

The West and its basic ideological

Principles according to Imam Khomeini's thinking

Introduction

“The Glorious Qur'an is critical of materialist philosophy.”



The occurrence of the 'Islamic Revolution' in Iran and the situation of the modern world especially the expansion of communications and development of communication media, the circumstance of our society and pronouncement of revolutionary values by our Revolution, has deemed it necessary and important for us to have a correct understanding of the West – as the perception dominant in the world – and its intellectual and theoretical foundations.

Although, our encounter with the western world and their preview has made this a foregone conclusion and has compelled many ideologues and researchers to conduct research on this subject, nevertheless, taking into consideration the transformation of the modern world and the expansion of the sphere of international relations, the importance of this issue is increasing day by day. Similarly, the domination of the United States of America as the standard-bearer of the west and the western perception about Afghanistan and Iraq that are located on two sides and in the neighborhood of our homeland, adds to the importance of the issue more than ever before. This is because nowadays, the political and intellectual representatives of the west are busy engaged on the other side of our borders in making their aims, aspirations and perceptions a reality.

Among our academic and political authorities, there have not been too few in the field of thinking who have emphasized the ideological superiority and domination of the west and the necessity to expand this domination over society and make it a reality. As a specimen, Mirza Malcolm Khan writes thus in his boon “The Treatise of Office of Planning”:

“...I would like only to say that in matters of administration we cannot and we must not bring about innovations on our own. We must either make it a point to take lessons from the science and experience of “Europe” or we must not take a step outside our circle of Barbarism”.

In contrast, many of our great thinkers have propounded the subject of fleeing from the west and rejection of the west and westernization and have proposed the question of “reverting to our own ideals”. For example, Imam Khomeini stresses on the need for awareness vis-à-vis the west and denunciation of westernization:

“...and we shall demolish all the decayed and hollow frameworks that in these past fifty years have driven the people to westernization and establish a regime based on justice and equality in relation to all strata of our homeland. We want the people to lean on their Islamic pillars and to reject the west and westernization that have caused the extermination of their culture.”

This is while the angle of our view in relation to the west has also been manifested in various forms. Sometimes it has taken the form of “inclination towards the west” while at other times we have become “westernized” and yet at sometimes we have made “fighting the west” our occupation while at times we have reverted to “fleeing the west” and at other periods to “lauding the west”. From the historical aspect, almost two decades before the beginning of the Constitutional monarchy movement, appetite for the west or westernization had made an impact on the minds of many of our intellectual and political elites. After that the period of inclination towards the west started and lasted until the Islamic Revolution. Some years after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, we made ‘fighting the west’ and ‘fleeing from the west’ our slogan whereas in these past few years, we have reverted to applauding the west.

For this reason one cannot sketch a clear picture of the future in the face of such a trend. Taking into consideration the development of communications and transformation of cultures in the modern world, will westernization and inclination towards the west once again not overtake us? If this trend continues, then will we not be once again drawn towards change of identity or obscurity? In that case, will this not be a great danger in the path of independence of our society and preservation of its values? For this reason, understanding the west can be decisive for us. We can consider our position vis-à-vis the west to be transitory and because we are in a transitory situation, we have a right to choose. However for choosing and selection, knowledge and understanding is decisive. In addition, the more human, refined and native the knowledge and understanding, the better it can assist us in choosing the path. For this reason in this writing, we undertake to briefly

investigate the concept of the west and its intellectual principles from the point of view of Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran regime. He who was a distinguished mystic, an accomplished orator and leader of a great revolution who for a period of ten years had taken on the mantle of leadership of a political system in the modern world. His holiness the Imam is an authority on this subject so that his point of view can play a prominent role in helping us to choose our path. The basic question is that what perception did Imam Khomeini have in relation to the west and its line of thinking? How did he view the west and what stances did he adopt in relation to it?

Imam Khomeini, the Islamic Revolution and the West

In a sense one can consider the perception of Imam Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution to be a perception vis-à-vis the dominant thinking of the west during the contemporary era that is famously known as 'modernism' or 'revivalism' and is based on individualism and principality of interest. Especially as the Islamic Revolution and the agitation of Imam Khomeini is considered as a sort of countering westernization and fascination vis-à-vis the west and this is the kind of perception of the Imam of the west and its essence that places him face to face with the west.

He brought back the religion of Islam as a living and dynamic school of thought on to the social and political arena and presented it as a liberating doctrine vis-à-vis the west. The Islam of which Imam Khomeini was its exponent, commentator and representative alerted the human being who was cut off from spirituality and had become earthbound and revealed to him how to stand on his own two feet in the era of domination of technique, exploitation of nature, the seemingly overpowering idea of humanism and the principality of carnal desires and to think and reflect upon spirituality and excellence so that he made him take control not only of matter but of his soul as well. Whereas according to the point of view of Imam Khomeini materialists:

“...view this Divine phenomenon from a material angle and incorrect assumptions...and assess values in terms of hegemony and weakening of nations under oppression...”

The Islamic Revolution of Iran led by Imam Khomeini challenged the accepted principles, indices, yardsticks, criteria, values in the culture of the west, and instead put forward the lofty values originating from the Mohammedan school of thought. In the era of enslavement of a number of deprived nations, this Revolution not only provided the motivation for the most popular liberating and justice seeking uprising; rather, by releasing the powerful forces from within the Iranian society, it created a surprise of its era and it was this question that caused the civilization of the west to challenge the Islamic Revolution.

1. Understanding the West

Without understanding, one cannot step on to any terrain, for selection which is a voluntary and willful affair takes place only and only in the safe

haven of awareness and understanding. In the words of His Holiness Hazrat Ali ('a), "O Komail! There is no action and effort for which you do not need to have understanding of it."

For this reason, in every problem it is necessary to have an understanding of the various dimensions and scope of that problem. The main question here is the manner of our facing up to the west – taking its ideological principles into consideration. Therefore, one of the important dimensions of this problem is of understanding the west even though our understanding and knowledge of the manner and method of approach and encountering as well as its substance and pillars are also important. The question of understanding the west which is sometimes referred to as "the occident" or "Occidentalism" and is placed opposite "the orient" or "orientalism" meaning the east or orientology or orientalizing can be considered from various perspectives.

For instance, we can investigate and understand the west either from the geographical and historical point of view or in terms of its contributions and achievements. Similarly, we can consider it either from the point of view of knowledge of politics and political sociology or from the point of view of economy etc...however, what is of note here is definitive and general understanding of the west and its theoretical and ideological principles – an understanding that focuses on the creation and essence of the west, the fundamental principles and ideological and intellectual foundations and in general, their outlook and weltanschauung. In this outlook, the west is viewed as a single generality whose core is composed of materialist and worldly perspective or secularism and not societies whose outstanding features are their industry and technology. Each of them has its own unique political and social system such that all of these societies have a common secularist outlook, incline towards materialism, are contemporary, utilitarian and individualist and in this respect there is no difference between America and Europe or a society such as Japan etc... understanding of the west from this point of view and in this sense is that it can determine our stance in our approaches and exchanges with the west. From the point of view of Imam Khomeini, understanding the west is a fundamental question for us and for this reason, one of the harms of westernization according to his point of view is that it prevents us from reflecting about the west. As an example, he states:

"...basically reflecting about what the west stands for and for which there is so much admiration, they have taken away reflecting on this subject from us. They do not allow us even to reflect on what the westerners are doing to mankind..."

Therefore, Imam Khomeini has emphasized the first step towards understanding here so that unless the first step is not taken, the subsequent steps are rendered impossible. According to him, westerners and their supporters by preventing us from thinking about the west have hindered our correct understanding of them.

2. Definition of the West

In general, terms, the meaning of the West, western society and modernism of the west is part of the world that in terms of industry and economy is advanced and is so-called developed. In the knowledge of politics, the west is considered both as a subject as well as a definition. From the point of view of subject, the west or western societies is part of the geographical world of today that is characterized by indices of industrial progress, economic development, technology and a high per capita income – meaning Europe and North America. In a wider context, the world of the West from the point of view of subject can be deemed to include Japan, Russia, Israel and also parts of Eastern Europe.

From a definitive point of view, is neither a geographical nor industrial nor technological location; rather, it is a school of thought with its own unique historical way of thinking, viewing and acting. The world perspective of this school of thought is a humanist and secular one while it is dominated by a “mechanical view”.. The calculating mind, experimentalism, utilitarianism, liberalism and the principality of the individual forms the basis of this school of thought. The product of such a perspective is nowadays the culture and ideology of capitalism and the western liberal-democratic system. Humanism forms the foundation pillar of the structure of the west that in the general definition is giving importance to human beings and their needs and wants – and that too the materialist human beings. Therefore, our view in this article is a definitive and ontological view of the west and we reckon the west to be a school of thought that contains its own unique weltanschauung, beliefs and ideology while it is founded on the principality of mankind.

“...if we are able to analyze the western philosophy and ideology of the well-known philosophers, we find out that the source of all of them is the principle of the school of thought of mankind meaning the writers of the Renaissance and the enlightened intellectuals of the eighteenth century whom our enlightened intellectuals and thinkers wanted to emulate.”

In his statements and writings, Imam Khomeini has repeatedly used terms such as the west, western etc...From these applications it is gathered that Imam has at times used these kind of terminologies in the geographical sense and at times in mentioning the west as states and societies but in many instances the manner of usage of the terminologies in sentences is such that one can clearly understand that by applying these terminologies the Imam has neither meant it in the geographical sense nor as an economic, political and social subject; rather, as a point of view and a school of thought. Therefore, for example, when the Imam would speak of economic or industrial dependency, the attention was drawn more towards the subject of the west and western societies.

“Our industry is an industry that is dependent on the west and has transformed Iran into an assembly-line country. It has destroyed our agriculture. It has placed all our underground resources and human resources such as our youth at the disposal of the west.”

Imam Khomeini spoke these words before the victory of the Islamic Revolution on the subject of economic dependency of our country on the west during the reign of the Pahlavi dynasty. The talk of industrial and economic dependency reveals that Iran was dependent on the industry and economy of the west and that the westerners (western states) have tried to establish a part of their industry in the form of assembly-line and complementing industries in our country. The management of this type of economy is for the most part that of the westerners and not in the hands of local management. He states further that:

“From the political point of view the Shah has placed Iran in the position of America; and has placed Iran always at the disposal of the oppressors and the arrogant.”

In such an outlook towards the west, the Imam has a case-by-case view but at the same time, by relying on the two principles of oppression and arrogance, one can say that the Imam’s view of the west is dominated by the oppression-oriented perspective and inclination to arrogance. Likewise, one must know that the case by case definition of the west is the practical result of the conceptual and interpretational meaning of the west. It is thus that the major and basic focus of Imam Khomeini on the west is not a case by case one; rather, in his numerous writings and statements he considers and discusses the west from the conceptual context and as being the equivalent of a general and materialist school of thought and weltanschauung. For example, in mentioning the situation of Muslims as well as the Society of Iran before the Revolution, he states thus:

“We must toil and work hard for long years in order to transform our inherent nature; and to discover ourselves; and to stand on our own two feet; and to become independent; and to no longer need the east and the west; and we must begin from the children; and our sole aim should be the transformation of the western human being into an Islamic one.”

It is obvious that in this statement, Imam Khomeini considers the west from the conceptual angle because he speaks of the transformation of “the western human being into an Islamic Human being”. In this standpoint, the west is neither a particular geographical or economic sphere and nor a concept that is identifiable with economic and industrial yardsticks. More significant is the fact that according to Imam Khomeini, this western human being has not evolved in the geographical west; rather he has evolved in our own homeland. Therefore, the west is a peculiar perception of human being and the world such that whoever accepts this perception and believes in it will be a western individual. Westernized and western-oriented individuals are also western in the same way that exponents of the west and supporters of liberalism and humanism are western whether they live in Iran or in other places. Imam Khomeini has referred to this concept time and again in his famous slogan “neither east nor west”. This slogan is not simply a political slogan and rejection of the political systems of the east and the west; rather – in the Imam’s interpretation – it is a rejection of the general perception of the east and the west.

“Yes, our slogan of “neither east nor west” is a fundamental slogan of the Islamic Revolution in the world of the hungry and the oppressed and explains the actual policy of non-alignment of Islamic countries and those countries who with help of God accept Islam as the only school of thought concerned with the liberation of mankind; and there shall not be an atom of deviation from this policy...some persons should not be under the impression that this slogan is a periodical slogan for this policy is the criteria of action until eternity of our people and the Islamic Republic and of all Muslims throughout the world. It is because the condition for gaining admittance to the road to bounty is the right of disavowal of the misled and removal from their path that must be implemented at all levels and Islamic societies.”

In the previously mentioned statement, the west is clearly mentioned as an intellectual and theoretical school of thought while America and Europe etc... are societies that incorporate this way of thinking or school of thought. In another instance, the Imam refers to the path of the Islamic Revolution as the “straight path” in relation to the eastern path and the western one. This straight path and route is that of the prophets and the divine thoroughbreds.

“From the very beginning of the Revolution and before the beginning of the Revolution when the foundations of the Revolution were being laid, the pathway has been the pathway of the prophets; the pathway has been the straight path of ‘neither east nor west’.

Similarly, in rejecting westernization Imam Khomeini reckoned one of the characteristics of the Pahlavi regime to be commitment to westernization of the people of Iran implying not only military, economic and political dependencies, rather, ideological, cultural or theoretical as well.

“From the cultural point of view, he has inclined the children of this country so sharply towards the west that it is painful. He has brainwashed the geniuses with western propaganda such that it is a very difficult task if we want to save the geniuses from westernization.”

3. The Ideological roots of the west

As mentioned previously, the west is a collection of ideology, principles and beliefs that took shape in the west gradually especially after the medieval ages and has found a global aspect nowadays. The roots of some of the ideological and theoretical principles of the west go back to the culture of ancient Greece. As an example, in the culture of ancient Greece they believed that the gods were in competition with human beings. In the midst of this, some gave supremacy to the gods while some others who considered human beings to be supreme were called early humanists. In addition, the theory of egocentrism or anthromorphism is also one of the perceptions of Greek culture. These definitions entered the modern west through the Renaissance and had a direct impact on the modern west and appeared in a clearer form and by relying on sensualities.

However, in the shaping of the west one must take into consideration the role of ancient Rome, Christianity, Judaism and also the big changes of the

medieval period. In fact modernism is a thinking that was cultivated on Greek-Judaic-Christian land and its roots and foundations are made up of materialism or secularism and humanism. After the Renaissance, it was formed and established with the efforts of thinkers such as Francis Bacon in his writing the book "Novum Organum", Rene Descartes' theory of mathematics about nature. and of Newton who proposed the necessary tools for securing the objectives under consideration of Bacon and Descartes as well as by John Locke and Adam Smith in conforming the activities of government and society and economy with the machinist plan of the afore mentioned three persons. As the westerners admit, Islamic civilization also had a tremendous impact in shaping western civilization. The crusades were a great climax in the culture of the western world in the medieval ages. These multilateral influences together with the pressures of the Church and contamination of the Christian religion and rule of the pope caused the western man to enter a new era of transformation during the Renaissance and to sketch a totally new picture of himself and the world around him.

Both in cultural as well as economic and political terms, in its shaping also the west followed a separate path from the rest of the world but likewise, continued with its traditional hostility towards the east that had begun from the time of ancient Greece and perhaps before that period. Nowadays too, the west with the aim of domination of mankind and the world has targeted the east and especially the world of Islam. In the words of Imam Khomeini,

"They have found out that it is Islam that can stand up to them. For this reason, the thing which is of utmost importance to them is Islam." In recent years one can find numerous examples about the stances adopted by the west that were aimed at attacking Islam or the Islamic Revolution – and this is something that they also confess to. One can consider the two prominent examples in the field of culture as being the theory of the clash of civilizations and the publication of the book "The Satanic Verses." In the words of the Spanish journalist Rafael Gomezpara, the publication of the book "The Satanic Verses" by the west was aimed at attacking Islam and ultimately, it was an international confrontation against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The argument of the clash of civilizations too has made the necessity of clashing with non-western civilizations – and especially Islamic-Iranian civilization – the focus of their attention.

In contrast, Imam Khomeini considers one of the principal aims of the Islamic Revolution to be the rejection of the culture of the modern world meaning the dominant culture of the west or the modernist culture and for this reason, other line of policy and culture is being restored opposite the west and the east. It is a line of policy that from the point of view of the Imam is not based on the perspectives of the philosophers of the west; rather it is based on Divine vision. According to Imam Khomeini, the Islamic Revolution aims to face up to the west by laying the foundations of a new culture based on Islam:

"There is not a person who does not know that rejection of the culture of governments of the modern world and laying the foundations of a new culture based on Islam in the world...brings in its wake pressure, hardships,

martyrdom and hunger; and our people have chosen this path on their own and will also pay the price for it; and feel honored in doing so.”

4. Identity and unity of the west

As a general definition, the west means an ideological and intellectual school of thought with its own peculiar theoretical principles and having identity and unity. This means that all the constituents and societies that comprise the west in the modern era possess a somewhat similar way of thinking, *weltanschauung* and ideology. This intellectual and theoretical unity and homogeneity on general issues and interests is a downright materialist and mechanical type of perspective such that the duality of their political and social systems in relation to them – meaning liberalism and socialism – is a superficial affair. The origin, basis and source of each of the two systems are the same and both have joint general principles.

It is for this reason that the Imam would use the terms ‘the east and the west’ together and considered both of them to have mutual and common objectives and aspirations and would mention them in perfectly similar terms. At times he would also refer to both of them either as “criminal superpowers” and “colonialists” or consider them as having the same objectives – domination of the world and mankind – or reckon both of them as satanic superpowers. Perhaps one can say that in general, from the point of view of the Imam, there are two standpoints and two schools of thought namely Islam and non-Islam of consideration. Non-Islam is either the west or the east in the context of socialist societies. Non-Islam is satanic powers and their supporters in Islamic countries and all of them are oppressive and criminal. The righteous Muslims and the oppressed of the world are under their hegemony. In fact from such an aspect there are just two lines of thought present in this world only:

1. The line of thought of arrogance and materialism which is the line of thinking that is pursued by the west and whose leadership in these times is entrusted to America. According to the Imam, this line of thought is the line of thought of injustice and oppression; it is the line of criminal oppressors; it is the line of colonialists and colonizers; it is the line of the west, the line of the east, the line of American brand of Islam; the line of the carefree affluent; the line of the decadent seekers of comfort; the line of the evil oppressors – the ‘Taghut’- etc...this line of thinking is composed of a front that Imam Khomeini calls ‘the front of infidelity’.

2. The line of monotheism and spiritualism that nowadays – opposite the west – is the line of the downtrodden and the line of genuine Mohammedan Islam, the line of the red Shiite; the line of the enslaved oppressed, the line of oppression and the line of the oppressed of the world. For example, in describing these two lines or two lines of thinking in Islamic societies, Imam Khomeini states:

“Today because the arrogance of the east and the west lack the capability to confront the world of Islam directly, they have begun to experiment with

assassinations and elimination of religious and political personalities on one hand and spreading and promotion of the American brand of Islam on the other hand...unfortunately, for many of the Islamic nations the border between “American brand of Islam” and the “genuine Mohammedan Islam”...has still not become perfectly clear...it is the duty of all the men of religion to save treasured Islam from the hands of the agents of the east and the west by clarifying these two lines of thought.

Imam Khomeini considers the west to be a singular viewpoint that embraces characteristics such as oppression, colonization, self-interest, domination of the downtrodden etc...thus according to this view, the west consists of the Second World – the former Soviet Union and its satellite states – too because they also possess the qualities of the west and play the same role in the world that the First World meaning the United States and its allies undertake.

By taking into consideration the principle of unity of the west, Imam Khomeini has at times has not defined the east in term of its application in those days meaning the eastern bloc or the former soviet Union and its allies; rather, he has applied the definition in its equivalent terms such as downtrodden of the world, the hapless, the deprived and Muslims and in the current terminology of those days, the Third World and uses the term ‘the west’ in relation to it. In these instances also, the Imam in addition to focusing on the west from a general standpoint, views all those that hold this standpoint singularly and uniformly. It is thus that he expresses himself that:

“...the east must rediscover it’s lost self...the east has everything. Its culture is better than the culture of the west; the culture of the west has been taken from the east. Everything about it is better than the west only that they have made it devoid of its contents...they have driven us to poverty so that we have come to think that each and everything that exists has originated from there. Unless we do not rediscover ourselves; unless the east does not rediscover itself; unless this lost one is not found, we cannot stand on our own two feet. The name of “the west” must be eradicated from the minds of our intellectuals.”

Therefore, from his point of view two doctrines and two ways of thinking are of importance, one of which is the east while the other is the west and each one of the two cultures have their own particular criteria and yardsticks. The culture and doctrine of Imam Khomeini is the culture and doctrine of the east and is thus opposite to the west.

5. The fundamental nature of the west

The fundamental nature of any thing reveals the truth and identity of that thing. Fundamental nature about conventional human and historical affairs and phenomenon reveals their creed and identity so that we can recognize the creed and existence of phenomenon through their fundamental nature. The fundamental natures can be considered to be the foundations and

characteristic features that becomes differentiating factor of one phenomenon from the rest of them.

Therefore, in order to recognize the fundamental nature and the truthfulness of the west, one must investigate research and identify the principles, fundamentals, pillars and characteristic features of the constituents. Based on this, we undertake an investigation of the fundamentals and theoretical natures of the west such as humanism, modern intellectualism, scientism, positivism, secularism the materialist point of view, universalism, colonialism, hegemony, imperialism and nationalism.

5-1. Humanism or the supremacy of human being

The main foundation and basic facade of the culture of the west is firm faith in human power and standing as well as in giving priority to his wants and desires. The roots of humanism goes back to ancient Greece during the period of Socrates during which the gods are considered as competing with human beings. This theory was proposed in anew form during the Renaissance and by leaning on the sensualities and carnal desires of man, it was transformed into a philosophy that considers the material dimension of man to be the yardstick and value of every affair. In humanism the human being that is cut off from the spiritual world and possessing natural and artificial needs is the yardstick for everything. In the words of Ganon:

“In fact the meaning of this term is to confine everything to absolute human criteria and ...to turn away from the spiritual on the pretext of gaining control of the earth.”

Therefore, the fundamental of humanism is nothing other than sensuality of human being; while sensuality is a statement of the dimension of human being that has been lost and released from spirituality and spiritual perfection and considers man distinct from the universal spiritual power. The spirit of carnality reveals the imperfect existence of human being that is under the command of the mind that is disconnected from the truth and only enables him to dominate nature. Thus it is placed opposite his spiritual and divine aspect. This aspect of human being belongs to the material world and gives a worldly and material dimension to all things of a human being. In the words of Dr. Shariati:

“An imaginary and false mankind that does not exist...the supremacy of mankind means the participation of all nations in one objective; in one truth meaning the partnership of a human being who has nothing with a human being in possession of capital...the supremacy of the western man...”

As a theologian and mystic deist with a monotheistic weltanschauung arisen from the Mohammedan religion, the point of view that Imam Khomeini holds is quite different from humanism. According to the Imam's perspective, the human being is a manifestation, a reflection and is the vicegerent of God on earth and possesses a nature that recognizes God, recognizes the truth, and that seeks reality and justice. The human being is a combination of two dimensions existential dimensions meaning the element of spirituality and the

element of materiality – and these two are not separate from one another. In describing the human being and in rejection of humanism, Imam Khomeini states:

“Every school of thought with the exception of the school of thought of Islam that you see...has visualized a human being as an animal; a creature whose job is simply to eat and sleep – except that to drink and to eat better...man possesses levels...for this human being who incorporates everything, meaning from nature to beyond nature and to the world of divinity, Islam has levels; Islam has a thesis; Islam has a program.”

Likewise, Imam Khomeini considers turning away of human beings from the Exalted Truth, truthfulness, spirituality and his detachment from divinity and divine teachings based on vision to be a kind of deviation from the intrinsic nature of human beings – a nature that seeks perfection and demands perfection. Thus, ‘the theory of innate nature’ that the Imam leans on and reiterates repeatedly is placed diametrically opposite the theory of humanism of the west.

Similarly, Imam Khomeini emphasizes the perfection of human being, which is excellence of spirituality of human being and development of his innate nature as well as his move towards monotheism and orthodoxy. He deems the perfect human being to be the vicegerent of God on earth and manifestation of the qualities of the Exalted Truth. In the Imam’s view, the perfect human being is not one who in order to secure his wants is highly motivated, who thinks well, who sleeps well and who lives well; rather, he is the literature of God and is a sublime example of Him as well as a mirror-image who sees his truth in it:

“Considering that the perfect human being who is a comprehensive existence and mirror-image of all the Divine Names and Qualities...is the very book of God...and is a supreme illustration of God...it is he who has been created in the form of the Exalted Truth and is the key to the gate of knowledge of the Almighty God...”

Thus according to the point of view and thought of Imam Khomeini, humanism which implies giving priority to the sensuality and carnal desires of man is rejected because although it enables him to succeed in finding the laws of nature and being in control of them as well as securing the material living and welfare, however, it does not secure for him his spiritual needs. It considers a purely absolute material existence for him whereas the human being is not a straightforward animal and possesses spiritual, incorporeal, supreme and divine aspects as well.

5-2. Self-analyses, scientism and positivism

However, why can man be the yardstick for all values and affairs? The humanist point of view believes that a human being possesses an intellect and is able to differentiate profit from loss. Imam Khomeini does not consider the intellect in the manner that the westerners did in the modern era – from after the Renaissance and during the period of modernism – as meaning self-

analyses and distinguishing profit from loss. From the western perspective, the mind is equivalent to self-analyses and self-interest that has replaced the humanist rationality. According to John Rawls:

“The definition of rationality must to the extent possible have a special connotation that is economic in theory which means using the most effective instrument for achieving the ascertained objectives...”

This manner of viewing the intellect is itself weltanschauung of the west:

“A self-analytical approach to life and living environment...is itself a kind of weltanschauung that has come into being in Europe in the course of a few centuries following the actions and reactions in relation to the medieval period.”

The intellect in the sense of being purely self-interested and utilitarian is totally in contrast with the point of view of Imam Khomeini about the human intellect and wisdom that has a link with God and benefits from the supernatural while having the ability to tame the obstinate power of sensuality. This is because the intellect is the factor of devotion and is the path to liberation and attainment of happiness and perfection of man as well as being the most important and outstanding factor of distinction of human beings from non-humans and the perfect human being from imperfect human beings.

Intellectualism in the west because of its reliance on feeling and experience as well as its sole reflection of the material, was a general definition that manifested itself in the cast of scientism and on the basis of humanism and modern scientism, while the aim of science also with the knowledge gained of the laws of nature became restricted to dominating it and gaining as much power as possible. Francis Bacon in the proposal he presented for his utopia in the book “Novum Organum” gave absolute supremacy to science – and that too discernible science – and introduced science as the only path of mankind towards prosperous living. After him in the eighteenth century the Frenchman Voltaire wrote:

“We must calculate, compare, weigh and observe – this is the essence of philosophy while the rest is wishful thinking.”

Scientism reached its peak in the nineteenth century by leaning on principles of positivism. The French August Comte gave this fundamental a direct and classic form. In the first half of the twentieth century, from the point of view of epistemology and epistemic methodology leaned more on logical positivism in which the major enunciation of philosophical and ethical issues was considered absurd and meaningless. After that too, new positivism that is sometimes referred to as new sophistry constituted the dominant and prevailing appearance of western thought.

The principal objective of science too is solely to increase the power of human beings, to spread and concentrate his domination of nature. Thus it removes human beings from self-recognition and self-purification so that in this instance, mankind has not achieved any qualitative improvement.

Western scientism views the universe and human being with the same vision. It regards human being as a one-dimensional creature who is detached from moral ethics, spirituality and happiness while it distances him from his innate nature.

From the point of view of Imam Khomeini this sort of approach to the intellect and science is condemned. In his view firstly, the human being is himself the subject of a particular science which is the science of humanity and is the science of the Divine Prophets and spiritualists. The program of the prophet of God ('a) was to train and educate human beings and thus before everything else, the human being must be identified and discovered in order to be able to develop his infinite potentials:

“If there is a subject for every science...the subject of the science of all the prophets too is man...the subject of discussion of all the prophets; the subject of their science is man. They arrived on the scene in order to educate human beings; they arrived in order to reach this natural creature from the level of nature to the supreme level of the supernatural; to beyond the world of spirituality.”

Therefore, education and training; growth and development as well as perfection of human potentials and his humanization before everything else, is itself the subject of science and knowledge. It is a knowledge whose aim is not domination of nature and increasing the privileges and power of human being; rather, it is domination of the human being himself, his spiritual purification and reaching him to perfection. Secondly, all sciences and cognitions are for development of human beings so that any knowledge that prevents the development of human being is a covering – and the covering is an obstacle to the growth and development of human being and it must be removed.

“It is simplistic thinking and naiveté for a human being to think that a tutor who is deviant; a teacher who inclines either towards the east or the west; who has either had an eastern or a western training make him a teacher for the children whose souls are as polished and clear as a mirror and accepts whatever that is given to him...divine knowledge also is not the criteria; knowledge of monotheism is also not the criteria; knowledge of theology and philosophy is also not the criteria – none of the knowledge is the criteria. That knowledge is the criteria and that knowledge is a source of happiness of mankind that...is communicated to mankind by a person who has himself received divine training...”

Alternatively, he states:

“If there is no spiritual purification involved, the science of monotheism will also not be of use.”

Thirdly, science that is dependent and science that is without spiritual purification culminates in dependency; and in order to avoid dependency, it is our duty to make use of science for the purpose of development and spiritual purification. The theory of Islamization of the universities that was put forward

by the Imam was a theory towards this end and its major objectives was to enable us to liberate ourselves from the west and achieve our true independence. This is because independent culture comes into being under the auspices of training and development of human souls whereas according to the point of view of Imam Khomeini, science and education without purification of the soul and upbringing culminates in immorality, dependency or war and dispute. It is for this reason that the Imam states:

“The meaning of Islamization of universities is in order that they become independent and detach themselves from the west; and to detach themselves from dependence on the east.”

However, at the same time as emphasizing on shunning science devoid of development and knowledge devoid of spiritual purification and values, Imam Khomeini was never opposed with the manifestation of civilization, technology and industry; rather, he considered them to be valuable and laid stress on them beneath training and beneath spirituality. However, he was concerned about making them an objective or detaching them from purification of the carnal souls, detaching them from development, detaching them from the superior objective of human being, from perfection and the pure innate human nature of man.

“If by manifestations of civilization and innovations, inventions, initiatives and the advanced industries that play a role in the progress and civilization of mankind, neither Islam nor any other monotheist religion has ever been opposed or will ever be opposed to them; rather, Islam and the Glorious Quran lay stress on science and industry.”

Finally, in his view, the east is not only the place of true and divine action; rather it is also the place of enlightenment, the rising sun and brightness whereas the west is the place of the setting of the sun of humanity and spirituality except that the thinkers of darkness of the west have obstructed the rays of the sunlight of the east and have kept it in the dark. He explains this aspect in very simple words:

“The east possesses the sun; the countries of the east are sunny. The west has no sunlight as you can see...”

5-3. The perspectives of materialism and secularism

Gradually, the calculative approach together with the enlightened intellectual and religious reform movement in the west, concluded in secularism, materialist and worldly outlook. Even during the enlightened intellectual period, a kind of secular and material divine philosophy and wisdom came in to existence. Secularism implies opposition to teaching religion, religious laws, spiritualities, the spirit of orthodoxy and release from the bondage of divine sovereignty. In fact it has been derived from the Latin term ‘zuculum’ or ‘seculum’ meaning ‘century’ but gradually, it has come to imply becoming worldly and this worldly. Based on this perspective, firstly, a human being must be released and freed from the rule of spiritualities, God and the sacred universe. Secondly, the realities that exist in the terra firma of

religion and philosophy are to be transferred to the terrain of non-sacrilege, natural and experimental affairs. Thirdly, sovereignty of materialism over religion and spiritual dimension shall be given priority and become a reality. Fourthly, the basic yardstick of administration of the world is progress and 'progress' consists of maximizing earning of material wealth that supposedly creates a more orderly world." In social and political living, separation of politics from religion and moral ethics as well as making political and social organizations non-religious and in general, elimination of piety from the religious aspects of some facades of the globe and human beings and performing deeds for the sake of material world objectives was the result of this perspective. According to Imam Khomeini, the west has become submerged in materialism, worldly perspective and the world of nature. "The west is submerged in the nature of the material world and is totally unaware of the supernatural world."

Thus, their progress and civilization too is not progress of humanity, ethics and spirituality; rather, it is a progress that has culminated in the decadence of humankind.

"...they have made progress, but a fatal progress; a progress that is resulting in the oblivion of mankind."

Likewise, Imam Khomeini categorically rejects the question of separation of politics and administration from religion and spirituality and proposes that religion is the way of life of human beings that conforms to their innate nature. Therefore, it cannot overlook the wants and needs of humans otherwise it shall be flawed. Religion is not solely absolute spiritualities; rather, religion has incorporated the administration of the affairs of society in its program and it has a cradle to grave plan, program and blueprint for human beings even from the human egg is fertilized until the world of the afterlife.

"Islam is not only worship; it is not only canonical teachings and instructions and so forth. Islam is politics. Islam is not removed from politics. Islam has established a state, a great regime...and Islam is not unaware of anything. It means that Islam trains human beings in all dimensions that a human being possesses."

Similarly, he points to religious texts that are composed of books and traditions from one period consisting of about fifty books. Three or four books deal with worship and obligations of human beings in relation to the Creator as well as a limited number that also deal with ethical issues while the remaining deal with social studies, politics and management of the society.

Likewise, Imam Khomeini considers the entry of material, sensual and worldly perspectives inside the territory of Islamic civilization, the separation of religion and the material world, of religion and politics as well as of religion and society from one another to be the conspiracy of aliens and especially of the westerners.

"...and unfortunately, propaganda of the latter aspect has had an impact on some of the men of religion and the pious ignorant of Islam to the extent that

they even deemed involvement in government and politics to be a sin and debauchery – and perhaps some do consider! This is a great tragedy that has afflicted Islam.”

These arguments can be observed time and again in the numerous works of Imam Khomeini such as in ‘Kashful Asraar’, ‘Tahreer al-Wasilah’, Kitaab al-Bay’, ‘Lessons on Guardianship of the Jurisprudent’ as well as in his various proclamations.

5-4. Seeking Domination, colonialism and Imperialist Outlook

One of the characteristics of the west is its colonial spirit and its imperialist outlook. ‘Universalism’ is one of the important social-political principles of the west that is synonymous with cosmopolitanism. It means the elimination of every kind of border and non-western yardsticks towards unification of mankind under the banner of leadership of the west.

In general, the claim to universalism of the west is aimed at breaking down borders in line with its own objectives and interests and creation of artificial borders under its own domination and hegemony such that it obliterates any kind of non-western affiliation and cooperation as well as every type of non-western unity and alignment. Thus it paves the way for the total domination by the west and the formation of western imperialism. In other words, “The west has an objective; but this objective...the west is desirous of ruling over the world...”

The methods of making western universalism a reality are also numerous such as the following: colonialism of ancient times, neo-colonialism, formation of global organizations such as League of Nations, the United Nations Organization, the right to veto, global order etc...all in all were the ways of making this idea a reality. Imperialism which has been taken from the word “imperiu” meaning empire in general, signifies any type of domination-seeking and arrogant nature of the powerful states and nowadays, from the west vis-à-vis other societies. From the point of view of Lenin, “Imperialism in its specific meaning implies the final evolutionary stage of the capitalist society and in fact is the stage of the rule of monopolies and export of capital.”

From the point of view of Imam Khomeini, the arrogant and domination-seeking outlook of the west is incompatible with the objectives and aspirations of the rest of the societies. However for making it a reality, the westerners have resorted to colonization of other states and plundering their God-given wealth through various means. Similarly, colonizers in these societies make efforts to remove any hurdle on the way at any cost and by any method to secure their wants. In describing the circumstances of his times, Imam Khomeini remarks as follows:

“The evil clutches of colonialism has penetrated into the depths of the great territories of the nation of the Quran; and all our great wealth and resources which although have been nationalized, is being poured into their mouths. The poisonous culture of colonialism has penetrated into the depths of the

districts and villages of Islamic states...it is necessary to avail of the opportunity and think of a solution..."

From the point of view of Imam Khomeini, the spreading of the secularist and laicism perception as well as the pronouncement of the proposal of separation of politics from religion and ethics also is among the plots and conspiracies of the western colonialists because making politics based on Islam and ethics a reality prevents their wants from being realized.

"This saying that religion must be separated from politics and that the scholars of the religion of Islam should not get involved in social and political issues has been said and spread by the colonizers."

As mentioned earlier, breaking the criteria and creating artificial frontiers also by followers of the western concept of global homeland has become a reality in Muslim and eastern countries so that by the separation of these societies and making them small as well as establishing controversial geographical borders, they are better able to attain their objectives and secure their interests.

In the meanwhile, the colonialists and their despotic and ambitious rulers have created divisions in the territory of Islam. They have separated the nation of Islam from one another and have created several distinct nations out of them..."

In yet another instance, Imam Khomeini describes this issue with greater clarity:

"At the time when the Europeans found their way to the countries of the east and saw that the countries of the east were a good prey so that in order to swallow this prey they conducted studies and this is what you have...Gentlemen awaken! O our youth, awaken! Be aware of the plots! Beware of the reason why they want to disconnect you from Islam; beware of the reasons why they want to bring you closer to other religions."

Similarly, Imam Khomeini considers some of the alternate methods of the colonizers for imperialistic domination of Islamic societies to consist of the instances as below:

- Dealing a blow to Islam; to the name of Islam
- Imposing their stooges and operatives on Muslim societies
- Misrepresenting Islam to the world
- Altering the truths and values of Islam
- Concealing the important dimensions of Islam
- Assassination and demolishing the supporters of the genuine Mohammedan Islam

- Sowing discord and creating differences between Muslims
- Spreading capitalism in Islamic countries
- Spreading the material, profit motive and secularist outlook
- Establishing affiliated nationalistic outlook

5-5. Nationalism

Nationalism is defined as giving principality to the people inhabiting a territory and to their ethnic and national dependencies. In nationalism, a person considers himself to belonging to a specific population group called a nation because of emotions and the particular affiliations such as geography, language, culture etc...They think like a national group and view the rest of humanity as strangers and foreigners while focusing their attention towards the interests of that same population group.

In the west, nationalism became important especially after the Westanley treaty and spread from there to all over the world. Basically nationalism has humanistic and western roots and is mentioned as one of the main elements of modernism. However, nationalism is endorsed by Imam Khomeini if it implies emphasis on faith and monotheistic universalism that lays stress on the Muslim nation.

Similarly, if we take into consideration nationalism as meaning love of the homeland too and reckon the nationalist to be a person who is attached to his homeland and territory and considers the rest to be of his fellow human beings, and not inhuman and other than fellow human beings, in that case too it is endorsed by Imam Khomeini.

“Attachment for the homeland; attachment for compatriots and safeguarding the boundaries of the country is an issue about which there is no doubt.”

In addition, nationalism that implies struggle for independence by the people of a territory in order to confront colonial and arrogant foreign powers that manifests itself in the form of national movements is also not opposed by Imam Khomeini. However, nationalism that contains racial origins (racism) and any other inhuman origin and in its western concept that is more common nowadays, and that plays a prominent role in segregating humanity and the human race from one another; and that culminates in the birth of limited and regional and controversial ideologies and only squanders the rights and exploits the sentiments of a group in order to defend another group is strongly rejected and invalidated by Imam Khomeini. He considers that to be opposed and contrary to Islam and the Mohammedan religion and reckons it to be a western plot for domination of Islamic societies.

Of the issues that the plotters have proposed for sowing discord among Muslims and which the agents of colonialism have arisen to promote is ethnicity and nationality...the nationalism that leads to enmity among Muslims

and discord in the ranks of the believers is contrary to Islam and is contrary to the interest of Muslims and is a conspiracy of aliens who are deeply troubled by Islam and its expansion.”

Similarly, Imam Khomeini strongly criticizes the various types of nationalisms that imply leaning on race and racial ideologies such as pan-Arabism, Pan-Turkism etc...

“...the important thing that has rendered Islamic governments impotent and which causes it to move away from the angle of the Glorious Quran is the racial game. This one is a Turkish race...this one is from an Iranian race...that one is of Arabic race...”

Conclusion: Imam Khomeini’s answer to the West

An analysis of the works of Imam Khomeini reveals that he proposes the genuine Mohammedan Islam or the Alawite Shiism or the Mohammedan canon of the Quran vis-à-vis the western perspective; while with the revival of Islamic and religious thought or eastern thinking – in the conceptual sense of the term – he aims to present a new concept. Therefore, he aims to revive and restore religious and Islamic thought. This revival and restoration presents thinking and a perspective that is different from the thinking and perspective of the west and is not compatible with it. Thus it is not in harmony with modernism. As a matter of fact, in his view, the falling of human being in the trap laid by the west and westernization is a kind of captivity in materialism and worship of sensuality. Whereas in the dictionary of religion and from the point of view of conventional wisdom, westernization means being deprived of the sunlight of the truth of the east and falling into the eerie darkness of the west and giving supremacy to carnal soul and the materialist mind of humanity instead of to the God of religions and to the spiritual mind of the afterlife. Some of the elements, fundamental principles, and foundation pillars of the perspective and answer of Imam Khomeini in the encounter with the west and western perspective consist of the following listed items:

- Rejection of humanism and opposite that, revival of the theory of innate human nature.
- Establishing a rule based on religion and moral ethics.
- Weighing the scales between the material world and the spiritual afterlife taking into account the superiority and priority of the hereafter as well as the transient nature of the world and permanent abode and residence of the world of the hereafter.
- Weighing the scales between the body and the soul giving priority to the soul and spiritual needs.
- Instrumental perspective of science and knowledge and likewise, to their power and direction and that too towards a lofty and superior objective meaning vision of God.
- Plan for the spiritual purification and cleansing as well as training in harmony and coordinated with education in sciences and realized knowledge.

- Restoring the human mind in the sense of connecting the mind to the truth; a mind that has the power to distinguish between good and bad; that has the power to place value and not be calculating and solely weigh the profit; a mind that seeks to lead and to guide human beings in the direction of his innate nature.
- Amputate the roots of colonialism and imperialism.
- Rejection of dependency on the west.
- Struggle against aliens, exploiters and oppressors.
- Rejection of westernization and inclination and leaning towards the west.
- Human beings to be endowed with virtues of God and stress on moral virtue.
- Stress on human values and making the role of divine vicegerency and appointment of man by God as His vicegerent on earth a reality.
- Renunciation of and turning away from the west as well as countering the western principles and fundamentals that are in conflict with innate human nature.
- Engaging in a determined struggle and countering westernization, proclivity for the west and self-defeatism vis-à-vis the west.
- Return to self-righteousness and rediscovering the truth of the self in the face of western self-alienation.
- Confidence and trust in the Great God and spiritual invigoration of human beings for attainment of desired excellence.
- Preference for justice and giving it priority in all aspects of individual and social life and rejection of economic development without social justice.
- elimination of despair, hopelessness and acquiring self-confidence in the path of progress in both spiritual and material aspects.
- Paying attention to and favoring the downtrodden and the oppressed human beings and elimination of class, group and factional differences.
- Emphasis on unity and preventing discord as well as elimination of artificial borders.
- Negation of western nationalism etc...

Finally, from the point of view of Imam Khomeini, the west is the dusk and sunset of the hallowed and religious truth and thus the light of religion and its sanctity must shine on the hearts of human beings so that they can view the world, the universe and humanity with the Divine Light and to rise in revolt against the west. They should sever their dependency on the west and should know that self-reliance – after trust in God – is the source of good and that a return to the true self or to one’s own innate human-divine nature is the most superior alternative to westernization, faith in the west and fascination for the west. Thus it recommends that:

“Do not be afraid of the west; be resolute...and the east should have the will to revolt against the west...”

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