

## **Boundaries between Islam and Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism**

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### **A short translation from Farsi into English**

This is a short translation of the first four chapters of Ayatolla Jallal Ganjeii's forthcoming book *Boundaries between Islam and the Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism*

#### **Chapter 1**

Recent history reminds us of the catastrophe of terrorism and its impact on people's day-to-day lives. The shocking images of innocent people being slaughtered in suicide missions, severed heads and mutilated bodies of the victims must shock and hurt the conscience of all humanity. However, what is more painful is that these atrocities are taking place in the name of Islam, a religion that reflects humane and tolerant tenets.

The National Council of Resistance of Iran [NCRI] has, for a long time, warned about the global threat that the religious dictatorship in Iran poses. It is a massive fundamentalist force that uses terrorism as an instrument to achieve its political objectives. What has now become more alarming is the operational capabilities and increased appeal for such ideas. It has become a home-grown threat in many countries and is now a major source of concern. The very security Islamic Fundamentalism was to protect and insure the survival of the socio-economic, cultural and political values and achievements of those countries has become terrorist related and is now admittedly the most serious threat to the secure fabric of their societies.

It is unfortunate that even now many states, that are the targets of such threats, refuse to show the political will to confront this disastrous phenomenon. Their lack of understanding and misperceptions about the threat indicates that they fail to recognise the real nature of the threat that now confronts the whole of humanity.

The terrorism that masquerades as Islam is no longer a potential threat; it is now a real and imminent danger that impacts on global peace and stability. Islamic Fundamentalist forces now use deception and misinformation as an instrument to mislead the world about its true intentions. Lack of understanding in the Western World of the true intentions of the Islamic Fundamentalists has made it an even more

dangerous phenomenon. These factors have given terrorism an easy arena within which to operate. As for the Iranian people and their resistance there are two reasons why a decisive position is not only an imperative but also a national duty.

The first reason is that the religious fascism that currently rules Iran has conducted more than 450 operations against its opponents all over the world. The majority of which were targeted at those resistance activists who are members of the opposition. This is a well-known fact of which many intelligence services and governments abroad are fully aware.

The second and perhaps more important reason, as far as the Iranian resistance is concerned, is the fact that the main opposition force to the Iranian regime is itself a force driven by Islam. The opposition encompasses many forward-looking Muslims within its ranks. Their view of Islam is totally opposite to what the Fundamentalists in Iran preach.

Their view of Islam reflects the true values of tolerance, freedom, justice and peace and in general the human values which are diametrically opposed to what the dark forces of Fundamentalism stand for and the inhumanity with which they further their goals. It is precisely for these reasons that the Iranian opposition, due to its ideological nature on the one hand and on the other its political platform in a temporary camp, is totally opposite to those who use terrorism as a method with which they hope to achieve their fundamentalist goals.

Later in this work, the ambitions and the central leadership role played by the religious fascists currently ruling Iran will become even more apparent. This work seeks to demonstrate the fundamental differences between true Islam and the Islam of terror and inhumane politics that Fundamentalists use to mask their true ambitions.

### **Initial anomalies.**

As in any other work, it is important to define the core of the study.

“Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism” and the way in which it is linked with a fundamentalist ideology in search of political supremacy, is the cornerstone of this thesis. The term terrorism is commonly used to cover a wide range of unofficial or unauthorised violence generally in pursuit of a political objective or political change. It

is, therefore, important to narrow the topic down so as to deal specifically with the manner in which Islamic Fundamentalism needs to use violence as a necessary instrument to further its particular view of the world.

In order to focus the debate on this core issue certain important questions require to be answered at the outset. To do this a series of other issues must also be addressed.

These are:

“Is Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism a version of Islam and does Islam needing such tactics to further its goals”?

“Is there an organic relationship between Fundamentalism and Islam”?

“Why is it that the decrees issued by Islamic scholars in condemnation of terrorism has very little or no effect in bringing about an end or even controlling Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism”?

“What are the historical roots of this phenomenon in Islam? What are its origins? And if there is no historical precedence for it when and how did it emerge”?

“How and why, contrary to all Islamic values and teaching, the followers of Fundamentalism can justify this level of brutality and violence”?

“How does Fundamentalism recruit and train its volunteers and prepare them for such levels of violence”?

“Can poverty and the lack of political representation in Islamic countries be used as justification for the emergence of the Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism”?

“How can it be combated? Can classical military-security methods be a useful tactic in neutralising Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism”?

This study in short seeks to examine this phenomenon and to highlight the possible solutions that are needed to confront and combat Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism,

which probably presents the most serious threat to the post-cold-war world of our time.

### **What is Islamic fundamentalism?**

Every political ideology has the capacity to embrace a fundamentalist and violent approach in order to further its political and ideological goals. Islam too is not immune from that general rule. Islam as a religion, be it Shiite or Sunni has the initial capacity and potential to grow into a Fundamentalist terrorist force. Therefore, in the ideological spectrum of Islam there is not much difference between the Shiite and Sunni in the use of terror as a means to further their particular objectives. Further, this reflects that it is not religion per say that drives them to violence but it is the manner in which they seek to obtain “political power” and recognition.

From this we may conclude that fundamentalist ideology does not reflect the “religious belief system” of an individual but rather the desire on the part of an individual or oligarchy to gain “political influence”. There are only a few exceptions to the rule that one can mention in which followers of a faith have been specifically instructed to remain outside the political arena all together and to accept the supremacy of the political establishment.<sup>i</sup>

It is very important to note here that there is a great deal of misunderstanding of the issues by those who follow events in the Islamic world. These observers frequently are misled and consequently draw the wrong conclusions from the existential events they witness. Observers and scholars alike, instead of paying attention to the real nature and dynamism of Islamic Fundamentalism, become preoccupied with terminologies and the popular usage of the term “Fundamentalism” as it applies in their own particular cultural and historical perspective. This misunderstanding has resulted in major debates that fail to get to the heart of the matter. Such an approach frequently reduces a debate to a mere discussion of the interpretations of an idea rather than resulting in a clear understanding of what it is that is the driving force behind the phenomenon of Islamic Fundamentalism.

The initial identification of Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorism is the desire of a regime to legitimise the establishment of a religious jurisprudence system of governance, a theocracy, and to establish the Sharia<sup>ii</sup>. This applies to both Shia and Sunni Muslims.

The most famous advocate of a fundamentalist system of governance was Ruhollah Khomeini whose political doctrine is known as “Velayat-e- Motlagh-e faqih”, meaning the “absolute rule of the religious jurisprudence”. Khomeini who personally developed this school of thought and used it to teach his religious classes in Najaf, states that:

- a- To practice and implement the Sharia is mandatory.
- b- To guarantee the practice and the implementation of Sharia, political power is an imperative.
- c- Faqih (The religious jurisprudent) is the only one who is expert and he alone is worthy of holding political power and leadership.

It therefore is clear from the foregoing requirements that if any Muslim, individual or group, is not prepared to accept or if they doubt the legitimacy of the arguments surrounding the Sharia or the Faqh, they certainly do not desire the establishment of a “religious government”, a theocracy, and thus for the reasons listed below they do not fit the description of Islamic Fundamentalists.

The challenges to fundamentalism are as follows:

- 1- Scholars constantly debate the rituals and principles relating to religious rule within the Qu’ran and Hadith. Therefore, the rejection and doubt about such matters is in itself proof that they are not part of the Sunnah, the Muslim way of life.
- 2- Most importantly it is doubtful and even can be denied that the state has the right to implement these duties and rituals or even can demand compliance from its citizens.

However, the idea of Velayat-e faqih is not a theory of governance that is limited only to Sunni or Shia Muslims. This study will show later that what makes it distinct from other theories is that others do not agree on the supremacy of a religious cleric as the supreme political leader of his time. There is, however, no disparity between the understanding of the Velayat-e faqih by Shias and Sunnis.

It is also important to remember that Islamic beliefs and values can be and often do coexist with political systems of governance in the Islamic world. But given that they are not the “absolute” values over-riding other political institutions of the state, they can never become or embrace the ideas of Islamic Fundamentalism nor can they use the particular tactics of terrorism as an effective instrument to enforce the political agenda. Such regimes may be referred to as reactionary states or, in some cases, groups. But they will not go as far as to embrace Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorist ideology.

## **Chapter 2**

“Wherever Islamic political power is sought whether Shia or Sunni if the source of the power sought is religion and the intention is to further the religious values then that power carries with it the beginning of fundamentalist Islamic terrorism.”<sup>iii</sup>

### **Importance of political power**

A brief review of the previous chapter indicates that in fundamentalism, the most important imperative is the attainment of political power, which is also considered to be a religious duty.

However, it is worth remembering that in Islam the manner and priority in which religious duties are to be followed by its adherents is not rigidly set in stone. To expand on this point, for example, daily prayers are an important ritual practice in Islam, but even more important is the sanctity of life of a fellow Muslim. If a devout Muslim was faced with a choice where he or she had to choose between performing the daily prayer ritual and saving someone's life, even though prayer is *very* important, the priority must be given to saving life even if it means missing prayer all together. In other words the urgency with which a temporary situation is addressed undermines other religious duties and rituals. Apart from such unusual circumstances, the nature of rituals in Islam determines their importance. Therefore what becomes clear is that there is an order of priorities that has to be observed and cannot be undermined unless the circumstances impose a choice.

Also of importance is the manner in which sins are ordered. Some are greater sins than others. For example amongst the greater sins is murder, slanderously speaking of God and the Prophet or calling into question a woman's integrity.

To illustrate these priorities further, however, we might take another example also using the daily prayer ritual, which is an important commandment that cannot be subordinated to another religious duty. In order to carry out the prayer ritual cleansing with water is necessary. However, if there is a shortage of water without which such cleansing cannot take place such water as is available may not be used for any other

purpose. But should that water be required to save a life then this latter usage takes precedence over the need for cleansing before prayer.

Therefore in the debate about priorities, the order of priority is dictated by the manner in which the rituals are linked to each other and whether or not one is dependent on the other. Attention to this topic of prioritising the ritual commandments is of utmost importance as distorting the order of priorities is the foundation upon which fundamentalist terrorism is erected.

The Previous chapter referred to the fundamentalist view of the world and very briefly examined Khomeini's view. Khomeini is considered to be the founder of modern Islamic fundamentalism and of the thesis that political power is the most important aspect of furthering the fundamentalist's view of the world. Political fundamentalism requires two imperatives.

- 1      The religious commandments are the foundations of the religion and therefore must be implemented.
- 2      In order to implement and execute those commandments, political power is needed and therefore must be attained.

### **Political manipulation of religion**

In Islamic fundamentalist logic, political power is the most important religious duty because other duties and implementations of Islamic principles are dependent on successful attainment of that power. This particular view when put into practise results in the following;

- 1- Obtaining political power is the first and principle step in fundamentalist Islam and since it is a religious duty to do so, sustaining and defending that power also becomes a complimentary religious duty.
- 2- Obtaining political power is the most important column of fundamentalism and is a prerequisite in order to guarantee the implementation of other religious duties without which the exercise of other duties will be undermined.



- 3- Given that political power becomes the most important aspect of the religion, Islam, and the continuation or exercise of other religious duties become dependent on maintaining such power, then Islam is turned on its head.

To go back to the example given earlier, prayer can and must be abandoned in a case in which lives are in danger. In other words in a situation when someone is drowning and in need of help, a person cannot and may not perform the prayer ritual in the knowledge that there is a life in need of help. But in fundamentalist Islam omitting the act of prayer even in these circumstances can be regarded as negligence and the offender could be prosecuted under the law. This is an extreme example but is deliberately so in order to highlight the importance of right prioritisation in so far as religious duties are concerned.

In the case of religious governance, then, what becomes the most important goal, which supersedes all other values and laws, is the defence and maintenance of the system or governance? Interests of state and of the political establishment overrule all other interests including religious commandments and prayers and other such matters.

This is exactly why the world is now faced with a phenomenon that does not preach prayer or other religious ritual but advocates a religious government in which the greatest sin is not the taking of life or murder but instead the greatest sin will be whatever is likely to weaken the foundations of the state.

To challenge the state becomes the ultimate sin and thus all acts are sanctioned to protect it from any challenges whether social, political or otherwise. Thus the very religious values and goals that the theocratic state is designed to protect fall victim to the interests of power over principles.

- 4- On this basis then, political power has priority over religious principles and duties and the political power then becomes a means by which that principle will be executed and defended. This was the view that Khomeini put into practice when he attained political power in the post 1979 revolution in Iran.

The question arises as to what it was he advocated before he and others attained the reigns of power in Iran. Prior to the 1979 revolution Khomeini and

others like him were advocating this theory that the establishment of a religious system of governance is the only way to revive and to serve the goals of religion (Islam). He was quoted as saying that “Our religion is our politics and our politics is religion”. It is now clear that the word politics in Khomeini’s vocabulary is nothing but the attainment of political power and implementation of fundamentalism.

### **Chaos and disorder**

The most dangerous religious consequence of this phenomenon, fundamentalism, is the way in which a distorted image of Islam is reflected. In Islamic fundamentalism religious values are no longer what they seem, they are turned upside down and the religious principles can no longer be defined independent of the government and political leaders who implement them. Therefore, they cannot be judged or defined independent of that political system. For instance, terms like “justice”, “Truthfulness”, “legitimate earnings” and “prayer” do have a definition independent of any political system or political interference. However, in fundamentalist logic these terms are defined in a manner, which is focused on the advancement of the fundamentalist view. This view is the instruments by which they impose the definition which best serve the political objectives of fundamentalism. Other than serving to maintain this form of governance Islamic values have no legitimacy. Consequently other inhumane acts and inhumane values such as “murder”, “forceful confiscation”, etc. are only found to be immoral when they are against the interest of the state. Otherwise they become common practice among those in power. Thus mass killings and human rights violations are an acceptable practice.

### **Systematic abuse**

It is now clear that the only issue, which is legitimate in a fundamentalist mindset, is political power and the defence of that power which is disguised in a distorted form of a religion masquerading as Islam. Consequently murder, torture and other forms of abuse are not defined as something ugly and immoral. This is exactly why there is no limit to the atrocities perpetrated by those who hold fundamentalist views. The mullahs in Iran have carte blanche in human rights abuses, murder, torture and all other forms of abuse, which they feel is legitimate and even logical as well as a religious duty. This mindset has become a model for

others to follow beyond the Iranian borders. Fundamentalists in other countries such as Algeria, Turkey and even those living in western countries embrace these ideas and exercise them. In future chapters the doctrine of Islamic governance as proposed by Khomeini will show that what is revealed above is only the tip of the iceberg. Velayat-faqih has a lot more to offer yet.

## Chapter 3

To summarise the previous chapters, they referred to two major principles that the Islamic fundamentalism relies on:

- 1- Total belief and adherence to Sharia Law and what is called the religious principles.
- 2- To execute and put those principles in to practice, there is a *necessity* to establish an Islamic state, which is even more important than the actual practice of the religion itself.

At this stage it is important to pay attention to the *nature* of these thoughts and theories. From a propaganda point of view those who campaign for such fundamentalist ideas intent to excite their audience by using a language which is designed to project the above principles and that becomes the main recruitment drive for their goals. For example when they cry out about the injustice and the abuses inflicted on them by the others (mostly the West and its allies), when asked what is the type of justice and equality they intent to put to practice, the answers given then reflects the laws and judgments based purely on religion itself. In fundamentalist logic the *struggle for justice* is nothing but the written judgments and instructions of the religious system of justice (Fiqh). A system which recognises and even advocates “gender apartheid”, accepts slavery and all forms of exploitations and encourages medieval punishments which even predates the emergence of Islam itself. In the fundamentalist logic even when it complains about honour, integrity and morality and criticises social misbehaviour, it is only done so that it can revive the misogynistic laws so that they can force women back to be subservient of their men folks. It is therefore within these contexts that when they want to use a point of reference and reason using historical precedents for their logic, that they refer to the beginning of Islam and the manner in which the Khalifs (rulers) ruled on certain matters and translated or even formulated the Islamic law. Apart from a very rare examples of using references from Imam Ali and more so of other four Khalifs, in particular Omar, in which under his rule Islam expanded rapidly and was a very wealthy empire, they have no other examples. When confronted with the question that what it is they are going to bring about if they were to succeed in their campaign, the answer is

the Sharia and religious rules which was stated above. Those familiar with fundamentalist culture and literature are aware of the manner in which they use of particular language and method of expression that at times even reflect a half truth picture and realities but in essence their final argument is the revival of an alternative which is nothing but the “Sharia” and the rule of “Faqh” (religious rule). They chose various analytical frameworks and slogans but the outcome is the same arguments. The final product is the “Sharia Law” that is in no way the reflection of true Islam and the values it reflects.<sup>1</sup>

### **Strategic assessments**

For the fundamentalist groups and forces to achieve their stated goal requires tactics which would eventually lead to a strategic objective. The main question is what tactics they employ in order to achieve that goal. The answer to this question will provide a better understanding as to why they employ such level of violence in the path to gaining power and even those who are in power, more so about the systems that are based on fundamentalist ideology and are employing brutal methods of suppression in order to sustain political power and justify it within a religious context. Before paying attention to strategy it is important to understand the appeal of such fundamentalist views for a vast audience. It is important to ask what the attraction is and how the Islamic fundamentalist terrorist groups present themselves and manage to recruit foot soldiers and volunteers.

The above ideas advocated by the Islamic fundamentalist are nothing new. These ideas have been discussed in religious schools or Madrasas for many years even though these ideas they have never been a dominant view but there has always been those who were in favour of these particular views. These often can be both Shia and Sunnis, who call for political power under the disguise of revival of Khalifat or ultimate sovereignty of the clerics and they do have their logic to argue the need for such rule too.

All scholars however have a different view as to how the holy rules must be applied. There are those who argue for the “rules” of religions and others who

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<sup>1</sup> Where necessary, this argument will be expanded within the context of this article.

argue for “governance” of religion. They have no disagreement in holy rules which has to be adhered to, such rules as daily prayers and so on, but what they differ in is the extent to which these rules should be applied in society.

The **first** group object to compulsion. They argue that there is no compulsion in observing religious duties.<sup>2</sup> This group argue that the religious duties must be embraced freely by those who believe and must be no compulsion. Therefore whether the political system of governance is Islamic or otherwise, Muslims must not be forced to observe religious duties unless they freely choose to do so.

The **second** group are religious conservatives. They are reluctant to enforce the religion through political institution because they believe that if they pursue that policy, it will damage the reputation and standing of the religion. However this group is the largest group and they are not unified in their views neither are they united in the manner in which they interact with those who govern them. However apart from these two major groups who claim to be defending the principles of Islam there is a third rather smaller group whose perceptions of Islam goes to the origins of the religion. Their achievements are noticeable in that unlike the other two major strands; they argue that the religious products and its totality in particular are not *absolute*. Not only they are not absolute but also any compulsions or the imposition of religion is rejected in Islam.<sup>3</sup>

After above examinations and views of Islam, the main question that needs to be addressed is the significance of this particular historical era and why it is that fundamentalism has become so popular and how various Islamic fundamentalist terrorist groups and organisation have been effective in undermining global security.

### **Inspiring model and successful paradigm**

The most important part of the answer is the existence of a fundamentalist regime in Iran for the last quarter of a century. This is an important achievement

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<sup>2</sup> The Holy Quran, sura Baqara (II), verse 256

<sup>3</sup> Amongst historical figures who advocated this school of thought was Imam Ali and at present the People’s Mojahedin of Iran are strong proponents of these idea.. They reject religious dogma and any form of compulsion in Islamic duties. Mojahedin’s views can be further examined in their publication “Dynamism of Quran”, and other series of articles published in Mojahed publication.

for the Islamic fundamentalist camp that sees it as a successful model which can impose itself. The fact that fundamentalism managed to impose itself in a country like Iran with a wealthy history and culture in such a vast geographical area and the turbulent history of various struggles in the later part of twentieth century gives hope to fundamentalist groups. This model suggests that how possible it is for establishment of a wider fundamentalist camp. It is not only possible but it is practical. This model also undermined the view of the conservatives that there should be no fear of grasping the political levers of power in the name Islam. In particular what strengthens their argument is that the “government of Sharia” in Tehran has lasted more than quarter of century and is not only stable, but it’s a powerful example of political system in the region and amongst the Islamic countries. It also enjoys support from other non-Islamic countries. This has sent a strong signal to other fundamentalist groups that despite extensive terrorist activities undertaken by the Tehran regime, as well as a complex network of activists all over the world, no concrete or harmful actions has ever been taken against them.

Iran over the years has allocated huge resources to propagate and gather support for its doctrine of export of revolution, even though the Western governments are perfectly aware of these illegal activities, no serious actions has ever been taken against Iran. This sends a very strong signal that the other states are prepared to tolerate and appease fundamentalism.

### **The only enduring model**

In the beginning of this chapter, references were made to “misunderstandings or misperceptions” of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism in countries that are target of such threat. These misperceptions combined with propaganda and noises that the fundamentalist make, create an environment that increasingly encourages the potential for terrorism. The most important issue here is the model of governance for Islamic fundamentalism which was missing until the establishment of the religious dictatorship in Iran. Having this model they are now inspired to multiply it. In other words despite differences in terminology and the definitions of fundamentalism, if its is confused with other such fundamentalism like old Christian or Jewish ideas, it will create a confusion that undermines the real

understanding of what “Islamic fundamentalism” truly stands for and what it is its set out to achieve.

Many commentators fell into this trap and knowingly or otherwise their arguments tend to benefit the Tehran regime. There are two trends in these arguments.

**First, misperception** is to confuse the **only** model of “Islamic fundamentalist terrorist state” with other fundamentalist groups, individuals or organisations.

**Second**, to misunderstand the nature of the Islamic fundamentalist rulers of Iran with other Islamic states. Such misperceptions undermine the historical realities. These will be explained in more details in future chapters.



## **Chapter 4**

The creation of the Islamic government in Iran had a direct impact on rise of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism. It was for the first time that a fundamentalist became a tangible reality in the latter part of the twentieth century and could act as model for others to follow. It was even more significant in that it succeeded in a country as important as Iran, a country with vast natural resources, wealth of history and culture, and a country with a history of social and political struggles.

It was astonishing that a fundamentalist ideology could gain political power. Even more astonishing was the manner in which the rest of the world related with this new phenomenon. Despite many terrorist acts sponsored and even at times conducted directly by the Iranian fundamentalist, the world's reaction was not only passive but at times they deliberately turned a blind eye to these actions and even ignored them. Many of these terrorist acts were linked to Iran directly and yet a paid was never paid for these actions.

### **Recruitment of naïve volunteers**

The importance of Iran as a model has been misunderstood and vastly underestimated. This might explain as to why many observers can't understand and analyse how Islamic fundamentalism recruits its foot soldiers. Many analysts have paid special attention on the expansion of terrorist acts in particular on those who embark on suicide missions, but what they have failed to explain is the primary reasons and motives. They simplified the motives with such arguments as religious beliefs of perpetrators or rewards in heaven and such like. These arguments neglect a major contradiction. Anybody who knows anything about Islam realises that despite the efforts by those who are engaged in brainwashing technique of the recruits, heavenly promises and heavenly rewards are not unconditional. Those engaged in such propaganda and brainwashing techniques must first at least prove the certainty of such rewards for volunteers. The most fundamental issue that they have to prove to their recruits is that the action taken by them is a "just act" and it represents a "good deed" and therefore they expect heavenly rewards. Thus the volunteer must be convinced of the justification of his

or her act as good deed or a godly deed even though the terrorist act is one which might go as far as a suicide mission. Without these justifications, in the mind of the perpetrator who is going to target other human beings, their act is not only going to be rewarded by heaven but it is an act which will bring about eternal suffering in hell.

### **From martyrdom to criminal death**

By Islamic laws which is stated in Quran, no Muslim has the right to take the “path of death” and destruction. Quran clearly states; “And make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction”.<sup>4</sup> Therefore it is clear that those who are involved in recruitment of volunteers for terrorist act, be it a volunteer who acts as a suicide bomber or one who carries out other acts of violence, are convinced that their action and self destruction or destruction of others is not a mere death but it is a martyrdom. But the truth of the matter is that the term “martyr” or “martyrdom” only applies to those who have dies as a result of a “just legitimate war” or “Jihad” which is an imperative in Islam and is an act of **defence**. This is the heart of the matter. The manner in which the distance between a murderous brutal act which is a great sin in Islam and is promised by God to be punished by eternal hell on the one hand and on the other legitimate act of self sacrifice which is a religious duty and is promised to be rewarded by heaven can be reached. Those who recruit volunteers for terrorist acts distort the clear boundaries between these two issues. Today in the Islamic world, many scholars, Imams, Mofities, Da’ada<sup>5</sup> and thinkers reject this terrorism which is been undertaken under the name of Islam.

### **The need for the Iranian fundamentalist model**

With certainty the highlighted contradiction between an act of murder and martyrdom can not be justified with religious reasoning and logic. Those engaged

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<sup>4</sup> Sura Baqara (II), verses 194-195. These verse state; “There is the law of equality. If then any one transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him. But fear God and know that God is with those who restrain themselves. And spend of your substance in the cause of God, and make not your hands contribute to (your) destruction; but do good; for God loves those who do good deeds”. It worth noticing that the whole chapter warns against severity of action against those who happen to invade another person’s right and warns against over reaction. It also warns against self destruction and encourages generous deeds.

<sup>5</sup> Da’ada is the plural of Da’ie, meaning one who invites to religion. These are active religious preachers and are in the same league as religious thinkers and scholars.

in brainwashing volunteers and their recruits can not explain and expand on this point because of two reasons. **First** reason is that religious terms like “Jihad” and “defence” and many other terms are open to interpretations. They have many meanings and often are very difficult to apply them to a specific situation. To clearly determine an answer to a specific situation such as whether to stand and defend in one battle or other, in one front or other, whether to kill or be killed, is it death or martyrdom, all of these issues are very complex issues and thus requires religious knowledge as well as a clear assessment of situation under which these acts are undertaken and finally what impact they are going to have on a final outcome. **Second** reason and the fact that needs to be considered is that to engage in any operation in which a Muslim risking his or her life and lives of others, what is the motive and what is going to be the final outcome of that act. This is a religious rule, no one has the right to undermine safety him, herself or others. This means that “Jihad” or “defence” can only be embarked on when there is going to be an effective outcome which would repel the invaders and effective victory will enhance the lives of the believers. A simple examination of these volunteers determines that they are naïve individuals who have not been guided by religious principles and logic at all. This is more apart amongst the Sunni volunteers as they lack guidance which is one of the principles of Shia followers.<sup>6</sup>

In the absence of a charismatic religious figure in the Islamic fundamentalist terrorist camp and someone who is able to sustain a logical approach in order to gain popular support, it becomes even clearer that Islamic fundamentalist terrorism in order to justify itself and its struggle and gain new recruits needs an effective weapon. To prove that “terrorism” is an “effective tool”, and thus the ones who embark on such acts are not just wasting their lives, it needs inspiration and a model. That inspiration and living model is the Islamic fundamentalist regime ruling Iran. It is a “successful model” which by its survival gives a message of hope to others who seek similar objectives. The message Iran projects, is that, it is not only possible but even practical to survive by using terror as means of survival. This was the methods they applied and even intimidated their opponents internationally and forced them to recognise Iran and accept it as

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<sup>6</sup> It is important to remember that the principle of guidance amongst the Shias were something of the past as Khomeini misused his position and resulted in giving decrees which send thousands upon thousands of Iranians to their death during the war with Iraq. It was a tool which no longer has a real possibility of revival amongst the Shias who believe in principles given the past experiences.

Islamic fundamentalist state. The Islamic fundamentalist camp all over the world needs this model and is dependent on the message it gets from Iran. This is the message that inspires them and without it they will be disarmed and will have no other logical reason to continue in their endeavours. They will have no way of justifying the bloodshed and the violence that is undertaken in the name of Islam.

### **A non-heroic yet effective model**

The reason that a model is so imperative in Islamic fundamentalist terrorist mindset is due to the fact that religious logic and reasoning is not available to justify the action undertaken by them. Therefore reference to a model like Iran which is a living example facilitates the recruitment of volunteers who seek their aspirations in that living model. Another important factor that acts as a motivator for those who pursue the Islamic fundamentalist terrorist agenda is the need for a successful surviving model which has the levers of power. The failed examples such as Taliban reflect, the “failures” of that particular view and thus are counterproductive for them so far as propaganda is concerned. Therefore they don’t rely on brave figures as they will soon be forgotten and they don’t reflect the “effectiveness” of use of “terror” as a strategy. What proves and legitimises the effectiveness of this strategy is a successful living model which is a source of motivation for potential recruits not like Taliban which was accused of being radicals who were seen as a cause of the downfall of an Islamic State.

### **Iran’s terrorist regime as the embodiment of a successful model**

The terrorist mullahs ruling Iran provides a unique successful model of governance under the name of Islam which must be distinguished with other forms of dictatorships. The mere existence of this regime goes well beyond the inspiration it provides for other Islamic fundamentalist groups because it is able to challenge the existing global order and act as a real threat. In addition it plays a leading role in providing financial and logistical support as well as leadership for such groups.

**Ayatollah Jallal Gangeii** is one of the most respected and learned scholars active within the Shia tradition of Islam. He has written on matters of Shiite teaching, as well as on general Islamic subjects, such as the life of the Prophet Muhammad. He is Chair of the Committee for Religious Minorities of the NCRI.

His scholarly works Include:

Boundaries of Islam and terrorist Fundamentalism.

Jesus Christ the message of love.

The role of women in the history of Islam.

The life of Maryam el ozra.

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<sup>i</sup> A familiar group for Iranians was that called the "Hojatiya". Under the Pahlavi regime, in order for them to consolidate a newly established religious cult, members were instructed to avoid any political activities against the regime so that trust could be established with the government thus minimising the risk of any reaction from the security forces.

<sup>ii</sup> Sharia and faqh are sets or regulations on worship and ritual duties including punishments and is often common amongst all sects of Islam, but less so for Shias. The summery of such rules and approaches to religious duties are often published in books called the "Towzih al- masael. However all Muslims refer to the science that defines all ritual rules as Faqh.

<sup>iii</sup> Mojahed publication, No. 763, p. 15, September 6, 2005