

# The Essence of Evolutionary Culture

## [Culture is a Bi-polar Reality \(Innately Internal and Innately External\)](#)

The bi-polar quality of culture means it possesses both innately internal and innately external aspects, just like the bi-polar quality of beauty does. Since conceiving beauty depends on human psychological and mental characteristics (other living beings are incapable of it), comprehending culture also has an innately internal aspect resulted by “The Principle of Protecting Evolutional Essence.”

As beauty has a virtually external aspect, such as the refreshing appearances of a flower, moonlight, a river fall, or beautiful handwriting, so does culture, like observable examples of morals, works of art, and architectural characteristics representing various external acquisitions and ideals.

The most apparent evidence for the bi-polar quality of culture is the same as that of beauty, which is specifically devoting the capability of comprehending beauty to man. In other words, cultural life is exclusive to human beings. If we consider all of the given definitions for culture, we find that none are applicable to animals.

Human perception and activities are undoubtedly unlimited from an evolutionary point of view. Man's experiences throughout history obviously prove that although no human being can innately achieve the essence of greatness, moving on a path towards the highest virtues is nevertheless a characteristic of mankind which has caused his immense accomplishments and all well-established encyclopaedias around the world approve of.

Hence, those activities and phenomena not rising from mental and psychological processes cannot fit in the definition of culture, no matter how appealingly fantastic they may be. Even if interesting issues play a role in preventing life from becoming monotonous and fading the boundary between physical and spiritual affairs, they should nevertheless be excluded from culture –for the sake of the essence of culture itself let alone when they are harmful, e.g. obscene pictures which demolish moral chastity, or

some types of music and drugs.

Unfortunately, fallacious paralogism has brought about deviations in the highly virtual meaning of culture, degrading it to a level which ranks humans with lowly animals, like gathering many huge snakes intrigued to bite; as ancient Persian culture states:

نیش عقرب نه از بهرکین است اقتضای طبیعتش این است

*“Scorpions do not sting out of revenge or hate; their nature causes them to do so”*

However, some lethally dangerous “human beings” tend to use all of their valuable capabilities and talents consciously for their own selfish pleasures and desires, reasoning that ‘pain is terrible, and losing one's wealth and possessions is truly painful’. This is the natural ego observed in man throughout history.

Can brotherhood, equality, reasonable liberty, graciousness, and human dignity be achieved through such natural egos so deeply immersed in conflicting disturbance? By no means, for such a wish would prove only a humiliatingly deceitful hallucination.

Therefore, accomplishing high virtues such as unity, logical equality and brotherhood in human societies inevitably requires perfect cultural elements like proper, meritorious morals and the highest qualities, such as justice, dutifulness, sympathy towards peers, accountability towards other fellow citizens and conceiving the exquisite glory of the universe by comprehending its beauty and fine order, all of which guide man along the quickest possible way to the creator of the rules of equality among men. No other path would lead to the pure ideal depicted by Universal Human Rights, man's general culture, morals and human universal nature.

Nowadays, scientists, experts and anyone with the least basic knowledge can merely refer to any well-known encyclopaedia to realize the essence of a culture able to save humanity, which can be defined as:

*“The proper quality or deserved methods used for those of man’s physical or spiritual needs based on human logical thoughts and emotions arisen from reasonable evolutionary lifestyles.”*

This is a fundamental part of our discussions on culture. In other words, by presenting the definitions of culture in various well-known encyclopaedias all over the world, we prove –at this critical period of time –that the commonalties between them all are properness, perfection, physical and spiritual development, graciousness, dignity, integrity, meritorious life, responsible freedom, and lawful justice.

Now let us analyze the above mentioned definition<sup>1</sup> that we stated as the most comprehensive of all. Doing so, we will come to four main principles vital to achieving the important ends and content of

culture.

## The Four Principles of Culture

**ONE:** The concept of culture –as presented in civilized nations –include “proper-ness” and “deservingness” based upon the logical thoughts and emotions arisen from people. Thus, although some phenomena in some societies may be regarded as culture, they cannot even be considered as true cultural phenomena, let alone if they conflict with reasonable thinking, emotions, and literature for they do not contain logical thought or perfect human emotions. This is why no aspect of selfishness (racism, greed for money, power, fame or pleasure) can fit into the concept of culture, for as we quoted from the world's most distinguished encyclopaedias:

*“Culture is the proper quality or deserved method of the phenomena in man's life; in other words, culture contains the highest values.”*

Thus, those who call greed for fame, money, power, pleasure, selfishness or mutiny culture, have betrayed the highest of human virtues terribly. Calling a person or a society cultureless is the worst insult possible.

**TWO:** Without culture as we defined it, human life does not deserve to go on, for a life without culture means a life empty of meaning, thought, logic or perfect human emotions.

**THREE:** The more the culture of a society depends on logical principles and high human receptions, the more meritorious and proper it will be.

**FOUR:** Culture is a two-dimensional reality, consisting of absolute and relative aspects.

Clearly, by “absolute” we do not mean in the philosophical sense, but that it is much more comprehensive than other relative cultural elements. Such a categorization brings us to general and special cultures.

Special cultures, caused by the relative aspect of culture, pertain to certain nations or peoples of specific thoughts or emotions. A few notable examples are the cultures of bullfighting in Spain, or the exaggerated amount of courtesy and bowing in Japan.[2](#)

General culture pertains to meritorious qualities appropriate to man's physical or spiritual lifestyle, phenomena and activities not limited to any specific nation or race, e.g. cultures like aesthetics, mutual respect among people, justice, knowledge, and creating heroes.

We may conclude from the above statements that, since culture means the proper qualities fit for the physical or spiritual phenomena and activities in man's life, accepting and reflecting the totally natural compulsory facts or effects of human life such as eating and drinking cannot be regarded as a part of

culture; however, their connection to prayers, which is quite common in Islam and some other religious societies, fits into the domain of culture. Defending one's life, preparing a shelter, or accessing scientific or philosophical facts through the senses can also be considered as a part of culture.

## **The Connection between the Necessary Cultural Elements and the Merited**

It is quite difficult to make a clear distinction between these two types of cultural elements without encountering a conflict, for accusing man of ignoring the gloriously perfect human ideals for providing the necessities of his life, would be denying the most obvious of fact –all reason and conscience.

Defying human glory and man's great ideals, and degrading mankind down to being equivalent to honeybees, means destroying all humanity. Furthermore, isolating cultural concepts from the vital facts of life –like knowledge, science and other mental activities that adjust or life –leads to the separation of perfectionist tendencies from normal life, which in turn causes spiritual dilemma between “natural and evolutionarily spiritual” life.

Early in the 21st century, we have seen many pioneer societies on the earth making great effort in order to implement the most realistic economic, social, legal or moral ideologies in their communities. Not only did they fail to do so, but they have even –as we have already seen in the definitions of culture in such countries as Russia or China clearly admitted the necessity of a pioneer spiritual culture regardless of any presumptions of an ideology.

Accepting the necessity of culture is not brought about by one or a few conventional factors, but by man's human nature, without man would totally lose his humanity when “man stepped which out of his prehistoric caves and entered the unfeeling wheels of a machine.”

Hence, ever since man came to being, he had culture beside him to provide his life with delicacy and fulfil his highest spiritual ideals. Man's close connection with culture has given profound cultural value to morals and arts (in a general sense), true knowledge, “taboo morals”, customs and even laws. It is quite a simple, unquestionable fact that without spiritual culture,<sup>3</sup> man would lose his life.

Solzhenitsyn<sup>4</sup> has thus elaborated on this matter at the International Congress of Philosophy in Liechtenstein:

*"We can generalize the same moral expectations we consider for man to governments, rulers, parliaments and political parties. If politics does not have a moral basis, there will truly be no future for mankind. Russians have been literally witnessing this since centuries ago. I unfortunately see that my countries' goals have fallen way behind even the West.*

*After seventy years of unbelievable pressure and suffocating dictatorship, there is now abundant*

*freedom among the poor classes, and many people have totally forsaken their conscience; however, we must not let this problem distribute among other countries. As we approach the end of the second millennium, this problem continues to threaten all of mankind.”*

## The Progress Crisis

He adds:

*"We do make progress –but in what? What kind of advances are the issue here? Progress is limited to technological civilization, more luxury in life and military explorations. We are voraciously swallowing the nature that we take for granted. But among such progress –devoid of any moral development –our physical needs increase with such extreme rapidity that we are left confused.*

*We insatiably keep expanding our possessions (in other words, we more and more use up our resources of human identity); however, when it comes to acquiring higher moral virtues and spiritual goals, we prove to be futile tools of greedy exploitations. Transportation and communications now take place at incredible ease; people can travel all around the world with a mere pressing of a television button.*

*Yet, in the middle of such an ocean of superficial information, the human soul is not only failing to progress, but is actually heading for doom. The more materialistically luxurious man becomes, the more will his spiritual life fade away. Scientific, technological, and economic advances are leading us to slavery. Constantly in seek of new discoveries, we have lost our goals; what indeed, is the end in life? We failed to escape from our endless responsibilities.*

*Telephones and television demolished the integrity of our time, and began to impose the conditions upon us. Communication among humans began to frail. People, particularly the elderly, found themselves living alone. Unable to put technology to use in welfare aims or to unite humans, we have become its plaything. Progress couldn't keep us away from globalizing responsibilities. Furthermore, we are increasingly unprepared for them.*

*We have lost the rhythm that was always alongside our virtual and physical well-being; good and evil have become illusively obscured. Another outcome of our spiritual degradation is the absence of the relaxed attitude we used to have towards death.*

*However financially secure one may be, the fear of death starts a cold sweat on any tycoon's skin. Insatiable, scandalous lifestyles have brought about an immense horror of death. As man gradually tries to consider himself the center of the universe, he tends to see the universe as a part of himself, rather than see himself as a part of the universe.*

*The presumption "Everything leads to death" has begun to dominate us like a threatening weapon. Nuclear threats rule the Twentieth century. Although everything seemed indifferent afterwards, the threat created a uniting concept in order to impose itself again on Western societies. Towards the end of the*

*century, internal ideological decay caused Communism to self-destruct. The demise of Communism caused the nuclear threat to recede, at an unpredictably rapid rate. The world, however, still does not feel completely secure.*

*Communism still lives on in Some parts of the former Soviet Union, for as brutal capitalism continues to disgustingly ravage its national resources –to such an extent that even has the West astonished – Communist slogans on 'equality and justice in poverty', have appealed to classes unable to withstand the conditions"<sup>5</sup>*

## **Has the Reality Called Culture Undergone Evolution throughout Historic Changes?**

Progress in several cultural elements, such as science, cultivating talents and potentials, usually responds with a positive answer: Yes, culture has evolved throughout history, Of course, evolutionary progress in culture is any perfectionist human being's ideal. But does history also confirm such progress?

If development means scientific advances concerning nature and human lifestyles, such culture has definitely made profound progress. The reason is quite obvious: the vital needs of life in nature, and also man's greed and ambition for power, has greatly expanded the necessary phenomena of culture.

We have already noted in our definition of culture that the necessities and worthy aspects of cultures do not always necessarily arise from reality, for man has time and again created artificial demands out of his selfish greed for power, and labelled them the necessities of life. For instance, exploitations, weakening peoples' will power and various sexual intrigues have been called art, considered a meritorious culture.

However, the other aspect of culture –including man's evolutionary needs for perfection –despite an ideal to any clear conscience, has not only failed to progress, but even shrunk due to advances in man's necessities for natural life (i.e., physical culture), to such an extent that it is sometimes considered as a disturbing factor. Let us consider the reasons why physical culture has made so much progress, but evolutionary culture heads for deterioration (of course, we do not intend to deny any exceptional cases):

1. Inability in finding a culture that can moderate selfishness and protect and follow evolutionary virtues.
2. Affections that lead to positive virtues vanish due to the ignorance of cultures receiving reasonable and observable beauty.
3. Neglecting cultures concerning rights, power and how to use power in order to uphold righteousness.
4. Ignoring the culture of benefiting from outstanding figures and genius among the society.

5. Greed for power, fame and wealth has demolished man's culture of scientific conscience, except for a painfully meagre minority in which it has been confined inside their pure souls

6. What on earth happened to the constructive *culture* that could elevate human relationships from a *hide- and-see* charade to an ocean of pure souls where waves constantly meet?

روح انسانی کنفس واحده است روح حیوانی سفال جامده است

*Human spirit is a unified soul, whereas in animals it is but a rigid lump of clay*

در عدد آورده باشد بادشان بر مثال موج ها اعدادشان

*Their number is as great as the wind, and flow strongly as waves*

چون که حق رش علیهم نوره مفترق هرگز نکرد نور او

*His light will never suffer division for God supports it.*

7. After all these years of endeavour to create civilizations and humanities, and all the toil and sacrifice put into making fundamentals –like a) meritorious life, b) human grace and dignity. c) reasonable. responsible freedom and d) total equality towards laws – a reality, not only puppet rulers today still unconsciously do obey powerful tyrants totally ignorant of humanity, but philosophical cultures such as Machiavellian's doctrines on survival and the theories of authoritarians like Hobbes or Nitché are even taught at universities without the least criticism.

There are dozens of other examples verifying evolutionary meritorious cultures being are ignored by the majority of today's human society.

Among the worst effects of the decline in meritorious evolutionary cultures on man's life was his deprivation of acquiring higher virtual truth, which led to committing any kind of injustice. As a result, their perception of reality has become extremely limited. Let us consider an example of such intense limitation:

People have lost their ability to comprehend mental reasonable beauties. Mechanized life culture prevented man from understanding the beauty lying in the universe and in the essence of life. In other words, man is now only capable of sensing the beauty of a flower (an observable beauty) –that is how painfully degraded mechanized life has made him.

Thus, the beauty of realities such as justice, righteousness, freedom of conscience, human dignity and chastity and the essence of life remain buried in books of sermons.

Various greed-driven crimes defying all morals and conscience, especially in political cultures, have caused irreversible damage to evolutionary culture.

The changes occurring in the logics behind human socioeconomic trends –shifting towards increasingly consumerist societies requiring more and more manufacture –has demolished the culture of “earn to live”, which leads us to “live to provide the desires of the greedy” culture:

*“In today's technological circumstances, the motto has become: More Production, Better Economy!”*

Do they really not know –or do they consciously ignore –who is actually responsible for more production? Are they unaware of those trampled under the pressure of manufacture increases? They do not seem to realize at all that however plentiful the mines and resources on earth may be, they will eventually run out.

Racism and regionalism are other “meritorious evolutionary anti-cultures” that are rapidly strengthening along with the “development of today's civilizations”. In fact, unlike many short-living socioeconomic theories and schools of thought, racism and regionalism are rooting stronger day by day, putting all laws, cultures, knowledge, economics and universal human power up to ridicule.

## **Disharmonious Cultural Elements in Real Facts May Demolish All of Human Culture**

We have already mentioned that since man is directly involved in the formation of culture –it is man who builds up a culture out of his environment, historical phenomena, relative and/or absolute ideals and his concept of ideology, and also it is man who attempts to harmonize permanent laws with temporary events in a period of time in order to create a culture he could live by, and finally because man has too many aspects to harmonize –cultural elements usually suffer from disharmony, and ruling authorities prefer accountable “things” rather than “people”.

The primary reason for such disharmony is the authoritarian and power-greedy tendencies that prefer cultural elements directly or indirectly effective in enhancing domination and power. Thus, there would be no need for any organized system of social culture.

In other words, it is possible to have a moral culture based on emotions and still base scientific culture on purely mental anthropology .Like-wise, having abstract tendencies in ethical artistic cultures, and yet seeing observable tendencies in its historical culture is also possible. Or maybe a purely supernatural religious culture beside a totally realistic scientific culture, e.g. European Christianity during the last two centuries compared to their scientific realism.

The reason behind the destructive effect of disharmony of cultural elements upon the entire Islamic culture lies in the unity of human life, primarily based on “man's evolutionary virtues.” When basic

cultural elements fail, unity vanishes and all of human culture faces certain doom. The most harmful form of disharmony in cultural elements is the isolation of spiritual basics and mental human virtues from physical aspects of culture, which is a result of greed for wealth, power and purely animal-like desires.

Here is an excerpt from a paper by Paul G. Bahanan, anthropology professor at the University of California:

*“All cultures undergo change, some slowly and some rapidly. Since culture consists of various factors. Changes in one of them would also affect the others. Some sociologists believe that many social problems are due to disharmonious changes in cultural elements. Cultural retardation occurs when some parts of a culture tend to follow others. Many cultural retardation in the history of the United States have occurred in its non-physical traditions, thoughts and issues. Science and technology advance so rapidly that they have put spiritual issues way behind<sup>6</sup>.*

## Reasons for Disharmony in Social Cultural Elements

The main reasons citable for disharmony in the cultural elements of a society are:

1. Selfish rulers: No meritorious reality in the world has survived destructive influences by the selfish. When people believe that “law” is a spider web aimed to entrap the meek, culture will indeed be regarded as devoid of any worthy qualities of life or compulsory guidelines.
2. Hedonism, which arises with “the natural self” and strengthens with nihilism, and defies all laws and principles.
3. Authoritarianism, in any form or caused by anyone it may be, demolishes all cultural merits, and so cleverly decorates their remains that it seems to claim, “I have granted you the most desirable culture you could imagine!” Poor simpletons who never cease to be deceived time and again by jargon like cultural or civilizational transfer.

راو هموار است و زیرش دام ها قحطی معنی میان نام ها

*The road is smooth, but riddled with hidden traps; an abyss of meanings in an ocean of names.*

لفظ ها و نام ها چون دام هاست لفظ شیرین ریک آب عمر ماست

*Words and names are like traps, as pebbles beneath water (our life) passing us by.*

## Pursuant Culture and Pioneer Culture

*“Pursuant culture refers to physical or non-physical qualities and ways of life based on no pre-*

*established principle, but seeking approval only through people's desires.”*

In other words, such cultures arise from any need, behaviour or desire people have, regardless of their compliance with man's non-physical realities.

Thus any of people's desires opposing religion, morals, dignity or logic can be considered as culture! Such Fraudulence in the name of culture<sup>7</sup> has greatly spread during our times, and will undoubtedly lead to the annihilation of humanity.

Although pursuant culture obviously means obeying human desires, we must keep in mind that it also provides selfish authoritarians with the chance they need.

In fact, this kind of culture both satisfies people's purely natural desires, and those of their rulers, who find the opportunity to not only fulfil their people's wishes, but also disguise any factors opposing religion, morals or human dignity in the name of culture.

Pursuant laws could prove to be much more suitable for people's needs rather than pursuant culture, for “laws” pertain directly to the context of people's lifelines, which thus can be constantly modified and adjusted according to people's actual needs; culture, on the other hand, being based on non-physical beauties and delicacies, cannot be manipulated –by people's physical needs. However, any lowly, morality-defying activity or quality is nowadays publicized in the name of culture.

Considering this theory proposed by several sociologists, we may come to the conclusion that a constructive, pioneer culture as the leader of human civilization should be a doctor, not a waiter:

*“Doctors are highly different from waiters, Waiters in a restaurant provide you with whatever you desire, whereas a doctor follows his own academic principles; he prescribes what he believes necessary, regardless of what you think, A pioneer politician should be like a doctor, not a waiter.”*

## **Whenever Man Has Followed Pioneer Systems, He Has Successfully Made Progress**

Let us present a few examples to elaborate on this critical point:

- a. Is it possible for an ordinary person to interfere in the most advanced of academic issues merely by having freedom and pursuant culture?
- b. Can the medical practice allow an uneducated person to examine and cure sick people only on premises of freedom and pursuant culture?
- c. Can we possibly let anyone enter an operation room and, relying simply on freedom and culture, begin to cut up people's bodies?

d. Is it possible to conceive someone stepping into a gun factory and start to comment on everything, and meddle with any tool he wishes, on the basis that, “I am making use of freedom and pursuant culture, of course? The times when people were deprived of freedom and their desired culture are over. Decadence is forbidden all over the world!”

e. Will there ever be a day when anyone would comment on any scientific or technological matter he wished, and if told, “you are not educated in such issues, so you should not meddle or interfere”, he would retort, “Yes, I am entitled to use my own culture and freedom, for the age of decadent deceptions and forcing people to imprison their thoughts are over!”

f. Culture and freedom are indeed amazing. Consider someone whimsically wearing a decorated military uniform. If he faces protest, can he claim, “Down with the anti-Liberty! Down with the anti-culture!”

Obviously, all of the above-mentioned who carry the book entitled *Freedom*<sup>8</sup> should be taken to mental asylums.

Now we can move on to the main point: whenever man has considered an issue essential to his survival, he has applied pioneer principles –sciences concerning human relationships, managing labourers to one's own advantage, social leadership, political activities and employing cultures for specific purposes, medicine, surgery, lethal arms and armour and military propaganda –quite successfully, though man's intrinsic progress calls for the truths about his perfectionist growth.

Hence, all the cries for freedom, free pursuant culture and free art! And humanity was degraded back to even before prehistoric ages. The reason why is that cavemen had not confined their potential for progress to their own selfish desires, and had –consciously or unconsciously – begun to activate their talents.

Here are a few examples of the culture of facts demolished in many societies –not because they failed to resist and satisfy man's evolution, but due to selfish rulers making illusive brainwashing using terms like freedom, free culture, free arts and other deceiving magic tricks:

1. Culture as authentic sympathy for our fellow human beings, not a business tool;
2. authentically moral consciences guiding our souls towards the highest goals of life, like a precise compass;
3. culture, the highest aim in life;
4. culture depicting honesty and keeping promise only for its moral desirability, not for making a profit;
5. culture in the form of responsible freedom and just deeds and thoughts;
6. culture as the sacred identity for knowledge;
7. culture in the form of cooperation in making use of various forces, which are blessings;
8. culture as the generalization of constructive, pioneer arts;
9. culture as referring to the media, documented propaganda, avoiding lies and misinterpreting the truth;
10. culture as the highest of cultures, providing all people with their deserving earnings.

Out statement, “Whenever man has followed pioneer systems, he has successfully achieved progress” does not imply that man can evolve progressively by abstracting and adjusting a group of key issues called laws; we mean to state that throughout history, whenever man has made and obeyed laws based on well-prepared information –without the influence of public desires –he has made successful evolution. Thus, in issues concerning science, technology and any matters benefiting man’s physical needs or selfish desires, we see man successfully using pioneer culture, whereas in evolving the essence of man –which involves religion and morals –he has totally ignored pioneer culture, and followed cultural phenomena in the name of “following free culture.”

## **Cultures Can Be Categorized into Four Main Groups:**

1. Sedimentary culture: In this form of culture, fixed laws based on ethic, mental, geographical and historical factors form totally unchangeable lifestyles and guidelines which can destroy or adapt other changes to their own advantage. If non human and non-natural factors cause a sedimentary culture, compulsory environmental factors or the people’s psychological in capabilities to adjust to positive changes may lead to useless insisting on ‘self’-orientated activities.

2. “Colourless liquid” culture refers to deceptions and explanations based on no fundamental, psychological roots, which are hence constantly variable. Societies possessing a history, of course, seldom seem “colourlessly liquid”, for as we have already seen, cultural ism originates from a basically active psychological source.

Any society throughout history tends naturally to pass its concepts and guidelines in life on to its next generations, and while this phenomenon –or better said, psychological factor –remains, the culture will also keep its stability in a number of activities and effects.

Thus we now come to two points:

a. As we have already mentioned in our discussion on Cultural Disharmony and Its Reasons,<sup>9</sup> there is no logical need for the cultural elements of a society to be harmoniously related; therefore, some elements may be “liquid,” rootless and highly change-prone, while others are stable and well-established. In some Arab societies, for instance, stable moral cultures accompany fervid changes in political cultures.

b. Despite being a relatively stable phenomenon, and however constructive a culture may usually be, when based on Machiavellian rules of social life management, they will fade away. We also know that despite all of the immense advances man has made, he is becoming increasingly powerless in distinguishing “means and ends”, particularly in societies incapable of managing human power; in such societies, power dominates people, and their essential culture destroys any principle or culture aiding them to achieve their goals.

3. Self-orientated culture (pursuant self-orientated): In this kind of culture, activities and effects that interpret cultural facts are essentially the desired ones, and completely quench cultural ideals. Such “self-orientation” specifically pertains to 19th and 20th – century scientific, technological and economic cultures.

“The self-orientated” inhibits the main identity of culture, which is creativity and developing the ideals of the “human self” in various aspects of life. The other effect of “self-orientated” culture –which is by no means less dangerous than the first – is changing man from the creator of science and technology to a helpless part of them. We should keep in mind that when one or several aspects of human life.

For example, the art of make-up –turns “self-orientated”, it would become unable to satisfy other culture-seeking aspects –e.g., the desire for truth. Therefore, duality in character arises; the ego partly mixed with the effect (in this case make-up techniques) dissolves in it, for it has turned “self-orientated”, and the other, seeing the rest of the human culture-seeking aspects fade away, gradually disappears, and the whole character is engulfed by the original effect.

Fortunately, observations show that not many people are obsessed by “self-orientated” influences, so there are always people conscious enough to condemn other's infatuation by some qualities in life or the weakening of other human culture-seeking aspects. Alexis Carrel in 20th century France, Thomas Eliot in England and William James in America – and also many other scholars from all over the world –have openly denounced such Internal captivities.

4. Dynamic, objective and pioneer culture: The following verses depict the pure source this kind of culture originates from:

قرن بکنشت این قرن نویست ماه آن ماه است و آب آن آب نیست

*Centuries passed; and a new one began; the moon is the same, but the water flowing by is not.*

عدل آن عدل است و فضل آن فضل هم لیک مستبدل شد این قرن و امام

*Justice and greatness have not changed, only the centuries and the rulers have.*

قرن ها بر قرن ها رفت ای همام وین معانی بر قرار و بر دوام

*Many centuries have one by, O valued one! Yet, these concepts have remained firm and strong.*

شد مبدل آب این جو چند بار عکس ماه و عکس اختر بر قرار

*Though the water in the stream has changed repeatedly, “the moon and the stars seen in it are still the same” (Mowlavi)*

بس بنایش نیست بر آب روان بلکه بر اقطار اوج آسمان

*Thus, the moon and the stars are based not in flowing waters, but in the highest of heavens<sup>10</sup>.*

This kind of culture is not affected by activities susceptible to the variables and unstable aspects of life, for it is caused by permanent natural facts and originally human aspects, and aims for the relative ideals guiding man towards the highest goal in life. In fact, this is definitely the human culture that is essential to any human civilization throughout history. This is the culture that can free itself from greedy, selfish rulers and continue serving the society.

Its other quality is its ability to neutralize morals and traditions based on imperfect thoughts, efforts to fill the realistic gaps of life, and in general, all unstably regional factors devoid of authentic ideals.

By further studying creative, objective and pioneer cultures, we understand why many other human cultures have diminished. The main reason is the sedimentary activities caused by the deterioration of their creators, or “self-orientated” cultures in which man imprisons himself instead of any analyzing and explaining his activities. Therefore, even if the cultural results they cause are able to survive, they will gradually turn taboo, and disappear from the horizon of the society.

## **What Causes an Objective Pioneer Culture?**

We must first bring back to mind the culture-seeking factor cited in the four definitions before addressing the roots of objective culture.

The general history of mankind, scientific evidence and philosophical experiences all prove that man cannot remain satisfied with his compulsory natural and biological qualities (as bees or ants do), and when his basic physical needs have been provided, he will strive to know the “hows and whys” of nature, turning his whole environment upside down to find his answers; and since his sensory, logical and mental viewpoints are unlimited, after achieving each goal he asks himself, “Now what?”

Taking such adventurous, insatiable behaviour towards various situations into close consideration brings us to a basic reason (or reasons), without which we would never be able to comprehend the motives behind objective –or even other –cultures. It would be impossible to find out the factors causing the rise, climax, demise, fall, or even transfer of cultures between societies without taking the roots of culture-seeking into consideration. Likewise, we would not be able to achieve a pioneer, objective culture.

Human culture-seeking appears to be based on primary and secondary factors:

THE FIRST ROOT is the active psychological factor arousing man to build and arrange his natural, physical surroundings and adjust the unchangeable phenomena around him in a way appropriate to his creative self.

THE SECOND ROOT refers to internal and external factors belonging to specific countries or peoples which determines the former root, and explains their modes of life.

Considering the first –and primary –root of culture– seeking, we may conclude that cultural diversity is as numerous as those of human aspects aiding man to adjust and change the world according to his ideals. However, we have already seen that man is not capable of building a perfect culture that would satisfy all of his various aspects; he cannot accumulate and organize all different cultural components. Unfortunately, every civilization throughout history has had to suffer such failures.

The reason for the above–mentioned inability is not due to negligence or uncontrollable inhibitions blocking the culture–makers way, but lack of attention to the active psychological factor aiming to both build a suitable home out of natural, unchangeable processes, and cause positive changes. On the other hand, we should remember that confining a society to –for instance –its ancient monuments, does not suit today's dynamic trends. Also, how can a bundle of taboo behaviours established ages ago – with or without good reason –be able to satisfy today's highly developed man? Indeed, such arts, morals, beliefs and lifestyles can play an active role in today's culture in two ways:

**First:** Their general social and/or psychological impact– if they have caused any.

**Second:** Historical application and understanding how lifestyles of the past were colored by those cultural affects, and also how the society found its definite path, the perfect “home” its people had made.

In order to have an authentically original culture; we must relate all of our ideal activities and/or outcomes to the active psychological factor, which –although stably creative– can provide them all. It would prove totally infertile, however, without being saturated with the crystal– clear viewpoint arising from man's internal, perfect culture for life.

We had better now elaborate briefly on the clear aspect of culture.

## Culture's Clear and Observable Aspects

The observable aspect of culture refers to those ideas, ideals and accounts of life materialized by visible effects in our world, e.g. works of art, moral ethics or technology supplying our requirements.

The clear aspect of culture depicts the ideals, emotions, morals and goals chosen for man's life, which – consciously or unconsciously –account for his individual or social lifestyle. They are “clear”, which means they have no visibly observable aspect. For instance, when a French historian writes about Napoleon Bonaparte from a clearly racist point of view, he would definitely call him the greatest hero of

all time, as an Iranian racist historian would do so with Xerxes in a clearly racist approach.

Assessing *The History of Gibbon* on the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, Whitehead also believes that:

*“Gibbon has produced a successful account of history, albeit from a totally 19th century point of view.”*

Ever since the eighteenth century, the scientific aspect of culture has in two ways brought about the current situation in the West through intensive brainwashing:

**First:** an incredible, human reality –the eagerness for discovering facts –that has been a human ideal ever since the earliest times: science. As it provides men contact with facts, science is considered a critical virtue of life, thus engulfing all mental endeavours around the world.

**Second:** science gave birth to technology, which caused great luxury in people's lives. Societies where technology was developing became so fascinated with its economical and prestigious advantages that, not only did they totally forget humanity and a deserved human life, they even made science a slave of its own creation, technology –“scientific bankruptcy”<sup>11</sup> arose, and logical human virtues were totally ignored. A clear aspect of “We are the highest race” and “We are Pioneers of Human Development” was engraved in their minds! It is now still spreading at full strength.

The unbelievable result is, the motto “I have technology, so I am the greatest on earth; I own everything all over the world, which I may use at will!”

This, indeed, is the culture that is gradually destroying original, worthy cultures of different peoples, and has clearly turned into an anti-culture.

The great cultural aspects that have been sacrificed by the clear “We are the greatest” aspect are: the highest of human emotions, a broad scope of life, the high aim of life, sympathy, and balancing powers and privileges to man's benefit. It has revived the fight for survival, which thousands of prophets, wise men, philosophers and any other human-loving person all around the world tried so hard to uproot!<sup>12</sup>

## Various Clear Aspects of Culture

The clear, unobservable aspects of culture –which account for its observable ones –differ widely in nature, range and activity:

1. The nature of some clear aspects of culture –which can also explain its visible aspects –arise from natural human qualities, like selfishness, greed for power, etc, each of which vary greatly in form and approach. Since they are human-originated their range is much stronger and greater, or as Thomas Hobbes claims, “Man can attack man like a wolf.” We must keep in mind, however, that all conscious individuals or communities aware of humanitarian sacrifices made in benefit of human justice and

emotion throughout history, not only do not admit being affected by –and accepting –selfish and power-greedy aspects, they even pretend to be against them.”

2. Racism and inadvertent patriotism, (in any way, not illogical patriotism) is another clear aspect of culture that is –consciously or unconsciously – influencing other aspects”

3. General ideals all well-balanced humans have agreed on throughout history, such as science, arts, civilization, health care, etc.

These clear aspects, if activated without being contaminated by selfishness or ambitiousness, can be –in their true nature –extremely useful. But unfortunately, as we have already mentioned, they have caused sidekicks which have totally demolished their creators' good name.

Saving ourselves from such clear aspects –which first entice us with their attractive appearances, and then turn into oceans of selfishness and greed to drown us –is only possible through determining the greatest of goals in life and adhering to them.

## How to Improve the Clear Aspects of Culture

Although the simplest and most straightforward, the way to improve the clear aspects of culture is also in the most exclusive and essential one proposed by wise intellectuals. It is, however, the longest and most complicated, too.

The most direct, simplest, and still the longest and most complex way is for man to return to himself; today's man has fallen greatly astray from his own self.

Clear aspects, of culture interpreting and explaining all cultural effects and activities are like glasses with colored lenses, changing man's viewpoint of his life. These aspects of life can undoubtedly give no pure reflection of man's observable world, for reflected observable phenomena cannot be more effective than their real image; purely imagining beauty is never as influential as seeing real, visible beauty. The imagination is only intrigued when the viewer wants to possess the beauty, or paint a picture of a beautiful phenomenon.

Likewise, a mental image of freedom cannot be as intriguing as real freedom; it can only be effective when it proves its desirability to the imaginer.

Therefore, we must distinguish clear aspects of culture from pure imagination; in order to do so, we have to consider the fact that clear aspects have the activating effect reflections and imaginations are devoid of. Besides, reflections and imaginations identically reflect what exists in the visible world –like a mirror – but they ignore their relationships with each other or basic goals fundamental factors; the clear aspect, however, accounts for all observable facts along with their connections with logical ends.

Hence, all dimensions of life –pleasure, pain, knowledge, need, logic, imagination, morality, religious and ideological tendencies, artistic creativity, etc. are explained by the clear aspects of culture. If they are confined to facts formed by compulsory, thoughtless activities, they would in fact only be reflections acting on naturally– originated factors.

We may conclude that, in order to provide satisfactory answers to the “hows and whys” of life, the clear aspects of life should provide man's highest ideals in life. Thus, we can state that any culture unable to determine the highest aim of life, will also definitely fail to provide its ideals.

Without activating the constructive aspects of life, the highest aim of life would not be capable of being creative or dynamic. Any individual or society requires evolutionary goal–setting –whatever its cultural effects may be –in order to achieve an objective freedom which can ensure the survival of an original culture. In such cases, any cultural effect or activity would prove devoid of any saturation by idealism or providing a basis, like a heap of compulsory activities. Aimless works of art, despite being highly attractive and exquisite, can only motivate us momentarily, but they do not guide us after we are aroused. If we accept the necessity of objectivity in original cultures, the rigid traditionalism in some cultures would definitely turn into original, constructive ones.

Cultures move towards their goals just like souls do. In fact, the culture of a society depicts its soul, and all of its cultural activities and affects represent the attitude of its spirit.

Thus, the only way to create an original, objective culture is to enhance the emotions and thoughts of the members of the society, and make them so harmonious that each human being would freely be able to create his/her own desired culture.

As we have already mentioned, without elevated goals, it is impossible to achieve true freedom of character, otherwise the society would fall into “free” slovenly cultureless ness, which would shatter away when compared with other cultures. Now that we have realized the need for explaining and interpreting the highest reasons and goals of life, we should find an ideology capable of such interpretations vital for creating an original, objective culture.

Ever since earliest times, many ideologies have proposed various ideas on the highest aim of life; however, by studying them, we come to a universally agreed conclusion: “Any target is located higher than the one that is aiming at it.” Thus the aim of life must be much higher than the mortal phenomena and activities of everyday life in order to provide a satisfactory explanation for the whole fundamentals of life.

Tendencies to move towards higher goals will certainly prove incompatible with the rise or fall of some cultural effects and/or activities; furthermore, the cause–and–effect rule puts culture –the “effect” –into the right evolutionary course. Of course, there is great debate over what the great aim should be, and we do not tend to go into its complicated details.

With the exception of hedonists and nihilists, all schools of thought –as we have already mentioned – agree that “the target is always higher than one aiming at it.” Thus, no school of thought can present phenomenon or activities as the highest goal to make an original culture –or as Mowlana Jalaluddin calls them, the “shadows of life”:

لطف شیر وانکبین عکس دل است هرخوشی را آن خوش ازدل حاصل است

*“The pleasure of eating honey and milk arises from the soul, all pleasures arise from the identity of human soul.*

بس بود دل جوهر و عالم عرض سایه ی دل کی بود دل را عرض

*Thus, the heart is the true essence, and the world but an effect, How can the shadow of one's soul become its cause?*

The most valuable and greatest quality of objective culture seeking an objective life is its logical organization of cultural elements –the highest human ideal. Objectiveness leads to cultural organization, as having an aim for one's soul causes mental order and discipline.

It should not be so surprising to us that cultural elements suffer from so great disorder in most human societies today, for philosophers and intellectuals have also for some time claimed to be unable to determine the true aim of life. After all, when the human spirit is mutilated by economists, lawyers, psychologists, expert sociologists and greedy technologists, how can we expect a culture with logically organized elements?!

All in all, we are left with no choice but to first solve the puzzle of the aim of life, and then move on to organizing the fundamentals and rules of a culture. Culture– maker today are apparently obliged to consider the highest aim of life; otherwise, the way today's mechanical lifestyles and uncalculated civilizations are going on, they will undoubtedly face nihilism.

## **The Highest Aim of Life Makes Original, Objective Cultures**

No aim can suitably explain a certain period of human life –his lifetime –including all regional and social, factors depending on historical knowledge and human capabilities without addressing these four questions: Who am I? Who am I with? Where am I going to? Why am I here?

By such questions, man undoubtedly intends to find out how he depends on his world. Now matter how his ideology may be, it is enough for man to have a world to be born in, get familiar with, develop a passion for, and finally die.

Without love to explain our relationships with the world we live in, there would never be any of the vast, fascinating cultures that have formed throughout history, nor any of the arts originating from man's far-reaching ambitions. Perfectionist, ambitious man, always reaching for higher positions –however highly accomplished his activities may be –can only be saturated by divine attractions –to which the only way of entrance is the human soul –unless, however, a cultural activity or effect is exaggerated and disguised so greatly that it would satisfy man's insatiable spirit. Such cultures would prove alive, colourless, sedimentary and self-orientated.

Considering our above discussions, we come to the conclusion that it is impossible to achieve a dynamic culture without religious and ideological factors caused by objective life.

By “ideological factors” we do not mean a heap of illogical, unverifiable beliefs, but man's spiritual awareness moving on the path of evolution towards divine attraction. As Iqbal Lahouri says:

جیست دیر برخواستن از روی خاک تا که اکہ کردد ازخود جان باک

*What is religion? Rising from the earth, to achieve self- awareness of the soul*

Along such a path, the world has been resembled to man's precious body, full of both cultural results and activities to “decorate” the home. In fact, the precious “home” is the world inside the “self”, which will stay with us forever; it is not a place to stay for some time and then leave.

## **The Culture Established by Islam**<sup>75</sup>

The culture established by Islam is an aimed life that strongly activates human aspects of aestheticism, desire for knowledge, logic, and idealism, and organizes all cultural elements. It does not isolate scientific culture from high human morals, does not separate artistic culture from the culture of economic guidance, and finally, considers the unity of culture as a dependant upon unity in human souls, thus preventing its destruction. The elements of Islamic culture –referred to as “culture of the mind”, “qualities”, “science”, “morals” (literally) and “the best form of all affairs” in major references –all belong to a high concept: wisdom and philosophy.

This wisdom includes any kind of activity able to enhance objective lifestyles for each individual or society. The first founder and promoter of this culture is God, who granted man the means to write, talent, power to express himself, taste, and the constant desire for seeking perfection and stable basics in the ever flowing stream of events.

As a result of this culture:

*“Three centuries after the Holy Prophet (s) died the city of Qartaba. with a population of one million, had eighty academic schools and a library including 600,000 books:*

*Arabic had become the main language of science. During this era, knowledge resumed spreading around the world. Zachariah Razi (251–313 AH) did a thorough study on smallpox, and his colleague Abul-Qassem Khalaf bin-Abbas Zahravi (d 404 AH) did the same for brain and spinal bone diseases.*

*Avicenna (370–428 AH), named "the prince of science", had upgraded medicine in the Islamic society to such an extent that when one of the kings of Castill caught smallpox, he asked his enemies in Qartaba for help.*

*Mohammad ibn-Jaber-ibn Senan Battani (d 317 AH) has brought much honour to his country through his famous works. A noble aristocrat, Battani had great respect for Ptolemy, although he himself exceeded Ptolemy in accurately studying the equinox calendar, and was the first to use the sinus instead of the hypotenuse, which led to today's trigonometry<sup>13</sup>.*

Literary culture as a whole –the voice of any cultural ideal –became such a mighty creative factor in Islamic societies that by presenting Jalaluddin Mowlavi and his like, it influenced all other constructive cultures around the world, and any literary school of thought today recognizes Mowlavi as one of its constituents.

However, other ordinary cultures do not enjoy such systematic establishment.

Let us take the statement "Literary and artistic modernity inhibits scientific advances"<sup>14</sup> into more careful consideration. By comparing it with the article "Scientific Bankruptcy Announced",<sup>15</sup> what may we conclude. ..?!

On the other hand, had the need for organizing and saturating all of man's psychic aspects been taken into consideration while constructing and continuing cultural changes, certainly no advance in one cultural affect would inhibit the others; in other words, literary and artistic modernism would not prevent science from developing and inappropriate expectations of observation, experience, or ignorance towards ideological culture and scientific bankruptcy would never happen.

As we have already stated:

*"The culture established by Islam is an aimed life that strongly activates human aspects of aestheticism, desire for knowledge, logic and idealism, and organizes all cultural elements"*

Artistic constructions in Spain, India, Iran and Syria – about the highly exquisite qualities of which all scholars on art agree –depict how strongly Islam enhances aesthetic aspects.

The Koran has pointed out God-made beauty on seven occasions, for instance:

*"We have adorned the lower heaven with the adornment of the stars."*<sup>16</sup>

*"We have set in heaven constellations, adorned them out to beholders."*<sup>17</sup>

*"Say: Who has forbidden the ornament of God which he brought forth for His servants, and the good things of his providing?"[18](#)*

In the above verses, "ornament" and "adorning" refer to beauty, both in its general and special meanings. The first two verses show its special meaning, and the third refers generally to any attractive, useful phenomenon.

The plentiful Koranic verses encouraging thought had such a profound mental effect on Muslims that very soon Islam became the focal point of science and knowledge. During the dark Medieval era, when all countries were deprived of any knowledge, Muslims successfully kept the flame of science burning. Other cultural elements, such as moral ethics and idealism, also highly flourished. All of these organized advances were due to their being based on the original principle of the objectiveness of life. If the basis is destroyed, all effects arising in the name of culture will also be of compulsory origin, showing fake liveliness like a water-sprinkled flower cut from its stem.

## Can a Society Have Various Cultures?

Before we answer this question, we must determine what is meant by "various" cultures. Let us consider some different kinds of culture:

**First:** cultures able to coexist in harmony due to their original commonalities, e.g. the cultures of holy religions (Islam, the Jews, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and any other religion able to verify its holy origin).

The best reason for the potential for harmony among the above-mentioned cultures is the vast amount of various vital qualities that have made all divine religions ever since Abraham (a), uniting people from many religious bases.

We clearly see how Islam, by providing freedom of belief and culture for the religiously intellectual, made harmony possible between them and Muslims, and all were able to endeavour in fields of science, ideology, industry, and culture throughout various eras of history; it seems the Islamic civilization has belonged to them all.

Can history ever deny the intimate, sincere co-operations various religions have made in medicine, in hospitals and research centres around the world since many years ago?[19](#)

The real commonalities between various religions causing their harmony are original realities such as:

1. The source of the universe (God);
2. God's wisdom and will in order to emancipate and perfect man (by giving them logical thought, conscience, and great prophets);
3. the realness of eternity;

4. the fact that God Almighty is truly the greatest and wisest;
5. all divine religions agree on the fact that man deserves a meritorious life, and is definitely entitled to dignity, graciousness, chastity, responsible freedom, education in all spiritual and/or physical matters.

Of course, all religions agree on the basic rights in Abraham's religion; therefore, they should also be in agreement on any cultural element based on these rights

**Second:** cultures harmoniously common in fundamental ideologies and basics of natural life, and also cultures having the same ideas about the optimum, logical life –though their common points may not be religious

Examples are celebrations after victory over a common enemy threatening all people's lives; also, commonalities in creating arts that depict man-made advances towards a better life in this world

**Third:** cultures that conflict in their ideas and concepts of the universe, particularly in their interpretation of life and its primary end

Even if such cultures do not neutralize each other, obviously their differences would in time make them all 'colourless' cultures in coexistence; however, since their 'colourlessness' is due to disturbing conflicts, they would never be capable of harmony.

There are numerous examples of these cultures, like the contrast between Iran's national culture and its religious culture –Islam. Of course, their 'contrast' does not imply that they cannot harmoniously coexist; contrarily, as we see, the elements of national culture based on the real issues of physical and spiritual life –that can play a useful role to mentally prepare people to accept factors leading to prosperity, are also accepted in the religious culture, like artistic poetry which is a highly popular art in Iran.

Provided being applied in accordance with facts serving man's prosperity, this cultural element is not only undoubtedly accepted by Islam, but even strongly encouraged by some religious references to be used to develop descriptions of realities about the world and man as they should be.

The criterion for cultural harmony lies in those affairs useful for man's physical and spiritual life. Such high cooperation and harmony between national and religious cultures caused Iranians to begin the greatest of scientific, philosophical, artistic, industrial, legal and moral services in the framework of Islamic culture, thus raising Iran to its pinnacle of flourish. Let us now briefly address national, religious and western cultures and their compatibility with Iranian culture.

Those who claim Iran is capable of having three different cultures, should first consider the fact that, when added to a land, 'nation' is not just a word anymore; Iran's history goes way back in time, and our country has seen various cultures in different eras. These scholars should be asked, therefore, which one of Iran's culture they mean.

Iranian culture has gone through various periods; the Arian invasion; the Medes era; the Achmanid era;

the Arsacides; the Parthians; the Keyan dynasty; the Sasanids; and many other eras after the rise of Islam. Are the commonalities among all of these eras meant here?[20](#)

## Is Islamic Culture Compatible with Western Culture?

If by “culture” here we refer to phenomena making man's logical mode of life understanding, objective and mentally enlightening, it is not only certainly compatible with Islamic culture, but also even encouraged and promoted by it. The criterion is, however, whether Western culture is capable of basing itself upon an objective man in an objective world or not.

During the last decade of the twentieth century, hedonism and utilitarianism dominated man's life goals in the West. Of course, we do not mean to deny the unquestionable figures and goodwill intentions occurring in Western countries. But the dominant trends are, as we mentioned above, mixed with various forms of opportunist authoritarianism.

In brief, Islamic culture is based upon a “logical mode of life”, which originates from the commonalities among divine religions (actually, all from Abraham's religion); undoubtedly, any culture –Western or Eastern –able to adjust itself to these common basics can have a profound role alongside Islamic cultures in reviving the prosperity of human societies.

Therefore, those who opine on the possibility of three harmonious cultures (national, religious and Western) coexisting in Iran, are either not thoroughly aware about them, or have been lured to express such ideas.

Now let us consider the basics of today's culture in the West, and see whether they are acceptable in Islamic culture or not.

First, we should keep in mind that the fundamentals of Western culture do not account for all of its people's thoughts and interest –the definitions given in dictionaries and encyclopaedias verify this, too – and are merely facts consisting of the foundation of their culture, or may be imposed by authoritative force.

Therefore, persons or phenomena exist in their life–styles which contradict the basics of their culture. A few of today's fundamentals of Western culture are:

- 1. Worldly life:** man's “last” stop. Stated in most Western works, it makes up for the majority of Western scientific culture. Unfortunately, the authoritative power of science –sometimes even more forceful and inhuman than Medieval infidelity –is at times used for verifying this basic of their culture; scientific appearance, obviously, is sometimes much more harmful than scientific outcomes.

Thus, with all of the evidence given by human conscience and pure logic that the world cannot be the end of man, relying on science in order to deny this fact will not only make science seem worthless, but

even stupefying.

2. Absolute freedom for any individual or group, provided that they do not disturb others' legal rights  
Thus, individuals must have no legal confinement in life at all; one can commit the filthiest of actions, and nobody can stop him/her.

Let us remind those who “expertly” tend to mix Western culture with Islamic culture about quotations made by the US Attorney of State:

*"For an American, law and religion cannot conflict more. Western countries, even those that do not insist on the boundary between religion and politics, consider the law as just a worldly issue highly influenced by current affairs....which legislators and law courts are to carry out. The government should control it totally, not churches or religion. Thus, the law we have in America cleverly by-passes religion, and only breezes past moral dutifulness. In other words, an American can be law-abiding and still morally deteriorated."*[21](#)

Can a culture only considering man's coexistence and legal rights towards other people ever be compatible with a culture that takes account of all human aspects, guiding them in a law-supported “logical” path?

3. The essence of power: although the essence of –power is generally not a main component of Western culture –it is even still rejected in some Western literary and more works –but alas, its influence shows in every aspect of today's political and social culture in the West –particularly the practical aspects. Even cooperation, teamwork, appreciation for one's peers and their decisions is considered a device for achieving power; thus, the current trend in Western culture is not “Death is the natural destination for the weak; no powerful dies before weakening”, but the strong trying hard to weaken people in their own physical aspects, leaving them to struggle towards their “natural destination”: death!

4. The essence of pleasure: Not only does–Western culture encourages pleasure in life, it even uses scientific jargon to justify it: “Depriving oneself of pleasures leads to complexes and other psychological abnormalities!”

Although these passionate lovers of fame admit that leaving pleasures causes mental activities to weaken:

جز ذکر نی دین او ، نی ذکر او سوی اسفل برد او را فکر او

*Sexual pleasure his entire world, his filthy thoughts would take him to the bottom of hell. (Mowlavi)*

they did not expand the concept to the pleasures of science, mystic knowledge, helping others, justice and piety.

**5. The essence of profit-making and opportunism:** Utilitarianism is so obviously established in the West that there seems no need to prove its dominance through reasoning, explanations and surveys. This part of Western culture claims man to be constantly seeking his own benefits: “No one can stop me from achieving what is to my advantage; I am entitled to take as my own anything I consider advantageous to me, even though it may harm others.” Is this correct, or had we not better say, “Nobody has the right to harm or damage what I have?”

From logical, moral, legal, philosophical and religious points of view, definitely the latter is correct. It is totally immoral to let people appropriate anything they consider to their advantage! This can be claimed only when all people have the right to deflect harm coming to them.

**6. Machiavellian trends in political culture:** This method weakens all human rules and principles to the benefit of politicians' goals – who are definitely unaware of man's various needs thus making everything unimportant in their viewpoint

It is true to state that ever since Machiavellian methods stepped into human management, the essence and formality of mankind has suffered irrevocably. We shall address another point on this matter in the next item

**7. Spreading pragmatism without correctly interpreting it:** If it were interpreted so that it claimed abstract, unreal concepts useless and inapplicable for finding out the truth about the universe – since they are neither receivable nor practically usable – we could regard it as logical and acceptable, but the actual case is, the only criterion used to judge issues is clearly observable, outer actions.

However, man's critical mental, spiritual and physical needs cannot be considered as acts; hope, goodwill, recognition of observable, logical beauty, justice and spiritual persistence and dutifulness are highly superior to utilitarianism and are the highest ideals and pillars of morality of most great religions<sup>1</sup>, for they pertain to man's spiritual grandeur.

When a culture considers the observable actions as the criterion, it has in fact ignored the most fundamentally important element of evolution: man's spiritual development.

**8. Limiting scientific knowledge:** Limiting knowledge to what can be observed merely by physical senses and human-made laboratories, confines the primary factor in man's development – religion, morals, wisdom, mystic knowledge and other originally mental realities of man's soul, the omission of which led to “The Bankruptcy of Science”, and human survival in the 21st century was put into great danger.[22](#)

**9. Presenting irrelevant issues in the name of philosophy and ideology:** It is an undeniable fact that for many years, not only has the West failed to come up with an organized, systematic philosophical ideology, but even ignored the need to define some deeply meaningful concepts. Man, on the other hand cannot freely interpret and explain life without understanding the general basics of the four connections (man–himself, man–God, man–the universe, and man–other people).

**10. Prosaic arts:** It is quite surprising how “arts” can be combined with the “prosaic”, which refers to anything low and destroying high human morals. The prosaic, referring to all of the immoral, cannot exist alongside art, which arises out of perfection.

Today's Western art –if it can be called art –merely aims to astonish its viewers. The more amazed they become, the more artistic a work can be considered!

On the other hand, any prosy, root-drying, meaningless phenomenon can be presented to the unaware in a highly attractive form, and still cause the same amount of amazement. But can such spectacles reveal any of the realities concerning man's objective path of life? What kind of persons will the outcomes of these kinds of art be? Neither these arts, nor their creators have been able to answer such questions so far.

As a whole, cultural triteness and employing culture to serve physical desires, utilitarianism and authoritarianism, is enough to destroy any culture, for when man falls into banality and unlimited physical desires, he has no identity left to provide a culture with.

## **Moral Corruption is the Main Reason for the Deterioration of Western Culture**

Let us now quote from Mr. Robert G. Ringer's statements, which are of the most alerting cries of the human soul in Western societies –drowning in mechanized infidelity, insensibility due to superficial, limited desires – depicting the fall of original, human cultures:

“What has caused the conditions of life in the West to change so much? Why have all of the good qualities vanished?”

In my opinion, the answer lies in the cleverly– laid conditions of ‘Abiding by Gradually–Imposed principles’. A highly effective technique, abiding by gradually– imposed principles becomes even stronger when man has some dependencies. Let us go into greater detail. Studies have shown that man does not respond positively to sudden changes; in fact, he goes into defence and puts up a strong resistance.

However, there is also much evidence that shows man cannot resist gradual changes, a fact well– understood by the enemies of individual liberty. They are clever enough to realize that they must act patiently. History clearly shows that the world cannot be changed in two weeks. However, by moving step by step towards their goals, no one would ever notice their evil plans infiltrate people's lives. Thus, people give in to *gradual changes*, considering it their destiny.

Some generations may consider a particular lifestyle as slavery, whereas other generations may think of it as freedom, for each generation knows only its own lifestyle. Thus, the deterioration of Western societies is the strongest evidence for the influence of these gradually imposing methods.

People have grown accustomed to the crisis around them; they have accepted the decadence, corruption and chaos that fill their surroundings. Only hope keeps them going; all they think of is when the demise may happen. Few people, however, believe it would ever take place, for such falls are mostly based on momentary actions.

The demise of the West fills quite a fluctuating diagram. America has deteriorated much faster during the years 1913 to 1963 than the previous 137 years. Among those fifty years, the last two decades prove to be more intense. However, there is no concrete evidence that deterioration accelerates every year, or that the Western civilization is nearing its demise; but it is definite that the present conditions will not be able to carry on easily.

Although man has always faced problems, we now have many more problems than our predecessors, anyone over thirty years of age –by just looking carefully around him –will definitely agree on this. Unfortunately, however, most people do not even want to realize the danger threatening them. Their way of reasoning is quite amazing. They believe that if one neglects the problems and dangers (‘whatever will be, will be’), everything will look normal to him; his worries will fade away.”[23](#)

Mr. Ringer thus accounts for the rise of human rights at the time morals are disappearing in the West:

*“When all moral ethics in the West were about to fall, Human Rights arose like a sacred belief– or, better said; a major law (or right) –and gradually turned into a strong bond of unity among people. Whatever we name it –republic, mass, population ...is irrelevant! In a democracy, human rights mean safeguarding the borders of the country, which is the best way to satisfy the people. But the crucially important point is, many consider it in its lowest meaning: violating others’ rights in the name of the ‘majority’s rights’; in other words, the stronger is always right! Such concepts are obviously in no way compatible with justice or morality.”*[24](#)

When asked, “Is it too late?” Mr. Ringer says:

*“I am frequently asked whether it is too late to save Western civilization or not. I believe the question is incomplete. Keep in mind that moral revolution has come to an end, for those social laws giving the rights and authority to desires –based on the idea that ‘Man is Entitled to His Desires’ thus making chaos a sacred law –have reached their peak. So the more appropriate question will be: Can we rediscover and recover our former moral qualities? Can we ever make those moral values again the base of our civilization?”*

*If we can, there should be no worry whether it may be too late; there is no reason to believe we are incapable of providing people in the West with a new life. In my opinion, the only hope is to rediscover Western civilization by means of correct moral values. Therefore, we should be brave, wise, and consciously try to find what destroyed these moral values, and then rebuild them.”*[25](#)

Mr. Ringer should keep only one thing in mind: If he used “human civilization” instead of “Western

civilization”, both the East and the West could be saved; ignoring the East and solely focusing on the West would prove aimless, for the two are strongly related. Is only considering the West not racist favouritism?

This, indeed, is the destructive factor which originates from selfishness, and is the root of all problems in our times –especially in the West.

Now let us consider the views of the renowned scholar, Erich Fromm, on the effect of cultural deterioration on the humanities in particular:

*“Man is the only being that kills its kind without any biological reason”.*

*“Modern psychology is quite lifeless, for it easily cuts a human into different parts, ignoring a whole, living human being. In other words, it considers man as a set of certain qualities put together –like a machine –and totally overlooks him as being alive”.*

*“Nowadays, man is considered as a tool still without a machine to be used in. A complete human sees himself / herself as an active piece of goods (in other words, an independent item of merchandise); hence, he is lonely and miserable. However, he tries to save himself from his misery. He is searching for happiness, but is fighting a losing battle.*

*“In today's societies, man has become a zero, a part of a machine; as long as a society sees profit-making and production as man's highest end, this is inevitable. I believe today's social establishment has destructive roots, for it produces tendencies for destruction. The greater the tendency for destruction, the more miserable man will be, and in turn less positive towards life.”<sup>26</sup>*

## **Factors Stabilizing Cultures throughout History**

Some cultures or cultural elements certainly seem more stable than others. Various theories have been proposed accounting for their stability, and it is quite useful to study them. First, we should keep in mind that some cultures have not at all remained firm due to their elements being general human virtual facts –in fact, they should be regarded as man's virtual elements “as they are.”

Studying these cultures may make their scholars and followers put serious effort into finding the natural reason brought about by their geographical, economic, social, political and historic aspect; thus, through realistic assessment of their cultures, they may refine and advance human ideals and come to dynamic, objective cultures.

For instance, slavery was a culture that even great scholars like Aristotle approved of; although it covered all human qualities in its own framework of slavery, it was still a totally incorrect culture that dominated most ancient lands. However, this culture cunningly rules out one of the most vital virtues of man –responsible freedom –thus upsetting man's developed thoughts into a state of confusion and

disorder. Islam, on the other hand, considered slavery a phenomenon totally irrelevant to man's "actual" virtues, and set out to demolish it.

Thus, the reason for the stability and deep influence of a culture cannot abstractly lie in its human virtual reality. In order to recognize if a culture is truly useful and stable, therefore, we need not the period of time of its duration, but its basic factors. A few of the basic factors that stabilize cultures are:

Factor One: the positive relationship between a culture – or some of its components –and the needs or luxuries of the members of a society. For example, the unique culture concerning living beings in India is based on regional factors or beliefs about living this only see in that area; likewise, the traditions of Nourooz (the new year celebrations) in Iran are due to Iran's climate, and have been established for many years.

Factor Two: is time; the more aged cultural elements become, the higher their value will be. It is impossible to account for this factor, but we can say that firmness during a long time can be sign of stability in cultural elements; however, it is not enough to prove it. Selfishness has existed throughout the whole history of mankind; very few cases can be found in which man has succeeded in keeping his virtues aligned with true logic and used them correctly –the majority have fallen astray in assessing "themselves", and instead of having the proper "self"(safeguarding their innate virtues up to perfection), they fall into ill-mannered selfishness. Such examples bring us to the conclusion that the stability of a culture in human lives does not necessarily imply its righteousness, although anything advantageous to man can prove original, and will remain firm for a long time.

Factor Three: the formation of the culture of traditions, customs and beliefs plays a crucial role in giving a society a special nationality, and causes the people to be focused and organized. Soon these cultural elements will turn into the identity of the society, which it will defend to the last breath; of course, this is due to the fact that as time goes by, there is more communication among cultures, which in turn enhances cultural studies and research, and modifications would prove necessary .

Factor Four: the compatibility of cultures with facts and realities is verifiable. The stronger and deeper their compatibility, the better the stability of the cultural elements.

Apart from the second factor –which considers cultural stability as due to time and duration –the other above-mentioned factors do not do so. In case of the first factor, the reasons and necessities leading to the beliefs of the society require concern, if they are based on the psychological rules of the peoples; time will undoubtedly be unable to influence it. And if it depends on the personal beliefs of the intellectual figures in the society, two factors will determine its survival.

- a. the qualitative and quantitative influence of the outstanding figures in the society;
- b. their qualitative and quantitative background logically supporting their culture's stability.

If the supporting factor is their cultural crystallization –directing the people as a truly original establishment –the culture will be deeply engraved in people's souls, and can strongly unite them. This is why time will not be able to influence it, for it enjoys logical backing.[27](#)

## Blind Imitation of Past Beliefs and Cultures Inhibits Logical Thought and Wisdom

We have already accepted that the firm establishment of culture among people does not necessarily imply that it enjoys originality or is compatible with reality. Although a culture well–engraved in people's lives and souls does become a viewpoint to man and the world, many cultures past and present lose all of their composure when it comes to logical analysis; therefore man must analysis the dominant culture of his society and eliminate any sedimentary, baseless elements in it if he wants to take positive steps towards “elevating evolutionary life.” But alas, sometimes imitation dominates great minds so much that all of man's thoughts are blocked. It seems we deny the fact that:

*Imitation destroyed people; a thousand damns be upon imitation! (Mowlavi)*

*How can an imitator also be a researcher? How can a wise one be the same as a fool?*

Centuries come and go, but society leaders still do not understand how destructively inhibiting imitation is. Maybe they are afraid that without imitation in people's individual and social life, they would not need management anymore.....have they not ever thought that the power– greedy must first change from “person” to “thing” –in other words, from “researcher” to “imitator” –before they can change people, take advantage of them, and imprison them in a cage of illogical imitation?

In brief, depriving people of sin, recognizing true life and its rules is a greatly unforgivable and deserves no less than being banned from God's kind blessings.

Blindly following the beliefs and traditions of the predecessors ruins one's mind; likewise following those drowning in their animal desires, those who have totally put aside human morals or dignity in the name of freedom, modernity, progress, culture and so on, using such deceiving jargon to destroy all logic, consciousness or conscience.

This is not an Eastern theory or religious prejudice, for we can see even more intense reflection, of such hatred for Western leader, by Western scholar, themselves in an interview with **Spiegel**, one of them had said, “Shame is fading away, and the urge to kill no longer know, any bounds. The mass media – television and radio stations the most have brazenly begun to use force and impudence in order to attract more customers for the general industry.

Cultural critics are complaining about inadvertent violence, and have announced a moral disaster condition Sociologists, psychologists and politicians are angry with the sexual corruption presented in all

cultural area, –TV and the film industry in particular. The confusion caused by insolence and violation is so great that even the Liberal Church of the Bible cries out about it in its publications.

“The women in Bayer have signed petitions demanding laws against sexual misconduct and violence Sociologists discuss subject like ‘violence in arts’ or ‘tendencies towards new terror’. The daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* has spoken of unprecedentedly high violence in the community, claiming a state of moral disaster which has engulfed the whole urban area, A, violence and harassment changes from a forbidden crime to a hobby, unprotected, confused humanity tries to condemn the increasing pressure and oppression upon foreigners, violence in street stadium, and public transport vehicles.

Freud's mysterious statement comes to mind:

*“The lack of shame is a sign of mental weakness. The conscience does not function anymore.”*

Spiegel: Mr. Duerr<sup>28</sup>, violence and violations are increasing day by day. What is wrong with this society?

Duerr: In my opinion, the basic problem is the destruction of social relationships, which leads to what man calls emotional death –in other words, the “end of warmth.”

The mass media also accelerate it by spreading it so much. Although our modern, free society has brought us happiness, there is one problem with this freedom –it took away from us the warmth that used to exist among families, and dominated man's social conduct.

Spiegel: How is the demise of family attachment related to the lack of shame?

Duerr: They are definitely related. For instance, physical shame means limiting the signs of sexual behaviour in order to keep a personal relationship chaste.

Nowadays, people have no respect for selected friendships. Therefore, privatizing sexual attraction is meaningless.

Spiegel: What if brazenness grows? If physical shame– as you have stated –arises from man's nature – how can we witness impudence increase every day?

Duerr: The Pope and the high priests are still in deep discussion on the nature of man. Sociologists, on the other hand, also stubbornly resist. What I'm trying to say is that, however people's social life may have formed, physical shame plays a critical role in it, for it can reduce social frustrations, and strengthen the relationships between married couples; that is why with shame fading away, adultery has increased to such an extent.

Spiegel: But this freedom is highly publicized, contrary to your theory.

Duerr: There certainly has been no society yet in which personal relationships are really so intensely publicized. This behaviour has also led to violence. It seems to be unprecedented throughout history.

Spiegel: Freud spoke of a lack of shame that weakens the wisdom of mind.

Duerr: That is true; there comes a time when man realizes that his own incompetence has led to a great lack of culture and civilization. Progress-orientated theorists have always claimed that primitive societies enjoyed much more zeal, endeavour, desire and uncontrollable instincts that we do in our well-established society today.”<sup>29</sup>

It is needless to mention how strongly Islamic culture and other divine religions have repeatedly warned man about the role of lust and undisciplined life in weakening thoughts.

مرد را ذوق از حیا و کمر و فر مر مخنث را بود ذوق از ذکر

جز ذکر نی دین او نی ذکر او سوی آسفل برد او را فکر او

که بر آید تا فلک از وی مترس کاو به شوق سفلی آموزید درس

او به سوی سفلی می راند فرس کر چه سوی علو جنباند جرس

*“Manhood lies in effort and endeavour, not indulging in sexual pleasures. No matter how sophisticated he may get, his indulge will degrade him: His cries may go high, but he himself will fall.” (Mowlavi)*

Faith, the highest outcome of logical thought and elevated emotions, is destroyed by shamelessness.

Imam Ali (a) has said:

لا ایمان لمن لا حیاء له

*“One, who has no modesty, has no faith.”*

Although Freud states that, “The lack of modesty is a sign of mental weakness”, how can he –with all of his emphasis on the necessity of saturating sexual instincts in any way possible –consider the lack of modesty as a sign of a weak mind?

## Culture Adoption and Its Causes

Cultural adoption has become quite popular these days. As religion-opposed, immoral activities and phenomena are infiltrating religious societies,<sup>30</sup> the nobly dignified ones become more and more terrified.

We shall address culture adoption by considering a few points:

**One:** From an absolute point of view, is culture adoption wrong or right? What is included in the cultural concepts and elements being accepted?

Obviously, the third part of this question is correct, and it must be determined what kind of culture is being accepted. If it is “the suitable methods or meritorious qualities for those of man's physical or mental activities based on logical reasoning in sensible life”, such a culture would undoubtedly be accepted, as it has been throughout history –man's perfectionist potential would seek it under any circumstances.

The most evident example possible for this is the Muslims' fantastic endeavours throughout the 2nd through 5th centuries (Hijra) which innately aimed to establish culture, civilization and adopt the meritorious, suitable aspects from other countries. From the Caspian shores to the Atlantic waters, they prevented their original, evolutionary culture from demise. Such pioneers of culture and civilization indeed discarded any filthy, immoral phenomena that opposed religion in the name of culture, and only considered those realities which were advantageous to man's physical and spiritual life as culture.

**Two:** Adopting dynamic, objective (evolutionary) cultures, although quite vital, does not mean imitation without studying, examining and refining.

خلق را تقلیدشان بر باد داد ای دو صد لعنت براین تقلید باد

*Imitation ruined people, a thousand damns be upon imitation! (Mowlavi)*

Imitation is destructively wrong, no matter whether something good or bad is imitated; in any case, the copycat is totally unaware of what he is doing. The only difference is, if a meritorious reality is being imitated, it will lead to good effects, despite without the role of the imitator. Literary culture quite clearly elaborates on this:

خدا خوان تا خدادان فرق دارد که حیوان تا به انسان فرق دارد

*“One who calls God is much different from one who knows God; as different as men are from animals.*

بدین سان از خدادان تا خدایاب ز دانش تا به عرفان فرق دارد

*Thus, the God-knowers to God-seekers are like mystic knowledge to science.*

مه تابان خور تابان یکی نیست که تابان تا به تابان فرق دارد

*The shining sun is not the same as the shining moon; each shining differs from the other.*

محقق را مقلد کی توان گفت که دانا تا به نادان فرق دارد

*How can a researcher be considered equal to a copycat?*

*How can the knowing be the same as the ignorant?*

If only the laws forbidding copying were seriously followed, there would be no more fluctuation in scientific theories, philosophy and other cultural elements. Recently, 'scientific' theories have infiltrated Islamic societies from the West, and have been imitatively accepted by the unaware as scientific discoveries. If they were told that such issues lack a soundly scientific basis and are merely subjective deductions or assumptions, they would abruptly disagree, "No! you are decadent! You are opposing science! The time for using imagination has come to an end.

This is science, the only thing that can bring about our progress. "These ignorant –and, at times spiteful –people forced others to follow such theories, abusing universally accepted principles such as "Scientific rules cannot be disagreed with." Since their obedience was merely imitation, even when the theories were scientifically proved wrong and rejected in the West, the copycats insisted on their beliefs– as if the clear blue sky were still pouring rain on their houses!<sup>31</sup>

**Three:** There are various forms of culture transferring to other societies. Let us now study:

## Culture Transfer

1. Culture transfer is best in its useful, productive form, which includes realities concerning meritorious methods for man's 'reasonable life.' Such cultural elements –like science, industries, religious qualities and elements based only upon man's pure virtues – are not only suitable enough for everyone to cooperate in their transfer, but also Islam has considered it a religious duty.

Many Islamic references have emphasized on such cooperation. The Holy Koran says:

*"Help one another to piety and good fearing; do not help each other to sin and enmity. There is no piety or good deed in this world higher than spreading elevating cultures that can save man from ignorance, poverty, anxiety, and various needs. And fear God, for surely he is terrible in retribution<sup>32</sup>*

The Holy Prophet (s) has also said:

الخلق كلهم عيال الله واحبهم اليه انفعهم لهم

*"All people are related to God; those who are more useful for others, are the most favoured by God"*

There remains no doubt that only life-saving cultures are the most vital and the most advantageous to man.

In all major references on history and civilization – written whether by Western or Eastern researchers – it is agreed that when Muslims were free of their selfish, tyrant rules during the 3rd through 5th centuries (Hijra), they had the chance to adopt cultural elements from other nations of that time, expand their culture and civilization, and pass on their own useful cultural elements alongside the elements adopted, adjusted and refined; some historians have stated this era as being crucial to the protection of science and culture in the Medieval times.

**2.** Transferring useful cultural elements, in order to gain economic or political advantages. In other words, the society intends to spread useful cultural elements to other societies in order to profit economically politically, or even dominate them; the purpose is not to follow ideal human goals or expanding helpful cultures. In these cases, the communities or nations conceding the cultures must take into careful consideration what they are adopting; otherwise, they would end up with a load of nonsense called ‘culture’, which would eventually ruin them.

As the renowned Iranian poet Nezami Ganjavi writes:

بکفت أن جا به صنعت درجة کوشند بکفت أنه خرد و جان فروشند

*“What are they endeavouring for” one asked He was told, “They buy sorrow at the expense their lives.*

**3.** Transferring culture in order to present the society as a leading pioneer to other societies.

Although such meagre intention may seem unimportant at first, they can lead to destructive aftermaths, for they all originate from selfishness; furthermore, they may even humiliate the society receiving their culture, and demand a reward for elevating their culture. “Indeed, our brain tissue is quite different from yours; we are much more complete, and as you know, the principle of evolution states that the superior can consider themselves as the goal, and others the means to achieve it!”

**4.** Transferring spiritually or physically corruptive and harmful factors to others in the name of culture may possibly be the most vexed of human actions towards their peers. Creating and presenting sexually arousing devices on a large scale –though seemingly scientifically-based phenomena or depicting beauty – actually aims to destroy mankind.

**5.** The production of stories, paintings or other forms of ‘art’ implying nihilistic goals, however exquisite they may be, is equal to destroying human beings.

**6.** Creating any works of art –no matter how attractive or fascinating –that humiliates and ridicules human character is equal to murder.

7. Efforts towards establishing ignorance about social problems and neglecting the poor; cultural affects clearly show this.

8. Any efforts towards depriving people of their responsible freedom grace, dignity and the life they deserve is equivalent to destroying their souls, no matter what or how the cultural activities may be.

9. Any seemingly-cultural efforts towards distracting human beings from eternity and the origin and end of life, is not different from trying to annihilate man's goal – seeking spirit.

Now we indeed realize what a massacre goes on among human communities, or as Jibran Khalil Jibran puts it, “Not only are the murderers of human souls ignorantly enjoying themselves, but they are even publicly announced guilty of murder, and ,till the dead souls around them do not touch them.”

العدل في الارض يبكى الجن لو سمعوا به ويستضحك الاموات لو نظروا

*"The justice that is now on earth brings demons to tears, and makes the dead laugh all its sight."*

والسجن والموت للجانيين ان صخروا والمجد والفخر والاثراء ان كبروا

*"Prisons and death is for the smaller, weaker criminals; the strong criminal, enjoy glory and honour."*

فسارق الزهر مذموم ومحتقر وسارق الحقل يدعى الباسل الخطر

*"If one steals a flower, he is condemned and humiliated; if one steals the whole field, he is considered a significant hero."*

وقاتل الجسم مقتول بفعله وقاتل الروح لا تدري به البشر

*"Murderers of bodies are punished, but killers of human spirits walk about freely."*[33](#)

## Current Cultural Changes

In an article, Paul J. Bahanan writes:

*"Ever since the mid-1800s, cultural changes accelerated at a higher rate, which was due to vast technological and industrial advances; cultural exchange has also sped up. Inventions like airplanes, cinema, radio, television, and so forth, make it possible for customs, traditions or cultures all around the world to be in constant touch. Anywhere you are, you can enjoy American jazz, English football or*

*Japanese kimonos at the same time.*

*Apparently, the expansion of cultural exchange is preparing the grounds for a global culture, and the differences among various peoples fading away. Some fear that this trend will cause man to be deprived of his long-established traditions. Others believe that the development of global cultures would lead to more variety and enrich cultures all around the world.”<sup>34</sup>*

There are a few points to consider here:

**First:** Science and technology have been separated from culture; this is quite considerable, since they naturally provide a purely scientific viewpoint, and establish a profit-orientated basis. The meritorious aspects of science and technology have unfortunately been contaminated by profiteering trends.

**Second:** Advances in culture development and exchange devices are highly crucial and unprecedented. If the cultural relationships and exchanges are not carefully calculated, social problems are very likely, for what is nowadays induced into people's minds as culture is not always originated from purely human emotions. If a general law –like the Human Rights –were written so that not only the study, adjustment and refining of cultures for being put into use for man's evolution, but also preventing filthy, commonplace phenomena entering other societies in the name of culture could be taken care of, original, dignified human cultures would find much more hope for survival; otherwise, the end of humanity would be inevitable.

**Third:** “Apparently, the expansion of cultural exchange is preparing the grounds for a global culture, and the differences among various peoples seem to be fading away.”

This is not as easy as it may seem to be. By carefully studying today's cultural issues, social management trends and various systems of authority and power, we cannot come to deny the role of mighty leaders in imposing powerful society cultures. On the other hand, original, productive cultures which take account of man's highest emotions and spirits have fallen way behind technology and its characteristics nowadays. Let us return to Professor Bahanan's article, where he clearly elaborates on this fact:

*“Some sociologists believe most social problems are due to the fact that some cultural elements progress more slowly than others. Most retardation in the history of the United States have been in non-physical aspects, e.g. thoughts and traditions. Science and technology advance at such great speed that they leave non-physical cultural issues way behind.”*

## **How Cultural Aspects Can Be Transferred from One Society to Another**

1. The almighty God has provided the truth –seeking with the facts about the universe, and –due to His

divine, extreme kindness, concretely confirmed in Islamic references –leaves no positively aimed efforts without fruitful result. The Koran has on several occasions emphasized on the necessity of fruitful outcomes due to efforts:

*"No soul laden bears the load of another and a man shall have to his account only as he has laboured."*<sup>35</sup>

*"And who so does an atom's weight of good shall see it and who so does an atom's weight of evil shall see it."*<sup>36</sup>

Thus, every human being is potentially ready to receive realities by means of efforts; according to this divine–human principle, man's success in discovering truths depends on his amount of effort. This divine–human principle provides all peoples and nations with useful cultural elements, as is verified in this *hadith* by the Holy Prophet (s)

اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصين

*"Seek knowledge even if it may mean going all the way to China."*

It was due to this belief that Muslims made great efforts ever since the rise of Islam towards acquiring the perfect cultural elements of other nations, and not only did they discover plenty of cultural and ideological realities about other cultures during the 3rd and 4th centuries (Hijra), but also fertilized them and got quite significant results with highly elevated their findings.

Thus, Islam not only never prevents adopting positive foreign cultural elements –the most apparent example to name of is science, a means of achieving the truth –but even strongly recommends it. Islam, therefore, accepts any cultural elements that can effectively discover or adopt true facts.

It is of great importance that anthropologists distinguish real scientific issues –which are proved through concrete scientific evidence –from potentially right or wrong theories and deductions; in other words, although such theories aim to account for certain phenomena, they have not yet been definitely approved of. Studying them in anthropological fields as the mere theories or deductions they are, is quite appropriate. It would be highly useful to bring them into a society seeking development and perfection, in order to expand the humanities.

**2.** The current Western knowledge of the nature of man has led to a vast amount of anthropological explanations, concepts and issues so popular that they have become the source of many interpretations about various human aspects, e.g. 'strong tendencies towards essential pleasures and enjoyment,' which following Freud's approval, began to look like a matter of scientific significance.

Apart from a very few number of wise, truth–seeking ones, most people in the West account for human

issues on the basis of the highly popular hedonistic viewpoints. It is the unquestionable duty of a developing, perfectionist society to carefully seek reasons for all human aspects, and to take into serious consideration the fact whether man is naturally hedonistically orientated or not, and if he is, are the pleasures concerned with only natural, purely physical ones?

Should spiritual, mental pleasures not be included? Is a society where no pleasures are based on the pains and inconveniences of others possible? In fact, such people have –using mental, social, regional and political factors –put so much emphasis on a human aspect that does not even innately exist in him that it now seems to be an essential part of human nature in the eyes of the simple-minded. Thus the establishment of Western culture nowadays is not comprehensible without taking hedonistic principles into consideration.[37](#)

3. Some certain cultural elements originate from ethical and regional features exclusive to some nations or peoples, and thus lack a universally human quality like taboo behaviours of tribal customs and particular interpretations of minor aspects of life. According to Islam's definition of culture (as an objective, creative culture), such elements are not only definitely unusable in anthropological issues, but even cannot be considered as ideal cultural phenomena.

4. There are other cultural elements that are compatible with reasonable human ideals. For instance, by studying religious cultures in various nations, we find that some cultural elements maybe considered unimportant in others –or maybe even illogical. A logical reasoning brings us to the conclusion that all of them originate from an extremely reasonable human ideal which has been degraded through time to a worthless phenomenon due to regional points of view and mental manipulations. We face such phenomena in various forms of worship for God. The Koran has also pointed it out.[38](#)

One of the commonest of human ideals that is degraded to lowly phenomena is justice –which, in its general form, is universally approved of. Since law has existed throughout the history of man, there is no exception to the fact that justice is accepted by everyone; when law exists among fellow men, every aspect of their life either obeys the law or defies it. (Let us suppose the latter is the case.) If they obey the law, justice exists; if not, there will be cruelty and deviation. However, we know that justice, in the hands of the selfish, power-greedy and ignorant people, is degraded down to a cruelly unjust phenomenon. When such cultural adjustments are transferred to anthropological domains, they will bring about nothing but obsessing people.

## **How Can Man –Who Accepts Culture and Cultural Activities Due to His Perfection-seeking Virtues – Openly Accept Destructive, Corrupt Cultures?**

Let us first mention again that the reason why man accepts culture is his intense tendency for perfection, which is undoubtedly mighty; individual and social advances in various fields such as science and

technology clearly prove it.

Now we must see why perfection-seeking human accepts destructive, corrupt factors so easily?

The most important reason for corruption is the vacuum-like gap of the realities of evolutionary culture among the society. In such an abyss, man's innate desire for perfection will either fade away, or may remain. If the former is true, lust and animal desire will dominate man's internal existence, and make any kind of corruption seem like enjoyment or even a necessity, and become the highest aim of his life. In such cases, all fundamentals like religion, ethics, law, economics, and politics will be manipulated by corruption, and lead the society for eventual demise.[39](#)

In the second case, if the innate desire for perfection still exists deep inside man, it can again be activated provided the necessary conditions, and attain original, positive cultural elements once more. If society leaders can safeguard it against corruption in fields like religion, politics, law, morality and education, and provide the grounds for its activation, the gap will obviously be filled with original, evolutionary culture. In any case, therefore, the leaders of the societies should protect their people against destruction.

The third case, which is the most dangerous form of anti-cultural invasion, is when the perfection-seeking eagerness is dominated by the 'animal-like natural self.' Thus, man turns into the most dangerous being, who would willingly destroy everything for just a moment of his own enjoyment.

Generally, the desire for perfection may be activated in positive or negative poles:

The *positive pole* pertains to the proper, worthy activities all Prophets, Imams (a) and other leaders of evolutionary human movements have done in order to keep humanity from poverty or infidelity. For instance:

1. How does the Holy Prophet Abraham (a) use this force? He stands firmly against all of his friends and the people of his time in order to make faith in the only God, honesty, sincerity and other moral virtues a reality. The desire for perfection makes him carry out the task sacrificing his own child. It would be impossible to perform such a bitter task without the endless desire for perfection. With all the force Abraham had, even if he had lived for centuries, he would have done the same time and time again.
2. The Holy Prophet Moses (a) faces the atrocities of the Pharaoh for many long years, never suffers the least pain. He could have kept on his resistance for years and years without wavering or fatigue.
3. The history of the efforts and pains of the Prophet Jesus (a) needs no further explanation.
4. The Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (s) said,

*"No other prophet went through as much pain and trouble as I did."*

However, he accepted the pain and trouble so eagerly as if he actually enjoyed it. Imam Ali (a) also showed gloriously profound efforts through both pure worship and sincere services for people in order to enhance their prosperity.<sup>40</sup>

The *negative pole* desires unlimited “self–power”; indeed, degradation into lowly values knows no bounds.

As Nero once said: “If only all of mankind had only one head, I could cut it off with one stroke!”

Ghengis Khan be slaved many societies of his time, and still could not get enough.

Tamerlane made pillars out of the heads he cut, obsessed by the advance of his unlimited power. Those who live only for their lusts and desires consider people as their highest aim in life, even if it may lead to the end of all of mankind. They not only consider their philosophy as the best for their own society, but also regard all of history as a mirror to interpret it by.

Thus, both positive and negative poles of "self"–enhancement lead to an immortal panacea; as Mowlavi states:

کیمیای زهر ماراست آن شقی بر خلاف کیمیای متقی

*These tyrants are truly venomous, painful vipers contrary, however, to men of piety.*

## **Deculturalization Instead of Cultural Generalization**

Unfortunately, culture is falling apart instead of enhancing its common cultural elements during the late 20th century; the turning point here are industrial societies, and only the power greedy, selfish authoritarians know what will eventually happen. If the curve of culture continues to fall into a nosedive, we would be quite lucky if it just degrades us back to our cave days. The ‘new’ culture it advertises deploys every scientific or artistic effort in order to establish animal instincts, and take people far away from highly moral virtues.

We had better call it the ‘anti–culture’, or ‘deculturalization’ of human societies. It tends to deliver the final blow to humanity: first demolish human realities and fundamental values, destroy the sacred foundation called ‘family’, and eventually call the whole earth a useless part of the solar system, and ruin it.

May God save mankind once again from those who destroy human values and deculturalize humanity, and grant us deliverance by enhancing our logic, reason and conscience.<sup>41</sup>

A global culture depends directly on the globalization of the four fundamental realities:

1. global human economy,
2. global human power,
3. global human rights, and
4. global human politics.

Let us elaborate further by addressing:

## Global Culture

1. The idea of achieving a global culture for people of all nations and societies is a great human ideal that anyone aware of man's nature, physical and spiritual needs and commonalities would warmly approve of. The strongest reason for the universal agreement on this matter is the generality of the humanities and literary culture that covers all nations and peoples, and is the same for Asians, Africans or Europeans.

2. By 'global culture' we do not refer to all elements and phenomena, for any society innately has certain characteristics in regard to religion, the universe and fellow men that are exclusive to its own historical, geographical and social factors.

What we mean by global culture are the general realities of culture, such as fundamental moral virtues (love for fellowmen, sacrificing for human ideals), accepting a worthy, meritorious life for mankind, accepting reasonable (responsible) freedom for all, and accepting to try hard to advance man's highest goals.

If the four above-mentioned fundamentals (global human economy, global human power, global human rights, and global human politics) are logically established, global culture is obviously achievable. We realize that all divine religions –originating from Abraham's –based upon man's pure, innate virtues (especially Islam, which covers all of their basics) would warmly accept such a culture. If all human societies do not possess the four fundamentals, this culture will never be able to exist.

The reason why is quite clear. Considering the definition for culture (the proper, worthy or meritorious qualities for man's physical or spiritual life phenomena or activities based on logic and emotions originating from **reasonable life**<sup>42</sup>, no society can enjoy a dynamic, objective evolutionary culture by means of an imperfect economy, lack of establishment for people's physical or spiritual enhancement or a legal system truly addressing social requirements and realities, for throughout the history of politics and power, when Machiavellians have taken control, humanity and its values have unfortunately been victimized. If powerful politicians are the end and people are the means” is the key motto to achieve political control, there will be no room for values like religion, morals, law, socioeconomics, politics or even culture –the ideas of Ghengis Khans and Neros proves this.

<sup>1</sup>. That makes it 164 + 1 definitions of culture altogether.

<sup>2</sup>. Such inordinate cultures –like other special cultural elements and phenomena –are heading for demise, except for

principle-based cultural aspects.

3. Spiritual culture includes a) high moral virtues, b) art, as an indication of man's deepest emotions concerning "what should be done", c) freedom –in the sense of having the power of choice, which arises in actively powerful qualities during evolution, and d) religion, addressing questions such as: "Who am I? Where have I come from? Why am I here? Where will I end up?"

4. Russian writer, who greatly criticized the Soviet Union from a mystical– religious point of view.

5. The Kayhan. Wednesday Mehr 14, 1372. (1994)

6. The World Book Encyclopaedia.

7. At times, these selfish impostors even have their intellectual-looking directors add the term "free" to culture in order to optimize its deceiving affects: 'free culture!'

8. A book by the English philosopher John Stuart Mill, concerning freedom of speech, thought, deed and writing –though without adequate logical care. Although it includes interesting points, sensible freedom and addressing immoral behaviours which allow people to do whatever they desire in the name of freedom have been ignored.

9. See p. 112. (p. 43 of the document)

10. Mowlavi is implying by "the highest of heavens" in fact the fundamentals of the creation of the universe which is linked to the human soul:

دو سر هر دو حلقه هستی بخ جققن به هم تویوستی

Indeed it was you who bonded the circle of the universe

11. Jean–Pierre Rosseau, The History of Science.

12. You may have heard Ernest Renan's idea, "The West is the employer race, and the East the employee. That is why nature produces a larger amount of labour force!" See how this so-called "intellectual" ruthlessly insults nature. Mr. Renan apparently knows nothing about Eastern civilizations, the true creators of science and technology. He adds, "The Western mind is industrial, official and civilizational, whereas that of the Eastern is emotional mediocre, and lacking for today's high thoughts!" It is quite surprising how such a "scholar" can be so ignorant of Eastern civilization history, and that the human brain has not changed in any race for at least 40,000 years. Most astonishing of all, he didn't even try to reason inductively that most inventions have also been achieved by accident, not accurate calculations.

13. Jean–Pierre Rosseau, The History of Science.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Sura As–Saaffaat 37:6

17. Sura Al Hijr 15: 16

18. Sura Al A'araaf 7:32

19. Especially during late 2nd to late 5th centuries Hijra.

20. For further study on the differences among various cultural eras in the history of Iran, see Hassan Pirnia, The Ancient History of Iran. Vol 1; and also Will Durant, The History of Civilization, Vol. 1 (The East, the Cradle of Civilization)

21. Herbert J. Lisbani, Law in Islam.

22. Mohammad Taqi Jafari, The Message of Mind; from the lecture "Survival in the 21st Century", UNESCO Symposium on 21st Century Culture and Science, Vancouver, Canada, September 1989.

23. Robert G. Ringer, The Fall of Western Civilization.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Bild der Wissenschaft, Vol. 10, 1976.

27. We read in ancient Egyptian law books –dating 3000 years back in time that the first thing the accused should be asked is. "Does your conscience approve of what you tell the judge?. Such agreement between conscience and speech in ancient Egyptian legal culture can still be regarded as a solemn truth

28. From an interview with German anthropologist Hans Peter Duerr, in the Spiegel, No.2, 1993.

[29.](#) These theorists do not prefer 'unlimited' lifestyles in order to enjoy civilized excitement or desire, for civilized people act on their elevated spiritual talents; thus, bringing instincts under control –in particular insatiable hedonism, which is the strongest –is of crucial necessity.

[30.](#) We do not mean completely religious or highly moral societies, but those not yet engulfed by immoral and lack of religion.

[31.](#) For instance, a) when the essence of sexual instincts and their priority over all other aspects had become popular in the past, some people in the East presented it as a scientific rule. After a while, a few psychologists like Adler and Jung discarded the theory. The writer has even heard from the late scholar Dr. Mirsepasi –who was a close friend of Freud –that his theory was more like a force, rather than a scientific issue. Later, some psychological experts claimed that the essence of safeguarding one's virtues and personality was the deepest, most active of the instincts, and took Freud's theory under more intense criticism.

However, some of our academic institutions still consider it a scientific issue! Such mental deviation is a result of copying scientific culture, which destroys all truth-seeking spirits in man. b) As we all know, the theory of animal evolution to higher species was proposed by Lamarck and Darwin in the 19th century. Their accounts were no more than a novel theory. However, it infiltrated our society like a scientific law of concrete proof. But as time went by and more research was made, it was shown to lack evidence, and soon fell into dark obscurity. For further study, please see Pierre Rosseau, The History of Industry and Inventions.

[32.](#) Sura Al Maaida 5:2

[33.](#) Jibran Khalil Jibran, Al-mavakeb

[34.](#) The World Book of Encyclopaedia, Paul J. Bahanan.

[35.](#) Sura An-Najm 53:39,40

[36.](#) Sura Az-Zalzala 99:7,8

[37.](#) For further elaboration on this point, we must mention a highly dramatic change that has occurred nowadays, and the results it has brought about:

When the West broke down all walls confining freedom and its glorious values, liberty –a vital phenomenon which is the best path to perfect virtues– turned into an undisciplined beloved which became so popular that it had the last two centuries named after it (actually, of course, named after immorality). It had better be called the century of 'self- strangeness.' Is this not a cause-and-effect outcome? Indeed, for unlimited freedom first victimizes human character. It became so sacredly worshipped that even philosophers and humanity scholars glorified undisciplined freedom to the very highest aim of life. Books like About Freedom by John Stuart Mill are examples of such infatuation.

Due to a small mistake between the end and the means, anyone – even the least educated –spurred by internal desires or limited knowledge, took the advantage of the necessity of freedom of speech, and expressed such exclusive, definite opinions as if they were the sole creator, of man, and possessed every knowledge or experience in creation!

The opinions were as greatly numerous as their so-called scholars. They were only whimsical brainwaves of philosophy and anthropology majors. On the other hand, they never thought about who should accept their ideas. Is everyone intelligent enough like Avicenna, Razi, Abu-Rehyan Biruni, Mowlavi, Bacon, Descarte, Kant or Hegel to be able to correctly evaluate such opinions? Or are most of them simple people who are prone to drown in the swamp of wrong ideas. Still, contradicting theories poured in the field of anthropology and human knowledge, which made all existing ideas doubted, and people lost most of their interest in such researches.

Some conscientious scholars could have suggested that in order to save man from such anthropological vertigo, all theories must first be analyzed alongside other fields and issues, and discussed with sincerely serious anthropologists in order to achieve a final, combined fact; when the theory showed reality, it can be publicly presented.

Even if someone in the West has come up with this suggestion – which we have not heard anything about yet –it has unfortunately been overruled.

All in all, having a society able to move towards the truth in complete independence is crucially necessary.

[38.](#) Luqman (31): 25: “If they are asked, ‘Who created the heavens and the earth? They will say, “God”.’

[39.](#) The history of Spain on many occasions states that despite Islam – the highest of divine religions – various disruptive factors deviated people from Islamic realities and emptied them from any religion, logic or conscience. If social leaders around the world do not take action against corruptive factors in the name of ‘culture’, their people also will definitely undergo what happened in Spain.

[40.](#) Mikhail Naima, the renowned contemporary Christian scholar thus describes Imam Ali (a) in his preface to George Gordac's Ali (a), *The Voice of Human Justice*: “The lives of great human beings overflow with experiences, lessons, faith and hope. They are high peaks that we are eagerly attracted to. As shining minarets, they light up the darkness along our way. They always remove any doubts about life, its aims and prosperity in us. Without such outstanding figures, despair would drown us; we would have raised the white flags in surrender ages ago: “O death! We are your prisoners. O death! We are your slaves. Annihilate us anyway you wish.” But we never lost hope, and never will. Thus, we will triumph, as the triumphant predecessors confirm it. One of them is Abu-Talib's son. Such glorious figures are always beside us (in other words, we live with them) although distantly in time and space. However, neither have time gaps made us unable to hear them, nor has spatial distance made them slip from our minds.”

The book mentioned above is the best proof to what we have stated. It includes the life story of one of the greatest human beings ever born to the Arab world, although he was never deservedly used. Islam did activate his capabilities, but he did not belong to Islam alone; if he did, how could his great spirit enflame the heart of a Christian writer in Lebanon in 1956, making him carefully study the Imam's life, and create a ballad-like biography of him?

Imam Ali's (A.S.) heroism was not confined to wars. He was also a champion of chastity, intelligence and indescribable beauty, deep humanity, flaming faith, grace and generosity, helping the poor, modesty and worshipping God.

[41.](#) It is not from a solely metaphysical point of view that we pray that God may save all of mankind from the selfish and powerful. Consider the following story, which I have cited in several of my works due to its high significance. In 1949, Einstein thus described a discussion he had with a high American official: “Recently, I was speaking to one of America's more intellectual, good-willing figures. I warned him about the new war that was threatening mankind, and that it could destroy the whole of humanity, and only super-national organizations could stop it. But he amazingly replied, “Why do you so strongly disagree with the end of mankind?!” Einstein adds, “Such a straightforward, abrupt answer implies the intense, internal suffering the world today has led to. Such answer can only come from somebody who has put much effort into balancing his character, but has failed, and even lost hope. It depicts the painful, innate isolation all humans are suffering from.” See Philip Frank, *The Life of Einstein*.

[42.](#) A life which guides the compulsory forces and activities of man's natural life towards evolutionary goals by means of more freedom of choice, thus, the human character is gradually developed and guided towards the highest end of life having found the answer to six fundamental questions (Who am I? Where have I come from? Who am I with? Where am I? Why have I come here? Where will I go from here?) –contributing to the harmony of the whole universe, dependant upon divine greatness.

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