



The Relationship between Islam and Civilization in Imam Khomeini's Thought

Introduction:

Imam Khomeini is one of the most prominent Muslim thinkers in the contemporary period whose thoughts and ideas can be studied and analyzed from various angles, including from the perspective of

civilization. From this perspective, the position of Imam Khomeini is important because it has several outstanding features. First, Imam Khomeini is a thinker whose field of influence is beyond the Shiite world, but also beyond the Islamic world,

and this feature has put his thought in the civilization style. The second is that; unlike many Muslim thinkers who have not and do not have a serious encounter with social issues, Imam Khomeini was directly confronted with these issues and had

an objective understanding of them and is very effective. His third unique feature, which is the objective manifestation of the second feature, is that Imam Khomeini is the only religious scholar who has established a religious government in the contemporary period and has led it himself. These two features are important in the sense that, unlike others who have expressed their views more as a thinker and in the position of opinion, Imam Khomeini has combined his thought with action and his practical experience of implementing the teachings and the rulings of religion in society can reflect a more realistic conception of thought. Imam Khomeini believed both in the view of the comprehensiveness of the religion of Islam and its maximum ability to manage human affairs and meet his material and spiritual needs and move him towards progress and development in various dimensions, and by forming a government. Showed the realization of part of his ideas in society.

1 - The Role of Religion in Civilization

The discussion of the relationship between religion and civilization and the role of religion in civilization is one of the topics that thinkers of religious, social, and philosophical sciences have dealt with more or less from different perspectives, but despite these scientific efforts, this issue has not yet found a proper place in the theories of civilization. According to one contemporary Muslim writer, in many theories of civilization, religion is considered as an influential or absent factor or as a sub-factor and later than the basic and pivotal factor and as its result and product; However, many great human civilizations such as Buddhist,

Brahmanical, Byzantine and Islamic civilizations have been the basis of religion (Jaber, 1410 AH, P. 26). Apart from those who have not given a place and role to religion in the process of the emergence of civilization and have not mentioned it, and a few people who have a negative role for religion, there are many thinkers who believe that religion is a central element in building a civilization and most civilizations are based on one religion. Here, for example, we will refer to the views of some thinkers and then we will explain Imam Khomeini's views on the relationship between Islam and civilization.

Among Western civilizations, Twain Be is one of those who pays great attention to the role of religion in civilizations and believes that any style of civilization is a manifestation of religion in it. According to him, religion was the source of the life force that created civilizations and kept them alive. Throughout the history of human societies, religion has been the only spiritual force that has kept civilized societies united against two deadly diseases (war and injustice). The main cause of the fall of civiliza-

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tions has been the weakening of religious beliefs of society. Following the weakening of religion, civilization has undergone internal social disintegration and has failed in the face of foreign military aggression and a new civilization based on the new religion has replaced the previous civilization (Twain B., 1373: P. 22 23).

Will Durant, in his famous work (History of Civilization), considers the effective factors in the formation of civilization including four categories of economic, political, moral, intellectual, and psychological factors, and examines the role of religion under the moral factor (Will Durant, 2012: P. 40). He considers moral traditions as one of the pillars of civilization and believes that all civilizations are based on the supernatural guarantees that religion has given to morality. Among Western theologians, there are many who have pointed to the role of religion in civilization. For example, Paul Tillich, a contemporary Christian theologian, believes that there is no civilization without religion.

2 - The Concept of Civilization in Imam Khomeini's Thought

By reviewing the writings and speeches of Imam Khomeini (RA), we can say that civilization is not an issue that has been raised independently for him. But because he was somehow confronted with this concept, he expressed his views on it more as a critique of the Western conception of civilization and denied the attribution of opposition to civilization on the part of religion and clergies. In Imam's thought, civilization does not have a single and specific definition and depending on the uses of this word, it also finds different meanings. In his works and speeches, civilization has been used with words

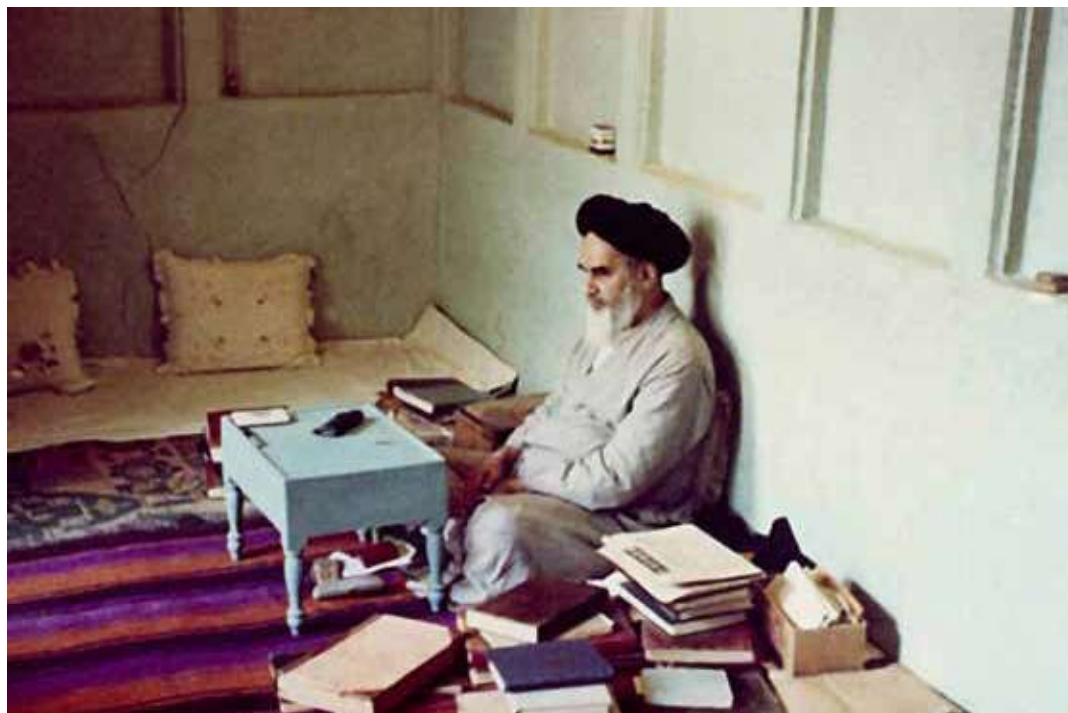
such as progress, development, excellence, and modernity. Examining all these cases, we can conclude that from Imam Khomeini's point of view, civilization is a general meaning of progress in material and immaterial dimensions. He considers cultural, political, economic, and social development, the rule of religion and law and submission to it, the existence of legitimate freedoms, cultural, political, and economic independence, and social justice as the characteristics and effects of civilization (Imam Khomeini, 1989, Vol. 3, P. 368).

In general, in Imam's thought, two distinct concepts of civilization are presented. First, the positive conception of civilization based on religion; A civilization that, while paying attention to the material dimensions, focuses on the spiritual dimensions of human life and places its main support on the spiritual development of human beings along with material progress.

Second, the negative conception of material and secular civilization; A civilization that has given originality and centrality to materialism and has completely neglected spirituality or has marginalized it and looks at it as a subset. In this civilization, what is important is the comprehensive material development of society in the economic, industrial, and welfare fields. The positive concept of civilization can generally be seen in cases where he has used the word civilization in relation to Islam and the revolution and religious scholars, and in contrast, the negative concept of civilization has often been used in relation to Western civilization and imperial civilization. In many cases where Imam Khomeini (RA) has used the word civilization in reference to the West, he has a materialistic picture of civilization in mind and speaks

about it with a negative and critical view. Based on this, it can be said that in Imam Khomeini's thought civilization is a two-way word that can have both positive and negative meanings, and it depends on what image of civilization we present and

its objective manifestation appears in these two areas. Civilization is not an individual and otherworldly thing; although without a doubt, the individual and the hereafter are involved in the construction of civilization, it is in the worldly and social life of man



on what foundations we base it on.

3 - Religion and Its Worldly and Social Scope

The attitude of any thinker towards religion can determine his thoughts about its connection to or separation from civilization. The wider the realm of religion and the more it encompasses the worldly and social dimensions of human life, the more it will be linked to civilization. On the other hand, the more we limit religion to the spiritual, otherworldly, and individual spheres of human beings, the less it will be deprived of civilization. The reason for this is that civilization is basically a worldly and social phenomenon, or

that civilization emerges. Based on this, it can be said that the type of religious attitude of each thinker will determine the type of his civilizational attitude.

4 - The Comprehensiveness and Maximum Realm of Religion

Imam Khomeini is one of the thinkers who deeply believes in the comprehensiveness and maximum presence of religion in human life. Belief in Islam, as a comprehensive religion that has a plan for all aspects of human existence and in all fields (Ibid: Vol. 10: P. 449), is one of the fundamental beliefs of Imam Khomeini. He believes that, unlike the material schools which are one-dimensional

and have dealt only with the appearances and the material dimension of human existence (Ibid: Vol. 11, P. 125). Islam is a religion that supervises all personal, social, material, spiritual, cultural, political, military, and economic affairs, and has not neglected any very small point that plays a role in the education of human beings and society and material and spiritual development (Ibid.: Vol. 5, P. 119). Imam Khomeini was completely against the one-dimensional view of religion and believed that those who only take sides with spirituality and leave the community, and those who only take sides with the community and leave the other side, are not Islamists. A true Islamic scholar is one who knows and understands Islam in both its material and spiritual dimensions (Ibid., Vol. 4, P. 190).

5 - The Religion of Islam at the Highest Levels of Civilization

Considering what has been said about the comprehensiveness of Islam, Imam Khomeini's belief in the relationship between Islam and civilization is very profound and he considers it at the highest level. In many cases, in response to those who have introduced Islam as opposed to civilization and progress, he says explicitly and decisively: Islam is not only not opposed to civilization but has been a civilization-building religion and one of the founders of a great civilization in the world. A religion that, with its own teachings, succeeded in establishing a new civilization in the world. According to the Imam, Islam is at the highest level of civilization, and the civilization that strives to achieve it is at its highest level (Ibid: Vol. 8, P. 415). According to him, what guarantees the realization of a civilized society is the school of humanity (meaning Islam) (Ibid: Vol. 9, P. 82).

6 - True Civilization; Religious and Spiritual Civilization

In Imam's view, the true and transcendent civilization is a civilization that is based on religion and spirituality, and a civilization that avoids religion and conflicts with it is materialistic and low. The highest level of civilization, in the Imam's view, is a controlled civilization in terms of material dimension. (Ibid: Vol. 1, P. 516).

It is on this basis that Imam Khomeini (RA) states: "The Islamic religion does not oppose progress and development or manifestations of civilization, but as soon as these manifestations of civilization become anti-religion and negate the roots and basis of religion, then religion begins to oppose them. As a matter of fact, what is opposed to religion is the distorted form of the manifestations of civilization and not the very principle of civilization and all its manifestations (Ibid: Vol. 4, P. 48).

7 - The role of religious government in the realization of Islamic civilization

Many theorists of civilization believe that the political system and government are the pillars of any civilization. Therefore, if religion wants to play a role in civilization, it must be involved in politics and the political system. Imam Khomeini is one of the Muslim thinkers who deeply believes in this relationship and is one of the theorists and founders of religious government after the early Islamic period.

8 - Practicing the Theory of Islamic Government

Imam's belief in the necessity of forming a religious government was not limited to the field of view and

opinion, but he put it into practice by forming a religious-political system. Imam Khomeini, as the founder of a religious government in the contemporary period, has linked civilization with religious government and considered the Islamic government equal to progress and civilization (Ibid, 1989, Vol. 5, P. 69). He considers the formation of an Islamic government as a fundamental step towards the realization of Islamic civilization and believes; Without the formation of a government, many of the rules and laws of religion will not be realized in society. Accordingly, the goal of the Islamic movement is to move towards the establishment of a correct civilization, which is the divine civilization of Allah and his messenger Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) (Ibid, P. 343).

9 - Universality of the Islamic Civilization

Imam Khomeini's ideal is the revitalization of Islamic civilization at its broadest level and even loftier than how the Islamic civilization was at the beginning of Islam and its early centuries. It is based on this thinking that the strategy of unity is one of the most important issues in Imam Khomeini's thought, the realization of which is a necessary condition for Muslims to overcome the obstacles and reach the high level of progress and civilization. Considering the Imam's deep knowledge of the irreparable harms of division in the Islamic world, at various times and repeatedly, he considered division and discord among Muslims as the main causes of their backwardness and believed that commitment to Islam and the unity of the word would ensure its progress. He considers the call to unity as the religious duty of all Muslims.

