

Article

A THEORY OF ISLAMIC MODERN CIVILIZATION: BRIDGING PHILOSOPHICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract: "Islamic modern civilization" embodies the synthesis of Islamic principles with contemporary advancements, striving for societal progress. This article delves into the theoretical foundations and historical context of this concept. It operates on two distinct levels: the foundational level, which establishes the theoretical groundwork within the realm of historical philosophy, and the secondary level, which involves a historical examination of Islamic civilization. Central to this theory is the belief in the continuity and evolution of historical events, rejecting the notion of isolated incidents. The Islamic awakening, spanning approximately two centuries and encompassing the entire Islamic world, culminated in the Islamic Revolution in Iran. This revolution emerged from the historical confrontation between the Islamic world and Western civilization, harnessing the latent potential of Islam to establish a political system rooted in religious tradition amidst the modern era. It stands poised to serve as the catalyst for the emergence of Islamic modern civilization. Through the establishment of its unique political system—the Islamic Republic—the revolution takes a leading role in propelling the fourth wave of Islamic civilization forward. This sets the stage for the eventual realization of the divine ideal of Mahdism, marking the culmination of history.

Keywords: Islamic modern civilization, evolution, philosophical and historical approach, Islamic Revolution, Mahdism

1. INTRODUCTION

The theory of Islamic modern civilization can be explored through two significant perspectives. Firstly, it involves a foundational level where a theoretical and conceptual framework has developed within the realm of historical philosophy. This aspect encompasses fundamental concepts like the essence of civilization, theories of evolution and continuity, which serve as the philosophical and theological backbone of the theory. Moreover, it discusses our response to globalization, viewed as the latest and

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most advanced form of philosophical aggression and a Western-centric approach. The second perspective of the theory offers a historical analysis of Islamic civilization with a forward-looking outlook. It traces the historical journey of Islamic civilization, from its inception to its current state, considering pivotal events like the Islamic Revolution and contemplating future possibilities such as the emergence of Imam Mahdi and the era of Mahdism. The theory is based on the notion that historical events are interconnected rather than isolated occurrences, leading to significant transformative moments. In line with divine prophecies, the theory suggests that human evolution inevitably leads to decline over time. From this perspective, Islam as a guiding faith has played a vital role in nurturing a universal civilizational order since its inception. Rooted in divine teachings and energized by the vitality of Islam, this civilization reached its zenith during the fourth and fifth centuries of the Islamic calendar, known as the first wave of Islamic civilization. Subsequently, in the eighth and ninth centuries of the Islamic calendar, Islamic civilization experienced a remarkable resurgence marked by grandeur and magnificence in regions such as Iran, India, and the Ottoman Empire, enduring for approximately two hundred years. The simultaneous rise of the Renaissance and the peak of Western civilization coincided with a period of decline and degradation in Islamic civilization. This clash between the two civilizations resulted in a bleak era marked by colonization and aggression against Islamic nations, a situation that endured until the eve of World War I.

The inherently expansionist and predatory nature of Western civilization sparked introspection among Muslims, prompting them to seek answers to why such circumstances arose and how to navigate through internal decay and external dominance. Following this, a succession of movements, uprisings, and conflicts emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, spearheaded by Muslims against Western colonization. This period, commonly referred to as the Islamic Awakening, gradually enveloped the entire Islamic world and culminated in the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Essentially, the Islamic Revolution served as a reaction to and critique of Western colonialist policies that suppressed and exploited Islamic societies. The revolution not only embodied staunch anti-colonialist sentiments but also advocated for a forward-looking and progressive Islamic revival. It revitalized all facets of religious tradition as a dynamic and living entity, without rejecting modernity in a dogmatic or extremist manner. The Islamic Revolution, while rekindling tradition to forge a political system in the modern era, adeptly embraced modern sociopolitical instruments, integrating them into its intellectual framework. Essentially, it emerged from a historical clash between the Islamic world and Western civilization, leveraging the latent potential of Islam to establish a contemporary political order rooted in religious tradition. This dynamic facilitated the emergence of Islamic modern civilization. The Islamic Revolution harbors capacities that serve as a nexus between a glorious past and the future trajectory of Islamic civilization. This potential manifests through a constructive dialogue with the West, offering an alternative model that fosters inevitable civilizational progress such as knowledge production and

reinvigorating overlooked dimensions of Islam like monotheism, justice, and advocacy for rights. In essence, Islamic civilization, buoyed by divine revelation, a comprehensive human outlook, and multi-dimensional guidance from Shiite Imams, along with its elevated vision of the culmination of history through the Mahdism doctrine, inherently thrives with vitality and internal dynamism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Habibollah Babaei (2013), the author of “Theoretical Explorations in Theology and Civilization,” is a specialist in the fields of civilization’s essence and Islamic civilization. He has produced significant theoretical works across multiple volumes, offering valuable insights. These writings not only aid in understanding future inquiries within the realm of civilization studies but are also esteemed research contributions, particularly concerning the Islamic and Western worlds from a civilizational perspective. “Theoretical Explorations in Theology and Civilization” delves into the potential of religious studies with civilizational themes while stressing the importance of civilizational studies in religious discourse. Essentially, these perspectives serve as a form of engagement with secular ideologies in significant social spheres. They propose a civilizational interpretation of religions such as Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, highlighting religions’ capacity to guide and shape civilizations. The book’s core sections cover diverse topics, including the essence of civilization, the nature of civilizational studies, practical wisdom, and civilizational wisdom within theological contexts. Additionally, it explores society, culture, and civilization through the lens of Muslim Sufi thought, examines Western pluralistic culture and its emerging challenges to the life and identity of Eastern Muslims, discusses Islam and civilization in the philosophies of Hasan Hanafi and Malik ibn Nabi, introduces practical theology within modern religious thought, and reviews the intellectual evolution of Christian theologians in cultural studies.

In his book “Philosophy of Islamic modern civilization,” published in 2016, Reza Gholami delves deeply into the nuanced discussion surrounding Islamic modern civilization, providing it with a scholarly foundation. He sheds light on essential aspects such as the nature of civilization, the imperative need for discernment in defining it, and the various stages characterizing Islamic modern civilization’s evolution throughout history. Furthermore, Gholami explores the historical epochs of Islamic civilization and elucidates the intricate relationship between traditional civilization and its contemporary Islamic counterpart. The book also tackles significant themes like Islamic philosophical perspectives and their relevance to Islamic modern civilization, the intersection of jurisprudence with contemporary Islamic civilization, and the intertwining of political thought with the modern Islamic world. These discussions contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of Islamic modern civilization and its philosophical underpinnings.

In his 2018 book “Lessons in the Discourse of Islamic modern civilization,” Farzad Jahanbin delves into various topics related to Islamic modern civilization. These

include the semiotics of civilization and the culture of Islamic civilization, the suitability of Islamic modern civilization, the relationship between culture and civilization, analysis of modern description, detailed explanation of the five stages of Islamic modern civilization's realization, Islamic civilization as a process or project, comparison of four countries claiming civilizational development in the Islamic world, and a comparison between Iran and the United States based on civilizational principles. Jahanbin offers comprehensive insights into these subjects, contributing to a deeper understanding of the dynamics and complexities of Islamic modern civilization.

Ali Asghar Rajabi, in his 2018 publication "Islamic modern civilization: Challenges and Strategies," delves into the revitalization of Islamic civilization. He juxtaposes this against the evolutionary principles of Islam, the structured progression of Islamic civilization, and the swift momentum of Islamic awakening, contrasted with the limitations of Western civilization. Rajabi rigorously analyzes the factors influencing advancement and decline, while proposing novel pathways for the development of Islamic civilization. This book provides comprehensive insights into the nuances of Islamic modern civilization.

Abdolmaleki, et al (2016), discuss the theory of civilization transition as a strategic approach to achieving Islamic modern civilization. Their emphasis lies on the significance of Islamic awakening in this process. Their objective is to clarify the dimensions and elements involved in nation-building within the context of Islamic modern civilization, with a particular focus on Ayatollah Khamenei's five-stage model of civilization-building. They underscore the importance of both material and spiritual aspects in shaping civilization, with a specific emphasis on Islamic modern civilization. The findings of their research strongly assert that contemporary civilizations are restricted by a narrow and superficial understanding of humanity and the world. Therefore, transcending the current state requires a more comprehensive worldview and attention to the various dualities inherent in human existence, while also striving for a balance between material and spiritual aspects of life.

In his 2016 analytical article, Mohammad Reza Khaki Gharamaleki offers a critical analysis of the theory of religious science's inevitability and the endeavor to engineer civilization dominated by theological thinking within modern historical contexts. He relies on phenomenological philosophy and an ontological approach to delineate the essentials of modern civilization as an unavoidable outcome of historical circumstances. Gharamaleki dismisses any attempts to Islamicize and domesticate sciences for the purpose of engineering Islamic civilization as destined to fail. He argues that the underlying drive for civilization-building and the Islamicization of sciences originates from a native-oriented and anti-Western stance. Finally, he emphasizes the necessity of comprehensive religious jurisprudence, outlining the framework of religious knowledge, and defining the desired role of theology for a proper and effective engagement with religious texts and religious movements on both a civilizational and communal level.

Reviewing the aforementioned works brings several points to light. Firstly, it underscores that studies on Islamic civilization, particularly those focused on Islamic modern civilization, have garnered significant attention from scholars and researchers in recent years. This signifies our gradual entry into an era where Islamic civilization, in a new form, stands in contrast to the aging civilization of the West, and even challenges it in many respects. Therefore, having concerns in this area is not only commendable but also critical and sensitive, as the initial steps in such a significant journey should be steadfast, not hesitant.

By outlining a proper plan at this juncture, based on the abundant resources of Islamic tradition, we can be hopeful about establishing a solid foundation for the emergence of Islamic modern civilization. Consequently, it is essential to open a gateway through the lens of historical philosophy, to thoroughly explore various aspects of Islamic history, and critically analyze the trajectory of Islamic civilization from its inception to the present day. This approach enables us not only to leverage the potential of Islamic tradition but also to enrich its theoretical frameworks for future sustainability.

Hence, in concluding this segment, while paying respects to all scholars involved, it's worth noting that none of the aforementioned theoretical endeavors seem to grapple with a crucial concern: to thoroughly explore the foundational origins of Islamic civilization and its relevance to both the present and the future. By emphasizing the Islamic Revolution as a pivotal point connecting the past and the future of Islamic civilization, a new avenue is presented to readers, showcasing the unique aspect of this research in comparison to other studies in the field.

METHOD

In order to grasp the true essence of a historical phenomenon, it is imperative to discern the prevailing mindset that influenced it. Mere documentation of events, devoid of understanding their underlying causes and subsequent analysis, fails to provide a comprehensive insight into historical occurrences (Fasihi 1996: 74-75). The cornerstone of modern historiography lies in historical rationality. Historians are tasked with meticulously evaluating all facets of history. This entails distinguishing between the imaginative interpretations of certain historians and the comprehensive works of those who have delved into every aspect of a historical event through meticulous examination of documents and evidence. This differentiation enables historians to effectively fulfill their responsibilities. Indeed, a correct comprehension of the causative factors behind each historical event, coupled with a keen focus on the logical connections between them, alongside a thorough and lucid analysis, unveils the trajectory of historical events. However, this is contingent upon grounding the analysis in primary sources and authentic documentation. Historians, armed with ample expertise in utilizing these sources, can embark on a proper historical inquiry, constructing logical narratives that elucidate the circumstances leading to these events (Haghdar 2004: 285; Shakeri 2017: 307, 309).

Therefore, this study aims, firstly, to move beyond the dominance of Western-centric historiography in both Western and Eastern contexts and, secondly, to critically assess historical artifacts and documents using the lens of historical rationality and the foundational principles of the evolutionary philosophy of Islamic civilization. Consequently, the practical application of historical rationality, combined with concepts such as transcendence, continuity theory, and dependency theory, has been integrated. The fundamental premise underlying this approach is that history is inherently linked to identity and continually evolves. Hence, the methodology employed in this research is deductive and based on historical rationality. In this approach, history is not fragmented but continuous, and juxtaposing apparently disparate events leads to the revelation of significant historical occurrences. Through this method, a comprehensive narrative of historical events can be constructed, elucidating the underlying causes of events and seemingly disconnected phenomena.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE ESSENCE OF CIVILIZATION

The Arabic term for “civilization” is “Tamaddon,” which has its root in the Arabic word for “city.” While this term is not found in ancient Arabic lexicons, it is utilized in contemporary dictionaries as a combination of a verb and a noun (Heydari 2001: 701). In Arabic, this term has synonyms such as “Madaniat,” “Saqafah,” and “Hazarah,” none of which are used in the Quran. Civilization denotes the adoption of a certain way of life that transfers the requirements of urban life to individuals and society. Therefore, the lexical concept of civilization is based on urbanization and settled living, where “Madan” signifies residence and settlement (Ibn Duraid, n.d., Vol. 2: 683; Sahib Ibn Abbad, n.d., Vol. 9: 327; al-Jawhari 1404 AH, Vol. 1: 2201; Ibn Sidah, n.d., Vol. 9: 358; Ibn Manzur, n.d., Vol. 13: 403; and Firouzabadi, n.d., Vol. 4: 376).

The word “civilization” entered the English lexicon through Dr. Samuel Johnson in 1772 and has since gained prominence, especially in recent times. Initially, it described societies transitioning from nomadic to settled, urban lifestyles. However, its usage evolved to encompass a wide range of societal systems, addressing not only material aspects but also spiritual dimensions (Yektaei, n.d., 86-89). Muslim scholars like Al-Farabi and Ibn Khaldun explored the concept of civilization in diverse contexts long before. Nasir al-Din al-Tusi also used the term “Tamaddon” in his book “Nasirean Ethics,” stating: “Since every species depends on cooperation, and cooperation is impossible without society, therefore, human species depends on society, which is called Tamaddon. Tamaddon is a combination of ‘Medina,’ meaning city, and Medina is the place of society where people engage in various professions and activities that shape their way of life” (Tusi 2007: 251).

In my view, some elements of civilization already exist, while others emerge over time. Urbanization is often seen as one of these elements; civilization does not arise in rural environments, small jungle clearings, or polar regions. When human basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter are met, and individuals adopt urban manners, ignorance and illiteracy give way to urbanity and humanity (Bostani 1995: 258). When

survival concerns such as cold, heat, and insecurity are addressed, higher pursuits come into focus, and science and art become esteemed. Civilization then progresses gradually, encompassing not only material enhancements and superficial embellishments but also the refinement of knowledge and the cultivation of virtue, elevating human life to a higher plane (Yukichi 1999: 119). If scholars recognized such distinctions between the two meanings of civilization, they could potentially dispel much fruitless debate. Another characteristic of civilizations is creativity and innovation. Civilizations are creative; they are not mere imitators. The third feature of civilizations is adherence to law. If we are to prioritize, the first requirement for all civilizations is adherence to the law. No civilization can be found where chaos reigns. The fourth characteristic of civilizations is cultural cultivation, albeit not simple culture but rather complex culture. When culture becomes more complex, civilization thrives. Civilizations enrich culture and foster the flourishing of art and industry. In other words, civilizations embody the essence of a culture comprehensively and manifest it along the course of that culture. Ayatollah Morteza Motahhari has defined civilization as having two aspects: material and spiritual. The material aspect of civilization pertains to its technical and industrial dimension, which has evolved over time. The spiritual aspect of civilization relates to human relationships (Motahhari, n.d., Vol. 2: 169). Elsewhere, it has been stated: all human potentials, which distinguish humans from animals, such as acquiring knowledge, creating ethical virtues, various arts and industries, and establishing laws and regulations, are matters and assets that arise solely in the realm of social life (Motahhari, n.d., Vol. 7: 121). Just as Western civilization embodies the name and all Western culture, Islamic civilization also represents Islamic culture. However, this progression from deficiency to perfection occurs in a gradual and hierarchical manner.

The fifth characteristic of civilizations is their emphasis on art and industry. Civilizations naturally express themselves through the language of art. They possess extensive literary works, with some philosophers believing that language in civilizations is the language of reason, not sophistry. Civilizations are system builders, producing social, political, economic, and cultural systems. In other words, social, political, and economic institutions contribute to the realization and embodiment of a culture on the path of civilization. Civilizations are comprehensive and multi-layered. Therefore, the elements of civilization can be listed as follows: urbanization, creativity and innovation, fertile culture, legality, ethical conduct, flourishing of human talents, flourishing of arts and industries, establishment of social, political, economic, and cultural systems, extensive literary production, intrinsic evolution and progress, cultural complexity, widespread cultivation of intellect and rationality, blossoming of human capacities and talents, comprehensiveness and multidimensionality of civilizations, and multi-layered creation and development of new issues (Najafi and Etemadi Bozorg 2018: 157-152).

Considering the topics addressed regarding the general meaning of civilization, it is appropriate to analyze civilization from an Islamic perspective or other

characteristics that distinguish civilizations from each other. Therefore, civilizations, besides having common points, also have distinct trends that define them; thus, what is significant in the chapter of Islamic civilization compared to other civilizations is the comprehensiveness of cognitive resources from the Islamic perspective. In this perspective, various fields of science, including empirical, mystical, and revelatory sciences, complement each other, reflecting a distinctive aspect of Islamic civilization compared to other civilizations, and, of course, the development and advancement of various branches of science among Muslims have been facilitated (Nabavi 2003: 21-218; Mazaheri Seif 2003: 81-86).

Nevertheless, it seems that in order for these dimensions to reach perfection and flourish, a special factor and strong motivating force are needed, and that, in my opinion, is the existence of a complete human and an infallible Imam (peace be upon them). This point of distinction and differentiation of Islamic civilization in Shia and Sunni beliefs.

The genesis of Islamic civilization, viewed from the maximalist perspective, is rooted in the interpretation of divine revelation, aligning with Shia doctrine. Its pillars encompass monotheism, belief in the afterlife, and its fundamental tenets include guardianship, divine law, and justice. Its overarching objectives entail drawing closer to God, fostering human development, orchestrating societal governance under the guidance of a perfect human figure, and establishing a virtuous existence. To realize such aspirations, it must traverse four essential stages:

- 1) Cultivating both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of Islamic culture while shaping an Islamic community.
- 2) Implementing Islamic political authority.
- 3) Cultivating a logic of knowledge production grounded in the logic of revelation.
- 4) Creating an environment conducive to Islamic rationality that addresses the diverse needs of Islamic society across economic, political, security, health, educational, and other domains.

Islamic civilization embodies a comprehensive and pervasive manifestation of Islam across cultural, social, political, philosophical, scientific, and practical dimensions. Like any civilization, it is gradually stratified and multifaceted. Thus, its full realization occurs when it can traverse these four stages based on spiritual unity, within the realms of guardianship and divine law, and also within the context of Islamic culture and rationality. In doing so: (1) it engages in the production of knowledge and the development of material resources, thus enhancing welfare and social justice, as previously mentioned. Islamic civilization is a multi-layered and multi-dimensional concept, and this elevation will be attained with the presence of the perfect human, reaching its culmination.

THE THEORY OF THE ISLAMIC MODERN CIVILIZATION

The concept of Islamic modern civilization entails the deliberate advancement, both materially and spiritually, within a structured and newly formed Islamic society, with Iran at its center, guided by Islamic teachings across all societal domains. This civilization has evolved into a coherent and organized entity, bringing the Islamic community closer to its goals. Several key principles underscore this definition: the material and spiritual dimensions of Islamic civilization, the emergence of new advancements, the prominence of Iranian civilization, and the intrinsic connection to Islamic teachings (Najafi and Gholami 2017: 126-127).

Ayatollah Khamenei elaborates on Islamic modern civilization, emphasizing its fundamental characteristic as the utilization of all innate human capacities, both material and spiritual, bestowed by God for human prosperity and elevation. “The outward manifestation of this civilization is marked by governance based on Quranic principles, responsiveness to evolving human needs while avoiding stagnation and regression, and fostering innovation and creativity to establish general welfare and justice, liberating society from economic practices such as Riba (usury) and wealth accumulation. He further emphasizes the need for an innovative and scholarly approach across various fields, from human sciences to education, economics, technology, arts, and international relations, all of which are integral to the process of civilization-building” (Khamenei 2014, speech). He further defines Islamic modern civilization as follows: “If we interpret comprehensive progress in terms of Islamic modern civilization-building, ultimately there is a tangible and external manifestation of progress within the Islamic framework. We can say that the goal of the Iranian nation and the Islamic Revolution is to establish an Islamic modern civilization” (Khamenei 2011, speech).

In my opinion, the theory of Islamic modern civilization can be broadly categorized into two main components. The first component involves the philosophical-theoretical approach to Islamic civilization, which serves as the foundation for the second component, the historical-futuristic approach to Islamic civilization.

PHILOSOPHICAL-THEORETICAL APPROACH TO ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

In this section, the theories of continuity and evolution are elucidated as the foundational philosophy of evolutionary Islamic civilization, and ultimately the theory of globalization will be mentioned as the Western model replacing Islamic civilization.

The theory of evolution as the first theological and philosophical foundation of the theory of Islamic modern civilization:

To have a comprehensive understanding of the lives of Shia Imams, the theory of evolution can be utilized in a chain-like manner. Key points include: the uprising of Imam Hussein, the Alawi system, the peace treaty of Imam Hassan, the Wali al-Ahd

(succession) of Imam Reza, the concept of Mahdaviat, and the occultation of Imam Mahdi, even during the period of al-Ghaybah al-Kubrā (Major Occultation).

Therefore, regional and even national Shia systems such as the Safavid era, the Constitutional Revolution, and the Islamic Revolution can be examined based on this theory. The theory of evolution contrasts with Ibn Khaldun's theory of decadence. The evolutionary trend does not necessarily mean that point "B" is higher than point "A"; it may even be lower. However, these points generally tend to move higher on average. Evolutionary trend is like a cyclical movement, meaning that the principle is the improvement and positive change towards perfection of the material world and its entities, which is in accordance with the divine policy and nature of existence (See Najafi 2014).

The theory of continuity as the second theological and philosophical foundation of the theory of Islamic modern civilization:

The theory of continuity is proposed in contrast to the theory of discontinuity, where historical events of different periods are viewed as interconnected. In this perspective, history is not composed of disconnected islands but is continuous, and the juxtaposition of seemingly scattered events leads to meaningful historical occurrences. The prerequisites that collectively cause history to unfold necessitate considering all the elements and minutiae cohesively. Concerning the components of Islamic civilization, it is not assumed that all events occurred during the time of Shia Imams. By using certain clues, the initial conditions of events can be observed. Some thinkers reconstruct events, juxtapose the prerequisites, and connect their trajectories. Through this method, a comprehensive narrative of historical events can be obtained, elucidating the causes of occurrences and events seemingly disconnected from each other.

Foundations of the philosophical theory of Western globalization and its relation to Islamic civilization

In recent years, the aggressive process of Western civilization has been justified by the theory of globalization. In other words, globalization theory has been considered as a cover for the colonial and interventionist aspects of Western civilization, seen as the latest and most advanced stage of Western civilization's expansionist ambitions. In the following, three characteristics of globalization from the perspective of the writer are highlighted:

Firstly, globalization is a phenomenon entirely distinct from other phenomena of the Western world and should only be analyzed within the recent centuries and contemporary decades and years.

A) Below Western history and thought

B) Without considering the West, it is merely global or transregional, which may even include major divine religions or Eastern philosophies.

Secondly, we should associate globalization with the past of Western history, at least from the Renaissance period onwards, and consider it a phenomenon post-

Enlightenment. In this analysis, globalization is a continuation of Western past trends that do not have a prominent distinction from other developments on the planet.

Thirdly, we should view globalization in connection with the Western past. Although logically and closely related to Western history and its particular developments, especially expansionism and progressivism, it is more important and prominent than other important phenomena and indicates a significant leap in Western thought. If we base our relationship with the phenomenon of globalization on the second or third perspective, then challenges and damages, nature, dimensions, and other processes will be different. Here, two levels of analysis are identified: 1. Quantitative analysis level 2. Qualitative and transformative analysis level.

Quantitatively, it mainly revolves around the development of technology and the extensive advancements longitudinally and laterally in the West in recent decades. Qualitatively, the West represents a cohesive and meaningful whole. If we add three more characteristics to these considerations, challenges and threats on the other side of the equation, namely the world that needs to be globalized, will be perceived more tangible and concrete: 1. The Eastern world and the Third World. 2. The Eastern world and the Third World, especially Islamic countries. 3. The Eastern world and the Third World, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran after the Islamic Revolution. With this breadth, the West is considered a challenge and threat in relation to globalization and culture, manifesting itself in any level with specific characteristics and forms. The assumptions and symbols of each of these levels may have differences despite commonalities and shared spaces. However, another perspective remains, which is the interaction between the West and the Islamic world, which over its centuries-long history has experienced its own specific characteristics, cycles, ebbs, and flows. In this view, the interaction and convergence of Islam and the West recur at several levels and periods (see Najafi 2010: 73-90).

HISTORICAL THEORETICAL APPROACH TO ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION:

Historically, Islamic civilization is divided into three major periods. The first period is the past era full of ups and downs of Islamic civilization, which will be discussed as historical developments in Islamic civilization. This period includes two intra-civilizational waves; the first wave corresponds to the early Islamic period until the 6th century AH, and the second wave encompasses the 8th to 10th centuries AH. The second period is the current state of Islamic civilization, in which the Islamic Revolution has occurred. And the third period is the prospect of Islamic civilization in the future and the possibility of its resurgence and reappearance. If the necessary requirements and conditions are met, we will witness the emergence of the fourth wave of Islamic civilization in the future.

The first period: Historical developments in Islamic civilization:

Rationalism, argumentation-centered reasoning, avoidance of dogmatism, and departure from blind imitation and the pitfalls of superstition are considered essential elements of knowledge production in individuals and society, all of which have been

heavily emphasized by Islamic religion. History testifies well to the claim that rationalism and the acknowledgment of philosophy as a useful tool for intellectual thought will dynamically enhance the scientific system. Philosophy, firstly due to the dire need for logic and its capacities, and secondly because of familiarizing and acquainting its students with certain proofs and arguments, liberating human thought from the shackles of conjecture and suspicion, and freeing one's thinking from the bonds of imitation and habit, have played an invaluable role and brought great benefits to humanity as a whole, especially to the Islamic scientific community (See: Shafabakhsh 2011: 66-60). Simultaneously with the emergence of the Islamic religion and its subsequent rationalism and argumentation-centered approach, Islamic civilization gradually took shape with the teachings of the Shia Imams and managed to reach its golden age, passing through two major waves.

The first period, which encompasses the initial three centuries of early Islam, coincided with the vibrancy of Islamic society and the blessed presence of the Shia Imams (peace be upon them), including Imam Sadiq (AS) and Imam Reza (AS), as well as their followers. This period continued until the beginning of the Major Occultation and was almost contemporaneous with the passing of Al-Farabi during the Buyid era. Islamic civilization reached its zenith in the 4th and 5th centuries AH, delivering luminaries such as Ibn Sina, Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, Al-Farabi, Al-Ghazali, Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, and many other thinkers to humanity.

During this period, Muslims became acquainted with Greek culture and philosophy. The inclination towards philosophy and logic in the Islamic world from the 3rd to the 5th centuries AH paved the way for central logical free thinking and liberation from intellectual conformity, which are essential for the production and dynamism of science (Mez 1984: 41-7). However, most of these sciences reached Muslims indirectly through translations into Syriac and Latin languages from Greek by philosopher Muslims. The agents of this scientific movement were mostly Syriac-speaking Christians from Iraq and the Levant, especially from Harran - present-day Urfa in southern Turkey. These individuals, either attracted by Islam or motivated by material rewards granted by Muslim caliphs, endeavored in this crucial endeavor, which was the primary source of the Renaissance, to transmit valuable elements of Greek thought to Muslims. They facilitated the transfer of valuable elements of Greek thought to Muslims, and, of course, Muslims attempted to correct and develop it (Ibn Nuh al-Qumri 2007: 41; Raeisinia 1999: 712-2).

Therefore, in the light of Islam, a platform was provided for Muslims to actively and enthusiastically contribute sciences from various fields, which was particularly characteristic of early Islamic civilization. However, this issue was not limited to Greek philosophy alone; Muslims eagerly sought and advocated for Chinese and Indian sciences as well, and they incorporated each of these sciences into their culture, history, and civilization, fostering their development and growth. Some sciences also found their way to the Islamic world through India; during the early Abbasid period, this scientific relationship was established, and translations of Indian texts on medicine,

astronomy, and other fields were undertaken. In fact, the scientific relationship between Muslims and Hindus was primarily facilitated by Iranians, and the largest center that served as a mediator for this relationship was Jundishapur, where Indian scholars and physicians were engaged in translating Indian books into Arabic at the beginning of the Abbasid era (Safa 1991: 87-88). In the book “*Al-Fihrist*” by Ibn al-Nadim, twelve books on Indian medicine are recorded in Arabic, which were translated and compiled during the early Abbasid period (Ibn al-Nadim 1964: 536). However, there are several points and observations regarding the pursuit of philosophy and sciences from other domains that distinguish the early Islamic centuries. Firstly, the pursuit of philosophy and other sciences occurred voluntarily, without coercion or force. Secondly, this pursuit involved thought and reflection, and Muslims were not merely conveyors or passive recipients of these sciences; rather, they assimilated these sciences, particularly philosophy, into their lives and then reappropriated them at a certain stage in their history. Thirdly, the political power and civilization of Islam in the early Islamic centuries created an atmosphere of vitality, wherein Muslims did not doubt their own assets. Instead of approaching other cultures and intellectual domains with skepticism, inferiority complexes, or hesitation, they employed them in service of their own advancement. Fourthly, we naturally witness a historical and cultural convergence; there was no agenda other than the pursuit of knowledge and culture, devoid of expansionism and imperialism, and free from political and policy interference. Finally, the fifth point is that philosophical thought and culture did not significantly impact the masses of Muslims but rather influenced the minds of Islamic elites and intellectuals. In fact, the interaction with the West in its initial stage primarily took place culturally and intellectually, often affecting the realm of scholars and influential thinkers, without significantly influencing the general public’s thinking.

THE SECOND WAVE OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

Witnessed the consolidation of major scientific centers politically and administratively with the emergence of Islam and the expansion of its conquests. More importantly, scholars from all these centers were able to pursue their studies and engage in intellectual exchanges with each other regardless of their religious affiliations. What is significant about these scholars is that they represented living scientific traditions and were skilled in their respective fields of expertise. They were multilingual and thus could utilize scientific writings in languages other than Greek. As a result, the intelligent initiatives of Islamic governments in the Middle Ages to focus the efforts of scholars throughout the Islamic world and support the translation of written sources laid the groundwork for the emergence of numerous intellectuals (Gutas 2001: 21-23).

Therefore, in the eighth to tenth centuries, we witness the emergence of the second wave of early Islamic civilization. During this period, three major empires, the Ottoman in present-day Turkey, the Safavid in Iran, and the Mughal in the Indian subcontinent, represented Islamic civilization. This period is different from the first

wave because, in the first wave, many scholars directly associated with Shiite Imams, whereas in this second wave, intellectuals, particularly in the fields of philosophy and contemporary sciences, manifested the peak of Islamic civilization. However, in the second wave, civilization flourished in architecture, art, mysticism, poetry, and literature. Magnificent structures such as Naqsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan and congregational mosques were built across the country. A significant point is that in this period, the interaction between Islam and the West transcended primarily scientific and cultural aspects and led to political and military conflicts. "With the expansion of Islam, especially in Spain, Christian scholars and thinkers realized that Islam would not stop expanding according to its teachings. Consequently, they made utmost efforts to weaken Islam. It was these efforts that Christian clergy, through various means, encouraged people to engage in wars against Muslims in various regions. In this regard, Pope Urban II's speech in Clermont in 1095 AD intensified public sentiment in Western Europe, leading to the initiation of the Crusades" (Ezzati 2007: 121).

Indeed, Western civilization before the Crusades was severely backward. Christian countries in Europe prior to the Crusades, which lasted from 1217 to 1137, had no knowledge of practical philosophy and theoretical wisdom. This was because these concepts were not present in their laws and the pre-Christian laws, and also due to the distortion of heavenly books and the inaccessibility of the original texts (Naini 1981: 1358). The Crusades led to Muslims having limited knowledge of the West and a greater influence of Muslims on Europeans. The scientific fervor of Muslims on one side and the biases of the Crusaders at the outset and during the long periods of war on the other side had led to the conclusion of this interaction between the West and the Islamic world in the middle Ages without any challenge to the Islamic world. According to Mieli Aldo, one of the European orientalists of the 20th century, "The Crusaders, who set out to conquer Jerusalem or to preserve their crumbling dominion on the shores of Syria and Palestine, were amazed to encounter a civilization superior to their own in these lands" (Mieli 1991: 488).

This trend continued until the fall of Constantinople in 1453 (857 AH). The West surpassed the middle Ages and experienced the beginning of the Renaissance. The Christian world was confronted with the Islamic world, and indeed, one of the roots of the Renaissance emerged from this interaction. Later, this influence was further enhanced by the translation of Islamic texts into European languages and the establishment of the first Western universities, leading to a more comprehensive process. The brilliance of Islamic civilization in Spain led to the awakening of the Westerners and the onset of the scientific and industrial revolution in Europe. In this regard, Le Bon points out: "In Córdoba, Islamic civilization reached such heights that for three hundred years this city was the foremost in terms of sciences" (Le Bon 2016: 342).

Another issue is that Muslims had both power and strong social and civil systems during this period, and the invading Western and Crusader worlds did not have much appeal to them. Ultimately, Muslim people in Muslim countries were distant from the

cultural or political influences of the West. Regarding the position of Iranians in these two civilizational periods, it is necessary to mention that Iran's cultural context facilitated the acceptance of Islam by Iranians in three dimensions: firstly, a desire for justice; secondly, spirituality; and thirdly, reverence for rights. Consequently, Iranians were able to comprehend the deeper layers of Islam. Among these, another important point is Iranians' inclination towards the issue of Imamate rather than Caliphate. We can observe the influence of this in the uprising of Al-Mukhtar, after two centuries, in the governments of the Al-Buwayh and Safavid dynasties.

Iran is the only Islamic country that has a five-hundred-year history of Shi'a culture officially at the level of a vast country. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for this is the cultural foundations of Iran, which have enabled Iranians to understand the teachings of Islam and Shi'ism, among the deepest of which are "infallibility" and "justice." Iranians, due to their cultural and personal characteristics, have acquired intelligence, and... With this intelligence, they have realized that their lost sovereignty lies in accepting the deeper layers of Islam, namely Imamate and Guardianship, and for this reason, they did not accept the caliphate. Instead, Iran embraced the deeper layers of Islam, namely Imamate and Walayah (Guardianship).

Second Period: Contemporary Era and the Occurrence of the Islamic Revolution in Iran

This period begins with the flourishing of Western civilization during the Renaissance. The revelation of Western colonialist policies led to the occurrence of Islamic awakening, which reached its peak with the Islamic Revolution.

The second period, which is the period of Western modernity, includes significant events. Firstly, the West regained and reinterpreted its identity, while the three major Islamic empires, namely Safavid, Ottoman, and Mughal, were not in a unified political and cultural front and sometimes used their military, political, and cultural power to weaken each other. Secondly, with the onset of the English Revolution and then the French Revolution in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the increasing tranquility of the Renaissance on one hand, and the gradual decline and deterioration of civil and social systems of Muslims, especially in Iran, on the other hand, the balance and equilibrium gradually collapsed. As an example, modernity, in its most damaging and therefore awakening form, namely military imperialism, entered Iran (Vahdat 2003:57). Iran's encounter with Western civilization after its encounter with Islam is the most important cultural and intellectual phenomenon in Iran's history. Continuous relations between Iran and the West began with the end of the Iran-Russia wars. Repeated defeats by Russia between 1803 and 1828 brought some Iranians to realization for the first time, while Fath-Ali Shah was still ignorant and proud, Abbas Mirza, who was involved in the wars, discovered the technical and scientific weakness and backwardness of Iran (Behnam 2003:19). What became our share as Iranians during the Qajar period, especially after the Iran-Russia wars, was the superiority of the West and their overt and covert influence in various aspects of Iranian life. This covert and overt influence had several characteristics: 1. Western interference and influence in Iran,

which initially was “political” and simultaneous with power and material strength; 2. this influence did not occur naturally and as a result of scientific and cultural exchange but rather took place under the shadow of colonial policies of Western countries. This influence came with specific commercial and economic privileges, including seizing the markets and economic pulse of other countries, especially Islamic nations. Of course, it should not be forgotten that during this trade, the material goods and industrial achievements of the West gradually mesmerized people’s eyes and confused their minds. The role of knowledge was lower in rank compared to these three commercial, political, and colonial features. This time, knowledge was not only a matter of time but also due to a particular perspective and equation that the Westerners had in defining the East. Interaction with the Western world not only influenced elites and intellectuals but also affected the lives and customs of ordinary people. Although this influence was hidden before the Constitutional Revolution, it became apparent afterwards and on the brink of the Pahlavi era, a completely invasive face was revealed (see Najafi, et al 2007). With the disappearance and weakness of Islamic civil and social systems under the influence of this increasing infiltration, Islamic awakening emerged, followed by Islamic awakening movements, which encompassed inherent and internal resistance within the Islamic world in general, and specifically within Shian Islamic Iran (Najafi, et al 2007). In this phase, Islamic awakening and then in the more evolved phase, Islamic movements compensated for the lack of civility and the weakness of indigenous Islamic political and social systems. This process continued until the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, leading to the emergence of a new Islamic political system. Therefore, during the emergence and rise of modernity and the West in Iran, three stages were formed: the first stage, the remaining indigenous and Islamic civil and social systems from the Safavid era until before the Iran-Russia wars; the second stage, the formation of Islamic awakening movements and movements after the Iran-Russia wars until today, which manifested itself in the form of five major movements and awakenings: the Tobacco Protest, the Constitutional Revolution, the Nationalization of the Oil Industry, the June 5th Uprising of 1962, and the Islamic Revolution of 1979. The third stage is the establishment of a new Islamic civil system from 1979 until now.

THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION AND ITS NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CURRENT GLOBAL SITUATION

In this section, two issues are discussed: the significance of the Islamic Revolution as the generator of the third stage of Islamic civilization and the philosophical relationship of the Islamic Revolution with the West in terms of criticism and inquiry.

Ayatollah Khamenei divides the stages of the Islamic Revolution as follows: the stage of awakening, the establishment of the Islamic political system, and the creation of a new Islamic civilization (Khamenei 2017, speech). During the two-hundred-year period of Islamic awakening, which began due to the confrontation of the Islamic world with the Western cultural invasion, a movement emerged in the Shia world,

particularly in Iran, that became universal. The question arises: why did this movement become so deep and manage to progress from a mere awakening to a revolution and then to a political system, while other uprisings in the Islamic world did not achieve such success? There are several reasons for this, including: the richness of mystical philosophy and other cultural and artistic achievements of Shiism compared to other parts of the Islamic world; more importantly, the deepest and most original layer of Islam lies with the Imams of Shia, who became the standard-bearers for Shiites. All of these factors give the ability to confront the deeper layers of the West. Naturally, one of the points of confrontation between Islam and the West at the civilizational level occurs. Until before the Constitutional Revolution, the confrontation was limited to the confrontation of Islamic movements against colonialism, but with the Constitutional Revolution, the landscape of confrontation changed, marking the transition from the stage of awakening to the establishment of a system. This stage did not happen in other Islamic countries or happened incompletely, but in Iran, the awakening turned into a system, with prominent roles played by Shia scholars such as Mirza Shirazi, Imam Khomeini, and Ayatollah Khamenei. One of these awakenings was the June 5th uprising in 1962, the content of which eventually blossomed into the Islamic Revolution, giving birth to a political system that transcends the level of a mere movement.

The Islamic Revolution of Iran emerged at a time when the West was summarized in two different perspectives: Marxism and liberalism. Both of these perspectives, however, had a common origin, which was a non-religious, materialistic, and power-oriented view of existence and humanity. In this perspective, the authoritarianism of the East and Islamic countries, and generally the non-Western world, had to redefine their identity and recognition in relation to the West. The Islamic Revolution, from its inception and presence, broke this hidden dominance and confronted it. Therefore, the Islamic Revolution is a non-secular reality that seeks to revive spirituality and is by no means compatible with the modernist horizon. Before the phenomenon of the Islamic Revolution, we did not have a religious revolution; revolutions were Marxist or reformist based on liberalism. The Islamic Revolution changed the concept of revolution in the world. The Islamic Revolution shattered the Marxist idea that religion is the opium of the masses (Najafi 2015: 35). All the words and directives of Imam Khomeini, from the moment of the evolution of Shian Islamic awakening in the 1340s until his arrival in Iran and ten years after that, were in the direction of asserting identity in the face of the Western perspective. The Imam not only offered a new definition and revitalization of Islam, but also changed the perception of Islam held by Orientalists and Western scholars who were previously introduced as part of the Western historical narrative. "Be sure that the powers of the East and the West are nothing but the superficial manifestations of the material world, which are not worthy of mention in the face of the immortality and eternity of the world of spiritual values. I explicitly declare that the Islamic Republic of Iran invests all its existence in reviving the Islamic identity of Muslims around the world and has no reason to invite Muslims to follow the principles of power acquisition in the world and does not allow the lust for

power, wealth, and the nearness to rulers to prevail...” (Khomeini 1988, vol. 21: 92). In fact, from the very beginning, Imam Khomeini placed the authenticity of the Islamic Revolution on changing the relationship between the East and the West, rejecting all previous programs, movements, and conventional theories. The Islamic Revolution of Iran, contrary to prevailing theories, liberal and Marxist models, and dominant discourses worldwide, occurred under conditions that were not in line with the logic of history and social evolution, as observed in previous major revolutions like the French and Russian revolutions, or more precisely, coordinated with the renewal of movements. Western monolithic worldview was challenged by the multi-dimensional thought and the concept of Medina and civilization proposed by the Islamic Revolution, which presented new definitions and interpretations of “human” happiness and perfection. In fact, the Islamic Revolution revealed a foundational and rooted aspect that had been hidden for decades under the dominance of Western monolithic thinking and civilization. With the further establishment of Imam Khomeini’s Islamic thought and the evolution of the Islamic Revolution, the multi-dimensional dimensions of Islamic revolutionary thought infiltrated the Western world, which was increasingly monolithic, materialistic, and devoid of meaning. This infiltration resulted in a kind of Islamic awakening in various dimensions. In fact, Islamic countries were able to become self-aware in the mirror of the Islamic Revolution. This self-awareness manifested itself in popular revolutions or in the formation of scientific, cultural, and political organizations. This collective awareness can also be examined in another aspect, which is identity. The Islamic Revolution separated national and Islamic identities from the Western perspective in the world. These two concepts, which were previously raised in two destructive forms of nationalism, were transformed by the call of the Islamic Revolution.

In fact, Imam Khomeini, from the very beginning, placed the authenticity of the Islamic Revolution on changing the relationship between the East and the West, and invalidated all previous plans, movements, and contractual theories (Kachorian 2011: 138). The Iranian Islamic Revolution happened contrary to the prevailing theories and models of liberalism and Marxism, and precisely under conditions that were in accordance with the historical logic and the course of social changes worldwide, similar to the two previous major revolutions in France and Russia, or more precisely, aligned with the modernization movement. Therefore, the possibility and necessary historical-social conditions for the emergence of a revolutionary with these characteristics, which was beyond the prevailing historical conditions, did not exist. The tremor in the monolithic world of the West was another challenging concept of the Islamic Revolution against the Western world. The Western world, which claimed to define happiness and human perfection in material terms, was confronted with the multi-dimensional thought and the concept of Medina and civilization of the Islamic Revolution, which offered new definitions and interpretations of happiness and progress for “human” and “perfection”.

In fact, the Islamic Revolution revealed a foundation and root that had remained hidden for decades due to the dominance of Western monolithic thought. With the strengthening of Islamic thought by Imam Khomeini and the evolution of the Islamic Revolution, the multi-dimensional dimensions of Islamic revolutionary thought penetrated more into the monolithic and materialistic world of the West. The result of this penetration was a kind of Islamic awakening in various dimensions. In fact, Islamic countries were able to become self-aware in the mirror of the entire display of the Islamic Revolution. This self-awareness manifested itself in popular revolutions or in scientific, political, and cultural formations. This self-awareness manifested itself in the form of popular revolutions or in the establishment of scientific, political, and cultural organizations. This body of awareness can also be examined in another context, which is the issue of identity. The Islamic Revolution separated national identity and Islamic identity from the Western perspective in the world. These two concepts, which were previously discussed in the form of destructive nationalism before the revolution, became the subject of serious questioning, negation, and criticism of Islamic revolutionary thought and were framed within the concept of “secularism”. The basis of this critique and questioning also revolved around the intrinsic identity and historical identity of Islamic societies; an identity in which, more than anything else, religion and religious teachings have been introduced as unifying and elevating factors for Islamic society and have guaranteed the life of those societies over the centuries. “The Islamic Revolution not only demonstrated this historical awareness well in the mentioned context but also taught them how to adjust and stabilize with the current world. The Western world has been declaring the death of religious traditions and everything beyond the realm of modernity for centuries... This religious aspect of the revolution, which engages with the secular aspect of the modern world, gives a special characteristic to the Islamic Revolution, which reveals the essence of the thoughts or the servant of Western civilization. The reason for this claim is that modernity followers declared that tradition and religion no longer have any significance. Therefore, the vitality of the Islamic Revolution and religion leads to a declining state for a culture that believes it has no rival, and its civilization is the final link in human evolution. This is considered a profound challenge for the world, which had deemed itself the end of history” (Najafi 2015: 598).

Imam Khomeini as a Faqih, introduced the modern concept of republicanism into the framework of the Guardianship of the Jurist (Velayat-e Faqih) system. However, is this the same republicanism with all its ideological foundations in the West and ensnared in the confines of social contract theory, a Western philosophical concept? In fact, this concept has been employed in the service of the Guardianship of the Jurist system. Before al-Farabi, some sought to reconcile religion with Greek rationality. Al-Farabi went beyond this; he blossomed a thought that had one aspect looking at Islamic thought and another looking at Greek rationality. Al-Farabi placed Greek thought within the perspective of Islamic civilization. Similarly, Imam Khomeini was able to place modern political concepts within the framework of Islamic thought through

jurisprudential appropriation, without succumbing to the demands of constitutionalism. However, this initial trajectory remains the most important theoretical issue of the Islamic Revolution until today: Islamic banking, popular religious governance, Islamic universities, and even the concept of the Islamic system itself have all been positioned within the sphere of this crucial issue. It seems that with the elimination of various rivals from the political and even intellectual scene internationally, such as the elimination of Marxism and the theories derived from it, these two modes of thought, namely assimilative or apprehensive understanding of the West, remain the most important aspect of the issue drawn into the fourth decade of the Islamic Revolution. In the final years of the third and fourth decades, which direction is the Islamic Revolution heading in terms of these two modes of thought: assimilative or apprehensive, or understanding and conciliation? It seems that this question revolves around the fundamental assumption that the Islamic Revolution, by generating new ideas from within tradition and religious values, achieves greater success and outlines a new paradigm in the modern world. In this new paradigm, two major aspects of Western civilization are re-evaluated:

1) The political domain and authoritarianism of Western civilization, and 2) The scientific domain and the progress and development of the new world.

In the initial stages, the Islamic Revolution was able to quickly enter the realm of political and social action and blatantly demonstrate all dimensions of this authoritarianism. However, in the subsequent evolution of the revolution, the examination of the second aspect is pursued with a slower pace and greater precision. The Islamic Revolution effectively showed that modernity and the modern world, contrary to their claim of being able to comprehend all levels of human perception and attribute everything to their own existence, were only applicable to a specific part of its history, particularly within the Western context. In fact, the Islamic Revolution demonstrated that the West and its peripherals are tied to a specific culture and conditions derived from specific and defined principles, and they do not belong to all humanity. Therefore, the call for perfection, universality, and ubiquity for all times and places is not justified. This line of thinking, emerging from within the Islamic Revolution, signifies a declaration of permanent war and perpetual challenge in the coming decades for the Islamic world against the West. Retreating from this would mean the end of the Islamic Revolution and its assimilation into the West. It appears that this level of the Islamic Revolution compels some Western thinkers like Michel Foucault to view the phenomenon of the Islamic Revolution as a revolution beyond modernity (see Foucault 1977). The logical outcome of this statement in the language of historical philosophy is the critique that the ultimate purpose of history is the emergence of the current civilization. With the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution, it was the West that was evaluated. This time, it was Islam that measured its relationship with the West and criticized and questioned its dependence on a particular culture and special, limited conditions. Islamic civilization will pave a new path beyond Western civilization, and according to Shia theory, true civilization awaits someone who will

outline a true and ideal perfection for humanity in the era of reappearance and messianism.

On the other hand, as mentioned, the Islamic Revolution of Iran, besides utilizing the important capacities of modernity, has also been the most important reviver and reproducer of Islamic tradition. To put it differently, the Islamic Revolution has been both a reviver of tradition and, in the realm of national identity and its recovery, a reason for the revival of tradition. Westerners do not see power, energy, and vitality in their own tradition; not that they have broken away from their tradition, but they rather pose modernity as post-traditional. While this issue is not a new one, it is a matter of transcending it. However, from this perspective, the Islamic Revolution holds living, dynamic, and life-giving elements within tradition, and thus does not want to be perceived as a reactionary revolution. From this standpoint, several issues can be distinguished; critical theories of the Frankfurt School and the Heideggerian perspective are both postmodern, and based on the premise that tradition alone does not constitute a dynamic, vital existence for the continuation of life, or that it exists less. However, from this perspective, the Islamic Revolution can serve as a kind of disruption to the concept of tradition and its position in Western theory, and accepting this from the perspective of Western theorists is an exit from modernity and the Western world, leading to a kind of challenge and paradox in some Western theories. This is because Western theorists, in referring to the tradition of their own history and culture and the course of their societies, cannot find a theoretical criterion for the course of evolution and formation of non-Western societies. Approaches that do not adopt the Western social and human sciences perspective on tradition and modernism are of three types; the Western approach, which orientalist have based on modernization theories and believe that the world, namely the West and then the rest of the world, is measured in terms of the distance they have from the West. The second is the inverse orientalist approach, which holds that whatever exists in tradition is positive and whatever is visible in the West is negative. The third approach is that of the reformists, who select the positive aspects of modernity and criticize tradition and modernity.

THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION OF IRAN, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF TRANSCENDENCE

Principles of idealism, realism, and utopianism transcend the Islamic Revolution beyond this trinity. The writer defines it within the framework of “transcendent thought”. This realm of thought can be characterized by the following attributes: it is not modern discourse. It is neither Salafi nor foundationalist; rather, it emerges from within tradition. It has its own superior logic and, at the same time, distances itself from reformist thought. This thought, while defining its relation to modernity, foundationalism, and reforms through its unique logic, cannot be comprehended by Western theorists. Essentially, how can a thought that considers truth and falsehood not relative, but absolute, evolve within the horizon of progressive thought? The main criterion for examining the philosophy of the Islamic Revolution is

found in the thought of Imam Khomeini and is investigable. The Imam did not subject the process of modernization and westernization of the country to modern discourse and rhetoric; because fundamentally, the revolution did not have a place within the modern world, and on the other hand, it was not considered a postmodern revolution in the sense the term is used in the West. Being non-modern and anti-modern means that the Islamic Revolution is not within the modern horizon but stands outside of it; because its main criterion is religious. While modernity is explicitly not religious, meaning it inherently has no association with religion, the Islamic Revolution stands outside the horizon of modernity. Understanding the Islamic Revolution as a religious revolution is different from other revolutions because: 1) It is not as if it is not. 2) It challenges the prevailing historical truth, namely Western history. 3) It disrupts the order of the world and heralds a new order in which the primary law is not the law of modernity, even though modern tools and objects are preserved within it. 4) It establishes a new relationship between human and existence. 5) It imparts a religious attribute to society and the world. 6). Religion pervades all aspects of society. 7) It establishes a new covenant that breaks the old covenant of the West, and, 8) It teaches us that man is not entitled; rather, he finds peace in the refuge of truth to return to his true home and homeland.

THE THIRD PHASE OF THE FUTURE OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION AND THE POSSIBILITY OF ITS EMERGENCE

Iran currently has conditions similar to the time of the inception of Islam. Islam was born among the Arabs, who were referred to as “Muhajirun” and “Ansar” during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). But was Islam only for the Muhajirun and Ansar? It is true that these two groups were the companions of the Prophet, many of whom were respected and revered. However, the reality is that Islam transcends the Companions and the Ansar. Similarly, the Islamic Revolution also does not have such a status in relation to its followers. It is true that we are the companions of the Islamic Revolution, but the Islamic Revolution transcends us. It has started in Iran but its waves are not limited to Iran; exactly the proportion that exists between Islam and the entire world. The reason for this issue goes back to the nature of the Islamic Revolution; it is because of the predisposed nature of the revealed religion of Islam and Islamic tradition, which has the capacity to create Islamic civilization and inherently challenges both contemporary civilization and its rival, Western civilization. However, this challenge does not mean absolute negation; just as it did not intend absolute affirmation from the beginning. The Islamic Revolution has utilized the capabilities of Western civilization but has never chosen a path of submission and accommodation to it. There is also a challenge ahead of the Islamic Revolution in the sense that if it does not move towards civilization-building, there is a fear that it will be halted in the stage of institutionalization. Liberal democracy is idealized within the scope of globalization and the pervasiveness of modernity. The foundation of the liberal democratic system and all of modernism is Western civilization. To establish an Islamic political system

within the framework of the Islamic Republic, we definitely need a foundation such as Islamic civilization, in other words, the connecting point between the two historical and future civilizational links is this very Islamic Revolution; a revolution that will transform the rupture of modernity into Islamic continuity. Given the existing context and resources, the possibility of the emergence of a new Islamic civilization is based on two main pillars: 1) The type of confrontation between the Islamic world and the Islamic Revolution of Iran with the West; 2) Attention to the immense capacities of the Mahdism paradigm.

THE TYPE OF CONFRONTATION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN WITH THE WEST

The phenomenon that modernity imposed upon us was to dehistoricize us. One of the angles of modernity and one of its consequences is historical rupture, which separated us from our history. Returning to Islamic civilization is a confrontation with this malady. The Islamic Revolution, by reviving Islamic civilization, has connected us to our historical past, essentially sidelining the history of modernity. Modernity, until now, presumed to have the upper hand in world history, with other histories relegated to the margins. Therefore, when we observe our own history through the lens of modernity, the historical authenticity of our past loses its value and real meaning, with many aspects of our history being neglected. However, if we detach modernity from our historical mindset, we transform the rupture of modernity into continuity. It is within this continuity that the vitality of today emerges from our rich cultural past, and it is modernity that is relegated to the sidelines of our history. In this situation, modernity is a part of our history, not the essential part of it. As mentioned, the central gravity point of the Islamic Revolution returns us to the real historical trajectory and the flourishing past of our civilization.

The first step in civilization-building is a mental one; it means breaking the foundation of the one-dimensional and materialistic construction of Western civilization, in other words, recognizing that there is no singular dimension dominating this civilization, whether it be ontology or epistemology. The anthropological, epistemological, and ontological aspects of Islamic thought are not materialistic and are not confined to a limited structure. Therefore, the first step of the Islamic Revolution is challenging the foundation of Western modern civilization, which is supported by materialism. The principle of Tawhid (monotheism) in Islam is directly opposed to the materialistic anthropocentrism of the West. Breaking the foundation of Western civilization pulls down its ideologies to the level of methodology and tools. This does not mean abandoning technology; rather, its aim is to liberate technology from ideology. In this way, the achievements of humanity are returned from the realm of dominant and unreal ideological constructs to their real and practical realm, namely as tools.

The Mahdism paradigm:

What is foundational in Western liberal democracy is the concept of “the end of history,” meaning the perfection of Western civilization and liberalism. This notion has been challenged within Shiism through the Mahdism paradigm. This paradigm signifies that the current state is not desirable. The desired state in Islamic theory at the end times is the emergence of a holy and celestial figure who will establish justice and equity on Earth. The philosophy of Mahdism is, in essence, a philosophy of evolution in Shia thought. Therefore, one of the foundations of the fourth wave of Islamic civilization is the discussion of Mahdism and awaiting, which is also elucidated based on the theory of guardianship of the jurist (*velayat-e faqih*). Just as the Islamic Revolution was able to utilize republicanism and create an alternative to liberalism and transform democracy into religious populism, in the civilizational system, Mahdism will be the culmination of the civilizational discourse. By undermining both the theoretical and practical foundations of the Western end-of-history theory, it will guide towards an exit from a non-religious world based on an evolutionary philosophy towards a religious realm. According to the philosophy of Mahdism, not only will Islamic civilization continue its movement forward, but the perspective of the Islamic Revolution will be directed towards the future. In fact, anti-Western and anti-modern revolutions, if they do not have a plan for the future, will perish. Therefore, by presenting the Mahdism paradigm, the other side of this civilizational trend is also revived. On one hand, historical continuity is established by referring to the past to reclaim Islamic identity with the help of the Islamic Revolution, and on the other hand, the desirable future and the ideal Islamic society will be depicted with the assistance of the Mahdism paradigm. Because only the emergence of a perfect human can bring humanity to perfection in all dimensions and scopes, whereas Western humans and utopias are incapable of achieving this in all dimensions. The Western perfection is merely one-dimensional, which is the non-divine and material dimension of humanity.

CONCLUSION

In my view, the formulation of a robust theory regarding the emergence of Islamic modern civilization necessitates a structured framework capable of providing a comprehensive narrative of historical events. Such a framework should effectively analyze the causes behind seemingly disparate occurrences and events. This approach should be grounded in the philosophy of history, leveraging both historical rationality and the evolutionary philosophy underpinning Islamic civilization. In my perspective, the imperative for establishing such a framework lies in its visual clarity, relying on the opening of theoretical and philosophical perspectives to illuminate our historical trajectory. By embracing the principles of transcendence and the enduring concepts of continuity and dependency, we can identify and reconstruct the three distinct periods of Islamic civilization. These periods encompass historical developments, the contemporary era including the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and the future trajectory of Islamic civilization, inviting assessment and speculation.

The foundational assumption of this approach rests on the notion that history possesses its own identity and is in a perpetual state of evolution. It recognizes the pivotal role played by the philosophy of transcendence and the theories of continuity and dependency in enabling us to confront modernity and emancipate ourselves from the dominance of Western historical narratives and civilizational paradigms. The challenge posed by modernity lies in its tendency to strip away our historical consciousness, leaving us dehistoricized. However, through the revitalization of Islamic civilization brought about by the Islamic Revolution, we are reconnected with our rich historical legacy, effectively breaking free from the confines of modern historical perspectives. By shifting our gaze away from the lens of modernity, we can uncover neglected facets of our history, paving the way for the continuity of our civilization.

From another perspective, the rise of the Islamic Revolution is anchored in the acknowledgment that the current state of affairs is far from ideal. The desired state, as per Islamic doctrine, envisions a divine and celestial figure emerging in the end times to establish justice and righteousness on Earth. This corresponds to the Shiite philosophy of evolution, or Mahdism, which, through the introduction of the Mahdi model, complements the notion of history's end. It not only ensures the continuity of Islamic civilization by reconnecting with the past to reclaim Islamic identity with the aid of the Islamic Revolution but also sketches out the desired future and the envisioned ideal Islamic society with the guidance of the Mahdism paradigm.

Notes

1. The Quranic verses and the teachings of the Prophet of Islam consistently emphasize the importance of critical thinking, rationality, and reverence for knowledge and scholars, tailored to the needs of Muslims in various contexts. From the outset, the Quran underscores the significance of reading, learning, and intellectual pursuits, highlighting the primacy of knowledge and understanding. (See Surah Al-Alaq, verses 1-5; Surah Al-Mujadila, verse 13; Surah Az-Zumar, verse 39; Surah Al-Qalam, verse 1). Additionally, in Surah Ar-Rum, God acknowledges those endowed with knowledge and faith (Surah Ar-Rum, verse 56). Knowledge and faith are not merely juxtaposed but are considered the bedrock and wellspring of faith, with knowledge being prioritized over faith (Shaykh Tabarsi 1960, Vol. 19; Babaei 2002: 546). It's noteworthy that one of the primary objectives of the prophets' mission is the dissemination of knowledge and wisdom (See Shariati 1966: 69).

Apart from the verses of the Quran, a wealth of Hadiths from Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Shia Imams underscores the importance of fostering a culture of scholarship within the Islamic community. These teachings can be categorized into encouraging the pursuit of knowledge, highlighting the significance of beneficial sciences, and praising the virtues of scholars and scholarship in Islam (See Tousi 1414: 488; Aben Fahed Al-halli 1407: 75; Majlisi 1984: 1-2).

2. Within Islam, the focus on intellectual understanding and the avoidance of imposing beliefs onto others is paramount. Islamic principles necessitate acceptance

through rational discourse, grounded in logic and evidence, with coercion being expressly forbidden in this context. Ayatollah Tabatabaei refers to this by stating, "The realm of truth and religion should not impose beliefs on people by force or legally, and destroy the foundation of free thinking in humans by resorting to coercion, force, intimidation, and excommunication" (Tabatabaei 2007: 137).

3. However, subsequent actions such as governmental unilateralism, the infiltration of religious biases, the excommunication of rival intellectual groups, and a severe assault on philosophical thought, along with the restriction of free thinking, resulted in the demise of philosophical prowess and, indeed, the magnificence and grandeur of Muslims (Sharif 1987: 4-18; Shiroudi 2003: 154). Historically, besides the Islamic civilization, other civilizations also witnessed a decline due to their departure from rationalism, tolerance, and inclusivity. For instance, the ban on philosophers' activities by the Roman emperor and the closure of The School of Edessa (457 or 489 CE) severed ties between the Roman world and intellectual and scientific progress. As a result, with the suppression of intellectuals and the imposition of constraints on them, coupled with the departure of elites from the ruling political structure, scientific resources shifted to other civilizations such as Iran during the Sassanian era (Christensen 1988: 102; Gutas 2001: 37-38).

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported.

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