
Zarqawi's Anti-Shi'a Legacy: Original or Borrowed?

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Two months before his death, Abu Musa'ab al-Zarqawi recorded a four-hour anti-Shi'a tirade under the title "Has Word of the *Rafidha* Reached You?" ("*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*"). *Rafidha* (rejecters) and its other plural form, *rawafidh*, are derogatory terms used to describe, as Zarqawi makes clear early on his sermon, the "Twelver Imamist Shi'a who follow the Jafari creed."¹ In what came to be his last message to his followers, Zarqawi lays out the reasons he believes that the Shi'a—who follow a "religion other than Islam"—are engaged in a doctrinal and political struggle with Sunni Islam. He also specifies the strategic implications of this notion for global *jihad*:

The Muslims will have no victory or superiority over the aggressive infidels such as the Jews and the Christians until there is a total annihilation of those under them such as the apostate agents headed by the *rafidha*

... Jerusalem was only retrieved at the hands of Salahuddin, even though Nouredin Mahmoud [Zenki] was harsher on the Crusaders than Salahuddin. It was Allah's will that victory and the liberation of Jerusalem would come at Salahuddin's hand only after he fought the 'Ubeidi *rafidha* [the Fatimids of Egypt] for several years, and totally annihilated their state and overthrew it, and from then he could focus on the Crusaders, and victory was awarded to him and he retrieved Jerusalem, which had remained captive for years under their grip because of the treachery of the *rawafidh*. This is a very important lesson that history gives us that should not be overlooked at all: we will not have victory over the original infidels [*alkuffar alaslkiyeen*] until we fight the apostate infidels [*alkuffar almurtaddeen*] simultaneously along with the original infidels. The Islamic conquests that occurred during the reign of the *rashideen* [the Four Righteous Caliphs] only occurred after the Arabian Peninsula was cleansed of apostates. And that is why the most hated figure among the *rafidha* is Salahuddin, and they would tolerate death rather than tolerate him.²

Zarqawi is mapping out the next phase of *jihad* as he sees it: in order to strike at Islam's perceived enemies such as the United States, Europe and Israel, the jihadists must also fight the Shi'a, who are agents of the forces hostile to the faith. Zarqawi asserts that, as a matter of doctrine, the *rawafidh* practice "a religion wholly different from the Islam that was brought forth by the Prophet (PBUH) ...and that has no other purpose than to destroy Islam." According to Zarqawi, the Shi'a conspire to cast doubt on the tenets of Islam and to sow sedition against Muslim rulers.

Zarqawi is not breaking new ground here, however. Castigating the Shi'a as political traitors to the Muslim nation is a long-standing tradition. Seven centuries ago Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyya, the ideological fount of the Salafist movement, made the same point when he wrote:

Many of [the *rafidha*] would favor the infidels within his heart more than he would favor the Muslims. That is why when the infidel Turks emerged from the east and fought the Muslims and spilled their blood; in the lands of Khurasan and in Iraq and Sham and in the Peninsula and elsewhere, the *rafidha* were there to aid them in killing Muslims. And the Baghdad vizier known as al-'Alqami; it was he and others like him who greatly aided them against the Muslims, as well as those who were in Al-Sham's Aleppo, and other *rafidha* who were the fiercest collaborators in fighting Muslims. The same goes for the Christians [the Crusaders] in Al-Sham where the *rafidha* were their greatest helpers. And should the Jews get a state in Iraq or elsewhere, the *rafidha* will be their greatest helpers, for they are always supportive of the infidels whether they are idolaters or Jews or Christians, and help them to fight Muslims and show aggression towards them.³

Zarqawi turned that thirteenth-century Baghdadi vizier cited above into the poster-boy of Shi'a treachery, and released a sermon in May 2005 titled "The Grandchildren of Ibn al-'Alqami Have Returned" ("*Wa 'aad ahfah ibn al-'alqami*"). In the jihadist version of history, in 1258 the vizier Ibn al-'Alqami—allegedly a Shi'a—conspired with Nassir-eddin al-Tusi, another Shi'a who acted as adviser to the "Tatar" commander Holaku, to attack Baghdad and topple the 'Abbasid Caliphate. The Tatars killed the last caliph, al-Musta'asim, by bundling him up in sackcloth and trampling him to death, and they laid waste to the city, butchering or enslaving hundreds of thousands of its inhabitants. To Zarqawi and the jihadists, the American occupation of Baghdad in April 2003 mirrored those centuries-old events because it also occurred through Shi'a collusion. And that was not the end of Shi'a infamy, for "what was endured by the Sunnis of Iraq at the hands of those *rawafidh*, the grandsons of Ibn al-'Alqami, was harsher and more gruesome than what they have had to endure at the hands of the American enemy." Zarqawi adds, "we are the vanguard of the *umma* and its first line of defense, and its spearhead that stands in the

face of this Crusader encroachment; working to stop this encroachment by these contemporary Tatars at the gates of Baghdad for the good of the whole *umma*.”

Zarqawi's Shi'a fixation was first indicated in a letter he allegedly wrote to Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri that came to light in February 2004. In this letter, which U.S. soldiers captured on one of his couriers, Zarqawi defends his anti-Shi'a rhetoric and actions. “The *rafidha* have declared a secret war against the people of Islam,” he wrote, “and they constitute the near and dangerous enemy to the Sunnis even though the Americans are also a major foe, but the danger of the *rafidha* is greater and their damage more lethal to the *umma* than the Americans.” He asserts that instigating Shi'a-Sunni strife would have two benefits: it would both deal with an imminent threat and rouse the Sunnis to action, leading them to flock to *jihād*.

In making his case, Zarqawi is able to refer to a very large body of polemical works that document the Shi'a doctrinal deviations and political betrayals of Islam. In the last century, most of the doctrinal works were commissioned and subsidized by Saudi Arabia's Wahhabis, but recently the jihadists have been turning out tracts of their own to highlight the political danger posed by Shi'ism. A number of sources seem to have influenced Zarqawi's rhetoric, beginning with a tract published in the early 1980s that warned of the challenge posed by Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Several contemporary Wahhabi sermons that focus on political matters also inform Zarqawi's arguments, as do two books published since the start of the Iraq war that address the Shi'a problem from a jihadist perspective. There are some instances where Zarqawi seems to have borrowed directly from these works.

Zarqawi argues in his April 2006 sermon that his tactics, such as indiscriminate attacks on Shi'a civilians, are nothing new—mass eradication of Shi'i populations was a repressive measure previously used by Muslim rulers when faced with sedition.⁴ Zarqawi is very careful to ward off any accusations of *bid'a* (innovation), which is taboo to all Salafists. He is unique, however, in his transformation of hate speech into a course for action: he has pushed *jihād* to the extreme by introducing the concept of a final solution to the Shi'a problem through “complete annihilation.” He recommends such a course as a prelude to defeating the other enemies of Islam and resurrecting the Caliphate. The security and moral implications of such a strategy should greatly worry those battling terrorism, as well as the Shi'a themselves, who are the majority in some key Middle East countries and sizable minorities in such strategic locales as the Persian Gulf's oil-rich rim and the areas adjacent to Israel's northern borders.

Pioneering Anti-Shi'ism

In many ways a book by Abdullah Muhammad al-Gharib entitled *Then Came the Turn of the Majus* [*Wa ja'a dawr al-majus*] set the tone for successive works that describe the

Shi'a political threat.⁵ And several instances in Zarqawi's sermon indicate that he borrowed directly from al-Gharib's book, including a verbatim—yet not cited—paragraph about a historical character called al-Hurmuzan who was involved in Caliph 'Umar's murder.⁶ Zarqawi does directly acknowledge al-Gharib in making the case that Khomeini was in reality an American agent.⁷

According to al-Gharib, he wrote this book in the late 1970s to warn of the imminent danger posed by Khomeini's movement even before the overthrow of the Shah. The word *majus* is the generic, early-Islamic term for all the “fire-worshiping” Persians—whether Zoroastrians, Mazdakites or Manicheans—who were encountered in the conquest of Iraq and Persia. The first edition was published in 1981 in Cairo (among other places), and an expanded second edition appeared in 1986, also in multiple printings. The author claims to have followed the activities of the “*rafidhah*” for two decades before compiling his treatise, and felt compelled to publish his case at a time when Middle Eastern Islamists were looking favorably on the Iranian Revolution. They believed, as he did, that this seismic event would help overturn Communism and other secular ideologies.

The gist of the book is cautionary, however; warning of Shi'a expansion originating from Iran and spreading into the rest of the Middle East. Though the author never definitively casts off the Shi'a as infidels, he comes close when writing in the introduction that “Their doctrines are rotten ... and these contemporary Shi'a are worse than yesterday's Shi'a.... And I have demonstrated that the Shi'a have their own origins and we have our own too, and there is no room for convergence.... Shi'ism reverts to majusist roots and not Islamic ones, and the home of majusism is the land of Iran and Persia.” Later on, al-Gharib gives more specific reasons for labeling Shi'a as heretics:

The Twelver Imami Ja'afaris who slander the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) and deny the *sunnah*, and believe that the scribes have deleted nary a verse from the Quran, and who believe in the infallibility of their Imams and claim that they are better than Allah's prophets and know the unknown, then we have no doubt about their heresy, and that their distance from Islam is such as the distance between the sky and the earth, especially if they believe in their known books: *Al-kafi*, *Fasl al-khitab*, *Fiqh men la yahdhuruhu al-faqih*⁸

Fueled by Arab ethnic chauvinism, the first part of al-Gharib's book is replete with indictments of the Persian race, whom the author holds responsible for a string of conspiracies against Islam. These began with a plot, allegedly hatched in alliance with Christians, to murder 'Umar. According to al-Gharib, “the esoteric *rafidha* look upon Arab Muslims with malice and hate simply because they destroyed the glory of Persia and vanquished the rule of Cyrus.”⁹ Al-Gharib asserts that the Persians turned to Shi'ism only because Imam Hussein married into royal Sassanian blood.¹⁰ The Persians also aided the

'Abbasids in dethroning the 'Umayyad dynasty, and then secretly sought to control them. Al-Gharib proceeds to describe the disruptive uprisings of the Qaramitah (Carmathians), the Buwayhids and the Fatimids—all of which contributed to weakening Islam. He adds that “they divided up the Islamic lands among them and spread unbelief wherever their feet tread ... then Salahuddin al-Ayyubi came and cleansed Bilad al-Sham and Egypt from majusism, and returned the Prophet's *sunnah* to the Muslims.” But the Shi'a went underground and

the batinis prepared themselves to emerge with their old beliefs with only the names changed: the Safavids, the Baha'is, the Qadianis, the Druze, the Nusayris [Alawites], the Assassins, the Isma'ilis.... The [batinis] returned to support the enemies of Allah and to cooperate with them against Muslims. They cooperated with Britain, Portugal, France, and Czarist Russia.... They returned to shred Islamic unity all over again.¹¹

Al-Gharib then elaborates about all the groups cited above, claiming that even the founders of the Druze and Nusayris sects were Persians. He makes some glaring historical mistakes, however, such as wrongly characterizing the Afghan Afsharids as Shi'a, when they were, in fact, trying to foment a Sunni revival in Iran after defeating the Safavids.¹² Al-Gharib even denounces the Sufis by arguing that some of their luminaries, such as al-Hallaj, were majusis.¹³ He also mentions in passing the “treachery” carried out by Ibn al-'Alqami and Nassir-eddin al-Tusi.¹⁴ But he is particularly vitriolic about

Syria's Nusayri sect, who had aided the Crusaders, the Tatars and the French. Al-Gharib insists that their ethnic ancestors were Persian slaves who had fled Iraq's Samara ahead of the Carmathian raids,¹⁵ and adds:

Today they control an important part of Bilad al-Sham—Syria—and plan to destroy Islam and Muslims when the coast is clear for them, and they cooperate with Israel, Iran and the United States, and Muslim scholars in the past and the present have unanimously declared this sect to be infidels.¹⁶

On doctrinal issues al-Gharib instructs the reader to review the work produced by an earlier generation of Sunni scholars—thinkers such as Muhammad Shukri al-Alusi, Muhib-eddin al-Khateeb, Muhammad Behjet al-Bitar, Rashid Ridha, Taqi-eddin al-Hilali and Mustafa Siba'i. He also recommends “contemporary” scholars such as Muhammad Nassir al-Albani; al-Bashir al-Ibrahimi; Ahmad Amin, who's book *The Dawn of Islam* [*Fajr alislam*] “ties Shi'ism to Judaism”; Muhammad Is'aaf al-Nashashibi; Ibrahim al-Jabhan, whom al-Gharib credits with revealing Shi'ism's *majusi* roots; Muhammad Rashad Salim; and Ahmad Hassan al-Zayyat.

Almost half the book is devoted to highlighting the danger posed by a resurgent Khomeini and alleged Iranian designs on the Persian Gulf. In al-Gharib's eyes Khomeini only makes a show of hostility toward the United States in order to hide the fact that he is an American agent. Khomeini's bellicosity gave the Americans an excuse to send their troops to such places like Oman, Somalia and Kenya, thus encircling the region. The author points out, however, that because treachery is second nature to the Iranians, they may eventually betray the Americans as well.¹⁷

Al-Gharib writes that Israel's long-term safety will be assured if Khomeini poses as its enemy and that "the day will come when people will know that the Jews were behind [the Iranian Revolution] just like Ibn Saba' was behind their emergence in the first place."¹⁸ Here al-Gharib regurgitates a long-standing accusation, employed by Sunni propagandists for centuries, that Shi'ism was founded by a Jewish convert to Islam, Abdullah Ibn Saba', who plotted to sow dissent among the early Muslims by championing the 'Alid cause.¹⁹ The author goes on to argue that the Shi'a of the Gulf States are essentially "fifth columnists" for Iran "who live with their bodies in the Gulf but their hearts and minds are in Tehran."²⁰ He gives details of how those Shi'a monopolize certain trades and create closed-off communities, and how they are proceeding to infiltrate government and society. He gives very specific examples from Kuwait, including long lists of Shi'a-controlled mosques and cultural institutions.

Al-Gharib's only intent is to bring attention to this emerging threat. He laments that many Sunnis are so enthralled by Khomeini's sloganeering that they fail to notice the impending Shi'a encroachment. The author offers no remedies to counter this threat, and proposes no grand strategies for defending Sunnism.

Contemporary Anti-Shi'a Wahhabism

Sharing al-Gharib's perspective is the 40-year-old Saudi preacher Mamdouh bin Ali al-Harbi. He analyzes the Shi'a "menace" in a two-and-half-hour sermon entitled "The Shi'a Octopus in the World" (*Al-ikhtaboot al-shi'i fil 'alem*), which is available in four audio files on a number of anti-Shi'a websites (such as www.albainah.net).²¹ The series begins with several audio segments, apparently recorded from chat rooms, of individual Shi'a cursing and mocking the Caliphs Abu Bakr and 'Umar, as well as the Saudi royal family. Rehashing the Ibn 'Alqami story, al-Harbi warns that "the Shi'a naturally constitute a supportive column for Iran's political and religious plans and ideas." He first highlights the danger posed by Saudi Arabia's Shi'a, who are "actively breeding" through community-funded mass nuptials and who seek to control such strategic businesses as bakeries and fish markets. "The Saudi Shi'a are similar to the Shi'a all over the world with regards to their heretical doctrine, paganism and grave-worship," al-Harbi declares. He also warns that some Shi'a are attempting to go undercover and to pass themselves off as Sunnis by

assuming common Saudi tribal surnames. He gives several examples, including some Kaysani (Nakhawileh) Shi'a in Medina who distort their family name of "al-Hirbi" to sound like that of the numerous al-Harbi tribe.

In the second audio file, al-Harbi uses Persian Gulf shipping and oil production statistics from al-Gharib's *Wa ja'a dawr al-majoos*, as well as his examples of Shi'a proliferation in countries like Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, but does not cite the source. Al-Harbi proceeds to describe Iranian proselytizing efforts among Yemeni tribes along the Saudi border because the Saudi state "is considered by Iran to be its first and greatest enemy to itself and to Shi'as in general."²² According to him, the American ambassador in Yemen has disbursed a hundred-million-dollars worth of weaponry, such as anti-aircraft and anti-armor missiles, among these tribes in order to foment unrest. Al-Harbi also describes what he believes are Iranian efforts to spread Shi'ism in Egypt.

This undated sermon was undoubtedly recorded after the start of the Iraq war because al-Harbi laments and lists all the illicit Shi'a designs on Iraq, including their "deceitful" efforts to inflate their numbers that "do not exceed 40 percent of the population." Some of al-Harbi's assertions about their sinister designs verge on the bizarre:

The Shi'a of Iraq control most of the important departments in the Iraqi government and they [lure others] through money and women just like their brothers the Jews, and one of the recent trends is the increase in the number of private sports halls in the capital Baghdad, where its patrons train on all sorts of martial arts such as Karate or Kung-Fu or Judo, and most of these halls belong to the Shi'a whether they be trainers or trainees, and when asked about the reason for this large number of [sports] halls and the large number of Shi'a among its patrons, more than one responded unanimously that they want their hearts to get accustomed to fighting Sunnis with their [bare] hands rather than with weapons, since weapons provide a quick death and that is not to their heart's content, as one of them said.²³

Al-Harbi claims that Khomeini's revolution assumed the mantle of leading the world's Shi'a, and spreads the Shi'a creed through Iran's worldwide network of embassies and cultural centers. He gives detailed examples of such activities in Kenya and the Sudan, and continues in the third audio file along the same lines to describe more Iranian proselytizing campaigns in Senegal, Nigeria, the Philippines, and Indonesia. In the fourth and last audio segment, he cites similar activities in Afghanistan, Turkey, Bosnia and North America, going so far as to give a detailed breakdown of Shi'a mosques and cultural centers in the state of Georgia, among many others.

In another one-hour sermon in two parts entitled "The Secret Plans of the Shi'a" (*Mukhattetat al-shi'a al-sirriyyeh*), which is similarly available on several anti-Shi'a

websites, al-Harbi dwells at length on a purportedly secret document called “The Secret Plan of the Clerics and Ayatollahs of the Shi’a” (*Alkhuta al-sirriyyeh li ‘ulema’ wa ayaat al-shi’a*). The Society of the Sunnis of Iran (*Rabitat ahl al-sunnah fi iran*), a London-based organization, “exposed” this document, and it was published in *Al-Bayyan* Magazine in March 1998. The text also appears in many versions on the internet and under different titles; one is the “Protocols of the Elders of Qum,” which echoes the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” to reinforce the impression among radical Sunnis that the Shi’a conspiracy is akin to the Jewish one.²⁴ Similarly, Zarqawi argues that

the roots of the *rafidha* and the roots of the Jews are one and thus much of the teachings of the *rafidha* are highly similar to the teachings of the Jews, and their secret meetings and conferences and their use of *taqiyya* [dissembling] to show something other than what they really harbor towards Muslims, is the same as with the Jews.... And he who is aware of what came in the protocols of the Jews and the teachings of the Talmud toward nations other than the Jews will find a complete overlap with the *fatwas* of the Ayatollahs and Seyyids of the *rafidha* towards the Muslims in particular.²⁵

In this second sermon, al-Harbi describes an alleged fifty-year plan that the Shi’a are employing to turn Sunnis to Shi’ism and to take over the Persian Gulf, as well as Pakistan, Turkey, Iraq and Afghanistan. The secret plan was put in place to confront the threat of the Wahhabis who “oppose the *Vilayet-el-Faqih*,” and it seeks to create dissension among Sunni clerics and Sunni rulers. The plan encourages Iranians to immigrate to the target countries and then spread fake pamphlets in which Wahhabi and Sunni clerics denounce the depravity of their societies—pamphlets that will cause the ruling regimes to seek retribution against such clerics. Meanwhile, Shi’a clerics will profess fealty to the rulers and push for representative government. Al-Harbi accuses the Shi’a using financial bribes to sway the rulers and of making gifts of “Persian female agents fluent in Arabic and with force of character and intelligence, in addition to being beautiful.” This charge seems to have been provoked by Saudi Shi’a attempts, in April 2003, to petition then-Crown Prince Abdullah for full citizenship rights—to the chagrin of leading neo-Wahhabi clerics.²⁶ Al-Harbi points out that such a strategy has worked in the past: the Safavids turned Iran from a majority Sunni nation into a bastion for Shi’ism and, in a more recent example, the Shi’a now constitute 50 percent of the population of Baghdad, up from only 10 percent in the 1950s.

Al-Harbi’s main argument is that there can be no reconciliation or co-existence with the Shi’a after the revelation of this secret plan. The primary motivation for such an anti-Shi’a line seems to stem from fears harbored by establishment Wahhabis that the ruling House of Saud would seriously entertain the idea of extending full rights to the kingdom’s Shi’a

minority. Like al-Gharib, al-Harbi proposes no counter-measures to respond to this perceived threat, and finds it sufficient to counsel Saudi Arabia's rulers not to trust the Shi'a.

Early Jihadist Anti-Shi'ism

Zarqawi seems to have relied most heavily in his sermon on a book by 'Imad 'Ali 'Abdul-Sami' Hussein entitled *The Treachery of the Shi'a and Its Impact on the Defeats of the Islamic Nation (Khiyanat al-shi'a wa athereha fi haz'a'im al-ummah al-islamiyyeh)*.²⁷ There are at least three instances where he borrows directly from this publication, although without citation.²⁸ According to its author, the book, which is widely available in electronic form over the internet, was completed on 16 November 2003.²⁹ It is unique in linking the fall of Baghdad in April 2003 to al-Gharib's theme of the Shi'a menace and to many historical examples of alleged Shi'a aid to the enemies of Islam.

In a sense, the Shi'a role in the American invasion of Iraq was a wake-up call to the jihadists, prompting them to search for similar precedents in Islamic history. Hussein dwells on Ibn al-'Alqami's treachery and even includes a fictional one-act play called *Upon the Walls of Baghdad* in which al-'Alqami, the 'Abbasid Caliph, and the phantom of History are characters.³⁰ According to Hussein, al-'Alqami "downsized" the 'Abbasid military for two reasons: to save funds to further indulge the caliph's decadence, and to leave Baghdad defenseless in the face of the Tatars. Hussein dispels the notion that al-'Alqami was motivated to perform this betrayal because his relatives had been the victims of anti-Shi'a riots in Baghdad the year before; rather, Hussein claims, his treachery can be traced to "the beliefs he carries."³¹

Hussein asserts that "treachery, betrayal and deceit is what passes for religion among the Shi'a"³² and—just as Zarqawi does—makes clear that he means, not only the mainstream Twelver Imamis, but also the Ismailis and Alawites when he speaks of the "treacherous Shi'a." Their impulse for treachery stems, he claims, from Shi'a doctrine that holds Sunnis to be infidels and that refers to them derogatively as the *nawasib*, or "those who are obstinate in hating Aal al-Bayt" (the "People of the House," including Mohammed, Ali, Fatima, Hasan ibn Ali, Hussein ibn Ali.) Hussein says there is no need to dwell on all the doctrinal differences that set the Shi'a apart from Islam because this has been amply done by many scholars before him. He is more interested in sounding an alarm by pointing out why the Islamic nation has been constantly thwarted politically and militarily. Hussein contends that the Shi'a are at the root of most of the calamities that have befallen Islam. He suggests that treachery has contaminated Shi'a blood, moreover, and they cannot be trusted to show benevolence even to those closest to them, such as the Aal al-Bayt themselves³³: "How can we enumerate their treachery when betrayal is in their blood and veins, and it is to them like water and air?"³⁴ He relies heavily on Ibn Kathir's book, *The Beginning and the End (Al-bidaya wal nihaya)*, in delineating the many Shi'a betrayals.³⁵

Hussein draws parallels between the Fatimids' relationship with the Crusaders and the "alliance" between the Americans and the Shi'a today in Iraq.³⁶ He also highlights the allegation that the Fatimid caliphs were not descended from Aal al-Bayt, but rather from a Jewish blacksmith. Furthermore, he draws a correlation between the Carmathian raids on Mecca (including the "theft" of the holy Black Stone) and Iranian-inspired disturbances and riots during the Hajj season.³⁷

Hussein lists the many "distractions" the Shi'a had put in place against the Seljuks and the Ayyubids at a time when the latter two Muslim dynasties were determined to address the Crusader threat. He echoes the sentiment that "Jerusalem was lost because of the treachery of the Shi'a."³⁸ Like al-Gharib, he devotes plenty of space as well to denouncing the Nusayris of Syria, going so far as to assert that the "Tatar" conqueror Tamerlane—who, according to Hussein, massacred hundreds of thousands of Sunnis in Syria and Iraq—was a Nusayri himself.³⁹ By referring to the first and second editions of al-Gharib's *Wa jaa' dawr al-majus*, Hussein also makes the case that Lebanon's Shi'a acted to further Israel's interests. Hussein then emphasizes the suspected allegiance of the world's Shi'a to Iran: "Iran is considered the nurturing mother for all the Shi'a and especially the Twelvers in every place," he writes, "and the Shi'a wherever they happen to be located are more loyal to Iran than to the land which they inhabit."⁴⁰

Hussein calls Iraq the "deep wound in the depths of the Islamic nation" and writes that the Shi'a betrayal there came about despite Saddam Hussein's "policy of appeasement." He contends that Saddam spent

large sums of money to build mosques and religious centers for the Shi'a in Iraq, and [gave] incentives to Shi'a leaders and individuals, to the extent that the president of the regime Saddam Hussein declared that he was descended from Hussein bin 'Ali and made 'Ali bin Abi Taleb's birthday a national holiday ...despite all of that the leading Shi'a clerics refused to cooperate with the Ba'ath.⁴¹

And now, Hussein continues, they have the gall to demand compensation for the former regime's political persecution of the Shi'a, "which was not persecution but rather a response to their never-ending treachery and mischief."⁴²

In conclusion, Hussein declares that the Shi'a "are the reason for most of the past and present setbacks endured by the Islamic nation.... So how can there be a rapprochement with those who allied themselves to the human and *jinn* devils in the past and the present to humiliate the Sunnis?"⁴³ His book reorients al-Gharib's argument, moving it beyond subtle suggestions of Shi'a treachery to highlighting their outright treacherous support for the American war Iraq. As far as jihadists are concerned, the support the American invasion received from Shi'i opposition leaders who agitated for it was the

epitome of betrayal in their times. And the precedent of al-'Alqami further justifies their anti-Shi'a hostility. It provides powerful imagery to underscore their view of the cyclical pattern to history and to support their claim that the Shi'a today are simply enacting the same role they played in the past. Like al-Gharib and al-Harbi, however, Hussein has no suggestions for action to counter this threat.

The Development of Jihadist Anti-Shi'a Ideology

In a book entitled *The Rafidhi-Crusader Alliance in Iraq (Al-tahaluf al-rafidhi al-salibi fil Iraq)*, Abdel-Muhsin al-Rafi'i brings many of Hussein's themes into sharper focus—though he never cites Hussein.⁴⁴ Al-Rafi'i says that he completed the book on 12 January 2005, and explains in the introduction that he was motivated to write it after seeing how much Hezbollah had distorted the reality of the Shi'a menace in many Muslims' eyes. He wanted to reveal the “extent of the *rafidhi* collaboration with the enemies of Allah and their role in the declared war on Islam ... towards the goal of destroying true Islam.” Continuing his denunciation of the Shi'a, al-Rafi'i writes: “Over the ages there did not pass a period of time when the *rafidhi* did not have a role in striking Muslims and conspiring against them with all the means available by way of betrayal, deceit and cunning, for the *rafidhi* are an esoteric group with many branches but one root, and they operate in the shadows to execute their goals.”⁴⁵ In essence, however, al-Rafi'i highlights the same historical timeline of betrayal as al-Gharib and Hussein, expanding on it only slightly when discussing the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry. He claims that “the Ottomans had a certain desire to retrieve al-Andalus [Spain] but the Shi'a played an important role in distracting the Ottomans in cahoots with the Crusaders to deny the Muslims this long-awaited dream.”⁴⁶

Where Al-Rafi'i does differ from the previous authors is in his focus on, and greater concern with, the current goals of this long-standing Shi'a-“Crusader” alliance. He contends that one goal is to use Iraq as means of achieving direct “Crusader” control over the Islamic world and its resources. Another of the alliance's goals is to create a “State of Greater Israel” from the banks of the Nile to the Euphrates River, and to prepare the ground for the False Messiah.⁴⁷ The author discerns the first vestiges of this plan in Saudi Arabia, where that country's Shi'a are “demanding their rights in order to spearhead the execution of the aforementioned plan in dismembering Saudi Arabia and bringing the Shi'a to power, and giving the Crusaders control of the Holy Sites as they did in Iraq,” thus fulfilling “the dream of the Jews.”⁴⁸ In analyzing Iran's foreign policy, Al-Rafi'i determines that there is also a “*Rafidhi*-Russian Alliance” directed against the Muslims of the Caucasus and Central Asia and a “*Rafidhi*-Hindu Alliance” directed against the Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent. The “Crusader” master plan calls for the lands of Islam to be handed over to the Shi'a, he argues, and where they are too few in number, other minorities—such as the Copts of Egypt or secularists (“the spawn of Communists”)—will take over.

Al-Rafi'i focuses on symbolism as well. Because the crescent is an Islamic symbol, for instance, he proposes changing the term "Shi'a Crescent" to the term "Shi'a Crucifix." He also suggests devising a symbol to represent a "Triangle of Evil" that would have the words "*rafidha*, Crusaders and Hindus" at its three corners and a Star of David at its center.⁴⁹

Yet despite the rampant Shi'a perfidy he has detected, al-Rafi'i writes that he is heartened by the apparent success of the jihadists in Iraq, who are confronting and foiling this "evil scheme" in the "land of the caliphate." His only lament is that "the governments of the region and even though they are in the majority associated with the Sunnis are unconcerned with the conspiracies being hatched to destroy Islam, even though these came in the form of a manifest military invasion that aims to occupy the lands of the Muslims, because the only concern of these governments is to stay in power."⁵⁰ He also chides "those clerics who have sold their religion cheaply" and have come out with *fatwas* against *jihad*.⁵¹

Al-Rafi'i contributes to the discussion by highlighting the jihadist role in putting a stop to the Shi'a conspiracy, but he, too, fails to offer any specific guidance about how the jihadists should act. Nevertheless, his thesis is an important stepping stone toward Zarqawi's assertion that jihadists such as himself must become the Islamic nation's vanguard in halting the designs of the Shi'a.

The Problem Posed by Hezbollah and the Mahdi Army

The anti-American and anti-Israel rhetoric and actions of the Iranian regime, and of such Shi'a radical groups as Hezbollah, seriously challenge the Wahhabi and jihadist myth of Shi'a treachery and collaboration with the enemies of Islam. But the jihadists have arrived at several explanations for this puzzling contradiction.⁵² Al-Rafi'i has his own theory about Hezbollah—an "Iranian creation" in his eyes—and it holds that the radical Shi'a organization is merely *posing* as an enemy of Israel to ward off accusations of treachery, which are leveled against the Shi'a generally. Hezbollah, moreover, entices Sunnis toward Shi'ism by playing on the popular Middle Eastern sentiment that supports the Palestinians cause. Its ultimate goal is, in fact, to stamp out the Sunni identity of Lebanon and to deny the latter any role in leading its society. Al-Rafi'i even uses the words of the former head of Hezbollah, Shaykh Subhi al-Tufaili, to suggest that Hezbollah actually serves to protect Israel's northern border.⁵³

Zarqawi's take on the issue is more expansive. He asserts that the Iranians—after seeing that the Lebanese Amel organization had been "burnt" and disgraced by its fighting against Palestinians—set about to "invent" a new organization called Hezbollah. This new group's guiding principle is that "every enemy of Iran is an enemy of Hezbollah ...which stands as a security cordon to prevent the Sunnis from crossing the border to confront Israelis."⁵⁴ Zarqawi then wonders why is it that Israel cannot stomach, and proceeds to

assassinate, a “harmless cripple” like Shaykh Ahmad Yassin while Hezbollah’s General Chairman Hassan Nasrallah holds regular rallies in downtown Beirut calling for Israel’s destruction and goes unharmed.⁵⁵ In a similar vein, Zarqawi derides Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s “screaming” to destroy Israel as mere oratory.⁵⁶

According to Zarqawi, Iran is more afraid of having “a strong Sunni neighbor because their main war is not with the Jews and not with the Christians but their first and last war is with Sunnis.”⁵⁷ The Iranian policy in Iraq, therefore, seeks to change that country’s demographics by facilitating massive Shi’a immigration and by furthering a policy of massacring the Sunnis.⁵⁸ They are aided in doing so by “the Iranian Sistani, the occupier’s preacher and the imam of heresy and unbelief who issues *fatwas* that are catastrophic to the Sunnis, in addition to those who serve the occupiers like al-Hakim and Ja’afari and their followers who are wolves in sheepskin ... to expand and consolidate the geographic domain of Iranian Persian *rafidhi* rule.”⁵⁹

Zarqawi also appears to declare war on Muqatada al-Sadr’s Mahdi Army that twice (in April and November 2004) clashed with U.S. troops in Iraq. He regards them as another Shi’a ruse, akin to Hezbollah. Their real role “is to protect their *rafidhi* creed and to fight the Sunnis and they are being prepared as an alternative card to be gambled with in case the balance in assuming power tips in favor of the resistance rather than the politicians.”⁶⁰ Directing his words to al-Sadr in the wake of the reprisal killings that occurred after the Samarra-shrine bombing, Zarqawi says, “We tell you that you have crossed your boundaries.... You have falsely claimed to be protecting the mosques of the Sunnis.... And we have agreed to join the battle against you and your flock of sheep but on two conditions.” Those conditions are that the Mahdi Armies retrieve their weapons from the “Crusaders”—weapons that were voluntarily handed over to American forces as part of a brokered cease-fire in November 2004—and that only Mahdi Army fighters who know the identity of their fathers emerge to fight Zarqawi’s men.⁶¹ Here Zarqawi is deriding the Sadrists for caving in to the Americans after the two confrontations in Najaf, and is alluding to what he sees as Shi’a sexual deviancy, which results in illegitimate offspring.

More of Zarqawi’s Tirade Against the Shi’a

The book that Zarqawi quotes most often in his diatribe against the Shi’a is *For Allah and Then for History (Lillahi wa thuma lil-tareekh)* by a pseudonymous author who goes under the name Hussein al-Musawi.⁶² This author is an alleged convert from Shi’ism to Sunnism who, as a former insider, reveals the secret machinations of the Shi’a clerical establishment. Such secrets include lewd allegations about Ayatollah Khomeini’s penchant for pedophilia,⁶³ as well as charges that Khomeini intended to destroy Mecca and Medina because they were “Wahhabi strongholds” and to make Karbala “into the *qibleh* towards which Muslims direct their prayers.”⁶⁴

Zarqawi castigates the Shi'a for many more sexual deviations as a result of the *muta'a* (temporary marriage) sanctioned by their clerics. He claims that it leads to even more depravity among them than what is tolerated in Europe and America, particularly in regard to such matters as incest, wife-swapping and anal sex.⁶⁵ But what roils Zarqawi the most—if the break in his voice is any indication—are the slanderous contentions leveled by the Shi'a on the chastity of Ayesha, the Prophet Muhammad's wife⁶⁶; he vows that “a hair from Ayesha's head is more beloved to us than ourselves or our families or all of mankind.”⁶⁷

In addition to dwelling on this large volume of Shi'a treachery and deviancy, Zarqawi further justifies his excessive tactics against them by claiming that previous Muslim rulers and commanders handled the Shi'a problem in a similar way. He proclaims, “What we do regarding all these crimes, and that is only to put into effect Allah's religious instruction upon them through killing and repressing them, we are in this case—by Allah—not bringing anything improvised to the *mujahidin* but only implementing the rule of Allah against [the Shi'a] as it was implemented by our predecessors.”⁶⁸ Zarqawi then proceeds to list historical instances when entire Shi'a populations were put to the sword or, alternatively, hurled into burning trenches.

Implications for Counter-terrorism

On July 29, 2005, the *New York Times* featured the story of Zaid Horani, a Jordanian jihadist who had been arrested four months earlier by local authorities when he returned to Jordan after fighting with Zarqawi's outfit in Iraq. Part of what compelled him to go, his mother volunteered, was that “he hated the Shiites.” The next day *Asharq al-Awsat*, a leading Saudi-owned Arabic-language daily that translates and runs stories from the *Times*, printed the article without the reference to hating the Shi'a. Why would the 27-year-old Horani develop such hatred toward the Shi'a while growing up in a country that hardly has any Shi'a? And why would a Saudi-owned paper excise his mother's quote?

The Saudi government may be rightly worried about the fruits that it has allowed to grow. Several decades of sustained anti-Shi'a propaganda issued by the Wahhabis—and recently augmented by jihadists chiming in on the topic—seem to have psychologically primed many young Sunni jihadist sympathizers in the Middle East to comprehend Zarqawi's sermon and observe his instructions. Zarqawi did not need to do too much anti-Shi'a brainwashing; much of the heavy lifting, such as casting the Shi'a as beyond the confines of Islam and highlighting their alleged treachery, had already been done. Zarqawi simply built on these perceptions when he asserted that “traitors” lurking within the Muslim camp were responsible for the success of Christians and Jews in thwarting the Muslim nation at every turn. To end this cycle of defeat, he argues, the jihadists need to do what heroic Muslim redeemers such as Salahuddin had done before them: address

the Shi'a problem. Past attempts to fix the problem have failed, Zarqawi adds, as evidenced by the current pitiful state of Muslim lands. The only permanent solution, therefore, is to excise the Shi'a and put an end to their very presence. Zarqawi uses the words "mass annihilation" and recommends it as jihadist policy.

Whether such jihadist anti-Shi'ism will survive the death of Zarqawi, its leading proponent, is now the question. Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, Zarqawi's purported successor as head of al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, indicates that it will indeed continue. He made this point very clear in his first message to the world (posted on several jihadist websites 13 June 2006):

We say to the grandchildren of Ibn al-'Alqami: you who have taken gods in addition to Allah, and slandered the honor of the Prophet, and cursed his blessed companions, and were ardent in the service of the Crusaders We shall do unto you as Abu Baker al-Siddiq saw fit to do against the apostates, and we will continue what Abu Musa'ab—God bless his soul—started with you, and we will fight you until the word of monotheism is supreme and the word of your tyrants is brought low.

Even jihadist groups other than Zarqawi's al-Qaeda are playing "catch-up" and reconfiguring their propaganda to address the Shi'a menace. The Ansar al-Sunnah terrorist organization posted a video on the internet on June 7 entitled "The Throbbing Vein that Confronts the Malice of the *Rawafidh*" (*Al-'irq al-nabidh fi ssad hiqd al-rawafidh*) This video, which runs for over an hour, highlights acts of aggression attributed to Shi'a militias over the last two years in Iraq, and ends with the fighters of Ansar al-Sunnah vowing vengeance.⁶⁹ Other jihadist groups active in Iraq, which are redirecting their resources from targeting American to fueling sectarian war, have also clearly decided to adopt some form of Zarqawi's anti-Shi'ism. The fact that they need to do so to remain relevant to *jihad* testifies to the popularity of Zarqawi's policy.

Zarqawi's most enduring legacy, therefore, may be the transformation of anti-Shi'ism into a central tenet of the jihadist worldview. He argued that Islam's victory is tied to the physical eradication of the Shi'a, and there is evidence that adherence to this policy is expanding among jihadists. The dissemination of anti-Shi'a propaganda should be considered an act of ideological terrorism, and raises the issue of how counterterrorist efforts should address the plethora of Saudi-funded Wahhabi propaganda directed against the Shi'a. At last count, there were at least twelve actively maintained websites dedicated to disseminating anti-Shi'a material.⁷⁰ Shutting down these websites and monitoring the flow of orchestrated hate speech directed against Shi'a should become a priority for those concerned with the spread of jihadist ideology.

NOTES

1. Although the audio recording was posted on several jihadist websites a few days before Zarqawi was killed on 8 June 2006, the accompanying text stated that this sermon had been prepared two months in advance but that accentuating circumstances had prevented an earlier release. The recording appeared as three separate files (two approximately 1.5 hours in length, and the third ran for one hour) and were identified as three separate “tapes” by a moderator who spoke before Zarqawi. The recordings were released by the Shura Council of the Mujaheddin (*Majlis shura al-mujaheddin*). The title of the sermon is a play of words on the similarly phrased opening verse in the al-Ghashia *sura* (88:1): “Has not there come to you the news of the overwhelming calamity?” (M.H. Shakir translation).

2. Zarqawi, “*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*,” minute 29 of tape 3.

3. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyya, *The Syllabus of the Sunnah* ([Minhaj al-sunnah), 1st ed. (1406 A.H.), vol. 3, pp. 377-78, available from <http://arabic.islamicweb.com/books/taimiya.asp?book=365>. Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328 A.D.) was born in Harran (northern Syria) and died in Damascus. As part of his biographical lore, it has been recorded that he himself went on several Seljuk campaigns to quell Shi’a (specifically Nusayri and Druze) rebellions in Kisrawan, Wadi al-Taym and the Jurd Mountains of the Syrian coast.

4. There is a split opinion among jihadists over targeting the Shi’a ruling elite versus the Shi’a laity. Ibn Taymiyya sanctioned the targeting of the Shi’a ruling elite only and marking them for death. Zarqawi, in a response to an admonishment from his former mentor Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, argued that there is no longer a distinction between the elite and the laity since, under a democracy, the lay people of the Shi’a elect their rulers. See Nibras Kazimi, “A Virulent Ideology in Mutation: Zarqawi Upstages Maqdisi,” *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, vol. 2 (Washington: Hudson Institute, September 2005): 68.

5. There are three other books written under the name “Dr. Abdullah Muhammad al-Gharib”: *Notes on the Iranian Revolution and the Stance of Islamists Regarding It (Lamahat ‘an al-thawra al-iraniyya wa mawqif al-islamiyeen minha)*, undated but written after *Wa ja’a dawr al-majus* since it cites the earlier book; *Amal and the Palestinian Camps (Amel wel mukhayemmat al-filisteeniyya)*, undated but also written after *Wa ja’a dawr al-majus* since he defends his earlier thesis in the introduction; and *The Conditions of the Sunnis in Iran (Ahwal ahil al-sunnah fi iran)*, 1990.

“Dr. al-Gharib” is assumed to be a professor of Islamic Studies in Egypt. In email correspondence dated 6 May 2006, however, Dr. Ahmad Rasim Elnafis, a leading Shi’a Egyptian scholar, disputed the existence of any scholar by the name of “Dr. Abdullah Muhammad al-Gharib” in Egypt. Furthermore, it has been insinuated (see Mishari al-Dhayedi in *Asharq Alawsat*, “Muhammad suroor ghadera...”, 28 October 2004) that the real author was a Syrian cleric called Shaykh Muhammad Suroor Zein al-‘Abidin, who was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood but left Syria in the 1960s to teach Islamic jurisprudence in Saudi Arabia (where one of his students was the neo-Salafist ideologue Salman al-Audeh). Suroor then moved on to Kuwait before settling in Great Britain in 1984. His followers are known as “Surooriyoon” and are derided by jihadists as “procrastinators of *jihad*.” Suroor began publishing a magazine called *Al-Sunnah* from Birmingham and supervised the website www.alsunnah.org, which was shut down on 20 May 2006.

According to Al-Dhayedi, Suroor left Britain indefinitely for Jordan in October 2004, and that his contribution to jihadist ideology was to combine the strict anti-schismatic views of Ibn Taymiyyah against sects like the Shi’a with the *hakimiya* theories of Seyyid Qutub. ‘Ali Al-Ahmad of the Institute of Gulf Studies in Washington, D.C., claimed in a conversation with this author to have spoken to a confidante of Suroor’s who had heard the aforementioned shaykh take credit for writing under the pseudonym “Dr. Abdullah Muhammad al-Gharib.” This assertion seems to be corroborated by the book’s many detailed references to Kuwaiti Shi’a that may have reflected Suroor’s long sojourn in Kuwait at the time of writing the book. In a curious coincidence, Zarqawi’s *nom de guerre* while in Afghanistan was “Abu Abdullah al-Gharib.”

6. Al-Gharib, *Wa ja’a dawr al-majus*, p. 54 (see note referenced to Ibn Kathir), from the internet edition available at www.d-sunnah.org, and Zarqawi, “*H el ataka hadith al-rafidha*,” minute 37 of tape 1.

7. Zarqawi, "*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*," minute 27 of tape 2.
 8. Al-Gharib, *Wa ja'a dawr al-majus*, p. 153.
 9. *Ibid.*, p. 222.
 10. *Ibid.* pp. 53-56. He attributes the "royal blood" theory to the Pakistani anti-Shi'a writer Ihsan Ilahi Dahir (or Zahir), who is the author of several similar, and equally influential, books against the Shi'a. Dahir sustained fatal wounds in a bomb blast in Lahore, Pakistan, in 1987 that was attributed to Shi'a militants, and died while being treated in Saudi Arabia.
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
 12. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
 13. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
 14. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
 15. *Ibid.*, p. 219. This visceral attack on the Nusayris may be an added clue hinting that the author was Syrian in origin (see note no. 4). For more on the Nusayris, see pages 393-419.
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
 17. *Ibid.*, pp. 280-84.
 18. *Ibid.*, p. 296.
 19. Yitzhak Nakash, *Reaching for Power: The Shi'a in the Modern Arab World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p. 45. Nakash traces the Ibn Saba' myth to medieval times, but highlights that it was revived by Wahhabi propaganda in the 1920s during Ibn Saud's early overtures for taking on the mantle of Islamic leadership. The next two phases of Wahhabi writings on the topic came in 1959, when the Al-Azhar University in Cairo recognized Shi'ism as a legitimate school of Islamic law, and then following the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79.
 20. Al-Gharib, *Wa ja'a dawr al-majus*, p. 317.
 21. Al-Harbi is denounced by jihadists as an "apologist" for the Saudi regime. He has several sermons arguing against the feasibility of *jihad* at this time, saying that it would only engender the hostility of the rest of the world when Islam is at its weakest.
 22. Al-Harbi, "*Al-ikhtaboot al-shii' fil 'alem*," minute 10 of audio file 2.
 23. *Ibid.*, minute 29 of audio file 2.
 24. Al-Harbi has another 2.5-hour sermon (in four audio files) entitled "The Doctrinal and Military Relationship Between the Shi'a and the Jews" ("*Al-'ilaqa bayn al-shi'a wal yahood 'aqadiyyen wa 'askariyyen*") on www.albainah.net in which he makes the case that shared beliefs, such as waiting for the advent of the Mahdi or Messiah and seeing themselves as divinely chosen, binds the Jews to the Shi'a. He adds that "Ibn Saba' was the first to invent the *rafidh* and the *rafdh* reverts to Judaism."
 25. Zarqawi, "*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*," minute 39 of tape 3.
 26. The 30 April 2003 petition was signed by 450 leading Saudi Shi'a and entitled "Partners in the Homeland." It advocated a platform for reform and turning back decades of Shi'i disenfranchisement. At the time, it was a measure of how emboldened the Arab Shi'a of the Middle East were by the rise of Shi'a fortunes in post-Saddam Iraq. The task of articulating the neo-Wahhabi response fell to Shaykh Safar bin Abdel-Rahman al-Hawali who wrote "A Response to the Demands Delivered by the Shi'a Sect to the Crown Prince" on 7 July 2003. For another, more extremist Wahhabi approach to the issue of Saudi Shi'a, see Nassir al-'Umar, "The Situation of the *Rafidha* in the Land of Monotheism" ("*Waqi' al-rafidha fi bilad al-tawheed*"), undated (available at www.albainah.com).
- In "*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*" (minute 30 of tape 1), Zarqawi refers in detail to a *fatwa* issued by Saudi Arabia's Permanent Committee for Studies and *Ifita'* that declares the Shi'a as idolaters who are beyond the confines of Islam. He laments the fact that this clear *fatwa* has not deterred the Saudi government from "bringing [the *rafidha*] close to them

and sitting with them and talking to them in official dialogue councils.”

27. The author is identified as bearing a “PhD in Islamic Culture and Proselytizing,” but there is no indication of his citizenship, age or current residence. There are also no other books under this name.

28. In “*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*” (minute 44 of tape 3), when Zarqawi discusses a tradition attributed to Imam Hussein about employing surreptitious methods to kill Sunnis, such as pushing a wall on top of them, see Hussein, *Khiyanat al-shi'a*, p. 11. The example of Imam Musa al-Kazim and Ibn Yaqtin in “*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*” (minute 40 of tape 3) is taken from Hussein, *Khiyanat al-shi'a*, p. 19. And Zarqawi (minute 30 of tape 3) also uses two quotes from the preface to Hussein’s book made by Mustafa Al-Siba’i and ‘Ali Ahmad Al-Saloo to advise against reconciliation between Shi’a and Sunnis.

29. Hussein, *Khiyanat al-shi'a*, p. 109. The copy used for this article was downloaded from www.tawhed.ws before it was shut down in late March 2006.

30. Ibid., pp. 100-106. The play is attributed to Muhammad ‘Ali Badawi, who first published it in *Al-Bayyan* Magazine, no. 189, in July 2003.

31. Ibid., p. 45.

32. Ibid., p. 2.

33. Ibid., p. 14.

34. Ibid., p. 107.

35. Ibn Kathir (1301-1373) was born in Syria’s Horan plain and allegedly studied under Ibn Taymiyya and continued his studies under the latter’s successor Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jozziyyeh. Ibn Kathir wrote multi-volume tracts on Islamic history tinged with virulent anti-Shi’ism.

36. Hussein, *Khiyanat al-shi'a*, p. 26.

37. Ibid., p. 32.

38. Ibid., p. 59.

39. Ibid., p. 68.

40. Ibid., p. 89. This is a widely held belief, even among some of the region’s rulers such as President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and King Abdullah II of Jordan, both of whom have recently made public remarks to this effect.

41. Ibid., p. 93.

42. Ibid., note 188, p. 97.

43. Ibid., pp. 107-108.

44. There are at least two instances in which Zarqawi borrowed from this book in “*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*” (again without citation): for the quote made by Subhi Al-Tufaili (minute 43 of tape 2), see Al-Rafi’i, *Al-tahaluf al-rafidhi al-salibi fil iraq*, p. 45; and when Zarqawi discusses Qajar benevolence toward Christians (minute 20 of tape 2), see al-Rafi’i, *Al-tahaluf al-rafidhi al-salibi fil iraq*, p. 16. Al-Rafi’i is another mysterious author like Hussein and al-Gharib, and there are no other books under his name. This book was downloaded from www.tawhed.ws.

45. Al-Rafi’i, *Al-tahaluf al-rafidhi al-salibi fil iraq*, p. 5.

46. Ibid., p. 18. Zarqawi (see “*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*,” minute 17 of tape 2) likewise has kind words for the Ottomans whom he calls “rejuvenators” of the faith; while “[the Ottomans] were busy advancing *jihad* into the heart of Europe,” the seditionist Shi’a were being supported by Western powers to undermine them.

47. Ibid., p. 21.

48. Ibid., p. 22. The flimsy foundations on which Al-Rafi’i makes most of his assertions are highlighted by his reliance of relying on blatantly forged memos, attributed to the Badr Corps, detailing plans to harm Iraq’s Sunnis and to take over

Baghdad (see p. 24).

49. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

52. There is a significant quantity of jihadist literature that is specifically anti-Hezbollah: see Abu Basseer al-Tartousi, "Lebanese Hezbollah and the Export of the Shi'a Rafidhi Creed" (*Hezbollah al-lubnani wa tassdeer al-madhab al-shii' al-rafidhi*), 2004, from www.tawhed.ws; Abdel-Mun'im Shafiq, "Hezbollah: A Different View" (*Hezbollah: ro'ya mughayira*), undated but written after the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 and available from www.albainah.net; and a two-part essay by Muhammad Suroor Zein al-Abidin, "Hezbollah's Victory" (*Intissar Hezbollahi*), undated from www.alsunnah.org. It is interesting to note that the hyperlink on Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi's website *Tawhid wal Jihad* to Hezbollah-related topics was deliberately misspelled as *Hezb-Al-Lat* (Party of Lat), Al-Lat being a pre-Islamic pagan deity—a not-so-subtle accusation of pagan worship leveled against Hezbollah.

This jihadist antipathy toward what should be a fellow terrorist entity deserves further study. There is a revealing interview, for instance, conducted by 'Usama bin Abdel-Fatah of the *Al-Ansar Bulletin* with Ayman Al-Zawahiri dated 1415 A.H. (1994 A.D.) and republished on www.tawhed.ws under the title "Our Stance Regarding Iran: Countering the Allegation of Cooperation between the Salafist Jihadist Movement and Rafidhist Iran" (*Mawqifiina min iran: al-red a'la tuhmet al-taawun bayn al-haraka al-jihadiyya al-salafiyya ma'a iran al-rafidhiyyeh*). In it, Zawahiri makes an ardent case denying associations between himself and the Iranian regime, thus reflecting a general sense of embarrassment at such a relationship among jihadists. Recently, Palestinian discussion forums such as www.palestinianforum.com, where self-described jihadist sympathizers regularly post, have featured attacks on the Palestinian Islamic Jihad organization for being associated with Iran.

53. Al-Rafi'i, *Al-tahaluf al-rafidhi al-salibi fil iraq*, pp. 42-45.

54. Zarqawi, "*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*," minute 43 of tape 2.

55. *Ibid.*, minute 50 of tape 2.

56. *Ibid.*, minute 36 of tape 3.

57. *Ibid.*, minute 55 of tape 2.

58. *Ibid.*, minute 57 of tape 2.

59. *Ibid.*, minute 53 of tape 3.

60. *Ibid.*, minute 54 of tape 3.

61. *Ibid.*, minute 56 of tape 3.

62. Zarqawi cites this book numerous times in his sermon, but no copy could be found on any of the various anti-Shi'a websites. There is a detailed refutation of the book, however, that quotes from it at length at www.shiweb.org/books/llah_llhaq_1/index.html under the title "For Allah and For Truth" (*Lillahi wa lil-haqeeqa*). This piece is dated 24 August 2002, and its author, 'Ali Aal Muhsin, writes that Musawi's book had been "published recently." Muhsin reports that Musawi claims to write under a pseudonym for fear of Shi'a retribution. But Muhsin argues that the biographical details he reveals—such as hailing from Karbala and having interacted closely with many Shi'a luminaries whom he names—create a profile of someone who could not, and does not, exist. Muhsin concludes that Musawi must be a Sunni by birth.

63. Zarqawi, "*Hel ataka hadith al-rafidha*," minute 60 of tape 2.

64. *Ibid.*, minute 46 of tape 3.

65. *Ibid.*, minute 75 of tape 2.

66. *Ibid.*, minute 84 of tape 2.

67. Ibid., minute 36 of tape 3.

68. Ibid., minute 3 of tape 3.

69. The *nom de guerre* of the masked presenter of the video is given as “Abu ‘Uthman al-‘Ubeidi.” This choice for a name is interesting since, at the time of the Kadhimiya Bridge tragedy last year, a Sunni youth named ‘Uthman al-‘Ubeidi died while rescuing several Shi’a from drowning in the Tigris River, and was hailed by Iraqi politicians as a hero of Shi’a-Sunni brotherhood in Iraq. The choice by the presenter seems to be a direct stab at notions of reconciliation among Iraq’s mutually hostile sects.

70. These include: www.albainah.net, www.d-sunnah.net, www.alburhan.com, www.ansar.org, www.alrased.net, www.islammemo.cc, www.shiaa.org, www.almjos.com, www.montadaalquran.com, www.alminbar.net, www.chihad.net, www.alsunnah.org.