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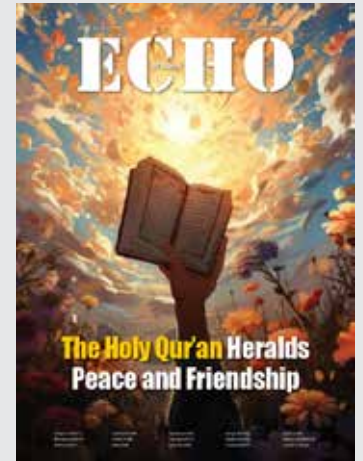
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Ashura: A Lesson for Everyone (Editorial)

Hojjat al-Islam Mohammad Asadi Movahed

4

Freedom of Expression or Expression of Hostility

Hojjat al-Islam Mohammad Mahdi Imanipour

8

Ayatollah Khamenei's Statement on the Desecration of the Holy Qur'an: An Analysis / Dr. Ali Akbar Ziaee

9

Sweden; Corruption and Islamophobia

Mohsen Pakaein

14

Disrespecting Religious Sanctities (Qur'an) under the Pretext of Freedom of Expression / Mohsen Asadi Movahed

17

ON THE RECENT BURNING OF THE HOLY QUR'AN IN SWEDEN

Abdullah R. Makwinja

18

The Holy Qur'an Heralds Peace and Friendship

Hojjat al-Islam Hamidreza Mohammadian

20

The Causes of the Desecration of the Holy Quran and the Ways of Dealing with It

Hossein Mohammadi

22

Sweden's Revolt Against Freedom / Safoora Kazemian

26

Quran-burning: Insulting Religion and Intensification of Conflicts

Dr. Zinat Motahari

28

Burning the Holy Quran in Sweden; A Racist Crime in the Name of Freedom of Expression / Dr. Siham Muhammad

30

Condemning the Desecration of the Holy Qur'an

32

The Role of Islamic Schools of Thought in Confronting the Desecration of Islamic Sanctities / Hossein Foumani

34

Tatbir (Qama-Zani): A Futile Passion, and an Obvious Challenge to Reason, Science, and Religion / Hamid Rezanian Shirazi

37

Prohibition of Insulting Religions from the Perspective of International Law

Dr. Fatemeh Ebrahimi Varkiani

42

International Meeting on «Examining the Jurisprudential and Legal Aspects of Desecrating the Holy Qur'an from the Perspective of International Law»

44

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Editorial

Ashura: A Lesson for Everyone

The Message of the Ashura Movement: Protect the Holy Quran

Hojjat al-Islam Mohammad Asadi Movahed, Islamic Research Scholar and Managing Director of Al-Hoda International Cultural, Artistic and Publishing Institute

The conflict between right and wrong dates back to the time of Adam's descent to the earth and the supporters of the truth defended it with their heart and soul. The religion of the last Prophet of Allah (PBUH) was also targeted by polytheists and infidels and was about to be destroyed in the second half of the first century. However, the valiant son of Ali and Fatima stood up against the infidel Umayyad party and protected the last and final divine religion revealed by Allah to Prophet Mohammad. After the epoch-making event of Karbala, Islam was revived and Karbala and Ashura became a school of thought that has and will always protect the holy Sharia of Islam.

History shows that after the martyrdom of Ali (AS) and the domination of the Umayyads over the Islamic world, corruption and perversion spread in Islamic society. Here, we will limit ourselves to a few examples.



1. Distortion and heresy:

Umayyads distorted many laws of Islam to serve the interests of their rule.

2. Corruption and obscenity

3. Oppression and crime

4. Wasting the Bayt al-mal

Imam Husayn's revolt for the revival of Islam and the Qur'an and his martyrdom has encompassed many lessons for mankind in all aspects of human life. These lessons and messages can be divided into two parts.

A: Lessons and messages that are addressed to all people with every thought and belief and of every race and nation in the world.

1- To live with nobility

One of the important lessons of the Ashura movement for all people was to - regardless of their beliefs - try to live with dignity and not submit to any kind of humiliation and oppression. That is the reason that when an oppressive man like Yazid called Imam Husayn to pledge allegiance to him, his response was: "I will never pledge to humiliation and I will not submit to you like slaves."

2- Fighting Oppression

With his revolt against Yazid's rule, Imam Husayn (AS) taught the people of all times to be anti-tyrannism and not to remain silent and submit to the oppressors. He taught them that if they are not able to eliminate the oppressors, they should, at least, not remain silent and disgrace the tyrants through disclosure.

3- Courage

Imam Husayn (AS) did not fear fighting for the noble cause of Islam and no obstacle discouraged him from standing up to the enemies. He roared like a lion in the battle with Yazid's military forces. It has been narrated that on the day of Ashura, he fought bravely with all his heart, and at the same time declared to the enemy that: "I will never surrender to your demands, and I swear to God, I will not pledge allegiance to you, and I will never run away from war with you."

4- Being a role model

With his uprising, Imam Husayn (AS) taught the believers that when the foundation of religion is in danger, they should not hesitate to make any sacrifices in order to preserve it. When Imam Husayn (AS) saw

that the leadership of the Islamic society had fallen into the hands of a person like Yazid, who openly violates the divine commandments, he rose up and called upon people to fight against Yazid, and in this way, he sacrificed his life, wealth, children, and friends, and did not allow a wicked man like Yazid to violate the divine commands. He has been quoted saying: "If the religion of Muhammad (PBUH) will not be protected except by my blood being shed, then o swords embrace me." Thus, the Imam's movement set a model for all the faithful people to stand up against the tyrants when the divine values are in danger, to prevent their encroachment, and to protect religious values from being distorted.

5- Chivalry and prudence

Imam Husayn's behavior in the course of the Ashura movement reflected pure honesty, chivalry, and prudence. A clear example of it was how the Imam treated Hurr and his troops. On the way to Karbala in the Sharaf area, when Hurr and his army stopped the Imam's caravan, despite the fact that Hurr's army was considered enemy when Imam Husayn felt that they were thirsty, he ordered his companions to give water to all of them. It has been narrated that the Imam even made some of their soldiers drink water with his own hand.

6- Tolerance

The Ashura epic was also a display of tolerance in the behaviors and words of Imam Husayn and his companions. When Imam Husayn (AS) was leaving Mecca for Iraq, he said in a sermon: "We, the people of Ahl al-Bayt (of the Prophet) are happy with what makes God Almighty happy. We are patient with regard to facing the way He puts us to trial and calamities, and He also rewards us for being patient and tolerant."

7- Loyalty

Loyalty and adherence to the covenant were the characteristics of Imam Husayn (AS) and his faithful companions. On the eve of Ashura, the Imam described his companions in these words: "I do not know anyone more faithful and honest than my companions."

B: Lessons and teachings that are specific to Muslims and Islam

1- Revival and preservation of Sharia law

As rightly said by Imam Husayn (AS), if Yazid's rule continued in the same way, no trace of Islam and the Qur'an would be left, and prophethood and imamate would be transformed into monarchy and devilry.

2. The awakening of the Islamic world

The pages of history are full of cases that reflect this awakening and all the movements that occurred after Ashura were inspired by that uprising. It should not be overlooked Imam Husayn's (AS) movement has inspired many freedom movements among non-Muslims.

3- Monotheism lesson

The Ashura movement is a book full of Islamic teachings the most important of which is monotheism. Practical monotheism was beautifully manifested in the attitude of the Imam and his faithful companions. They proved that between pleasing God and pleasing someone other than God, they will easily ignore everything other than God. This is the eternal lesson of Ashura for all believers in the world.

4- Preservation of Islamic sanctities

Although the main objective of Imam Husayn and his zealous companions was to preserve the very foundation of Islam and divine decrees, at the same time, each and every stand that the Imam and his companions took emphasized specific important issues or ruling, which can be very instructive for the followers of that infallible Imam. For example, since the Islamic culture and teachings emphasize the sanctity of Mecca and the House of God when Imam Husayn (AS) felt that Yazid's secret agents might assassinate him next to the House of God and thereby break the sanctity of the divine sanctuary, he immediately left Mecca and said: I swear to God, it is better if I am killed outside Mecca, rather than inside Mecca and next to the Ka'ba." Imam Khomeini (RA) has, in this regard said: "Sayyid al-Shuhada' (the master of martyrs) did not stay in Mecca, so as the sanctity of Mecca would not be desecrated."

5- Adherence to prayer

Among the important lessons of the Ashura movement is the need to adhere to prayer and guard it. Imam Husayn (AS) paid great attention to the issue of prayer and promoting its culture. In the evening of Tasu'a, when Omar Sa'd's army decided to start a war with Imam Husayn, he commissioned his brother, Hazrat Abulfazl, to ask the enemy for a one-night respite, and he stated the reason for it in these words: "Give us a respite tonight so that we can engage in prayer, supplication, and seeking Allah's forgiveness; because God knows that I love prayer and the recitation of the Qur'an."

6- A lesson on preserving chastity and guarding the hijab

One of the important lessons of Ashura for Muslim women is to protect the hijab. When in the evening of Ashura, Yazid's shameless soldiers set fire to the tents of Imam Husayn's camp and started looting the properties of the martyrs' families and the household of the Prophet, another dimension of the mission of the female heroes of Karbala, that is, preserving chastity and hijab, was manifested. Every woman was doing her duty in a different way. It is narrated that when the people gathered to watch the captives of Ahl al-Bayt, Lady Umm Kulthum (Imam Husayn's sister) said to them: "O people! Have you no shame that you have gathered to watch the Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet who do not have proper clothing?" Hazrat Zainab, too, addressed Yazid in his palace in Shaam and said: "O son of the people who were set free by the Prophet, is it fair that you have placed your wives and maidservants in a safe place and away from the eyes of the people, and make the daughters of the Messenger of God move through the cities with inappropriate clothing, so that everyone can look at them?!"

Concluding remarks

Today, we are witnessing a new wave of anti-Islam and Islamophobia moves and creating doubts about the religious teachings of Islam.

The free-thinking people of the world, especially the young Muslims, should, by making Imam Husayn (AS) their role model, keep the following points, which are derived from the Imam's words and deeds, in mind.

- Confront the conspiracies of the enemies of Islam intelligently and unitedly in order to preserve and pro-

tect the sanctity of the Holy Qur'an.

- Respecting the sanctities of other religions is one of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the messages of Ashura, therefore, any countermeasures and desecration of other holy books are not compatible with Islamic teachings.

- Tolerance and politeness in behavior along with compassion are among the messages of Ashura that will ensure the salvation of the young people if they follow them.

- From the viewpoint of all divine religions, especially Islam, freedom of speech and expression is condemned if it offends the beliefs and faith of others and hurts their feelings.



Freedom of Expression or Expression of Hostility

Hojjat al-Islam Mohammad Mahdi Imanipour

President of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, and
Chairman of the Policy-making Council of Interreligious Dialogue

The recent move of the Swedish court to issue permission to anti-Islam extremists to desecrate the Holy Qur'an outside the main mosque in the capital city of Stockholm on the day of Eid al-Adha, under the pretext of freedom of speech, has once again revealed the obvious anti-Islamism of the government and security apparatus of this European country. This brazen act has raised the anger of Muslims around the world.

It is a known fact that key-

words such as "freedom of expression" and "right to express opinion" - instead of being used in the way of protecting ethics and human rights - are, in fact, used as a tool and an excuse to fight against such principles.

Surprisingly, while the Swedish authorities have regarded the burning of the holy book of Muslims as "freedom of expression", they have referred to the protest against this offensive and intolerable act as an example of "the violation of freedom

of expression"! This decision by the Swedish court reflects the purposeful and fully conscious anti-Islam objective that the overt and covert movements in the West have been trying to establish for years.

Undoubtedly, Muslim nations consider preserving the sanctity of the Holy Quran as the red line that should not be crossed and will never remain silent in the face of offensive acts like what is happening in Sweden.

The Islamic Culture and Relations Organization strongly condemns the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden and asks the Swedish government to prevent anti-Quran gatherings and apologize to Muslims of the world for violating their religious sanctities and insulting their religious emotions.

Systematic and brazenly designed anti-Islam and anti-Qur'an moves in the decision-making and policy-making system of Sweden will eventually result in the spread of hatred in this country to the detriment of the Swedish government and security institutions. A change in the existing trend and replacing it with a constructive and interactive approach toward the Islamic world can lead to the spread of peace and justice.





Ayatollah Khamenei's Statement on the Desecration of the Holy Qur'an: An Analysis

Dr. Ali Akbar Ziaee

Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in a message, called the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden a bitter, conspiratorial, and dangerous incident and emphasized: "The severest punishment for the perpetrator of this crime is agreed upon by all Islamic scholars, the Swedish government must hand over the criminal to the judicial authorities of Islamic countries."



The text of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution's message is as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Merciful

The desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden is a bitter, conspiratorial, and dangerous incident. The severest punishment for the perpetrator of this crime is agreed upon by all Islamic scholars, and the Swedish government must also know that by supporting the criminal, it has taken a warlike stance against the Islamic world and has attracted hatred and enmity from Muslim nations and many of their governments.

That government must hand over the criminal to the judicial authorities of Islamic countries. The hidden (behind-the-scenes) conspirators should also know that the sanctity and grandeur of the Holy Quran will increase day by day, and its guiding lights will shine brighter than ever. The likes of this conspiracy and its conspiracist are too insignificant to prevent this increasing radiance. And Allah prevails in His affairs.

Sayyed Ali Khamenei
The 22nd of July, 2023



There are always sacred values in human life that thinkers and governments protect. Preserving the dignity of human and religious values has been of special importance since the beginning of the formation of social systems in primitive tribes and traditional and modern social systems. Throughout history, most political and social systems have endeavored to protect social and spiritual values and defend the structures approved by religious traditions.

The history of passing laws against the desecration of religious sanctities goes back to the breaking of taboos in primitive human

societies when religious leaders dealt with such criminals. All divine religions and even non-Abrahamic religions have established laws regarding the desecration of religious sanctuaries to protect the religion against offenders.

After the collapse of communism, the failure of Western liberalism, the emergence of political Islam - following the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran - and the awakening of Muslims in the Islamic countries that were under the domination of the West, a trend of Islamophobia was started by imperialistic powers and global Zionism in various forms including the desecration of the Holy Qur'an in western countries; especially Sweden and Denmark. Desecration of the Holy Qur'an under the false pretext of freedom of expression is a concrete example of violating the religious sanctities and is considered a crime in all religions.

The aim of this article is to have a look at the ways and means of dealing with the issue of desecration of religious sanctities on the basis of Ayatollah Khamenei's statement.

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution did not consider a single person guilty of desecration of the Holy Qur'an but he considered it to be a conspiracy against Islam, which was planned by the global imperialistic powers and the enemies of Islam. To quote:

"Criticizing is different from desecration and insult. This point is very important, everyone should pay attention. This kind of act, this kind of desecration is the act of the Americans who have disgraced themselves in the world."

In another speech, he said:

"The global imperialistic powers are against the teachings of the Holy Qur'an calling Muslims to unity and solidarity, so it becomes clear that the desecration was not done by one person but is rooted in the hatred of global imperialistic powers towards Qur'anic teachings. The Qur'an has advised us to be united. It has warned us that if we lose our unity and solidarity, our reputation, identity, and power will be destroyed. Today, unfortunately, these disturbances are observed in the Islamic world. Today, the conspiracy against the Islamic world is very serious. If organized conspiracies are working against Islam with more intensity in this era, it is the awakening of the Islamic Ummah that has terrified the enemies. Global imperialistic powers, greedy people in Islamic countries, and interventionists among Islamic states are afraid of the unity of the Islamic nations. America and Zionism always poison the atmosphere with their propaganda, in order to create differences between Islamic countries and Islamic states."

From the point of view of the leader of the Islamic Revolution, one of the main conspiracies of the enemy against Islam and desecrating the Holy Qur'an is the Judaization of Holy Quds. He says about this:

"Their big crime is that they want to Judaize the Holy Quds, the first Qibla of the Muslims, and beloved Palestine."

Referring to the conspiracy of the political and cultural institutions of the Western world, he condemned the Western pretext of freedom of speech and called it completely false and misleading. In his state-

ment condemning the insult to the Prophet, in Charlie Abdo's publication, he also said that the anti-Islamic policies of the Zionists and arrogant governments are responsible for such hostile actions the aim of which is to divert the minds of the

Grand Ayatollah Khamenei:

"People's hearts are in the grip of the power of Islam and the Qur'an. You have seen what the Muslim nations everywhere - Europe and Asia - did in response to the insult of that Satanic speaker who used

cal meaning of this act is important. What does the American government want to say about this action? I think it is not difficult to understand the message of this act."

The danger of desecrating the Holy Qur'an from the viewpoint of Ayatollah Khamenei can be explained and interpreted in several ways:

A: This unwise action of the enemies of the Holy Qur'an can be the basis of a broad plan of imperialistic powers against Islam and the Muslims of the world.

B: This criminal act can be a part of the plan to promote liberalism of the West and popularize values based on modern atheism, the most important obstacle of which is the Holy Qur'an and Islam as a political and value-based school of thought.

C: This action can be dangerous for the unity of the Islamic Ummah and lack of zeal on the part of Muslims to confront Western attacks on their religious sanctuaries paves the way for the implementation of the evil plans of global and Zionist-imperialistic powers to control the material and spiritual resources of the Islamic countries.

It is obvious that the consequences of such an unwise act, which is supported by extremist Western parties and security organizations affiliated with imperialistic powers and Western media, are the responsibility of the perpetrators and main designers of this sinister plan.

All the scholars of Islam, both Shiites and Sunnis - including Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali denominations - consider desecration of the Holy Qur'an to be punishable. As mentioned in the statement of the



nations and governments of West Asia from the evil plans that America and the Zionist regime have for this region.

The Holy Qur'an is the most important source of inspiration at the individual and social levels among Muslims. Right-wing extremist groups in Western countries in recent years, especially in Sweden and Denmark, have, with the help of Zionists and arrogant media agents, pursued Islamophobia and in this direction, the most important source of inspiration in Islam, i.e. the Qur'an, is targeted.

The devotion of the world's Muslims to the Holy Qur'an and religious teachings and the confrontation of imperialistic powers with these values is reflected in the words of

to send Satanic verses to the hearts of criminals. It was not specific to the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is Islam, the Islamic belief and faith of the people. Nations are like this."

In 1993, Salman Rushdie met the US President, Bill Clinton, in the White House. The leader of the revolution in a meeting with the guests of the Islamic Conference said that:

"Dear Muslim brothers from all over the world! Today, enemies have risen against Islam, not against Sunnis or Shiites or some sect or some community. They are enemies of Islam and they are enemies of the Qur'an. You saw that the president of America met with the apostate, infidel Salman Rushdie. The meeting of two unbelievers with each other is not important. The politi-

leader of the revolution, all Islamic scholars have strongly condemned this shameful act. We are referring to a number of them.

Hossein Ebrahim Taha, the Chairman of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation:

“It is quite evident that the actions like desecration of the Holy Qur’an and Prophet Mohammad are moves in the direction of Islamophobia.”

Qara Daghi, the Secretary General of the World Union of Muslim Scholars,

“Burning the Holy Qur’an is a racist act and does not represent freedom, and this barbaric act of an individual is officially supported and it should not be tolerated.”

This offensive action has been condemned by the official authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Morocco, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Libya, Lebanon, Iraq, Algeria, Sultanate of Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and also Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, Islamic World Union, World Muslim Scholars Union, Palestinian Scholars Union, Arab Society, Arab Parliament, Al-Azhar Scholars of Egypt, Muslim Brotherhood, Lebanon’s Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and Hamas.

When a crime is committed with the support of the officials of Sweden and Denmark in public and in front of the mass media, the nature of the crime is not personal or against the right of a small group of people, but the addressees of that crime are all believers.

The Swedish government should not expect that the Muslims of the

world and those who believe in Abrahamic religions must be indifferent to this type of desecration of the Holy Qur’an and should not take action to prevent similar moves and punish the perpetrators of the crime. It is in such conditions that



the leader of the Islamic Revolution wants the Swedish government to hand over the perpetrators of this crime to the judicial bodies of Islamic countries.

The Hague Court was formed to protect the rights of citizens at the international level, but in the meantime, it seems the rights of Muslim nations and their religious values do not have the least place in the international legal system.

It does not seem that the reform of the judicial laws of the European Union will be able to ensure the protection of Islamic religious sanctities and, at least, historical experience has shown that the judicial system of Western countries, based on common sense and civil laws, cannot prevent crimes related to

religion and religious values.

The desecration of the Holy Qur’an has happened to turn off the light of guidance, and behind this criminal movement are polytheists and atheists who belong to the global imperialistic powers and

Zionism. Verse 8 of Surah Al-Saf:

“They want to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light, although the disbelievers dislike it.”

Justifies the statement of Ayatollah Khamenei about this desecration of the Holy Qur’an. The last phrase of Ayatollah Khamenei’s statement is derived from verse 21 of Surah Yusuf, where God Almighty says: “And Allah is predominant over His affair.” Ayatollah Khamenei clarifies that Muslims should not be disappointed by the plots of global imperialistic powers and Zionism for trying to extinguish the lights of divine guidance through such conspiracies.

And the last supplication is praise be to the Lord of the worlds.



Sweden; Corruption and Islamophobia

Mohsen Pakaein

One of the reasons for Islamophobic activities in Sweden, which has caused hatred in the Muslim world, is the dissatisfaction of Muslims with the increasing corruption in this country.

The increase in sexual harassment, abuse of children, administrative corruption, bribery, organized crime, support for terrorism, and drug trafficking are among the issues of Muslims' dissatisfaction with the Swedish government.

The ruling party of this country,

which came to power in 2022 and calls itself Democrat, believes that practicing Islam is not compatible with democracy! The right-wingers, who form the main body of the so-called Democrat party, have repeatedly expressed their opposition to the performance of religious duties by Muslims, including offering prayers and choosing the hijab.

Sweden's ruling party, like the neo-Nazis, considers insulting what is sacred for Muslims, including the Prophet Muhammad

(PBUH) and the Holy Quran, as a way to exercise democracy, and issues permission for such actions in the name of freedom of speech. This way of thinking considers Islam's opposition to corruption as a form of interference in governance and believes that Muslims intend to take the country under their control.

Although corruption in Sweden is defined by the National Crime Prevention Council (Brå) as "abuse of power", in 2016, about 1,510,000 crimes were reported

to legal authorities in Sweden, which shows the level of corruption in this country. In order to understand this situation more, the extensive cases of corruption in Sweden are discussed below.

1. According to the reports of most European media, including the Independent, Sweden and Denmark are the countries with the highest rate of sexual harassment in the European Union. In these countries, 80 to 95 percent of people say they have been sexually harassed. These numbers are the highest in this continent, and for this reason, the Gatestone Institute calls Sweden the “rape capital of the West”. According to these reports, Swedish women are much more exposed to sexual crimes than men; Although men are not safe from sexual injuries and a significant part of these crimes occur in public places, workplaces, and schools. Fredrik Bundestam, director of the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, says: “This is the first time we have conducted a study of the entire academic sector, and it is actually the most extensive survey in the world on sexual harassment in the higher education sector. In this survey, a total of 38% said that they had experienced unwanted sexual activity since the beginning of their studies or work at university or college.

2. Child abuse and child harassment, which are clear violation of human rights, is widespread in Sweden. Among the abused children, 35% were girls and 65% were boys. Among them, a signifi-

cant part of the threats is directed at the population of 500,000 Swedish Muslims, who are insulted and intimidated by right-wing and racist movements.

3. Regarding human trafficking, according to Sputnik’s report, the number of corruption centers in Norway and Sweden has increased following the arrival of Ukrainian asylum seekers in this country, and the Swedish police identified a number of “corruption centers” as employers of women and girls at the beginning of this year. These people were illegally brought to Sweden by human traffickers or as asylum seekers. In justifying their actions, these trafficking gangs told the police that they felt sympathy for these people and wanted to help them to get out of the difficult situation. According to numerous reports, since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, European networks of human trafficking and sexual exploitation have targeted Ukrain-

ian refugee women and trapped them in modern slavery.

4. Regarding the lack of social security, bicycle theft is one of the most common crimes in a country of ten million people, Sweden, and over the past ten years, more than 600,000 bicycles have been stolen from people. Anti-theft devices for bicycles and cars are warned to people. Sweden is also among the top five countries in the world in terms of car theft, and the rate of Swedes is 106 thefts per 100,000 people, which means that with a population of ten million, more than ten thousand cars are stolen in this country every year. In terms of theft from homes and places, Sweden has a miserable situation and according to the available statistics, there are 1915 cases of theft per 100,000 people.

5. Ever since the anti-corruption institutions in America and Sweden started investigating the offer of a bribe by a Swedish-American company to the son of Recep Tayyip Erdogan in exchange for domination of the Turkish market, the existence of bribery in the Swedish administrative system has been highlighted. It was also reported that one of the employees at the Swedish Embassy in Jordan received money from the applicants in exchange for shortening the interview time. Erik Ollenhag, Sweden’s ambassador to Jordan, strongly reacted to this issue and stated that he would react seriously against corruption and disorder. But during the wedding ceremony of Princess Victoria with her sports coach in a church

▶ **According to the reports of most European media, including the Independent, Sweden and Denmark are the countries with the highest rate of sexual harassment in the European Union**



in the center of Stockholm, it was revealed that a millionaire businessman paid for the couple's honeymoon and provided them with a private jet and a luxurious cruise ship.

This is an example of bribery to the royal family and "Peter Wolverdorski", the political editor of the newspaper "Dagens Nyheter", said: "All Swedish people want that the officials do not look for their personal interests and they want to be sure that the officials only have the interests of the people in mind, not in their own business interests. I think whoever owns such a company would be very willing to have the support of the royal family to continue doing business abroad. So there is a risk that one day the royal family will eventually want to repay his hospitality." But the biggest corruption case in Sweden's history was when Saab, the manufacturer of Gripen jets, was accused of paying bribes to the South African

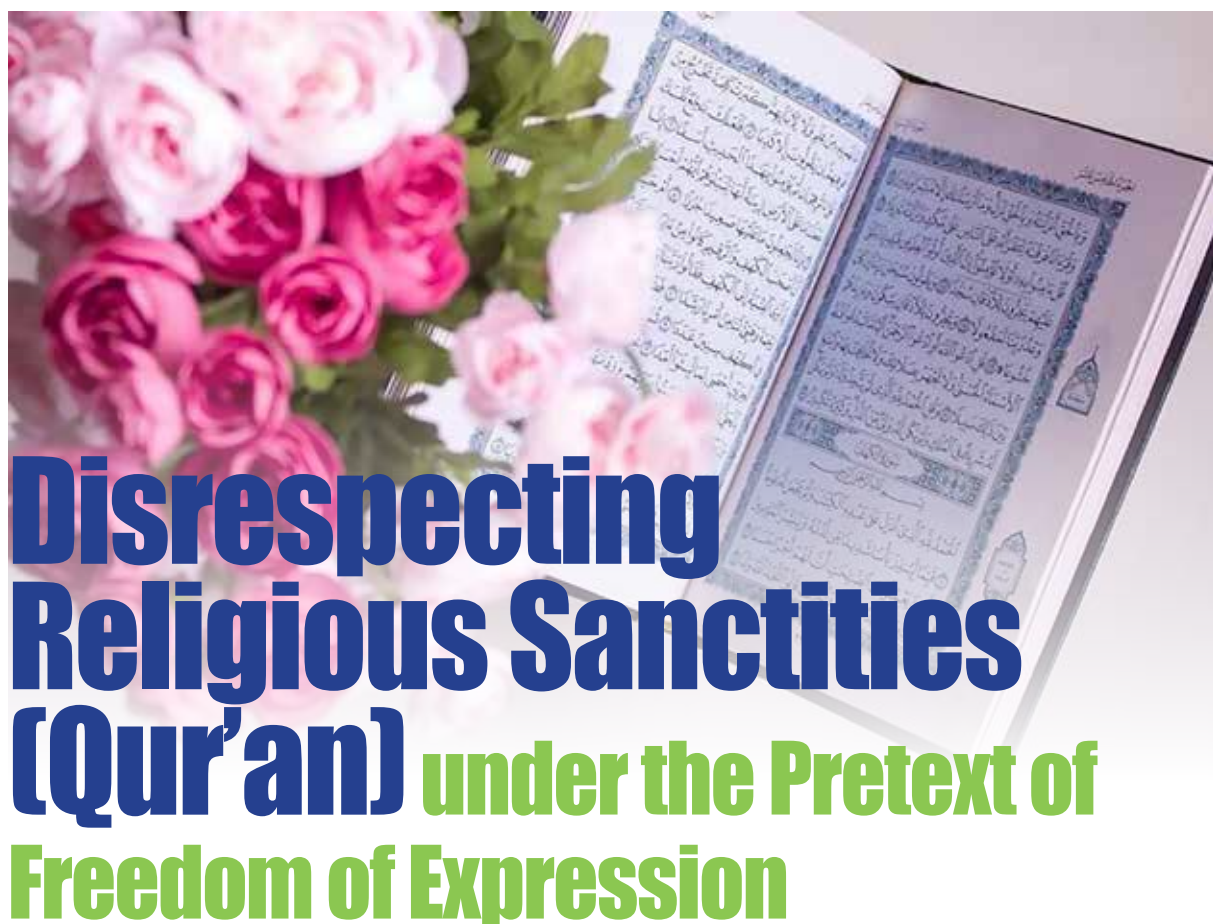
government to conclude a profitable contract. The research was abandoned, an action that was criticized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

6. Sweden has been a safe haven for terrorist elements and groups in recent decades. This country's support measures for terrorist elements and groups such as the MKO and the Anzal movement include a wide range of measures such as sheltering and financing them. These elements from inside Sweden were planning to carry out terrorist acts against the people of Iran, and among these terrorists was "Habib Al-Assiod" known as "Chaab", the leader of the terrorist group "Harakah al-Nidal", who was hanged. This terrorist was based in Sweden for many years and benefited from the facilities of the government of this country and participated in the martyrdom and injury of 274 innocent Iranian citizens. Sweden's lack of will and

unwillingness to include international standards in domestic laws is the most important reason for not prosecuting criminals and terrorists in Sweden.

7. According to Swedish media reports, gun violence and murders stemming from actions related to the drug trade and personal vendettas have reached an alarming growth rate in recent months. In a report referring to the armed murder in early March this year in Sweden, the Wall Street Journal wrote that this shooting opened a new chapter of brutality in the wave of gang violence in Sweden and made Sweden the hot spot for gun murder in Europe. Swedish National Crime Prevention Council announced that shootings leading to murder in Sweden are almost 5.2 times the European average. In 2021 and 2022, 45 and 62 people died due to gun violence.

Muslims, as followers of Islamic civilization, have never insulted what is sacred to other nations; the books of divine religions, such as the Bible, the Torah, the Avesta, and the prophets and messengers, have been respected by Muslims. For this reason, the Islamic world does not expect countries that claim civilization and adhere to human rights, it disrespects and insults the sanctities of Muslims. The Muslims of the world consider the existence of widespread corruption in Sweden to be the main cause of insulting their beliefs, and naturally, the continuation of this situation will increase the hatred of the Islamic world for Sweden's government.



Disrespecting Religious Sanctities (Qur'an) under the Pretext of Freedom of Expression

Mohsen Asadi Movahed / Master of International Law; Razavi University of Islamic Sciences

Introduction:

On Wednesday (June 28), Selvan Momika (37 years old and of Iraqi origin) tore pages of the Holy Quran and set them on fire in the center of Stockholm in front of the city's main mosque. This arrogance, which was done with the approval and support of the Swedish government, has angered the Muslim world.

He committed this crime after the police of Sweden issued a permit to hold an anti-Islamic demonstration. This action received strong condemnation from the Arab and Islamic countries, and they all demanded to prevent these manifes-

tations of Islamophobia.

Jordan and UAE summoned the ambassadors of Sweden, Iran summoned the chargé d'affaires of this country, and the secretary of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation has called for an emergency meeting following this insult to the Holy Quran. Also, mass protest gatherings have been held in some countries and are scheduled to be held in other countries.

In Iraq, hundreds of citizens of this country, while condemning the burning of the Holy Quran in Sweden, held a large protest rally in front of the Swedish embassy in Baghdad and expressed their an-

ger towards this crime.

Freedom of Expression and Prohibition of Religious Intolerance:

The effort to propagate tolerance and its expansion, which is a requirement for the development of human rights, was officially brought to the attention of the United Nations in the 1990s; and the resolutions of the General Assembly (Resolution 48/126 approved on December 30, 1993, and Resolution 49/213 on December 23, 1994) declared 1995 as a religious "year of tolerance".

But in particular, in 1965, the Declaration of the International Principles of Cultural Coopera-

tion declared: “Every culture has its respect and value that must be respected, and all people have the right and duty to develop their own culture, so all cultures are part of the common heritage that they form humanity. Respecting different cultures and individuals and human groups belonging to them is a manifestation of one of the areas of prohibition of racism and racial discrimination.”

The aforementioned declaration also considered the practices of racial, religious, and national hatred in the political, educational, and cultural spheres of social life as a violation of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and condemned them. In addition, Resolution No. 1510 dated December 12, 1960, of the General Assembly, which condemned all forms of racial discrimination, is directly related to the concept of tolerance and efforts to eradicate the spirit of discrimination. Basically, it seems that the increase in ethnic and communal tensions, the occurrence of internal wars, the spread and intensification of fundamentalism, etc., are contributing factors to the rise of religious intolerance, which has taken on new forms in recent years.

For the first time in 1962, the General Assembly asked all governments to ban and cancel discriminatory laws that play a role in the continuation of racial discrimination and religious intolerance and to take appropriate measures to combat such intolerance and prejudices. In this regard, finally, on November 25, 1981, the declaration of prohibition of religious intoler-

ance was approved by the General Assembly.

Religious tolerance in its simplest and most basic form is based on recognizing the rights of others and respecting them for their personality and identity. The new social and political values, from which the international norms in the field of human rights are derived, have become a rule through the need for tolerance and the most basic condition for maintaining the order and stability of the social system. The second paragraph of Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: “Understanding and tolerance must be promoted among all nations and racial or religious groups.” Anyway, among the numerous resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the declaration of elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief approved on November 25, 1981 (Resolution 36/56) is considered a basic and accepted document.

Insulting and disrespecting the religious beliefs of a group or community also violates the important principles of the United Nations and is considered an indirect action to incite hatred. Thus, since religious tolerance is considered an essential element of all democratic societies and a basic precondition for respect to human rights, and also because religious intolerance involves an “act or omission” that violates human rights; it seems that what is important with regard to intolerance and discrimination is the effect of that behavior or performance in promoting racial, national and religious hatred or preventing its spread.

ON THE RECENT BURNING OF THE HOLY QUR’AN IN SWEDEN

**Abdullah R. Makwinja,
President of Ahl ul-Bayt Islamic Guidance Council, Zimbabwe**

In 2023 the world witnessed two blatant desecrations of the Holy Qur’an in Sweden one outside the Turkish Embassy and the most recent one in front of a mosque under the guise of freedom of speech. Freedom of opinion and expression, indeed, cornerstones of human rights and pillars of free and democratic societies. These freedoms support other fundamental rights, such as peaceful assembly, participation in public affairs, and freedom of religion. But Sweden should note that freedom of speech is not an absolute right. It is a right that is subjected to certain limitations in order to ensure that it is not exercised in a way, which can cause harm to others.

Taking international human rights law as a yardstick, hate speech is a category of expression, which enjoys no protection whatsoever. Under Article 20 (2) of the International Covenant on Civil Political Rights, all States are obliged to prohibit by law “any advocacy of national,



racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence”

While the right to free speech is enshrined in the constitutional law of many countries, nowhere it is considered to be an unfettered one. There are laws that prohibit, for example, inciting murder, violence, terrorism, racial hatred, or hatred to other groups or any act that causes fear of violence, distress, harassment, or is defamatory or malicious. In Sweden and most European countries, it is a crime to deny the Holocaust. Edward Snowden and Julian Assange are good examples that freedom of speech is not absolute even in these countries, which claim to be champions of freedom of speech. In reality, there is no absolute freedom of speech, but it exists under predefined limits. It is due to such contradictions, on the limits of freedom of speech, that the clash of values between Islam and the West is currently taking place. Racism, national security, holocaust denial, incitement, glorification of terrorism, racial hatred, and libel, among many others, are all limitations imposed on freedom of speech by Western nations.

Pope Francis condemned and rejected permitting the act as a form of freedom of speech. He said the

burning of the Muslim holy book, the Qur’an, has made him angry and disgusted. “Any book considered holy should be respected to respect those who believe in it,” the pope said “I feel angry and disgusted at these actions”.

Freedom of expression is not absolute and never has been, although some people try to push the limits as much as possible, not to support freedom but to advance their predetermined agenda. Freedom of expression is of great value and must be used in a constructive way in line with the idea of bringing peaceful co-existence and understanding among religions.

From July 11 to 12, the 53rd session of the UN Human Rights Council held an urgent debate on acts of burning the Quran in relevant countries and passed a draft resolution proposed by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The resolution was approved by 28 members of the Council out of 47, including China, Ukraine, and most African countries, while seven abstained and twelve voted against, including France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

However, several Western countries expressed their opposition to the anti-blasphemy laws during the debates and, at the same time,

strongly denounced the burning of the Holy Qur’an in Sweden: what a show of hypocrisy. It is within this context that Muslims unreservedly condemn and denounce the recent burning of the Holy Qur’an; this time with the blessing of the Swedish government. This abhorrent action is unacceptable and should be condemned in the strongest terms possible by all those who cherish world justice, harmony, and peace. Permitting this anti-Islam act, which targets more than two billion Muslims and insults sacred values, under the guise of ‘freedom of expression’ is completely unacceptable.

The global Muslim community upholds the total dismissal of all forms of hate speech or action based on religion or race. In this context, we call on the UN to bear its responsibility of upholding world peace by rejecting this incitement of violence and injury to the feelings of the global Muslim community with regard to the sacred book of Islam. For the sake of world peace, the cherished values of dialogue among religions and civilizations, tolerance, inclusiveness, and peaceful co-existence should be promoted and all phobias towards religion must be rejected. All religious beliefs and feelings need to be prized.

The Holy Qur'an Heralds Peace and Friendship

Hojjat al-Islam Hamidreza
Mohammadian



قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ
بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ
شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ
اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ

“Say, ‘O People of the Book! Come to a common word between us and you: that we will worship no one but Allah, that we will not ascribe any partner to Him, and that some of us will not take some others as lords besides Allah.’ But if they turn

away, say, ‘Be witnesses that we have submitted [to Allah].’ (Holy Qur’an, Surah Aal-e Imran Verse 65)

From the point of view of the Qur’an and Islam, all divine religions have come to establish a bond between man and God Almighty and to save and guide him. And all Abrahamic and non-Abrahamic religions are respectable and no Muslim even has the right to insult and blas-

pheme non-Abrahamic religions respected by other communities.

“Do not abuse those whom they invoke besides Allah, lest they should abuse Allah out of hostility, without any knowledge. That is how to every people We have made their conduct seem decorous. Then their return will be to their Lord and He will inform them concerning what they used to do.” (Surah

Al-An'am, Verse 108)

According to the explicit text of this holy verse, a real Muslim never has the right to mock, insult, or even insult the beliefs and religions of other nations.

God Almighty has given all human beings the intellect which adorns human existence and the indicator of knowing good and bad and although some people choose not to benefit from wisdom and rationality, that is not a reason for Muslims to insult and ridicule them. In many hadiths that have reached us from the Ahl al-Bayt, it has been repeatedly emphasized to avoid arguing with the opponents of religion.

Nasr ibn Mazahim Minqari, the great Muslim historian, has, in the book "The Battle of Siffin", narrated that Hujr ibn Adi and Amr ibn Hamiq went into the open and began to express hatred and curse the people of Shaam (Levant). Imam Ali (AS) summoned them and when they came they said: "O Commander of the Faithful, why did you stop us from insulting them?" The Imam said: "It is not permissible for you to abuse, curse, and express hatred. However, the right thing would be better to describe their wrong actions and tell them that what they do is unlawful. Also, instead of cursing them and expressing hatred you could say 'Oh God, do not let our blood and theirs be shed, establish a compromise between us and them to their compatibility, and prevent them from going astray so that they can recognize the truth and

leave the one who has resorted to rebellion and oppression."

All divine prophets have come to free mankind from the captivity of worldly affairs and guide them to have control over their rebellious soul. Man's true salvation depends on believing in the true prophets of God. None of the prophets had differences with each other, and if there seem to be certain differences in their laws, it was due to the needs of the time and special circumstances.

"We do not send the apostles except as bearers of good news and warners. As for those who are faithful and righteous, they will have no fear, nor will they grieve." (Surah Al-An'am, Verse 48)

After the end of the Second World War and the destruction of the infrastructures of European countries involved in the war and the dire need to create new infrastructures, there was a large influx of young workers from Muslim countries such as Turkey, Iran, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, India, and Pakistan for employment into the European countries and Muslims from different countries, who were always peaceful and science-loving people, grew and developed in European societies and mixed and married with European people. From the 1950s onward the world witnessed the expansion of Muslim communities, the establishment of mosques, and scientific associations in Europe and the friendship between Muslims and Christians.

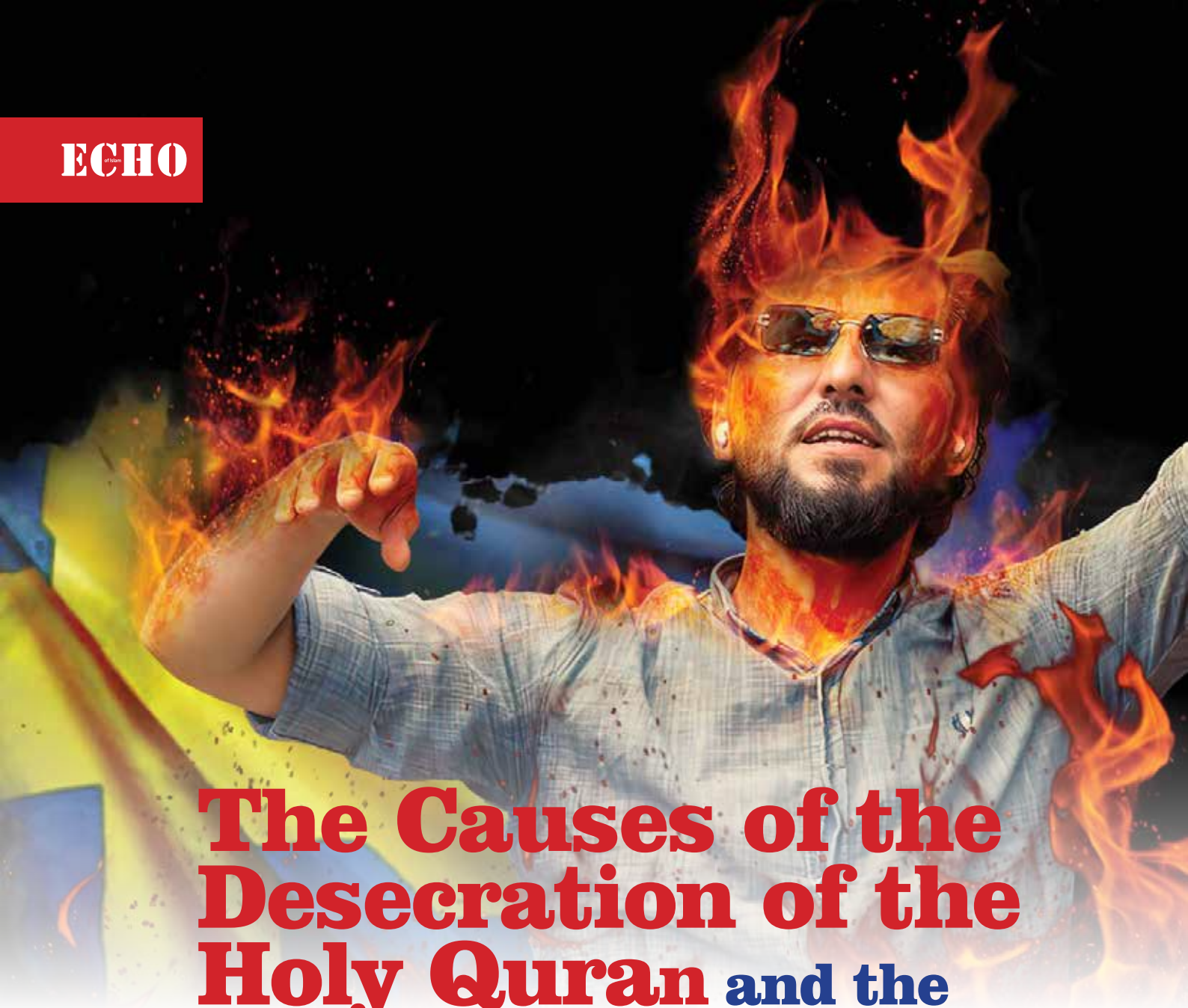
This rapid growth of the Muslim communities in Europe was reacted to by some non-Muslim fanatics and ill-wishers of Islam who statistically predicted that between 2050 and 2070 half of the population of Europe would comprise Muslims. And in order to prevent this phenomenon they came up with a new plan, i.e. to create Islamophobia by resorting to different ways and means.

In today's age, we are witnessing that the detractors of Islam repeatedly insult the Holy Qur'an and the great Prophet of Islam in the name of freedom of expression. Is insulting burning of the holy books of Muslims and other religions a sign of freedom of expression? This dangerous conspiracy started with Salman Rushdie's book and led to the burning of the Qur'an in America and Europe and now in Sweden by an atheist and extremist Iraqi, Salwan Momika, who had been arrested on charges of war crimes in 2017 and then released with the intervention of Western countries and went to Sweden. The fact of the matter is that this person is only looking for fame and nothing more.

Last but not least:

"Allah does not forbid you from dealing with kindness and justice with those [polytheists] who did not make war against you on account of religion and did not expel you from your homes. Indeed, Allah loves the just." (Surah Al-Mumtahanah, Verse 8)

Islam respects all religions.



The Causes of the Desecration of the Holy Quran and the Ways of Dealing with It

Hossein Mohammadi / Senior Expert of International Relations

The world has recently witnessed insults and disrespect towards the Holy Quran, the most sacred book for over 1.5 billion Muslims. This incident took place in Sweden during the Eid al-Adha holiday, under the pretext of freedom of expression but with permission from the Swedish government and police. This act has been condemned by Islamic countries. The question here is when did Islamophobia and hostility towards

Islam emerge in Europe?

Islamophobia has its roots in the Crusades and has continued in various forms and dimensions until today. After World War II, Islamophobia and hostility towards Islam intensified with the migration of Muslims to European countries for employment opportunities, and it has continued to this day. Multiple factors have always played a role in fueling Islamophobia and hostility towards

Islam in Europe. One factor is the growth of the Muslim population as compared to negative population growth among native Europeans; the phenomenon that Huntington's theory of 'The Clash of Civilizations' considers to be the primary cause for the decline of Western civilization. Another factor that can be mentioned is the covert and overt enmity of Zionists against Muslims and Islamic nations. Insulting Islamic sanctities

and the Holy Quran first occurred in the United States and then in France (Charlie Hebdo magazine), followed by Denmark, and later in Sweden, breaking the hearts of Muslims worldwide.

Disrespecting the sacredness of the Quran is undoubtedly an insult to all Abrahamic religions, including Christianity and Judaism, and has no connection to freedom of expression and human rights. European countries, claiming to champion human rights and democracy, always regard the book as a cultural symbol and consider insulting and disrespecting it as an insult to belief and thought. The dual approach towards cultural, political, and religious issues is the most important reason behind misusing the principle of freedom of expression and belief by the Western government.

At present, European countries consider any expression or opinion regarding the Holocaust and homosexuality as a crime, and individuals who engage in research or investigation on these topics are condemned to imprisonment and social exclusion. However, when it comes to insulting Islamic sanctities, they remain silent, thereby endorsing such behavior. What is the purpose of this dual approach? In recent years, a dangerous ideology has emerged in Europe that promotes superiority through the power wielded by governing authorities. They expect others to accept what they perceive as true, disregarding conflicting perspectives. For example, disrespecting the sacred book of Muslims is justified under the guise of freedom of expression and is seemingly contradictory to the United Nations' International Covenant on

Civil and Political Rights adopted in 1966.

The truth is that the hostility towards Islam goes beyond disrespecting the holy book of Muslims. Currently, Western research centers and think tanks have come to the conclusion that the Islamic world is emerging as a new bloc and pole in the multipolar world. An example of this can be found in the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, which recognizes Islamic civilization as an independent center of world development within a polycentric world, and even in the Russian parliament, acts of disrespect towards the Holy Quran have been condemned by the MPs.

The mobilization, harmony, and unity among Islamic countries with regard to defending Muslim sanctities can be resilient and impactful. Islamic countries, considering their high capacities in terms of the number of countries, large populations, energy reserves such as oil and gas, geopolitical and geographical positions, as well as the existence of Islamic centers and

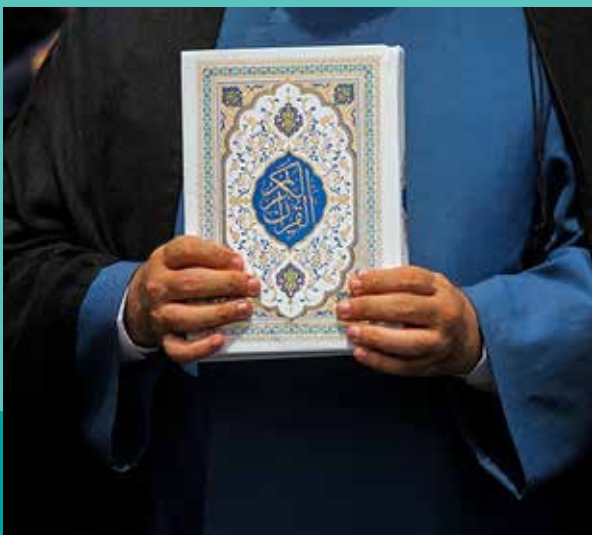
unions such as the Arab League, Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Al-Azhar in Egypt, and other Islamic centers in the East and West, can confront Islamophobia with coordinated actions.

Some actions that can be listed as measures to address the situation include reducing political relations, imposing sanctions on countries and their supporters, revitalizing the cultural and media power of Muslim nations in the realm of soft power, pursuing complaints and grievances through international organizations and courts such as the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

Today, racist behavior towards Muslims and any individual based on their background is unacceptable. False claimants of democracy cannot play with the emotions of Muslims and expect to end it with a simple apology, as it creates significant destructive effects among non-Muslims as well. After the failure of launching extremist groups, the West is now deliberately pursuing a new strategy to undermine the religion of Islam by exploiting people in Islamic countries and creating conflicts between Muslim nations, such as Sudan. Currently, there is not a day in Western media where they do not create negative news against Islam; and, to some extent, seek to brainwash their audience against Muslims. Undoubtedly, disrespecting the sacred book of Muslims will not be their last action. Thus, it is incumbent upon Islamic countries and religious scholars to confront such actions with unity and sound practical decisions in order to put an end to these heinous acts. The enemies of Islam are vigilant, and we must also be more vigilant and alert.

▶ **Today, racist behavior towards Muslims and any individual based on their background is unacceptable. False claimants of democracy cannot play with the emotions of Muslims and expect to end it with a simple apology, as it creates significant destructive effects among non-Muslims as well**







Sweden's Revolt Against Freedom

Safoora Kazemian, Media Expert

During the rapid growth of the Muslim population in Europe, with Sweden and France ranking first in this upward trend, Sweden has violated international human rights protocols by insulting the sanctities of hundreds of millions of Muslims worldwide. By providing legal immunity to the perpetrators of such heinous acts, it has been confirmed in practice that Europe and the West, contrary to their exaggerated claims and rhetoric about respecting freedom of speech and expression, do not believe in this fundamental human right. What has actually been happening there is an overt violation of these basic human rights.

Islamophobia and desecration of the Holy Qur'an; a sacred book that emphasizes respect for all divine religions in its teachings - as well as the teachings of the noble Prophet of Islam - are seen as acts of weakness and helplessness in the face of the increasing inclination of Europeans towards the divine religion of Islam.



The Western world has come to realize that the facade presented about freedom over the centuries is no longer effective and those who are true advocates of freedom of thought are no longer interested in accepting deceptive ideas that are devoid of humanistic foundations. This is the reason that some Western countries, including Sweden, issue licenses for Anti-Islam activities without realizing that by doing so they, in fact, slaughter freedom and not Islam and the Holy Qur'an.

Through the review of anti-Islamic records, especially in Sweden, from 1998 until now, we find that the result of these insults and attacks on the Holy Qur'an has led to an increase in inclination towards Islam in the West. In this regard, the "Pew Research Center" in Washington, which provides

statistical reports on attitudes worldwide, predicts that by 2030, Muslims will make up 8% of Europe's population, and the current population of Muslims in Europe, which exceeds 50.5 million people, is evidence of the accuracy of this center's research and the growth and influence of Muslims worldwide, which has greatly and unnecessarily concerned the authorities of European and Western countries.

Widespread administrative, social, and cultural corruption; increase in corrupt centers; increase in theft and lack of social security; increase in bribery and administrative corruption that has provided the grounds for the presence of various terrorist groups in Sweden; drug trafficking leading to an increase in armed killings; an increase in sexual harassment, child

abuse, and exploitation of children; and human trafficking are just a fraction of the widespread corruption in Sweden. These issues have sparked protests among the people of this country, especially Muslims. Unfortunately, this country lacks a practical plan to solve these problems and is forced to resort to unwise actions such as burning the Holy Qur'an as a means to divert attention from these issues.

Finally, in addition to condemning this heinous act, we call upon all Muslims worldwide, intellectuals, advocates of freedom, and governments across the globe to react against the condemnable actions of the Swedish government. We urge nations to stand against actions that lead to the destruction of security, national interests, and especially freedom.



Quran-burning: Insulting Religion and Intensification of Conflicts

Dr. Zinat Motahari

The last case of desecrating the Holy Book of Muslims sparked a new wave of reactions in the Muslim world. For Muslims, this offensive behavior carries the clear message of Islamophobia. The place and the day (the main Stockholm Mosque on the day of Eid al-Adha) chosen for committing this heinous act in front of

the astonished eyes of 200 Muslims made it a grave case of ethnocentrism as well. In the view of the leaders of Islamic countries, however, the Swedish judicial body's sanctioning of such a heinous offense and the support provided by the police corroborates the centuries-long contentions of cultural imperialism as

the historical source of conflict between the East and West.

Scandinavian countries have authorized disrespect to religious beliefs more than any other European country in the past decades. They are developed countries whose names are ranked high in happiness polls and studies. This coin, however, has another

side that shows the seemingly attractive social policies of these countries entail less satisfactory results in the opinion of other societies around the globe. In other words, the internal policies of states can have international consequences that sometimes expand apprehension rather than spreading happiness. The reason is that states are highly monitored in the era of globalization, which is as much characterized by potentials as limitations.

The expansion of migration, especially westward by populations of less developed countries, introduces the necessity of a very important issue, that is, coexistence. Contrary to the outdated model of cultural assimilation that required the newcomers to culturally melt into the destination society, coexistence today is rather the threshold of multiculturalism. As such, the failure of certain Western states in protecting the cultural values of their Muslim citizens is the denial of multiculturalism and breaches the civil rights of this population group.

The main reason behind the European states' patronage of insults to religion or at best shelving it seems to stem from the conventional dualization of religion and development; an idea that has long been repudiated by thinkers such as Max Weber who conversely associated the two. Thereupon, although ignoring the religious feelings of a group in favor of the maximal

protection of liberties for another might seem a progressive agenda in cherishing freedom, such an act is falling short of a major multicultural criterion, namely religious tolerance. This agenda takes a reductionist definition of freedom for granted that scapegoats order, social contract, and public good.

In the wider global spectrum, the discontent of the Muslim populations residing in the West escalates cleavages that are addressed in globalization studies and, among others, are predictors of extremism, hate crimes, ethnocentrism, and Islamophobia. In addition, the tide of

dissatisfaction caused among the Muslim-majority countries is a major source of pressure on national governments for retaliation and accounts for the persistence of conflict and distrust in international relations. To conclude, the passivity of Western states with regard to the insults to the beliefs of about two-billion Muslims can cause hindrance to the ideas of lasting peace and the constructivist approaches to international relations.





Burning the Holy Quran in Sweden; A Racist Crime in the Name of Freedom of Expression

Dr. Siham Muhammad

It is no coincidence that the crime of burning the Holy Quran in Sweden, in front of the Stockholm Mosque, on the first day of Eid al-Adha coincided with the murder of a young man of Algerian origin in France by a policeman, which sparked violent clashes between angry peo-

ple and police forces in Paris that led to chaos and vandalism. The purpose of this incident - authorized by the Swedish authorities - was to provoke the Islamic communities residing in Sweden, Europe, and the Islamic world. It seems that some parties are trying to play on reli-

gious and sectarian sentiments to not only strike at the stability and security of European countries but also, specifically, target Muslim communities and hold them responsible for the chaos and crises that these countries face today due to numerous reasons including the Ukrainian cri-



sis, which has eclipsed all parts of Europe.

The racist and criminal decision to burn the Holy Quran had received the green signal from the Swedish court two weeks earlier. This criminal act, and the fact that the Swedish police allowed racist extremists to burn the Holy Quran on the day of Eid al-Adha, in addition to being a clear crime against freedom of belief and religion, also manifests the continuation of the West's hostile approach to human rights and true freedom, especially freedom of belief. This behavior is not surprising on the part of these racists. Their actions against the Holy Quran and Muslims, and creating a state of

heinous Islamophobia, confirm that their history is full of such crimes despite their sterile and false claims to defend public opinion and freedoms.

Moreover, by organizing groups and movements that claim to be Islam and delve into murder, slaughter, and destruction of homelands - as admitted by former US intelligence chief James Wellesley - they intend to set the world on fire. The two World Wars that resulted in the terrible massacre of millions of innocent people were not initiated by Muslims, but rather it was the West that violated all fundamental human values and principles to serve its illegitimate and colonial interests.

From this point of view, the crime of burning the Holy Quran in Sweden is a continuation of Western hostility towards true human rights. It also presents many indications that there are some extremist parties in the West today, particularly in Europe, which are working to strike Islamic communities and ethnic minorities under various pretexts, which would, in fact, sabotage the whole European continent in the long run. These parties are far-right parties backed by US intelligence and move freely throughout Europe, and their only weapon to achieve power is to hit minorities and create chaos in the name of freedom of speech.

Condemning the Desecration of the Holy Qur'an

Insulting and desecrating the Holy Qur'an has rightfully ignited anger and fury in the hearts of Muslims around the world. An extremist Swedish citizen sets fire to the Holy Qur'an in that country, and this heinous act sets fire to the hearts of millions of Muslims. Although it was not the first time that

the tragic incident of insulting the Holy Qur'an and the Noble Prophet of Islam (PBUH) was taking place, this one was different and much more painful for the Muslims of the world in several ways.

Firstly, before this incident, the Swedish police had announced that they had given

permission to the people who wanted to demonstrate in front of the main mosque in Stockholm on the day of Eid al-Adha and burn the Holy Qur'an. It was quite strange and unprecedented that a government should officially authorize insulting the sanctities of hundreds of millions of Muslims and on top of



it extend its support to the perpetrators.

Secondly, while during this incident, the Swedish police gave full support to those who participated in this outrageous and inhuman act, it arrested those who opposed and protested against it and asked for the burning of the Holy Qur'an to be prevented.

Thirdly, the time and place of this insulting act were different from the previous similar incidents. The time chosen was Eid al-Adha and the place was outside the main mosque in Stockholm. Since both the time and the place of this event were sacred for Muslims, it extremely hurt the feelings of Muslims around the world.

The Western world, in general, and Sweden, in particular, justify this heinous move in the

name of 'freedom of expression'. However, it is important to note that insulting in general, and desecration of sanctities in particular, has nothing to do with 'freedom of expression', which is everyone's right, and is rather an unethical and inhuman act that is condemned in the view of every school of thought. The reason is that no one has the right to cause unnecessary pain and suffering to any human being, but in this case, millions of people around the globe have been subjected to unnecessary pain and suffering.

Moreover, every sensible person knows that there is a difference between criticism and insult. While there is no problem with criticizing other people's beliefs, insulting what is sacred to them is condemned. The objective of someone who burns

the Holy Qur'an is not to reform the beliefs of Muslims but to ridicule and humiliate their beliefs. Besides, criticism always finds meaning in an atmosphere of discussion, dialogue, and benevolence, but insult takes place in an atmosphere of violence and enmity. Therefore, it can categorically be claimed that this act was an example of insult, and not criticism.

It is, therefore, everyone's duty to condemn this bitter incident and try to make the world aware of the unethical and inhuman essence of this act, its designers, founders, and supporters, and make the world, especially the Westerners, aware of the reality of Islam so that they can, away from any prejudice, traverse the path of truth, humanity, and morality and the world will not witness such unfortunate events again.





The Role of Islamic Schools of Thought in Confronting the Desecration of Islamic Sanctities

Hossein Foumani

The world continues to witness demonstrations against and the condemnation of the desecration of the Holy Qur'an. Grand Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, condemned the recent insults to Islamic sanctities and the Holy Qur'an in

some European countries. Considering these insults as a sign of enmity of the arrogant powers with Islam, he called upon all the free-thinking people of the world to confront the dirty policy of insulting religious sanctities and spreading hatred and asked for severest punishment

for the perpetrator of this act, which is considered a crime by all Islamic scholars.

"In his words: Despite the conspiracy of arrogance, the sanctity and glory of the Holy Qur'an is increasing day by day and the lights of its guidance are shining even more than before. The



Qur'an is becoming more popular every day and the future belongs to Islam."

Verse 103 of Surah Aal-e Imran of the Holy Qur'an says: "Hold fast, all together, to Allah's cord, and do not be divided".

According to Grand Ayatollah Khamenei, unity, solidarity, and integrity are beyond any differences in color, race, and school of thought and it is one of the most important characteristics of Islamic culture.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Imams from his Ahl al-Bayt have been flagbearers of Islamic unity and have always emphasized the importance of unity among Muslims.

The issue of the proximity of

Islamic schools of thought the Islamic Ummah and Muslims' unity and brotherhood has been emphasized by the leaders and scholars of the Muslim world in recent centuries and following the victory of the Islamic 'The World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought' was formed in which a large number of scholars and thinkers of the Islamic world discuss the important issues and problems of the Islamic Ummah.

It goes without saying that insulting the divine book of Islam is insulting all the divine prophets and sanctities of all Abrahamic religions, which is not acceptable in any culture and faith.

The developments in the Mid-

dle East region in the past few decades, especially the spread of Islamic awakening followed by the awakening of other nations of the world, have caused some Western countries to fear the spread of Islamic thought and the inclination of the people under their government to the religion of Islam and it is for this reason that they resort to Islamophobia some incidents of which have been witnessed in Sweden, Denmark, France, America, etc. over the past few years.

The role of Muslim scholars and thinkers in this period of time is very sensitive and decisive. Proximity of Islamic schools of thought over what is shared by all of them, such as belief in



monotheism, prophethood, resurrection, prayer, fasting, and Qiblah can be an important factor in the elimination of many of the problems of the world of Islam including the issue of Palestine.

Presently, the Muslim population of the world is about one and a half billion, of which more than twenty-five million live in the European continent, most of whom provide valuable services to the countries of their immigration and residence with their expertise. Except for some takfiri and deceived groups that have, in fact, been created by some Western countries, especially the United States of America and its allies, Muslims are the most peaceful people of the world. Because of their failure in fighting resistance and jihad-

ist groups in Gaza and occupied Palestine, the Zionists are trying to create soft war by spreading negative and false propaganda against Muslim sanctities through the media in order to divert world opinion from the crimes that are being committed in the Palestinian occupied land.

The scholars of the Islamic world have the capacity to prevent most of the anti-Islamic movements of aliens by promoting unity and solidarity in the world of Islam and among the followers of different Islamic schools of thought. The world of Islam consists of fifty-seven countries, which have great capacities in different fields, and by uniting and cooperating in the political, cultural, religious, and economic fields, they can

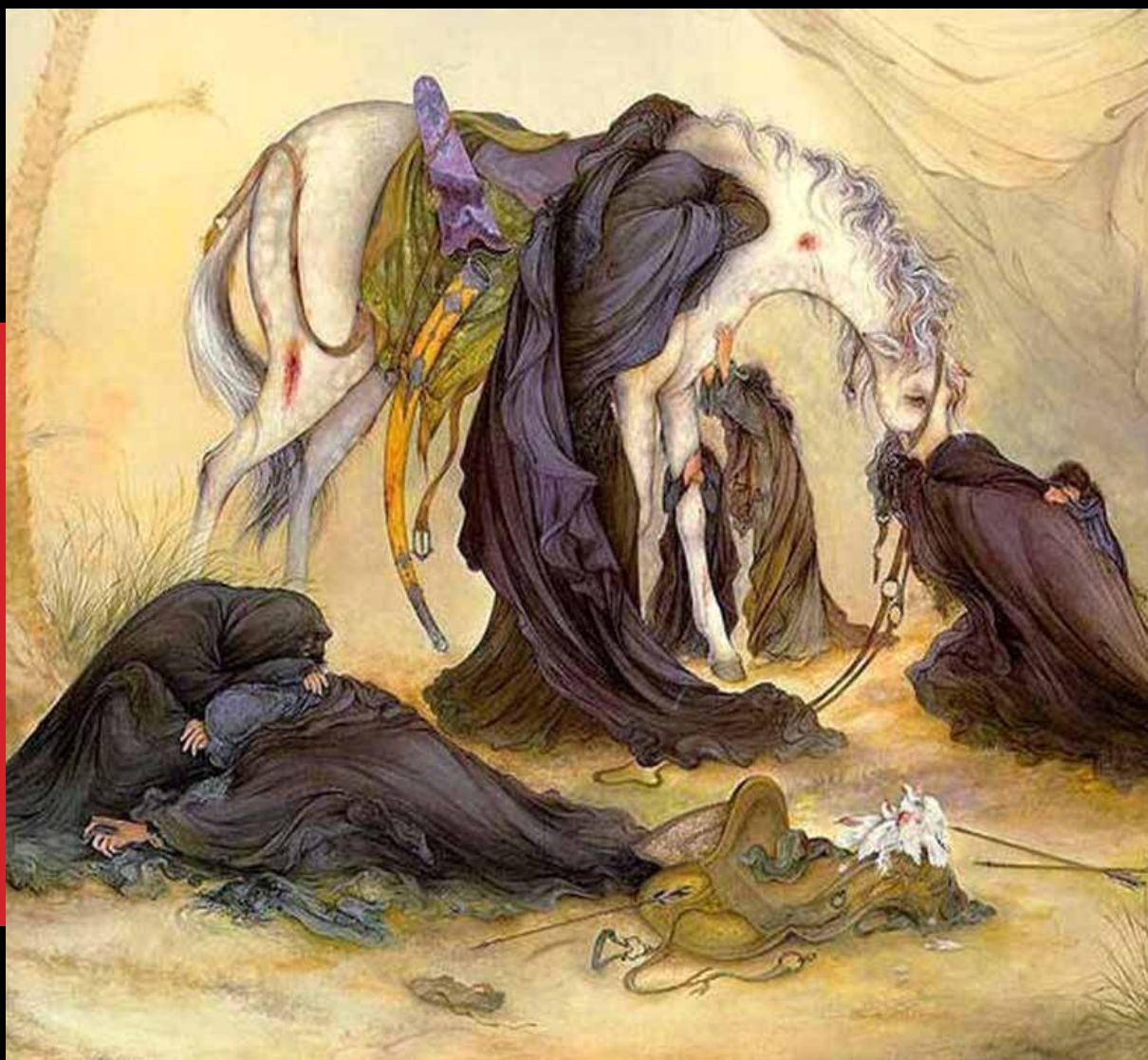
defend the rights of the Islamic Ummah.

The member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), religious centers such as Al-Azhar of Egypt, and other Islamic centers can jointly take effective action with regard to defending Islamic sanctities places and even the sanctities of all Abrahamic religions by issuing joint statements against the desecration of religious sanctities and make offenders realize that hurting the beliefs of Muslims will be costly for the countries that support sacrilegious moves.

What is quite evident is the continued desecration of Islamic sanctities by Western countries is a planned and organized move aimed at creating Islamophobia under the pretext of freedom of speech.

- The Ways and Means of Confronting the Desecration of Islamic sanctities include:

- The unity of the Islamic Ummah.
- Exposure of tricks of Western countries and Zionists by Islamic scholars and thinkers.
- Spreading enlightenment and confronting anti-Islam conspiracies in social media and virtual space.
- Simultaneous and nationwide demonstrations in Islamic countries against those who insult Islamic sanctities.
- Sanctioning economic and political relations with those who take action against Islamic sanctities.
- Simultaneous judicial action by Islamic countries against those who indulge in such acts and their supporting countries.



Tathbir (Qama-Zani): A Futile Passion, and an Obvious Challenge to Reason, Science, and Religion

Hamid Rezania Shirazi

Since the first mourning ceremony held for the Master of Martyrs Imam Husayn (AS), his lovers were always devoted to honoring and reviving the School of Ashura and explicating the teachings of Ahl al-Bayt (the Household of Prophet Muhammad) as well as the message behind Imam Husayn's uprising, as it had a valuable message in each age and time for seekers of the truth and justice, even for non-Muslims.

In line with these higher goals are the recommendations of the Prophet and Shiite Imams (AS) for holding mourning ceremonies. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS) has been quoted saying: "May God have His mercy for our Shias. I swear to God that our Shias are believers. I swear to God that they sympathize with and share the tragedies of our household with their long-time sorrow and grief (in our mourning)" (Bihar al-Aanwar, vol. 43, p. 222).

All the same, what can be inferred from such hadiths is that Shiite Imams recommended simple and profound mourning ceremonies to transfer the message and culture of Karbala to future generations. Unfortunately, as time passed and the Shiite denomination became widespread, those ceremonies were mingled with certain ethnic and national practices and traditions as well as individual, and collective tastes, which might prevent a proper comprehension of the message of Ashura and the philosophy of Imam Husayn's uprising.

The Notion

Tatbir (or qama-zani) is a kind of mourning for Imam Husayn (AS), done by hitting a qama (or kama, a kind of dagger) or sword to one's head so that it bleeds (Fathullah, Mu'jam al-faz al-Fiqh al-Ja'fari, 1415 AH, p. 114). In fact, qama is a weapon similar to a sword, but it is shorter and wider without a curvature. A person who injures his own or other people's heads with qama on the Day of Ashura is called "qama-zan" and the action is called "qama-zani" or "tatbir." Tatbir is often practiced in some mourning processions, and when doing so, the mourners loudly cry "Haydar Haydar." Moreover, drums and horns are sounded and red flags are raised (Al-Fadli, "Falsafat al-sha'air al-Husayniyya," the website of the network of al-Imamayn al-Hasanayn).

Arguments by Proponents of Tatbir

Proponents of tatbir have cited jurisprudential and hadith-based evidence to establish the legitimacy of the practice. We cannot address all those arguments, but some of them are as follows.

The Infallible Imam's confirmation (the myth of hitting the head to the



howdah)

There is an anecdote cited in the book *Nūr al-ayn fī mashhad al-Husayn* whose author is unknown, however, it is attributed to Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Neyshaburi al-Isfarayini - an Ash'arite Shafi'i Sunni scholar - and the book was deemed unreliable by many scholars. For example, the great Shiite scholar of hadith the late Shaykh 'Abbas Qumi, the author of *Mafatih al-Jinan*, says that it was very unlikely of Lady Zaynab to have broken her head by hitting it to the howdah since she was a rational woman from Banu Hashim and had obtained the degree of submission to God (*Muntaha al-Amal*, vol. 1, p. 75). He then cites reliable sources to show that there was not a howdah in the caravan for her to hit her head to.

Moaning and wailing for Imam Husayn (AS)

The idea here is that tatbir is an instance of moaning and wailing (*al-jaza' wa-l-faza'*) for Imam Husayn, which is described as a divine ritual. This implies that tatbir is not only permissible but also recommended (or supererogatory: *mustahabb*).

However, it should be noted that every action has a specific definition, which should be confirmed by religion or reason and common sense. In this case, too, the scope of mourning should be determined by religion or reason. Jabir ibn Abdullah Ansari says that he asked Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS) about moan-



ing and wailing, and he said: “The highest degree of wailing is to shout ‘woe’, hitting one’s face and chest, and cutting the front part of the hair. A person who goes on mourning inevitably loses his patience” (Wasā’il, vol. 2, p. 915, the section on the dislikeness of moaning and groaning). In his critique of these kinds of mourning, Imam Khomeini says: “I should have a word on mourning and ceremonies held in the name of Imam Husayn (AS). We do not say, and no religious person would say, that whatever is done in those ceremonies is good. Many prominent scholars have reprimanded and prevented many of those practices” (Kashf al-Asrar, p. 173).

Revival of Shiite doctrines

The proponents of tatbir claim that, with this practice, the foundations of religion can be reinforced and an increasing number of people might be interested in Shiism. This can be seen in one way or another in various sources. Mr. Sayyid Hasan Shirazi attacks those who try to eliminate such rituals, arguing that “if the question is that of fighting what is forbidden and protecting Islam, then why not fight other forbidden acts? And if the question is to fight the rituals, then why was there no opposition to them on the first day, as they are performed for many years now, and this is the main reason for the permissibility of tatbir” (Sha’air al-Husayniyya, pp. 25-26 and 128), and then he concludes that tatbir is intrinsically permissible and is an instance of comply-

ing with the Imam.

In reply, it is necessary to note that the main argument against tatbir is that it results in the humiliation and destruction of Shiism as it presents an ugly, regressive, and vile picture of Islam for non-Muslims and even some Muslims. The prominent Shiite scholar Sayyid Mohsen Amin says: “Why is it necessary to perform a practice like tatbir, which embarrasses and humiliates the religion and its believers, and leads people to hatred of Islam, even if it is an essential part of Islam? Is it not a requirement of piety and caution to refrain from tatbir? Even if we believe that tatbir is permissible, it had better be avoided, since it is not an obligation, and thus its avoidance would not undermine the religion.”

Moreover, Imam Khomeini explicitly says: “You want to do something for the sake of God. When an action ends up undermining Islam, it had better not be done. For example, tatbir leads to the humiliation of Islam. Instead, hold processions and chest-beating ceremonies in the most glorious ways” (Dar sāya āftāb, Muhammad Hasan Rahimiyan, p. 116).

Other non-religious, non-rational, and non-commonsensical claims

Many people who perform tatbir claim that Imam Husayn’s tragedy is so big that they lose their patience and sanity.

If this were true, then these people would have a higher place than the pure Shiite Imams (AS) or religious scholars and jurists, since although the Imams observed those tragedies with their divine knowledge, they never performed such practices. Even Imam Husayn (AS) asked his sister Zaynab on the eve of Ashura not to tear her clothes, scratch her face, or cry in his elegy (al-Luhūf, p. 140).

In fact, it should be noted that the Uprising of Ashura is not an uprising that aims to yield insane and infatuated people who lack any kind of rationality, religious legitimacy, or common sense. On the contrary, it had higher and more valuable goals, such as freedom and dignity in life. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Make things easy and do not make them difficult; and make people steadfast in religion and do not make them hate it” (Shaykh Hurr ‘Amili, Wasāil al-Shi’a, vol. 3, p. 491).



Tatbir is Non-Healthy, Non-Scientific, and Non-Commonsensical

Harmful effects of tatbir on the brain

There are many reports of death as a result of tatbir or qama-zani in many cities of Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, and Pakistan. According to Dr. Alireza Zali, a neurosurgeon and the assistant professor of the College of Medicine at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, here are the harms of such blows to the brain:

- Damages to the skin and hair, bones, and the brain tissue under the bone as a result of tatbir
- Blood coagulation, damage, venous injury, and intense bleeding of the brain venous sinuses

- Breakage as a result of breaking the underlying bones
- Formation of infections in the breakage
- Contusion, bleeding, and inflammation of the brain tissue
- Possible entrance of hair and other external things and increased risk of infection. (Pīrāmūn qama-zanī dar Ashura, p. 11).

Moreover, Dr. Mahdi Bina, an associate professor of psychology, warns about the effects of tatbir on children’s spirit in these words: “Since blood flows after tatbir, and the practice comes with rhythmic and repetitive bodily movements, it leaves impacts on children. Some children get panicked and disgusted by seeing this. Now if a child or an



adult sees this as a religious phenomenon, then this would lead to his or her hatred for religion in the future.” (ibid).

Tatbir is a humiliation and belittlement of religious doctrines and the genuine values of the School of Ashura

The main argument for the forbiddance of tatbir or gama-zani is that it embarrasses and humiliates Shiism. It is not difficult to see this, as scenes of tatbir in certain Islamic and even Western countries have been used in social networks, websites, TV networks, and anti-

Islamic media to present a violent and ugly picture of Islam. A case in point is the documentary *The Sword of Islam* (1987) by BBC or the documentary *Shiite Terror* on VOA, in which Shias are portrayed as obsessed with murder and blood-shedding, and in the end, it plays scenes of tatbir on the Day of Ashura (Kayhan Al Arabi, June 15, 1994, no. 3113).

Of course, it is historically established that colonialism uses all means possible to undermine Islam and Muslims, and one such means is tatbir, as the Supreme Leader of Iran says: “... When Communists conquered the Azerbaijan region of the former Soviet Union, they eliminated all Islamic traces there; for example, they turned mosques into storehouses, ... leaving no trace of Islam and Shiism there, but they only allowed one thing, which was tatbir. The instruction given by Communist heads to their subordinates was that Muslims were not allowed to hold congregational prayers or recite the Quran, but they were allowed to perform tatbir, since it was a propagation against religion and Shiism...” (public speech to people of Mashhad on March 21, 1997).

There is an article on Rahpouyans website, under the title of “Defense of the Shiite sanctity, part 9” in which a document is said to be found in the UK embassy in Tehran to the effect that, in 1965, the embassy purchased 15,000 qamas and donated them to mourning ceremonies in Tehran! Which was to say, hit yourselves and leave us alone. There is even a photo of tatbir of the time, attributed to a British diplomat.

Let us finish with the words of the fathers of Islam. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: “The worst act is that which is heretic and unprecedented. Beware that every heresy is misguidance, and every misguidance ends up in the hell” (Amali I-Shaykh al-Mufid, p. 188; Usul al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 57).

Imam Ali (AS) reprimands heresies in these words: “No heresy was made unless it led to the abandonment of a tradition. Avoid heresies and go on the obvious path. The best act is that which has a history, and the worst one is that which is heretic and unprecedented” (Mizan al-Hikma, vol. 1, p. 453).

It would be great if people donate blood in blood transfusion centers to patients that need blood, instead of injuring themselves and damaging society by tatbir. Blood donation is an act liked by God, fills the sacred passion with sanity, and thus, puts Ashura ceremonies on the path of the higher goals of Imam Husayn (AS) and his faithful companions.

Prohibition of Insulting Religions from the Perspective of International Law

Dr. Fatemeh Ebrahimi Varkiani, Ph.D. in International Law from the University of Tehran and Lecturer at Al-Zahra University

Almighty God has created all human beings with equal inherent dignity. He emphasized the necessity of exercising tolerance and that is the reason the teachings of all Abrahamic religions confirm the importance of peace, peaceful co-existence, and respect for human dignity.

However, human history has recorded numerous bitter stories of forgetting the teachings of the divine prophets and man's pure and peace-seeking nature, resulting in many tragedies caused by self-conceit and a sense of superiority in race, gender, color, nationality, religion, origin, etc. Examples of such tragedies are the First and Second World Wars, after which the world community decided to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article One of this declaration, which is a universal international document, emphasizes:

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

By adopting the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1966, the nations committed themselves to respect the civil and political rights of all indi-

viduals. Article 20 of this covenant states:

1. Any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law. 2. Any advocacy of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility, or violence shall be prohibited by law.

Thus, a glance at the articles of this Covenant makes it evident that the right to freedom of expression, which includes the freedom of inquiry, attainment, and dissemination of information and thoughts of any kind, regardless of the extent, whether orally or in writing or in print or by any other means of his choice, should not be in conflict with other articles, including articles 18 and 20 of the Covenant.

Unfortunately, the derogatory action of the Danish newspaper in 2005 against the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH), the desecration of Muslims' faith in the Charlie Hebdo magazine, and finally, the brazen acts of burning the Holy Qur'an in countries such as Sweden and... which has taken place in the name of freedom of expression, are, undoubtedly, a clear violation of Article 20 and contrary to the limitations applicable to Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This is despite the fact that the Human Rights Committee clearly emphasizes that

the followers of a religion cannot express hateful statements, which incite discrimination, violence, or hostility towards other people or followers of other religions under the pretext of following the orders of their religion.

The outcome of such insults is nothing but the creation of conflict with the followers of religions, especially Muslims, whose right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion is attacked, which is contrary to paragraph 2 of Article 18 of the Covenant stating "No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice."

Even though these rights place certain duties on the member states of the Covenant, unfortunately, the Western governments have acted so weakly in preventing acts that insult religions, that the Islamic governments tried to deal seriously with these insulting acts with the help of other international mechanisms. Combating blasphemy is an issue that has been repeatedly addressed by some member states of the United Nations (UN) between the years 1999 to 2010.

The plans presented on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) "seek to ban dis-

criminary statements, extremism and misunderstandings that lead to polarization and fragmentation with dangerous unintended and unforeseen consequences.” In April 1999, at the insistence of the OIC, Pakistan submitted a draft resolution entitled “Insult to Islam” to the UN Human Rights Commission. Some members of the commission suggested that this resolution be changed to include all religions. The commission accepted this proposal and changed the title of the resolution to “Combating defamation of religions”.

This resolution has called on all countries to adopt appropriate measures to combat hatred, discrimination, intolerance, and acts of violence, intimidation, and coercion motivated by religious intolerance including attacking sacred or holy places and encouraging understanding, tolerance, and respect in matters related to freedom of religion or belief, within their national legal framework, in accordance with international human rights instruments. Of course, it is to be noted that, claiming the resolution restricts freedom of expression, some so-called human rights activists, proponents of freedom of speech, and several Western countries opposed it.

Due to the increasing trend of insulting religions, this issue was placed on the agenda of the Human Rights Commission in the following years. The commission approved similar resolutions under the title “Combating defamation of religions as a means to promote human rights, social harmony and religious and cultural diversity “ and “Combating defamation of religions”.

The resolution on “Combating defamation of religions”, adopted in 2008, respecting religions and protecting them from humiliation and insults, was recognized as a

basic element necessary for the realization of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This resolution deplores the use of print, audio-visual and electronic media, including the Internet, and any other means to incite acts of violence, xenophobia, or related intolerance and discrimination against any religion, as well as the targeting and desecration of holy books, holy sites, places of worship and religious symbols of all religions; discrimination related to Is-



lam or any religion and has obliged the High Commissioner to submit a report.

In addition to the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly also put the issue of insulting religions on the agenda and adopted a resolution in which the member states strongly expressed regret regarding the physical attacks on businesses, cultural centers, and places of worship of religions, as well as the targeting of religious symbols. The resolution also condemned the use of print, audio-visual and electronic media, including the Internet, and any other means to incite acts of

violence, xenophobia, or related intolerance and discrimination against Islam or any other religion. It emphasized the need to fight effectively against defamation of all religions, particularly Islam and Muslims, especially in human rights forums.

Subsequently, the governments were asked to take decisive action through political institutions and organizations to prevent the dissemination of racist and xenophobic ideas and content aimed at any

religion or its followers, which incites discrimination, hostility, or violence. The governments were also called upon to, within the framework of their respective legal and constitutional systems, provide adequate protection against hateful acts, discrimination, intimidation, and coercion resulting from defamation of religions and to take all possible measures to promote tolerance and respect for all religions.

Unfortunately, however, these legal norms did not prevent the growing trend of Islamophobia and insulting religions to the extent that in 2023, the Muslims of the world

were faced with the hostile act of burning the Qur'an, creating a wave of anger in them. Their protests against this move were so widespread that the countries approved the resolution proposed by Morocco was adopted in the last session of the UN General Assembly.

This resolution strongly condemns all acts of violence against people based on their religion or beliefs, as well as any act against religious symbols, scriptures, homes, businesses, properties, schools, cultural centers, or places of worship, and also condemns any attack on sacred or holy places, and shrines and declared such actions as a violation of international laws.

Despite the opposition of the Western countries, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted the resolution proposed by the Islamic countries, condemning the insult to the Qur'an, and demanded that the High Commissioner for Human Rights investigate and report on this matter. The resolution called for condemning attacks on the Holy Qur'an, describing them as "acts of hatred". In this resolution, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other departments of the Human Rights Council are also asked to provide the necessary recommendations to countries to eliminate the legal gaps in the criminalization of insulting religions.

Moreover, it has been recommended to hold meetings to examine this issue in the March and June 2024 meetings of the Human Rights Council. The United States of America and England and Belgium, on behalf of the European Union, opposed the adoption of this resolution, but the Human Rights Council approved it with a decisive vote.

International Meeting on «Examining the Jurisprudential and Legal Aspects of Desecrating the Holy Qur'an from the Perspective of International Law»

This meeting, which was held with the participation of university professors and lawyers from all over the Islamic world, both in person and virtually, began with introductory remarks by Dr. Karim Najafi Barzegar, Secretary General of the Inter-Islamic Network on Virtual Universities (CINVU), stating that insulting religions is prohibited in the international documents, laws, and conventions. The insulting attitude of some European countries towards Islam and the Holy Quran carried out under the code name of freedom of speech, calls for practical, effective, and coordinated action by Islamic countries in confronting such attitude.

Referring to the statements of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution in condemning the insult to the Holy Qur'an, he emphasized: The West and all the Zionist agents behind this heinous act have been slapped by Muslims many times, but imposing deterrent sanctions and banning scientific and academic communications with them, is one of the missions of international and national organizations of Islamic countries.

Dr. Ali Karimi Morid, the Strategic and Executive Deputy and Head of the Permanent Secretariat of CINVU, also spoke at this event by stating that in the positive laws of many countries, insulting beliefs is a criminal offense. However, due to the existing anti-Islamic views, the legal institutions of these governments remain silent. The world is moving towards transformation and a new worldview. A scientific group like the Hampshire College of America has published the results of research on the scientific miracles of the Holy Qur'an and confessed that 1400 years ago, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had spoken in verse 125 of Surah Al-An'am about the difficulty of ascending to beyond the earth's atmosphere due to the lack of oxygen and in verse 88 of Surah Naml had mentioned the movement of the earth, which the Westerners have discovered in recent centuries but the arrogant powers do not want that their people should know anything about these facts.

Stating that ignorance is one of the reasons for insulting Islamic sanctities, he added: "The world



craves for knowledge, but the arrogant powers try to spread ignorance and, therefore, by combining enmity and ignorance, permission is given to an ignorant person to burn the Qur'an. Thus, there is a need for positive measures in this regard by Islamic countries and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Dr. Ahmad Momenirad, Associate Professor of the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the University of Tehran, expressed his views by stating that insulting the Qur'an can be discussed and investigated from both jurisprudence and international human rights perspectives. In international documents, wherever the issue of freedom of speech and opinion is mentioned, the limitations of this matter are also mentioned that, in fact, free-

dom of speech and opinion and its expression is free, but this freedom is not absolute and has limitations and exceptions. Thus, in today's world, no one has the right to promote and support racism, and in this case, he should be prosecuted and punished. The United Nations Charter and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights discuss the issue of freedom and state that people are free and this is a human right, but further states that this freedom is not absolute and comes with limitations. Thus, based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Covenant on Political and Civil Rights, freedom of speech and opinion is within the framework of the components required by human societies, which is the preservation of public morality, public order, and respect for the rights of others, and the exercise of

every right must take into account these issues.

Dr. Nasrollah Ebrahimi, another Associate Professor of the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the University of Tehran and Deputy Secretary General of CINVU, also spoke at this meeting, stating that defamation is one of the issues that has always been discussed in international law and convention. However, Westerners due to their anti-Islamic views, allow this practice. They don't attribute the laws to Islam and, thus, by using the capacities of international law and international lawyers, we should actively deal with the desecration of Islamic sanctities. Westerners have hidden themselves behind freedom of speech, but freedom is not absolute and human rights must be taken into consideration. Insulting

the Holy Qur'an, insulting God and the sanctities of almost two billion Muslims causes hatred.

This international jurist continued: There are enough laws in this matter, but at some points, we may need to write regulations. Adding that recently, on the initiative of Pakistan, a resolution that was proposed by Pakistan in this regard and opposed by Western countries was finally approved by the votes of many countries, so it is necessary for lawyers in Islamic countries to act according to international law, which clearly emphasizes the need to respect religions and communities and avoid hateful actions.

Dr. Alireza Mazloum Rahni, a faculty member of Islamic Azad University and the director of the private law group of the International Association of Muslim Professors of Universities, was the next speaker who by referring to the criminalization of insulting religious sanctities in more than one hundred countries of the world and what the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution has stated in his message condemning the act of Qur'an burning, said that what the enemy is targeting now is a soft war one dimension of which is a legal war, and the person hired to insult the Qur'an is affiliated with the Zionist regime and he did this audacity with the permission of the Swedish government.

This faculty member of Islamic Azad University then added: The Swedish constitution has four parts, one of which is related to freedom of expression. In this constitution, fundamental rights are of two types; absolute and conditional. Absolute rights are not restricted under any circumstances, while conditional fundamental rights such as freedom of expression and

freedom of assembly and demonstration are limited.

Dr. Mazloum Rahni concluded by stating that in the legal war, we should leave the passive and defensive mode, adopt an active attitude, and use all legal capacities in Islamic countries and international legal documents.

Dr. Ali Khamis Al-Alawi, the Chairman of the Oman Intellectual Property Association, said in his speech at this meeting: The burning of the Qur'an is supported by global Zionism, and these ugly and inappropriate actions have their own goals, and the perpetrators want to gauge the reaction of Islamic countries and Muslim nations. These enemies should be answered only with the logic of power. The Holy Qur'an is the book of almost two billion Muslims, and Muslims should respond strongly to this anti-religious act.

Al-Alawi emphasized: The unity of the Islamic Ummah is also important in this regard, and I hope that the Islamic Ummah can defend its holy book with the right measures.

Dr. Seyyed Ali Al-Fayaz, professor of Imam Kazem University (AS) in Baghdad, while thanking the Islamic Republic of Iran for holding this meeting, stated: The Holy Qur'an was not only revealed for the guidance of mankind; rather, it is the best heavenly book that was revealed to his best servant, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), and preserved from distortion and change. This book has greatness and a special place among the holy books and is sacred to Muslims. Respect for religions is emphasized in the Holy Quran.

Dr. Haitham Al-Tas, head of the Faculty of Law of the University of

Damascus, Syria, also stated in this event that burning the Qur'an is a provocative act against Muslims and incites racism and hatred. Also, this move is against freedom of expression.

Dr. Azmi Zareen Nazia, a professor of Persian language and literature at Punjab University in Lahore, Pakistan, was another speaker of the program who said: Holy books have a special place among religions, and disrespecting these books is not acceptable anywhere. The people of Pakistan came to the streets in response to the burning of the Qur'an in Sweden and protested against the desecration of the Qur'an. The perpetrators of such actions are trying to annoy Muslims, while they do not know that the people of the world are becoming more eager to know the Qur'an with these actions; what is it and what is the content of this thing being burned?

Dr. Mohammad Wahid Binesh, the head of the Khatam al-Nabieen University of Afghanistan, also said in this event that respect for the holy books and the holy prophets has been mentioned many times in the Holy Quran. Violence is not the way of life, the way of life is the way of seeking peace and peaceful coexistence, and respect for the beliefs of others.

He went on to explain that insulting is the work of an ignorant person and the government and clarified that terrorists operate in the name of freedom and justice but crimes cannot be committed in the name of freedom, and freedom means hearing the words of religions in a peaceful atmosphere.

At the end of the meeting, the participants prepared a joint statement and read it in Arabic.



إن هذا القرآن يهدي للتي هي أقوم

Indeed this Quran guides to what is most upright

