INDIGENOUS CULTURAL FRAGMENTATION IN OUR ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The Prime objective of this article is to delineate the impact of globalization on indigenous culture and its fragmentation. In parallel, the study also includes the role of the Islamic principles on this very aspect. To attain this aim, the study adopts the methodology of content analysis based on the past research. The findings of the study suggest that globalization has a pernicious influence on the local and indigenous culture and its fragmentation, whereas the Islamic principles has a positive attitude toward every culture of the globe which sheds an inclusive view on culture as well as cultural fragmentation.

Key Words: Indigenous culture, Cultural fragmentation, Globalization, Islamic principles

INTRODUCTION

We are now living in a global village, yet fragmented in many ways which are mainly societal, cultural, religious, political and economic. As the world has been squeezed into a new form in this new millennium, we all bump into each other more frequently in the process termed as globalization, which is, by definition, the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture. Nevertheless, culture has fragmented in so many dimensions one of which can be termed as indigenous cultural fragmentation taking place within the boundary of a single nation. As a matter of fact, cultural fragmentation occurs as nation-state power weakens under the quick and easy flow of information and martial technology, both of which are made possible by globalization.

However, historically-evolved local ethno-religious fragmentation is not detrimental to the socio-economic development process in our new phenomenon of living condition of globalization and not contrary to the Islamic religious philosophy. Rather they are viewed as the way of identification of different groups of indigenous people or tribes which Almighty creator proclaimed in the Holy Quaran, the holy scripture of Islam. As long as any of these cultural heritages is not conflicting toward the fundamental tenets of Islamic religion and state or beneficial to mankind, it can be preserved as it is. Having conserved this status-quo of culturally fragmented heritages, the different regionally bounded population can maintain their ideological life which is directed toward a common goal of united Umma.

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Diversity, indeed, appears to be a fundamental impetus for the stability as well as prosperity of all nations and ethnicities. Relating this fact, researchers argue that the intensities of fragmentation and polarization across ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups have been associated with economic growth and development, the quality of governance, the provision of public goods, the prevalence of civil conflict, and endogenous nation formation. However, the origins of the uneven distribution of ethnic and cultural fragmentation across and within countries have been largely neglected in the new era of globalization. Newly emerging evidence suggests that deeply-rooted factors, determined long-long years ago, have significantly affected the level of fragmentation and cultural diversity as well as the course of comparative socio-economic development from the dawn of human civilization to the contemporary era of globalization (Spolaore and Wacjarg, 2013).

In this respect, Islam and Galor (2013) advance and empirically establish the hypothesis that, in the course of the prehistoric exodus of Homo sapiens out of Africa, migratory distance to various indigenous settlements across the globe adversely affected the level of genetic and cultural diversity, and thereby generated a persistent hump-shaped effect on development outcomes, reflecting the trade-off between the beneficial and detrimental effects of diversity on productivity in this new age of global village. Building upon the insight of the bio-geographical roots of comparative development, Arundhati Roy (2002) proclaimed, “In the present circumstances … the only thing worth globalizing is dissent.”

The prime intent of the article is, therefore, to examine the influence of globalization on indigenous cultures and their fragmentation which are existed from the time immemorial. To attain this goal, we like to explore different sources of socio-economic and historical perspectives of cultural fragmentation and the evolutionary process of globalization which may influence our life in many dimensions of social, economic and ethno-religious political environment.

GLOBALIZATION: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

The term ‘global’ has a long history for about 400 years in the English language, but in the Oxford English Dictionary, the term globalization, along with other terms like globalize and globalizing, first appears in use in the 1960s specifically in economic context. In the economics and management literature, the concept of the globalization of markets first comes in use in 1983 by Levitt. In sociology, Robertson (1992) was one of the pioneers to use the term in the articles published in 1985. In media and cultural studies, McLuhan (1964) first uses the term ‘global village’ in his book Understanding Media in 1964. However, the term has
got the wide attention of the academia, politicians, business people, and media in the 1990s and ultimately earned rapid circulation in every sphere of life.

Though globalization has been considered by many authors as simply equating the universalization of modernity or as a transformational process bearing its own significance and impacts, it has far beyond differences that can be assumed in its every specific space. Thework (2000) defined globalization as tendencies toward a world-wide reach and connectedness of social phenomena and a world-encompassing awareness of actors insinuating the global spatialization of the conquest of and domination over large stretches of the world. Examples abound such as the Roman Empire or the colonial expansion of the West during the mercantile era spreading the motivation of nation-state.

In our era, globalization has transformed the globe into a quasi-entirety of the relevant space of the new links that relates its various parts to each other. Yet, these links are not locked into inter-state or inter-society levels; rather they are connected through the world-wide development of communication, cultural references and means of transportation which set an unprecedented extent having direct relations of diversified activities between groups and individuals from different parts of the world. This phenomenon has been substantially facilitated by the Internet, television, telephone and air-travel (Ben-Rafael and Sternberg, 2000).

According to Bartelson (2000), this process can have three sequences: (a) Transference – intensification of interaction and exchanges among various social settings; (b) Transformation – emergence of changes at the level of the local systems; and (c) Transcendence – the dissolution between inside and outside. This evolution has been considered by Featherstone, Lash and Robertson (1995) as the triumph of universal ‘disembedding’ attributed by the ‘informational order’ embracing the planet in which the globe has become a framework of contemporary social life within the periphery of nation-states. As a result, the globe is now undergoing the process of institutionalization without having any guiding rules.

Nevertheless, this process has been analyzed from most diverse and contradictory theoretical underpinnings formulated by several authors such as Moore (1966), Wallerstone (1974), Meyer (2000), Luhmann (1997), Friedman (1995) Bourdieu (1998) and Pieterse (1995). Moore (1966) analyzed the Parson’s model (AGIL) which attempted to develop and perfect a general analytic model suitable for analyzing all types of collectivities. Unlike the Marxists, who focused on the occurrence of radical change, Parsons explored why societies are stable and functioning in an adaptive, goal oriented, latent and integrative process of distinct culture and values. This view has been castigated by Wallerstein (1974). According to him,
there has been a transition in society where the struggle of the privileged and underprivileged is engendering a new world. Meyer (2000) discusses the Weberian idea in which social difference is determined by class, status and power. He also evaluates globalization as global cultural change expressed in the enactment of shared models, despite the disparities that exist among societies in terms of resource base and cultural heritage.

In similar fashion, Luhmann (1997) encounters the emergence of a global system that enclaves a new singly world-society where national actors play a role to a lesser extent. According to Luhmann, globalization is a variant that can demonstrate varying intensity and strength in different places or groups of different societal facets. Appadurai (1996) shares his views on ‘global flows’ that employ financial resources, popular movements, ideas and ideals, media and technological know-how producing random configuration by irregular effects and exhibiting different loci in different spaces depending on different perspectives of nation-states, social movements, corporations or individuals. All these views are set on different perspectives based on diverse analysis but not contradictory to each other.

However, there have been others who have different views but their analyses are conflicting to each other. One of the researchers, who analyze globalization from the opposite side of conflict, describes a world where fragmentation is on rise, after a stage of stable links between powerful centers and weak peripheries. This is happened because of emerging new smaller centers competing against the weakening old centers. Frobel (2000) focuses on conflict-analysis in which globalization appears to be an international division of labor which in effect closes factories in the West where unions are strong and opens factories in the East where unions are absent and workers are generally unorganized.

Bourdieu (1998) is a harsh proponent of this type of conflict analyses toward globalization. According to him, globalization stands against the welfare states and comparatively high salaries of workers in the West and supports the restoration of crass capitalism aiming to retain world domination by Western economic interests. Pieterse (1995) asserts that evolutionary changes in languages and cultures lead to adulteration in a globalized world, though globalization is equated frequently to ‘americanization’ in the domain of culture. However, this paper is not about the analysis of conflicting connotation that has been portrayed by the term of globalization; rather than its impacts on indigenous cultures and their fragmentation.
INDIGENOUS CULTURE IN OUR TIME

The word “indigenous” comes from the Latin indigena meaning ‘native’. The term “indigenous” has persisted as a generic term for many years. In some countries, this term also refers to as tribes, first peoples or nations, aboriginals, ethnic groups, adivasi, and janajati. Occupational and geographical terms like hunter-gatherers, nomads, peasants, hill people, etc., also exist and for all practical purposes they can be used interchangeably with “indigenous peoples”.

It is estimated that there are more than 370 million indigenous people spread across 70 countries worldwide. Practicing unique traditions, they retain social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Spread across the world from the Arctic to the South Pacific, they are the descendants - according to a common definition - of those who inhabited a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived. The new arrivals later became dominant through conquest, occupation, settlement or other means. Although the term ‘indigenous culture’ means the inherent culture of theses indigenous peoples, we refer here only to mean the local or national culture at large which can be influenced by the process of globalization.

In fact, culture is a difficult term to define. In this respect, Apte (2001) is appropriate to say that despite a century of efforts to define culture adequately, there was in the early 1990s no agreement among anthropologists regarding its nature. According to Mathew Arnold’s (1867), culture referred to special, intellectual or artistic endeavors or products, what we might call “high culture” as opposed to “popular culture”. By this definition, only a portion – typically a small one – of any social group “has” culture. This sense of culture is more closely related to aesthetics than to social science.

An antithesis of culture has been expounded by Edward Tylor (1970). According to him, culture is referred to a quality possessed by all people in all social groups who nevertheless could be arrayed on an evolutionary continuum from “savagery” through “barbarism” to “civilization”. Specifically, Tylor’s definition of culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”.

In contrast to Arnold’s view, all folks “have” culture, which they acquire by virtue of membership in some social group – society. And a whole grab bag of things, from knowledge to habits to capabilities, makes up culture. However, in
general, culture can be defined as a way of life of a group of peoples – the behaviors, beliefs, values and symbols that they accept generally without thinking about them and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.

As many of other social elements, culture possesses myriads of characteristics. Among them the prominent are that culture can (a) be manifested at different layers of depth (Schein, 1984, 1990); (b) affects behavior (Hofstede, 1991; Saville-Troike, 1997; Lustig and Koester 1999); (c) be differentiated from both universal human nature and unique individual personality (Hofstede, 1991); (d) influence biological processes (Hofstede, 1991; Ferraro, 1998; Avruch, 1998); (e) be both an individual and a social construct (Matsumoto 1996; Avruch, 1998); (f) be always both socially and psychologically distributed in a group and so the delineation of a culture’s features will always be fuzzy (Žegarac 2007); (g) have both universal and distinctive elements (Triandis 1994); (h) be learned (Lustig and Koester 1999; Ferraro, 1998); (i) be subject to gradual change (Driver 1961); and (j) be interrelated (Ferraro, 1998). The following Figure 1 can be depicted for explaining how culture can affect human behavior.\textsuperscript{22}

Figure 1: Effects of Culture on Human Behavior

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{culture_behavior.png}
\caption{Effects of Culture on Human Behavior}
\end{figure}

Source: Adopted from Hofstede (1994)

According to Hofstede (1994), culture is learned, not inherited. It derives from one’s social environment, not from one’s genes. Human nature is what all human beings have in common. It is inherited with one’s genes. The human ability to feel fear, anger, love, joy, sadness, the need to associate with others, to play and exercise oneself, the facility to observe the environment and talk about it with other humans all belong to this level of mental programming. However, what one does
with these feelings, how one expresses fear, joy, observations, and so on, is modified by culture. Human nature is not as ‘human’ as the term suggests, because certain aspects of it are shared with parts of the animal world. And the personality of an individual, on the other hand, is her/his unique personal set of mental programs which s/he does not share with any other human being. It is based upon traits which are partly inherited with the individual’s unique set of genes and partly learned. ‘Learned’ means here: modified by the influence of collective set of culture as well as unique personal experiences.

**CULTURAL FRAGMENTATION AND GLOBALIZATION**

In urban sociology, fragmentation refers to the absence or the underdevelopment of connections between the society and the groupings of some members of that society on the lines of a common culture, nationality, race, language, occupation, religion, income level, or other common interests. However, Robert Ellis (2015, p.302) is very succinct in this regard as saying, “Beyond language, but encompassing it, is culture which I would define in terms of habits of symbol-attachment. … Cultural fragmentation is thus our attachment to differing symbols between individuals or groups or over time. It is largely a difference in the emotional meaning attached to symbols, but of course also has an unavoidable cognitive component.” In this connection he cited some examples.

“If we think of a particularly powerful example of cultural fragmentation – that of religious division between, say, Christians and Muslims – the main cause of fragmentation is the differing emotional impact of both linguistic and nonlinguistic symbols on the different groups.” He also clarifies this by saying:

“The Cross or the word “Christ”, will have a much more profound and generally more positive, emotional effect on the Christian than on the Muslims and vice versa for the Crescent or the word “Muhammad”. “At the same time, however”, he continues to say, “there are varying degrees to which Christians do not understand the cognitive sense of “Muhammad” to Muslims, because of the culturally complex web of metaphors through which it is understood or vice versa for Muslims and “Christ”.

Once we accept the metaphorical basis of meanings that are immediate gestalts, it is not enough to claim to know what “Muhammad” means through reading religious studies textbooks and being familiar with the facts about his life contexts and places in Muslim belief.” However, he asserts that “these facts do not necessarily give us access to the experience of even the cognitive meaning of “Muhammad” in the right hemisphere of a Muslim.”
Nevertheless, Robert Ellis is much keen here to clarify the proper meaning of cultural fragmentation. Thus, he says: “This bigger example can be set beside a relatively trivial one. If my daughter likes and appreciates a popular song that I neither like nor appreciate, this is not merely a matter of “taste” nor of “the generation gap” – or at least there are further ways of understanding both. It is an example of fragmentation of meaning, because I lack her attachment to this cultural symbol. Although I may understand the words of the song, I also fail to understand the positive significance she invests in it, though metaphorical relationships between the song and her immediate experience. These probably have a complex relationship with other aspects of personal experience such as different peer groups and different physical experience. Their basis is metaphorical associations makes our “differing” understanding of cultural preference both cognitive and emotional.”

These two instances illustrate how cultural fragmentation may be clarified in the spheres of religion and arts. Yet, “there are also a wide range of other aspects of our environment in which meanings differ: architecture, design, food, patterns of daily activity, attitudes to work and leisure, attitudes to animals, attitudes to non-human environment, communication practices, gender roles, sexual practices, attitudes to sexuality, attitudes to age difference, social organization, conduct of trade, attitudes to law and government, political organization, rites of passage, attitudes to intoxicants, sports, forms of transport, clothes, cleanliness, toilet practices, medical practices, childcare customs, agricultural practices, and attitudes to violence,” and to name a few. What Ellis wants to spell out is that there is a matter of “significance” inherent in it.

Thus, he mentions that: “if we take the simple example to toilet practices, the Indian (as well as the Muslim) custom of cleaning the anus after defecation with water from the left hand, and of rejecting the Western habit of using toilet paper, is accorded significance by both sides.” He also adds in this respect that: “Even if the divergent customs were regarded as unimportant and treated quite flexibly they would still be significant, but given the degree of cultural attachment to each different approach, the fragmentation of meaning here is actually substantial.”

Apart from this broad spectrum of cultural fragmentation globally bounded national territories, there is indigenous cultural or tribal cultural or localized cultural fragmentation within a single nation. There have been several indigenous groups of nomadic people living in Bangladesh as well as in Iranian plateau from generations to generations such as the Chakma, Garo, Shantal, Marma, Khasia in Bangladesh and the Qashqai and Shahsevan in Iran. Their cultures are mostly different from the respective two national cultures of Bangladesh and Iran. Perhaps
in every country of the world, there have been indigenous groups of people living for generations. However, the process of globalization has been in its new form of domination since the Britton Woods agreement established in 1944.

This is in fact the new world order which has been resonated in the voice of James Paul Warburg who put forward in his comments in the senate on February 7 1950, ‘We shall have World Government, whether or not we like it. The only question is whether World Government will be achieved by consent or conquest.’ Notably, James Paul Warburg is the son Paul Warburg who was the German-born Jewish banker (one of the Jackals of the Jekyll Island) and author of the Federal Reserve Act which was approved in 1913 in the Woodrow Wilson’s presidency.

Paul Warburg was the first chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. It is this concentrated pattern of the creature of the Jekyll Island’s corporate-power of the Rothschild working in the shadows together towards a one-world system in which most people often refer to in today’s context as ‘The New World Order’. Nevertheless, the other name of this New World Order is globalization which is postulated by this author as:

“The ‘New World Order’ has been transformed into a Cartel of the Rothschilds, Rockefeller, JP Morgan, Carnegie and some others located in Europe, Australia, Canada and rest of the developing nations of the world. How many people know this fact that all the giant conglomerates are owned by the Rothschilds Family and their agents of the Illuminati? Hence, the ‘New World Order’ is not a recipe for a new global political order, but truly the corporate cartel of the Rothschilds whose roots are spread around the American-Israeli Raj’’.

If globalization means this type of new world order where there will be a virtual border and under the canopy of a homogenous culture of ‘Americanization’, all other local indigenous cultures will have to be vanished. This means that there will be no more cultural heritage locally bounded but have to be imported from the European civilization now represented by American-Israeli Raj.27

However, demarcations among the different cultural fragmentations located all over the world are not detrimental to national integration or sovereignty from the religious perspective particularly Islamic religion as long as there has been no subversive collusion or apathy by different indigenous cultural people against the state.

As a matter of fact, Islam does not deprecate other religions and does not indoctrinate abhorrence of Christians, Jews, and Hindus. Our differences and
disagreements are not to be feared, rejected, or stamped out. God wants us to use our differences to learn, through dialogue, about ourselves, about others, and about truth.

In Islamic teachings all human beings are equal at the time of birth, as are all creatures of God. However, they are not necessarily identical in terms of culture, ethnicity, race, skin color, physical and cognitive abilities, potentials, social status, but none of these things do not make one person superior to others. The background of culture and diversity, the color of skin, the language spoken, the country of residence, the amount of wealth and the degrees of prestige enjoyed, do not change the true stature of a person in the sight of God.  

Islam is an egalitarian religion which teaches that all human beings are completely equal in God’s perspective and are created in such a way that all human beings are gifted with consciousness and wisdom through which s/he can know God personally. The true essence of Islam is to respect all other cultural, ethnic and ideological settings.

Islam and the Quran are clearly appreciative of multiplicity and dissimilarity in terms of culture and beliefs in human society. Discarding the pre-Islamic tribal culture inculcating tight groupings based on family lineage, the Quran describes all human beings as part of one super unit which is humanity. It addresses the totality of humanity as ‘Bani Adam’ (children of Adam) in several places. For example, the following verses in the Quran endorse the principle of diversity as an essential element of the scheme of creation.

(i) “O ye who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: it may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let some women laugh at others: it may be that latter are better than the former. Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other names…….” (Sura Hujrat, verse 11)

(ii) “O mankind! We created you from male and female and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is fully informed.” (Sura Hujrat, verse 13)

(iii) “If thy Lord had so willed, He could have made mankind One People: but they will not cease to be diverse.” (Sura Hood, verse 118)

In the first verse, the Quran upholds unity by exhorting its adherents to revere the dignity of all human beings. The next two verses avow the diversity among human beings through nations and tribes. The Quran recognizes and respects the facets of identity determined by these divisions forming smaller and larger
collectivities of mankind. While the Quran conveys respect for everyone, it does not confer nobility or higher worth upon any group or ethnicity. Instead the single evaluative standard for the Quran remains moral consciousness of God (taqwa).\(^30\)

The Quran explicates if it had been God’s Will to not to grant free will to humankind; He could have made all mankind alike and all would then have Faith (Sura Younus ,verse 99). Thus, the men of Faith must guard against the temptation of forcing Faith by any means of compulsion. Hence, the Quran upholds diversity and tolerance as part of the Divine Will. The Quran sees disputations in the matter of religion as futile and urges its adherents to find common grounds of belief through civility, compassion, sincerity and a genuine concern for the good of others. This also reflects in the following verse in the Quran as it lays down the code for Muslims’ conduct with the followers of other Abrahamic religions.

“And argue ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better than mere argument, apart from those among them who inflict wrong and injury upon you. Tell them that we believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you: our Allah and your Allah is One and it is to Him we submit.”\(^31\)

As mentioned earlier, the Quran says that God could have kept us all alike, but He chose to give us diversity in religion, language, culture, color, and race to test our capacity for right conduct and for harmony and peace.\(^32\)

“….. To each among you have we have given a law and a way of life. If Allah had so wanted He would have made you a single people (professing one faith and following one law) but He wished to test you in what He has given each of you. So excel in good deeds. To Allah will you all return in the end and then He will show you the truth of the matters in which you disagreed.”\(^33\)

“And among Allah’s signs are the creation of heaven and the earth and the difference of your tongues and the variation of your colours.”\(^34\)

The Quran’s admiration for diversity in tribal, ethnic, national, and religious differences varies with the Biblical depiction of the Tower of Babel, in which God punishes the human race for competing with God by distributing it into different groupings with mutually incomprehensible languages. The Quran also puts forward that human nature has also been created diverse in terms of inward disposition and personality and not just in language, color and creed. As the Quran says that “Everyone acts according to his or her own disposition.”\(^35\)
There has been a history of Muslims, Jews, Christians, Hindus, and members of other faiths living together in harmony in a pluralistic society under the Muslim rule. Let us have a look at the major tendencies of a society that conforms to the spirit of the Islam’s ethics. The first thing that comes to mind was the exceptional ethnic and religious diversity that existed in the early centuries of Islam; this was unknown to other civilizations of those times. The Muslims from a diverse origin used to live in perfect harmony with the rest of the population, as the Jews and Christians remained loyal to their faith and were free to fulfill their respective religious obligations. They were not subject to any pressure to disown their faith and to embrace Islam.

Contrary to what would happen quite a bit later, the non-Muslims benefited from a protection that the outsiders did not find in any other society. The Prophet himself had set numerous instances in his life, when he used to take his allies and his hosts under his wings and would not allow anyone to humiliate them or to treat them harshly. Besides, these Jews and Christians adopted Arabic language and effectively contributed to the culture of the Islamic society. They were perfectly integrated, more than a thousand years before the Western societies, which after many twists were able to produce the harmony that had once existed in the societies of Baghdad and Cordova. These ethnic people had a special status that guaranteed them a complete protection. They were not only considered as protégés but also as allies. They were described by a term that meant ‘people of the pact.’

They could accede to high posts in the State. Some would become ministers. Nourished by strong Islamic culture, one of the great Jewish thinkers, Maimonides, found the inspiration in Averroes (Abu Rushd) to renew the links between faith and reason in Judaism. A few centuries later Levinas – under the influence of German philosophy - would do the same to give scriptures a new hermeneutic. Evidently, these ‘allies’ were subject to taxes, as were the Muslims themselves, they probably had an advantage in that their tax liability consisted of fixed amounts, whereas Muslims were subject to zakat which is proportionate to resources. Thus Islamic society is pluralistic in character, allowing harmonious cohabitation of religions.

Islam respects all religions. When Caliph Hazrat Umar (ra) arrived in Jerusalem after the conquest of the city by the Muslims in 638, he was given a tour of the sites by the Christian Patriarch of Jerusalem. As the time for prayer approached during the tour, Hazrat Umar (ra) asked for a place where he might offer his prayers. The Patriarch offered Hazrat Umar (ra) the opportunity to pray where he stood in the Church of Holy Sepulchre. Hazrat Umar (ra) turned down the offer saying where he, the first Muslim ruler in Jerusalem, would offer his prayers, his followers would build a mosque and that he did not want that spot to be with a
place of importance to Christians. Thus, he prayed outside the church across the street at a spot where a mosque, called the Mosque of Umar, still stands opposite the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This shows Hazat Umar’s (ra) respect for Christians and their places of worship.  

Hence, Islam urges its followers to engage compassion, acquire knowledge, and assimilate wisdom regardless of cultural origin and creed. In its early centuries the Muslim civilization was the vanguard of human progress because it was not reluctant to acknowledge truth and to acquire knowledge from whatever source - Muslim or non-Muslim, past or present. Hazrat Ali (ra), the fourth Caliph of Islam and a highly revered figure by all Muslims, said that one should evaluate a discourse based on what it says and not who says it or what the cultural identity is. The exclusivists, who now seem so rampant and powerful in Muslim thought and society, only became a potent force in the wake of Mongol onslaught and well over six hundred years after the advent of Islam.  

At present, the process of globalization has a harder time controlling the international system of states. The nation-state’s irrelevance for the local culture combines with the power shift provided by weapons and communications technology to create cultural fragmentation. Nations attract weak allegiance. Smaller ethno-cultural groupings hold the hearts.  

Into this fray of cultural fragmentation, let us then draw the big lines. Islamic ideology challenges Western universalism with its own Universalist claim. The scriptures of the Prophet are not what moral relativists call an "alternative," to be lived only by those who chose to be Muslim. They are a system for all mankind, a replacement for the West’s whole kit of individualism, human rights, commerce and diversity. These are powerful and conflicting diagonals underlying the composition we are looking at: the world picture of cultural fragmentation and structural globalization.  

It is Tibi’s (1998) thesis that political Islam’s absolutist universalism is a powerful enzyme in the chemistry of world conflict. Its effect is to increase conflict and disorder, multiplying the force of cultural fragmentation. Political Islam does not have the organizational power to create a trans-national Islamic political entity. Relying as it does on interpreted scripture rather than structural systems; it must operate with totalitarian politics deriving from the style and conflicts of local strongmen. Its Universalist claim keeps its head in the clouds, but its rejection of both history and popular sovereignty mean that the action on the ground is always tied to local ethno-cultural conflict. And political Islam’s Universalist claim is so complementary to the disenfranchisement felt by those local ethno-cultural groups,
living in Nations to which they feel little allegiance, that we can expect it to persist for a long time, magnifying the cultural fragmentation, increasing the conflicts, and breeding the "new world disorder".

We may expect that the West will learn from this period of history that the current Western order is not some final answer. After all, the Enlightenment ideas that led to the nation-state world order are the same one that teaches us the value of diversity, of self-criticism, and of the decentralized proliferation of ideas. Out of our own self-interest, we must clean our lenses and see what is really happening. If the nation-state system so ill serves such a large number of people, we must find a way to fix those parts of it that is such fertile ground for fundamentalism.

And we must also expect that out of the civilization of Islam, there will be increasing movement to escape the claustrophobic future envisioned by the fundamentalists. In fact, Islam imagines the creation of an "international morality" which will allow the world’s civilizations and their various local, cultural groups to live together with commonality but without moral relativism. There are many strains of thought in current and past Islamic civilization that support this kind of trans-cultural international morality. The challenge of our age is for the people of the world to create that code.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussions delineated above, it is much evident that the current globalization process has a devastating impact on localized culture and tradition of the native or indigenous groups of people located in diverse geographical boundary of the globe. This means that the current process of globalization is in favor of a singular identity of Westernization or Americanization in the name of modernity vividly visible in Huntington’s the Clash of Civilization that is on the verge of face to face confrontation of Islamic culture and religion. There is no other barrier to globalizing by the Westerners for executing new world order except Islam which wants to bind its civilizational nuances with a globalized world that is capable of accommodating every local culture within universal civility and decency. In essence, it is the beauty of Islamic universal values that can contribute to many aspects of the entire indigenous cultural fragmentation and looks forward to seeing the socioeconomic growth and development for all irrespective of race, religion, and gender.
Endnotes

4. Traditionally it refers to all Muslims on Earth taken together. However it can also be used as the humankind with an assumption that every child of Adam and Eve born as an obedient entity of the God-Almighty.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
31. Al-Qurana, Sura Ankaboot, verse 46.
33. Al-Qurana, Sura Maida, verse 48.
34. Sura Rum, verse 22.
35. Sura Bani Israel, verse 84.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
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