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SCTR 19H
Research Paper: Topic Statement and Bibliography
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Martyrdom in Shi'a Islam during the Iran-Iraq War

The question I would like to explore in this paper is the phenomenon of martyrdom in Shi'a Islam. More specifically, I would like to examine tensions between the praise of martyrs and the abhorrence of suicide in the religion, since at times martyrdom can seem like suicide, or suicide can be the likely outcome.

To limit the question further, I'll focus on Iran in the twentieth century, when the Iranian government encouraged child-martyrs in the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988). I'll examine how scripture was invoked to justify this practice, and compare and contrast this modern situation to the original words and context of Qur'anic verses about martyrdom. The central religious beliefs I'll be exploring focus on the notions of submission and sacrifice within Islam.

Working Bibliography

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