

# ECHO

of Islam

## Blessings and Achievements of the Sacred Defense



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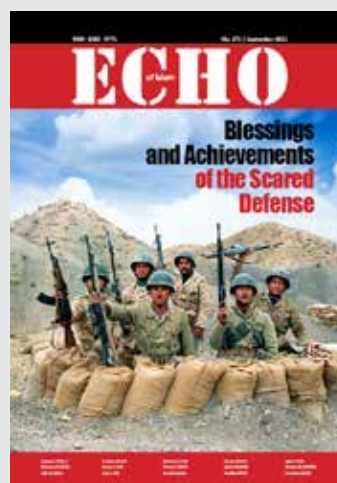






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# The Sacred Defense and Its Spiritual Outcomes

Mohammad Asadi Movahed

Managing Director of Al-Huda International Cultural, Artistic and Publishing Institute

قُلْ هَلْ تَرَبَّصُونَ بِنَا إِلَّا إِحْدَى الْحُسَيْنَيْنِ وَ نَحْنُ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمْ أَنْ يُصِيبَكُمْ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ أَوْ بَأْيَدِنَا فَوَيْلٌ لِمَنْ كَفَرَ بِنَا أَوْ يَتَّبِعُوا إِتْنَا مَعَكُمْ مُتَرَبِّصُونَ

Say: "Do you await for us but one of two most excellent things? (Martyrdom or Victory) And we await for you that Allah will afflict you with punishment from Himself or by our hands. So wait; we too will wait with you". (The Holy Quran, Surah Al-Taubah, Verse 52)

One of the main tasks of the manager of an organization is decision-making. Every man-

ager usually faces such situations in which he has to make an important decision. Decision-making is the main pivot of management on which the other pillars of the management process rely.

Some administrative and management experts such as Herbert A. Simon, have considered decision-making to be synonymous with management. One of the places

where decision-making plays a decisive and key role in the battlefield and the war front.

Keeping in view the personal characteristics and ideological foundations of the decision-makers with regard to their role in designing and preparing the required conditions and the forces functioning under their commands during the eight years of Iran's sacred defense (against

the uncalled-for invasion) - the aim of which was to protect the Iranian territories and the honor of the Iranian people - it can be concluded that the defensive battles of the Islamic Republic of Iran against Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist war machine, which had been fully equipped and supported by the arrogant powers of the world, were value-oriented in essence rather than merely being a move to defend the country and the ruling system.

Value, literally, means price, merit, beauty, and virtue. Value has a special meaning in different aspects of human life such as society, economy, culture, religion, law, ethics, etc. In their broadest sense, Islamic values are those that are desirable and useful from the viewpoint of the holy religion of Islam. However, at times, Islamic values are essentially of special connotations, i.e., these values have been recognized as lofty and outstanding from the ethical point of view. Therefore, the spiritual and cultural factors that prevailed among the Iranian combatants - within the framework of Islamic values - during the course of the sacred defense denote the values adorned and demonstrated by these combatants of Islam during those days. These values included a strong belief in God Almighty - both in words and in action - adherence to Islamic principles, abiding by the principle of *Velayat-e Faqih*, having faith in

the Day of Judgment, having faith in their own power and capability, being duty-bound, obedience to the teaching of the Holy Prophet of Islam (pbuh) and his household (Ahl al-Bayt), selfless participation in advancing the goals of the sacred defense, having a spirit of self-sacrifice, being inspired by the spirit and the culture of the incident of Ashura, and, finally, being inspired by unity and empathy.

The story of eight years of Sacred Defense is the story of a golden and honorable era in the history of a nation that adhered to patience, dignity, unity, and empathy and, thus, brought about victory, security, and honor for the Islamic Republic of Iran and resulted in great achievements for this country. Some of the most important of these achievements have been political stability, mass mobilization of the brave people of Islamic Iran, and sacrifices made by the military fighters; all of which reflect upon the spirit of national unity and the collective commitment of Iranians to protect their homeland and national and ideological capitals. As a result, those who had their greedy eyes on this country's treasures realized that they could not defeat the martyrdom-seeking nation of this land through force and deceit.

Regardless of their religious affiliation, Iranian people - from different religions and denominations - joined hands and confronted the aggres-

sive enemy and the martyrs of the imposed war - Shiites, Sunnis, and even members of religious minorities - stood side by side and back to back against the enemy; reflecting upon the sense of patriotism on the part of the people of Islamic Iran.

Undoubtedly, the fierce resistance put up by the Iranian people against the full-fledged aggression of the enemies of Islam and Iran in defending the Islamic values will prove to be the great heritage of this land that will shine in the history truth-oriented struggles of civilized and freedom-loving nations of the world. The resistance shown by the people of Islamic Iran, which arose from the spirit of unity and faith, was formed under the guidance of the Great Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (ra), and resulted in the revival of a constructive school of thought and the Islamic awakening movement of in the world.

The Sacred Defense of the Iranian people in various political, military, social, cultural, etc. fields could upset the usual world equations and undermine the materialistic analyses of the secularists. This great event will undoubtedly be remembered by the Iranian nation who have left behind values such as honor, dignity, and the spirit of epoch-making for the future generations of this country and as a unique and dignified legacy.



# A Note on Iran's Sacred Defense by Dr. Mohammad Mahdi Esmaili,

The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance

Sacred Defense and Re-Creation of Lofty Human Values



Even though speaking of Sacred Defense and martyrdom, the realm of men of courage and bravery, is a great challenge, it involves insight. The Sacred Defense proved the valuable capacities of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, which have left their image in the mind and soul of several generations of the people of Iran. As stated by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, "the outcomes of the eight years of Sacred Defense were not just confined to a particular period of time; they are enormous treasures that

our nation can use and derive lessons from. The gigantic event of these eight years resulted in the emergence of a collection of high capabilities, desirable and lofty cultural values, extraordinary beliefs and knowledge that our nation had inherited in the course of history or had attained the required talent for it and surfaced with the advent of the Islamic Revolution."

What made the phenomenon of the Sacred Defense admired by many in the world and followed by the perseverance and proved stability on

the part of the Iranian nation, was the culture of seeking martyrdom. Seeking martyrdom means heartfelt belief in God and the Day of Judgement, firm belief in the truthfulness of Islam, faith in the ideals of the Islamic Revolution, belief in the leadership of Vali-e Faqih, resistance and perseverance against the enemy, self-sacrifice to preserve Islamic values and in short, the culture of seeking martyrdom means the culture of Ashura. And this is what makes the spirit of martyrdom victory and salvation. By reviving the culture of Ashura, self-sacrifice, and martyrdom and promoting it in the society, the late Imam Khomeini (ra) became a role model for our youth and it was due to the revival of this very culture, faith, and perseverance that the late Imam had predicted the victory of the Iranian nation vis-à-vis the big powers of the time who had fully armed Saddam's regime.

As regards the role of the commanders and senior officers of the Sacred Defense in ad-

vancing defense strategies and the effects and blessings of the influence of their down-to-earth personality on the combatants, it should be said that undoubtedly, being a role model is a function of certain characteristics. One has to be of strong personality and engage in this holy struggle in order to have an effective and lasting impact on the hearts of people and this was one of the outstanding characteristics of the commanders and combatants of Islamic Iran during the years of the Sacred Defense. What seems to be of great importance is taking appropriate measures for the transfer of these lofty values to future generations.

Although many efforts have been made by artists and members of the media and thinkers, and valuable works of art have been produced in the form of films, paintings, photography, sculpture, novels, and essays, etc. in portraying the values of the Sacred Defense, there are many more areas that been unnoticed and overlooked.

Artists and people of culture must use the capacities of the Sacred Defense in the international and world arenas and convey to everyone the message of peace and justice of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, which has been the victim of oppression and injustice by the false claimants of human rights, to the world. Our dear leader had once pointed out that the point to be taken into consideration about narrating the Sacred Defense in the

work of art is that it is a very large field many aspects of which have not really been discovered yet. It is not that people cannot understand and perceive it, as a matter of fact, is not been reflected. It should not be assumed that the themes of sacred defense are repetitive.

Ashura, the Arbäeen March, the struggle against terrorism, and the sacrifices made by the defenders of the holy shrines are some of the examples and topics that can be linked to the issue of Sacred Defense and presented in new formats.

What can be said about the Sacred Defense is that those eight years resulted in the manifestation of the best qualities that a society can be proud of and expect from its own youth. The Sacred Defense was the manifestation of epic, spirituality, religiosity, and idealism and it was the manifestation of self-sacrifice, perseverance, and resistance. Indeed, the Sacred Defense was the manifestation of all the heavenly purities that are bestowed upon man.

It would be a rightful expectation that those working in the field of art, science, and literature enter this vast field with all their might and create works that would bring honor for the name of Iran and Iranians at the world level and fulfill part of our obligations to those who took their lives in their hands and made great sacrifices to defend our beloved homeland and became a source of honor and pride for us.



# Dr. Abouzar Ebrahimi Torkaman's\* Views on Divine Love and Self Sacrifice



"Sacrifice is the manifestation of divine love and cannot be perceived by the intellect"

We must convey the message of the spirit of faith and struggle and the message of the invincibility of the Iranian nation to the world through the translation of written works, works of art, and producing films on the Sacred Defense.

(Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran)

The foundation of self-sacrifice is rooted in preferring others to oneself. That is, the person does not just see himself. When one

does not see oneself only, he can see others. Not just being concerned about oneself means preferring others to oneself and the absence of this culture is man's main problem. One can make sacrifice when he handles self-conceitedness and loves everyone and sees everyone in the universe.

Sacrifice is a matter of (divine) love and this is not within the realm of intellects. Intellect is utilitarian and looks for one's own interests. Intellect says that if something is beneficial for me, I will work hard for it. But love is not like that and it only works for

the beloved and sees the beauties. Just like the incident of Karbala, where after undergoing all the sufferings, Hazrat Zainab (sa) said: I saw nothing but beauty. We must use the capacity of the culture of self-sacrifice as much as we can and spread this culture in our lives at all times and use it to move forward being better human beings.

The history of the sacred defense is full of bravery shown by the combatants of Islam on the war fronts of truth against falsehood. Therefore, in order to strengthen the revolutionary spirit of the society, it is necessary to try and spread the culture and spiritual and moral values of the sacred defense in a coherent and comprehensive manner, by using every possible tool and technology, and to pass on this important culture to future generations.

Being the headquarters and custodian of Iran's cultural relations with the world, the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) has a special place and mission in the cultural diplomacy of the country and one of its duties is to introduce and present the culture and values of the sacred defense and promote high concepts such as self-sac-



rifice, patience, and resistance. Accordingly, using the capacity of the cultural centers of the Islamic Republic of Iran abroad, this organization plans and implements various programs, both for foreigners and Iranians living abroad, some of which include the introduction of translated works on the Sacred Defense in different languages, views of Imam Khomeini and the Supreme Leader on the Sacred Defense, organizing film weeks and exhibitions on Sacred Defense, organizing poetry nights, meetings and international webinars on Sacred Defense and the culture of self-sacrifice and resistance, and particularly organizing such programs the main theme of which is women and Sacred Defense.

Also, the Al-Huda International Cultural, Artistic and Publishing Institute as well as Center for Organizing Translation and Publication as the powerful arms of ICRO in the area of translation and publication have, through their continuous efforts, been able to produce valuable books in different languages on the phenomenon of Sacred Defense from among which mention may be made of such works as "Biography of Martyr Soelimani", "Memoires of Ms. Seyyedeh Zahra Hosseini on the Sacred Defense and Liberation of Khorramshahr" and two special issues of the Al-Wahdah and Echo of Islam periodicals in Arabic and English, respectively. Another measure taken by

the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization is the ToP Project, which was launched a few years ago with the aim of supporting the translation of Iranian works into other languages at the global level.

Some of the outcomes of this project have been the translation and publication of a large number of books on various topics, including the sacred defense, in different languages. It is important to introduce the martyrs and prominent people

who played a role during the course of the Islamic Revolution and the Sacred Defense; a task that has been one of the cultural objectives of the ICRO.

**\*. President of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization**





# Why Did **Saddam Hussein** Start a War against Iran?

In 1979, Saddam Hussein became the chairman of the Ba'athist Party and the President of Iraq. Once, the pillar of the US in West Asia, the Pahlavi regime in Iran was overthrown

military build-up, with military expenditures swallowing 8.4 percent of GNP in 1979. Starting in 1958 Iraq had become an increasingly important market for sophisticated Soviet weapons,

was overthrown, much of the Iranian Army's American equipment became inoperable.

The Iraqi invasion of Iran in 1980 (on the pretext of resolving border disputes) thus solved



by a massive popular upsurge which the US was powerless to suppress. This made the US and its client states deeply anxious at the prospect of similar developments taking place throughout the region.

Meanwhile, Saddam Hussein had drawn on the country's oil wealth to carry out a major

and was considered a member of the Soviet camp. In 1972 Iraq signed a 15-year friendship, co-operation and military agreement with the USSR. The Iraqi regime was striving to develop or acquire nuclear weapons. The only army in the region to rival Iraq's was Iran's. But after 1979, when the Shah of Iran

two major problems for the US. Over the course of the following decade two of the region's leading military powers, neither of them hitherto friendly to the US, were tied up in an exhausting conflict with each other. Such conflicts among third world countries create a host of opportunities for impe-

rialist powers to seek new footholds, as happened also in this instance.

Despite its strong ties to the USSR, Iraq turned to the west for support in the war with Iran. This it received massively. As Saddam Hussein later revealed, the US and Iraq decided to re-establish diplomatic relations - broken off after the 1967 war with Israel - just before Iraq's invasion of Iran in 1980 (the actual implementation was delayed for

to negotiate the arrangements was none other than the present US defense secretary, Donald Rumsfeld.) In 1982, the US State Department removed Iraq from its list of "state sponsors of terrorism", and fought off efforts by the US Congress to put it back on the list in 1985. Most crucially, the US blocked condemnation of Iraq's chemical attacks in the UN Security Council. The US was the sole country to vote against a 1986 Security Council statement condemning Iraq's use of mustard gas against Iranian troops - an atrocity in which it now emerges the US was directly implicated (as we shall see below).

A brisk trade was done in supplying Iraq. Britain joined France as a major source of weapons for it. Iraq imported uranium from Portugal, France, and Italy, and began constructing centrifuge enrichment facilities with German assistance. The US arranged massive loans for Iraq's burgeoning war expenditure from American client states such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The US administration provided "crop-spraying" helicopters (to be used for chemical attacks in 1988), let Dow Chemicals ship its chemicals for use on humans, seconded its air force officers to work with their Iraqi counterparts (from 1986), approved technological exports to Iraq's missile procurement agency to extend the missiles' range (1988). In October 1987 and April 1988 US forces themselves attacked Iranian ships and oil platforms.

Militarily, the US not only provided to Iraq satellite data and information about Iranian military movements but, as former US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) officers have recently revealed to the New York Times (18/8/02), prepared detailed battle planning for Iraqi forces in this period - even as Iraq drew worldwide public condemnation for its repeated use of chemical weapons against Iran. According to a senior DIA official, "if Iraq had gone down it would have had a catastrophic effect on Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and the whole region might have gone down (i.e., slipped from US control) - that was the backdrop of the policy."

One of the battles for which the US provided battle planning packages was the Iraqi capture of the strategic Fao peninsula in the Persian Gulf in 1988. Since Iraq eventually relied heavily on mustard gas in the battle, it is clear the US battle plan tacitly included the use of such weapons. DIA officers undertook a tour of inspection of the Fao peninsula after Iraqi forces successfully re-took it, and they reported to their superiors on Iraq's extensive use of chemical weapons, but their superiors were not interested. Col. Walter P. Lang, senior DIA officer at the time, says that "The use of gas on the battlefield by the Iraqis was not a matter of deep strategic concern". The DIA, he claimed, "would have never accepted the use of chemical weapons against civilians, but the use against military objec-



a few more years in order not to make the linkage too explicit). Diplomatic relations between the US and Iraq were formally restored in 1984 - well after the US knew, and a UN team confirmed, that Iraq was using chemical weapons against the Iranian troops. (The emissary sent by US President Reagan



tives was seen as inevitable in the Iraqi struggle for survival.” (As we shall see below, chemical weapons were used extensively by the Iraqi army against Kurdish civilians, but DIA officers deny they were “involved in planning any of the military operations in which these assaults occurred”.) In the words of another DIA officer, “They (the Iraqis) had gotten better and better” and after a while, chemical weapons “were integrated into their fire plan for any large operation”. A former participant in the program told the New York Times that senior Reagan administration officials did nothing to interfere with the continuation of the program. The Pentagon “wasn’t so horrified by Iraq’s use of gas,” said one veteran of the program. “It was just another way of killing people - whether with a bullet or phosgene, it didn’t make any difference,” he said. The re-capture of the Fao peninsula was a turning-point in the conflict, bringing Iran to the negotiating table.

A US Senate inquiry in 1995 accidentally revealed that during the Iran-Iraq war the US had sent Iraq samples of all the strains of germs used by the latter to make biological weapons. The strains were sent by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [sic] and the American Type Culture Collection to the same sites in Iraq that UN weapons inspectors later determined were part of Iraq’s biological weapons program.

It is ironic to hear the US today talk of Saddam Hussein’s attacks

on the Kurds in 1988. These attacks had full support from the US:

“As part of the Anfal campaign against the Kurds (February to September 1988), the Iraqi regime used chemical weapons extensively against its own civilian population. Between 50,000 and 186,000 Kurds were killed in these attacks, over 1,200 Kurdish villages were destroyed, and 300,000 Kurds were displaced... The Anfal campaign was carried out with the acquiescence of the West. Rather than condemn the massacres of Kurds, the US escalated its support for Iraq. It joined in Iraq’s attacks on Iranian facilities, blowing up two Iranian oil rigs and destroying an Iranian frigate a month after the Halabja attack. Within two months, senior US officials were encouraging corporate coordination through an Iraqi state-sponsored forum. The US administration opposed, and eventually blocked, a US Senate bill that cut off loans to

▶ **“As part of the Anfal campaign against the Kurds (February to September 1988), the Iraqi regime used chemical weapons extensively against its own civilian population.**

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Iraq. The US approved exports to Iraq of items with dual civilian and military use at double the rate in the aftermath of Halabja as it did before 1988. Iraqi written guarantees about civilian use were accepted by the US commerce department, which did not request licenses and reviews (as it did for many other countries). The Bush Administration approved \$695,000 worth of advanced data transmission devices the day before Iraq invaded Kuwait.”

The full extent of US complicity in Iraq’s “weapons of mass destruction” programs became clear in December 2002, when Iraq submitted an 11,800-page report on these programs to the UN Security Council. The US insisted on examining the report before anyone else, even before the weapons inspectors, and promptly insisted on removing 8,000 pages from it before allowing the non-permanent members of the Security Council to look at it. Iraq apparently leaked the list of American companies whose names appear in the report to a German daily, Die Tageszeitung. Apart from American companies, German firms were heavily implicated. (Saddam Hussein’s use of chemical weapons, like his suppression of internal opposition, has been continuously useful to US interests: condoned and abetted during periods of alliance between the two countries, it is routinely exploited for propaganda purposes during periods of tension and war.)

هو الشاهد

# And He is the Witness

And the martyr was the name He chose for those who love Him



It is very difficult for a person who is stuck in the affairs of this world and attached to his belongings to understand the beauty of the hidden treasures of the heavens, and any migration that would mean cutting off from this world is very frightening for him. But for those who have liberated themselves from the clutches of worldly desires, migration (death for the cause of Allah the Almighty) is not equal to annihilation (ولا تحسبن) (الذين قتلوا في سبيل الله امواتا بل احياء) and rather it means eternal life with endless beauty (ما رايت الا) (جميلا).

This after-death life, and the beauty that emerges from that apparent fear, is a beautiful paradox that earthly systems and schools of thought

are not only unable to comprehend its greatness but have also failed to find any answers to how it would be.

And, of course, what resolves the mystery of this paradox is nothing but the connection of the earthly man to the origin of the beloved beauty of the Creator of the universe.

He (the Exalted; the Majestic) is the witness; the witness to all that is hidden and visible, the outward and the inward, and the overt and covert of His servants. And He is the one who knows and recognizes those who truly love Him from the those who simply claim it...

And is the reward of true lovers anything other than

proximity (عند ربهم يرزقون) and companionship (وادخلى جنتي) with the beloved?

And can the one who loves Him imagine this companionship to be anything other than fading away in the beauty of the beloved? (فرحين بما آتاهم الله) (من فضله)

Yes, these lovers of the True Love and these martyred witnesses are resting next to their Beloved One so that they can witness both the beauty of God Almighty and be a witness to us, the earthly beings (يستشرون بالذين) (لم يلحقوا بهم من خلفهم). But this witnessing is not like the other forms of it; it is a promising and an enthusiastic one. (لا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون)

Yes, this is the status of a martyr, and this is the status of the culture of martyrdom (الله جميل و يحب الجمال) and blessed are those who enter the ranks of the lovers of the Beautiful Witness by their pen and their art.

Oh God, please make us the companions of our martyrs in the hereafter.

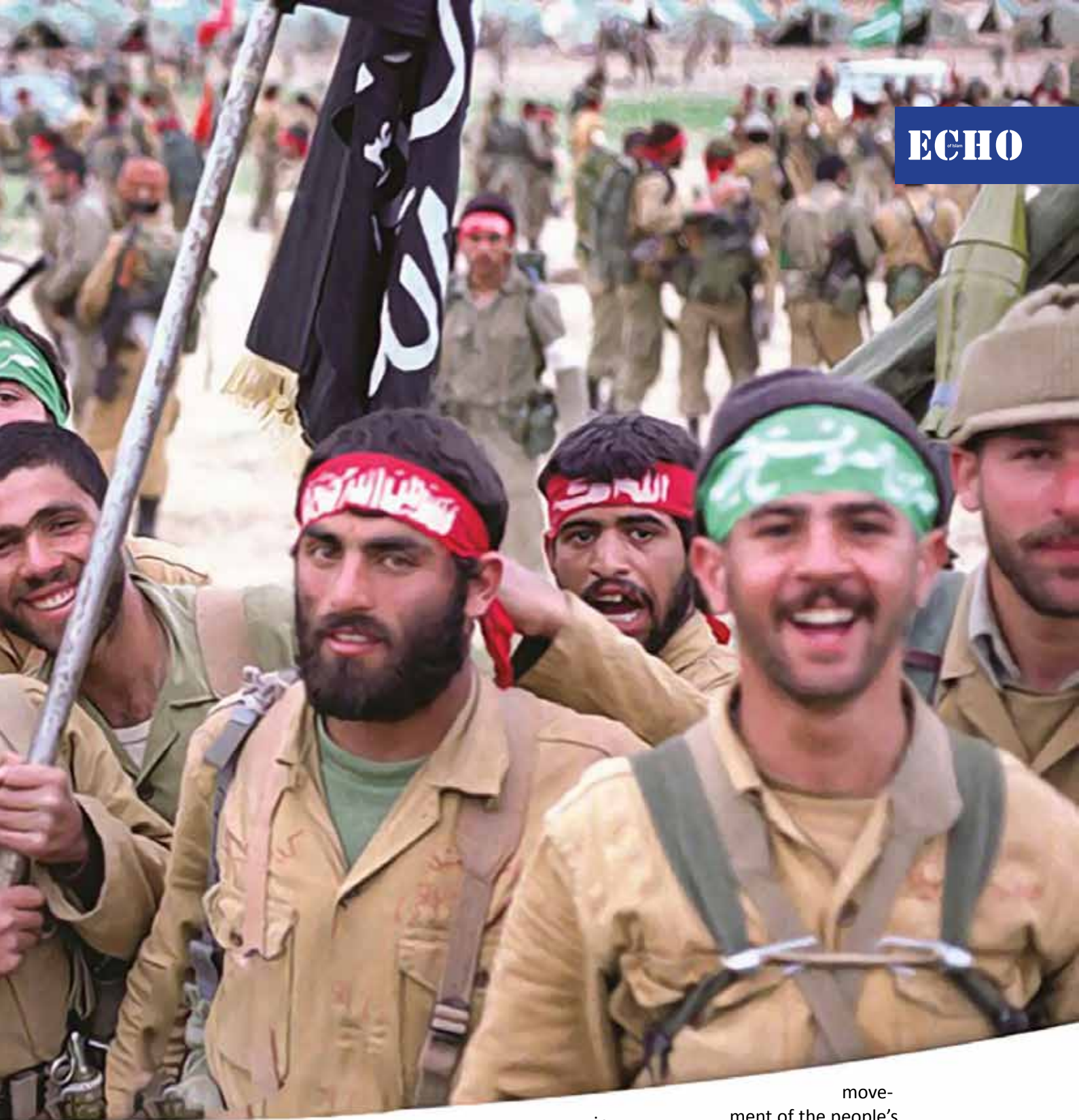
Ayoub Dehghankar, the son of martyr Ali Mohammad Dehghankar, one of the martyrs of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance



# Tangible Blessings and Achievements of the Sacred Defense

(Against the War Imposed by Saddam  
Hussein's Ba'athist Regime)





### 1- Flourishment of Talent and Creativity

Among the developments that took place during the eight-year war was the emergence of creativity, innovation, and innovative actions that took place in various dimensions. From the ingenious

initiatives of the late leader of the Islamic Revolution in strategic issues and decisions of the war to the initiatives and innovations of the Basij force. To the extent that even the influence of the liberals and their constant Obstruction remained ineffective. As for the conscious

move-  
ment of the people's forces in the war, we remember that this was opposed by the liberals and the ousted Bani Sadr faction. They believed that the war should be left to the army alone, but Imam Khomeini, because of his deep awareness of the enemy's fundamental goals of overthrowing the regime

and the revolution, saw a way out of this conspiracy. The nation was united in the war-like the victorious uprising against the oppressive imperial regime, and this strategy, of course, had a profound and dramatic effect on the victories of the Right Front, thus paving the way for creativity and initiative by official institutions. Numerous innovations in the provision of military equipment and logistics - such as the construction of Khyber and Arvand River bridges - played a special role in the success of operations.

## 2- The Birth of the Basiji Way of Thinking

The Basiji thinking, which was the ideology of the Sacred Defense, became concrete in the school of the love for Imam Khomeini (ra) and the educated people of this school created the most beautiful epics in history. And today, the sanctity and purity of the Basij are due to the self-sacrifice and martyrdom of the Basijis during the Sacred Defense. Which should never be used for political purposes.

## 3- Transformation in the Country's Defense Industry

One of the most important blessings and benefits of the war was that the committed youth, with creativity and initiative and considering the severe needs, undertook extensive activities to meet the daily needs of society, especially the imposed war. And it was precisely these initiatives and innovations that made the beautiful slogan

of the Iranian need to be met by the Iranians turn from an ideal state into a reality, and the first sparks of hope in the hearts of the youth of this region that "can be self-reliant and "It had an independent country." If we look at the arms relations of third world countries, especially the Arab countries in the Persian Gulf, we can clearly see that this is true. All these countries have been forced to hand over several of their military bases to arms-selling countries by purchasing weapons.

## 4- Purification of the Administrative System of the Country

One of the blessings and bliss of the war was the cultivation and refinement of the counter-revolutionary forces, especially the fifth pillar, of the country's administrative system.

In this way, because the foreign war and the actions of the fifth pillar of the civil war were going on at the same time, the agents affiliated with the foreign enemy, whether they wanted to or not, took actions that, although causing damage, led to their disclosure and liquidation.

## 5- Voluntary Presence of People on the Battlefronts

The Iraqi regime tried to achieve its military goals for three days.

Saddam had promised to speak in Ahwaz three days after the attack began. Evidence from the first few days of the war also suggested that this prediction could occur. But first of all, the brave people of Khuzestan and other border provinces prevented this from happening. The people of Khuzestan, who had been propagandized by Saddam for months to turn them against the Islamic Republic in their raw imagination, stood up bravely and fought. Then, popular forces from all over the country, on the orders of the Imam, were present on the fronts and prevented the aggression and expansionism of the Ba'ath party leaders. The operations of Tariq al-Quds, Fatah al-Mobin, Beitolmoghaddas, Ramadan, and... were battles in which the popular nature of the war was revealed. In this regard, regardless of statistics, the motivations for the widespread presence of people on the front are:

A- Sense of Duty to Defend

Our people and warriors considered participating in the war as a religious, national, and revolutionary duty and agreed with the Imam and his leader that:

Our goal is to fulfill our duty.  
Our





task is to protect Islam. If we are killed or kill the enemy, we have done our duty ... and this strong religious motivation was a force that draws people to the arena of war with enemies.

B: Defending the existence of Islam and the Islamic Revolution and preserving the territorial integrity of the country

So far, every war in our

country has led to the disintegration of a part of our country, but this time in the imposed war of Iraq against Iran, our people with their high historical vision, prevented the disintegration of Iran and preserved its territorial integrity.

#### 6- Presence of Nomadic People's Forces

Nomads were one of the most important sections of the people on the battlefields against falsehood. The nomadic mobilization of the Iranian tribes in the battle scenes continued with full force. Seventy-year-old no-

madic snipers in the south and west of the country, who were sitting behind the hot trenches of the plains and mountains, put a red blank on the foreheads of the Ba'athist mercenaries without a single mistake. They had the spirit of freedom-seeking and anti-arrogance and self-sacrifice in the way of God. Therefore, Imam Khomeini (ra) said about nomads: "Nomads are the reserves of the revolution."

#### 7- Political Experiences

One of the blessings of Sacred Defense is gaining political experience in domestic and foreign fields. During the war, we deeply realized that we are alone in the world. Among our political experiences were the need to organize, activate the foreign policy, and activate struggle against domestic counter-revolution combined with the widespread struggle against foreign aggression.

#### 8- Economic Experiences

One of the blessings of Sacred Defense was cognition and spirituality in the field of public necessities. Relying on the spirituality of the revolution, the management of the Islamic Revolution could have provided a







favorable ground for fundamental movements in the various dimensions it needed. For example, one of the traditions of the Iranian people was the tradition of storage due to the frequent invasions of foreigners and the creation of famines at certain historical stages. This tradition could have dealt a severe blow to the country's economy in times of war, as an artificial famine occurred with the influx of people and the widespread purchase of essential goods. But the spirituality of the people, as one of the most fundamental features of our revolution, prevented the economy from being vulnerable, especially during the war.

#### 9- Military Experiences

The invasion of the borders of the Islamic Republic by the

Ba'athist regime of Iraq, with the motive of destroying the Islamic Revolution in the sensitive region of the Middle East, provided a favorable ground for the consolidation of our military forces. Our first experience in

▶ The invasion of the borders of the Islamic Republic by the Ba'athist regime of Iraq, with the motive of destroying the Islamic Revolution in the sensitive region of the Middle East, provided a favorable ground for the consolidation of our military forces. Our first experience in this large-scale military conflict was the need for coordination between all military forces.

this large-scale military conflict was the need for coordination between all military forces.

#### 10- Impact on the Scientific and Research Attitude in Universities

The development in the field of defense industry has created the belief in the academic and scientific-research centers that where there's a will, there's a way. Also, confronting the dependence on foreign powers in new technologies and knowing the process of technological growth by local experts and elites, marked the scientific independence of universities. And everyone knows that this independence was due to the culture of self-confidence that manifested in the minds of our army force during the time of the Sacred Defense. It is far from



fair if we do not consider the achievement of knowledge of stem cells and nuclear science by Iranian scholars and thinkers to be influenced by the culture of self-confidence and creativity of the era of Sacred Defense; As the Supreme Leader of the Revolution has repeatedly pointed out this fact.

#### 11. Development of the Organization of Army and The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps

The Islamic society should not oppress anyone nor be oppressed by anyone and should have enough power to defend itself. As this verse of the Sacred Quran refers to this matter; "prepare against them whatever you can of [military] power and war-horses, awing thereby the enemy of Allah, and your enemy" (Anfaal, 60).

The military forces of Islam must ultimately be powerful and sufficiently equipped for their sacred battle. (After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, in addition to spiritual changes in all aspects), a new

► **During the victory of the Islamic Revolution and eight years of Sacred Defense, we witnessed the tremendous impact of mosques in introducing the Islamic Revolution and organizing forces.**

factor appeared in the army, and that was the conviction and the creed which was seen both within the army forces and in the faithful, sincere and young forces of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The Revolutionary Guards, a corps that arose from the context of the revolution as an essential requirement, did not initially have sufficient combat experience. Of course, the army, which had classical experience, in practice, did not have enough power to battle against the Ba'athist regime in Iraq. With the beginning of the imposed war, the IRGC and the army were able to go through their developmental stages, and undoubtedly, the cooperation between the IRGC and the army played a very important role in their victories.

### 12- Trenchless Trench Builders

From the highest point of the Iran-Iraq border in West Azerbaijan to the southernmost point of the battlefields, constructive (Sazandegi) Jihad forces were actively present everywhere. Wherever a combatant was advancing and fighting, the engineering unit was there. The capabilities of the truthful Jihad Sazandegi forces in various fields astonished the malicious enemy. The speed of action in creating huge embankments and strongholds under the enemy's fierce attacks, as well as the construction of roads and bridges - especially the Besat Bridge - is one of the unforgettable honors of the constructive Jihad during the Sacred Defense.

### 13- Active Participation of Women, Strengthening the Foundation of Families

One of the honors during the time of Sacred Defense was the enthusiastic presence of women in all arenas, especially in supporting and providing relief to the front. Our dedicated women not only provided the manpower needed on the fronts by parenting and raising brave fighters but also took on an additional role by actively participating in support affairs. One of the blessings of the war was to strengthen the sacred foundation of the family and the emotional relations of its members, so much so that even if the father of the fam-

ily was martyred, the spiritual presence of the mother would strengthen the foundation and ensure the safety of the family.

### 14- Distinguishing Friends from Enemies

During the Sacred Defense, those who strived and fought were separated from those who sat (at home). As stated by the late Imam Khomeini (ra): Only the poor and those who have experienced the pain of poverty have been with us until the end of the road. He also said in this regard: "We have known our friends and enemies in war." The enemy soldiers caught our army napping and we were attacked unawares and there was no readiness to defend at the beginning of the enemy's widespread aggression. The greatest lesson we have learned from the Sacred Defense is that we must always be at the height of preemptive defense readiness. In our de-

fense strategy, aggression has no place, but our policy is prevention, and in this policy, the balance of power is the main condition, and the defense preventive strategy is realized if this important condition is taken into account.

### 15- Reviving the Role of Mosques in the Sacred Defense

Since the advent of Islam, mosques and imams have played a very pivotal role in spreading Islamic teachings and culture and strengthening the Islamic government. During the victory of the Islamic Revolution and eight years of Sacred Defense, we witnessed the tremendous impact of mosques in introducing the Islamic Revolution and organizing forces, especially the mobilization of the people during the Sacred Defense and the dissemination and promotion of the culture of sacrificing and martyrdom the most important of which are:

The mosque is the first base of the Islamic government, and the axis of unity, the mosque is the only safe media, mosque and clergy, training of militant forces, formation of popular mobilization, a base for propagating the Islamic Revolution and Sacred Defense, collecting public donations, promoting the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom, spreading the values of the Sacred Defense and...

International and Regional Achievements of the Sacred Defense

- 1- Establishing the authority of the Islamic Republic
- 2- Guaranteeing the independ-

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ence of the country

3- Birth of a new defense strategy

4- Creating a pattern of struggle against the great powers

5- Proving the oppression against Iran in the world

6- The growth of political relations and diplomacy with countries

7- Belief in Iran's role in providing security in the region

8- Proving the effectiveness of Islam

9- The failure of Israel's timed goals in the Middle East

10. The failure of the US policy of bilateral containment

11- Evaluating the performance of international and regional organizations

12- Introducing more about the Islamic Revolution in the world

13- The defeat of the expansionist plans of the enemies of the Islamic Revolution

14- A test for Human rights

15- Awakening of the Islamic world

► **Wherever a combatant was advancing and fighting, the engineering unit was there.**

**The capabilities of the truthful Jihad Sazandegi forces in various fields astonished the malicious enemy.**



# Intangible Blessings and Achievements of the Sacred Defense

(Against the War Imposed by Saddam  
Hussein's Ba'athist Regime)



### 1- Confidence and Self-belief

One of the important blessings of Sacred Defense (imposed war) was the strengthening of self-confidence. In the sacred Defense, we came to the conclusion that we must believe in ourselves and run the country based on our own capabilities. The impact of this self-confidence was recognizable after the war in various economic, social, and new defense technologies. In the Sacred Defense, we concluded that we must rely on ourselves and achieve the belief that we can fight against all powers and superpowers for years, as Imam Khomeini

(ra) said: This war defeated the greatness of the two powers or the East and the West.

Cracking the greatness of the two powers, East and West was achieved not only in the field of battle and war but in all fields. With the self-confidence created in the people, we made progress and initiatives that aroused the admiration of friend and foe.

In the economic sanctions, we patiently resisted with the spirit of frugality and thrift and proceeded to manufacture various tools and parts, to the point of self-sufficiency in basic goods and products, and in one

sentence, our nation proved that, if we want, We can and all this was one of the blessings of the imposed war and various sanctions, which in the words of Imam Khomeini (ra): "This war and economic sanctions and expulsion of foreign experts was a divine gift that we were unaware of" and in the testament of the self-confident leader of society is that: "Do not expect anyone from outside to help you achieve the goal, which is [Islam] and to implement the rules of Islam. You must stand up for this vital thing that brings freedom and independence.







## 2- Growth of Religious Beliefs

The growth of religious beliefs during the time of the Sacred Defense was very significant. Everything on the front and behind the front had taken on a divine color. Even the indifference of the society in this spiritual atmosphere came to a deep internal transformation.

## 3- Growth of Moral and Spiritual Virtues

One of the blessings and benefits of war was the growth of moral and spiritual virtues in individuals and the strengthen-

ing of social values. In that spiritual atmosphere, many people cultivated their souls, and their hearts were purified with the light of truth, so that, according to Imam Khomeini (ra), they walked the hundred-year-old path overnight.

## 4- Cultural Experiences

The most important cultural experiences during the time of the imposed war were curbing the culture of capitalism and welfare and promoting the culture of asceticism and simplicity; Because the cultural context of fighting the enemy is based on

the teachings of Islam is asceticism and contentment and simple living. The late Imam was also very careful about the influence of capitalism in the system and the Sacred Defense.

## 5- A Test of Intellectualism

Intellectuals in Iran have never been original and rooted. Intellectualism in Iran has been contemporaneous with Westernization; because it was born in the context of Western thought. Intellectualism in Iran is more of an imitative stream than a genuine and rooted one. The intellectual considers blind imi-



tation, misanthropy, and anti-traditionalism as an inherent feature of intellectualism. The concerns, worries, and aspirations of the intellectual are also different from others. The Westernized intellectual is far from the realities and is accustomed to his illusions. He never found his way among the masses, and the masses never followed the vicious intellectual. The (imposed) war was the manifestation of the values of the revolution and therefore proved well that the concerns of the intellectuals in the revolution were different and the path of the intellectuals from the very beginning was separate. The vicious intellectual has founded his method on enmity with the religion, traditions, and beliefs of the people.

## 6- Strengthening of the National Unity

One of the important blessings and benefits of the Sacred Defense was the strengthening of national unity among the individuals of the nation, especially the groups and political parties of the country; In a way that everyone had placed their party and union interests in the service of the interests of the system and the security of the country.

## 7- Testing the Efficiency of the Islamic Republic

As an all-encompassing phenomenon, the impact of the imposed war on the Iranian society encompassed a wide range

of political, cultural, and social aspects and provided a difficult test for the efficiency of the young system of the Islamic Republic. Challenging the system of the Islamic Republic from the beginning of the victory of the Revolution has always been the goal of the arrogant powers. This is because the revolution in Iran and its possible spread in the region could endanger their interests, and they had high hopes for the destructive effect of the war in pursuing this sinister goal. The war began at the time when Iran was focusing on dealing with inherited economic problems, sabotage and assassinations by anti-revolutionary elements, lack of skilled revolutionary manpower, and foreign provocation of ethnic groups. In spite of the imposed war the Iranian nations proved that through faith in Islam it can overcome the existing difficulties and bring about unity in diversity. By introducing a

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new model of leadership in the management of society, the late Imam Khomeini (ra) had a great role in creating unity and empathy among the Iranian people.

## 8- Impact on Art and Literature

Epic teachings, especially the ethics and manners of the warriors, have had a direct impact on the field of art and literature of the country. It can be boldly said that epic-mystical literature was reborn in this period and even influenced and captured the minds of artists and screenwriters. Although classical and academic art moved very slowly in harmony with the Sacred Defense literature, artists shone brightly in creating literary and artistic subjects beyond the classical standards. Resistance literature is a branch of war culture and art. War cinema also complemented the war literature in our country, which became known as the cinema and art of the Sacred Defense. In the cinema and music during the war, the values espoused by the war were defended and upheld; the values that formed the theme of the war. About 50 feature films with the concept of Sacred Defense were made. During the years of the imposed war (1980-1988).

## 9- Creating Beauties

Although the war is nasty and frightening, people were found during the eight years of Sacred Defense who created beautiful scenes and like Hazrat Zainab (sa)

in Karbala who said in response to Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad "I saw nothing but beauty" created beauty from death and blood and turned the field of death into a scene of prayer and supplication with God, and opened the secrets of the Qur'an and the infallibles (pbut) to the pure and truthful hearts. Prior to the Sacred Defense, both the imperialist and communist camps had left the people of the world with "religion, the opium of the masses," but one of the beauties of the imposed war was that it showed the power of "religion" in strengthening the public determination to defend the homeland to the world and the world understood that miracles can be done with Allah-o Akbar or Ya Zahra (sa) or Ya Hussain (as).

At the beginning of the war, a Parisian newspaper wrote sarcastically: "Iranians believe in miracles; 'Unless a miracle comes to the Iranians and saves them from this catastrophe.'" another European newspaper wrote. "As the sun moves, so do the Iraqi forces, and nothing is stopping them,"

### 10- Revival of the Spirit of Ashura and Manifestation of Martyrdom

According to Imam Khomeini (ra), our war was a repetition of Ashura. "Martyrdom" in addition to the great cultural, spiritual, political impact and... has valuable social effects.

Martyr Morteza Motahhari wrote:

"Martyr has a special logic which cannot be compared with the logic of ordinary people It is a

logic mixed with love and reform which made him scarify himself for his society and the spiritual logic loves to meet its own Lord. Yes; the logic of a martyr is another logic.

Imam Khomeini (ra) considered the greatest achievement of the Sacred Defense as a spiritual transformation in society. Righteousness, self-sacrifice, contentment and simple living, donation, and finally martyrdom, were among the values that can be attributed to the legacy of the Islamic Revolution.

### 11- Noble Ambassadors

One of the results of the Sacred Defense is the proof of faith and devotion of self-sacrificing perdus of Islamic Iran, which was shown in the dungeons of captivity. Our heroic men, under severe torture and in the midst of life and death, refused to insult their sanctities even verbally. This pure belief and faith, which is, in fact, the stage of the reality of certainty of the faith,

astonished the Ba'athist torturers.

### 12- The Impact on Strengthening Social Relations and the Spirit of Brotherhood

Another blessing of the Sacred Defense was the spiritual strengthening of societies and fostering the social relations; So that intimacy and brotherhood were strengthened among the people. The sending-off the warriors and the participation in the funerals of the martyrs and [visiting the families of the martyrs and welcoming the freedmen from Iraqi prisons] are the only examples of this sympathetic interaction that was the result of eight years of Sacred Defense.

### 13- Influence on Public Culture

Another blessing of the Sacred Defense was the change in the country's public culture; such that everyone was interested in defending the country and chasing and punishing the aggressor Ba'athist enemy. When Imam Khomeini (ra) said: "War is at the top of affairs", in fact, everyone had made war the priority of actions and decisions, and personal and individual interests had all been sacrificed for the war. The culture of defense and struggle had dominated public opinion to such an extent that everyone defined his social and political value and influence with his defense capabilities, and attributing all successes to the Sacred Defense formed the basis of social and political relations. "

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#### 14- Exposing the Liberals and the Hypocrites

One of the perils that seriously threatened the Islamic Revolution was that of the Revolution falling into the trap of the liberals. As stated by the late Imam Khomeini (Ra): "Today, ten years after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, I confess, as in the past, that some of the decisions made in the early days of the Revolution, with regard to entrusting important positions and affairs of the country to a group which did not have a sincere and true belief in the pure Islam, were wrong the consequences of which will not be easily erased... And even now I firmly believe that they are not satisfied with anything less than the deviation of the Revolution from all its principles and mov-

ing towards the world-devouring United States.... And we are still paying the price for trusting these groups and liberals.

Another blessing of the (imposed) war was to expose the true face of the hypocrites; such that with the withdrawal of leftist political groups from the battle, that too, with baseless reasons and excuses, the people realized the deviant nature of these groups.

#### 15-The Defense Capacity of the People

In every culture, there is a special mentality in people to defend the homeland. Most countries try to mobilize forces to defend the country by arousing nationalist sentiments. Trying to exist and be alive and concepts such as confronting the devil and

darkness are other ways to counter the enemy's aggression. But in the imposed war, certain cultures of Sacred Defense emerged that were derived from Islamic values. Values such as jihad, martyrdom, exercising divine sovereignty, and denying the domination of infidels over the affairs of Muslims, guardianship, and oppression were among the building blocks of this culture. A culture that according to the words of the Holy Prophet (pbuh): The love of homeland is a part of faith, found a special emersion and created a unique epic. An epic that, despite the support of world powers for the Ba'athist forces and 2800 days of proud defense recorded a successful experience in the country's record with pride and victory.



# **The Role of Iranian Women in the Sacred Defense**



## Introduction

Historical texts often speak of the status of women in the harems of Iranian kings and the influence of western and eastern women, or the so-called intellectuals, on social change. However, the Iranian women who participated in the Gribayedov incident, the tobacco movement, the constitutional movement, the uprising against the compulsory unveiling of hijab, and the uprising of July 20, 1952, etc. were the mass of Muslim women who abided by the orders of the Maraaje' (religious authorities) and set foot on the battlefield in order to perform their religious and divine duties.

From the 1940s until the victory of the Islamic Revolution, these women showed a wider and more continuous presence. The reason is, firstly: the greater self-confidence that Imam Khomeini (ra) created in women; and secondly: their response to the invitation of the Imam for a socio-political presence. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, women were still helpless and tired of a long struggle against the Pahlavi regime. Therefore, they considered it their duty to participate in the crises that arose in different parts of the country, especially in Kurdistan. But what called on women for more help, after about a year and a half after the victory, was the sacred defense, which witnessed the bravery of the men and women at this frontier for eight years. However, and because of the extent of women's sacrifices in the field of sacred defense, it is not possible to enumerate all those sacrifices, and in every article and in this article, only a small part of it

can be mentioned.

## Combating the Enemy

The first responsibility that women spontaneously took on, was to fight the Ba'athist enemy in the southern part of Iran and the internal mercenaries in Kurdistan. They even made Molotov cocktails to fight the Iraqi tanks that were going to cross the Shalamcheh border. Of course, preparing and using Molotov cocktails was the most basic martial work of the sisters and women, as they later on equipped themselves with weapons to fight the enemy. In the Khorramshahr cemetery, I saw a 51-year-old woman carrying a rifle. I said: Mother, what are you doing? She said: My son and daughter fought until they were martyred, and they are buried here. I am going to continue their path. She did not accept everything I said and responded by saying: I must defend my religion. This is not only your duty, my son, but also my duty, she fought and finally she was martyred by a mortar shrapnel.

► The story of this brave woman was narrated by the Supreme Leader as follows: "I remember a Muslim woman living in Susangerd, whose husband was blind. Although she was forty or fifty years old, she defended the city very bravely. She was known to have killed several Iraqi soldiers with a cane."

Women fighters in Khorramshahr were also responsible for other tasks, including taking care of weapons, arming fighters, guarding the bodies of martyrs, and distributing weapons among fighters. The situation was the same on other fronts. For example, in West Gilan, a woman captured several Iraqi soldiers, and in Shadegan, four females captured eight Ba'athist soldiers. Ms. Fatemeh Nawab Savavi, along with the irregular troops group of Shahid Chamran in the Susangerd area, took up arms and fought the enemy. A Susangerdi woman baked bread with poisoned flour and killed several Iraqis with it. And again, in this city, the mother of Martyr Al-Hani invites eleven Iraqi soldiers to her house, feeds them, and when they have rested and fallen asleep, locks the door and informs the Basijis who capture all of them.

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Although the scenes of women's warfare were small, but they continued until the end of the Sacred Defense, and secondly, had a profound effect on the morale of the warriors. Women also performed many intelligence combat roles.

## Emotional Support

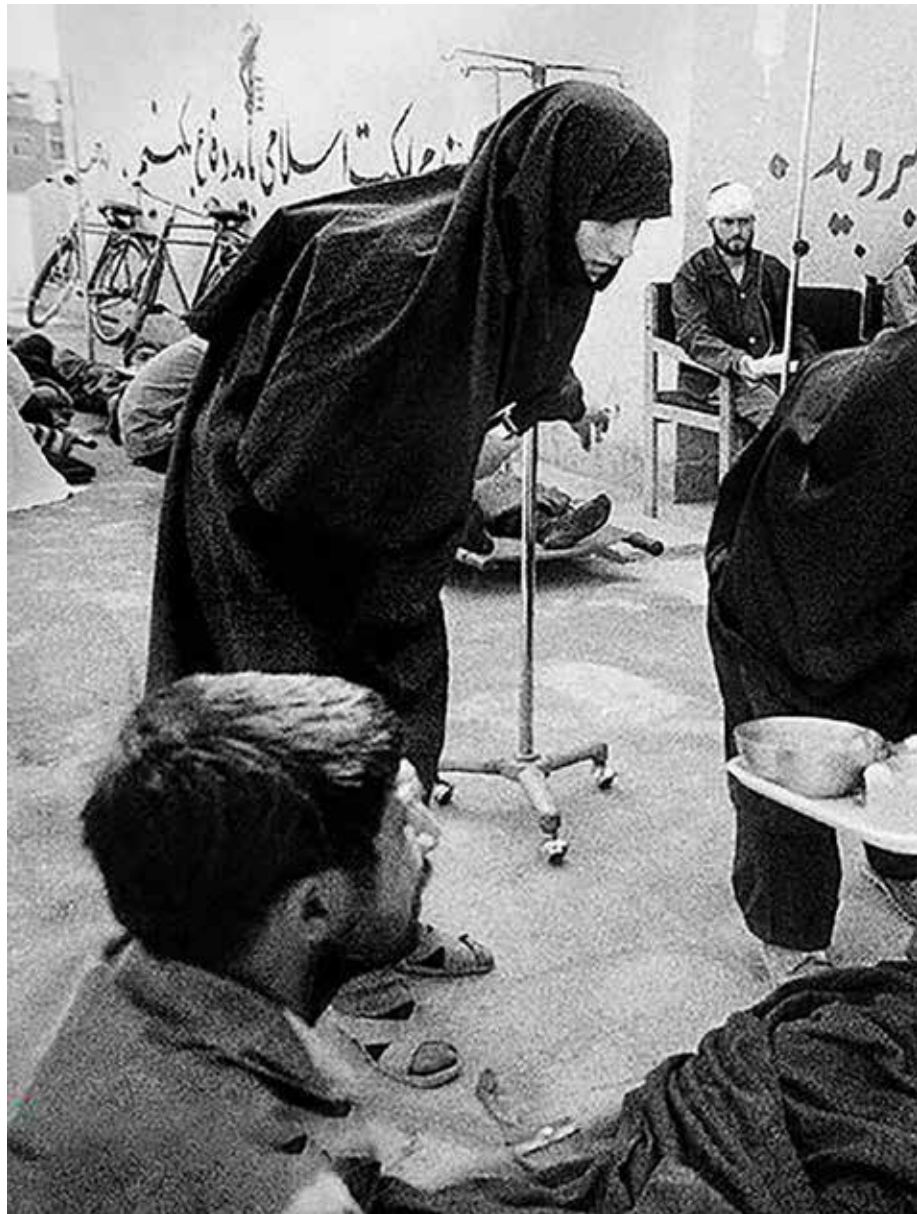
In the war, women were given the role of providing psychological and emotional support to the fighters so that the war could end success-

fully by encouraging the soldiers. In the imposed war, Iranian women spontaneously took on the role of providing moral support to the fighters, and as Imam Khomeini (ra) said: because of the emotions expressed by the women, they did very useful work for the front. Thus, the Sacred Defense has recorded countless and at the same time unique examples of the spiritual support of Iranian women, such as: In West Gilan, the commander of a combat battalion, seeing the bravery of a rural woman, He retreated and returned his forces to the city despite Bani Sadr's order. Part of the emotional and spiritual support of women has been expressed through poetry and by female poets, and these poems have influenced the presence of more warriors on the fronts.

### Support Centers

Other manifestations of the companionship of Iranian Muslim sisters, wives and mothers should be seen in the preparation of goods and items needed by warriors and soldiers. Women devoted their lives and property in material and logistical support on the southern and western fronts, creating many memorable and unforgettable scenes. They wove scarves and hats for the warriors, sewed clothes and sheets for the soldiers, and cooked hot food for them.

Ms. Khakbaz goes to the front with a group of sisters, and on the night of Nowruz, she prepares rice and fish (customary Iranian dish made for the occasion) for the warriors. Most of the kitchen activities of the front, which fed 50,000 people daily, were carried out by women.



Another example is Ms. Fatemeh Zarei with 60 years of age, who baked bread 24 hours a day behind the front lines during the operation and stopped working only to perform her religious rituals. During the imposed war (sacred defense), women collected, packaged, sent, and provided other services in mosques, homes, schools, and any other place where a support center could be established.

These efforts were so valuable and decisive that Imam Khomeini (ra) thanked them in simple but spiritually inspired words: When I see these honorable women on TV, who accompany and They are supporting the army and the armed forces, I feel a value for them in my heart that I cannot value anyone else like that. What they are doing is not looking for an expectation of a position or a





job or something they ask of the people, but they are anonymous soldiers who are said to be engaged in jihad on the fronts. This is a divine gift, we should appreciate this blessing and follow these women and children behind the front and those who are present in the half-ruined cities, we should benefit from their Islamic morality, faith and attention to God.

#### Relief and Treatment

From the first attack of the enemy that martyred and wounded several people and fighters, the women of this land realized that they had to help treat the wounded and war veterans. Without any expectation, they went to the fronts only with the intention of gaining God's approval and obeying their leader, and at some point, they themselves were wounded and some-

times joined the many martyrs of the revolution.

If the women volunteers did not come to the aid of the front and the war, the number of war martyrs would increase, and if the wounded were not treated in time, their subsequent treatment would impose a heavy cost on the state treasury.

Families and combatants, by seeing the relief and treatment of war wounded, felt more eager to continue their voluntary presence on the front. Even now, the beautiful examples and manifestations of self-sacrifice of nursing, creates a wave of love and enthusiasm to serve the people.

Ms. Yousefzadeh is an example of a nurse woman who was martyred due to chemical pollution.

#### Financial Sacrifices

Several Muslim women, in addition to being directly involved in the sacred defense, provided a variety of support for the fighters, one of which was to contribute financially to the battlefields. In fact, during the sacred defense, we witnessed the high tide of women's financial self-sacrifice, which Imam Khomeini (ra) has mentioned many times: "Every day, we see women who bring a gold coin and spend in the way of God and war.

#### Sacrifice and Dedication

In addition to woman encouraging their children, husbands, brothers, and fathers to participate in the sacred defense, they were very effective in welcoming men to be more present on the fronts, after hearing the news of the injuries and martyrdom of relatives and their loved ones showed unparalleled

patience and forbearance, which helped to strengthen the morale of the warriors to continue the war. While the mothers saw their young children being martyred on the front, they were that the man and sons have been martyred in the way of Islam, and they still suggest that we have other young sons and want to dedicate them for Islam. The self-sacrifice of Iranian women has been so great that even the foreign media could not deny it.

### Propagation and Intelligence Co-operation

The Western Front had features that were less common on the Southern Front, such as the enemy's attempt to create a dispute between Shiites and Sunnis, or the existence of counter revolutionaries collaborating with the enemy. It made intelligence and information surveillance inevitable. There are many examples of propaganda and intelligence activities of sisters and women in Kurdistan, such as: Female students were sent to the Kurdistan Region from the seminary in Qom and from other Islamic schools. From the very beginning, they were attacked, persecuted by enemies in various forms, such as the opposition Kurds and the MKO group. For example, the MKO hypocrites who told these women that if you go out with the Kurds and eat their food, they will poison you in your food and you will be killed. Instead, they said to the Kurds: They do not accept you and they will try to change your religion. When the MKO hypocrites saw that their psychological warfare was ineffective, they carried out assassinations, for example:

- Student, Sedigheh Roudbari was martyred an hour after finishing the Quran lesson in Baneh on August 19, 1979.

- Student, Fahimeh Sayari was martyred two days after being sent from Qom being shot by MKO hypocrites.

But women, regardless of the actions of the enemy, continued their propagational presence on the western fronts during the war, which resulted in 434 martyrs in Kurdistan. 71 of these martyrs were martyred by the counter revolutionary agents. The oldest of them was Ameneh Niki, who was assassinated at the age of 78 on September 7, 1980 in Sanandaj and the youngest of them was a 2-year-old girl named Ronak Mominifard, who was martyred on July 6, 1988, as a result of being hit by shrapnel from counter-revolutionary weapons. The conclusion that can be drawn is:

The imposed war, after the Islamic Revolution, created another campaign scene for women. From the

first days of the war, they fought alongside the warriors against the enemy. Sometimes they fought hand to hand, and sometimes, by engaging in warfare, they maintained a direct presence in the sacred defense. Gradually, as the war dragged on, other service roles for women became needed.

Hence, the women turned to the support of the front behind the battlefield, went to the cities and the battle lines to help and treat the fighters. On the front and behind it, they tried to strengthen the morale of the fighters in various and wonderful ways. Of course, not all war services can be summed up in what we have enumerated, but the work of women who wrote poetry, stories, epics, made music, films and theater, provided photos, news, and reports, became martyrs, veterans, and captives. These are just some of their services to the war. What made women help the fighters or defenders of the country in the worst conditions with the least facilities, was the belief in the reward of good in the sight of God and the belief in the right path of the Imam Khomeini(rah) Otherwise, it was unlikely that after sacrificing their lives, property and children for the victory of the Islamic Revolution, they would have to once again sacrifice what was left of their property, lives and children to preserve the Islamic revolution. Undoubtedly, one of the most important reasons for the victory of the war was the sincere presence of these women in the field of defense, Even more than that, it can be said that a nation whose women are at the forefront of advancing Islamic goals will not be harmed.

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# The Role of Clergies in the Sacred Defense (Imposed War on Iran)

Mohsen Asadi Movahed: Masters of Islamic Jurisprudence and law





### Introduction:

According to history, in all the uprisings and movements that have taken place against oppression, Shiite scholars have led the uprisings or have played a role in those uprisings and have stood their ground. Among them is the role of Mirza Kuchak Khan (who was himself a student of religious sciences) in the Jungle movement, Sheikh Mohammad Khayabani in the Tabriz uprising, Mirza Shirazi in the glorious tobacco boycott movement, Ayatollah Kashani in the oil nationalization movement, the martyr Ayatollah Seyyed Hassan Modarres in the long struggle against Reza Khan and finally by the guidance and management of Imam Khomeini

(ra) upon the Islamic Revolution of Iran and during the holy defense, it was victorious.

Imam Khomeini (ra) says in this regard: "Fighting and committed clerics of Islam have always been the vanguard and shield of the people.

Most of the clerics who set foot on the fronts played two roles, first, they had a propaganda role and the other a combat role on the fronts, and it must be said one of the great honors of the clerics throughout the history of Shiism has been to be present in all scenes in defense of Islam and Islamic values.

If we take a brief look at the revolutions that have taken place throughout Shiite history, most of these revolutions have been

led by a cleric and the clergy has played a key role in it, which is one of the greatest manifestations of the presence of the clergy during the eight years of the holy defense, is in the message issued by Imam Khomeini (ra) in March 1989, "the horizon of jurisprudence is stained with the blood of the martyrs of the clergy".

### The Sacred Defense

During the eight years of holy defense, it was the manifestation of the legitimate defense of the Muslim nation of Iran against the coercion of the world's innovative powers. Foreign and domestic enemies did their best to disappoint the people in defending the Islamic



homeland and used all the propaganda media to confront the oppressed nation of Iran, but they were unaware of the unparalleled power of the people's faith and the unity of their word. The religious leaders played a major role in this by appearing on the scene in time and sending a message to the people that defending the sanctity and honor of the Islamic country and sacrifice against the aggressor is necessary and obligatory. The great clergies and Marajee emphasized the legitimacy of this defense with their words and instructions and determined the widespread and continuous presence of the people on the battlefields.

#### **Clerics were Side by side with the people on the front lines:**

The presence of clerics on the battlefields can be divided into three forms: Some were sent to the fronts to preach. They turned the front-line trenches into mosques and classrooms and rulings. Some clerics entered the fronts for battle and were present in the fronts as Basijis without clerical uniforms. The third form of the presence of the clergy in the war zones was a combination of the two previous forms and in the form of propagating the sacredness of the act of defense, which were successful both in the field of battle and combat, and they propagated by preserving the sacred clothes of the clergy. they fought the enemy with weapons in their hands like other warriors and at appropriate times they

preached the warriors. This type of propaganda had a very profound effect on maintaining and improving the morals and spirit of the warriors.

#### **Scattering the fragrance of God on the fronts**

The sacred defense was a platform for building godly human beings, and a gateway for servitude, the religious seminary, and the clergies played an honorable role. The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution says in this regard:

"Some of you clerics can equip an army with spiritual weapons. The advantage of our fronts over all the fronts of the world is that it is the sanctuary of worship and there is spirituality in it."

Prayer is the highest remembrance and the best way to strengthen faith in God. The clergies had a tremendous effect on raising the morale and spirit of the warriors by offering congregational prayers. By

► **Prayer is the highest remembrance and the best way to strengthen faith in God. The clergies had a tremendous effect on raising the morale and spirit of the warriors by offering congregational prayers.**

their presence and by reciting the verses of jihad and sacrifice from the Quran they taught resistance and endurance to the warriors.

#### **Clerics and Religious Education on the Fronts**

One of the reasons for the presence of clerics on the battlefields was to answer the religious questions of the warriors. These issues usually included the following:

1. General religious issues that were afflicted by the people and the warriors.
2. Specific issues of the front and related to the combatant, such as the permission of the parents to be present in the front, fasting and praying in the front, etc.
3. Issues that included the general rules of war and jihad.

#### **Clerics and Strengthening the Spirits of the Warriors**

Military experts attribute 75 percent of the victory to the high morale and spirit of the military and combatants and attribute only 25 percent to factors such as weapons, organization, training, communications, and so on. A strong, calm, and cheerful commander can make the right decision in critical situations and use his forces and facilities properly. A soldier with a strong and calm spirit can also use the tools and equipment of the war correctly and in a timely manner to inflict blows on the enemy. But the demoralized commander will not have enough tact and precision in carrying out operations when facing danger.

The Sacred Defense was no exception to this rule, and the clergies had a profound effect on strengthening the fighting spirit of the warriors at critical times of the war. The main role of the clergies at this stage was

to statistics, the clerics, in proportion to their population, sacrificed the most martyrs in defending the Islamic revolution. The high number of martyrs shows that the clergy not only encouraged the warriors and strengthened their

not Suddenly a young warrior stood up and said: guys! You are the same guys that were shouting out dear Imam Husain and Karbala two hours ago. Hussein is the same as Hussein and Karbala is the same as Kar-



to guard and strengthen their hearts.

## Military Activities of the Clerics on the Fronts

One of the activities of the clergies in the holy defense was to be present in the combat units. Many religious seminary students were sent to combat units after attending intensive specialized courses, and they took charge of battalions or combat units. Sometimes in a division, there were four commanders of the clerical battalion.

- Presence in the front line of the battle

The clergies were among those who were at the forefront of various military operations. According

to morale, but also had the largest presence on the battlefield, a presence whose effect is only as great as a military person and as a fighter. Rather, because of the effect they had on strengthening the morale of the warriors, they were far more effective and productive than the average person. One of the war commanders described the role of a cleric during Operation Karbala 5 as follow:

In my battalion, a cleric performed a miracle and created an epic. My battalion was grounded due to heavy enemy fire and the situation in the area and was unable to advance. I commanded them aggressively and begged them to get the troops out of this situation; But I could

bala. Then he took his turban from his backpack and put it on his head and said: "Whoever loves the progeny Prophet Mohammad (Pbuh) and Imam Husain (as) follow me." He said this and started walking, and the battalion moved involuntarily behind him, and the first martyr of the battalion was the same student.

- Priority in accepting risk

One of the important factors that strengthened the morale of the warriors and encouraged them to participate in the dangerous battlefields was that the clergies were at the forefront of accepting danger and taking precedence over others in difficult war situations.



### A Few Statistics

The number of clerical martyrs was 3417 people, which is 15.5% of the total number of clerics in the country at the same time, forty out of every thousand students have been martyred. Most



cleric martyrs were in Operation Karbala 4 and 5 in 1986

### March 1, the day of the clergy and holy defense

On March 22, 1985, Imam Khomeini (ra) representative in the Revolutionary Guards, Hojjatolislam Sheikh Fazlullah Mahallati, along with eight members of parliament and several other judges and officials, were on their way to the battlefield when their aircraft was attacked by two Iraqi fighter jets and crashed 25 km north of Ahwaz, killing all 50 people on board. To honor the sacrifices of the clergies during the time of the Holy Defense, this day was named "Clergy and Holy Defense Day".

In general, the role of the clergies in the sacred defense can be divided into several categories:

1- The legitimacy of the holy defense by Imam Khomeini (ra) and the scholars such as the Grand Ayatollah Golpayegani (ra) and the

3- influence and Impact on commanders.

4- The enthusiasm of the clergy for jihad and love for the front and their presence as fighters on the battle lines.

5- Strengthening the spirit



Grand Ayatollah Bahuddini (ra).  
2- Encourage people to participate in the front and mobilizing them.

▶ In the holy defense the clergies proved once again that they will always stand by the nation in all scenes by the presence of scholars on the battle lines and alongside the warriors, For example

and morals of the warriors by strengthening their faith and trust in God, appealing to the Ahl al-Bayt, answering the religious issues related to the front and sacrifice in religion, and the general issues of the warriors.

In the holy defense the clergies proved once again that they will always stand by the nation in all scenes by the presence of scholars on the battle lines and alongside the warriors, For example, President Ayatollah Khamenei joined the fronts despite his busy schedule. Grand Ayatollah Bahauddini attended the Valfajr Operations, and Ayatollah Mirza Javad Agha Tehrani (aged eighty) attended the battlefield on many occasions.



## A Glance at the Role of Physicians during the Eight Years of Sacred Defense

During the Sacred Defense Era, different classes of society with varied expertise and skills would play significant roles in order to defend the Islamic Republic of Iran's territories. Each person stood up against the enemy by the scientific or practical experiences that they had in this field.

In this regards, the medical society of Iran in different fields who had according to the ethical charter sworn in to help the combatants with all the materialistic facilities that they had in their pos-

session got present in the battlefields. They got present in the war in order to relieve and ease the pains of the war injured patients by doing some tough surgeries. They conducted those surgeries under the most difficult situation. In fact, doing the surgeries during those tough moments was something of great importance. 'Wandering in the Strange Land' is the book which reviews the memories of Medical Society regarding the Sacred Defense Era, and two memories of that have been mentioned as follows:

### 800 Surgeries in 45 Days!

In the early days of the imposed war the number of those injured as a result of ruthless attack by the Ba'athist army was so high that the Iranian medical team were engaged in performing surgeries in order to save as many lives as possible. The number surgeries to be performed were so high that they did not even have time to rest to regain enough energy for attending to new injuries let alone being able to take a shower during this time. As one of the doctors had narrated even though they had thought



about going to a nearby village to check how they could have a bath there, the conditions were such that they had to postpone the idea and think of something else.

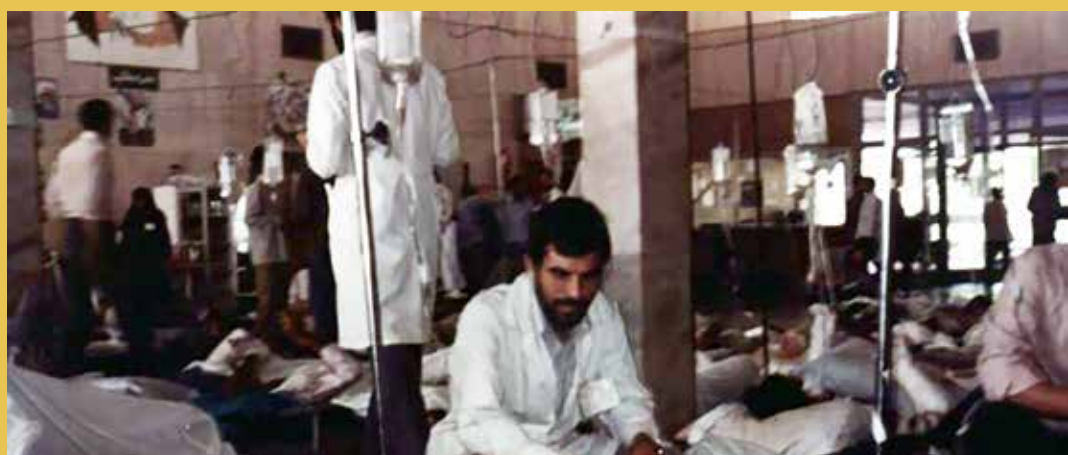
### **Surgery in the Desert Hospital with the hope of less than 10 % for discovery**

On one of those days, they brought an Iranian soldier to the hospital. He had a very critical health condition. We started our work so immediately. We took him to the surgery room along with the medical equips and auxiliary nurses and anesthesiologists. The surgery room located in the heart of a mountain; also there were only little facilities. This soldier's stomach and sides had been injured and it was bleeding. We firstly revived him and after unconsciousness, the laparotomy surgery was done successfully.

Anxiety and concerns had covered me, because the soldier had so much bleeding in a way no next surgery was possible for him. I thought about this issue that whether I could save him in that far remote mountain that was close to a village?

I put his right kidney that had got out from his body into his body. It had been exposed to fecal pollution. We were so worried about him to gain his consciousness. Despite of all the efforts that had been done for him in the best form by the medical team, even having 10 % hope of survival was so much for him and we did not expect him to come round anymore.

Eventually the first symptoms



of consciousness appeared. After that the medical team including the physicians and nurses got so delighted and happy when they saw that condition. After two days passing from the surgery, the special health cares were done and after prescribing medicines and reaching the ordinary health condition of the patient, due to receiving better health cares he was supposed to be sent to the other hospitals located in the civilian areas; Along with the assistance of three medical assistants and the local Kurds, we moved towards Iran by foot by putting him

on a stretcher. It lasted for one and half day that we reached the borders. Fortunately, according to the good health cares that we had done for him, we were able to take him to the borders safe and sound and we handed him over to the Army forces.

To conclude it must be noted that a large number of devoted members of the Iranian medical time who attended the warfronts to fulfill what they called to be their duty, had received injuries in the course of the imposed war and many of them were also martyred.





# A Comparative Study of Visual Arts in the Iranian Sacred Defense and World War I Posters

By: Abdolali Bagheri, Kamran Afsharmohajer, and Seyyed Saeed Zavieh

## Introduction


Visual culture is a new way of looking in which motivations, prospects, and hidden layers of meanings in every artwork are revealed (Mirzoeff, 1999: 3). This article aims at focusing on the significance of visual culture as a newfound concept for further understanding of its status and scope in the contemporary world as an interdisciplinary field of study. The presence of some common features in the social and political conditions at the time of the Iran-Iraq war (the Holy Defense) and World War I in Britain was the reason for writing this paper. These features mainly include unity and cohesion in society; voluntary participation of people on the battlefield, emphasis on human virtues and moral values such as bravery, courage, forgiveness, sacrifice, national honor,

and patriotism as well as the presence of religion in poster designs. In spite of having some similarities, the bold differences of poster designs in the mentioned countries are more highlighted in this paper that can be attributed to differences of society's and designs' look to the war and its related issues. It can be indicated that the different aspects of cultures as a rich source of inspiration for poster designers have led to the creation of entirely distinct posters with a distinct identity that roots in the society's visual culture. The culture and beliefs of society as well as behavioral patterns, values, and traditions can influence the poster design process.

## Research Background

"Art and visual culture" is another article that





initially defines visual culture and its relation with art history. Khazaei in his article entitled “Art of mystical epic, an introduction to Holy Defense posters” puts some posters of the Iran-Iraq war (the Holy defense) and their symbolic concepts into scrutiny. Having referred to the Saghakhane movement, he believes the Islamic Revolution and the imposed Iran-Iraq war led to a situation in which young artists could create innovative works in various fields of art and form the foundations of Islamic Revolution art based on Iranian art and spiritual settings of Islamic culture. The author finally concludes that the Holy Defense posters are not mere colors and shapes. They are embodied spiritual and epic works of art created by the precise selection of the characteristics of Iranian art such as abstraction, brevity, aesthetics, and symbolism in which spiritual values are manifested symbolically in shapes and colors.

#### Theoretical Basis

The theory of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) in the 18th century is a philosophical provision and aesthetic explanation of formalism, which is based on aesthetic judgments. Accordingly, reaction to artworks, interpretation of art, and addressees’ judgment are based on the artwork

itself. In the early twentieth century, Clive Bell and Roger Fry developed formalism approaches more precisely. “Fry believes that the artwork has little or no significant meaningful association with the author or culture of the society to which he belongs” (Adams, 2011: 29). In formalism approaches, evaluation of artwork is attributed to physical qualities such as color, size, shape, line, texture, and visual qualities such as balance, emphasis, movement, rhythm, repetition, contrast, harmony, variety, consistency, and composition (in which all works of art are common). While the content of the artwork, ideas, social, cultural, political, and historical aspects are ignored (Tekiner, 2000: 32). This shift in the understanding of art is a result of the replacement of modernism theories with post-modernism theories. Formalism has provided a set of criteria for observations of contemporary art, while other criteria are considered in post-modern theory. The content of the artwork and the surrounding conditions (personal, historical, social, aesthetic, and cultural), are all involved in the perception and understanding of the art meaning. Many scholars and contemporary art theorists categorize the visual arts in a broader framework entitled visual culture (Gudelius and Spears, 2011: 20-23).



### Posters in World War I

Analysts believe that militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism were the main causes of World War I (1918-1914). The war led to industrialization, urbanization, the emergence, and growth of mass media, and emphasis on national power and identity which are all evident in the war posters (James, 2009: 1-12). Posters were brought from theatres and advertising business to politics to be used as a popular war advertising media. According to Maurice Rickards, the poster was a great tool of mass communication, for being understandable and cheap, and accepted by the public.

Baker believes posters were media tools for creating a visual rhetoric of national identity, an identity for which the war was started (Baker, 1990: 24). Many war poster designers used their personal experience and memories of living during the war and observed the realities of the war. War poster objectives and purposes are the same in all countries; to recruit soldiers by encouraging a sense of patriotism and instilling a sense of guilt in people. As quoted by Jeremy Aynsley: "although similar techniques of visual movements were used in the creation of war posters, they all root in patriotic context and visual traditions and tried to display the national and religious rituals." (Aynsley, 2001: 45) National Posters mobilized civilians to participate in the war in form of a public effort to win the war.

### Posters in Britain

The simple truth was that "people are more influenced by what they see, rather than what they read or hear". Propagandas also benefited from this fact to a great extent and caused the posters to be used as a visual media in Britain during war.

The posters powerfully showed that the war is a more immediate and serious threat than what people think. The designer showed this threat by displaying a village in flames and a mother and her child running from the fire in Fig. 1. The second poster shows German soldiers at the door and explains that the enemy is closer than what we think to emphasize the seriousness of the enemy's presence in British lands in Fig. 2. Moreover, this poster and similar posters try to assert that the German

army is at the gates of the city. This is considered a threat to the authority of Britain and consciously challenges the beliefs of a nation that considers itself one of the world's leading powers and finally motivates them to fight and enlist as volunteers. However, these kinds of posters are never used in the Holy Defense despite the country's being occupied partially and the moral aspects of joining the defense are depicted on posters to a greater extent. Although the posters of the two countries have a common goal of recruitment, this act is demonstrated differently in the images due to cultural differences. It was the warrior's religious beliefs, human values, and spirituality that brought them to the battlefields in Iran, not the finite values or the threat of land concurrence by Iraq.

War posters in Britain focused on patriotism. The most famous of them for motivating soldiers to serve in the war was "Brighton wants you" (Fig. 3). The poster depicts Lord Kitchener, the British Secretary of State for War, wearing the cap of a British Field Marshal and his military ranks (Hollis, 2004: 33). This poster shows military superiority in British culture at that time.



Fig. 1. Anonymous, April 1925. Source: James, 2009: 44.



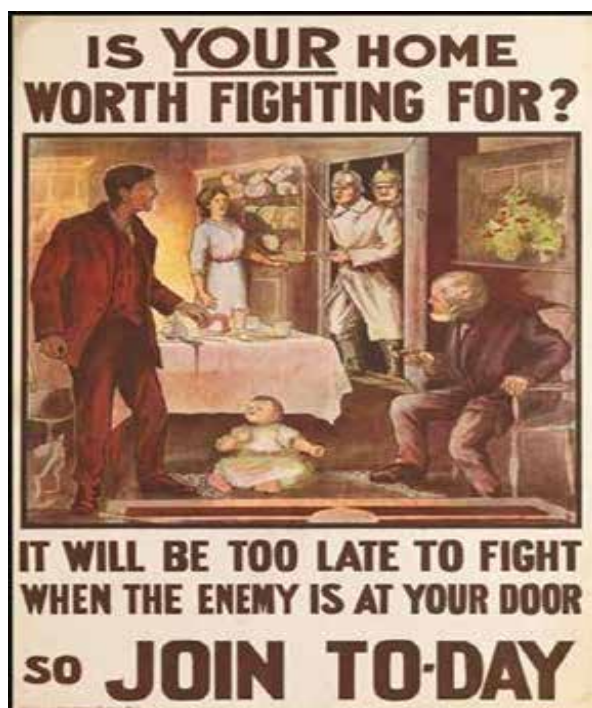


Fig. 2. Anonymous, July 1915. Source: James, 2009: 45.



Fig. 3. Alfred Leete, 1915. Source: Meggs, 2009: 303.

In similar posters calling on people to battle in Iran, the hand of Ayatollah Khomeini is depicted in an image with a slogan of “Is there a champion to help me” which refers to Ashura incidence in Karbala and it is derived from religious beliefs and Islamic cultures (Fig. 4 & 5).

On the other hand, chivalry and knighthood became a valuable norm in Britain. Medieval chivalry was appreciated and practiced by people who wanted to be decent and honorable in the existing world. The concept of being a gentleman was a part of medieval chivalry and it was accepted as a positive feature in modern ordinary life. Courage and Responsibility was also highlighted during the war and propaganda efforts at the beginning of the war relied on voluntary service and insisted on the features of bravery. The Poster “Britain needs you once” indicates this fact. It depicts St. George wearing a knight's armor and fighting a dragon (Goebel, 2007: 57). Knights are symbols of the highly responsible people who are always ready to serve and even die (Woods, 1916: 16).

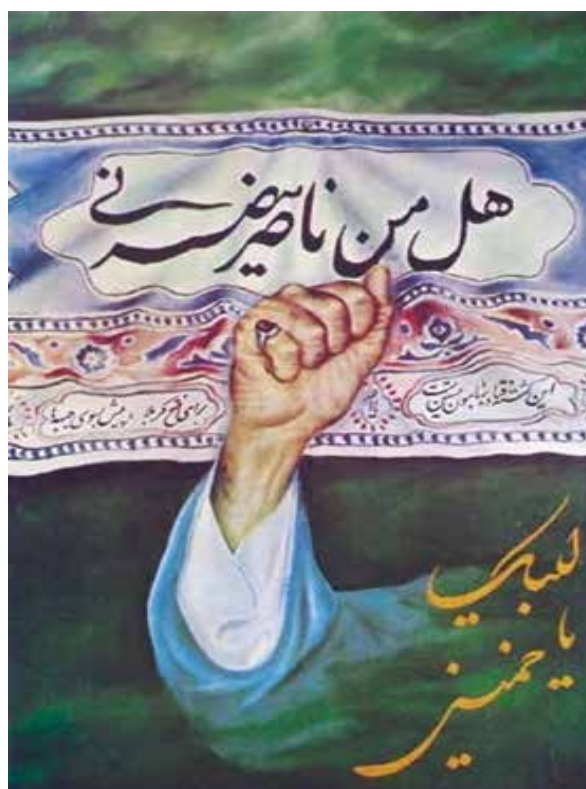


Fig. 4. I accept. Source: Aali, 1989:100.



Fig. 5. Anonymous. Source: James, 2009: 80.

Chivalry and Christianity were united by church missionaries. Even, some fanatical preachers did not hesitate to refer to Jesus Christ as a chivalrous gentleman (Marrin, 1975: 153). This fact is also evident in the war posters in which efforts to establish a connection between chivalry and faith in order to affirm that true Christianity is about justice and chivalry is obvious. In these images, the knights are depicted with a sword that evokes the images of the cross and refers to chivalry and bravery. Every British soldier who was killed in the war was considered as a brave dutiful, honorable, righteous, and holy knight, even if he had killed another human being (James, 2009: 101- 103). Family relations were also subjects of the posters in Britain which aimed at provoking family members to cooperate in war. It can be indicated that in Great Britain propagandas on non-military acts and ideals such as honor, bravery, responsibility, and civic values were superior to military virtues.

#### The Holy Defense Posters (Iran-Iraq War)

Iraq invaded Iran shortly after the Islamic revolution in Iran on 22 September 1980 and aimed

at conquering Khorramshahr, Abadan, Ahwaz, Dezful, and Soosangerd. However, Iraq armored forces were hindered by spontaneous resistance of people who had little weapons such as guns, grenades and

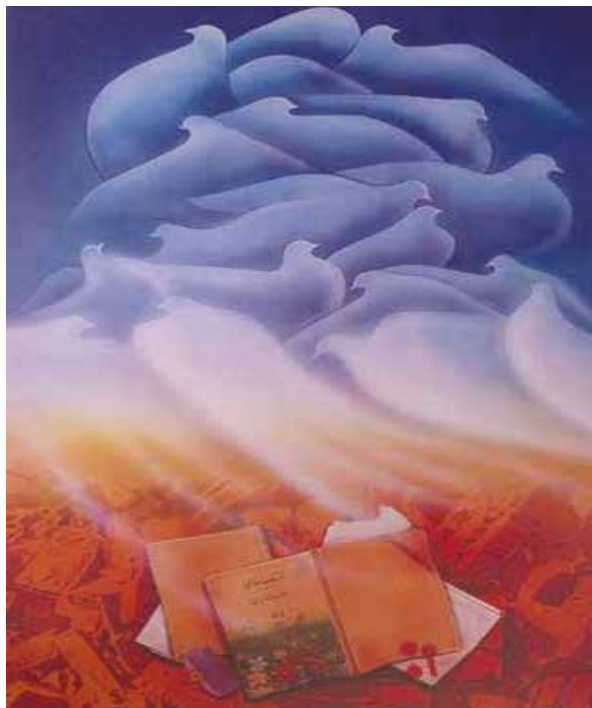
Molotov cocktails, the people who were not militarily trained, but highly motivated. They fought with such passion that not only Iraqis but also many Western observers were surprised (Sonnenberg, 1985: 21-26). It was the longest war of the twentieth century. The enemy employed conventional and unconventional weapons unlimitedly (Sonnenberg, 1985: 34-39). Resisting against the imposed war was called the Holy Defense because it was a defense against the invasion of illegitimate beliefs, history, identity, and geography of a nation.

Warriors only inclined to God, asking His help and the Imams'. Quranic verses were prevalent and the Holy Defense leaders were the vanguard of Defense and martyrdom rather than just being commanders. The growth of religious beliefs in the holy war was enormous. Mosques were centers for voluntary soldier recruitments. Everything in front and behind battlefields had a divine color and essence. Faith, spirituality, and devotion spirit were prevalent in the community. People and soldiers considered participation in war as a religious duty to which they were responsible, whether they die or live. These strong motivations led the nation to battlefronts. Propensity to Islamic values and religious art in graphic design and particularly poster design of the Holy Defense was no exception. Taking Islamic concepts and values into consideration after the war is evident in artworks of young and revolutionary artists of that time who considered concepts such as defense, resistance, sacrifice, martyrdom, ascension, and liberation, as the main subjects of their works. The spirit of worship, respect and sincere devotion to God, relation to

Quran, praying and dependence to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), sacrifice and martyrdom, steadfastness and resistance were prevailing in characteristics of the warriors and public and were stunningly reflected in war posters by the artists. The use of abstract patterns is



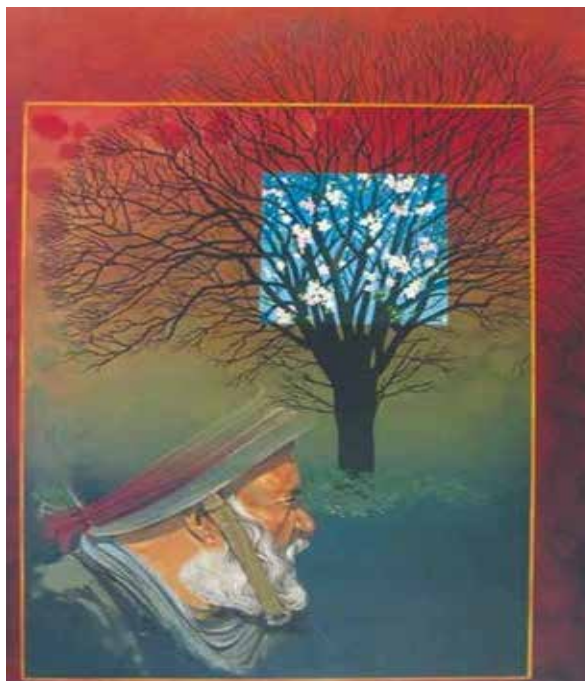
the basics of art, which makes people refer to their culture and identity. This approach has a special place in visual arts, especially graphics of the Holy Defense. Regarding the posters of the Holy defense, “symbolism” and the use of symbolism is another characteristic of these posters which is highly appreciated (Khazaei, 2006: 20-21).



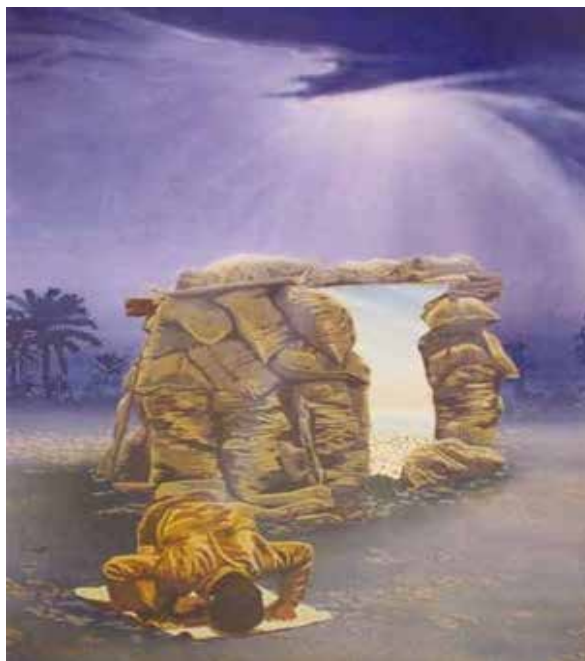
**Fig. 6. Fly, Mohammad Khazaei. Source: Aali, 1989: 39.**

The intrinsic value of the materials and its perfection, efforts to connect man and after life, and expression of symbolic aspects are almost evident in posters of the Holy defense. The remarkable point is that these posters try to detach from the real space and approach higher existence. The spiritual and mythical ambiance became prevalent in this period and human beings transformed from being real, tangible, and achievable and engaged in social interaction in the pre-war period to unreal, unachievable, and angelic figures during the war. Symbolic signs and posters are evident in these posters (Emamifar, 2010: 80-81); (Fig. 6 & 7). God says in verse 35 of Nur verse: God is the light of the heavens and the earth ... and will guide whomever He wills with light (Holy Quran, Nur, 35). The similarity of “light” and “exist-

ence” in Islamic mysticism corroborates that the “existence” of the transcendent Absolute has emerged in form of light.



**Fig. 7. Birth, Mostafa Goodarzi. Source: Aali, 1989: 133.**



**Fig. 8. Trench of Love, Hamid Sharifi. Source: Aali, 1989: 53.**



Fig. 9. Holy defense, Mostafa Goodarzi.  
Source: Aali, 1988: 138.



Fig. 10. Every day as Ashura,  
Kazem Chalipa. Source: Aali, 1988:173.

Where there is an “existence”, there is the light of God. Islamic scholars agree that the forms of the perfect world are shaped out of light. Accordingly, the sages, mystics, and artists enter the territory of light after being refined from the material world. They enter the territory of detached forms from the physical world (Bolkhari, 2009: 361). The poster designers of the Holy Defense were greatly inspired by Quranic verses and religious beliefs. Henry Corbin believes that this light is the same halo surrounding the creatures that belong to the world of light (Corbin, 1995: 59). Using light elements in the posters (Fig. 8 & 9) also indicates that the warriors are guided and belong to the higher world.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr also believes that painting is an attempt to depict the nature of heaven which is the initial creation of

nature of the divine world or the eternal paradise that exists in the above world (Nasr, 1996: 175). Using religious symbols, flags decorated with religious rituals, elements of Islamic architecture, and Arabesque motifs with colors of green, red, black and

blue has specific meanings and special applications in Islamic and Iranian culture in religious graphics and they are widely used by designers in these posters patriots and martyrs of the Holy Defense are depicted divinely as they are from “the world of lights” (Fig. 10 & 11).



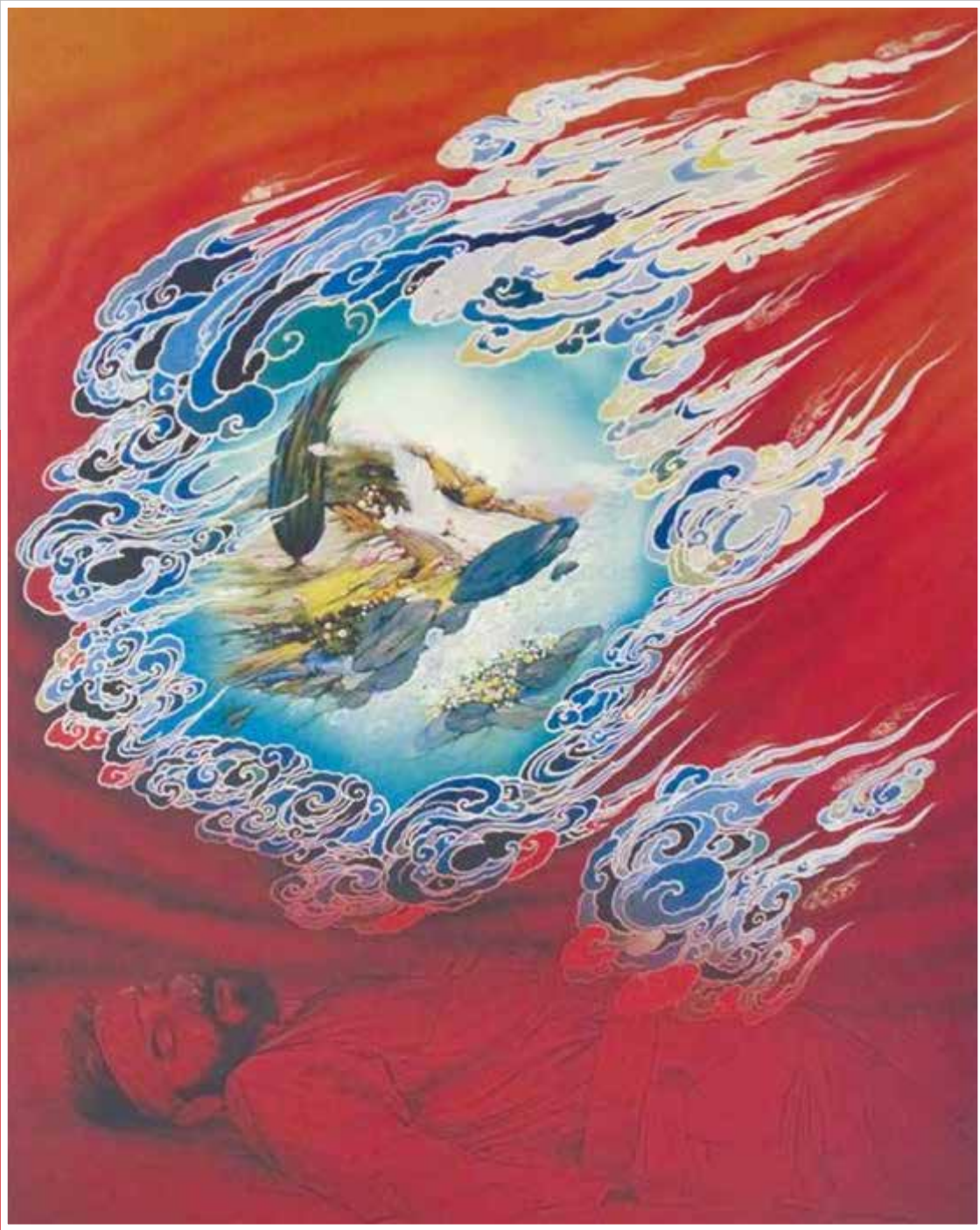


Fig. 11. The water of life, Mostafa Goodarzi. Source: Aali, 1988:145.

