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### The Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims

Edited by Andrew G. Bostom. Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus, 2005. 759 pp. \$29

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Reviewed by Johannes J.G. Jansen

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Bostom, an associate professor of medicine at Rhode Island Hospital, has compiled a large collection of documents concerning jihad in his voluminous *The Legacy of Jihad*. Bostom's book amply documents the systematic and destructive character of Islamic jihad, refuting the much-repeated argument that jihad is a "rich" concept that has many meanings and that jihad first of all signifies "inner struggle." **Jihad is first of all war, bloodshed, subjugation, and expansion of the faith by violence.** The book implicitly devastates the fashionable but uninformed opinion that all religions are elaborations of the Golden Rule. Jihad is everything the Golden Rule is not.

Jihad has been extremely effective and has served Islam well. In the light of this success, it can hardly be expected from Muslim leaders that they renounce jihad for more peaceful methods for propagating their faith. Renunciation of jihad would simply not be in the interest of Islam.

But it would, to the contrary, be very much in the interest of the rest of the world. How should the rest of the world react to Muslim insistence on the legitimacy of jihad? Do modern, free, and democratic societies have the stomach to withstand jihad? This question becomes more and more important when jihadists see themselves increasingly not as an alternative to Christianity, Judaism, or any other faith but as an alternative to democracy. **One almost gets the impression that present-day jihadists fervently desire to add Islam to the list that starts with Nazism and communism.**

Bostom not only presents us with classical mainstream Islamic sources and their justifications for jihad, plus witness reports from victims that survived by accident, etc., but he also quotes contemporary Muslim clerics. For example: Yusuf al-Qaradawi (b. 1926) discusses "martyrdom operations," a relatively new tactic of jihadists. Are such operations jihad or suicide? This is an important question because Islam forbids suicide. Luckily Qaradawi, regarded by many in the West as a moderate, knows the exact difference between suicide and a martyrdom operation. Someone who kills himself is "too weak to cope with the situation" in which he finds himself. **"In contrast, the one who carries out a martyrdom operation does not think of himself. He sells himself to Allah in order to buy Paradise in exchange."**

If this is how the moderates reason, what can we expect from the radicals?

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