

# Violence Against Women in Islam



الرجال قوامون على النساء بما فضل الله بعضهم على بعض وبما أنفقوا من أموالهم<sup>١</sup> فالصالحات قانتات  
حافظات للغير بما حفظ الله<sup>٢</sup> واللاتي يخافون نُشوزهنَّ فعطوهنَّ واهجروهنَّ في المصاحع واضربوهنَّ<sup>٣</sup> فإن  
أطعنكم فلا تبغوا عليهنَّ سبيلاً<sup>٤</sup> إن الله كان علياً كبيراً

Sura 4:34

*“Why do the human rights activists ignore their suffering as though they do not even exist? Why isn't the cry of these millions of women heard, and why isn't it answered by anyone, anywhere? Why? Why? Why?”<sup>1</sup>*

**Wajeha al-Huwaider**

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<sup>1</sup> Wilders, G. (2012) *Marked For Death. Islam's War Against the West and Me*. Washington: Regnery Publishing.

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## Introduction

With the mass immigration of recent decades, Islam has made its appearance in our society. And that has meant the arrival of an ideology which is alien to us. Western values such as individual liberty, freedom of speech, separation of church and state, and equality between men and women are achievements that do not exist in Islam. The growing influence of Islam in our society puts those freedoms under pressure. We witness increasing violence against homosexuals, censorship, Islamic anti-Semitism, serious threats against politicians, and even the assassination of a critic of Islam.

But it is not only the non-Muslim world that is faced with the excessive violence and the urge of Islam to curtail freedoms. Within Islam, violence and submission are the rule. The main victims are women. The Dutch government, instead of focusing on countering the Islamization process, combating this violence, and urging women to renounce Islam, gives in and facilitates absurd projects such as separate integration, separate swimming lessons and even separate theater performances. Giving in, looking away or leaving these women to their fate — as the politically correct Netherlands does — is not a solution.

In Islam, women are inferior beings who are subordinated to men in various ways. “Child marriages,” forced marriages, anti-female violence, confinement and shielding women from the outside world, honor-related violence, forced sex and genital mutilation are some of the forms of violence that large groups of Muslim women have to deal with. Within Islam, violence against women is not only legitimized, it is even mandatory.

The lack of attention given to the deplorable situation of women within this ideology and the still dominant, politically correct attitude among politicians and civil servants — which disconnects Islam from the violence against women within Islam — prompted the PVV group in the Dutch House of Representatives to write this report.

This publication presents the position of women in Islam in relation to violence. By letting the Islamic sources speak for themselves, we observe that the endlessly repeated assertion that the above-mentioned abuses have no connection with Islam is not based on facts. Islam legitimizes violence against women, and even orders it. That is the core of the problem. Various studies show that this violence (including forced isolation, honor-related violence and female genital mutilation) is widespread, in the Netherlands as elsewhere.

If we want to root out this misery in the Netherlands, then female Muslims will have to liberate themselves from the prison of Islamic violence and to choose freedom.

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*The Hague, April 2013*

## 1. Women and violence in Islam

In the recently published report ‘Dichter bij elkaar?’ (‘Closer Together?’) of the Social and Cultural Planning Office, we read that over 80% of indigenous Dutchmen are convinced that Muslim women have too little freedom.<sup>[2]</sup> The fact that the politically-correct governing class and the Dutch ‘intellectual’ class have a very different view of the relationship between Islam and the lack of freedom and violence, is evident from the downplaying of the role of Islam or even the refusal to mention Islam as a cause of horrors, such as child marriages, forced marriages, honor-related violence, anti-female violence and the imprisonment of women within Islamic communities.

On January 7, 2013, for example, State Secretary Teeven responded to the following question: “Do you acknowledge that there is a link between honor killings committed in the Netherlands and mass immigration from predominantly Muslim countries?” His answer was, “No.”<sup>[3]</sup> That this answer does not seem to be supported by police figures may be read in the section below on the situation in the Netherlands. But there is fear in administrative circles of explicitly identifying the cause of these abuses. ‘Intellectuals’ also seem afraid to put their finger on the sore spot. The columnist Nausica Marbe drew attention in a column to the fact that the Islam expert Maurice Berger considers the notion of ‘forced marriage’ nonsense, and finds a ban on such practices undesirable.<sup>[4]</sup> She called him an armchair thinker. Perhaps the fact that Mr. Berger’s university chair is paid by the Sultan of Oman<sup>[5]</sup> plays a role in his refusal to take Islamic violence against women seriously.

There is also denial at the European level that honor killings and honor-related violence within Islam might have something to do with Islamic teachings: “Honour killing is often mistakenly believed to be (...) a practice condoned by Islam.”<sup>[6]</sup> That the violence against these women is legitimized and, indeed even required by Islam, soon becomes evident when one analyzes the Islamic sources.

### *Islamic sources*

In addition to the Quran, the Hadith forms a primary source in Islam. The Hadith is the collection of sayings and acts (Sunna) of Muhammad (written by Bukhari, Muslim, Dawud and others). According to Islam, Muhammad’s actions and teachings have to be imitated because they are a perfect guide. Muhammad is, after all, the example given by Allah of how man should live. Obedience to his message is a duty. The Quran (Sura 33:36) states:

“It is not for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice about their affair. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error.”

And in Sura 4:80 we read: “He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah; but those who turn away — We have not sent you over them as a guardian.”

Hence Muhammad expresses the message of Allah, with regard to women as in other matters. Given the fact that Muhammad did not proclaim a message of freedom and equality, these are not values that we see in Islam when it discusses women. In this ideology, women are not equal to men; they are at the same level as dogs and donkeys; the intelligence of women is not

recognized; women should at all times and in every way be sexually available to their husband; marriage with minors and even sex with children is permitted; a man is allowed to beat women or he fears disobedience; and in lawsuits and cases of inheritance a man is equal to two women. Furthermore, in principle women are not allowed to leave the house without permission. A (first) marriage is only permitted with the permission of a woman's guardian (primarily the father). Child marriages, forced marriages, genital mutilation, anti-female violence and even the imprisonment of women in Islam are directly attributable to the core: the Koran and the Hadith. Below are some examples of suras (chapters from the Koran) and hadith which legitimize and even demand the aforementioned abuses.

### **Hadith**

#### **Bukhari (1:6:301):**

Narrated Said Al-Khudri: "(...) the prophet said, 'Isn't the witness of a woman equal to half of that of a man?' the women said, 'Yes.' he said, 'This is because of the deficiency of a woman's mind.'"

#### **Bukhari (1:9:490):**

Narrated 'Aisha: "The things which annul the prayers were mentioned before me. They said, 'Prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey and a woman (if they pass in front of the praying people).' I said, 'You have made us (i.e. women) dogs.' I saw the Prophet praying while I used to lie in my bed between him and the Qibla. Whenever I was in need of something, I would slip away, for I disliked to face him."

#### **Bukhari (5:58:236):**

Narrated Hisham's father: "Khadija died three years before the Prophet departed to Medina. He stayed there for two years or so and then he married 'Aisha when she was a girl of six years of age, and he consumed (sic — consummated) that marriage when she was nine years old."

#### **Abu-Dawud (11:2078):**

Narrated Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin: The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: The marriage of a woman who marries without the consent of her guardians is void. (...).

#### **Bayhaqi, (14490):**

Ibn 'Umar reports from the Prophet that once a lady came to the Prophet and asked him about the rights of a husband on his wife. He replied: "... She should not leave his house without his permission."

#### **Bukhari (1763):**

Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas narrates that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him & give him peace) said: "A woman must not travel except with a Mahram and a man must not enter upon her except if she has a Mahram." (...)

**Muslim (17:4206):**

‘Abdullah b. Buraida reported: “(...) She was put in a hole up to her breast, he ordered the people to stone her. Khalid came forward with a stone which he threw at her head, and when the blood spurted on her face he cursed her.”

**Abu Dawood (41:5251):**

The Hadith Narrated Umm Atiyyah al-Ansariyyah: “A woman used to perform circumcision in Medina. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to her: Do not cut severely as that is better for a woman and more desirable for a husband.”

**Muslim (3:684):**

Muhammad said “When anyone sits amidst four parts of the woman and the circumcised parts touch each other a bath becomes obligatory.”

**Quran**

**Sura 2:282:**

And let two men from among you bear witness to all such documents [contracts of loans without interest]. But if two men be not available, there should be one man and two women to bear witness so that if one of the women forgets (anything), the other may remind her.

**Sura 4:11:**

Allah instructs you concerning your children: for the male, what is equal to the share of two females.

**Sura 4:34:**

Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband’s] absence what Allah would have them guard. But those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance — [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike them. But if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Grand

**Sura 2:223:**

Your wives are a place of sowing of seed for you, so come to your place of cultivation however you wish and put forth [righteousness] for yourselves. And fear Allah and know that you will meet Him. And give good tidings to the believers.

**Sura 24:31:**

And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their headcovers over their chests and not expose their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women, that which their right hands possess, or those male attendants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women. And let them not stamp their feet to make known what they conceal of their adornment. And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed.

**Sura 4:15:**

Those who commit unlawful sexual intercourse of your women — bring against them four [witnesses] from among you. And if they testify, confine the guilty women to houses until death takes them or Allah ordains for them [another] way.

As can be seen in the above sources, Islam states that women have limited intelligence, that — like dogs — they make prayers void, that Muhammad married a six-year-old girl and had sex with her when she was nine, that the marriage of women (not men) is invalid without the consent of a guardian, and that women are not permitted to leave the house of their husband without his permission. Furthermore, women may not travel without 'mahram' (a relative whom they cannot marry, such as a father, a brother or a son who has to watch her)<sup>[7]</sup>; in litigation cases and matters of inheritance two women equal one man; men are the guardians of women; they are superior to women; they have to beat women when disobedience is feared; and woman should cover themselves in public for moral reasons. Finally, Islam legitimizes the genital mutilation of women and girls, and women who are guilty of lewdness have to die. Within Islam, a woman is not fully human, but is only defined by a man.

The latter is also the core of the problem regarding honor-related violence in Islam. Since, according to Islamic teachings, the man is the guardian of the woman and thus (partly) responsible for her actions, her 'missteps' also have to be corrected by him. Indeed, he also has committed a 'misstep'. Her un-Islamic behavior affects him as the custodian and guardian of, for example, his wife or daughter.

The Swedish professor and expert on honor-related violence Pernilla Ouis observes: "It can be concluded that the honor ideology and the religious and moral rulings (of Islam) do not protect teenage girls from sexual violence and abuse (. . .), but rather the opposite."<sup>[8]</sup>

And although honor-related violence exists also outside Islam, the statistics speak for themselves: "Although Sikhs and Hindus do sometimes commit such murders, honor killings — both worldwide and in the West — are mainly Muslim-on-Muslim crimes. In this study, worldwide, 91 percent of perpetrators were Muslims. (...) In Europe, Muslims comprised an even larger majority at 96 percent."<sup>[9]</sup> The fact that a global ideology legitimizes and even teaches that violence and abuse against women is a sacred task, and the adherence to this task by its followers, requires a different approach than denial and looking away from the Islamic character of these crimes. The victims of this ideology deserve a helpful government, not one that is anxious or crippled by political correctness.



## 2. The Dutch context

Violence against women within Islam is also a reality in The Netherlands. Unlike in some other countries, in The Netherlands there are more official data available than just about honor related violence. We also have data (although limited) about other forms of anti-female violence within Islam.

For example, forced marriages. In these marriages, (mostly) girls are being forced to marry a (selected Islamic) man from their native country. As we could read in the Hadith, there is no freedom for women when it comes to marriage, and this inequality is justified by Islam.

Fred Teeven, the Dutch State Secretary for Justice, wrote in the explanatory memorandum for the bill to change, among other things, the minimum age for marriage in The Netherlands, that it is not known exactly how often forced marriages occur, but that studies admit that this does happen in The Netherlands.<sup>[10]</sup> One of these studies claims that this occurs mainly with people from Turkish, Moroccan, Somali, Afghan, Pakistan, Kurdish, Indo-Surinamese and Chinese origin.<sup>[11]</sup> With the exception of the Chinese, all groups concerned are immigrants (or their descendants) from Islamic countries (one in five Indo-Surinamese in The Netherlands is Muslim<sup>[12]</sup>). This is confirmed by schools and health authorities. Islamic girls are afraid to be given away and dumped in their native (or ancestral) country. In some major cities, they even tried to prevent this phenomenon with contracts.<sup>[13]</sup> Once again we notice here that the governing elite is denying reality and is afraid to mention the role of Islam. In 2012, the Ministry of Interior Affairs released the ‘Action Plan to prevent forced marriage’. The plan does not mention the word ‘Islam’ even once.<sup>[14]</sup>

Apart from the limited data about forced marriages, there are in the Netherlands also data available about Islamic women living in forced isolation. This means that they never or rarely leave their houses because their husbands won’t allow them to do so. In Amsterdam alone, there seem to be hundreds of women (between 200 and 300) who are imprisoned in their homes.<sup>[15]</sup> We already mentioned that Islam justifies keeping women inside or not allowing them to leave their homes unless accompanied by their husband (paragraph 1). It remains remarkable that when Islam is finally mentioned in a research paper, this happens almost exclusively in order to deny categorically that this ideology plays a primary role in the abuses which are being examined. For example, the report ‘life in forced isolation’ explicitly claims that it is not Islam, but culture, which leads to this form of abuse. Ultimately, the researchers cannot deny that the majority of these women can be found in those areas with the highest concentrations of Islamic inhabitants (i.e. Moroccans, Turks and Somalis).<sup>[16]</sup>

As mentioned above, the role of Islam is not recognized in relation to honor related violence, either. The most extreme form of honor-related violence is honor killing. By refusing to see honor killing as a specific problem, but instead treating it as a part of the policies against ‘normal’ domestic violence, the seriousness of this problem is highly underestimated. One often thinks that it is possible to deal with honor killings within the context of domestic violence. This is a misconception: honor-related violence demands specific knowledge as well as specific interventions.<sup>[17]</sup> Lenore Walker, author of *The Battered Woman Syndrome*, concludes that honor killing cannot be equated with ‘standard domestic violence’: “In ordinary domestic violence involving Westerners, it is rare for brothers to kill sisters or for male cousins to kill female cousins. And while child abuse occurs in which fathers may kill infants and children, it is very rare for Western fathers to kill teenage daughters.”<sup>[18]</sup>

What other differences exist between ‘general domestic violence’ and violence related to Islam? Research in 2009 showed that in the United States, Canada and Europe, honor killing almost exclusively occurs amongst Muslims.<sup>[19]</sup> Westerners are rarely involved. Victims of Islam-related violence are usually teenage girls and young women. Honor killings are meticulously planned; domestic violence is not. Perpetrators of honor killings often announce their intentions on multiple occasions; perpetrators of ‘general domestic violence’ do not announce their actions. With honor killings, more people are involved, sometimes even entire families; a perpetrator of domestic violence almost always acts alone. Perpetrators of domestic violence will never boast about what they did; perpetrators of honor killings will do just that. Furthermore, it can be noticed that the method in which the women are killed can be characterized as utterly brutal: they are raped, burnt alive, stoned or beaten to death, stabbed to death; their throats are slit; they are slowly suffocated or killed with poison. Muslims who commit these acts or who are involved see these murders as heroic, honorable and as a fulfillment of their religious duty. A study which was conducted in Turkey brought to light the fact that no social stigma is associated with the perpetrators of honor killings.<sup>[20]</sup>

In The Netherlands, there are hundreds of honor-related cases each year (an average of more than 490 in 2007, 2008 and 2009), of which 13 ended fatally in 2009. This means that every month someone is murdered. In 2009, in 95 percent (!) of the cases where honor-related violence was suspected, those involved were from an Islamic country, or at least one of their parents was. The most common groups involved are Turks, Moroccans and Afghans. In 85 percent of the cases, victims were threatened or abused. Almost 10 percent of the cases were cases of murder/manslaughter or attempts, kidnapping and rape. Attacks, suicide, ‘disappearances’ and other offences (among others human trafficking) complete the sad list.<sup>[21]</sup> Recently, in answer to questions asked in Parliament by the Party for Freedom, the first figures for 2010, 2011 and 2012 were revealed. On average, there are almost 500 honor-related cases a year, of which in 2010 as well as in 2012 eleven cases ended fatally.<sup>[22]</sup>

When we put these figures about the persons involved and their background next to the statement of State Secretary Teeven (paragraph 1), who emphasized that there is *no connection whatsoever* between honor related violence and mass immigration by groups from mostly Islamic countries, we see how political correctness can harm reality.

The research report ‘De Dochters van Zahir’ (‘The daughters of Zahir’) about women given shelter because of honor-related violence, also confirms that honor-related violence in The Netherlands exists almost exclusively in an Islamic context. 26 percent of the girls/young women who were given shelter in 2010 were Turkish, 24 percent were Moroccan, 27 percent were Iraqi and 23 percent were from a range of (mainly non-western) countries.<sup>[23]</sup> Between 77 and 100 percent of these women (or at least one of their parents) originally come from Islamic countries. Based on these figures, the answer of the Dutch State Secretary does not seem to conform to reality. That is dangerous. The authorities look away and deny the facts.

When it comes to female genital mutilation, the role Islam plays is also meticulously avoided. In the recent report ‘Female Genital Mutilation in The Netherlands’<sup>[24]</sup>, not a single word is devoted to Islam. In the previous section, we saw on what grounds female genital mutilation is legitimized within Islam. Based on the report we know that there are 30,000 circumcised women living in the Netherlands. Every year 50 girls are circumcised. Looking at the background of these girls, we notice that by far the largest group has its origins in Islamic countries. Somalia represents by far the largest group, with 10,000 women. Even twice as

large as the second group: Egypt. Most other circumcised women in the Netherlands have as their countries of origin Eritrea, Iraq, Nigeria and Sudan.<sup>[25]</sup>

### *Safety*

Another problem one faces when tackling the issue of violence against women within Islam is the limited safety that the current ‘shelters for battered women’ offer. The victims’ experiences with the police and the shelters is not entirely positive. Women point out that they don’t consider their safety guaranteed. This concern is not unjustified given that — despite the secret location of the shelters — information regarding the whereabouts of the women leaks out to the outside world.<sup>[26]</sup> This is an important reason why women in danger decide not to seek refuge in a shelter. A poignant example with a tragic outcome was the case involving an Islamic woman and her children in the town of Zierikzee. In March 2010, her husband murdered two of her children. Although he had threatened the woman and her children on several occasions, he was able to turn his threats into deeds. Police and justice were broadly informed of this man’s plans, but could not persuade the woman to go to a shelter. The woman was convinced that she would be unsafe there as well, and that her husband would be able to find her.<sup>[27]</sup> In such cases, the police and official authorities are powerless.

Nevertheless, another solution is possible. The Ministry of Justice determined after researching the matter that the ‘safety measures are aimed more at protection of the victims than at prevention by arresting the offenders. We discovered that in three murder cases the police had strong indications about the (intention to commit) severe criminal deeds which put women in acute danger, while the main suspect was not arrested. In all three cases, the arrest of the men could at least in the short term have kept the women in a safer situation.’<sup>[28]</sup>

In short: in addition to providing shelter at a secret location, the police must act more severely and more quickly against potential offenders (the preparation for serious crime and threats and intimidation are, indeed, already punishable). Also the ‘Surveillance and Security System’ can be applied more often in cases of honor-related violence, when the safety of victims is being severely threatened. In some regions, the system is not used for honor-related violence at all.<sup>[29]</sup>

Tough action by the police also demands another internal approach by the police force. For example, we do not need more multicultural officers capable of ‘sympathizing’ and showing understanding for the terrible situation of honor-related violence. In practice, these officers do not seem to function any better in social interactions with threatened women. Endangered immigrant women even prefer to approach an ‘old-fashioned’ Dutch officer than a foreign policeman, as practice shows.<sup>[30]</sup> What is needed is a hard and fast police approach and a policy without nonsensical ‘multicultural ideas’. What is needed is realism.

### 3. Conclusion

In Islam, women are looked upon as inferior beings. In many ways they are disadvantaged. Forced marriages, honor-related violence, forced isolation, and genital mutilation are abuses that are justified by Islam. The politically correct assertion that there is no connection between the aforementioned abuses and Islam is not based on reality. Islam legitimizes violence against women and even prescribes it. This is the essence of the problem.

The so called prophet Muhammad, the role model within Islam for how people should behave, married a six-year-old girl and forced her to have sex with him when she was nine; he can therefore rightly be called a pedophile. The same Muhammad turned women into inferior beings against whom all forms of violence are allowed. He even made some forms of violence against women into so-called divine commandments.

Dutch society needs to be protected and warned against the Islamic teachings, the legitimization of pedophilia, forced marriages, forced confinement and calls to violence.

With this report we have tried to remove the veil that hangs over these truths by disclosing the Islamic sources as well as the consequences which we see in the figures.

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## Notes

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