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VATICAN CITY STATE AND ITS ROLE IN DE-ESCALATING TENSIONS BETWEEN
THE ISLAMIC WORLD AND THE CHRISTIAN WORLD

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ABSTRACT

The legal identity of the Vatican City State, its position in the international arena and its role in the interaction and hostility between Islam and Christianity are important issues that have not been addressed much. However, the Vatican is of great importance due to its special situation and position at the international level, especially among Christian countries. The main question of the present article is that how the nature and position of the Vatican City state was and what effect did this city government have on the detente between Islam and Christianity? The present article is a descriptive-analytical and examines the question using the library method. The results of the article show that the Catholic World Church, according to its official teachings, is neither a monarchy, nor a sect, nor a democracy. Its rule is unique. Its rule is unique. Because the church has a unique nature and the pope presides over it and is a member of it. The Vatican City State has been recognized as a city-state in order to maintain and promote the spiritual influence of the pope in the world, and various countries can establish relations with it.

Regarding the role of the Vatican in de-escalating tensions between the Muslim world and Christianity, it should be said that the Vatican has always emphasized interaction and negotiations between religions, including Islam. In practice, however, some of the pope's stances have challenged such an approach, sparking religious anger and hatred among Muslims. The words of Pope Benedict XVI in his harsh introduction of Islam in 2006 can be evaluated in this regard. In the period of Pope Francis, although efforts have been made to bring religions closer, it does not seem to be enough to further de-escalate tensions between Islam and Christianity.

INTRODUCTION

More than a thousand years have passed since the Christian conflict against Islam, and the bells of the church and the cry of God Almighty are still heard. This means that although every once in a while, one of the two long-time rivals win; but none of them left the field. The history of the conflict has also prompted them to reach some kind of agreement to

recognize each other, at least in doctrinal terms. The ineffectiveness of such conflicts and disputes has led the parties to conclude that they should engage in negotiation instead of force, and that it is better for them to seek a more realistic knowledge of each other instead of denying each other. Founded in the early centuries AD as a humble military institution, the church eventually gained the power to express itself in all religious and non-religious areas, thus managing the entire Middle centuries.

Pope is derived from the word pope meaning father and from the Greek word papas. Christians have assigned this word to the spiritual father of the religion of Christ. (Kung, 2005: 64; Sharma, 2006: 92)

Emperor Valentine III accepted this method and announced in 445 AD that the Bishop of Rome was at the head of the church. (Van Worst, 2005: 140) Archbishop Sirikius first proclaimed himself pope in the fourteenth century. (Kung, 2005: 130 and 147) In fact, the cathedral itself is a kind of world council of churches that has been formed by some human agents (McBrian, Karamipour, 2004: 22). It is on this basis that the Vatican City-State system is based on the rule of the pope and the cathedral, which is interpreted as the papal system.

The main question that is raised and examined in this article is what is the legal structure of the Vatican City State? How can the diplomacy of this Vatican City state be evaluated at the international level, and more importantly, what role does this Vatican City-state play in de-escalating tensions? In order to study and answer the question, first, the legal status of the Vatican is examined, then the diplomacy of this city-state is examined at the international level, and finally, its interaction and approach in the Islamic world are explained and analyzed.

The structure of the Vatican City State

From the beginning, Christianity has believed in in-laws which were based on the structures of its religious thinkers. These spiritual organizations and appointments reach Christ at a relatively long distance, which is considered as a reliable reference. Over time, and based on the needs felt for the organization of the church, this dynasty came into being. Management and presidency at its highest level are the responsibility of the bishop and all affairs and order in the church are dependent on his supervision and planning (Nejatnia, Ghanbari, 2012: 68). In the Catholic Church, there are three main ranks: episcopal, priestly, and deacon. The origin of this hierarchical system goes back to the Christian view of the relationship between Christ and the Church. The mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit is performed in the church, which is the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit. In order for the church to be able to fulfill its mission, the Holy Spirit bestows various spiritual hierarchies and miracles on the church and guides it through it (Ratzinger, 2014: 243). The church is an apostle because it is built on the apostles in three senses: First, the church is built on the "foundation of the apostles" (Revelation 21:14), the witnesses whom Christ himself chose and sent. The second meaning is based on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church.

Therefore, the church preserves the teachings of the Niceno Mount (Acts 2:42) and preserves and quotes the instructive words heard from the apostles (cf. 2 Timothy 1: 13-14) and the church, in the third sense, thanks

to the successors of the apostles in The pastoral work, that is, the episcopate, with the help of the priests united with Peter's successor- the greatest Pastor of the Church- has always been taught, sanctified and guided by the apostles until the return of Christ. Jesus joins the apostles to the mission he accepted from his father. Therefore, they receive the authority of the mission and the power to carry it out from him. The apostles knew that God had invited them as servants of the New era, servants of God, ambassadors of Christ, and so on. But one of the things the apostles possess and it can not be transmitted to others is that they are the chosen witnesses of God's resurrection and thus the cornerstone of the church. This divine mission must continue until the expiration of the universe. Thus, just as the task that God had entrusted only to Saint Peter as the first of the apostles to be transferred to his successors continues, so the pastoral duty of the church, which the apostles undertook, must continue uninterrupted by the bishops of the Holy Order. In this way, the church teaches that the bishops, by divine appointment, replace the apostles as pastors of the church, so that whoever obeys them obeys Christ, and whoever despises them, despises Christ and the one who sent him. In order to pastor God's people and increase their number, Christ established various services in His church that is in the best interest of the whole body. The pastors who have the holy power must serve their brothers, so that all who belong to the people of God may be saved. Accordingly, the messenger of God does not speak and act according to his authority, but speaks on the authority of Christ; he speaks to the community not in the name of the member but in the name of Christ. No one can give grace to himself, but grace must be given to him.

This fact requires that there must be servants of grace whose authority is from Christ. Bishops and priests take away their mission and authority to act as leaders in the place of Christ. pastors receive the power to serve God's people in the service of worship, word, and love in union with the bishop and his priests. The Pope, the Bishop of Rome and the successor of Peter, is the proven source of unity between the bishops and the faithful. The pope of Rome, because of his role as vicegerent of Christ and pastor of the whole church, has superior power over the whole church. The group of bishops has no authority except to ally with the bishop of Rome, Peter's successor, as their head. This group also has superior and complete authority over the whole church, but this power is not exercised without the consent of the Pope (Ratzinger, 2014: 269-275). The papacy is therefore the highest priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church and, consequently, the Vatican City State, due to the pope's status as Roman bishop. Similarly, the pope is the president of the episcopate and is called the vicar of Christ and the priest of the cathedral on earth (McBrian, Karamipour, 2004: 22).

- **Conditions of appointment, manner of election and duties of the papal position; The highest official of the Vatican**

The canon of the Catholic Church states: "Only a baptized man can receive the holy degrees. As far as being a bishop and a priest is concerned, the teachings of the church emphasize that the condition mentioned is a divine law. The Catholic doctrine that only men can be

bishops and priests insinuate that being a man is an integral part of the person of Christ and his apostles (Appointment of women to clergy is a new challenge to the Christian tradition, 2007, p. 10). Since the pope has always been elected from among the cardinals since 1999, the cardinals must be less than 80 years old according to the new law published by Pope John Paul II (Abdokhodaei, 2003: 451). Therefore, the age requirement for holding the papacy is to be a maximum of 80 years (Kaveh, 2013: 109).

The method of electing popes, which includes the position of the elected ones and the supervision of the Holy Father, is not done only by divine providence and destiny (Adabi, 2005: 34). The cardinals are executive agents and special advisers to the pope in the administration of the World Catholic Church who are elected by the pope. After the death of the Pope, the Assembly of Cardinals will take over the affairs of the Vatican until the election of the next Pope, and will participate in the meeting of Cardinals to elect the next Pope (Abdkhodaei, 2003: 81 and 82). The candidate for the papal position must get more than two thirds of the votes (Adabi, 2005: 35).

The Pope presides over the Holy residence as the central government of the Catholic Church, presides over the Vatican City State as an independent national state, and presides over the Vatican City State Caliphate. Duties such as stating the principles of prayer, reforming the Catholic Church, and overseeing all church affairs, including the executive and judicial duties of the cardinals (Supreme Judge and Senior Executive), are among the duties of the Pope (Worrest, 2005: 336; Will Durant, 2014, Vol. 4, part two: 1642; Binas, 1969: 637-638). The core of the executive power of the Vatican is called the Coriander Mana, which operates under the supreme authority of the Pope. The Prime Minister, the presidents of all assemblies, papal councils, organizations and ecclesiastical courts are elected by the Pope and the Prime Minister is solely responsible for coordinating the activities of these institutions with each other (Abdolkhodaei, 2003: 80 and 91).

There is no set time limit for the papacy, and it ends only with the resignation or loss of the brain. Loss of brain (brain death) is one of the legal means of ousting the pope. The Council of Cardinals ousted the Pope once in 1080. The pope can elect some or even appoint a successor directly. Because the most important aspect for the Pope to choose is the definite and obvious faith of the next person, and the other factors in the succession are secondary. The ways in which the papacy needs to be redefined come in a variety of ways. Physical death is the most common way of substitution. (Adabi, 2005: 34) Loss of brain (brain death) and resignation are also legal tools. However, the pope is never deposed due to his supreme power.

- **Vatican legal status**

Determining the position of Vatican in international law was the first major issue raised in the Lattreau negotiations between representatives of the church and the Italian government. At first, Italy did not accept any territorial situation for the Vatican, and offered a kind of extraterritorial position provided in the Papal Guarantee Act and Church officials responded by saying, "The Vatican considers the provision of

territorial integrity as a prerequisite for the critique of any treaty." Finally, with much effort of Mussolini in 1928 the King of Italy agreed to recognize a small part of Rome and cede it to the Catholic Church, thus establishing the dominion of Pope Pius IX and his successors from 1878.

Although the Lateran Treaty declared the Vatican City independent and the Italian Constitution of December 1947 reaffirmed the treaty and the special legal status of the Pope, in the eyes of some experts in public international law, this recognition did not constitute the country, but merely It is a bilateral agreement between Italy and the Church that has no legal requirements for other countries. (Ziaee Bigdeli, 1988, vol. 3: 73) According to the 1933 Montevideo Convention, the state as a person under international law must have four specific conditions, which are: permanent population, specific territory, government, ability to establish relations with others. States (sovereignty). (Muqtadar, 2013: 44) The Vatican, on the other hand, is an artificial state that did not emerge on the basis of natural facts and interests, but was recognized for the spiritual influence of the Church. "In fact, the Vatican City can be considered a country in the true sense of the word - and composed of its constituent elements - because, according to the Lateran agreements, Italy has accepted only one irrefutable event, and that is the sovereignty of the Vatican," writes the French lawyer Louis Cavare. "Italy has sought to increase the independence and spiritual power of the pope by handing over a part of its territory to the pope, and it is not the case that a new country has been established within another country." (Ziaee Bigdeli, the former, vol. 3, p. 141)

Despite the shortcomings which exist in the formation of the Vatican City State as an independent state, most countries in the world have diplomatic relations with the Vatican, and in many countries, Vatican ambassadors are introduced as ambassadors upon arrival. The Vatican has served as a permanent observer to the United Nations and is a member of many international forums and organizations. The Vatican, even if we do not consider it as the country in its literal sense in international law, can establish political relations with the countries of the world according to various international treaties that are the source of legal obligations (Ziaee Bigdeli, the former, vol. 3, p. 240). And religious agreements between the pope and other states have legal effect. Lawyers who believe in a real country in the Vatican City distinguish between the treaties that the pope concludes as president and his religious agreements as president of the church. They believe that the first category can have any content and content, but the second category is related to the legal status of the church and its followers in the territory of the Contracting States. (Ziaee Bigdeli, the former, vol. 3, p. 78)

The Vatican City Government emerged under the Treaty of Lateran in 1929. The Vatican is 44 square kilometers, and is located on the west side of the Tevent River in the center of Rome (the capital of Italy). The Vatican City State is historically a collection of ancient palaces and buildings that stretched from the time of the ancient Roman Empire around the Church of St. Peter and is separated from Rome by the old high walls which were built in the 9th century by Pope Leo IV. Although the area of the Vatican as an independent country with diplomatic relations with the

rest of the world seems small, but it is composed of departments and institutions that consider it their duty to support nearly nine hundred million Catholics and actively and actively strive to propagate their ideas.

Pope Paul VI stated at the United Nations in October 1965: "This small place allows the Holy residence to have the least possible freedom to carry out its spiritual mission and to reassure its audience that it is independent of any domination in the world. (Corriere Della Sera, 17. Jun 1992)

There are five main doors to the Vatican, each with its own name. Their names are the door of good and evil, the door of death, the middle door, the door of the seven rites, and the holy door. In the area in front of the Vatican is the famous Church of St. Peter, and within the grounds are beautiful gardens, a large library museum, a collection of ancient and historical buildings, a helicopter landing strip, a train, a transmitter station, a post office, office buildings, cardinals' residences and more. ... Some Vatican ministries, councils, offices, departments, and organizations are located in Rome. Under international law, any aircraft is prohibited from flying over the Vatican and the area is considered a neutral and inviolable country. About nine hundred people live in the country, half of whom have official Vatican citizenship. Cardinals, Vatican ambassadors to various countries, and dignitaries of the country have official Vatican citizenship, which allows them to be immune from any encroachment by the Italian government or other governments, and to be able to carry out their ecclesiastical duties with complete independence.

The flag of the Vatican consists of two vertical stripes in yellow and white, with the country's emblem in the middle. The special symbol is the emblem of the pope, which includes three special royal crowns and seal. In the middle are three keys in red, silver and gold. Four straps are drawn on the royal seal, the emerald jewel is placed in the final strap. Under the 1929 Treaty of Laterano, the Italian government had no right to interfere in the affairs of the Vatican. According to this, the Italian police can not enter the Vatican, and the region enjoys overseas rights and privileges, and is exempt from paying all kinds of taxes imposed by Italy.

The Vatican is guarded by an army called the Swiss Guard. These people, who have yellow and blue uniforms and long spears and are said to have Michelangelo uniforms, are actually used in ceremonies today and number about 90 people. The history of these guards was founded by Pope Julius II for the Italian Civil War in 1505 AD, when the army. In addition to the Swiss Guard, about 110 guards in the role of law enforcement officers are responsible for enforcing the Vatican's internal order. It should be noted that the maximum speed limit for cars in the Vatican is 30 km.

- **Vatican diplomacy**

The Vatican believes that the Holy See introduces itself in the international arena in three ways: a) Pope's activities; Including travel, lectures and advice letters. b) The activities of the Secretariat of State, which have a political origin and are called apostolic activities. c) Presence of papal delegations in different parts of the world who use their political rights and techniques for the continuous presence of the pope in local churches and with various governments. (KJ Hallsty, 1994: 251)

Today, Vatican diplomacy is active at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. At the bilateral level, by establishing political relations with governments, it oversees the interests of Catholic communities in various countries, and supports the religious activities of its followers. The Vatican claims that it seeks to remind governments of the fundamental foundations of international life and the fundamental principles of a free and pluralistic cultural country on which the Church and its teachings are fully dependent. At the multilateral level, the presence of Vatican missions in international organizations and institutions has a significant impact on the direction and process of global decision-making.

Under international law, the diplomatic activities of Vatican embassies are recognized. Article 1 of the Regulations on Diplomatic Agents adopted by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the Vatican ambassadors are considered to be first and foremost political agents. The provisions of this article are enshrined in Article 4 of the Convention on Diplomatic Relations adopted on 18 April 1961, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (23 to 1969), and the Vienna Convention on the Representation of States and their Relations with International Organizations is adopted on 12 March 1975.

Vatican ambassadors introduce themselves not only as representatives of the Vatican government, but also as representatives of the Pope, the leader of the Catholic Church. Accordingly, they do not limit their sphere of activity only to communicating with the political members and statesmen of the mission country, but also consider themselves responsible for communicating with the local churches on behalf of the Pope, the world church leader. They were obliged to inform the Vatican of the activities of the churches of the mission, and to provide the necessary grounds for the appointment of bishops, without interfering to the work of the caliphates of the region. They are also obliged to support the interests of the Catholics in the mission country and protect their freedom to perform religious rites by establishing relations with governments.

Vatican ambassadors are selected from among bishops with at least 25 years of service in Roman Korba and secretary of state. Most of them are fluent in 3 or 2 world languages and have studied ecclesiastical law, technology and political science.

The duties of Vatican political representatives are described in Articles 362 to 367 of the Ecclesiastical Code. According to this regulation, the main duties of ambassadors are: 1. To inform the Holy See about the conditions of the churches in the region, and issues related to the life of the church and the spiritual well-being of the people. 2. Assisting the bishop through actions, recommendations and consultations while respecting the full exercise of their powers and legal authority. 3. Establishing a continuous relationship with the conference of the bishops of the region and offering any cooperation with them, without having the right to join the conference. 4. Announcing and proposing the names of the candidates for the appointment of a bishop to the Holy See and creating a process of information and training for those who are promoted according to the regulations approved and announced by the Holy See. 5. Activities for the development of areas for the establishment and stabilization of peace, progress and cooperation between nations. As it can be seen from

the above, there is a kind of conflict between the ambassadors and the bishops of the Vatican. Prior to the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), the presidents of the episcopal council of the region had no right to interfere in political affairs or to contact political authorities, and their activities were limited to the church and religious affairs.

At the Second Vatican Council, the heads of the episcopal councils were allowed to contact local governments. Pope Paul VI wrote in his 1969 letter of recommendation: "The ambassador's important task is to further strengthen the bonds of unity between the Holy See and the local churches, and the embassy does not aim to increase the power of the Church of Rome and reduce the authority of bishops. Rather, the goal is to help and support the bishop and the believers." Article 364 of the Ecclesiastical Law also outlines the measures needed to coordinate ambassadors and bishops and outlines the ambassadors' area of religious and ecclesiastical practice. However, the Vatican emphasizes that the ambassadors' responsibility lies primarily with their ecclesiastical duties and religious mission, and secondarily with their political and diplomatic representation. The *Gaudium et spes* states on the Church's diplomatic activities:

The political community and the church are independent of each other and each has independence in its own field. The better they cooperate with each other and continue to work together based on appropriate qualities with time and space constraints, the more they will be able to do this service effectively for the benefit of all. Accordingly, the purpose of the diplomatic activities of the Holy See is not political and secular, but spiritual and religious, because on the one hand it seeks to guarantee the freedom of the church to carry out its purely religious mission, and on the other hand, it is moral, spiritual and social, and for the development of actions, cooperation and sympathy between nations and the development of peace and justice of social classes. It is also stated in paragraph 1 of Article 365, and paragraph 5 of Article 364 of the Ecclesiastical Law:

In diplomatic activities, the stated spiritual goal is to develop and support relations between the Holy See and government officials of a country through negotiations, and the conclusion and implementation of agreements and other similar conventions to ensure the freedom of the church and religious peace, and along with the development and promotion of what is concerned with peace, development, progress and cooperation of nations." (Interview with Vatican Secretary of State 1992 / *Carriere Del Sera*)

The Vatican has political relations with 165 countries. This is despite the fact that before the time of Pope John Paul II, the countries with which the Vatican had established political relations were less than half of the current ones. The Vatican's diplomatic relations with some countries are limited to sending ambassadors (104 countries), and in some countries they are limited to Dual accreditation. They also have apostolic representation in some countries with which they do not have political or diplomatic relations. These people represent the pope in the local church. The Vatican has thus tried to maintain its presence in all parts of the world as much as possible.

It is worth mentioning that the Vatican does not have diplomatic relations with the countries on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf. Ambassadors of the Pope have been appointed as ambassadors in about 48 countries. According to unwritten diplomatic custom, an ambassador who has been in the country of mission for a longer period of time is appointed as the ambassador of that country, but in many countries with a majority of the Catholic population the title is awarded to Vatican ambassadors upon arrival, in honor of the position of the pope and the church.

About 62 countries have ambassadors based in the Vatican, and about 64 countries have Dual accreditation to communicate with the Vatican. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) also has a representative office in the Vatican.

Vatican diplomacy, while prestigious and active diplomacy, is one of the world's least expensive diplomatic apparatuses. Undoubtedly, paying attention to attracting quality personnel, improving the level of education, passing diplomacy courses and finding the necessary skills of this technique in the church academy, and avoiding the excessive expansion of the diplomatic apparatus, have been the most important factors in achieving the desired level. According to 1996 statistics, there are a total of 205 members of the Vatican diplomatic apparatus worldwide, of which 107 are heads of representation (ambassador or papal representative), and 12 are pope representatives in international organizations. (Enciclopedia Cattolica, 1998: 3545. *Annuario Pontificio* 1997) In the 1989 budget of the Vatican, the estimated costs for 118 embassies were a total of 13,164 million liras, with an average cost of about 110 million liras per embassy. (Less than \$ 100,000)

In addition, the Vatican has been an official member, or observer member, of most important international organizations and institutions. For example, in the United Nations (UN), the World Trade Organization (WTO) UNESCO, it has an observer member. The Vatican argues that it prefers a mission of observing in order not to be compared with political power (*Annuario Pontificio*, 1996), because then it will be forced to side with one state against another. Accordingly, the Pope's representative is only an observer and does not participate in the voting by announcing corrective opinions and ideas.

The interaction and confrontation of Christianity with Islam and the role of the Vatican

In this article, an attempt has been made to examine the role of the Vatican, headed by the Pope, with a historical approach to the relations between Islam and Christianity.

- **The history of the interaction between Christianity and Islam**

Differences and rivalries between Christians and Muslims in Europe began in the early eighth century. That is, at a time when tensions between European Christians and Muslims were escalating and Christians saw the remnants of Eastern Roman civilization and the Roman Church in danger of extinction. In 732 AD, Charles Martel, after uniting the Franks, defeated the Muslim Arabs in a battle between Poitiers and Tours and prevented them from advancing towards Central Europe. The "myth of the

Battle of Poitiers" is still an inflection point in the history of the church. Islamic historians have paid less attention to this war, which they call the "Tomb of the Martyrs," (Battle of Tours) led by Abdul Rahman Ghafqi, the Muslim ruler of Hispania. In any case, the defeat of the Muslims stopped the advance of the Arab army on French and European soil. From the seventh century to the end of the seventeenth century AD, that is, for more than a thousand years, the West was looking at Islam and Muslims with a hostile eye. It is obvious that the countless wars between Christians and Muslims deepened the animosities and prejudices between the followers of these two Abrahamic religions. The siege of Vienna by the Ottoman Turks in 1683 is reminiscent of the last bloody battle between Christians and Muslims. (Moland, 2002: 120)

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, there was a gradual shift in the European view of Islam. During this period, two completely different traditions emerged in dealing with Islam: the tradition of interaction and the tradition of confrontation with Islam. European thinkers and church-affiliated elites translated the Muslims Holy book and researched the life of the Prophet of Islam in order to become acquainted with Islam. One of the first translations of the Qur'an was published in 1647. On the other hand, a translation into Latin was published during the reign of Pope Innocent XI in 1698, mostly for ideological confrontation with Islam. Ludovico Marachi, the translator of this version of the Qur'an, also devoted pages to the biography of the Prophet of Islam and the critique of his teachings. (Gardidi, 1998: 101 and 225) Of course, many translations of the Qur'an have been made into most European languages, the first of which is a Latin translation by the Englishman Robert von Ketton commissioned by the great monk Peter Venrabilis and published in 1134 AD (538 AH).

On the eve of the eighteenth century, an encyclopedia entitled "Critical Historical Culture" by Pierre Bell was published, in which he had a distorted image of the Prophet of Islam. The translation of this book also became very popular in German-speaking lands. So much so that Wolfgang Goethe mentions in "Truth and Permission" that he read the book in his father's library as a teenager and disappeared into its labyrinth. Almost at the same time as Bell's book, Barthelmi Arbelo's famous work "The Eastern Library" was published in France. In this book, on the one hand, the author obtains information and knowledge of many lands of the Muslim East, but on the other hand, it is clear that his work is mixed with common prejudices about Islam. (Kung, 2005: 136)

The publication of *The Religion of Muhammad* by Adrian Rindland, a Dutch orientalist and Protestant theologian, in 1705, as well as George Sal's English translation of the Qur'an in 1734, marked an inflection point in the positive evaluation of the life of the Prophet and Islam in Europe. In their works, these two scholars first of all, and perhaps for the first time, drew the attention of Europeans to the commonalities between Christianity and Islam. In his book *The Life of Muhammad*, published in the Netherlands in 1730 after his death, Enrique Kent de Bolen Willie defended the argument of the founder of Islam. Sharma (2006: 146 and 155) in this work praises the Prophet of Islam who was able to spread the teachings of monotheism from India to Spain.

- **The interaction of Christianity and Islam and the role of the Vatican in the current era**

The Second Vatican Council stated in the Charter of Our Time in 1965: "The Church has a deep respect for Muslims who worship the One God, the Living, the Merciful, the Almighty, and the Creator who speaks to human beings.

They try to surrender to God even in secret. Just as Abraham surrendered to God. They believe in Abraham as their source, and although they do not accept Jesus as the son of God, they praise him as the prophet, and they respect and honor Mary, his virgin mother. They are waiting for the Day of Judgment, when God will resurrect and reward human beings. They respect the spiritual life, and worship God through prayer, almsgiving, and fasting.

Although there have been many differences and animosities between Christians and Muslims over the centuries, the Second Vatican Council wants everyone to forget the past and work together in mutual understanding, and to defend enjoy social justice, moral values, peace, reconciliation and freedom for all human beings."

This policy is also emphasized in the Pope's statements. In his speech in Morocco on August 19, 1985, he stated: "For us Christians and Muslims - Abraham is a model of true faith in God, a model of submission to his will and assurance of his kindness. "We all believe in one God, in one God, in the living God, in the God who created the world and perfected his creatures."

Addressing the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1997, the pope said in a contemplative tone: "The Church has a deep respect for Muslims. Muslims' faith in one God brings them closer to the followers of monotheistic religions, and it is hoped that this closeness will lead to greater understanding of different skin communities. Muslims believe that God is merciful and loves mercy and forgiveness, so Muslims must accept the logic of love and strive for mutual forgiveness (Corriere Della Sera, Apr / 1997; L'osservatore Romano, Apt / 1997)

However, the Vatican is trying to use the slogan of the rapprochement of religions to gain leadership. Another part of our modern-day document states: Talking to Muslims often gets in the complicated way, because they merge religion and politics, so the church must always be the initiator and innovator, because it is sent and under the influence of its nature and its constitution, that is, mercy and forgiveness. Conversation is a basic characteristic and need for compassion.

The Vatican Prime Minister Cardinal Sudano said: "Islam cannot be talked about in general today. The Catholic Church has great respect for Islam. What is often inaccurately portrayed as Islamic fundamentalism can represent a danger that is not directly derived from religion but is a form of religion that has only political purposes. (La Repubblica. 18 / Mar / 1996) In examining the policies of the Vatican towards Islam, it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that with the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the era of revival of Islam in the world quickly began its course.

The growth of Islamic tendencies over the past few decades has convinced all thinkers of international relations that Islam has played a major role in the uprisings and transformations of international relations.

On the other hand, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the approach of the Eastern Bloc-dominated nations to religion, especially Islam, led to regions of the world from Central Asia and the Caucasus to Africa and Latin America and Central Europe to become the arena of conflict between Islam and Catholic Christianity as two religions that have many followers and this is a fact that the Vatican never neglects. An examination of the Vatican's intentions for Islam requires another opportunity that is beyond the scope of this article.

It is worthwhile to quote the full text of the Pope's speech on May 5, 1999, during a weekly meeting with Catholics on dialogue with Islam:

1- Today, in order to deepen the issue of inter-religious dialogue, I would like to reflect on the dialogue with Muslims. According to the enlightenment of the nations, they worship the one and only merciful God like us. The Church respects Muslims and believes that their faith in God, the almighty, helps to form a new human family based on the lofty and heartfelt ideals of man.

Muslims, like Jews and Christians, view Abraham as a model of an absolute team for God's commands (see the statement of our era, 3) Muslims seek to follow Abraham in praising God's place as a guide, and the ultimate purpose of all beings in their lives. (Papal Council for Interfaith Dialogue, Message to Muslims on the Occasion of the End of Ramadan 1997) The manifestation of this readiness and submission of man against the will of God in prayer. Prayer indicates the inherent success of every human being towards his Creator.

The Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, whose descendants go back to the family of Abraham, is also on the path of Abraham's surrender. Muslims also respect her, and this is especially evident in their religious feelings.

2. We Christians gladly emphasize the common values between Christianity and Islam. Today, I would like to refer to my speech to the Muslim youth in Casilanka: "We believe in one God, that is, the one and only living God who created the world, and causes the evolution of his creatures. In the revealed old texts, the oneness of God is emphasized with one voice.

Christ also emphasizes this and considers the testimony of the children of Israel as his own: "God, our Lord, is the only Lord. (Mark 12:29 and Numbers 4:5) 'The words of praise, which rise from the heart of St. Paul, also emphasize the oneness of God: "Now to the King of the ages [eternal], immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen".

(First Epistle of Paul to Timothy Verse 17) We Christians, in the light of complete revelation through Christ, know that the mysterious monotheism of God is limited to one numerical unit, and according to the mystery of love, we see in the inherent monotheism of God the characters of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Each of these three persons possesses an inseparable divine essence and at the same time are distinct from each other, and this is because the interrelationship between them.

3. This relationship (between three persons) in no way undermines divine monotheism; the fourth Lateran Council in 1215 was made it clear, well: Each of the three is "that reality." That reality is written in capital

letters and it means God, that is, the divine essence and nature. This divine essence does not give birth and is born and does not arise. The Christian school of the Trinity, emphasized by the church councils, explicitly rejects all forms of idolatry and the worship of the three gods.

From this point of view, there is a significant agreement between Christianity and Islam regarding the belief in the monotheism of the divine essence, but this agreement should not cause the differences between the two religions to be forgotten. We Christians know that divine monotheism is expressed on the level of three divine persons. God is love (John 4:8), and from the beginning he was a father and devoted himself completely and thus gives birth to a child. There is a bond of love between the two, the father and the son, and this bond means the Holy Spirit. With this distinction between the three persons, it does not add to the divine monotheism. On the other hand, we must not forget that monotheism and the Trinity which are special features of Christianity and they are mysteries that the human intellect cannot comprehend, but their intellect is invited to accept the revelation of the inner nature of God.

4. Inter-religious dialogue is a verse of hope, and it makes us know each other more deeply and respect each other more. It refers to the message addressed to Muslims in Ramadan 1998 by the Papal Council for Interfaith Dialogue. In both Christian and Islamic traditions throughout history, research, neologism, as well as art, literature, and science are observed, and this heritage has influenced Western and Eastern cultures. Worship of the one God, the Creator of all, compels us to strengthen mutual knowledge in the future. In today's God-fearing world, Christians and Muslims are called upon to always defend the human spirit, moral values, and liberty along with love.

The common path to eternity must be expressed in prayer, fasting, and Iranian love for others, as well as in the pursuit of peace and justice, human advancement, and the defense of the environment. (*Corriere Della Sera*, 5 / May / 1999, *L'osservatore Romano*, 5 May / 1999, *Avvenire* 5 May 1999) The two religions, by following the path of reconciliation, and by surrendering to the will of God, and not resorting to any kind of violence to resolve differences, can be a sign of hope, and to enlighten the world with the light of wisdom and the mercy of the one God who created and nurtured the family of humanity.

In 2005, two weeks after the death of Pope John Paul II, the Vatican Cardinal Council elected German Joseph Alois Ratzinger as the 255th pope, thus, Cardinal Ratzinger, who was seventy-eight years old at the time and well-known among the followers of the Catholic Church, ascended the throne of the Vatican as Pope Benedict XVI. Ratzinger was known for a long time as a prolific writer and a popular professor at German universities. His relatively traditional conception of Catholicism, and his staunch adherence to the doctrinal principles of the religion, had made him the most important Christian theologian since the 1960s. Prior to becoming a cardinal, he was first Archbishop of Munich and Freezing. Ratzinger believed that Western countries, and especially Europe, which he saw as the main stronghold of Christianity in the world, should return to Christian values and beliefs, and resist the growing trend of secularization of industrial societies. The main target of Pope Benedict XVI's attack is

relativism, which he sees as an attack on the objectivity of truth in general, and the rejection of the objectivity of moral values in particular. According to Ratzinger, this despair of achieving an absolute truth and a strong objectivity for moral principles is the origin of the moral and social disorder of industrial societies in the twenty-first century.

Ratzinger was named one of the 100 Most Influential Living People in a Times poll in 2005, just months before he was promoted to pope by the Cardinal Council. (<https://www.hamshahrionline.ir>) This was not unexpected, given his great spiritual influence among high-ranking Catholic officials. His election as pope comes at a time when he had temporarily lost his sight due to a heart attack and expressed a desire to retire and return to his Bavarian village to write his books. It was the emergence of a new current in the church; the current that preferred Ratzinger to his rival - the cardinal who was the leader of the liberal faction of the Church - showed a tendency towards traditionalism and fundamentalism.

After becoming pope, Ratzinger made moves to bring the various Christian denominations closer together. His change in the title of Archbishop of the West was hailed by the Orthodox Church as a conciliatory and friendly move, and the good relations that the pope had established with the leaders of the Protestant Church also had some effect on the rise of his reputation as a pope who aspired to Christian unity.

At the same time, in a congratulatory message to the Pope on his election, the Jews praised his attention to the history of the Jewish people and praised him for his sensitivity to the Nazi massacre of Jews. Similarly, the Tibetan Dalai Lama, who met with him shortly after his election to the Vatican, described him as a man who had made a good impression on him.

However, the new Pope's relationship with Islam became complicated. Initially, it was rumored that the new Pope was taking a tougher line against extremist Islam, especially terrorism attributed to some Muslims, than John Paul II. But when caricatures insulting the Prophet of Islam appeared in Danish publications, the Pope took a hard line against it; He called on Christian believers to respect the others' religious symbols and to refrain from insulting the sanctities of others. Moreover, the pope insisted on interfaith dialogue; Basically, dialogue is the only way to prevent anger and hatred between people and to maintain peace and friendship. In a message, he called on Christians to open their hands and hearts to Muslim immigrants seeking refuge in the West. On July 1, 2006, the pope, who prays in the monastery of the Carmelites, prayed for the forgiveness of the terrorists' souls and their guidance; Because in his view, "they do not know that they are harming themselves and their neighbors." (<https://www.hamshahrionline.ir>)

On August 7, 2006, the Pope expressed concern about the continuing conflict in Palestine, particularly in Lebanon, and sent two ambulances with medical equipment to help those affected by the conflict in southern Lebanon. On September 11, Roberto Picardo, the leader of Italy's most important Muslim group (UCOII), praised the Pope for his message that Asian and African countries were in danger of drowning in Western materialism and stated that the view of Muslims is the same in this regard. The next day, the pope, who spoke at the University of

Regensburg about "faith, rationality, and the university," made a statement that was quickly met with a Muslim response. "The prophet of Islam has brought nothing to the world but violence," the world's Catholic leader was quoted as saying by a 14th-century Roman emperor. His statement angered the Islamic world. But the Vatican has defended Pope Benedict's recent remarks on the concept of holy jihad, which have been condemned by some religious leaders in Islamic countries.

During a week-long trip to his hometown, Germany, the Pope in September 2006 apparently questioned the concept of jihad in Islam. The pope's remarks angered the entire Islamic world. But the Vatican said the pope had no intention of insulting Muslims. "It is clear that the Holy Father's intention was to encourage respect and dialogue with other religions and cultures, which obviously includes Islam," said Pope's spokesman Federico Lombardi. Pope Benedict XVI, in a closing speech at the University of Rigenberg, outlined the historical and philosophical differences between Islam and Christianity and the relationship between faith and violence. He emphasized that these were not his words, and only quoted the words of Emperor Manuel II Palalogos from the Christian Byzantine Empire, whose capital was present-day Istanbul. Sheikh Yusuf Qaradawi, a prominent Qatari cleric, also denied the pope's remarks, saying: "Muslims have the right to be angry at the words of the highest-ranking cleric in Christianity and to have their feelings hurt." He asked the Pope to apologize to the Muslim Ummah for insulting Islam, the Prophet and his beliefs. (<https://www.bbc.com/persian/worldnews/story>)

The Pope said his words had been misinterpreted. Addressing Vatican pilgrims, the Pope reiterated that his quote from a medieval text criticizing Islam, did not reflect his personal beliefs. He also expressed respect for Muslims, saying he hoped his remarks could lead to "critical negotiation between religions." The pope said he wanted to explain in his speech at a university in Germany that religion is inspired by logic, not violence. Various groups of Muslims around the world have called on the pope to apologize for quoting a Byzantine emperor who, according to historical texts, said, "The rulings of the Prophet of Islam brought nothing but violence to the world." But the pope has only said that he regrets that his remarks insulted Muslims.

Islamic societies have reacted differently to the Pope's "deep regret" over his remarks last week. A number of Muslim countries have responded positively to the pope's comments about his speech last week. "The pope's apology was exactly what Muslims expected," the British Muslim Council said in a statement. In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, an anti-government group, welcomed the Pope's recent remarks, calling them a retreat from what he had said a few days earlier. But the Muslim Brotherhood said in another statement that regret was not enough and that the Pope should apologize to Muslims. In the occupied territories, Hamas, which leads the Palestinian Authority, has said "it does not consider the Pope's apology to be an apology to Muslims." In the occupied territories, at least seven churches have been attacked since the Pope's speech. In Iran, several hundred people marched in the religious city of Qom to protest the Pope's remarks .

Pope Benedict XVI, the world's Catholic leader, called on Christians and Muslims in Turkey to have a "real negotiation" as he continued his efforts to appease Muslims. In his speech at the Turkish Religious Affairs Administration, the Pope stressed that the relationship between Muslims and Christians should be based on "truth and a sincere desire to understand each other." The Pope's visit to Turkey was widely opposed. Thousands of Turkish police officers are in charge of securing the Pope's trip. For Pop trips, two similar vehicles are designed to mislead potential attackers. This was the Catholic Church leader's first visit to a predominantly Muslim country. Earlier, the pope's remarks about Islam led to widespread protests among Muslims, including in Turkey. As mentioned, in a speech at a university in Germany, he quoted a Roman emperor who described Islam as a harsh religion. Although the pope stressed that these remarks did not reflect his views, the publication of the text of his speech provoked an angry reaction from many Muslims. However, the Turkish government had said the meeting could be a "turning point" in relations between Islam and Christianity. (<https://www.bbc.com/persian/worldnews/story>)

In addition, the Pope reopened the Office of Interaction with Islam. His move at the Vatican has been interpreted as the importance of better relations with the Islamic world. Pope Benedict XVI, the world's Catholic leader, has reconsidered his decision last year to vote to reopen the Office of Interaction with the Islamic World. The world's Catholic leader last year voted to remove the office from the Vatican's administrative structure. The Council for Interreligious Dialogue was merged with the Office of Cultural Affairs last year by order of Benedict XVI. The action of the world Catholic leader to reopen this office is very important; This means that the Pope attaches importance to better relations with the Islamic world. This office by the Pope implicitly means admitting a mistake in closing it. (<https://www.bbc.com/persian/worldnews>)

Following the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, the cardinals of the Catholic Church met again at the Vatican to discuss the election of a new pope and to elect a new Pope to preside over the Vatican and the Catholic Church. The first meeting was held on March 12, 2013, with no results; Black smoke billowed from the famous Sistine Chapel's chimney, indicating a mismatch between voters' views on the Pope's nomination. But in the second round of voting, on the second day, March 13, 2013, Jorge Mario Bergoglio from Buenos Aires was elected the 266th Pope; After that, he chose the title of Francis.

Islamic leaders in Argentina congratulated Jorge Bergoglio on his election in a statement, saying: "Bergoglio has always shown himself to be a friend of Islamic societies and has always had a personality who welcomes interfaith dialogue." (Pope Francis' a friend of the Islamic community ", 2013) Also after the election, Ahmad al-Tayyib Sheikh Sharif al-Azhar and the president of Al-Azhar University congratulated him on the election in statements. Also, after one day, 180 countries congratulated him on his election as Pope ("Tawadros II thanks cardinals and Pope Francis for the" blessed choice " 2013).

"Muslim-Christian relations have been on his agenda since the election of Pope Francis as the world's Catholic leader," Vatican Foreign

Minister Cardinal Pietro Parolin told Italian TV channel 2000. Parolin announced that the Pope's relationship with the Islamic world is one of his top priorities in 2019. According to the report, Pope Francis has a comprehensive program for the spring focusing on dialogue with the Islamic world. "The Pope's attention to the Muslim world and the Arab world is due to the problems that have arisen between Islam and Christianity these days, due to the propaganda about terrorism," the Vatican foreign minister said. (<http://shabestan.ir>) Since the beginning of his papacy, Pope Francis has sought to expand his interaction with the Islamic world in various ways, but now he is paying special attention to traveling to Arab and Islamic countries. Francis' focus on Catholic-Muslim relations stems from his first international trip to Jerusalem since being elected Pope in 2013. Since then, his conversations with Islam have been widely emphasized in the pope's travels. He went to Turkey in November 2014, visited the Central African Republic in 2015 and Egypt in the spring of 2017; Countries where the majority of the population is Muslim. According to Vatican officials, interfaith dialogue is of particular importance to the Pope, and his visit to Islamic countries is a clear example of his efforts to spread a culture of interaction with the Muslim world.

In 2019, the Islamic World Association and the Vatican Catholic University signed a cooperation agreement. Following his recent invitation to SacroCuore Catholic University, the Secretary General of the Islamic World Association stated about the friendship between nations and peoples. Muhammad ibn Abd al-Karim al-Issa provided many examples of positive relations between the Islamic world and the Christian world; Relations have recently been strengthened through increased dialogue between the Islamic World Association and the Vatican. Al-Issa also emphasized on the importance of co-operation based on natural laws and mutual values. In addition, the Secretary General of the Islamic World Association announced the launch of a global project in which the Islamic World Association works on more positive relations in all national and religious sectors. He spoke about the value of friendship and criticized various factors, including religious and political extremism, which threaten the bond between people. (<https://www.shia-news.com>). Among the steps that the Catholic University has taken in recent years to bridge the gap between the Islamic world and the Christian world are various initiatives to promote Arabic culture and language. The Islamic World Association and the Catholic University seek to strengthen research through this collaboration.

CONCLUSION

The pope is the highest and holiest religious authority in the Roman Catholic Church. Given that the pope reaches St. Peter and, consequently, Jesus, the church without a pope is meaningless. After the Middle Ages, the First Vatican Council approved the infallibility of the Pope as a doctrinal principle. This doctrine is of great importance to Catholic Christians and the Roman Church. Christians believe that the church, with all the errors that occur in it, remains right and whenever it takes the position of issuing a fatwa, it is safe from error with the approval

of the Holy Spirit. The Vatican City State is an artificial state that is not formed on the basis of the components of the state government; Rather, it is recognized for the purpose of preserving and enhancing the spiritual influence of the church. Most countries in the world have diplomatic relations with the Vatican. First of all, we need to distinguish between the declaratory policies and Vatican implementing policies. The Vatican has sought to advocate for the rapprochement of religions in its proclamation policies in recent decades; In practice, however, very limited measures have been taken, and even in some cases the Pope himself, with unconsidered statements, has offended Muslims and, as a result, religious differences and hatred between the Muslim world and Christianity. In particular, the insulting remarks of Pope Benedict XVI, which met with widespread negative reactions throughout the Islamic world. The Pope, although he tried to state later that his words were misunderstood, traveled to Turkey and worshiped at the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, suspicion remained in the Muslim world.

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