

Assessing the Relationship between Resistance and Defensive Jihad in Shiite Political Jurisprudence

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Abstract

This research aims to explain the relationship between "resistance" and "defensive jihad" in Shiite political jurisprudence, examining whether these two concepts are synonymous or whether there are serious distinctions between them in terms of nature, scope, and function. Given the importance of defending the Islamic polity and its role in preserving the security and cohesion of Islamic society, one of the significant challenges in political jurisprudence is the precise differentiation between resistance and defense. Employing a descriptive-analytical method and based on ijthihad methodology, this article analyzes relevant theoretical sources and foundations and demonstrates that resistance is a broad, strategic, and comprehensive concept that can be articulated and applied across various political, cultural, economic, security, wartime, peacetime, and negotiating arenas; whereas defensive jihad is a more limited concept, largely pertaining to practical engagement with threats and aggression in the domain of defense and security. The findings of this research indicate that in Shiite political jurisprudence, resistance is understood as a coherent strategy for safeguarding the identity and existence of Islamic society, and defensive jihad is considered one of the operational mechanisms and significant instances of resistance under specific circumstances. Accordingly, the conceptual distinction between resistance and defensive jihad is essential for a more precise understanding of the functions of defense, security, and sound governance in Islamic political thought.

Keywords

Resistance, Defensive Jihad, Shiite Political Jurisprudence, Security, Islamic Governance.

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1. Introduction

Defending the Islamic polity is among the most important individual and social duties and responsibilities of every Muslim, especially given the numerous functions and the worldly and otherworldly, material and spiritual effects attached to it. Undoubtedly, revisiting the functions and effects of defense can not only elucidate its role and significance in individual and social life, but also encourage individuals to attain the station of the *mujāhidīn* (strugglers) and martyrs. One of the fundamental and challenging issues in Shiite political jurisprudence is the question of resistance and its distinction from defense. Ensuring sustainable security, as one of the essential needs of governments and political systems, has been a focus within the cycle of governance. Among the instruments that can be viewed in the present era as an important instance for ensuring security is the strategy of the resistance front. This strategy, in a coherent and purposeful manner, is based on Islamic beliefs and values and popular presence in the West Asia region, and is considered one of the valuable achievements of the Islamic Revolution. So much so that the thought of the resistance front in the literature of international relations and regional security has had a direct connection with the goals of the Islamic Revolution. This achievement serves as a fundamental strategy upon which one can rely to defend the Islamic polity and Muslim lands. Accordingly, strengthening the culture of resistance in Islamic societies against the culture of arrogance (*istikbār*) and the hegemonic system is imperative. This research, within the framework of political jurisprudence and based on a descriptive-analytical method grounded in *ijtihād* methodology, seeks to explain the category of resistance and its distinction from defensive jihad. In response to the question of what constitutes the distinction between resistance and defensive jihad, it maintains that resistance is considered a significant strategy in the Islamic system. Naturally, based on the category of resistance, numerous outcomes—including victory, independence, freedom, and others—can be achieved. In this regard, studies concerning the principle of resistance against arrogance and hegemonic states have received attention; however, the distinction between these two categories has not been explored. Therefore, this research has endeavored, by analyzing their foundations in the field of political jurisprudence, to present a comprehensive investigation. Accordingly, the main question of the present research is the explanation of the strategic approach to resistance and its distinction from defensive jihad in political jurisprudence. Our hypothesis is that in political jurisprudence, defensive jihad is viewed as a mechanism, whereas resistance is viewed as a macro-strategy.

As for the background for this research, it must be pointed out that the existing writings on this subject are predominantly concerned with the principle of resistance or defensive jihad and have not attended to the distinction between these two categories. Hence, it can be said that a discussion centered on the distinction between resistance and defensive jihad has no written precedent, and thus differentiating these two categories with an analytical approach is considered among the contribution of this research. In the present paper, while elucidating the concept of resistance and its distinction from defensive jihad, the authors maintain that the essential step in understanding the distinction between resistance and defensive jihad across various domains depends on an accurate recognition and comprehension of the concept of resistance as a strategy. Accordingly, some policies of the Islamic system—adopting the approach of resistance as a strategy and policy, both domestically and in the international arena and foreign policy—are examined in this research.

2. Conceptual Analysis

2.1. Jihad

Lexicographers believe that the term *jihād* derives from the root "j-h-d," meaning hardship, effort, and capacity (Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, 1991, p. 208). It has also been used to mean endurance (Ibn Manẓūr, 1994, vol. 3, p. 133). In *Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr*, it is defined as capacity and hardship (Fayyūmī, 1994, vol. 2, p. 112). In the terminology of jurists, it refers to the expenditure of life, wealth, and capability in the path of advancing Islam and upholding its rites (Najafī, 1984, vol. 21, p. 3). In this regard, al-Shahīd al-Thānī maintains that *jihād* is the expenditure of life and wealth in a specified manner for combatting polytheists or rebels in the course of promoting and elevating Islam (al-Shahīd al-Thānī, 1993, vol. 3, p. 7). Ayatollah Motahhari states: "Some believe that there should fundamentally be no law of war in religion; whereas we know that one of the branches of our religion is *jihād*" (Motahhari, 1993, vol. 20, pp. 218–252). It appears that the intended meaning of *jihād* is striving with life and wealth and combating enemies for the advancement of Islam and Muslims.

2.2. Defense (*Difāʿ*)

In the lexicographical tradition, *defāʿ* (defense) has been used in various meanings: (1) repelling and driving away with force: "Had God not repelled some people by means of others, the earth would have been corrupted" (Quran, 2:251); Ibn Manẓūr, 1993, vol. 2, p. 395; Zabīdī, 1994, vol. 11, p. 115;

Ibn al-Athīr, 1988, vol. 2, p. 124; Fayyūmī, 1994, vol. 2, p. 196). (2) Aiding and supporting: "Indeed God defends those who have believed" (Quran, 22:38). (3) Departing or migrating: "I have departed from such-and-such a place" (Fayyūmī, 1994, vol. 2, p. 196). Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī states in this regard: When *dafʿ* is transitive with the preposition *ilā*, it means giving, paying, or restoring, as in the verse *fa-dfaʿū ilayhim amwālahum*: "return their properties to them" (Quran, 4:58); but when transitive with the preposition *ʿan*, it means assisting, as in the verse *Inna Allāha yudāfiʿu ʿan alladhīna āmanū* (Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, 1991, p. 316; Quran, 22:38). Defensive *jihād* is combat with the motivation of defending Islam, the system, and the political government against an invading enemy that threatens the foundation and existence of Islam, or intends to seize Muslim lands and property, or to kill a group of Muslims (Ibn Barrāj, 1986, vol. 1, p. 297; al-Shahīd al-Thānī, 1992, vol. 1, p. 217; al-Shahīd al-Thānī, 1993, vol. 3, pp. 7–8). It should be noted, however, that defense is an innate matter, and God Almighty has placed it in the nature of all beings; hence, all creatures possess a commendable defensive capacity and use it to protect themselves against incidents and enemy attacks. The religion of Islam, by establishing laws, has channeled this innate inclination in a principled and correct manner and has granted humans the right not to yield before aggressors and to defend themselves using various defensive means and instruments. All divinely revealed laws have accepted defense as an inalienable right for any individual or group that is attacked (Makarem Shirazi, 1995, vol. 2, p. 28). Jurists such as al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī, al-ʿAllāmah al-Ḥillī, al-Shahīd al-Awwal, and al-Shahīd al-Thānī have held that defense of life, honor, and sanctity is absolutely obligatory, regardless of whether the defender has an expectation of safety (Ḥillī, 1988, vol. 1, p. 307; Ḥillī, 1993, vol. 3, p. 571; al-Shahīd al-Awwal, 1997, vol. 2, p. 59; al-Shahīd al-Thānī, 1993, vol. 3, p. 12).

According to al-ʿAllāmah, even if the aggressor is a Muslim, and defense leads to his death, defense is still obligatory.

In this regard, Imam Khomeini writes: "Defense is obligatory, even if one knows that he himself or the aggressor will be killed" (Khomeini, 2006, vol. 1, p. 553). Of course, defense has been extensively discussed in jurisprudential texts, and jurists have deliberated on its various dimensions and aspects. In Islamic law, the scope of defense is confined to the following four areas: defending Islam and preserving and protecting it against enemies; defending the subjects of the Islamic state; defending the *dār al-islām* (territory of Islam); and defending the Islamic polity.

2.3. Resistance (*Muqāwama*)

The term *muqāwama* derives from the root "q-w-m," and lexicographers have mentioned various meanings for it, such as: moderation; stability and continuity (Ibn al-Athīr, 1988, vol. 4, p. 125); and steadfastness, endurance, and perseverance (Dehkhoda, 1998, vol. 14, p. 21302; Moein, 2002, vol. 1, p. 255). Resistance (*muqāwama*) and steadfastness are among the concepts emphasized in the Quran, where adherence to them is regarded as the path to deliverance from oppressors and hardships (Quran, 9:7). In some verses, God has obligated the divine prophets to steadfastness and confronting enemies: "So be steadfast as you have been commanded" (Quran, 11:112), and has given the glad tidings that if this practice is upheld, divine help and succor, as well as material and spiritual blessings, will descend upon the community (Quran, 72:16; Quran, 41:30). The concept of resistance signifies standing firm and persisting upon the principles and doctrinal foundations against change, transgression, and aggression by the global hegemonic system: "What is the meaning of resistance? The meaning of resistance is that a person chooses a path which he knows to be the path of truth, the correct path, and begins to move along this path, and obstacles cannot divert him from moving on this path or stop him; this is the meaning of resistance" (Khamenei, June 4, 2019). Hence, the meaning of resistance encompasses cultural, political, and economic resistance (Khamenei, August 21, 2016), and it is a combination of various intellectual and mental elements. Naturally, failing to attend to the foundations, principles, requirements, and criteria of resistance leads to an incorrect understanding of it, and consequently, one cannot proceed toward realizing its operational models. In this regard, the Supreme Leader states: "Promote and propagate the theory of resistance against the formidable enemy. Let no one imagine that because the enemy has bombs, missiles, propaganda apparatuses, and the like, we should retreat; no, the theory of resistance is an authentic and correct theory—both in theory and in practice; from both perspectives—it must be promoted" (Khamenei, November 3, 2018).

3. Types of Defense

In jurisprudential works, defense (*difāʿ*) has been divided into two types: general and specific. Specific defense refers to the deterrent force against an illegitimate danger aimed at repelling it from one's own inviolable person or from others, whereas general defense refers to the deterrent power employed to repel danger from human society against aggression (Ebrahimi, 2003, p. 96). Imam Khomeini (may his soul be sanctified) divided defense into two

categories: defense of the Islamic domain and defense of the self and the like. Regarding the first category, he writes: "If an Islamic country or its borders are attacked by a dangerous enemy, such that the Islamic community is exposed to peril, defense is obligatory upon everyone"; he then extends this to political and economic domination as well, stating: "If commercial relations with the enemies of Islam endanger the Islamic domain and Muslim lands politically, it is obligatory upon all Muslims to refrain from such relations" (Khomeini, 2006, vol. 1, p. 552). Regarding the relationship between defense and *jihād*, it should be said that the meaning of *jihād* is present in both terms, signifying the exertion of maximum effort and striving while enduring hardship and difficulty in confronting the enemy. Of course, according to lexicographers, the semantic scope of *jihād* is broad and includes every kind of effort and struggle, by any means and weapon, against any enemy (Ibn Manẓūr, 1994, vol. 1, p. 283); however, in jurisprudential terminology, *jihād* refers to fighting and sacrificing life and wealth against the enemies of religion who obstruct the elevation of Islam and the establishment of divine laws (al-Shahīd al-Thānī, 1993, vol. 3, p. 7), whereas defense denotes fighting with the aim of defending Islam and Muslim lands against an invading enemy that threatens the foundation of Islam, or intends to seize Muslim lands, honor, and property, or to kill a group of Muslims (al-Shahīd al-Thānī, 1992, vol. 1, p. 216). It must be added that some jurists have mentioned noteworthy differences between defense and *jihād* (Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', 2001, p. 382).

4. Quranic and Hadith-Based Evidence for Defensive Jihad

In numerous Quranic verses, the categories of defense and *jihād* have been addressed. God states in Surah al-Baqarah, verse 251: "And if God did not repel some people by means of others, the earth would certainly have been corrupted." And in Surah al-Ḥajj, verses 39–40, He says: "Permission [to fight] is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged ... And if God did not repel some people by means of others, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which God's name is much remembered would have been destroyed." Undoubtedly, according to the logic of the Quran, defending the centers of monotheism and combating corruption is considered an obligatory duty upon all Muslims, and divine help and succor are regarded as a certain and assured matter for the defenders. Of course, divine help is not the same as certain victory over enemies, for God Almighty always assists Muslims by strengthening their faith, bestowing tranquility and peace upon their hearts, and instilling fear and terror in the

hearts of their enemies; however, it must be borne in mind that this world is a world of causes, contradictions, and competing interests, and it is possible that the enemy may prevail over the Muslim army in some instances by employing particular tactics and ruses. Nevertheless, Muslims must stand against the oppressors by preparing up-to-date capabilities alongside reliance upon God. It is indeed surprising that some Muslims believe that in the face of the onslaught of the infidels and Zionists against Muslim lands, the massacre of the general populace—especially children and women—the destruction of their mosques and places of worship, and at times the violation of Muslim honor, we bear no responsibility or duty whatsoever. Moreover, numerous hadiths emphasize the obligation of *jihād*, resistance, and steadfastness of the Islamic resistance front against enemies, and regard *jihād* in the path of God as the means of worldly and otherworldly felicity and perfection. In a hadith transmitted from Imam ‘Alī (peace be upon him), it is related: "... Then indeed, fear and dread of engaging in *jihād* against those who rightly deserve it and who cooperate in misguidance is misguidance in religion and a loss of this world together with abasement and humiliation, and in it lies the earning of the Fire by fleeing from battle when combat is joined, for God Almighty says: O you who have believed, when you meet those who disbelieve advancing [for battle], do not turn your backs to them [Quran 8:15]" (Kulaynī, 1987, vol. 5, p. 38). In this hadith, resistance against the enemies of religion is deemed obligatory, and fleeing from *jihād* and resistance against the enemies of religion is prohibited for those who meet the conditions of *jihād*. In a hadith transmitted from Imam al-Šādiq (peace be upon him), it is related: ‘Ubayd ibn Zurāra said: I said to Abī ‘Abd Allāh (peace be upon him): "Inform me about the major sins." He said: "They are five, and they are among those for which God Almighty has made the Fire obligatory. God Almighty said: Indeed, God does not forgive that partners be associated with Him [Quran, 4:48], and He said: Indeed, those who devour the property of orphans unjustly, they only consume fire into their bellies, and they will burn in a blaze [Quran, 4:10], and He said: 'O you who have believed, when you meet those who disbelieve advancing [for battle], do not turn your backs to them' to the end of the verse, and slandering chaste, heedless believing women, and intentionally killing a believer for his faith" (Šadūq, 1986, p. 233). In some hadiths, the reason for the prohibition of fleeing from battle is stated to be the disgrace of religion and the belittlement of the prophets and the imams of religion, because it emboldens the enemies against the Muslims and leads to the killing of Muslims, and consequently, fleeing from battle results in the destruction of

religion (Ibn Bābawayh, 1993, vol. 3, p. 565). Also, in hadith texts, the reason for the abrogation of the verse requiring every believer to resist ten unbelievers is said to be consideration for the condition of the believers; because the believers experienced weakness of faith, the ruling was lightened for them; otherwise, those with high levels of faith are capable of resisting ten polytheists (Kulaynī, 1987, vol. 5, p. 69). According to what is mentioned in historical reports, Imam ‘Alī (peace be upon him) displayed the necessary resistance on the battlefield and never fled from the field of *jihād*: "for I have never fled from the ranks of the enemy" (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983, vol. 2, p. 580).

In light of the numerous verses and hadiths, Shiite and Sunni jurists are in agreement regarding the obligation of defending Islamic society. For instance, the author of *Jawāhir al-Kalām* maintains that if the unbelievers seek to attack Muslim communities and aim to destroy the rites of Islam, it is obligatory upon everyone (Najafī, 1984, vol. 21, p. 47). Al-Shahīd al-Thānī also argues that when the unbelievers invade Muslim lands and intend to dominate the Muslims and seize their resources, defensive *jihād* is required (al-Shahīd al-Thānī, 1993, vol. 3, p. 8). Likewise, al-‘Allāmah al-Ḥillī holds that, from a jurisprudential standpoint, defense of life, property, and honor is obligatory, and if one is killed in defensive *jihād*, he is considered a martyr (Ḥillī, 1993, vol. 3, p. 571). Ayatollah Khamenei regards the objective of resistance as defending the Islamic polity (Khamenei, March 12, 2015) and considers the motive of the enemies of Islam to be the weakening of the resistance front in the advancement of Islamic societies (Khamenei, July 19, 2021), citing Quranic verses and hadiths of the Infallibles in these matters. Hence, the rulings of defensive *jihād* in jurisprudence—which is an instance of resistance—have been explicitly and clearly articulated by the jurists, and in situations where the enemy seeks to attack, infiltrate, and dominate Islamic society, the Lawgiver has decreed resistance and defense against the enemy. Defensive *jihād*, as a jurisprudential subject, is an instance of resistance against the aggression and domination of global powers over Islamic society.

5. A Strategic View of the Concept of Resistance

The issue of resistance is one of the most fundamental topics and foundational matters of the Islamic system, raised in opposition to the various currents of the arrogant front. Ayatollah Khamenei, as the ruling jurist, maintains that resistance against global arrogance has a religious basis (Khamenei, October 30, 1996) and, as the most important strategy of the Islamic Revolution, attributes numerous effects to resistance, including: fulfilling divine duty,

bringing about peace and security, forcing the enemy's retreat and defeat, creating welfare and security, and preserving the dignity and authority of Islamic society (Khamenei, March 4, 2003). In this research, the intended meaning of the jurisprudential documents of resistance is the theoretical explanation of resistance based on jurisprudential propositions—that is, to which chapters of jurisprudence, as well as which verses and hadiths of the Infallibles (peace be upon them), has the jurist referred in explaining the subject of resistance? An examination of the works of jurists shows that the jurisprudential concept of resistance is not an independent concept and has not been treated as a separate chapter in jurisprudence; however, the subject of resistance has been raised in two instances across various chapters of jurisprudence: first, the necessity of standing firm against the domination of tyrannical governments, and second, resistance against the infiltration of global exploitation. Thus, the concept of resistance theoretically encompasses social duties such as *jihād* against the tyrant (*tāghūt*), enjoining good and forbidding wrong, the prohibition of accepting the guardianship of oppressors, *naḡy al-sabīl* (rejection of non-Muslim authority over Muslims), and the negation of the dominance of unbelievers over Islamic society, among others. For this reason, it has been discussed in various jurisprudential chapters. In this regard, the Supreme Leader maintains: "In objectives and principles, our criterion must be 'So be steadfast as you have been commanded' (Quran, 11:112). Deviation from principles and values is by no means permissible; the objectives are divine objectives, and no hesitation, doubt, or apostasy with respect to these objectives is permissible. However, in methods, we must constantly refine, reform, change, and correct errors as part of our ongoing work and permanent programs. We should identify which of our methods—even if we have become accustomed to them—is wrong, and change and correct it. We must be careful not to confuse the place of these changes; that is, in the realm of objectives, we speak of steadfastness; we must not confuse 'objective' with 'method.' Steadfastness in methods is not required; steadfastness in objectives is required. Trial and error applies to methods. Of course, we should benefit from experiences so that our trials are successful, and we should not seek to experiment repeatedly and make mistakes consecutively; but in the realm of objectives, we must stand firm and resolute and not retreat a single step" (Khamenei, September 21, 2004). Fundamentally, to achieve success in the arena of resistance, continuity coupled with prudence must be considered. Naturally, with attention to this criterion, important objectives can be achieved, such as the establishment of

the Islamic system, defense of the Islamic system, defense of the oppressed, provision of security, provision of religious freedom, social justice, and others. The discourse of resistance has found abundant expression as a foundational element in the foreign policy formulation of Iran's political system—a theory that is itself grounded in authentic religious and ijtihad-based teachings with an Islamic approach, situated within the broader discourse of the Islamic Revolution. It serves as a fundamental strategy in shaping and extending relations between the Islamic system and states, societies, and nations, toward the realization of justice-oriented governance on the international stage. Moreover, the category of resistance plays a prominent role in confronting aggressions and preventing the domination and infiltration of foreigners and aliens into Muslim lands. It must be added that the discourse of resistance acts as a director of the macro-policies of the Islamic system across various domains. Accordingly, the agents of the Islamic system at different levels should formulate policies and make decisions based on the criterion and standard of the strategy of resistance. Although resistance in the arena of warfare is the same as defense and defensive *jihād*, it encompasses other arenas as well, and has a broader semantic and operational scope. In the arena of battle and war, all hostile governments and states are targets of the resistance front—whether those engaged in frontline combat or those that, through design and planning, support the direct aggressor state. For example, the usurping Zionist regime, as the primary enemy of the resistance front, is physically opposed to the resistance front in warfare; however, the hegemonic system and arrogance, as its main backers, can also be targeted by the resistance front. Moreover, the target of resistance may include certain political currents opposed to the line of resistance. For instance, the hegemonic system, insofar as it is based on domination and an arrogant spirit, is one such case that conflicts with resistance and steadfastness; or the modern materialist-capitalist current, whose sole aim is the attainment of material interests, pressures resistant nations to exploit and plunder them and thereby gain material benefits. In any case, if a person fears that the foundation of religion is in danger, based on the proofs of resistance, he must confront it if he has the capability. Naturally, in resistance, geographical area is not a criterion, and it includes defense of regions other than one's own, such as Palestine, Yemen, Syria, and beyond. Perhaps the movement of Imam Ḥusayn (peace be upon him) can be interpreted according to the logic of resistance, because according to historical reports, the Imam left Mecca of his own volition and rose up, and in one of his sermons he cited the words of the Prophet: "Whoever sees a

tyrannical ruler who treats God's sanctities as permissible, breaks God's covenant, opposes the Prophet's tradition, and acts among God's servants with sin and aggression, and does not change him by deed or word, it is God's right to admit him to his (the tyrant's) place of entry" (Abū Mikhnaḥ al-Kūfī, 1997, p. 172). This statement of the Imam and his conduct regarding the manner of warfare and the presence of his family and household on the battlefield cannot be justified by the logic of defensive or offensive *jihād*, but can be justified by the logic and strategy of resistance. One of the criteria of resistance is the preservation of the Islamic polity, and the basis of the Islamic Revolution's support for the Palestinian cause rests upon the strategy of resistance, because the principle and foundation of resistance is the defense of Islam, and the issue here goes beyond matters of conventional *jihād*. The necessity of knowing the enemy, monitoring enemy conspiracies, and tracking their actions are among the indicators of resistance. Fundamentally, today the progress and victory of the axis of resistance are realized through recognizing the enemy, monitoring its plans and schemes, and countering them. According to the logic of resistance, if in any region the religion of God and Islam are in danger, one must confront the enemy—and the movement of 'Āshūrā, the Palestinian cause, the fight against ISIS in recent years, and support for resistance groups in Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and elsewhere are based on this very principle.

Of course, in a superficial view, the perception of resistance may be limited solely to military resistance; however, with a deeper perspective, one can recognize that resistance is a comprehensive strategy and a rational concept. This means that the concept of resistance can flow through war, peace, economy, culture, negotiation, and beyond. The perception of the concept of resistance in Iranian society sometimes carries a negative connotation, as if the strategy of resistance is generally incompatible with matters such as negotiation, engagement, and the like. Yet the approach of the Islamic system, despite adhering firmly to core principles and red lines, is also based on constructive engagement and negotiation. Thus, in general, it can be said that resistance is an overarching principle and strategy, not defined solely in military terms, but referring to a set of activities across various arenas aimed at ensuring security and protecting national interests. For example, heroic flexibility (*narmish-i qahramāna*) can be cited as part of the strategy of resistance. In this regard, Ayatollah Khamenei states: "Heroic flexibility—contrary to some interpretations—has a clear meaning, an example of which is seen in a wrestling match. In this contest, where the goal is to defeat the

opponent, if a wrestler has strength but does not employ the necessary flexibility at the right place, he will certainly lose; but if he uses both flexibility and strength at the right moments, he will pin his opponent to the ground" (Khamenei, August 13, 2014). Therefore, it must be said that one of the components of resistance being a strategy is heroic flexibility—or, in other words, an artful maneuver to achieve the objective. In this regard, God Almighty says: "And whoever turns his back to them on that day—unless he is maneuvering for battle or withdrawing to a company—has indeed incurred the wrath of God" (Quran, 8:16). Every movement—whether forward or backward—like a military battlefield, must be directed toward achieving specific objectives (Khamenei, November 20, 2013). Hence, resistance is present in the political arena in the form of heroic flexibility.

Furthermore, resistance, as a strategy and macro-approach of the Islamic political system, can also play a role in the economic sphere. Therefore, in pursuit of social welfare and a focus on the domestic economy—despite attention to economic interaction and development with other countries—a resistant economy must be considered in order to resolve the economic and livelihood problems of the system. Ayatollah Khamenei states regarding the resistant economy: "A resistant economy means an economy that wells up from within, reduces our need for others, and increases the country's solidity against external shocks; this is the meaning of a resistant economy" (Khamenei, November 16, 2016). Thus, the fact that resistance in the economic arena is addressed in the form of a resistant economy indicates that resistance is a strategy and is not viewed merely as a mechanism. In this way, the strategy of resistance serves as the roadmap of the Islamic state, which will prove instrumental in dealing with other countries across various arenas and in regulating regional and trans-regional relations in accordance with the principles of Islamic governance. Of course, through deeper reflection and scrutiny of the category of resistance and its jurisprudential foundations, and by comparing it with defensive *jihād*, further differences can be identified.

6. Conclusion

One of the most important duties of any political system is to devise systematic and efficient strategies for mapping out the geometry of domestic interactions and for engaging with other political entities in the arena of international relations. Resistance, as the strategy of the Islamic Republic aimed at protecting values and national interests and confronting the hegemonic system and global arrogance, was articulated by the leaders of the

Islamic Revolution. Elucidating resistance from the perspective of political jurisprudence can clarify its various dimensions and serve as an inspiration for the agents of the Islamic system. Accordingly, in light of the aforementioned discussions, the category of resistance occupies a special place in jurisprudential sources, and today resistance is something that transcends national and religious borders, with numerous successful experiences to its credit. Through it, the defense of independence, freedom, and the dignified identity of freedom-seeking nations is realized. Based on the findings of this research, in the Quran and other religious texts, synonymous terms such as steadfastness (*istiqāma*) and firmness of foot (*thabāt al-qadam*), as well as resistance against the enemy, are regarded as the foundation of religion and the source of life for Muslims. In this study, relying on the sources of ijtihad, the concept of "resistance" was examined as a strategy and divine path. Fundamentally, the origin and basis of resistance must be sought in jurisprudential foundations, the dictates of reason and rational logic, and the spirit of patriotism. Resistance, as a fundamental solution, paves the way for attaining sublime objectives, neutralizes national and ideological threats, and facilitates the path of standing firm upon ideals, insisting on one's beliefs and convictions, reclaiming rights, and disobeying the enemy, steering society toward felicity and perfection. The present research, by emphasizing the proofs of defensive *jihād* and the religious foundations of resistance, examined the distinction between the two, and described "resistance" as a broad strategic concept that flows across various arenas—such as war, peace, economy, culture, negotiation, and beyond—whereas defensive *jihād* was characterized as a mechanism to be employed when the enemy invades the homeland.

Accordingly, the general framework governing the strategy of resistance can be explained as follows:

1) Resistance is a general concept that encompasses the struggle against the threats and interventions of hegemonic global powers.

2) Throughout history, Muslims of various creeds and denominations have engaged in peaceful relations, and the fundamental principle from the Quran's perspective in social relations is peace. The discussion of resistance arises where domestic and international factors create obstacles to the freedom and progress of Islamic society.

3) Resistance has not been discussed as an independent subject in jurisprudence; however, within the framework of normative theory, it can be elucidated through various chapters of jurisprudence, such as defensive *jihād*, the rulings on apostasy (*al-ridda*), repelling *jihād* (*jihād al-dafʿ*), enjoining

good and forbidding wrong (*al-amr bil-ma'rūf wal-nahy 'an al-munkar*), and similar topics.

4) Although the jurisprudential foundations of resistance can be explained through various chapters of jurisprudence, its elucidation through defensive *jihād* of Islamic society is a logical approach and enjoys universal acceptance.

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