

Can Islam Become A Legitimizing Source For The Cultural Legitimacy Of The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights?

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Abstract:

The proposed research undertakes to investigate theological and juridical-ethical resources in Islamic religious thought to demonstrate to Muslim as well as non-Muslim human rights theoreticians that it is possible to construct an internal and universal indigenous paradigm of human rights discourse that can actually provide cultural legitimacy to the international bill of human rights in the Muslim world. Human rights discourse in Muslim world is faced with an internal crisis generated by the refusal of the Muslim traditionalist scholars to acknowledge the religious validity of the secular document of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The universal claim of the latter document is rejected in a number of areas where the document is seen as an affront to the religiously derived claim to self-regulating universalism. Hence, the secular universalism founded on the rationally derived concept of the equality of all human beings endowed with inherent dignity and freedom of religion have been intensely debated and opposed by the traditionalist scholars as a Western hegemonic ploy to culturally dominate Muslim peoples. However, if this position were an honest academic review of the UN Declaration, then it would have led these scholars to the inevitable search for authentic Islamic notions of, at least, religiously promulgated immunities and entitlements for all human beings regardless of their religious affiliation.