

The Role of the Culture of Sacrifice and Martyrdom in the Creation of a new Islamic Civilization

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Abstract

In all human societies, certain values form the bedrock of a culture. The significance and status of these values are such that every nation perceives its identity, and social and political life as dependent upon its adherence to and respect for them, and upon the complete transmission of these values to future generations. The culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom is one such value that has been intertwined with the history of Iran and has always held a special place. It has long served as an inspiration for believers and Muslims on the path of human and divine perfection. This research, conducted through a literature review, aims to examine the role of the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom in the creation of a new Islamic civilization. The findings indicate that the safeguarding of values within the framework of monotheism, coupled with a deepening of the spirit of selflessness, a focus on justice and dignity in the pursuit of Islamic liberation, non-dependence on foreign powers, and the neutralization of sedition through a clear understanding of enemies, are among the most prominent strategies of the school of self-sacrifice and martyrdom in establishing and realizing a new Islamic civilization.

Keywords

Self-sacrifice, Islamic civilization, society, martyrdom

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Introduction and Problem Statement

The Islamic Revolution, by introducing the doctrine of “Neither East nor West,” established a collective super-order based on the equality of states and sovereignties, and the realization of divine and human rights for nations in the international system. By reviving the forgotten capacities and potentials of non-aligned nations and rejecting passivity and submission to imperialism, it sought to sever the roots of dependence on great powers and present a new framework for governance. This significant truth of the Islamic Revolution can be found in the words and concerns of its founder, Imam Khomeini, and its continuity is evident in the policies, strategies, and practical methods rooted in his thoughts and conduct. (Jahanbin & Moeinipour, 2014)

From the perspective of Ayatollah Khamenei, as an Islamic thinker and intellectual, the ultimate goal of the Islamic Revolution is to achieve an Islamic civilization through a logical and continuous process based on four pillars: religion, rationality, knowledge, and ethics. To achieve this goal, five stages must be completed: the Islamic Revolution, the Islamic system, the Islamic government, the Islamic society, and finally, the Islamic civilization. Following the Islamic Revolution and the establishment of the Islamic system (the Islamic Republic), which is embodied in the Constitution, the formation of an Islamic society paves the way for modeling and initiating Islamic civilization, the complete manifestation of which will occur in the era of the reappearance of the Imam of the Age (Mahdi).

The term “civilization” has various meanings, with one of the most important being urban settlement and residing in cities. Therefore, civilization is associated with refined social behavior and urban living. Lexicographers distinguish civilized life from that of barbaric tribes, defining civilization as adapting to the norms and ethics of urban living. Hence, in linguistic terms, civilization can be understood as the transition from nomadic and violent lifestyles to settled urban living. (Moein, 1986)

In this context, Islamic civilization is one in which all components are based on the pure teachings of Islam, rooted in the Quranic teachings and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his successors. Its components include religion, ethics, knowledge, justice, Islamic laws and regulations, national solidarity, security and peace, tolerance, unity, wisdom, and the defense of the rights of the oppressed. (Farzandi, 2020)

Every civilization is founded on a set of ideas and philosophical foundations that justify its formation. Civilization is built upon intellectual and ideological pillars and is shaped by cultural tendencies. In fact, the culture of a society develops through emotional and intellectual inclinations, and these inclinations play a crucial role in the formation of civilization. (Jamali, 2015)

It is assumed that civilization-building can be managed by humans. It is a process that begins with the creation of concepts such as society, industry, technology, thought, and scientific production, which grow and manifest over time. In all these aspects, humans play a central role as the agents, drivers, and goals of transformation. (Goudarzi, 2015).

Since the formation and evolution of an idea or theory are influenced by the social and individual contexts of human societies, addressing the requirements of a new Islamic civilization has become an ideal subject for scholars and Islamic intellectuals. According to many historians of Islamic culture and civilization, as well as cultural and political sociologists, one of the most influential factors in social and political changes within the Muslim community has been the promotion of the doctrine of sacrifice and martyrdom.

In modern times, Imam Khomeini revived the doctrine of sacrifice and martyrdom after centuries of stagnation and deviation. This revival resulted in the overthrow of the Pahlavi monarchy and the establishment of an Islamic government based on the principle of Guardianship of the Jurist (Wilayat al-Faqih), paving the way for the resurgence of Islamic civilization.

Today, thanks to the historical continuity of religious leadership, Ayatollah Khamenei continues to guide this divine movement along the path of the Islamic Revolution with wise leadership. According to him, the most crucial factor that can ensure the uninterrupted progress of this sacred system toward achieving the new Islamic civilization is reliance on the doctrine of sacrifice and martyrdom. This spirit, inspired by divine values, can strengthen the elements necessary for civilization-building and realize the emergence of the new Islamic civilization.

Therefore, since achieving the foundations of civilization in an Islamic society requires modeling based on divine and human values, promoting the doctrine of sacrifice and martyrdom remains one of the most credible paths toward achieving the new Islamic civilization.

Importance and Necessity of the Research

Culture is recognized both as a product and as a set of social processes that produce a result. Similar to self-sacrifice, it represents a process that includes prerequisites, stages, and outcomes. This process illustrates a way of living that combines existing awareness with achievable knowledge, which is referred to as a cultural act. (Tarighi & Samadi, 2016)

The culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom is one of the major components and valuable cultural heritages preserved and passed down through generations in our society despite various events and challenges. Through reinterpretation and reconstruction by contemporary religious and social thinkers, this culture has shaped specific revivalist

literature, gradually steering social transformations toward Islamization. Following the June 5th, 1963 movement, under the leadership of Imam Khomeini, religious revivalism took a new form by actively engaging religion in politics and international relations. Consequently, self-sacrifice and the establishment of its culture became one of the key elements of religious and national identity, leading to the stability and formation of the Islamic Revolution. (Ghiassvand & Dehkordian, 2009)

The eight-year Sacred Defense period marked a turning point in demonstrating the unmatched strength, courage, and talent of the noble people of Iran. During this period, the society, relying on religious teachings, successfully passed this divine test. Historical achievements confirm that self-sacrifice and martyrdom are among the most effective cultural elements influencing social processes and phenomena.

The culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom brings immense direct and indirect benefits to society. It represents one of the richest treasures of Islamic and Shia culture, which became vividly evident during the years of the revolution and Sacred Defense, showcasing the most astonishing examples of human selflessness. However, a fundamental issue is that such a precious treasure cannot be effectively promoted or transmitted through superficial views and formal methods. Therefore, the necessity of paying attention to and promoting the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom in society, as well as observing its positive impacts, requires deep belief and profound thinking. It is essential to institutionalize this thought among the people through appropriate mechanisms. Identifying ways and adopting methods to best introduce this culture to society demands thorough, comprehensive, and continuous research. Practitioners in this field must take this task seriously, as fulfilling this crucial responsibility will ultimately lead to awakening society to the significance of self-sacrifice and martyrdom.

Research Background

This section briefly presents studies and research conducted in this field:

The findings of Hamidi (2022), in examining the contributions of the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom to the development of a new Islamic civilization from the perspective of Ayatollah Khamenei, showed that guaranteeing intrinsic values based on monotheism, maintaining independence from foreign powers with dignity, creating a civil society through law-abidance, neutralizing conspiracies through enemy recognition, and meeting scientific development needs are among the key achievements of this culture. These factors collectively contribute as civilization-building elements that have led to the flourishing of the new Islamic civilization.

Andisheh (2017) investigated effective methods of promoting and modeling the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom among teenagers and youth in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province. The study surveyed high school and university students, war veterans, cultural officials, and organizations. The results identified the most effective methods for promoting this culture, including:

1. Visiting war memorial sites and introducing war heroes.
2. Producing and broadcasting religious programs based on the Ashura culture through media.
3. Organizing Q&A sessions for teenagers and youth.
4. Creating video games and animations themed around self-sacrifice and martyrdom.
5. Presenting role models like Martyr Fahmideh and Martyr Alam al-Hoda to society.

Based on the conducted research, it is evident that existing studies have focused on methods of promoting and modeling the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom, as well as examining its contributions to Islamic civilization development. However, an independent study on the strategies of self-sacrifice and martyrdom culture in creating a new Islamic civilization has not been conducted. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the social and political strategies of self-sacrifice and martyrdom culture in shaping a new Islamic civilization.

Theoretical Foundations of the Research

Civilization:

Various definitions of civilization have been proposed. In a general definition, it can be said that civilization is a structured political and social formation that gradually prepares and empowers a nation's people for a law-abiding and responsible life. (Ahmadi, 2009: 21).

Will Durant's View on Civilization:

Will Durant believe that "civilization is cultural creativity that becomes possible through social order, the rule of law, and relative prosperity?" He further states that "civilization is a social order that accelerates cultural achievements and fosters the use of ideas, traditions, art, and creativity." Ultimately, Durant defines civilization as a collection of material and spiritual creations and accumulations of human society (Durant, 1991).

Islamic Civilization:

With the emergence of Islam and its rapid, widespread dissemination among various peoples and nations, a strong and grand foundation of culture and civilization was established. People from diverse races, languages, and tribes contributed to its development. These nations, adhering to Islamic principles and values, succeeded in creating what is known as Islamic civilization.

Thus, Islamic civilization is not attributed to a single nation or race but encompasses the civilizations of all Islamic peoples, including Arabs, Persians, Turks, and others. The common factor among them is their shared Islamic principles and values, which paved the way for the rise of Islamic civilization.

Based on this explanation, Islamic civilization can be defined as a collection of Islamic beliefs and values, manifested in scientific advancements, artistic expressions, and the emergence of social and political symbols among the nations and people who embraced Islam as their religion (Talashan, 2020).

Sacrifice and Martyrdom:

The term “sacrifice” in its literal sense means “choosing, prioritizing the needs of others over oneself, and favoring the benefit of others over personal interests” (Dehkhoda, 1998, p. 3682). In Islam, sacrifice refers to efforts, selflessness, generosity, and sincerity in the way of God, reflecting human spiritual growth and divine understanding. It is associated with concepts such as martyrdom, altruism, and benevolence.

“Martyrdom” in its literal sense means “witness” and, in terminology, refers to someone who testifies or bears witness to an issue (Ibn Manzur, 1985, p. 225). In this study, sacrifice and martyrdom are considered as striving and dying for the sake of God.

The most prominent manifestations of sacrifice and martyrdom are reflected in religion. In Islam, these values are of such great importance that the religion actively promotes sacrifice and the pursuit of martyrdom to strengthen religious ideals. Islam emphasizes the conscious act of dying in God’s way to advance divine and Islamic goals.

In summary, the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom in Islam encompasses a set of awareness, beliefs, and practices that bring a person closer to the highest level of perfection — a conscious choice of death in the way of God.

Research Method:

Present Study:

This research aims to examine the role of the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom in the creation of a new Islamic civilization. It has been conducted using a review-based, library method. The statistical population includes all documents, sources, and references related to the subject, such as books, articles, and theses.

Research Findings:

Civilization is a concept with various definitions due to its complexity. Some scholars equate civilization with science and technology, while others associate it with political power. Figures like Taylor define civilization through cultural elements such as art, ethics, and customs, while Alfred Weber focuses on civilizational characteristics, and Humboldt emphasizes the territorial aspects of civilization.

In summary, civilization can be considered the extension of culture and acceptance of social order, through which societies transition from nomadic life to institutionalized social structures. Civilization is the objectification of normative cognitive foundations that provide answers to fundamental ontological, anthropological, and epistemological questions, shaping values and norms.

Based on these normative foundations, theoretical-practical systems emerge, leading to the establishment of institutions responsible for reproducing these systems. The differences between civilizations arise from the variety of theoretical-practical models they adopt, making civilizations concrete embodiments of abstract models (Jahanbin & Moeini Pour, 2014).

Islamic Civilization:

Islamic civilization began with the prophetic mission of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his public call to Islam. The migration to Medina and the establishment of an Islamic government were significant steps in enriching this emerging civilization.

After the Prophet's demise, the Imams (AS) took on the responsibility of preserving and promoting Islamic culture and civilization, despite numerous limitations. They played a vital role in developing the school of thought and disseminating knowledge through training scholars and narrating Hadiths, ensuring humanity's spiritual growth throughout history (Gholami & Moradi, 2020).

Islamic civilization, representing the history, culture, traditions, and religious beliefs of Muslims, has undergone various ups and downs over the past fifteen centuries. The Iranian Revolution, based on an Islamic system, played a pivotal role in its revival. The Supreme Leader of Iran's views and theories have filled centuries-old gaps in Islamic civilization, giving it a new identity (Yaqouti, 2019).

In the field of Islamic civilization, new Islamic civilization is viewed as a five-stage process, including:

1. Islamic Revolution
2. Formation of an Islamic System
3. Establishment of an Islamic Government
4. Formation of an Islamic Society
5. Creation of an Islamic World (Arefi Gorvan, 2018).

In achieving the Islamic World, as one of the stages of a new Islamic civilization, the guidance of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei (may God preserve him), plays a directing and leading role for all three branches of government and all institutions. All organizations are expected to understand their responsibilities within the Islamic Republic and implement the Leader's directives to achieve their missions and goals in line with higher-level documents.

According to numerous statements by the Supreme Leader, establishing a new Islamic civilization is the greatest aspiration of the Islamic Republic (Ezzati, Torabi & Chehardoli, 2019: 76).

Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's Definition of Civilization:

Ayatollah Khamenei defines civilization through both positive and negative approaches, emphasizing its pillars and foundations. Instead of defining civilization in a general sense, he focuses directly on an Islamic perspective.

He describes Islamic civilization as one that is “characterized by faith, knowledge, ethics, continuous struggle, advanced thought, and high morals, and it serves as a point of liberation from the materialistic and oppressive worldview, as well as the immoral foundations of new Western civilization” (Khamenei's speech, 2013/04/29).

He considers the new Islamic civilization to be based on four pillars: religion, rationality, knowledge, and ethics (Khamenei's speech, 2011/09/17). He explains that in this civilization, “knowledge is accompanied by ethics, materialism is paired with spirituality, and religion and political power are aligned with justice” (Khamenei's speech, 2000/10/05).

The main characteristic of a flourishing Islamic civilization is that it enables people to utilize all material and spiritual capacities bestowed by God for their happiness and advancement. Such a civilization is achieved through popular governance, where the laws are derived from the Quran and steer clear of rigidity, backwardness, innovation, and deviation.

This civilization spreads human ethics and, through faith, knowledge, ethics, and continuous struggle, offers advanced thoughts and high morals to all humanity (Khamenei, 2013).

The Role of the Culture of Sacrifice and Martyrdom in Islamic Civilization:

Ayatollah Khamenei has consistently emphasized the role of sacrifice and martyrdom in deepening new Islamic civilization. He frequently highlights the spiritual influence of sacrifice and martyrdom in shaping and strengthening the pillars of Islamic civilization.

Among the highest spiritual values in Islamic culture are sacrifice and martyrdom, which play a crucial role in ensuring the country's independence and preserving the religious and national identity of society. Sacrifice holds a lofty human status praised in Islam and mentioned in numerous Quranic verses and Hadiths:

> “Those who have believed, emigrated, and striven in the cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives are greater in rank in the sight of Allah. And it is they who will be successful” (Surah At-Tawbah, verses 20-21).

Despite the importance of the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom in Islam and Iran, attention to these values has diminished over time, especially after the

war. Sacrifice and martyrdom became mythical concepts, and both people and officials paid less attention to promoting these values. This lack of attention led to the marginalization of the culture of sacrifice, resistance, and martyrdom.

However, based on historical experiences, proper implementation of religious culture, especially the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom, can serve as a driving force for moral, worldly, and spiritual progress in societies. Therefore, it is essential to pass on these Islamic values to future generations (Ghahremani, Asheqi, & Mahdiyoun, 2009).

Effective Strategies for Promoting the Culture of Sacrifice and Martyrdom:

One of the key components of the rich Islamic culture is the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom. Proper understanding of the lofty culture of sacrifice and martyrdom, and raising public awareness about moral and behavioral models derived from the Quran, Hadiths, and traditions, require appropriate conditions and atmosphere.

Thus, implementing strategies and recommendations, which will be discussed below, can play a significant role in creating a favorable environment to promote this culture in society:

1. Since awareness and knowledge lead individuals toward a particular inclination, and in the absence of such awareness, people would lack any motivation or tendency toward a phenomenon, it is essential to utilize media, especially national broadcasting, along with responsible religious and cultural organizations, families, and educational institutions to promote cultural awareness and elevate people's religious beliefs. This enlightenment will undoubtedly strengthen individuals' participatory spirit and increase their awareness of individual and social rights (responsibility).
2. Establishing reciprocal relations and constructive interactions between the Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs and the youth, especially university students, through organizing joint specialized meetings, supporting scientific research, and cooperating with other research and educational institutions while utilizing the opinions of religious scholars and experts.
3. Utilizing media advertisements and appropriate mechanisms to introduce martyrs and veterans as true role models for the youth by dedicating parts of Friday prayers to their introduction, using respected academic and cultural figures for this purpose, or integrating relevant content into textbooks.
4. Encouraging the creation of works on the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom by organizing conferences, and scientific and cultural competitions in collaboration with cultural and religious institutions, the Martyrs Foundation, universities, schools, and some media outlets to inform, educate, and preserve the achievements of the Sacred Defense and the Islamic Revolution.

5. Paying special attention to educational content in schools: In a structured education system, the curriculum is interconnected with other elements at each stage of design, implementation, and evaluation. Islamic education scholars have strived to develop educational policies, educational goals, and curriculum content. However, the teachings of sacrifice and martyrdom as a system that ensures the realization of fundamental goals in an Islamic society have been less emphasized. Reflecting on the curriculum to promote the culture of sacrifice, martyrdom, and resistance requires understanding its epistemological aspects, particularly the concept of knowledge and its value system.
6. Social Initiatives: Developing and expanding the symbols of the Sacred Defense in forms such as:
 - a. Building memorials for martyrs in key urban and rural areas, revising the preparation of cultural inscriptions and posters, and even city murals to increase religious and cognitive awareness about martyrs, preserving the remnants of the Sacred Defense, and naming streets, squares, and educational centers after martyrs and veterans, taking into account psychological and sociological advertising principles.
 - b. Organizing exhibitions and museums dedicated to the Sacred Defense to collect and display material and spiritual artifacts from that period, which can serve as tangible evidence to narrate historical events for the current generation.
7. Providing opportunities for different segments of society, especially young people, to visit operational areas from the Sacred Defense period through “Rahian-e Noor” convoys, and planning meetings with the families of martyrs and veterans to share experiences and strengthen mutual ties in cooperation with the Martyrs Foundation, the Foundation for the Preservation of Sacred Defense Works, schools, universities, and national broadcasting.
8. Implementing incentive policies within the framework of the Fifth Development Plan to increase public participation in religious culture and, consequently, the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom by planning necessary actions to improve the quality of activities and support educational and research efforts to strengthen the intellectual and cultural foundations of sacrifice and martyrdom.

Strategies for the Culture of Sacrifice and Martyrdom in Building Islamic Civilization:

Studies show that the spirit of martyrdom and courage among the defenders of this land not only saved the Islamic Revolution from turbulent transformations

but also laid the foundation for a new Islamic civilization through the manifestation of civilizational elements in Islamic Iran.

1. God-Centeredness in Islamic Societies

The new Islamic civilization, as the most important strategy for the Islamic world, addresses both the individual and collective dimensions of human material and spiritual needs with the goal of human prosperity. The key factor for human progress and ultimate happiness is God-centeredness. One of the main criteria of this God-centeredness is recognizing the path of God and sincerity in action, with the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom playing a vital role in achieving societal prosperity. According to the Supreme Leader: “If someone fights for personal desires or material gains and is killed in the process, he is not a martyr in the way of God. The condition for martyrdom and fighting in the way of God is that the action must be for God’s sake.” (Speech to thousands of Basijis from Qom Province, 23 October 2010). Therefore, theoretical and practical belief in monotheism is a key pillar in building a new Islamic civilization. As the Supreme Leader emphasizes: “To understand the values of Islamic civilization, we must understand monotheism as liberation from servitude to anything other than God, breaking the chains of oppression, believing in human potential, and trusting in divine promises regarding the victory of the oppressed.” (Jeradi, 2013).

2. Deepening the Spirit of Sacrifice in the Islamic Nation

Sacrifice, which means giving up one’s right for the benefit of others, is a divine trait in Islamic culture. It involves generosity and altruism in the path of God, often accompanied by concepts like martyrdom and benevolence. This trait fosters social solidarity and strengthens civilizational elements such as brotherhood, cooperation, and selflessness for national and religious benefits. The Supreme Leader states: “Martyrdom means sacrificing one’s most valuable worldly possession for an ideal that benefits humanity.” (Speech, 6 December 2002). Sacrifice and selflessness create societal stability and provide the foundation for achieving a higher understanding of communal goals in Islamic societies.

3. Emphasizing Justice-Seeking and Justice-Practicing

Deep faith and commitment to justice have been evident in the sacrifices of veterans and martyrs. Their participation in battlefields was a practical embodiment of justice, becoming a guiding model for the pursuit of justice in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Justice, born from the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom, has always acted as a “social driver” in advancing Islamic civilization. Respecting justice ensures social order, and this principle significantly influences the process of civilization-building. In the Supreme Leader’s words: “Justice, derived from the culture of

sacrifice, is essential for the success of Islamic civilization.” Justice-seeking shapes the foundation of law-abiding societies, ensuring that the values of the Islamic civilization continue to thrive.

4. Dignity and Honor Through Independence

One of the fundamental strategies of the doctrine of martyrdom and self-sacrifice is maintaining a sense of dignity, which the Iranian nation has achieved through this great position. According to the Leader’s viewpoint, martyrs were individuals who constantly sought to bring honor to the Islamic Republic of Iran by sacrificing their lives and wealth. For the martyrs, achieving dignity for Islam and Muslims was a top priority. They reached divine blessings by sacrificing their blood, fulfilling the Quranic verse, “Indeed, all honor belongs to Allah” (Yunus: 65), and elevating Islamic civilization to global power and glory. Martyrs always strived to achieve dignity for the Islamic community, paving the way for Islamic awakening and new Islamic civilization. The Leader stated: “One of the greatest blessings bestowed upon our Islamic society is the presence of brave men and self-sacrificing youth who, from the victory of the Islamic Revolution to this day, have stood against the enemies of the revolution and, with their lives and blood, have supported Islam, the revolution, and the path of God. Some of these dear ones were martyred in the path of God and attained the infinite divine blessings, becoming a source of pride for Iran and Islam, and a badge of honor for our great departed Leader.” The martyrs of our time, without witnessing an infallible Imam or the noble Prophet, answered the call of the late Imam and, by his rightful guidance, played the role of a “Mujahid in the way of Allah” in the best possible way. Without the sacrifices of our martyrs, today’s honor and greatness for Islam would not exist.

5. Islamic Awakening

From the Leader’s perspective, one of the key elements in preserving the grandeur of new Islamic civilization is establishing and stabilizing Islamic power, with the Islamic Republic of Iran at its forefront as the flag-bearer of the Islamic movement in the region and the world. Political stability, economic self-sufficiency, and cultural development today owe much to the doctrine of self-sacrifice and martyrdom. The Leader emphasized that the Islamic awakening achieved through the doctrine of self-sacrifice has granted the Islamic system and Muslim societies a spiritual and moral authority in the eyes of tyrannical powers. He stated: “You, brothers and sisters, know that the spiritual authority and dignity of today’s Islamic system and Muslim nation in the world, in the eyes of tyrannical powers, is due to these martyrdoms and the efforts of your dear ones.” Despite the enemy’s use of various modern media, deceptive news, and traitorous agents, the self-sacrifice of

martyrs and veterans has prevented any harm to this land. The Leader clarified: “The strength of this structure is due to its foundation in faith in God. Those who took this path did divine work. This system is unlike other systems... The secret of this revolution’s endurance lies in its reliance on faith and trust in God.” Therefore, according to the Leader, preserving the honor of Islam always strengthens the Islamic Republic, as the foundation of the revolution and new Islamic civilization is based on Islamic ideals and awakening.

6. Ensuring National Independence and Islamic Dignity

Undoubtedly, one of the most valuable achievements of the doctrine of self-sacrifice and martyrdom, which has elevated the Islamic Revolution to regional and global power, is securing national independence and safeguarding the dignity of Islamic principles. This achievement serves as a significant political driver and a foundation for civilization-building at both national and international levels. Regarding this important issue, the Leader stated: “Today, thanks to the blood of the martyrs and the sacrifices of the war veterans and freed captives, Iran and its people have achieved dignity and honor in the Islamic world and against global arrogance. Today, the satanic powers have no right to interfere in the affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Iranian nation uses its wealth independently and does not allow foreigners to encroach upon it. The Muslim people of Iran have gained the right to vote and the right to life, and they no longer interact with arrogance from a position of weakness. At the same time, Iran has become a role model for all Muslim nations in the Islamic world to achieve dignity and greatness.” According to the Leader, standing firm, resisting, and fighting against the enemies of Islam have led to the greatness and dignity of the new Islamic civilization. When a martyrdom-loving nation reaches a level of political awareness where sacrificing one’s life in the path of God is considered an absolute value, that nation achieves the honor of dignity and independence, never bowing to oppression and tyranny. Such a great nation opens the way for the development of a new Islamic civilization. In another statement, the Leader highlighted the significance of this bravery and said: “Standing up against powerful, oppressive, arrogant enemies is a great and significant act.

This is exactly what our people did, and the greatness of our nation is due to the martyrdom and bravery of your children.” In the Leader’s view, understanding the philosophy of martyrdom is a key factor in achieving the independence of Islamic countries. It also provides the foundation for the fundamental development of Islamic civilization through the courage of the youth and the teachings of the doctrine of self-sacrifice and martyrdom. He emphasized the civilizational impact of martyrdom and the greatness of dying in the path of God to achieve power: “Unlike some countries

and governments that show weakness before enemies out of fear of death and remain under the dominance of foreigners, a nation that understands the meaning of martyrdom can achieve independence both internally and externally. Such a nation can move forward more firmly and achieve stability, as it will no longer allow foreign interference in its affairs. This, in turn, facilitates social interactions and reduces societal costs.”

7. Enemy Recognition and Resistance Against the Enemy

Since the Islamic Revolution, enemies of Islam and Iran have used various tactics to oppose the noble Iranian nation. However, the power of the doctrine of self-sacrifice and the culture of martyrdom has stood strong against these hostile attacks. Throughout the history of the Islamic Revolution, the enemy’s plots, such as sanctions and conspiracies, have failed. The Leader, while explaining this historical achievement, said: “From the beginning of the Islamic Revolution until now, enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran have assassinated and martyred pure and sincere individuals who had an influential role in the country. These events are rare in the history of nations, which is why our nation is rich in revolutionary teachings. The many incidents and martyrdoms faced by the revolution have demonstrated the wickedness of the country’s enemies and made our nation more aware of their intentions. This awareness strengthens the country, as recognizing the enemy and distinguishing right from wrong allows the nation to defend its Islamic positions when under threat.”

He further stated: “When a nation recognizes its enemies and can identify them, it has created a clear boundary between right and wrong. This boundary motivates the nation to take action at the right time and defend its Islamic positions when they are threatened.”

8. Military Advancement

One of the most notable outcomes of the selfless efforts of the martyrs is the strengthening of military power and the advancement of defense equipment. The Quran repeatedly promises victory to those who fight for the truth, emphasizing that success comes through self-sacrifice and martyrdom. The Leader elaborated on this divine promise and explained how the sacrifices of the martyrs have contributed to the strength, security, and foundation of a new Islamic civilization in Iran: “These verses of the Quran became clear during our revolution and in the years that followed. The Iranian nation succeeded in achieving victory in the revolution through struggle in the path of God. During the eight-year war with Iraq, they thwarted the enemy’s malicious goals, defended the borders of the Islamic country, and achieved victory. Thanks to the sincerity and dedication of the warriors, the Iranian Army and IRGC have reached a level of advancement that is incomparable to the pre-revolution period. Today’s army is a disciplined, organized, and well-equipped force, and today’s IRGC is a unique and revolutionary organization.” He further referred to the divine

promise of victory, saying: “This is the fulfillment of God’s promise: ‘Indeed, Allah will help those who help Him.’ (Quran 22:40). You helped God by fighting on the battlefield, and God granted you victory.”

9. Expanding International Influence

The sacrifices of martyrs and selfless individuals have significantly contributed to strengthening Iran’s international influence and improving its foreign relations at both regional and global levels. These relationships, built with wisdom and strategic planning, have helped spread the culture of self-sacrifice and bravery while promoting peace and justice in the world. From the Leader’s viewpoint: “Today, thanks to the blood of martyrs and the sacrifices of veterans, the Iranian nation has reached a level of influence that has made the world’s media, global public opinion, and various governments eager to establish friendly relations with Iran. This dignity has reached a point where they have repeatedly apologized for their past mistakes against Iran. The Islamic Republic of Iran is in such a position now. Before the revolution, Iran’s relations with other countries were such that they did not value Iran in the global system.” The desire for dignity is one of the key factors in strengthening international influence. This element has played a significant role in reshaping the global power structure and further solidifying Iran’s geopolitical position. The Leader’s stance on this matter is a model for the world, contributing to the formation of a new Islamic civilization.

Conclusion

Civilization is a combination of moral and material factors that provide society with the opportunity to support the growth of every individual at each stage of life, from childhood to old age. In the current historical context, establishing a new Islamic civilization is an inevitable necessity. Failure to achieve this will lead to the decline of Islamic civilization within the framework of Western civilization. Furthermore, ensuring the prosperity of human society is only possible through the creation of an Islamic civilization.

The formation of Islamic civilization is the most significant goal of the Islamic Revolution. The Supreme Leader has outlined the process of achieving this goal in five essential stages: “Islamic Revolution,” “Islamic System,” “Islamic Government,” “Islamic Nation,” and finally “Islamic Civilization.” He has also emphasized this in the Second Step Statement of the Revolution, considering its realization possible due to the high level of awareness among the Iranian nation, which is the result of forty years of experience defending the revolution under difficult conditions.

In this regard, many thinkers in the field of Islamic culture and civilization history, as well as cultural and political sociologists, agree that one of the most

influential factors in shaping social and political developments, and thus preparing the Muslim community to establish Islamic civilization over the past centuries, has been the promotion of the doctrine of self-sacrifice and martyrdom. The culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom carries significant and profound impacts, both directly and indirectly, on today's society.

Self-sacrifice and martyrdom are among the richest treasures of Islamic and Shiite culture, which manifested in remarkable ways during the years of the revolution and the Sacred Defense, showcasing extraordinary scenes of human sacrifice. Therefore, it is essential to pay attention to and promote this culture in society, especially among the younger generation, while observing its positive effects and functions in the community.

The culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom has brought great achievements to the country on national, regional, and international levels. The continuation of the historical doctrine of courage and martyrdom has become the most genuine movement in the history of the revolution to preserve Islamic civilization. Elements such as seeking dignity, pursuing truth, sincerity in achieving divine goals, independence from foreign powers, and jihad to counter conspiracies are among the effective strategies of the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom in establishing a new Islamic civilization.

Suggestions

Among the proposals that can introduce the strategies of the doctrine of self-sacrifice and martyrdom and utilize these elements in the development of a new Islamic civilization are as follows:

1. Introducing the diverse capacities of the doctrine of self-sacrifice and martyrdom to the younger generation through the education system.
2. Identifying the challenges and obstacles in promoting the culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom and formulating strategies to address them.

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