well-known, and arguably the most important difference between Sunni and Shi’i conceptions of jihad. In practice, however, not all Shi’is have internalized this doctrine as a binding law.

The common denominator in the doctrines of all the three Shi’i leaders discussed above is that jihad is always legitimate when Islam itself, or Islamic values for that matter, are imperiled. The crucial question then becomes—and here the views may differ—what constitutes an outside attack, or a “defense of Islam” for that matter? At what point is Islam, or the values for which it stands, considered to be under attack? While there is no clear consensus on this issue, several themes are recurring in the speeches and statements analyzed above. These themes can be said to form the core of the Shi’i view of jihad as a defensive concept. They all have in common the shared memory of real or perceived historical injustices

inflicted upon the Shi’a community by an illegitimate rule.

The first recurrent theme is that jihad must be waged against a tyrannical rule. The three Iranian thinkers discussed above have all experienced, firsthand, persecution by what they deemed an illegitimate monarchy that claimed to rule Iran by divine right, and they therefore best embody historical Shi’i grievances, the ultimate grievance being the martyrdom of Hussein at Karbala. The conclusions drawn by Shi’is against the historical guilt of the illegitimate rulers are exemplified in Taleqani’s call for a jihad against the *taghut* and Mutahhari’s claims that jihad in defense of human rights is the most superior jihad, and should even be waged in non-Muslim countries.

A second theme is the sacred role of martyrdom (*shahadat*). The Shi’i *mujtaheds* and thinkers discussed here extol martyrdom for the sake of God as the greatest service to God possible. Here again, the primary historical example for Shi’is of a *shahid* is Hussein, who “witnessed” the great injustice that has taken place. “Witnessing,” a central idea within “*shahadat*” from which the word also derives its name, helps the Shi’i community remember its historical suffering. From a practical point of view, it also helped Shi’is throughout the centuries maintain a common historical bond and a communal unity that defied sporadic persecutions by Sunni rule. But “witnessing” also serves the function of humiliating the enemy, as Shariati’s speech makes abundantly clear. Shariati writes that through his martyrdom, the *shahid* “cannot defeat the enemy, but he can humiliate him.”

The ultimate defeat of the enemy through the death of the martyr ties in the third recurrent theme within the Shi’i doctrine in general, and its views on jihad in particular, namely the idea of resistance. Taleqani and Mutahhari’s acknowledgement of the existence of personal anger, which they believe necessary to be expressed as long as they are in line with the commandment of God, are a case in point, and reflect the depth of anger in Shi’ism, and the idea

of resistance that it helped foster in Shi'i identity and doctrine.

A fourth recurrent theme is the idea that jihad can legitimately be waged when the dignity of Muslims is at stake. "Man must defend his rights, to defend his dignity. This is the truth of jihad..." Taleqani states. Mutahhari legitimizes jihad in order to defend one's "self-esteem," and regards a "dishonorable peace" as tantamount to surrender. The need to uphold one's dignity is also reflected in Ali Shariati's description of a shahid who, by his death, chooses not to "flee the hard and uncomfortable environment."

In the final analysis, it cannot be concluded that Shi'i conceptions of jihad—both internal and external—are clearly distinguishable from dominant Sunni points of views on this issue. Without a doubt, the Occultation of the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam and the theoretical inability to wage war in his absence is a belief that is entirely missing in Sunni doctrine. By and large, however, when it comes to waging jihad, Shi'is seem to be guided by rules that are rather similar to those of Sunni Muslims.

What does distinguish the two conceptions of jihad is an element absent in Sunni doctrine, namely the perception of historical suffering that began with the martyrdom of Hussein in Karbala, was followed by the murder of eleven rightful Imams, and continues, up to the present, with the

isolation and/or discrimination in many countries in which Sunnis form a majority of the population and hold political power. These historical grievances have left a deep mark in Shi'i doctrine and identity overall, and in its relationship to jihad in particular. It helps explain why Shi'is, in their pronouncements on jihad, oftentimes emphasize those aspects of jihad which are particularly dear to them—the resistance against injustice and tyrannical rule, the need to maintain dignity, and the continued willingness to pay the ultimate price in this struggle through martyrdom. Ultimately, however, the difference in the perception of jihad between Shi'is and Sunnis remains one of words and emotions, rather than one of substance and deeds.

*Assaf Moghadam is a doctoral student at The Fletcher School at Tufts University and a senior research analyst at Mann & Mairone/Global Justice Group. He would like to thank Professor Ayesha Jalal for her comments on an earlier draft of this paper*

*The views and opinions expressed in articles are strictly the author's own, and do not necessarily represent those of Al Nakhlah, its Advisory and Editorial Boards, or the Program on Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization (SWAIC) at The Fletcher School.*

<sup>1</sup> Bruce Lawrence, "Holy War (jihad) in Islamic Religion and Nation-State Ideologies," in Kelsay, John, and James Turner Johnson, eds., *Just War and jihad: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on War and Peace in Western and Islamic Traditions* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 146.

<sup>2</sup> Rudolph Peters, *jihad in Classical and Modern Islam: A Reader* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1996), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Mustansir Mir, "jihad in Islam," in Shakeel, Hadia Dajani and Ronald A. Messier, eds., *The jihad and its Times* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Center for Near Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, 1991), 113.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Mir, *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Islam divides the world into two zones, the House of Islam (*dar al-Islam*) and the House of War (*dar al-harb*). Some jurists add to this categorization the House of Peace, or *dar as-sulh*.

<sup>6</sup> Mustansir Mir argues that the *jihad* of the Sword is, for all practical purposes, synonymous to qital. Mir, 13. Seyyed Hossein Nasr argues that the 'jihad of the Sword' also applies to the socio-economic domain, as well as to the personal domain, including the defense of one's rights and reputation, the family, and honor. From a spiritual point of view, he adds, "all the pillars of Islam can be seen as being related to *jihad*." Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Spiritual Significance of jihad," in *Traditional Islam in the Modern World* (London and New York: KPI, 1987), 29-33. Mir, quoting

Raghib, adds that some thinkers would add to the duality of “greater” and “lesser” jihad the jihad against Satan, or *mujahadat ash-shaytan*. Mir, 113.

<sup>7</sup> Nasr, 28.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Mir, 114.

<sup>10</sup> For examples of more passive Meccan verses, see Surahs (13:22 and 41:34-35 of the Quran. For Medinan verses permitting the violent defense against aggression, and active aggression, see Surahs (2:190; 4:75; 22:39; 2:217; 9:5; 2:191-93 and 216; and 9:29). Peters, 1. Peters points out that the Quran does not provide an unequivocal statement on whether Muslims are to fight the unbelievers only as a defense against aggression or under all circumstances. Supporting the view are a number of verses, including the following: “And fight in the way of God with those who fight you, but aggress not: God loves not the aggressors.” (K. 2:190). See Peters, 2.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion of military methods, see Majid Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1955), 83-94. On initiation and termination of war, see Khadduri, pp. 94-102, and 133-140. For examples of the verses on safe conduct of wars and truce, see Peters, 2. On neutrality and the treatment of prisoners of war, see Mir, 121. On the spoils of war, see Khaddouri, 118-133.

<sup>12</sup> See Peters, 2. Peters quotes one verse from the Quran stating “Fight them until there is no persecution (or: seduction) and the religion is God’s (entirely).” (K. 2:193 and 8:39).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>14</sup> For discussions of Shi’i Islam, see for example Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi’i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi’ism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985); David Pinault, *The Shi’ites: Ritual and Popular Piety in a Muslim Community* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992); Yann Richard, *Shi’ite Islam: Polity, Ideology, and Creed* (Oxford, UK & Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995); Roger M. Savory, “The Export of Ithna Ashari Shi’ism: Historical and Ideological Background,” in Menashri, David, *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 13-39; and Ayatollah Ja’far Sobhani, *Doctrines of Shi’i Islam: A Compendium of Imami Beliefs and Practices*, Shah-Kazemi, Reza, ed., transl. (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001).

Given the brevity of this paper, a discussion of Shi’i Islam will be deferred to a longer paper to be submitted at the end of the semester.

<sup>15</sup> Martin Kramer, “Introduction,” in *Shi’ism, Resistance, and Revolution*, ed. Martin Kramer (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), 2.

<sup>16</sup> Yann Richard, *Shi’ite Islam: Polity, Ideology, and Creed* (Oxford, UK & Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995), 29.

<sup>17</sup> David Pinault, *The Shi’ites: Ritual and Popular Piety in a Muslim Community* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), 6.

<sup>18</sup> Pinault, 178-79.

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Pinault, 6.

<sup>20</sup> Richard, 41.

<sup>21</sup> Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi’i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi’ism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 236.

<sup>22</sup> Rudolph Peters and Majid Khadduri, for example, argue that the doctrines are very similar, the one crucial difference being that “Twelver Shi’ites hold that jihad can only be waged under the leadership of the rightful Imam.” Quoted from Peters, 4. See also Khadduri, 66.

<sup>23</sup> Abdulaziz Sachedina, for example, points out that in Shi’i Islam, waging an offensive *jihad* requires the permission of the Imam. Abdulaziz Abdulhussein Sachedina, “The Just Ruler (*al-sultan al-adi*),”

in *Shi'ite Islam: The Comprehensive Authority of the Jurist in Imamite Jurisprudence* (New York: 1988), 105. Quoted in Roger M. Savory, "The Export of Ithna Ashari Shi'ism: Historical and Ideological Background," in Menashri, David, ed., *The Iranian Revolution and the Muslim World* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 18, 37.

<sup>24</sup> Mehdi Abedi and Gary Legenhausen, eds., *jihad and Shahadat: Struggle and Martyrdom in Islam* (Houston, TX: Institute for Research and Islamic Studies, IRIS, 1986), 17-18.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 17. It is important to add here that the *ulama* was far from united in either its views on jihad, or on the proper source of authority during the Twelfth Imam's absence. The Akhbari school of Shi'i jurisprudence, for example, was known for its insistence that no state or religious body could legitimately act on the Imam's behalf. See *ibid.*, 19.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>27</sup> See footnote 23.

<sup>28</sup> Compare Peters, 4; Mir, 122; and Momen, 180. See also the Shii thinkers discussed in the section on the "Exponents of the Shi'i Perception of jihad."

<sup>29</sup> Sachedina, 112 as quoted in Savory, 18.

<sup>30</sup> Ali Shariati, "jihad and Shahadat: A Discussion of Shahid," Website of Ali Shariati, <http://shariati.org/jihadand.html>, last accessed 15 October 2003. All subsequent quotes in this section are taken from this undated speech.

<sup>31</sup> Taleqani, Ayatollah Sayyid Mahmud, "Beliefs and Practices: jihad and Shahadat," Al Islam Website, <http://www.al-islam.org/beliefs/philosophy/jihadandshahadat.html>, last accessed 15 October 2003. All subsequent quotes in this section are taken from this undated speech.

<sup>32</sup> Ayatollah Morteza Mutahhari, "jihad: The Holy War of Islam and its Legitimacy in the Quran," Islamic Propagation Organization, 1985, Website of Salaam: Islamic Information Resources, <http://www.al-islam.org/short/jihad/>, last accessed 17 October 2003. All subsequent quotes in this section are taken from this source.