

Foundations and Objectives of the Educational Methods of *Jihād-i Tabyīn* in the Qur'anic Thought of Martyr Imam Khamenei

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ABSTRACT

Under current conditions, the front of global arrogance, by resorting to hybrid warfare and distorted narratives, has targeted the intellectual and doctrinal identity of Islamic society. In such circumstances, Martyr Imam Khamenei, drawing inspiration from Qur'anic verses, introduced the term "*jihād-i tabyīn*" (*jihād* of clarification). *Jihād-i tabyīn* is a Qur'anic strategy and a multilayered educational process that, in confronting the war of narratives, strengthens the faith and insight of the learner and, relying on ethics, law, and innovation, safeguards society against the enemy's distortions. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach and the *istinṭāqī* (interrogative) method. Data were collected through the library method and examined using the technique of qualitative content analysis. The findings indicate that the foundations of the educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn* can be classified into two general categories: general foundations, comprising faith, trust in God, steadfastness, and perseverance; and specific foundations, comprising moral commitment, adherence to law, and innovation. Likewise, the educational objectives of this *jihād* operate on two levels: short-term objectives, such as guiding the learner toward recognition of the truth, raising awareness of the distortion of religion, enhancing analytical capacity against media dictatorship, strengthening hope and psychological resilience, recalling forgotten truths, and cultivating the capacity for logical responses to doubts and long-term objectives, including immunizing the learner against intellectual and doctrinal deviation, empowering them to stand firm against opposing currents, and institutionalizing lasting insight.

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Introduction

In the contemporary world, the expansion of cognitive, media, and hybrid warfare has shifted the arena of confrontation between the front of truth and falsehood from the battlefield to the realm of public thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions. From this perspective, “*jihād-i tabyīn*” (*jihād* of clarification) in the Qur’anic thought of Martyr Imam Khamenei is not merely a media or informational act; rather, it is an educational and strategic process aimed at enhancing the knowledge, insight, analytical capacity, and intellectual and doctrinal resistance of the audience against distorting currents. Accordingly, the theoretical framework of the present study rests on three fundamental components—“education (*tarbiyat*)”, “*jihād*”, and “*tabyīn* (clarification)”-and, drawing on the teachings of the Holy Qur’an and the views of Martyr Imam Khamenei, clarifies the relationship between the educational foundations and objectives of *jihād-i tabyīn*. Within this framework, the general and specific foundations of explanatory education provide the theoretical groundwork necessary for analyzing the methods of influencing the cognitive, doctrinal, emotional, and behavioral dimensions of the learner.

Literature Review

Several works and studies have been conducted on the subject of “*jihād-i tabyīn*” from various angles. The book *jihād-i tabyīn in the Thought of His Eminence Ayatullah al-‘Uzmā Khamenei* (2023) [in Persian] addresses various dimensions of *jihād-i tabyīn*, examining topics such as the concept of *jihād* and *jihād-i tabyīn*, the benefits and effects of *tabyīn* (clarification), its requirements and dos and don’ts, methods of *tabyīn*, subjects requiring clarification, and the duties of various social strata and institutions. Likewise, Muḥsin Maḥmūdī, in his study “*Jihād-i tabyīn in Cyberspace from the Perspective of the Leader of the Revolution*” [in Persian] (2022), examines the capacity of cyberspace and its role in countering ambiguity-creation, doubt-sowing, fake news, and the distortion of reality, based on Imam Khamenei’s views. ‘Alī Farahmandiyān, in his study, “The Conditions

for the Success of *Jihād* of Clarification” [in Persian] (2021), discusses some of the most important conditions and requirements for the success of *Jihād-i tabyīn* and emphasizes the necessity of its operationalization. ‘Abbās Naṣīrī-Fard, in the book *Concepts, Techniques, and Skills of Jihād-i tabyīn* [in Persian] (2022), Based on a Structural and Conceptual Model, takes an applied approach to the conceptualization and structural analysis of *jihād-i tabyīn* and elaborates on the techniques and skills required for activity in this field. Likewise, ‘Umānī and others, in the article “*Jihād* Explained; A preventative strategy against forced thinking caused by Haarp technology” [in Persian] (2022), examine *jihād-i tabyīn* as a preventive strategy and attend to components such as the necessity of stating the truth, persuasion, recognizing the enemy front, repetition, brainstorming, and the continuity of clarification.

A review of the literature shows that the aforementioned works have either focused mainly on the general, political, social, media, and strategic dimensions of *Jihād-i tabyīn*, or have examined the verses related to *tabyīn* within an exegetical framework; to date, no study has been found that independently and systematically examines and analyzes the foundations, objectives, and educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn* on the basis of the Holy Qur’an and with an emphasis on the intellectual system of Imam Khamenei.

The distinguishing feature of the present study compared to previous studies is that *jihād-i tabyīn* is not examined here merely as a propagandistic, political, media, or confrontational strategy, but is studied with an educational and Qur’anic approach. This research seeks, by centering on the Holy Qur’an and drawing on the thought of Imam Khamenei, to present a coherent framework of the foundations and objectives of the educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn*. In this respect, while drawing on the achievements of previous studies, the present research creates an integrative and systematic approach among Qur’anic studies, educational discussions, and the intellectual system of Imam Khamenei.

Research Method

The research method of this article is *istinṭāqī* (interrogative), whereby the researcher, having adopted a specific problem or question, turns to the primary sources-especially the Holy Qur'an-and attempts to obtain the answer to the problem through "making the text speak" and the systematic extraction of the implications of religious texts. Thus, unlike methods that merely collect and describe data, in the *istinṭāqī* method an active, question-oriented relationship is established between the research problem and the religious texts; that is, by posing the research questions to the relevant set of verses, the researcher extracts, categorizes, and analyzes the concepts, foundations, objectives, and the relationships among them. In this article as well, centering on the question "What are the foundations and objectives of the educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn*, based on the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the exegetical and Qur'anic thought of Martyr Imam Khamenei?" and through direct reference to the verses and authoritative sources relevant to the research, the relevant data were collected and, after semantic and content examination, organized within an analytical framework in order to provide documented and coherent answers to the research problem.

1. Theoretical Literature of the Research

1.1. *Tarbiyat* (Education)

Rāghib Iṣfahānī, in explaining this term, notes that the verb "*rabbaytu*" (I raised/nurtured) originally derives from the word "*rabw*", while some also believe that its original root is the doubled root "*rabb*" or "*rabab*", one of whose letters was changed to "*yā*" for ease of pronunciation (Rāghib Iṣfahānī 1997, 340). "*Rabb*" originally means education and nurturing, that is, bringing about one state after another in something until it reaches its ultimate degree of completeness and perfection; and in origin, "*rabb*" is the same as *tarbiyat* (education), and in the Qur'an it refers to bringing something into being gradually until it reaches its complete measure (ibid).

In Persian, “*tarbiyat*” is used in various senses, including: producing behavioral or moral change in someone; teaching someone a particular skill; teaching a particular habit or skill to certain animals; nurturing something such as a flower or plant; behaving appropriately in accordance with the customs and traditions of a given society; and the benevolence and generosity shown by elders toward their subordinates (Anvārī 2003, 1:592).

Various interpretations have been offered regarding the technical meaning of “*tarbiyat*”. Martyr Muṭahharī defines *tarbiyat* as “nurturing in such a way that the inner potentials latent within a thing are actualized, and through the creation of balance and harmony among them, the learner reaches the highest degree of his perfection” (Muṭahharī 2017, 22:523).

Based on the explanations given above regarding the lexical meaning and technical usage of “*tarbiyat*”, it can be understood that *tarbiyat* refers to an organized process of conscious and purposeful actions and influences exerted by an educator; a process that, relying on a deliberately conceived plan, seeks to transform and shape the cognitive domains, beliefs, emotions, affective tendencies, and behavioral patterns of an individual or a group of individuals.

1.2. *Jihād-i Tabyīn*

“*Jihād*” is rooted in “*juhd*”, which denotes hardship and toil (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 3:133), strength and power (Ibn Fāris 1983, 1:486), and great effort and striving to attain a goal (Fayyūmī 1985, 2:112). This word is used in an intensive form and is also understood to mean combat against unbelievers. What has been said above concerns “*jihād*,” with a *kasra* on the *jīm*; by contrast, “*jahād*,” with a *fatha* on the *jīm*, means hard or solid ground (Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 3:134). The term “*jihād*” in its juristic sense is “the sacrifice of one’s life and everything connected to it, such as wealth and property, in combat against polytheists and aggressors, for the specific purpose of elevating the word of Islam” (Suyūrī 2001, 1:340).

“*Tabyīn*” means the clarification and disclosure of a matter after a state of ambiguity and vagueness (Muṣṭafawī 1989, 1:366). This term

has a broad scope and is not limited to speech; rather, it is used whenever the purpose of an utterance is to disclose and demonstrate a truth, as stated in the Holy Qur'an: "...so that you may clarify for the people that which has been sent down to them..."¹ (Quran 16:44) (Rāghib Isfahānī 1997, 1:330-331).

Martyr Imam Khamenei about *jihād-i tabyīn* states: "This [*jihād-i tabyīn*] is drawn from the words of the Commander of the Faithful (a); in that well-known testament of his to Ḥasan and Ḥusayn (a) — which, though addressed to them, he qualifies by saying '*wa man balaghahū kitābī*': (and whoever my letter reaches), meaning that you and I are addressed by this testament as well — among the things he states [is this]: '*Allāha, Allāha, fī al-jihādi bi-amwālikum wa anfusikum wa alsinatikum fī sabīli Llāh*': (Fear God, fear God, with regard to jihad with your wealth, your persons, and your tongues in the way of God) (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter, 47); ... Jihad must likewise be waged with the tongue, and there are those in this domain, too, who can genuinely be active and wage this jihad" (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with Members of the Assembly of Experts, 19/12/1400 Sh [10 March 2022], <https://khl.ink/f/49769>).

Martyr Imam Khamenei considers confronting the enemy to be the essential pillar of the concept of *jihād*: "*Jihād* means striving against the enemy; not every effort is *jihād*. *Jihād* means an effort that is directed against the enemy ... In Islamic terminology and Islamic logic, *jihād* is that which is carried out against the enemy" (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with Eulogists of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (a), 03/11/1400 Sh [23 January 2022], <https://khlink/f/49448>). He also considers *tabyīn* to be a form of *jihād*: "Speak out, clarify, in order to neutralize the enemy's temptation—that becomes *jihād*" (ibid), and describes it using expressions such as enlightenment, correct narration of events, exposure, explanation, elaboration, and the strengthening of intellectual foundations.

Given the lexical sources and the words of Martyr Imam Khamenei, *Jihād-i tabyīn* means a broad and comprehensive effort to state the truths and the correct narrative against the enemy's distortion, in order to remove the dust of ignorance from the mind of society.

¹ . ﴿...لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ...﴾ (النحل/٤٤)

2. Foundations of the Educational Methods of *Jihād-i Tabyīn* in the Qur'anic Thought of Imam Khamenei

“*Mabānī*” (foundations) is the plural of “*mabnā*” (basis) (Fīrūzābādī 1991, 1:15), which in lexicography is defined as foundation, groundwork, basis, and ground (Mu‘īn 2001, 3:377); and in technical usage, “foundations” are the fundamental, underlying propositions that both establish the legitimacy and validity of a given branch of knowledge or subject, and also fix the mental presuppositions of the scholar or specialist in that field (Rūhī Dehkurdi 2016, 103).

General foundations play the role of an overall, comprehensive substructure for a given field of knowledge, whereas specific foundations pertain to the fundamental principles and presuppositions of a particular subject or issue within that same field. In other words, general foundations answer the question of what general and fundamental principles a given field of knowledge rests upon, while specific foundations specify what particular principles and presuppositions a given subject within that field is built upon.

2.1. General Foundations

2.1.1. Faith as the Identity-Establishing Foundation of Educational Action in *Jihād-i Tabyīn*

Faith as the identity-establishing foundation of educational action in *jihād-i tabyīn* is among the general foundations of the educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn*. Faith in God Almighty, in the heavenly book of the Holy Qur'an and the divine books of the previous prophets, in the Noble Prophet (s) and all the prophets sent by God, as well as faith in the Day of Resurrection, is among the most important things demanded of Islamic society: “*The Messenger has faith in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and all the faithful. Each [of them] has faith in Allah, His angels, His scriptures and His apostles. [They declare,] ‘We make no distinction between any of His messengers.’ And they say, ‘We hear and obey. Our Lord, forgive us, and toward You is the return’*”² (Quran 2:285).

². ﴿آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَ مَلَائِكَتِهِ وَ كُتُبِهِ وَ رُسُلِهِ لَا يَفْرِقُونَ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَ أَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَ إِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ﴾ (البقرة/٢٨٥)

The increase of faith in divine knowledge strengthens the hearts of believers to carry out *jihād-i tabyīn* against enemies by creating deterrence against their aggression; therefore, it is necessary that those responsible for religious and social ceremonies of Muslims act and speak in a manner that leads to an increase of faith among the audience and those present at such gatherings.

It is a faith that has brought the Prophet (s) and his companions, despite the fewest resources and numerous constraints, to such greatness and glory up to the present age that no human power is capable of confronting or annihilating them; and this very fact keeps the spark of hope perpetually alight in the hearts of believers: “*Do not weaken or grieve: you shall have the upper hand, should you be faithful*”³ (Quran 3:139). In this regard, Martyr Imam Khamenei states: “...because of your affiliation to a school of thought that can save humanity in its age of bewilderment; ‘you will be superior’—because this faith is at your disposal; ... it is this very faith that can crush and shatter the power of devils and pharaohs, just as it did before. In the early days of the rise of Islam, who would have imagined that a small, oppressed, weak group in a corner of Mecca could, by the blessing of these divine verses, bring about the greatest civilization of their time, elevate and advance human civilization, create this vast realm and this expansive domain, and thus remain, with honor and pride, throughout the course of time?” (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with Hajj Officials, 25/10/1381 Sh [15 January 2003], <https://khlink/f/3161>).

2.1.2. *Tawakkul* (Trust in God) as an Epistemic and Psychological Support in the Process of Explanatory Education

One of the general foundations of the educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn* is *tawakkul* as an epistemic and psychological support in the process of explanatory education. Having the *jihādī* spirit of reliance on God in carrying out *jihād-i tabyīn* is essential. God Almighty, after commanding the Prophet (s) not to obey the unbelievers and the hypocrites, instructs him to place his trust in God: “*And do not obey the faithless and the hypocrites, and disregard their torments, and put*

³. ﴿وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ (آل عمران/ ١٣٩)

your trust in Allah, and Allah suffices as trustee”⁴ (Quran 33:48). Trust in God, which is commanded to the Noble Prophet (s) in this verse, has also been the way and practice of other prophets in pursuing their goals, as stated in *Sūrah Yūnus* from the words of Prophet Noah (a): “...I have put my trust in Allah...”⁵ (Quran 10:71).

Based on the teachings of the Holy Qur’an, among the benefits of believers’ trust in God the Exalted—besides entrusting the outcome to God’s will—is freedom from Satan’s dominion and control over the will and thought of those who strive: “Indeed he does not have any authority over those who have faith and put their trust in their Lord”⁶ (Quran 16:99). It has been mentioned in the exegeses that although Satan approaches all human beings, his effort is not effective on all of them. On the other hand, faith and trust in God are a fortress that protects a person from vulnerability (Qarā’atī 2004, 4:579).

2.1.3. Steadfastness (*Istiqāmat*) as the Governing Rule of Educational Perseverance in *Jihād-i Tabyīn*

Steadfastness as the governing rule of educational perseverance in *jihād-i tabyīn* is also counted among the general foundations of the educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn*. God the Exalted keeps those who remained steadfast on the path of monotheism and *jihād* in God’s way free from any fear or grief: “Indeed those who say, ‘Our Lord is Allah,’ and then remain steadfast, they will have no fear, nor will they grieve”⁷ (Quran 46:13).

As the exegetes explicitly state, the meaning of “Our Lord is Allah” is the acknowledgment of the exclusivity of lordship in God the Exalted and the oneness of that pure Essence. Likewise, steadfastness here means that they do not deviate from that testimony and acknowledgment and do not act contrary to it. Those who possess such acknowledgment and steadfastness have no punishment awaiting them, and therefore have no fear; nor do they face any unpleasant matter ahead, and therefore will have no grief (Ṭabāṭabā’ī 2000, 18:196).

⁴. ﴿وَلَا تُطِيعُوا الْكَافِرِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَدَعُوا أَذَاهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا﴾ (الاحزاب/ ٤٨)

⁵. ﴿...فَعَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ...﴾ (يونس/ ٧١)

⁶. ﴿إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ﴾ (النحل/ ٩٩)

⁷. ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾ (الأحقاف/ ١٣)

2.1.4. Perseverance as an Inherent Characteristic of the Process of Explanatory Education

Another of the general foundations of the educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn* is perseverance (continuity) as an inherent characteristic of the process of explanatory education; the divine command for *jihād-i tabyīn* indicates the continuity and necessity of persisting in this type of *jihād*, since the enmity of the unbelievers toward Muslims is likewise perpetual and ongoing.

According to the Holy Qur'an, this enmity is only due to the believers' faith in the One God⁸ (*al-Burūj*/8), and it will continue to be pursued by them until they fully follow and comply with the enemy's creed⁹ (*al-Baqarah*/120). But since Islamic society, on the basis of the command of the Greater *Jihād*, cannot submit to the enemies, and since, on the other hand, the divine will is for the victory, expansion, and universalization of the true religion¹⁰ (*al-Tawbah*/33), the struggle between the two groups will continue until the victory and elevation of the religion of Islam.

In this regard, in order to prevent any slackening in the continuous, striving movement, the Holy Qur'an—while reproaching some of the People of the Book who had read the signs and characteristics of the Prophet (s) in their own scripture, yet concealed the truth¹¹ (*al-Baqarah*/146)—explicitly reminds the Noble Prophet (s) to beware of

⁸. ﴿وَمَا تَقْوَا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ﴾ (البروج/٨)

“They were vindictive towards them only because they had faith in Allah, the All-mighty, the All-laudable” (Quran 85:8)

⁹. ﴿وَلَنْ تَرْضَى عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَى حَتَّى تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ...﴾ (البقرة/١٢٠)

“Never will the Jews be pleased with you, nor the Christians, unless you followed their creed...” (Quran 2:120)

¹⁰. ﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ﴾ (التوبة/٣٣)

“It is He who has sent His messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it prevail over all religions, though the polytheists should be averse” (Quran 9:33)

¹¹. ﴿الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (البقرة/١٤٦)

“Those whom We have given the Book recognize him just as they recognize their sons, but a part of them indeed conceal the truth while they know” (Quran 2:146)

falling into the trap of doubt and uncertainty: “*This is the truth from your Lord; so do not be among the skeptics*” (*al-Baqarah*/147). What has been sent down to you from God is indeed the truth; do not doubt. It is clear that this address is not directed at the Great Prophet (s) alone but encompasses the entire Islamic ummah (Ibn ‘Āshūr 2000, 2:41), and warns them to beware lest the false words of the enemies take effect on them and Muslims deviate from their correct path.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon every member of Islamic society and every pillar of the Islamic government, trusting in the correctness of their path and paying no heed to the surrounding talk of enemies and ill-wishers, to engage in *jihād-i tabyīn* and not cease their effort and struggle until the realization of the divine will—namely, the removal of *fitnah* (sedition) throughout the world and the universalization of the divine light and religion¹² (*al-Baqarah*/193).

2.2. Specific Foundations

2.2.1. Moral Commitment (*Akhlāq-madārī*) as the Inherent Framework of Education in *Jihād-i Tabyīn*

Speech accompanied by good ethics and dignity penetrates hearts and multiplies its effectiveness many times over. In the Qur’an, God, addressing the Noble Messenger (s), states that his gentleness and good character, manifested in his speech, is what draws people toward him: “*It is by Allah’s mercy that you are gentle to them; and had you been harsh and hardhearted, surely they would have scattered from around you...*”¹³ (*Quran* 3:159). Your gentleness toward them is among the things that caused them to enter the religion, because you brought them proof and evidence through your noble attributes, good character, and fine virtues (Ṭabarsī 1993, 4:314).

Martyr Imam Khamenei regards gentleness in speech and avoidance of lying and slander as important components of *jihād-i tabyīn*: “A definite principle in this matter [*jihād-i tabyīn*] is that one

¹² ﴿وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ﴾ (البقرة/١٩٣)

“Fight them until faithlessness is no more, and religion becomes [exclusively] for Allah” (*Quran* 2:193)

¹³ ﴿فَمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَ لَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْتَضَوْا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ﴾ (آل عمران/١٥٩)

must follow an ethical method in this work. What some do in cyberspace or in the press, etc.—confronting public opinion with abuse, slander, deception, and lies—must be strictly avoided. Truths must be disseminated with strong logic, dignified speech, and complete rationality, accompanied by the adornment of emotion and human feelings, and through the employment of ethics” (Khamenei, Remarks at the Conclusion of the Arba‘in Mourning Ceremony, 05/07/1400 Sh [27 September 2021], <https://khl.ink/f/48746>).

2.2.2. Adherence to Law (*Qānūn-mandī*) as the Organized Basis of Explanatory Educational Action

Law is the connector of the various layers of society, and thus holds an important role and position in society. The primary function of law is to regulate the behavior of members of a society who are naturally prone to conflict. The role of a sound law based on humane principles is to determine limits and boundaries, eliminate grounds for dispute, repel the aggression of aggressors, adjudicate among people, indicate the path to excellence and perfection, establish order, ensure justice, and provide the grounds for human perfection.

The Noble Prophet (s), who himself bore the role of communicating and implementing the life-giving laws of Islam, held it in high esteem. He considered the implementation of Islam’s penal and criminal laws (*hudūd*) against those who transgress the limits of the law to be better than sixty years of worship, and even superior to forty nights of rain falling upon the earth:

- “A legal punishment (*ḥadd*) carried out on earth is more purifying than sixty years of worship”¹⁴ (Ibn Shu‘bah 1995, 214).

- “The establishment of one of God’s *ḥudūd* is better than forty nights of rain in the lands of God”¹⁵ (Ray-Shahrī 2013, 128).

From these and other traditions, the high status and dignity of law in the view of the Infallibles (peace be upon them) becomes clear.

Regarding the importance of observing the law in the educational method of *Jihād-i tabyīn*, Martyr Imam Khamenei states:

¹⁴. « حَدُّ يُقَامُ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَزْكَى مِنْ عِبَادَةٍ سِتِينَ سَنَةً ».

¹⁵. « إِقَامَةُ حَدٍّ مِنْ حُدُودِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ مَطَرٍ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً فِي بِلَادِ اللَّهِ ».

Let everyone regard law as the criterion; we suffer harm, we are struck, by lawlessness. You saw it in the year [13]88; the fact that the country suffered losses in [13]88—both material losses and our reputation in the world being endangered—what was it because of? It was because of lawlessness. We told them: come, let us act according to the law; the law is clear. You say the election has a flaw; very well, wherever the election has a flaw, the legal duty is clear as to how the matter should be resolved; well, come, let us act according to it. They did not; they did not submit to the law; they acted unlawfully; well, they created a problem—for the country, for themselves, for the people; for seven or eight months, one after another, they created insecurity and various problems. This is because of not submitting to the law. My recommendation, my emphasis, my demand of the various institutions, is that everyone submit to the law. (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with the People of Qum, 19/10/1396 Sh [9 January 2018], <https://khl.ink/f/38675>)

2.2.3. Innovation as an Inherent Requirement of *Jihād-i Tabyīn* under Changing Conditions

“Innovation” is not a foreign concept from the perspective of Islam and enjoys a positive and commendable status in religious teachings. Religion is in harmony with innate human nature (*fiṭrah*), because innate talents are cultivated through religion. On the other hand, innovation and engaging in creation and positive change is also an innate matter accepted by human nature. In this regard, Islam is a religion that itself encourages innovation and creativity. The Holy Qur’an describes God as innovative in the creation of nature and humankind, and mentions one of the divine names as being “*Badī*” and “*Fāṭir*” (the Originator): “*Originator of the heavens and the earth...*” (*al-Baqarah*/117). What is meant by “*Badī*” in this noble verse is bringing something into being in an original and innovative way without precedent; “*Badī*” means a Creator who creates without precedent and without imitating others. He is the One who created the heavens and the earth for the first time, without precedent, and His power is such that whatever He wills comes into being instantly, with no interval between His will and its manifestation. Of course, when

God says to a thing that does not yet exist, ‘Be,’ this too already exists in divine knowledge, and thus [His command] is not addressed to non-existence (Ja‘farī 1997, 1:333-335).

The diversity and non-uniformity of the Qur’an’s educational methods can be regarded as another symbol of the importance of innovation. The Qur’an demonstrates innovation in religious educational methods in practice; the use of parables, storytelling, questions and inquiry, eloquence and fluency of speech, and the presentation of religious and educational models all show the Qur’an’s attention to not confining itself to a single method in presenting religion, and to the diversity of its educational methods.

From the perspective of Martyr Imam Khamenei as well, one of the foundations of jihād-i tabyīn that must be taken into account in its educational methods is the matter of innovation:

The second point [regarding Jihād-i tabyīn] is that in difficult wars, one can no longer fight with old weapons. Today, one cannot go to fight against cannons, missiles, and the like with swords, spears, and such things. It is the same in Jihād-i tabyīn; [one cannot work] with old methods. Of course, some old methods have no substitute, such as the minbar [pulpit], such as eulogy (maddāhī); these are old, but they have no substitute; they remain effective, and nothing else can take their place. However, in terms of various tools, one must move with the times. Of course, today, in this regard, our hardware weapons are good; that is, the cyberspace sector and the like are, after all, active and functioning, and although cyberspace has its problems ... the weapon of tabyīn has an important software component; here innovation must take place, new words must be spoken, and a new manner of expression must be employed. (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with Members of the Assembly of Experts, 19/12/1400 Sh [10 March 2022], <https://khl.ink/f/49769>)

3. Objectives of the Educational Methods of *Jihād-i Tabyīn* in the Qur’anic Thought of Imam Khamenei

3.1. Short-Term Objectives

3.1.1. Guiding the Learner Toward Recognition of the Truth

Under current conditions, the front of unbelief has entered the battlefield with all its capacities and, by employing a hybrid war composed of diverse tools and forces, is attempting to push back the rival’s strategy. This comprehensive war encompasses military, economic, media, and urban domains, and even the involvement of security and diplomatic forces. Hybrid warfare has taken shape from two simultaneous dimensions: field realities and mental, reconstructed narratives. The enemies of Islam, by employing the “war of narratives,” not only influence public opinion but also, by creating despair and hopelessness among the opposing forces, prevent them from continuing their resistance.

Martyr Imam Khamenei states in this regard:

In hybrid warfare, it is not a military attack, but an attack on religious and political beliefs; the enemy’s attack is on religious beliefs and political beliefs. In the surah, ‘Say, I seek the protection of the Lord of humans,’ (Quran 114:1) you say: ‘from the evil of the sneaky tempter, who puts temptations into the breasts of humans, from among the jinn and humans’ (Quran 114:4-6)—its ‘sneaky tempter’ is precisely these foreign propagandists and their followers inside [the country]; they tempt, they distort the truth; their goal is to weaken the nation’s will, their goal is to extinguish hopes; they want to extinguish the flame of hope in the hearts of our youth, to make the youth despair. Despair means a dead end; when a youth despairs of progress, despairs of the future, he feels he is at a dead end (Khamenei, Remarks to the Gathering of Pilgrims and Attendants of the Holy Shrine of Imam Reza, 1/1/1402 Sh [21 March 2023], <https://khl.ink/f/52275>).

3.1.1.1. Making the Learner Aware of Religious Distortion and Appropriation

If the understanding of Islam were to be replaced by Western tools instead of drawing religious teachings from the clear source of the Qur'an and the *Ahl al-Bayt* (a), or if the definition and interpretation of religion were carried out selectively to meet daily needs, religion would become a means for the lust and self-indulgence of those who would exploit the lofty and profound teachings of Islam as a tool for achieving their own sinister goals, drawing Muslims along with them toward their wicked ends through exegesis by personal opinion (*tafsīr bil-ra'y*) of the Qur'anic verses and the *Ahl al-Bayt*'s hadiths. Martyr Imam Khamenei, drawing on the words of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (a) addressed to Malik Ashtar, states:

If jihād-i tabyīn is not carried out properly, the worldly-minded will even turn religion into a means for their own self-indulgence and lust; ... [Imam Ali (a)] explains: choose those who possess these qualities ... 'look into this with a penetrating look'; look carefully ... Those who prayed the dawn prayer in four or six rak'ahs and then said, 'We feel fine; if you like, we will pray even more for you.' '...For this religion has formerly been a prisoner in the hands of vicious persons when action was taken according to passion, and worldly wealth was sought...' (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 53)—they turn religion into a means of acquiring the world and satisfying their own lusts. (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with Members of the Assembly of Experts, 19/12/1400 Sh [10 March 2022], <https://khl.ink/f/49769>)

3.1.1.2. Enhancing the Learner's Analytical Power against Media Dictatorship

With the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution and the shortening of the plundering hand of the arrogant powers over Islamic Iran, they placed on their agenda a policy of concealment and calling into question the achievements of the Islamic Revolution, and of exaggerating its weaknesses and shortcomings, in order to portray the Islamic government as ineffective in running the country. Martyr Imam Khamenei states:

The Western powers, known for dictatorship—these very ones who claim to want to confront the dictatorships of the world are

themselves the most dictatorial—[today] have added one more item to these dictatorships, and that is media dictatorship.” “They distort the image of the Imam, the activities of these forty years ... you see absolutely no sign, in this Western media empire, of progress, of positive points, of strengths; concealment of truths. Conversely, if there is one small weak point, they magnify that small weak point a hundredfold and display it. (Remarks at the Meeting with Commanders and Personnel of the Air Force and Air Defense of the Army, 19/11/1400 Sh [8 February 2022], <https://khl.ink/f/49572>).

The remedy for confronting the suffocation and dictatorship of hostile media is extensive activity, particularly in the media sector, in stating the achievements and successes attained in various fields of society and the military victories on the battlefield.

3.1.1.3. Strengthening the Learner's Hope and Psychological Resilience

In Islamic teachings, hope, which arises from knowledge and recognition of the Origin and the Return, is the basis of all beneficial and fruitful human endeavors, and also the source of the reform of society's affairs and the attainment of felicity (Ja'farī Harfteh et al. 2025, 12). The enemy, exploiting society's lack of awareness of its circumstances, limitations, and available resources, sows the seeds of despair and hopelessness among members of society at the smallest setback or defeat, thereby preventing them from continuing on their path—just as the hypocrites in early Islam, in confronting the unbelievers, created fear, dread, and hopelessness among Muslims in order to prevent them from resistance and steadfastness. As verse 12 of *Sūrat al-Aḥzāb* indicates, the hypocrites and those in whose hearts was a disease said that the Prophet had not told them the truth — that he had promised them victory, yet, they claimed, the enemy army had now come and was advancing and would finish them off; that is, despair, hopelessness, and self-deprecation before the enemy, together with a hidden inclination of the heart toward the enemy, existed within them (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with a Group of University Students, 12/4/1395 Sh [2 July 2016], <https://khl.ink/f/33694>).

In contrast to the hypocrites' movement, true believers, with the hope that sprang from their faith and heartfelt belief, found through steadfastness a way out of difficulties, and by reciting the words of God and His Messenger in describing the circumstances, reminded Muslims and called them to resistance: "Others said: 'this is what Allah and His Messenger had promised us' (Quran 33:22); this enmity had already been told to us in advance by God and the Prophet; that when you enter this arena, all the forces of unbelief and arrogance will show enmity toward you; ... 'Allah and His Messenger were true' (Quran 33:22) ... that is, instead of weakening their morale, the enemy's attack 'only increased them in faith and submission,' (Quran 33:22) strengthened their faith" (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with a Group of University Students, 12/4/1395 Sh [2 July 2016], <https://khl.ink/f/33694>).

3.1.1.4. Consciously Reminding the Learner of Forgotten Truths

Satan, who is an open enemy to human beings, relying on the instrument of forgetfulness, drowns man in the swamp of ingratitude toward divine blessings and turns him into a weak, powerless being incapable of confronting and resisting hardships. In such circumstances, even the smallest difficulties cause God's favors to be erased from a person's memory, and as a result, he joins the ranks of Satan's army: "*Satan has prevailed upon them, so he has caused them to forget the remembrance of Allah. They are Satan's confederates. Look! Indeed it is Satan's confederates who are the losers*"¹⁶ (Quran 58:19). One of the factors of human deviation and the emergence of hypocrisy in a person is forgetfulness of the remembrance of God; one who is heedless of God and does not fear His punishment lacks piety and recognizes no boundary or law, and as a result does anything to attain position, wealth, and carnal desires, and becomes a complete follower of Satan (Riḍā'ī Iṣfahānī 2008, 20:271).

At the level of society, invoking historical memory functions as an effective counter to enemies' exploitation of collective forgetfulness. One instance of this is recalling past periods of weakness and hardship

¹⁶ ﴿اَسْتَحْوَذَ عَلَيْهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَانْسَاهُمْ ذَكَرَ اللّٰهُ اُولٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ اَلَا اِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ﴾ (المجادلة/١٩)

endured in the face of tyranny (*tāghūt*) and arrogance, exemplified by the Qur’anic reminder, “Remember when you were few, abased in the land...”¹⁷ (*Quran* 8:26). Martyr Imam Khamenei refers to this verse to draw a contrast between the nation’s present standing and its earlier condition, describing the Iranian nation in its formative years as similarly few in number, weak, and subordinate, and cautioning against forgetting that earlier state of oppression (Remarks at the Meeting with Members of the Assembly of Experts, 15/12/1392 Sh (6 March 2014), <https://khl.ink/f/25696>).

Another example is reminding [people] of days of peak strength, authority, and might—what Martyr Imam Khamenei terms the “Days of Allah” (*Ayyām Allah*): “We must not let the memory of the great days fall into oblivion. The great days of any country and any nation are those days on which a divine event took place through the people ... ‘remind them of Allah’s [holy] Days’ (*Quran* 14:5); God the Exalted commands the Prophet in the Qur’an to remind them of the Days of Allah. The Days of Allah are precisely these great, history-making days. The eight years of the Sacred Defense are among these Days of Allah” (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with Those Involved in the Rahian-e Nur Program, 16/12/1395 SH [6 March 2017], <https://khl.ink/f/35917>).

3.1.2. Cultivating in the Learner the Capacity for Logical Response to Doubts

Training the learner’s ability to respond logically to doubts is among the short-term objectives of the educational methods of *jihād-i tabyīn*. In verses 30 to 44 of *Sūrat al-Ṭūr*, God presents obstinacy and pretext-seeking as highly destructive factors in the course of human life, stating that at times these traits distance a person so far from innate human nature (*fiṭrah*) and psychological health that he denies even clear and obvious realities. In other words, one who is caught up in obstinacy and pretext-seeking may see the whiteness of snow as black and the blackness of coal as white. In such a state, the lens of obstinacy and stubbornness makes all beauty and goodness appear repugnant and ugly to him, and whatever is ugly becomes desirable and lovable to him.

¹⁷. ﴿وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ أَنْتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُسْتَضْعَفُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ...﴾ (الأنفال/٢٦)

Regarding the cultivation of the capacity to respond to doubts, Imam Khamenei states:

Today, the dissemination of false ideas is carried out not only through numerous mass media tools—such as radio, television, the internet, and all kinds of electronic methods—but artistic methods are also employed. Today, in the world, money is spent to make expensive films, in order to indirectly implant an idea in minds or to remove an idea from minds. One of the most important targets of these efforts is religious thought, and especially Islamic thought. Of course, after the establishment of the Islamic Republic, Shia thought in particular has also become a target of these very things. You may have heard that in the land of Palestine, by the Zionists, or in America, conferences on Shia studies are held, and people conduct research on the views and intellectual layers and social form of the Shia; this is so that they may be able to combat the Shia. They must know the Shia in order to be able to combat them. There are many doubts. If you go among the youth, you see that even our good young people sometimes have doubts in their minds. There is nothing wrong with that; doubt occurs to everyone's mind; a young person should not be blamed for having doubts. When the mind is active and working, doubt comes to mind. It is upon us, the seminarians, to resolve these doubts, whether through prevention or through remedy. (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with a Group of Clergy from Hamadan Province, 15/4/1383 Sh [5 July 2004], <https://khl.ink/f/3240>)

3.2. Long-Term Objectives

3.2.1. Immunizing the Learner from Intellectual and Doctrinal Error and Deviation

Today the enemy seeks to distort the truths before the eyes of the people, in order to steer the people's action, resolve, and will toward error and misguidance; one example of this is the whitewashing of the tyrannical Pahlavi regime (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with a Group of University Students, 07/03/1397 Sh [28 May 2018], <https://khl.ink/f/39710>)—while poisoning and disturbing the minds and thoughts of the youth, and concealing the radiant face of Islam

and leading the youth astray under deceptive and colorful titles, were among the most significant intellectual harms perpetrated by the Pahlavi regime. Accordingly, today all individuals — whether those whose statements circulate in broad domains, or those whose words are effective in smaller domains — have a duty to clarify [the truths], should they observe that the truths and firm principles of Islam and the Revolution are being distorted (Khamenei, Remarks at the Gathering of Pilgrims at the Shrine of Imam Khomeini, 14/03/1380 Sh [4 June 2001], <https://khl.ink/f/3068>).

Regarding the immunization of society from doctrinal and intellectual deviation, Imam Khamenei states: “They attack the faith of our people, they attack the insight of our people, they attack our piety, they attack our ethics; they spread various dangerous spiritual viruses among us; well, what should we do? We must defend. This requires a garrison [base], like the garrisons of the battlefield; Friday prayer is one of the most important of these garrisons; it is a garrison of faith, a garrison of piety” (Khamenei, Remarks at the Meeting with Friday Prayer Leaders from Across the Country, 14/10/1394 Sh [4 January 2016], <https://khl.ink/f/31847>).

3.2.2. Empowering the Learner for Conscious Steadfastness against Opposing Currents

One of the long-term objectives of the methods of *jihād-i tabyīn* is empowering the learner for conscious steadfastness against opposing currents. Based on the Holy Qur’an, resistance and steadfastness are not merely commendable but a necessary and essential matter, which God the Exalted Himself carries out as an act of grace toward believers and to prevent the complete domination of the corruption and destruction of tyranny (*tāghūt*) (Ṭabāṭabā’ī 2000, 2:98); for no one has the power to confront Him, and in fact He defends His believing servants (Qurṭubī 1996, 3:259). The Quran says: “...*Were it not for Allah's repelling the people by means of one another, the earth would surely have been corrupted; but Allah is gracious to the world's creatures*”¹⁸ (Quran 2:251). It also states: “Say, ‘I give you just a single advice: that you rise

¹⁸. «...وَلَوْ لَا دَفَعُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ» (البقرة/٢٥١).

up for Allah's sake, in twos, or individually... ”¹⁹ (Quran 34:46). It is clear that here “rising up” (*qiyām*) does not mean standing on one's feet, but rather turning toward the guidance, reform, and edification of human beings through enlightening dialogue, and inducing them to think and reflect, as well as reflecting on oneself; for the source of every desirable transformation—or of enduring an undesirable and unwanted state—is a transformation in thought and belief, followed by a transformation in action; and it is for this reason that the truth becomes manifest to the truth-seeking human being only in the light of correct thought and enlightening, purposeful, and truth-seeking dialogue (Ṭabarsī 1993, 8:225).

3.2.3. Institutionalizing Lasting Insight and Awareness in the Learner

Insight (*baṣīrat*) can be regarded as among the most important objectives of carrying out *jihād-i tabyīn*; a concept that, in Qur'anic culture, encompasses a person's ability to correctly discern truths and precisely analyze realities (Sutūdah-Niyā 2009, 141). With this approach, it is necessary that the activities of *jihād-i tabyīn* be carried out with deep vision and complete insight; that is, with care and foresight, the enemy's plans and programs must be identified and analyzed, and, based on a precise assessment of circumstances, strategies of confrontation must be designed—since the Noble Prophet (s) was commanded to declare that he and his followers had found their path with insight, and on this basis invite others to the straight path: “Say, ‘This is my way. I summon to Allah with insight I and he who follows me...’ ”²⁰ (Quran 12:108). The absence of insight on the path of *jihād* causes miscalculation, whereby the enemy is regarded as a friend, and the path is opened for its infiltration into the decision-making, deciding, and operational centers of Islamic society—from the minds and thoughts of the people and officials to the institutions of governance.

¹⁹. ﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعْطُكُمْ بِوَاحِدَةٍ أَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ مَشْنَىٰ وَفُرَادَىٰ...﴾ (سبأ/٤٦)

²⁰. ﴿قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي...﴾ (يوسف/١٠٨)

In expressing the importance of the necessity of institutionalizing insight, Imam Khamenei states: “Create insight within yourselves. Create analytical power within yourselves; a power by which you can form, for yourselves, a mental synthesis of the realities of society and come to know something. This analytical power is very important. Every blow that we Muslims have suffered throughout history has been due to a weakness in analytical power” (Khamenei, Remarks at the Question-and-Answer Session with Youth on the Second Day of the Ten Days of Fajr, 13/11/1377 Sh [2 February 1999], <https://khl.ink/f/2927>).

Conclusion

The results of this study show that *jihād-i tabyīn*, in the thought of Martyr Imam Khamenei, has a nature that goes beyond a mere communicative and media action, and can be analyzed as a purposeful, continuous, and multidimensional educational process, the ultimate aim of which is to enhance the cognitive, doctrinal, psychological, and behavioral capacities of the audience in confronting distorting and hostile currents. Based on the research findings, the educational foundations of this process can be formulated on two levels—general and specific. The general foundations, including faith, trust in God, steadfastness, and perseverance, provide the internal infrastructure and psychological resilience necessary for explanatory action; while the specific foundations, including moral commitment, adherence to law, and innovation, pertain to the methodological and operational requirements of this process. From this perspective, the effectiveness of *jihād-i tabyīn* depends on the simultaneous integration of cognitive, ethical, behavioral, and communicative components.

The findings of the study also indicate that the educational objectives of *jihād-i tabyīn* are organized on two levels: short-term and long-term. At the short-term level, the most important identified objectives include: attaining a correct recognition of the truth, strengthening the ability to distinguish reality from distorted narratives, increasing critical analytical capacity against media

operations, preventing the distortion of religious concepts, strengthening hope and psychological resilience, the conscious recalling of forgotten truths, reducing the grounds for discord, and enhancing the ability to respond logically to doubts. At the long-term level, the most important expected achievements are: immunizing the audience against intellectual and doctrinal deviations, empowering them for conscious and active resistance against opposing currents, and institutionalizing lasting insight and awareness.

In sum, the main achievement of this research is that *jihād-i tabyīn* can be regarded as a comprehensive model for cultivating a truth-seeking, analytical, resilient, hopeful, and responsible human being; a model that, through the connection between knowledge, ethics, rationality, innovation, and social action, increases society's capacity to intelligently confront cognitive and media warfare. Accordingly, if its foundational and objective-related components are coherently realized, *jihād-i tabyīn* can lead to the enhancement of society's intellectual and cultural immunity, the strengthening of collective analytical power, the reduction of vulnerability to distorted narratives, and the formation of lasting and active social awareness.

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