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Shi'ite Iran's Genocidal Jew Hatred

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Cleveland, November 9, 2009 [6988 words]

During July 2008, Professors [Moshe Sharon](#) and [Benny Morris](#) both opined solemnly about an inevitable Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear facilities. These two respected Israeli academicians, despite holding very disparate political views, also concurred on the moral justification for such pre-emptive action—the genocidal threat to Israel posed by a Shi'ite Iranian regime gripped with an apocalyptic, Jew-hating fervor.

For example, Hassan Nasrallah, “Secretary General” of the Iranian regime’s jihadist proxy Hezbollah, in a recent televised address that aired September 18, 2009, referred to Jews as, “...the criminal and murderous limb of Abraham's progeny [who] **killed the prophets, spread corruption in the land, and committed atrocities and sins...**” He concluded the speech by reminding his audience,

Imam (Ayatollah Khomeini) was straightforward from day one when he said: “This ‘Israel’ is a cancer gland that must be removed from existence.” President Ahmadinejad said nothing new - he only revived what the late Imam Khomeini (May God honor his soul) said: “Israel must be removed from existence.”

The so-called “Khomeini revolution,” which deposed the secular, Western oriented regime of Mohammad Reza Shah, was in reality a mere return to oppressive Shi'ite theocratic rule, the predominant form of Iranian governance since 1502. Khomeini's views were the most influential in shaping the ideology of the revitalized Shi'ite theocracy, and his attitudes towards Jews—both before and after he assumed power—were particularly negative. Khomeini's speeches and writings invoked a panoply of *Judenhass* motifs, including orthodox interpretations of sacralized Muslim texts, and the Shi'ite conception of *najis*, or ritual uncleanness. More ominously, Khomeini's rhetoric blurred the distinction between Jews and Israelis, reiterated paranoid conspiracy theories about Jews (both within Iran, and beyond), and endorsed the annihilation of the Jewish State.

Since 1979, the restored Iranian theocracy—in parallel with returning, **brutally**, their small remnant Jewish community to a state of obsequious dhimmitude, through execution and intimidation—has always focused its obsessive anti-Jewish animus on the autonomous Jewish State of Israel. For current Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the destruction of Israel is an openly avowed policy, driven by his eschatological beliefs. Mohammad Hassan Rahimian, representative of the Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, summarized this annihilationist eschatology, redolent with Koranic Jew hatred (Koran 5:82)—which pertains to Jews, generally, not “Zionists”—on November 16, 2006, stating: “The Jew is the most obstinate enemy (Koran 5:82) of the devout. And the main war will determine the destiny of mankind. . . . The reappearance of the Twelfth Imam will lead to a war between Israel and the Shia.”

Important scholars of Islamic Antisemitism—from Hartwig Hirschfeld in the mid 1880s, and Georges Vajda in the late 1930s, through S.D. Goitein in 1971, and Haggai Ben-Shammai in 1988—have demonstrated, collectively, *all* of the following: clear historical evidence of specific Islamic antisemitism, from the Geniza record of the high Middle Ages—including the coinage of a unique Hebrew word to characterize such Muslim Jew hatred, i.e., *sin'ūth*—published in full by Goitein as of 1971; the content of foundational Muslim sources detailing the sacralized rationale for Islam's anti-Jewish bigotry, including Hartwig Hirschfeld's mid 1880s essay series on Muhammad's subjugation of the Jews of Medina, based upon the earliest pious Muslim biographies of Muhammad; George Vajda's elegant, comprehensive 1937 analysis focusing primarily on the hadith (the putative words and deeds of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, as recorded by pious transmitters); and subsequently, Haggai Ben-Shammai's concise 1988 study of key examples of Jew-hatred in the Koran and Koranic exegesis.

My presentation will introduce evidence compiled from the seminal works of these scholars, Islam's own foundational texts, and historical eyewitness accounts—adduced to considerably greater extent in *The Legacy of Jihad* and [*The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism*](#)—which elucidate how Islam's primal anti-Jewish animus, i.e., specific Antisemitic motifs in Islamic theology, including Islamic eschatology, the uniquely Islamic institution of jihad war, and its corollary institution, dhimmitude—operate in tandem with regard to the annihilationist Muslim Jew-hatred directed at the Jews of Israel, in particular by the Shi'ite Islamic Republic of Iran.

As I will demonstrate, the pillars of this continuous modern campaign of annihilationist antisemitism are the motifs from traditional Islamic Jew hatred, including Islamic eschatology, grafted seamlessly to jihadism. These deep-seated Islamic theological motifs are further conjoined to Holocaust denial, and the development of a nuclear weapons program intended expressly for Israel's eradication.

At the height of so-called secular Arab nationalism, a fatwa written January 5, 1956 by then Grand Mufti of Egypt, Sheikh Hasan Ma'moun, and signed by the leading members of the Fatwa Committee of Al Azhar University, and the major representatives of all four Sunni Islamic schools of jurisprudence, elaborated the following key initial point: that all of historical Palestine having been conquered by jihad, was a permanent possession of the global Muslim umma (community), “fay territory” [booty], to be governed by Islamic Law. Furthermore, quoting directly from the text, we see the conjoined motivations of jihad and conspiratorial Islamic Jew hatred:

Muslims cannot conclude peace with those Jews who have usurped the territory of Palestine and attacked its people and their property **in any manner which allows the Jews to continue as a state in that sacred Muslim territory.**

[as] Jews have taken a part of Palestine and there established their non-Islamic government and have also evacuated from that part most of its Muslim inhabitants... **Jihad... to restore the country to its people.. is the duty of all Muslims, not just those who can undertake it.** And since all Islamic countries constitute the abode of every Muslim, the Jihad is imperative for both the Muslims inhabiting the territory attacked, and Muslims everywhere else because even though some sections have not been attacked directly, the attack nevertheless took place on a part of the Muslim territory which is a legitimate residence for any Muslim.

Everyone knows that from the early days of Islam to the present day the Jews have been plotting against Islam and Muslims and the Islamic homeland. They do not propose to be content with the attack they made on Palestine and Al Aqsa Mosque, but they plan for the possession of all Islamic territories from the Nile to the Euphrates.

There is just one historically relevant meaning of jihad despite contemporary apologetics. The root of the word Jihad, appears 40 times in the Koran and in subsequent Islamic understanding to both Muslim luminaries—from the greatest jurists and scholars of classical Islam (including Abu Yusuf, Averroes, Ibn Khaldun, Al Ghazzali, and the Shi’ites Al-Hilli and Al-Amili), to ordinary people—meant and means “he fought, warred or waged war against unbelievers and the like.” As described by the seminal Arabic lexicographer E.W Lane, **“Jihad came to be used by the Muslims to signify wag[ing] war, against unbelievers.”** A contemporary definition was provided at the Fourth International Conference of the Academy of Islamic Research at Al Azhar, Cairo, in 1968 by Muhammad al-Sobki:

...the words Al Jihad, Al Mojahadah, or even “striving against enemies” are equivalents and they do not mean especially fighting with the atheists...they mean fighting in the general sense...

Muhammad himself waged a series of proto-jihad campaigns to subdue the Jews, Christians and pagans of Arabia. Numerous modern day pronouncements by leading Muslim theologians confirm that Muhammad has been the major inspiration for jihadism, past and present. (see Yusuf Al-Qaradawi’s, “The Prophet Muhammad as a Jihad Model”)

Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406), jurist, renowned philosopher, historian, and sociologist, summarized these consensus opinions from five centuries of prior Muslim jurisprudence with regard to the uniquely Islamic institution of jihad:

In the Muslim community, the holy war is a religious duty, because of the universalism of the [Muslim] mission and [the obligation to] convert everybody to

Islam either by persuasion or by force... The other religious groups did not have a universal mission, and the holy war was not a religious duty for them, save only for purposes of defense... Islam is under obligation to gain power over other nations.

Shi'ite jurisprudence was in agreement with the Sunni consensus on the basic nature of *jihad* war, as reflected in this excerpt from the *Jami-i-Abbasi* [the popular Persian manual of Shi'a Law] written by al-Amili (d.1622), a distinguished theologian under Shah Abbas I:

Islamic Holy war [jihad] against followers of other religions, such as **Jews**, is required unless they convert to Islam or pay the poll tax.

The essential pattern of the jihad war is captured in the classical Muslim historian al-Tabari's recording of the recommendation given by Umar b. al-Khattab (the second "Rightly Guided Caliph") to the commander of the troops he sent to al-Basrah (636 C.E.), during the conquest of Iraq. Umar reportedly said:

Summon the people to God; those who respond to your call, accept it from them, but those who refuse must pay the poll tax out of humiliation and lowliness. (Koran 9:29) If they refuse this, it is the sword without leniency.

By the time of al-Tabari's death in 923, jihad wars had expanded the Muslim empire **from Portugal to the Indian subcontinent**. Subsequent Muslim conquests continued in Asia, as well as Eastern Europe. Under the banner of jihad, the Christian kingdoms of Armenia, Byzantium, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Croatia, and Albania, in addition to parts of Poland and Hungary, were also conquered and Islamized by waves of Seljuk, or later Ottoman Turks, as well as Tatars. Arab Muslim invaders engaged, additionally, in continuous jihad raids that ravaged and enslaved Sub-Saharan African animist populations, extending to the southern Sudan. When the Ottoman Muslim armies were stopped at the gates of Vienna in 1683, over a millennium of jihad had transpired. These tremendous military successes spawned a triumphalist jihad literature. Muslim historians recorded in detail the number of infidels slaughtered, or enslaved and deported, the cities, villages, and infidel religious sites which were sacked and pillaged, and the lands, treasure, and movable goods seized.

Ayatollah Khomeini's 1942 speech "Islam Is Not a Religion of Pacifists," is a modern vision of these classical formulations, which states plainly,

...those who study *jihad* will understand why Islam wants to conquer the whole world. **All the countries conquered by Islam or to be conquered in the future will be marked for everlasting salvation.** For they shall live under [Allah's law;

the Sharia]. . . . Those who know nothing of Islam pretend that Islam counsels against war. Those [who say this] are witless. Islam says: Kill all the unbelievers just as they would kill you all! Does this mean that Muslims should sit back until they are devoured by [the unbelievers]? Islam says: Kill them [the non-Muslims], put them to the sword and scatter [their armies]. Does this mean sitting back until [non-Muslims] overcome us? Islam says: Kill in the service of Allah those who may want to kill you! Does this mean that we should surrender [to the enemy]? Islam says: Whatever good there is exists thanks to the sword and in the shadow of the sword! People cannot be made obedient except with the sword! The sword is the key to paradise, which can be opened only for holy warriors!

There are hundreds of other [Koranic] psalms and *hadiths* [sayings of the prophet] urging Muslims to value war and to fight. **Does all that mean that Islam is a religion that prevents men from waging war? I spit upon those foolish souls who make such a claim.**

Khomeini's Iran has indeed embraced *jihad* "...as a central pillar of faith and action," demonstrated, notably by the unending campaign of vilification and proxy violence against the "Zionist entity", Israel. This struggle epitomized what Khomeini's Iran viewed as its "...sacred struggle to cleanse the region and the world of Muslim and non-Muslim infidel blasphemy".

And what has always been the nature of the system of governance imposed upon those indigenous non-Muslims conquered by jihad? In his seminal *The Laws of Islamic Governance* al-Mawardi (d. 1058), a renowned jurist of Baghdad, examined the regulations pertaining to the lands and infidel populations subjugated by jihad. This is the origin of the system of dhimmitude. The native infidel "dhimmi" (which derives from both the word for "pact", and also "guilt"—guilty of religious errors) population had to recognize Islamic ownership of their land, submit to Islamic law, and accept payment of the Koranic poll tax (*jizya*)—the tax paid in lieu of being slain—based on Koran 9:29. Al-Mawardi notes that "The enemy makes a payment in return for peace and reconciliation... Reconciliation and security last as long as the payment is made. If the payment ceases, then the jihad resumes." A treaty of reconciliation may be renewable, but must not exceed 10 years. **This same basic formulation was reiterated during a January 8, 1998 interview by Yusuf al-Qaradawi confirming how jihad continues to regulate the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims to this day.**

The "contract of the *jizya*", or "*dhimma*" encompassed other obligatory and recommended obligations for the conquered non-Muslim "*dhimmi*" peoples. Collectively, these "obligations" formed the discriminatory system of dhimmitude imposed upon non-Muslims—Jews, Christians, [as well as Zoroastrians, Hindus, and Buddhists]-subjugated by *jihad*. Some of the more salient features of dhimmitude include: the prohibition of arms for the vanquished dhimmis, and of church bells; restrictions concerning the

building and restoration of churches, synagogues, and temples; inequality between Muslims and non-Muslims with regard to taxes and penal law; the refusal of dhimmi testimony by Muslim courts; a requirement that Jews, Christians, and other non-Muslims, including Zoroastrians and Hindus, wear special clothes; and the overall humiliation and abasement of non-Muslims. It is important to note that these regulations and attitudes were institutionalized as permanent features of the sacred Islamic law, or Shari'a. The writings of the much lionized Sufi theologian and jurist al-Ghazali (d. 1111) highlight how the institution of dhimmitude was simply a normative, and prominent feature of the Shari'a:

...the dhimmi is obliged not to mention Allah or His Apostle.. Jews, Christians, and Majians must pay the jizya [poll tax on non-Muslims]...on offering up the jizya, the dhimmi must hang his head while the official takes hold of his beard and hits [the dhimmi] on the protruberant bone beneath his ear [i.e., the mandible]... They are not permitted to ostentatiously display their wine or church bells...their houses may not be higher than the Muslim's, no matter how low that is. The dhimmi may not ride an elegant horse or mule; he may ride a donkey only if the saddle-work is of wood. He may not walk on the good part of the road. They [the dhimmis] have to wear [an identifying] patch [on their clothing], even women, and even in the [public] baths...[dhimmis] must hold their tongue.

The practical consequences of such a discriminatory system were summarized by S.D. Goitein in 1970:

...taxation [by the Muslim government] was merciless, and a very large section of the population must have lived permanently at the starvation level. From many **Geniza** letters one gets the impression that the poor were concerned more with getting money for the payment of their taxes than for food and clothing, for failure of payment usually induced cruel punishment... **the Muslim state was quite the opposite of the ideals...embedded in the constitution of the United States.** An Islamic state was part of or coincided with dar al-Islam, the House of Islam. Its treasury was...the money of the Muslims. ***Christians and Jews were not citizens of the state, not even second class citizens.*** They were outsiders under the protection of the Muslim state, a status characterized by the term dhimma...**They were also exposed to a great number of discriminatory and humiliating laws...As it lies in the very nature of such restrictions, soon additional humiliations were added, and before the second century of Islam was out, a complete body of legislation in this matter was in existence...In times and places in which they became too oppressive they lead to the dwindling or even complete extinction of the minorities.**

At the outset of the 16th century, Iran's Safavid rulers formally established Shi'a Islam as the state religion, while permitting a clerical hierarchy nearly unlimited control and

influence over all aspects of public life. The profound influence of the Shi'ite clerical elite, continued for almost four centuries (although interrupted, between 1722-1795, during a period of Afghan invasion, and internecine struggle), through the later Qajar period (1795-1925), as characterized by the Persianophilic scholar E.G. Browne:

The Mujtahids and Mulla are a great force in Persia and concern themselves with every department of human activity **from the minutest detail of personal purification to the largest issues of politics**

These Shi'ite clerics emphasized the notion of the ritual uncleanness (*najis*) of Jews, in particular (but also Christians, Zoroastrians, and others), as the cornerstone of inter-confessional relationships toward non-Muslims. The impact of this *najis* conception was already apparent to European visitors to Persia during the reign of the first Safavid Shah, Ismail I (1502-1524). The Portuguese traveler Tome Pires observed (between 1512-1515), "Sheikh Ismail...never spares the life of any Jew," while another European travelogue notes, "...the great hatred (Ismail I) bears against the Jews..."

The writings and career of Mohammad Baqer Majlisi elucidate the imposition of dhimmitude in Shi'ite Iran. Majlisi (d. 1699), the highest institutionalized clerical officer under both Shah Sulayman (1666-1694) and Shah Husayn (1694-1722), was perhaps the most influential cleric of the Safavid Shi'ite theocracy in Persia. Indeed, for a decade at the end of the 17th century al-Majlisi functioned as the de facto ruler of Iran, the Ayatollah Khomeini of his era. By design, he wrote many works in Persian to disseminate key aspects of the Shi'a ethos among ordinary persons. His Persian treatise, "*Lightning Bolts Against the Jews*," despite its title, was actually an overall guideline to anti-*dhimmi* regulations for all non-Muslims within the Shi'ite theocracy. Al-Majlisi, in this treatise, describes the standard humiliating requisites for non-Muslims living under the Shari'a, first and foremost, the blood ransom *jizya*, or poll-tax, based on Koran 9:29. He then enumerates six other restrictions relating to worship, housing, dress, transportation, and weapons (specifically, i.e., to render the *dhimmis* defenseless), before outlining the unique Shi'ite impurity or "najis" regulations. It is these latter najis prohibitions which lead Anthropology Professor Laurence Loeb—who studied and lived within the Jewish community of Southern Iran in the early 1970s—to observe, "Fear of pollution by Jews led to great excesses and peculiar behavior by Muslims." According to Al-Majlisi,

And, that they should not enter the pool while a Muslim is bathing at the public baths...It is also incumbent upon Muslims that they should not accept from them victuals with which they had come into contact, such as distillates, which cannot be purified. If something can be purified, such as clothes, if they are dry, they can be accepted, they are clean. But if they [the dhimmis] had come into contact with those cloths in moisture they should be rinsed with water after being obtained. As for hide, or that which has been made of hide such as shoes and boots, and meat,

whose religious cleanliness and lawfulness are conditional on the animal's being slaughtered [according to the Shari'a], these may not be taken from them. Similarly, liquids that have been preserved in skins, such as oils, grape syrup, [fruit] juices, ...and the like, if they have been put in skin containers or water skins, these should [also] not be accepted from them...**It would also be better if the ruler of the Muslims would establish that all infidels could not move out of their homes on days when it rains or snows because they would make Muslims impure.** [emphasis added]

Far worse, the dehumanizing character of these popularized “impurity” regulations fomented recurring Muslim anti-Jewish violence—including pogroms and forced conversions, throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, which rendered areas of Iran *Judenrein*—as opposed to merely unpleasant, “odd behaviors” by individual Muslims towards Jews. For example, the pre-eminent modern historian of Iranian Jewry, Walter Fischel, provides these observations based on the 19th century narrative of Rabbi David d’Beth Hillel, and additional eyewitness accounts, which describe the rendering of Tabriz, *Judenrein*, and the forced conversion of the Jews of Meshed to Islam:

Due to the persecution of their Moslem neighbors, many once flourishing communities entirely disappeared. Maragha, for example, ceased to be the seat of a Jewish community around 1800, when the Jews were driven out.... Similarly, Tabriz, where over 50 Jewish families are supposed to have lived, became ***Judenrein*** towards the end of the 18th century through similar circumstances.

The peak of the forced elimination of Jewish communities occurred under Shah Mahmud (1834-48), during whose rule the Jewish population in Meshed, in eastern Persia, was forcibly converted, an event which not only remained unchallenged by Persian authorities, but also remained unknown and unnoticed by European Jews

The so-called “Khomeini revolution”, which deposed Mohammad Reza Shah, was in reality a mere return to oppressive Shi'ite theocratic rule, the predominant form of Persian/Iranian governance since 1502. Conditions for all non-Muslim religious minorities, particularly Bahais and Jews, rapidly deteriorated. Historian David Littman recounts the Jews immediate plight:

In the months preceding the Shah's departure on 16 January 1979, the religious minorities...were already beginning to feel insecure...Twenty thousand Jews left the country before the triumphant return of the Ayatollah Khomeini on 1 February...On 16 March, the honorary president of the Iranian Jewish community, Habib Elghanian, a wealthy businessman, was arrested and charged by an Islamic

revolutionary tribunal with “corruption” and “contacts with Israel and Zionism”; he was shot on 8 May.

And Littman concluded this 1979 essay with the following appeal:

It is to be hoped that the new regime will not revert to the pre-Pahlavi attitudes of the Shi‘a clergy, but will prefer a path of equality for all of its citizens, thus demonstrating in practice the “tolerant” attitude of Islam so frequently proclaimed. [emphasis added]

Littman’s essay also alludes to the emigration of 20,000 Iranian Jews just prior to Khomeini’s assumption of power. The demographic decline of Iranian Jewry since the creation of Israel has been rather dramatic even including the relatively “halcyon days” before 1978/1979—from nearly 120,000 in 1948 to roughly 70,000 in 1978, and at present barely 20,000 (and perhaps considerably less).

The writings and speeches of the most influential religious ideologues of this restored Shi’ite theocracy—including Khomeini himself—make apparent their seamless connection to the oppressive doctrines of their forbears in the Safavid and Qajar dynasties. For example, Sultanhussein Tabandeh, the Iranian Shi’ite leader of a prominent Sufi Order, wrote an “Islamic perspective” on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. According to Professor Eliz Sanasarian’s important study of religious minorities in the Islamic Republic, Tabandeh’s tract became “...**the core ideological work upon which the Iranian government...based its non-Muslim policy.**” Tabandeh begins his discussion by lauding as a champion “...of the oppressed” Shah Ismail I (1502-1524), the repressive and bigoted founder of the Safavid dynasty, who, as per contemporary accounts “...bore hatred against the Jews and ordered their eyes to be gouged out if they happened to be found in his vicinity.” It is critical to understand that Tabandeh’s key views on non-Muslims, were implemented “...almost verbatim in the Islamic Republic of Iran.” In essence, Tabandeh simply reaffirms the sacralized inequality of non-Muslims relative to Muslims, under the *Shari’a*, stating for example,

Since Islam regards non-Muslims as on a lower level of belief and conviction, if a Muslim kills a non-Muslim...then his punishment must not be the retaliatory death, since the faith and conviction he possesses is loftier than that of the man slain...Again, the penalties of a non-Muslim guilty of fornication with a Muslim woman are augmented because, in addition to the crime against morality, social duty and religion, he has committed sacrilege, in that he has disgraced a Muslim and thereby cast scorn upon the Muslims in general, and so must be executed.

Islam and its peoples must be above the infidels, and never permit non-Muslims to acquire lordship over them. Since the marriage of a Muslim woman to an infidel

husband (in accordance with the verse quoted: ‘Men are guardians form women’) means her subordination to an infidel, that fact makes the marriage void

The conception of najis or ritual uncleanness of the non-Muslim has also been reaffirmed. Ayatollah Khomeini stated explicitly, “Non-Muslims of any religion or creed are *najis*.” Khomeini elaborated his views on *najis* and non-Muslims, with a specific reference to Jews, as follows:

Eleven things are unclean: urine, excrement, sperm, blood, a dog, a pig, bones, a **non-Muslim man and woman [emphasis added]**, wine, beer, perspiration of a camel that eats filth... The whole body of a non-Muslim is unclean, even his hair, his nails, and all the secretions of his body... A child below the age of puberty is unclean if his parents and grandparents are not Muslims; but if he has a Muslim for a forebear, then he is clean... The body, saliva, nasal secretions, and perspiration of a non-Muslim man or woman who converts to Islam automatically become pure. As for the garments, if they were in contact with the sweat of the body before conversion, they will remain unclean... **It is not strictly prohibited for a Muslim to work in an establishment run by a Muslim who employs Jews, if the products do not aid Israel in one way or another. However it is shameful [for a Muslim] to be under the orders of a Jewish departmental head.**

The Iranian Ayatollah Hossein-Ali Montazeri further indicated that a non-Muslim (*kafir*'s) impurity was, **“a political order from Islam and must be adhered to by the followers of Islam, and the goal [was] to promote general hatred toward those who are outside Muslim circles.”** This “hatred” was to assure that Muslims would not succumb to corrupt, i.e., non-Islamic thoughts.

But how have the jihad and its corollary institution, dhimmitude—including “najis-inspired” dhimmitude—been conjoined to Islamic Antisemitism, past and present?

Demonizing Israel and Jews—via motifs in the Koran, hadith, and sira (earliest pious Muslim biographies of Muhammad)—Hezbollah views the jihad against the “Zionist entity” as an annihilationist war intrinsic to broader conflicts: the struggle between the Islamic world and the non-Muslim world, and the historical struggle between Islam and Judaism. The most senior clerical authority for Hezbollah, Husayn Fadlallah has stated, **“We find in the Koran that the Jews are the most aggressive towards the Muslims...because of their aggressive resistance to the unity of the faith.”** Fadlallah repeatedly refers to anti-Jewish archetypes in the Koran, hadith, and sira: **the corrupt, treacherous and aggressive nature of the Jews; their reputation as killers of prophets, who spread corruption on earth; and the notion that the Jews engaged in conspiratorial efforts against the Muslim prophet Muhammad.** Hassan Nasrallah, current Secretary General of Hezbollah, and a protégé of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei,

presently Iran's highest ranking political and religious authority (i.e., its "Guardian Jurisprudent"), has reiterated these antisemitic views with particular vehemence. Invoking motifs from Islam's foundational texts, Nasrallah has characterized Jews as the "**grandsons of apes and pigs**," and as "Allah's most cowardly and greedy creatures." He elaborates these themes into an annihilationist animus against all Jews, not merely Israelis.

Anyone who reads the Koran and the holy writings of the monotheistic religions sees what they did to the prophets, and what acts of madness and slaughter the Jews carried out throughout history...

Anyone who reads these texts cannot think of co-existence with them, of peace with them, or about accepting their presence, not only in Palestine of 1948 but even in a small village in Palestine, because they are a cancer which is liable to spread again at any moment... There is no solution to the conflict in this region except with the disappearance of Israel.

If we searched the entire world for a person more cowardly, despicable, weak and feeble in psyche, mind, ideology and religion, we would not find anyone like the Jew. Notice, I do not say the Israeli... [I]f they [the Jews] all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide.

The crux of all these allegations is a central antisemitic motif in the Koran which decrees an eternal curse upon the Jews (Koran 2:61/ **reiterated at 3:112**) for slaying the prophets and transgressing against the will of Allah. **It should be noted that Koran 3:112 is featured before the pre-amble to Hamas' foundational Covenant.** This central motif is coupled to Koranic verses 5:60, and 5:78, which describe the Jews transformation into apes and swine (5:60), or simply apes, (i.e. verses 2:65 and 7:166), having been "...cursed by the tongue of David, and Jesus, Mary's son" (5:78). **Muhammad himself repeats this Koranic curse in a canonical hadith** (Sunan Abu Dawoud, Book 37, Number 4322), "He [Muhammad] then recited the verse [5:78]: '...curses were pronounced on those among the children of Israel who rejected Faith, by the tongue of David and of Jesus the son of Mary' ". The related verse, 5:64, accuses the Jews of being "spreaders of war and corruption,"—a sort of ancient Koranic antecedent of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*—invoked not only by Hezbollah leaders Fadlallah and Nasrallah, but "moderate" Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas who cited Koran 5:64 during a January 2007 speech which urged Palestinian Muslims to end their internecine strife, and "aim their rifles at Israel."

Indeed the Koran's overall discussion of the Jews is marked by a litany of their sins and punishments, as if part of a divine indictment, conviction, and punishment process. The Jews' ultimate sin and punishment are made clear: they are the devil's minions (4:60) cursed by Allah, their faces will be obliterated (4:47), and if they do not accept the true

faith of Islam—the Jews who understand their faith become Muslims (3:113)—they will be made into apes (2:65/ 7:166), or apes and swine (5:60), and burn in the Hellfires (4:55, 5:29, 98:6, and 58:14-19).

The centrality of the Jews' permanent “abasement and humiliation,” and being “laden with God’s anger” in the corpus of Muslim exegetic literature on Koran 2:61/3:112, is clear. By nature deceitful and treacherous, the Jews rejected Allah’s signs and prophets, including Isa, the Muslim Jesus. Classical Koranic commentators such as Tabari (d. 923), Zamakshari (d. 1143), Baydawi (d. 1316), and Ibn Kathir (d. 1373), when discussing Koran 5:82, which includes the statement (***“Thou wilt surely find the most hostile of men to the believers are the Jews..”***), concur on the unique animus of the Jews towards the Muslims, which is repeatedly linked to the curse of Koran 2:61/3:112. For example, in his commentary on 5:82, Tabari writes,

In my opinion, [the Christians] are not like the Jews who always scheme in order to murder the emissaries and the prophets, and who oppose God in his positive and negative commandments, and who corrupt His scripture which He revealed in His books.

Tabari’s classical interpretations of Koran 5:82 and 2:61, as well as his discussion of the related verse 9:29 mandating the Jews payment of the *jizya* (Koranic poll-tax), represent both Antisemitic and more general anti-*dhimmi* views that became, and remain, intrinsic to Islam to this day. Here is Tabari’s discussion of 2:61 and its relationship to verse 9:29, which emphasizes the purposely debasing nature of the Koranic poll tax:

...“abasement and poverty were imposed and laid down upon them”, as when someone says “the imam imposed the poll tax (*jizya*) on free non-Muslim subjects”, or “The man imposed land tax on his slave”, meaning thereby that he obliged him [to pay] it, or, “The commander imposed a sortie on his troops”, meaning he made it their duty... God commanded His believing servants not to give them [i.e., the non-Muslim people of the scripture] security—as long as they continued to disbelieve in Him and his Messenger—unless they paid the poll tax to them; God said: “Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day and do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden—such men as practice not the religion of truth [Islam], being of those who have been given the Book [Bible]—until they pay the poll tax, being humble” (Koran 9:29)..

The dhimmis [non-Muslim tributary’s] posture during the collection of the jizya- “[should be lowering themselves] by walking on their hands, ...reluctantly

... His words “and abasement and poverty were imposed upon them”, ‘These are the Jews of the Children of Israel’. ..‘Are they the Copts of

Egypt?’ ...“What have the Copts of Egypt to do with this? No, by God, they are not; but they are the Jews, the Children of Israel....By “and slain the prophets unrightfully” He means that they used to kill the Messengers of God without God’s leave, denying their messages and rejecting their prophethood.

The Koranic curse (verses 2:61/3:112) upon the Jews for (primarily) rejecting, even slaying Allah’s prophets, including Isa/Jesus (or at least his “body double” 4:157-4:158), is updated with perfect archetypal logic in the canonical hadith: following the Muslims’ initial conquest of the Jewish farming oasis of Khaybar, one of the vanquished Jewesses reportedly served Muhammad poisoned mutton (or goat), which resulted, ultimately, in his protracted, agonizing death. And Ibn Saad’s sira account (i.e., one of the important early pious Muslim biographies of Muhammad) maintains that Muhammad’s poisoning resulted from a well-coordinated Jewish conspiracy.

The contemporary Iranian theocracy’s state-sanctioned Jew hatred employs this motif as part of its malevolent indoctrination of young adult candidates for national teacher training programs. Affirming as objective, factual history the hadith account (for eg., Sahih Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 47, Number 786) of Muhammad’s supposed poisoning by a Jewish woman from ancient Khaybar, Professor Eliz Sanasarian notes,

... the subject became one of the questions in the ideological test for the Teachers’ Training College where students were given a multiple-choice question in order to identify the instigator of the martyrdom of the Prophet Muhammad, the “correct” answer being “a Jewess.”

It is worth recounting—as depicted in the Muslim sources—the events that antedated Muhammad’s reputed poisoning at Khaybar.

Muhammad’s failures or incomplete successes were consistently recompensed by murderous attacks on the Jews. The Muslim prophet-warrior developed a penchant for assassinating individual Jews, and destroying Jewish communities—by expropriation and expulsion (Banu Quaynuqa and B. Nadir), or massacring their men, and enslaving their women and children (Banu Qurayza). **Just before subduing the Medinan Jewish tribe Banu Qurayza and orchestrating the mass execution of their adult males, Muhammad invoked perhaps the most striking Koranic motif for the Jews debasement—he addressed these Jews, with hateful disparagement, as “*You brothers of apes.*”** Subsequently, in the case of the Khaybar Jews, Muhammad had the male leadership killed, and plundered their riches. The terrorized Khaybar survivors—industrious Jewish farmers—became prototype subjugated *dhimmis* whose productivity was extracted by the Muslims as a form of permanent booty. (And according to the Muslim sources, even this tenuous vassalage was arbitrarily terminated within a decade of Muhammad’s death when Caliph Umar expelled the Jews of Khaybar.)

Thus Maimonides (d. 1203), the renowned Talmudist, philosopher, astronomer, and physician, as noted by historian Salo Baron, emphasizes the bellicose “madness” of Muhammad, and his quest for political control. Muhammad’s mindset, and the actions it engendered, had immediate, and long term tragic consequences for Jews—from his massacring up to 24,000 Jews, to their chronic oppression—as described in the Islamic sources, by Muslims themselves.

Muhammad’s brutal conquest and subjugation of the Medinan and Khaybar Jews, and their subsequent expulsion by one of his companions, the (second) “Rightly Guided” Caliph Umar, epitomize permanent, archetypal behavior patterns Islamic Law deemed appropriate to Muslim interactions with Jews. George Vajda’s seminal analysis of the anti-Jewish motifs in the hadith remains the definitive work on this subject. Vajda concluded that according to the hadith stubborn malevolence is the Jews defining worldly characteristic: rejecting Muhammad and refusing to convert to Islam out of jealousy, envy and even selfish personal interest, lead them to acts of treachery, in keeping with their inveterate nature: “...sorcery, poisoning, assassination held no scruples for them.” These archetypes sanction Muslim hatred towards the Jews, and the admonition to at best, “subject [the Jews] to Muslim domination,” as dhimmis, treated “with contempt,” under certain “humiliating arrangements.”

Annihilationist sentiments regarding Jews, as expressed by Hezbollah, the Iranian regime, and incorporated permanently into the foundational 1988 Hamas Charter, are also rooted in Islamic eschatology. As characterized in the hadith, Muslim eschatology highlights the Jews’ supreme hostility to Islam. Jews are described as adherents of the Dajjâl—the Muslim equivalent of the Anti-Christ—or according to another tradition, the Dajjâl is himself Jewish. At his appearance, other traditions maintain that the Dajjâl will be accompanied by 70,000 Jews from Isfahan wrapped in their robes, and armed with polished sabers, their heads covered with a sort of veil. When the Dajjâl is defeated, his Jewish companions will be slaughtered—everything will deliver them up except for the so-called gharkad tree, as per the canonical hadith included in the 1988 Hamas Charter (in article 7). Another hadith variant, which takes place in Jerusalem, has Isa (the Muslim Jesus) leading the Arabs in a rout of the Dajjâl and his company of 70,000 armed Jews. And the notion of jihad “ransom” extends even into Islamic eschatology—on the day of resurrection the vanquished Jews will be consigned to Hellfire, and this will expiate Muslims who have sinned, sparing them from this fate. [Moshe Sharon](#) recently provided a very lucid summary of the unique features of Shi’ite eschatology, its key point of consistency with Sunni understandings of this doctrine, and Iranian President Ahmadinejad’s deep personal attachment to “mahdism”:

Since the late ninth century, the Shi’ites have been expecting the emergence of the hidden imam-mahdi, armed with divine power and followed by thousands of martyrdom-seeking warriors. He is expected to conquer the world and establish

Shi'ism as its supreme religion and system of rule. His appearance would involve terrible war and unusual bloodshed.

Ahmadinejad, as mayor of Teheran, built a spectacular boulevard through which the mahdi would enter into the capital. There is no question that Ahmadinejad believes he has been chosen to be the herald of the mahdi.

Shi'ite Islam differs from Sunni Islam regarding the identity of the mahdi. The Sunni mahdi is essentially an anonymous figure; the Shi'ite mahdi is a divinely inspired person with a real identity.

However both Shi'ites and Sunnis share one particular detail about “the coming of the hour” and the dawning of messianic times: The Jews must all suffer a violent death, to the last one. Both Shi'ites and Sunnis quote the famous hadith [Sahih Muslim, Book 40, Number 6985] attributed to Muhammad: The last hour will not come unless the Muslims fight against the Jews, and the Muslims would kill them until the Jews hide themselves behind a stone or a tree and the stone or the tree would say: “Muslim! Servant of Allah! Here is a Jew behind me; come and kill him!” **Not one Friday passes without this hadith being quoted in sermons from one side of the Islamic world to the other.**

The rise of Jewish nationalism—Zionism—has posed a predictable, if completely unacceptable challenge to the Islamic order—jihad-imposed chronic dhimmitude for Jews—of apocalyptic magnitude. As historian Bat Ye'or has explained,

...because divine will dooms Jews to wandering and misery, the Jewish state appears to Muslims as an unbearable affront and a sin against Allah. Therefore it must be destroyed by Jihad.

This is exactly the Islamic context in which the widespread, “resurgent” use of Jew annihilationist apocalyptic motifs—Sunni and Shi'ite alike—would be an anticipated, even commonplace occurrence.

Despite an international outcry of condemnation following Ahmadinejad's statements in late October, 2005 that Israel “...should be wiped off the map,” and “...very soon this stain of disgrace will be purged from the center of the Islamic world,” he continued to express such annihilationist sentiments throughout 2006, through the present, while simultaneously referring to the “myth of the Holocaust,” and even sponsoring a December, 2006 Holocaust deniers “conference” in Tehran. Ahmadinejad also maintained he has “...a connection with God,” and his genocidal pronouncements have been endorsed by the upper echelons of Iran's national security establishment. **The conclusion that Israel's eradication has become “Iran's principal foreign policy objective,” does not seem unwarranted.** Matthias Kuntzel has highlighted,

appropriately, the unique dangers posed by Iran's fusion of a martyrdom mentality, with nuclear weapons capability, and Holocaust denial.

Holocaust scholar Daniel Goldhagen has put forth the controversial argument that the Nazis melded centuries of annihilationist German Jew hatred to a state machinery capable of implementing the systematic mass murder of Jews. Citing the independent statements of Iranian Presidents Rafsanjani (from December 2001) and Ahmadinejad (from October 2005), Goldhagen, in a November 3, 2005 opinion editorial, cautioned,

Two Iranian presidents have now openly spoken about destroying Israel, with Ahmadinejad defiantly repeating his genocidal hopes again...despite the world's condemnation of him.

Goldhagen's visceral concern that "...it would be folly for the world to treat the Iranian leaders' words as anything but an articulation of their intent," remained oddly de-contextualized for an historian of antisemitism with his particular mindset. Yet four centuries of *najis*-inspired Jew hatred in Shi'ite Iran, accompanied by pogroms, forced conversions, and other less violent, but continuous forms of social and religious persecution—**none of which are ever mentioned by Goldhagen**—surely meets his own prior standard—regardless of its validity—of an established "annihilationist" mentality in Germany.

Irrespective of the controversy surrounding his earlier work on Nazi Germany, Goldhagen's apparent ignorance of Shi'ite Iran's centuries old history of Jew hatred is pathognomonic of the current state of "scholarship" on Islamic antisemitism. Such ignorance may also explain the inability of our intellectual and policymaking elites to appreciate the prevalence and depth of support for such annihilationist views in contemporary Shi'ite Iran.

Regardless, Iran must not be permitted to acquire a nuclear weapons capability, certainly now, under the current regime, and into the foreseeable future.