

Dr. Abouzar Ebrahimi Torkaman's Views on the Cultural Aspects of the Statement on the Second Phase of the Islamic Revolution



Q: In the statement of the second phase of the Revolution, the Supreme Leader has stressed the need to move towards the great ideal of the Revolution, namely the creation of a new Islamic civilization. Given the importance of culture in the process of civilization-making, what role, in your opinion, can the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization play in realizing this ideal?

A: Culture and thought have a fundamental role in the development of any civilization. If we consider the new Islamic civilization as a living, dynamic, and cohesive being, we can assume that Islamic culture and thought is the blood that flows through its body and gives it life. It was for this reason that the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, in a meeting with the

officials of the organization on 6th February 2002 emphasized the position and importance of this organization in the field of thought and culture and considered it to be “The harbinger of the spiritual authority of the system and the country”.

Among the goals of the organization outlined by its constitution are the expansion of cultural relations with different nations and communities, especially Muslims and the oppressed, strengthening and regulating the cultural relations of the Islamic Republic of Iran with other countries and cultural organizations, as well as the correct presentation of Iranian culture and civilization and its cultural features. Is. The Islamic Culture and Relations Organization is the official custodian of cultural diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran abroad and is at the forefront of introducing and explaining the discourse and achievements of the Islamic Revolution abroad. With an extensive network of cultural offices abroad and a large number and in collaboration with elites and thinkers, this organization can play a pivotal role in explaining and introducing the concept of new Islamic civilization. Perhaps one of the most important responsibilities of the organization in this regard is to introduce the concept of new Islamic civilization to foreign elites and thinkers. In this regard, our cultural representatives can play a significant role in throwing light on the international concepts outlined in the statement on the second phase of the revolution.

For the establishment of the new Islamic civilization the cooperation of other Islamic societies, especially countries that have a historical his-

tory of civilization, is important and effective. Therefore, it is necessary to explain and describe it properly at the level of elites of different countries such as Turkey, Malaysia, North African countries, etc. In this regard, the following programs have been defined and are being implemented by our cultural offices.

1- Translation of domestic scientific papers with the aim of explaining the concept of new Islamic civilization in different languages

2- Translating books on the subject of new Islamic civilization into differ-

ent languages within the framework of a ToP project

3- Calling for papers and organizing scientific conferences with the presence and participation of foreign thinkers (with the aim of acquainting them with this concept and production of related literature by non-Iranian writers about the new Islamic civilization)

4- Publishing various books in non-Persian languages with the participation of Iranian and foreign thinkers on the subject of modern Islamic civilization



5- Expansion of Persian language education

6- Expanding relations with cultural and academic centers

7- Active presence in foreign and international book fairs

8- Organizing meetings to introduce the various areas of the art of the country in the host country

Q: As the Supreme Leader has said, the Islamic Revolution is a cultural revolution. Keeping in view statement on the second phase, how can the Islamic-Iranian culture be best protected and introduced in the international arena?

A: Iranian culture has been one of the most enduring and influential cultures in human history, and we must be able to introduce it in the right way and adapt it to today's requirements. Iran is one of the oldest civilizations in the world and, in fact, is one of the cultural axes of the Eastern world. The elements of Iranian culture that transcend Iran's political borders can be summarized as spirituality and ethics, Persian language and its dialects, national festivals such as Nowruz and the solar chronology, ancient Iranian monotheism, Persian art, literature and poetry, Iranian architecture, and local cultures of Iranian ethnic groups. The scope of this ancient culture encompasses many countries.

The power of Iranian art and culture is so great that even the invaders of Iran were dissolved and eventually became the transmitters of Iranian culture to other parts of the world. Seventy years after the Mongol invasion of Iran, we saw the spread of the Persian language in China - one of the Mongol-influenced areas - because all the cor-

respondence of that period, within the territories of Mongol rule, were in Persian. The Persian language was so powerful that it was able to spread even in places where no Iranian lived. Take, for example, southern Europe and the Balkan Peninsula, we thousands of copies of Persian manuscripts were produced.

Therefore, the activity of chairs on Iranology in world universities around is important for informing the public about Iran, and if we can expand the number and activities of these chairs in different countries, more students will be interested to study Persian and get acquainted with Iranian culture and civilization.

Q: One of the issues raised in the statement on the second phase is concerning lifestyle. What cultural activities can effectively promote the Islamic-Iranian lifestyle in the international environment?

A: The issue of lifestyle has been mentioned as one of the seven main topics for the second phase of the revolution. Lifestyle is one of the key issues that the wise Leader of the Revolution has elaborated on various occasions. Overall, the statement on the second phase addresses two fundamental points in this regard: the irreparable damages caused by the Western lifestyle; and the need for comprehensive and intelligent management of affairs in order to confront the Western lifestyle.

In every civilization, lifestyle denotes any model that shapes man's personal and social life and brings about happiness, satisfaction, and personal and social security for him. Obviously, only a lifestyle and way of

life is worthy of goal setting and planning, which falls within the framework of the objectives laid down by the Creator. The trajectory of man's life is determined by his Creator and it is the lofty goal of his creation, and the commands, prohibitions, do's and don'ts that are determined by the laws of religion, lead man to the goal, which is his eternity and eternal happiness. As for the Islamic lifestyle and way of life, we must first identify the pattern of the Islamic way of life in accordance with human needs today, and then explain its various dimensions in the international arena; i.e., first in the Islamic world and then outside of it.

Q: Please describe the position of Islamic-Iranian culture and civilization in world culture and civilization and what measures can be taken to elevate this position.

A: Undoubtedly, Islamic civilization has been a brilliant part of human civilization, and what the world culture and civilization owes it, is not any less, if not more, than what it owes Greek culture and civilization. However, it should be noted that Islamic culture continues to have a spiritual impact in the present world and its charm and spirituality remains flawless.

The profession of writing was one of the lowest of jobs in the pre-Islamic era. Teaching was not honored and anyone who was a teacher was humiliated. Islam declared teaching as the task of the divine prophets and considered dissemination of knowledge to be its Zakat and it was through this move that the Islamic civilization produced great scholars and great books and gigantic libraries. For instance, the library of Khajeh

Nasir Tusi in Maragheh had 400,000 books that were used by scientists and astronomers of the time.

Regarding the status of Islamic-Iranian culture and civilization, we can refer to the current conditions of the world and our dear country, the coronavirus pandemic, and the problems it created for performing certain rituals in Iranian society, even though these conditions caused the activation of other layers of religious responsibilities. Since our culture has preserved its religious identity, its outward and inward aspects should not be separated from each other. Whenever a part of rituals loses the opportunity to be performed publicly, society satisfies its sense of need by returning to its esoteric identity and/or other rituals. In such circumstances and crises, a new aspect of religion and religiosity emerges. In practice, the difference between the Iranian society's way of confronting the coronavirus and other countries lies in the presence of the religious culture and participation of the masses.

Q: Why and in what way it would be possible to effectively explain the cultural values of the Islamic Revolution to the world?

First of all, it is necessary to introduce the achievements of the revolution made over the past 42 years to the international community, especially the youth of the Islamic world. Therefore, one of the most important parts of the statement on the second phase is the part, which describes the achievements of the revolution in seven parts and it also states what needs to be done in seven paragraphs.

As regards how to effectively ex-

plain this rich culture I must say that his statements during the meeting of the members of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution on 10th December 2013 about culture and cultural values the Supreme Leader of the Revolution stated:

“Culture is the identity of a nation.



Cultural values are the true spirit and essence of a nation. Everything is based on culture. Culture is not marginal to and below economy and it is not marginal to and below politics. Rather economy and politics are marginal to and below culture. This must be taken into consideration. We cannot separate culture from other areas (of life). When I said that economic issues and various important issues should be attached to culture, it means we need to keep in mind the importance of culture when we look for a fundamental movement in the field of economics, in the field of politics, in the field of construction, in the field of technology, production, the

advancement of science. Sometimes a person gets into a job, does an economic job, but does not pay attention to its cultural consequences. Yes, it's a big task; it is a great economic task, but the absence of attention to its cultural effects may result in consequences that are harmful to the country. This is the (importance of)

culture. We must keep in mind this cultural point in all matters and do not let it be forgotten”.

Therefore, in order to introduce, explain and transmit cultural values in an effective way, these values must first be prepared and produced in the form of clear messages and suitable to the tastes of the addressees, and then reach it to them through effective and internationally accepted tools and methods such as books, art including cinema, plays, and social networks. It goes without saying that as the cultural headquarters of the country the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization is responsible for this great task at the international level.