

The Islamic System of Iran: A Strategy for Addressing Cultural Crises in the Era of Globalization

Seyed Morteza Mirtabar¹, Nasrin Fattahi²

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Abstract

Culture is the most extensive and rapid dimension of globalization. Globalization is a process that has created both opportunities and threats for the global community, particularly in the realm of culture. Among these threats are the weakening of commitment and social cohesion, the emergence of cultural conflicts, and consequently, cultural pluralism and identity loss. This article seeks to answer the question of what perspective and strategy can be used to position the Islamic Republic of Iran as a resolver of global cultural challenges. A descriptive-analytical method has been employed to answer this question. The best way to overcome the current global crises, especially cultural crises, is to present a system based on the fundamental principles of the holy religion of Islam, which are embodied in the Islamic Republic of Iran. This system, by emphasizing the verses of the Quran and the traditions of the infallible Imams (peace be upon them), adopts principles such as the criterion of Islamic values, God-centeredness, perfectionism, the formation of a united community, preservation of identities, pursuit of justice and the absence of discrimination, resistance to domination, and a culture of spirituality as strategies to advance its goals. Additionally, by maintaining characteristics such as the connection between religion and politics, embracing rational thoughts, accepting pluralism within unity, Islamic democracy, Islamic human rights, and a civil society based on religious ideas, it offers a systematic and precise strategy to counter the globalization project.

Keywords: Globalization, Cultural Crisis, Culture, Islamic Republic of Iran.

1. Researcher of Urwatul Wothqa International Research Institute, Qom, Iran (**Corresponding Author**),
Smbb_110@yahoo.com

2. Assistant Professor of the Islamic Studies Department of Lorestan University, Lorestan, Iran.
fatahi.n@lu.ac.ir

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Introduction

With the expansion of globalization, significant challenges have emerged in various aspects of global systems, particularly in the realm of culture. The onset of globalization has shown that our modern world is marked by a broad network of relationships and social interactions, with culture at its core. The globalization of culture is its fastest and most extensive dimension (Jones, 2006: 56). However, this global dimension has proven to be the most challenging, attracting the most debates in the past two decades. There is a widespread fear that globalization will lead to the erosion of cultural differences and create cultural homogenization, promoting the McDonaldization of culture even in affluent societies (Carothers, 2002: 213). This fear has mobilized people globally, generating a consensus of opposition and drawing the attention of many global leaders. The Leader of the Revolution, in a meeting with the members of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, emphasized the importance of culture, stating: "Culture is like a net in which fish swim without realizing it, being guided in a direction. Therefore, culture, as a shaper of public mentality and behavior, is one of the fundamental fields" (Statements of the Supreme Leader, 17 December 2002).

Among the consequences and impacts of cultural globalization are the inevitable expansion of communications, the consequent reduction of distances, the globalization of existing challenges and opportunities, and behavioral patterns in various fields. There is also the global expansion of communication levels, identity issues, and their influence and impact on a global scale, the emergence of global identity-forming resources, and the globalization of human mental and visual horizons (Grieg, 2002, vol. 46: 225-235). Criticism of cultural globalization states that globalization, like a flood, destroys cultural diversity worldwide, undermines local stability, repels individuals, and erases the distinctions between local cultural boundaries that form our identities (Mendieta, 2007: 114). Nonetheless, it must be understood that this process cannot be denied or rejected and must be confronted, with efforts made to solve its problems. Hence, in this global system, every group and religion strives to present its culture as the dominant one, creating multiple opinions and challenges worldwide. However, the Islamic Republic of Iran, relying on Quranic verses, has provided definitive and significant solutions to address these cultural crises in the context of globalization, which will be discussed in this article.

In fact, the main aim of this article, in addition to elucidating the globalization system and offering a positive approach to it, is to examine the cultural challenges in the era of globalization and to present the solutions provided by the Islamic system. Therefore, the question of this article is: how can cultural challenges in the global community be eliminated, and what is the way to

confront them? The methodology of this research is fundamental and theoretical. Numerous articles and texts have been written about globalization and its consequences, but a comprehensive and specific study on the cultural crises of globalization with solutions from the Islamic Republic of Iran has not yet been conducted. For example, Pourzaki (2017) in his article discusses how the Islamic Revolution responds to the globalization process and believes that the inconsistency between ruling forces causes tension and challenges in the government's policymaking and decision-making arena. Eshtari and Hossein Zadeh Fermi (2022) in their research examined the similarities and differences between globalization and the slogans of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, arguing that the concept of goals and aspirations embodied in the slogans of the Islamic Revolution of Iran differs from the characteristics and goals of the capitalist system's global planning (globalization). Yazdani Zadeh and Habibi (2010) assert that for the Islamic system of Iran to enter the global paradigm, some other laws and regulations should be created according to its specific conditions. Javadi (2018) believes that the Islamic Revolution has the capacity for globalization due to its alignment with human nature, flexibility, balanced achievements, and rationality, but has not provided an explanation in this regard. Indeed, by reviewing the research background, it can be said that no systematic research has yet addressed the role of the Islamic system in solving the cultural crises of globalization.

Overall, this article adopts an interdisciplinary approach and a descriptive-analytical method to connect the achievements of cultural studies and the sociology of globalization with the field of religious texts studies and Iranian political culture. It addresses the question of which system and doctrine is better equipped to elevate humanity to a higher human system in the context of globalization.

1. The Purpose of Culture and Cultural Crises

The definition of culture, rooted in the Latin word "Cultivate," can be articulated in two forms. First: Culture in its general sense: Based on this premise, culture is a combination of lifestyles, value systems, traditions, and defined beliefs (Stenou, 2007: 67). Another definition states that "Culture is a complex whole that includes knowledge, religion, art, law, ethics, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society" (Ashouri, 2001: 47). Therefore, some consider contemporary meanings of culture to be synonymous with "way of life" (Billington, 2001: 41).

Second: Culture in its specific sense: The culture referred to in this article is "a bipolar reality, both intrinsic and extrinsic... Culture is the quality or appropriate method for those activities of human material and spiritual life that

are based on sound reasoning and elevated feelings in a rational evolutionary life" (Jafari, 1994: 2). Accordingly, culture can be regarded as reflecting the enduring values, traditions, and norms of society (Kazemi, 2003: 97), but not merely of a single society. Since the phenomenon of culture involves human agency, it is humans, due to environmental conditions, historical events, ideals, religious worldviews, etc., who create culture. Therefore, cultural differences and the existence of various models in society do not necessarily imply that culture within a society is entirely systematic and deterministic (Jafari, n.d., 159). In fact, culture possesses a dynamic feature that gives meaning to human life; hence, to acquire knowledge in life and create a proper lifestyle, a systematic plan is required. For this purpose, continuous care and review in the field of culture are essential, a necessity emphasized by the Supreme Leader during a meeting with the members of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution (Statements of the Supreme Leader, 13 January 2004).

Understanding various cultural values is crucial because the weakness of some values leads to cultural differences and consequently cultural crises in society. Weak and ineffective cultural values, like weak physical and economic capacities, merely adopt a passive stance and will not endure; whereas, authentic and superior cultural values, akin to effective natural and economic capacities, are strengthened, grow, and find their place when faced with the challenges of globalization (Nahavandian, 2004: 43). Therefore, many prominent thinkers, such as Imam Khomeini (may Allah bless his soul) and Allameh Jafari (may Allah bless his soul), have in their speeches, endeavored to highlight Islamic culture as the highest culture in the world. They believe that a superior culture is one derived through understanding connected to revelation, that is, through the Prophets and Imams (peace be upon them) (Imam Khomeini, vol. 8, 415). Efforts should be made to eliminate deviations that infiltrate these definitive cultural principles. The endorsement of these religious scholars' views can be found in the verse "Those who believe and do not mix their faith with wrongdoing - those will have security, and they are [rightly] guided" (Al-An'am: 82). Based on this verse, two important factors, faith and avoidance of injustice – the result of true faith – become the sources of cultural dimensions in all areas. According to Quranic verses, the model explaining human action originates from the ethical domain of religion. However, the cultural crises addressed in this article refer to behaviors deemed undesirable and sometimes criminal based on the moral standards and dominant official norms of traditional Islamic values. This model is referred to by Mr. Serajzadeh in his book as cultural deviance (Serajzadeh, 2004).

2. Globalization or Globalism?!

Globalization is a comprehensive concept used to describe the interweaving and

interconnectedness of human society on a global scale. David Held, Anthony McGrew, and many other globalization theorists agree on the fact that globalization is a set of processes that ensure social relationships (Jones, 2006: 112). This phenomenon, which considers beyond the state and nation, primarily has an economic and material nature. However, as a form of civilizational progress, it holds significant cultural and non-material importance, akin to all major civilizational advancements (Madison, 2001: 172). In other words, globalization, in its hermeneutical sense, is a paradoxical process; it is as much a unifier and integrator as it is a disintegrator and disruptor of traditional structures, creating new forms of global interdependence (Giddens, 1999: 291).

There is a divergence among theorists regarding the origins and commencement of globalization. Some argue that globalization is a new formulation of pre-modern globalist thoughts of religions, sects, and ancient civilizations (Robertson, 1992: 23-38), emphasizing cultural heterogenization or cultural particularism. The most prominent theorist in this regard is Huntington. Others see it as nothing more than the logical continuation of capitalism and imperialism, thus identifying the development of capitalism as the origin of globalization (Nasri, 2001: 283). This view emphasizes the homogenization of global culture or cultural universalism, particularly the Americanization of global culture. Perhaps the table below succinctly illustrates instances of cultural globalization (Waters, 2000: 229), although this does not imply that other dimensions are excluded:

	Ideal Model of Globalization or Globalism	Current Status
Religious	Separation of religious components from land	Relativism and Fundamentalism
Ethnic	Separation from land - Cosmopolitanism and Diversity	Formation of micro and macro nationalism
Economic	Simulated and symbolic consumption	Immaterialization of goods at the highest level
Media	Global distribution of images and information	Deterritorialization of image and information distribution
Recreational	Mass tourism and the end of tourism	Non-classification of topics and objectives

All these discussions reflect the negative connotation of the term globalization among many great thinkers of the world. However, it should be noted that a negative approach to globalization is a mistake, and it seems that these thinkers have conflated globalization with globalism. This conflation has led to varying definitions of globalization, necessitating a brief discussion on the difference between these two processes due to their importance.

Many prominent thinkers in our society and other communities use globalization and globalism as synonymous terms, often as equivalents for the English word "Globalization." However, these two words differ grammatically

and semantically. One is intransitive, while the other is transitive, and this structural difference partly reflects the underlying perception behind these equivalents. Globalization is considered a historical, external, natural, and objective phenomenon, whereas globalism is seen as a deliberate, colonial, and imposed project designed to exploit the wealth and resources of poor countries by powerful and dominant countries. Thus, we sometimes see entirely pessimistic expressions such as Americanization, Westernization, cultural homogenization, unification of cultures, and McDonaldization used as equivalents for the term "Globalization," which actually refer to globalism (Hemmati, 2006: 254). In fact, globalism is the post-communist Western imperialism that aims to Westernize the world (Mehrban, 2002: 51).

The distinction between these two processes has been articulated: "Globalization is about embracing the world, becoming familiar with other cultures, and respecting the views and opinions of others; whereas globalism is the negation of others" (Abdel Jabiri, 1998: 7). In this perspective, globalism is a large-scale social engineering plan that embodies the hegemonic ideology of the West, aiming to universalize the American way of life and Westernize humans by promoting a culture of consumerism and gender through neoliberalism and postmodernism foundations. Thus, the West tries to impose and solidify its global and transcendent culture using satellite communication technologies and mass media, thereby establishing a single normative American empire globally (Dehshiri, 2000: 72-73).

Therefore, it must be said that the game rule of win-win, the fundamental logic of globalization theory, is disregarded by dominant powers. Consequently, with the slogan of globalism, poverty, deprivation, discrimination, and humiliation are posed as threats to the future of human society, and globalization theory has not provided solutions for them.

This erroneous conflation between globalization and globalism has led some Muslims, Christians, and other religious leaders, such as followers of the Dalai Lama, to nostalgically and self-centeredly depict an unrealistic and self-serving image of globalization, thereby distorting the term and creating misunderstandings about it. The appearance of a savior, the formation of a unified global government in the end times, and the eradication of oppression and exploitation are undoubtedly the wishes and beliefs of every true Muslim. Still, these should not be conflated with globalization. Similarly, the issue of the approximation or unity of churches and the global church movement, although an ideal and desirable goal for Christians, should be recognized as distinct from globalization (Hemmati, 2006: 254-255).

In conclusion, it should be noted that the conflation of definitions between globalization and globalism has led to different interpretations of globalization,

affecting the cultural domain as well. Thus, it can be inferred that cultural globalization always entails the creation and absorption of local cultures; processes that, in turn, contribute significantly to the compression and consolidation of the world as a whole. Hence, globalization can both strengthen local cultures and render them ineffective (Bakhshi Sheikh Ahmad, 2008: 84-85). Therefore, the concept of globalization should not be viewed negatively and paradoxically. Contrary to Dr. Nasr's viewpoint (Nasr, 2006: 313), this global system can be utilized to establish cultural security and a unified and shared global culture, as also emphasized by the Holy Quran. Consequently, globalization in the realm of culture is both a threat and an opportunity (Masoudnia, 2010: 231), and efforts should be made to harness the opportunities while eliminating the threats.

3. Cultural Crises of Globalization

Misinterpretation of globalization and globalism, and the inappropriate use of opportunities to create a shared cultural space, have rendered the topic of cultural globalization or global culture one of the most contentious issues in globalization discourse. Consequently, numerous definitions and criticisms have emerged. In reality, the multiple definitions of culture in the context of globalization have caused the concept of culture to lose its clarity (Rosenstein, 2010: 20). However, it must be acknowledged that culture holds significant importance for globalization; it is the fundamental aspect of the entire complex process of global communication and is essential to the cohesion of this complex interaction (Tomlinson, 2002: 40), making the discussion of culture in the globalization system a serious matter.

Nonetheless, all definitions in the realm of global culture can be categorized into two groups. First, critics of globalization, viewing this phenomenon as a project, believe that cultural globalization means the dominance of one culture—specifically, American culture—over the world. Ritzer is among those who perceive the cultural goal of globalization as the McDonaldization of the world (Kiani: 104), leading to the creation of modern culture or Western civilization (Franko Aas, 2007: 3). Second, some believe that globalization does not signify the dominance of one type of culture, particularly American culture, over the world. Instead, they argue that cultural globalization means the global dissemination of all cultures. In other words, globalization means universalization, and universalization implies the worldwide spread and acceptance of phenomena, goods, ideas, and thoughts—not necessarily their dominance. Therefore, globalization resembles universalization (Masoudnia, 2010: 229), which, despite providing opportunities, can also lead to deviations. Hence, the main challenge of globalization is how to utilize the undeniable

opportunities it offers to enhance civilization levels globally. Competition in the global arena is not necessarily destructive; it can even foster cooperation among countries. In fact, globalization does not lead to a clash of civilizations. Moreover, globalization is never synonymous with Americanization or Westernization (Madison, 2001: 182, 191). Thus, instead of rejecting and denying cultural globalization, efforts should be made to present a comprehensive and accurate culture for the entire world. Culture, like a toolbox, helps us understand and act upon the world, thereby acquiring identity (Gol Mohammadi, 2002: 124).

In reality, culture in this sense fosters cultural pluralism, leading many thinkers to view cultural globalization as a common threat and an opportunity to strengthen their steps toward preserving and recognizing their cultural identity (Ahmadvand, 2006: 88). Perhaps this incorrect definition and confusion between cultural globalization and globalism have led the Fourth Conference of Islamic Culture Ministers (ISESCO) in December 2004 in Algeria to consider globalization dangerous and to identify global culture as suffering from the adverse effects of the creeping phenomenon of globalization (Aminian, 2006). In our country, two major shortcomings can be identified regarding the phenomenon of cultural globalization: 1) Researchers and policymakers have paid insufficient attention to its importance. 2) Policymakers and cultural decision-makers have shown less sensitivity to the potential consequences and risks of this cultural trend (Nahavandian, 2004: 29).

In summary, it should be understood that with cultural globalization, the enduring values, traditions, and norms of one or more cultures gradually form a unified network of social relations. As a result, social relations, which were previously tied to specific times and places, transcend borders and limitations, acquiring new dimensions. The global culture emerging in this context is distinct from specific cultures; it does not belong to historical identity but is eclectic, universal, and timeless. Despite this, various global systems have tried to replace the universality of global culture with their specific cultures, attempting to guide it. However, the question remains: which of these systems can effectively manage cultural globalization?

4. Systems Claiming to Manage Cultural Globalization

a) Liberalism

Liberals consider the establishment of a state essential for preserving freedom against threats from other individuals or other states (Dunn, 2004, Vol. 1: 369). Liberalism advocates for individual freedom and rights against political institutions and emphasizes institutionalizing tolerance, permissiveness, and moral flexibility regarding religion (Arblaster: 220-221 and 127, 190). According

to this viewpoint, the formation of a unified global government is humanity's most significant achievement, which only liberalism can deliver. This realization is entirely practical given the resources available to liberal countries. Hence, the leaders of the liberal world must fulfill their current responsibility to create a unified global governance. Consequently, numerous theorists strive to explain and establish the philosophical and theoretical foundations of this matter (Larijani, 1995: 269). However, it must be understood that, in contrast, the idea of global governance in Islamic culture and thought has been present from the beginning of its emergence and, according to religious sources, its realization is certain and indisputable. The question that must be asked of liberalism proponents is: to what extent does liberalism possess the internal capacity and capability for globalization? If we base universal human laws and teachings within the framework of liberalism, certain necessary conditions will be met. But are the teachings and laws of liberalism based on reasonable human demands and capable of having a universal and global aspect? In general, liberal systems, which focus on individual primacy and rights, have undermined the fundamental components of human social life and cannot claim to be global. They cannot achieve cultural unity, commonalities, and shared interaction within the global human community, nor can they secure global justice, peace, order, and comprehensive development. In reality, Western rationality, being based on humanism and utilitarianism, cannot recognize the religious and cultural values of other societies (Nekouei Samani, 2007: 151).

b) Liberal Democracy and the Church's Performance

With the decline of the Eastern Bloc and socialist systems, liberal democracy in the West, led by the United States, has tried to present itself as the only viable alternative for the new global era. Today, the United States, due to its military and economic superiority, seeks to maintain the dominance of this discourse (Lak, 2006: 161-162). However, this system also cannot provide a correct solution to the existing crisis, as the Church has not been immune to these non-religious deviations and has adopted a secular perspective on these occurrences. In fact, the religious system of the Church has shown a contradictory attitude toward new crises and transformations. By retreating from its defensive stance, it has adopted a passive position in response to the industrial onslaught, utilizing concepts created by the industrial spirit that challenged the Church. In this challenge, the Church pursued the path of secularization, sacrificing itself in the rapid flow of the modern system to alleviate its troubled conscience regarding its non-participation in the development of the new civilization. This was the price the Church paid for participating in and aligning with the fate of the new industrial society, selling its religious spirit and truth to the Faustian spirit dominating the technological system (cf. Berman, 2002: 44).

c) The Islamic System

Liberalism and liberal democracy, with their components like humanism, the absolute value of freedom, individualism, capitalism, and their core principle of secularism, stand in opposition to political Islam, whose core principles are justice, theocentrism, and the Guardianship of the Islamic Jurist. From the Islamic perspective, firm and solid cultural beliefs are shaped based on spirituality and a comprehensive religious definition. As Imam Khomeini (may his soul rest in peace) reminded Gorbachev, the former leader of the Soviet Union, humanity cannot be saved with materialism alone. The lack of belief in spirituality is one of the fundamental pains of human society in both the West and the East (Imam Khomeini, Vol. 21: 221). Imam Musa Sadr, in his speech in Lebanon, also described religion as the best means for achieving victory, creating unity, and salvation (Sadr, 2008: 32). Nowadays, each of the heavenly religions considers solutions to address this crisis. Islam, as a global and divine religion, has proposed various solutions for organizing and resolving these crises, which the Islamic Republic of Iran has adopted as the guiding principle and the flag-bearer of its system.

5. The Islamic Republic of Iran: A Strategy for Regulating Global Culture

The culture promoted by the monarchical system, characterized by its secular and democratic features, emphasized freedom of expression, freedom of action, universal suffrage, cultural tolerance, human rights, and reconciliation. However, the monarchy's interpretation of these socio-cultural terms was entirely Western and based on American globalization. Consequently, this regime failed to transform the traditional political culture of society, resulting in a fragmented and disconnected cultural landscape in Iran (Farson, 2000: 26-27). With the victory of the Islamic Revolution, a sense of uniformity and cohesion emerged within society. This revolution can be seen as a sudden bridging of the historical state-nation gap. The reinterpretation of Shiite Islam created a revolutionary ideology, transforming the previously dependent political and social culture influenced by Western currents into a participatory-dependant political culture (Sharif, 2002: 181). These developments have bolstered the export of the revolution to the world and the rescue of global culture from its challenges.

Acknowledging the external reality of globalization does not mean endorsing its correctness. Endorsement would preclude criticism and reform. As Waltz noted, and as we strive to demonstrate in this article, globalization still has little to offer in many areas of individual and collective life, leaving much of the world untouched by its seemingly pervasive wave (Walters, 2000: 8). The diversity and plurality of existing cultures in the world do not justify their

correctness; they merely provide an anthropological description of their state, asserting that morality, the core of culture, has a flexible nature influenced by various external factors (Javadi, 1996: 195). Therefore, to resolve these cultural asymmetries, adherence to common principles is necessary, as globalization emphasizes. The Islamic Republic of Iran, through its strategic approaches, introduces these common principles to the world, presenting a path to alleviate cultural crises.

From this perspective, the Iranian Islamic system does not merely define globalization as a process but distinguishes it into two distinct projects:

1) The American-led Project: This project equates globalization with Americanization, promoting the idea that globalization means the spread of American influence and culture. It involves the negation of others and penetration into different cultures, seen as a continuation of Westernizing the world.

2) The Islamic World's Project: This model advocates for addressing globalization as a project while guiding its effects with a localized and particularist approach. This project is derived from the ideologies of the comprehensive system of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, which will be further elaborated upon.

6. The Principles of the Islamic System of Iran: A Model for the World

The confrontation with global domination and the disruption of the global globalization model, along with the introduction of a new globalization approach, have prompted the Iranian system to pay greater attention to religion. This attention is a reaction to the pressures arising from these processes, which have led to moral deviations, crises of legitimacy, economic and political crises, the renewal of religious values and beliefs, and the inefficiencies and shortcomings of secular and Western de-religionization plans. Consequently, the formulation of laws, regulations, decisions, and the establishment of principles and objectives based on religious and ideological foundations have taken shape in Iranian society. Thus, the Islamic Republic of Iran has presented a distinct plan, positioning itself as an exemplary and model country. The following outlines the cultural principles and foundations of the Islamic system of Iran with a global approach:

a) Principle of Islamic Values as Criteria: Islamic values and norms are the cornerstone of the constitutional principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The significance of the revolutionary values and beliefs is clearly stated in the first paragraph of the preamble to the Constitution: "The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran sets forth the cultural, social, political, and economic institutions of Iranian society based on Islamic principles and criteria, reflecting

the heartfelt desire of the Islamic community."

b) Principle of Theocentrism: According to the second principle of the Constitution, the Islamic Republic is founded on belief in the One God, the exclusive sovereignty and legislative power of God, submission to His commands, the essential role of divine revelation in the expression of laws, resurrection, divine justice, continuous leadership, and the dignity and supreme value of humans coupled with their freedom and responsibility before God. This fundamental principle means that the Iranian Islamic system is theocentric from an ontological perspective, in stark contrast to the secular ontology that relies on autonomous human reason. Thus, the Islamic Republic defines its identity through religious value propositions and a particular interpretation of authentic Islam.

c) Principle of Perfectionism: The framers of the Constitution envisioned the Islamic Revolution of Iran as a doctrine and depicted the establishment of the government as a means to create a country with high human values aimed at achieving perfection. In this view, the doctrine is perceived as an ideology providing theoretical and ideological support for the establishment of the government and determining and justifying the distribution of power, wealth, security, and values in society (Pour Saeed, 2008: 6). According to the preamble of the Constitution, military institutions, the three branches of government, and the media are mandated to be doctrinal and Islamic, and these institutions must act and operate in accordance with Islamic principles and values. One of the outcomes of perfectionism and doctrinal orientation is the primacy of ideological borders over geographical ones. The political unit in Islam is the ummah (community), not the nation, and since the Islamic ummah is scattered around the world, this Islamic principle is not exclusive to any particular ethnicity or nation but is considered universal.

d) Principle of Forming a Unified Global Community: The path to forming a unified global community has been paved for globalization, and the continuous struggle to save oppressed nations around the world will be reinforced, as God states: "Indeed this community of yours is one community, and I am your Lord, so worship Me" (Al-Anbiya: 92). However, it should be noted that the emphasis on universality does not imply disregarding geographical borders. It is necessary for Islamic Iran to be regarded as a commendable and exemplary model for other societies, as stated in the preamble to the Constitution: "The Muslim community, by choosing competent and faithful officials and continuously monitoring their work, actively participates in building an Islamic society, hoping to succeed in establishing an exemplary Islamic society that can serve as a model and witness for all people of the world."

e) Principle of Preserving Religious-National Identity: Maintaining the Islamic Republic and adhering to its requirements, including national security, territorial integrity, and safeguarding the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran through the establishment of a doctrinal army (preamble to the Constitution), creating a conducive environment for moral development (Article 3), maintaining comprehensive independence (Article 152), and officially recognizing a single language and script (Article 15), is obligatory and necessary. Overall, three cultural-value sets can be extracted from the country's official laws. The first pertains to values with a religious aspect, which are the priority of the system. The second relates to Iranian values and national beliefs. The third encompasses cultural patterns related to subcultures not specifically included in the first two categories, with the Islamic Republic of Iran's approach to these subcultures being preventive, to avoid them becoming threats. Globalization of culture, as an external factor, seems to disrupt the balance of these three categories, potentially jeopardizing the preservation of Iran's cultural system. In contrast, maintaining this balance can achieve the ideal state of Iran's national cultural security, serving as a model for the global system.

f) The Principle of Justice in Ethnic-Racial Disputes: The principle of justice concerning ethnicity permeates the Constitution, as evidenced in clauses one, two, three, eight, nine, fourteen, and fifteen of Article Three. These clauses emphasize creating a conducive environment for the development of moral virtues, enhancing public awareness, providing free education and physical training for all, and ensuring public participation in determining their destiny. Other principles addressing minority rights include Article 7, which regards councils as pillars of decision-making and administration of the country; Article 20, which emphasizes equal legal protection for all citizens; Article 22, which discusses the inviolability of life, property, residence, and dignity of all individuals; Article 23, which prohibits inquisitions into beliefs; and Article 25, which bans the inspection and interception of correspondence as a legal right. Furthermore, Article 26 declares that freedom of assembly is permissible for everyone, provided it does not oppose national unity. Similarly, Articles 28, 29, 30, and 31 discuss universal freedoms, the right to employment, the right to social security, access to free education for all, and the right of every Iranian individual and family to adequate housing based on their needs.

Considering these points and examining the principles of the Constitution, it can be concluded that no ethnic group is given precedence over others, and the need to honor all of them at all times has been emphasized. Chapter 3 of the Constitution discusses citizens' rights and is designed for everyone without discrimination. The promulgation of the Citizens' Rights Charter in 2016 by the President can be seen as an effort to realize Chapter 3 of the Constitution.

Various articles of this Charter, including Article 10, prohibit insult, humiliation, or the creation of hatred towards ethnic groups, followers of religions and sects, and social and political groups. Additionally, Article 77 states that citizens have the right to choose and engage in employment without discrimination and in compliance with the law. No one can deprive citizens of this right based on ethnicity, religion, gender, or differences in political or social inclinations. Moreover, Articles 97 and 99 affirm that citizens, regardless of ethnic and religious differences, have the right to intercultural communication. Citizens are entitled to the necessary facilities for participating in their cultural life and collaborating with other citizens, including establishing associations, holding religious and ethnic ceremonies, and cultural customs, in compliance with the law. Finally, Article 110 emphasizes that no one has the right to instill ethnic, religious, and political hatred in the minds of children or incite violence against a particular race or religion through education, upbringing, or mass media.

g) The Principle of Spiritual Culture: The antithesis of spiritual culture is the tyrannical culture, which resists progressive and Islamic culture by denying the resurrection and exclusively emphasizing sensory experience, thereby promoting a culture devoid of spirituality and filled with financial consumption. God states in the Quran: "Beautified for people is the love of that which they desire – of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return" (Al-Imran: 14). Thus, briefly, the core of conflicts lies in the relationship between material and spiritual aspects within the frameworks of Islamic culture and tyrannical culture. The Hadiths and the conduct of the Imams (peace be upon them) teach us that the greatest enemy is within us, not outside of us. Martyr Motahari, in examining the causes of materialism, points to factors such as the inadequacy of social and political concepts, flaws in promotional methods, and an unfavorable moral and social atmosphere (Motahari, Vol. 1: 573). He asserts that preventing intellectual deviations is only possible when one joins a systematic theological school that addresses this need (ibid., Vol. 1: 582). Therefore, today, we must strive to align ourselves with the main cultural challenges of our time and provide reliable answers to the religious community, which necessitates the specialization of religious discussions and the strengthening of cognitive and theological debates based on the intellectual environment of the current generation. Martyr Motahari also highlighted the primary duties of seminaries in this regard (ibid., Vol. 24: 283-284). Even before him, some scholars emphasized the necessity of comparative studies and understanding other worldviews to explain and, if necessary, critique them from an Islamic perspective (Eyvazi, 2006: 115-116).

7. Cultural Features of the Islamic System of Iran to Address Cultural Damages

In addition to the aforementioned principles, the Islamic system of Iran offers cultural features that, if implemented globally, can serve as the best strategic roadmap for addressing cultural damages resulting from globalization. The key features are as follows:

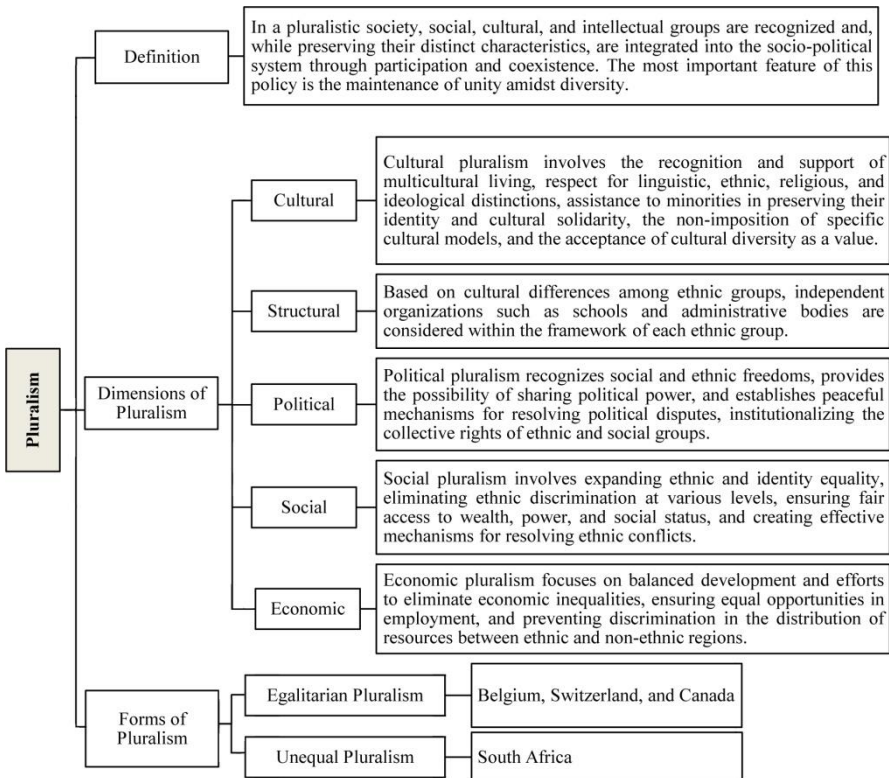
a) The Link Between Religion and Politics: Countries that adhere to liberalism and neoliberalism strive to present secular politics as legitimate and acceptable, portraying it as the best solution to the crises of globalization. Fukuyama, in his "End of History" thesis, refers to the ultimate victory of liberalism and liberal democracy, which is based on secularism, and considers it the triumph of human societies (Hunter, 2001: 6). However, the Islamic Republic of Iran rejects this view, drawing inspiration from Islamic thought and identifying it as one of the distinctive features of the cultural particularism of the Islamic system of Iran for forming a unified global community (Imam Khomeini, Vol. 4: 157).

b) Absorption of Rational Thoughts: One of the cultural features of the Islamic system is the concept of "zone of emptiness" and the possibility of absorbing new ideas, borrowed from Islamic jurisprudence. In Islamic jurisprudence, there is a ruling called "Ibaha," where the lawgiver has not issued a ruling, and it is known as the domain of "no text." In such cases, rational decision-making, even if it involves Westerners, can be adopted and implemented in society for cultural development (Behrooz Lak, 2007: 80-85). Westerners have always tried to portray Shia Islam, which is based on the progressive theory of the guardianship of the jurist, as inefficient and unjustified with ambiguities and doubts. However, with the formation of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its 40-year resistance against them, rejecting the teachings of Western secularism and modernism, it has taken steps to revive Islamic civilization. This effort, along with the security, the export of the revolution, and the influence of the Iranian Islamic system in the region, demonstrates the success and advancement of Iran's revolutionary goals. Despite Western attempts to tarnish it with terms like fundamentalism and Islamic radicalism, they will undoubtedly fail (ibid.: 31).

c) Pluralism Amid Unity in Cultural Dimensions: The prevalence of pluralism amid cultural unity essentially acknowledges existing subcultures and commits to the shared elements among different ethnic groups worldwide, or in other words, leveling identities. The aim is to transform diverse cultural components into common elements without eliminating them. As God mentions in verse 118 of Surah Hud, He references the differences among various peoples, presenting them as a sign from God. God does not command the

tolerance of these differences; rather, He views their existence positively and emphasizes the principle of mutual recognition to foster human solidarity. Salehi Amiri, in his article, illustrates this characteristic of the Islamic Republic of Iran through a clear diagram (Salehi Amiri, 2006: 47).

Reza Shah's nation-building plan, which was continued with less intensity by Mohammad Reza Shah, was based on the classical paradigm of assimilation, wherein the diverse identity boundaries across Iran were supposed to gradually dissolve, and all citizens would be absorbed into a single cultural identity. Although this plan achieved some success in creating a broad Iranian identity, particularly in large cities, it never eradicated ethnic and linguistic differences. Consequently, after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the existence of various ethnic groups was recognized in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic (Ahmadi Pour, 2010: 37).



d) People's Religious Governance: Given the considerable receptivity of democracy, major countries are striving for the expansion of the democratic model within their borders through the process of globalization. A prominent example of this is the promotion of this model in countries supporting liberalism. However, it must be acknowledged that governments define

democracy according to their own specific criteria and somewhat theorize it based on their economic interests without considering the ethical and cultural characteristics of the country. Nevertheless, the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to establish a foundation for the relationship between democracy and liberalism by drawing inspiration from Islam and formulating it as an established discourse within the Islamic framework.

In fact, religious governance is a behavioral pattern where people are the foundation and axis, and the government, along with all responsible individuals including elites, serve their entrusted mandate, with people vigorously striving to realize the ideals and aspirations of Islam. This meaning is also evident in the words of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who states: "Our desired democracy may be similar to democracies in the West, but the democracy we aim for does not exist in the West. Islamic democracy is more complete than Western democracy."

Conclusion

As expressed, a precise understanding and scrutiny of the process of globalization and the globalization process can identify many of the crises arising from these global changes and transformations, especially in the realm of information explosion. In reality, the major crises occurring worldwide, especially in the cultural domain, stem from globalization, not globalism. Globalization entails embracing a world, becoming familiar with other cultures, and respecting the opinions and views of others, whereas globalism negates others. This misunderstanding has led world leaders, especially some religious leaders, to be influenced by globalism, leading them to resort to war and extremism, resulting in dire consequences and numerous crises. However, it should be noted that alongside opportunities, globalization also poses threats. Therefore, the primary challenge of globalization is how to utilize undeniable opportunities, a phenomenon that places us humans at the forefront of advancing civilization worldwide. Competition in the realm of globalization, contrary to globalism, is not necessarily destructive; rather, it enhances cooperation among countries. Various systems have presented models and blueprints for the globalization process, but it seems that the model of the Islamic Republic of Iran is the best policy for addressing global crises. The Islamic Republic of Iran, emphasizing principles such as placing Islamic values as the criterion, servitude to God, perfectionism, forming a unified community, preserving identities, justice, non-discrimination, non-domination, and spiritual culture, has set these strategies as the forefront of its goals, thereby confronting the globalist thoughts that are dependent on humanist attitudes and the liberal system. If the nations of the world adopt these principles as the source of cultural and political

movements in their societies, undoubtedly the challenges of globalization will diminish, and this global system will only become an opportunity for peaceful coexistence and approaching the ideal city. However, alongside these principles, indicators such as the integration of religion and politics, the attraction of rational thoughts, acceptance of pluralism while maintaining unity, people's religious governance, Islamic human rights, and a civil society based on religious thoughts should also be considered. Despite all the hardships, wars, sanctions, and Western hostility, especially the promotion of cultural invasion in society, Iran's position in the region and the world over the past 40 years demonstrates security, resilience, resistance, and progress in cultural and political domains compared to regional countries, which are the results of accepting and implementing the principles and indicators envisaged by the laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran; although achieving these principles and indicators in their entirety has not been realized and requires the efforts, struggles, and resistance of Iranian officials and society as a whole.

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