

Imam Khomeini in the eyes of a western Muslim woman

By: Elisah Binnewijzend

I was born in 1984 a couple of years after the revolution in Iran.

The political relations between Persia and the Netherlands was started during the Kingdom of Shah Abbas. In 1626, the first Persian ambassador to Holland, Mousa Beig presented his Credentials at the States-General of the Netherlands.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Persian and Royal Dutch families had various state visits to each other's countries.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the relations between the two countries experienced ups and downs.

After 1979 Islamic Revolution, the Dutch government demonstrated its keen interest to preserve its friendly relations with Iran by sending an ambassador to Iran in 1981. The Islamic Republic of Iran also showed its willingness to expand ties with that country in 1983. As a result of first official visit of Dutch authorities to Iran, deputy minister of Agriculture and Fishery of the country visited Iran in 1984 which was reciprocated by a visit of the Islamic Republic of Iran's deputy Agriculture minister. The diplomatic relations between the two countries has continued on ambassadorial level so far.

When you look at a picture of Imam Khomeini you see the impulses of the revolution, the whole history of the overthrow of the Shah, the rhythms of martyrdom, the bygone Islamic civilization that had temporarily overshadowed the West: all of this was contained in the presence of this man.

He was the source of the revival of Islam, he was the source of the revolution, he was the source of whatever power this revolution and Islam represented to the world. Without him I am certain the monarchy would still be in place and Islam would be effectively eliminated as a factor in the political destiny of the Middle East.

Would the revolution in Iran have survived in its vitality and coherence?

It seems pretty obvious that all inspiration was derived from Khomeini's leadership. Khomeini was the revolution!

Those given the awareness or feeling to know what he represented (the wholeness of life biased through Islam) could not help but be filled with the fervour of Islam, the blessed confidence of martyrdom, the determination to spread Islam to the world.

He uplifted and transformed; this was done not through some projected idea of his charisma; it was done by the actual material of life; it was accomplished through the intention of that which had created this whole drama. No, Khomeini was at the center of this Islamic eruption; Khomeini was the fountainhead of the

spiritual power that flowed into the hearts of Muslims throughout the Middle East—at least those Muslims who instinctively were close to the heart of Islam.

On September 22, 1980, Iraq sent its forces across the Iranian border and launched a war of aggression that was to last for almost eight years. Iraq enjoyed financial support in this venture from the Arab states lining the Persian Gulf, above all from Saudi Arabia. Imam Khomeini, however, correctly regarded the United States as the principal instigator of the war from the outset, and American involvement became increasingly visible as the war wore on. Although Iraq advanced territorial claims against Iran, the barely disguised purpose of the aggression was to take advantage of the dislocations caused in Iran by the revolution, particularly the weakening of the army through purges of disloyal officers, and to destroy the Islamic Republic. As he had done during the revolution, Imam Khomeini insisted on an uncompromising stance and inspired a steadfast resistance, which prevented the easy Iraqi victory many foreign observers had confidently foretold. Initially, however, Iraq enjoyed some success, capturing the port city of Khurramshahr and encircling Abadan.

The war against Iraq continued to preoccupy Iran until July 1988. Iran had come to define its war aims as not simply the liberation of all parts of its territory occupied by Iraq, but also the overthrow of the regime of Saddam Husayn. A number of military victories made this goal appear attainable. On November 29, 1981, Imam Khomeini congratulated his military commanders on successes achieved in Khuzestan, remarking that the Iraqis had been obliged to retreat before the faith of the Iranian troops and their eagerness for martyrdom. The following year, on May 24, Khurramshahr, which had been held by the Iraqis since shortly after the outbreak of war, was liberated, and only small pockets of Iranian territory remained in Iraqi hands. The Imam marked the occasion by condemning anew the Persian Gulf states that supported Saddam Husayn and describing the victory as a divine gift. Iran failed, however, to follow up swiftly on its surprise victory and the momentum, which might have made possible the destruction of Saddam Husayn's regime, was lost as the tide of war flowed back and forth. The United States was, in any event, determined to deny Iran a decisive victory and stepped up its intervention in the conflict in a variety of ways. Finally, on July 2, 1988, the US navy stationed in the Persian Gulf shot down a civilian Iranian airliner, with the loss of 290 passengers. With the utmost reluctance, Imam Khomeini agreed to end the war on the terms specified in Resolution 598 of the United Nations Security Council, comparing his decision in a lengthy statement issued on July 20 to the drinking of poison. Any notion that the acceptance of a ceasefire with Iraq signaled a diminution in

the Imam's readiness to confront the enemies of Islam was dispelled when, on February 14, 1989, he issued a fatwa calling for the execution of Salman Rushdie, author of the obscene and blasphemous novel, *The Satanic Verses*, as well as those responsible for the publication and dissemination of the work. The fatwa received a great deal of support in the Muslim world as the most authoritative articulation of popular outrage at Rushdie's gross insult to Islam. Although its demand remained unfulfilled, it demonstrated plainly the consequences that would have to be faced by any aspiring imitator of Rushdie, and thus had an important deterrent effect. Generally overlooked at the time was the firm grounding of the Imam's fatwa in the existing provisions of both Shi'i and Sunni jurisprudence; it was not therefore innovative. What lent the *fatwa* particular significance was rather its issuance by the Imam as a figure of great moral authority.

The legacy of Imam Khomeini was considerable. He had bequeathed to Iran not only a political system enshrining the principles both of religious leadership and of an elected legislature and head of the executive branch, but also a whole new ethos and self-image, a dignified stance of independence vis-à-vis the West are in the Muslim world. He was deeply imbued with the traditions and worldview of Shi'i Islam, but he viewed the revolution he had led and the republic he had founded as the nucleus for a worldwide awakening of all Muslims. He had sought to attain this goal by, among other things, issuing proclamations to the hujjaj on a number of occasions, and alerting them to the dangers arising from American dominance of the Middle East, the tireless activity of Israel for subverting the Muslim world, and the subservience to America and Israel of numerous Middle Eastern governments. Unity between Shi'is and Sunnis was one of his lasting concerns; he was, indeed, the first Shi'i authority to declare unconditionally valid prayers performed by Shi'is behind a Sunni imam.[]

Muslim youth still inspired by imam Khomeini

Muslim youth all over the world are still inspired by Imam Khomeini. More and more religious groups are started on the internet and organize lectures ,inviting Islamic teachers from all over the world, inviting non-muslims to lectures and try to come closer to our sunni brothers and sisters. The shia youth doesn't fall for the traps of the wahabi regimes who work together with the USA and Israel. More than ever i see young shia muslims fight for their believes with in the back

of their minds the ahle beyt who fought for us, imam khomeini who fought for us and most important Allah subhana wa ta' ala who will always stand by us and gives us the power to never give up.

We feel powerful, even when we know we are a minority in most countries, because we know that our number 1 shia country "Iran " is the most powerful country in the world.

We young muslims have learned so much of imam Khomeini.

In his last will he taught us the following:

It begins with an extended meditation on the hadith-i thaqalayn: "I leave among you two great and precious things: the Book of God and my progeny; they will never be separated from each other until they meet me at the pool." The Imam interprets the misfortunes that have befallen Muslims throughout history and more particularly in the present age as the result of efforts precisely to disengage the Qur'an from the progeny of the Prophet (S).

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The late Imam was a wise man, he drew a path for us, the youth, in order to follow. Imam had foreseen many events, most important of which is the Islamic awakening we live today.

Imam Khomeini is the ideal to the youth, he is the role model we look up to as he has set sublime goals we should achieve in life. To him and the other young muslims, Imam Khomeini is a school that teaches how to fight oppression and live with dignity.

Imam Khomeini was the one to bring all the concepts to light which led Iran to attaining self-sufficiency. The Imam initiated a policy that allowed Iran take its own decisions without foreign interference

Imam Khomeini on Islam offenders

As we all know Muslims have been greatly offended by references made about Islam in a speech that Pope Benedict XVI delivered on September 12, 2006 at the University of Regensburg entitled "Faith, Reason and the University – Memories and Reflections" Muslims were insulted by the speech's misrepresentation of Islam as a religion that is spread through violence.

Ayatollah Mousavi Bojnurdi answered this by saying the following:

Declaring that Muslims, Christians and the Jews should be united, the former president of the Iranian Islamic Human Rights Commission said: the Pope knows that Islam is the caller for the aggregation. I'm really sorry that some people under the name of Christianity and Judaism insult someone who is the caller of monotheism and unity of the religions.

Imam Khomeini's first major work of immediate social and political relevance was *Kashf al-asrar*, written in 1941 during his early life as a teacher in the *hawzah ilmiyyah* of Qum. The son of Shaykh Mahdi al-Qummi, a religious teacher of Qum, had written a book, *Asrar al-fsahah* (Secrets of a Thousand Years), in which he insulted Islam. The Imam took leave for a few weeks and wrote his angry rejoinder. He later told his son Ahmad, who wondered why he was angry at the book; You were not present at that time to see what insults were being hurled at Islam.

Among other early works of the Imam, there is the *Hadith jund al-aql wal-jahl*, a commentary on a hadith of al-Kafi. He also wrote *adab al-salat*, a mystical-philosophical (*irfani*) work about Muslim prayers.

The most well-known example of Imam Khomeini's thoughts about insulting Islam is his fatwa which he issued on 14 February 1989 calling for the death of Salman Rushdie.

The British Indian novelist and writer was sentenced to death by Imam Khomeini for insulting Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his fourth novel, *The Satanic Verses*, which was written in 1988 and sparked global protests by Muslims around the world.

The bounty, which was announced by late Imam Khomeini on the writer's head, is recently increased by \$500,000 to \$3,300,000.

The caretaker of 15th of Khordad Foundation "Ayatollah Sane'ei" said that these insulting acts against the Islamic sanctities would not be halted until the late Imam's decree on apostate Salman Rushdie is carried out.

"The late Leader (of the Islamic Revolution) sought to root out these blasphemous plots hatched by the agents of the US and Zionist regime through announcing bounties, and now it's the best time for fulfilling this job", the

statement added.

Ayatollah Sane'ei said his foundation supports those people who actively fight against these anti-Islamic plots and conspiracies

It must finally be stressed that despite the amplitude of his political achievements, Imam Khomeini's personality was essentially that of a gnostic for whom political activity was but the natural outgrowth of an intense inner life of devotion. The comprehensive vision of Islam that he both articulated and exemplified is, indeed, his most significant legacy.