

Studying cultural methods of globalization and formation of cultural imperialism

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Abstract: Globalization movement is toward culture de-identification. In globalization, protecting the cultural identity is a barrier against political, social and cultural development. For this reason, transformation or de-identification should be done. In fact, cultural independent identity prevents the native culture's blind and passive imitation of the global culture and imposition of culture and ideologies of import. Native culture is able to specify and prepare correct organizational management method, outcome of technique and consumption as well as social control method, therefore, the globalisers use different tools to create cultural imperialism and cultural globalization and communication and media play important role in this problem.

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1. Introduction

Globalization has long history but it has turned into one of the key words and main issues of the press and to critical subject in social and political sciences. With this description, because they didn't define it comprehensively, its different dimensions have not been understood properly and this phenomenon has remained ambiguous and unknown in society of Iran, world of Islam and the Third World. For this reason, it is necessary to recognize it more carefully so that one can identify different aspects of this phenomenon and specify correct position to face it. In fact, globalization is complex and controversial in all fields and dimensions but it is more ambiguous in culture and politics. Furthermore, effect of globalization on culture and politics is more than its effect on other globalization dimensions such as economics.

1.1. Globalization

Globalization is defined as: expanding culture of a country or a bloc to the earth or effort to expand the special patterns and ideas globally. This effort is effective on other countries of the world and puts them in a new and desirable order. For this reason, globalization is defined as a new global system which includes broad and different fields such as exchanges, communication, thought and global capital and tries to generalize a method and expand a civilization. Sometimes, they limit this phenomenon from zone of a country, bloc or the external civilization to the explosive growth of multinational companies in order to plunder capitals of the world. The above phenomenon means merge of markets and national

cultures in favor of the markets and top global cultures and its result is economic and cultural poverty for the weak countries in the world (Pishgahi Fard, 2008).

Religions intend to globalize their values and ideas but religious globalization is different from the non-religious globalization. In fact, an idea which seeks to find global expansion results in human happiness and perfection or moves to that direction, otherwise, it is harmful, therefore, if any thought and culture try to achieve their goals, make them dominant on the world using legitimate and human tools and start globalization but because this globalization aims at human goodness and happiness, it is not regarded as treacherous project, otherwise, globalization is a deadly project and is harmful (Dadgaran, 2008). Therefore, when globalization is mentioned, the project will be introduced. What is the meaning of project? Project is a set of activities which has been designed with special purpose, therefore, its executive operations are predictable and controllable while process is applied to show interaction flow and end it without a predetermined design. Therefore, difference between process and project is as follows:

- 1- Project has specified design but process has no definite design.
- 2- In the project, target is predetermined but it is not so in the process.
- 3- Project is the planned work unlike the process and is conducted as definite budget.

Considering the definitions of globalization and project, one can emphasize on globalization project. In case this project is good and proper and results in happiness of the people in the world and future life, it will be good and useful. Only divine

religions presented useful project for globalization (Dadgaran, 2008). Reasons for the western globalization process or project: in process, a person or thing doesn't interfere in creation and survival of a phenomenon and doesn't supervise on its condition and is unaware of its fate. In fact, process is natural trend of the phenomenon with natural vicissitudes while the project is controlled by coxswain who intends to direct that to special destination by mobilizing the resources. There are some theories about this question: is globalization a project?

First theory: globalization is a project that is issue of globalization has been designed by West and especially America to continue dominating the world but in recent decades, it has been growing. Proponents of the globalization project are two groups: one group believes that globalization has been a project from the beginning and all of its parts have been pre-designed. Another group believes that globalization has come out of other social realities of which some part has been pre-designed (Sajadi, 2001).

Second theory: globalization is a process and a trend which needs time. Therefore, theory of different globalization trends existed in the previous centuries. Proponents of this theory speak about capital globalization in centuries 16 and 17. They believe that globalization process is continuation of the previous smaller processes. Among proponents of this theory, some groups believe that although each process is product of the previous process, globalization is a new process for which one cannot find lengthy roots and beds. This group with such argument regarded globalization as product of the two past decades.

1.2. Culture

Culture literally means training, knowledge, literature, reason, reasoning, wisdom, goodness, education, grandeur, dignity, sagacity etc. But authorities have given different idiomatic definitions. It seems that Samuel King's definition seems to be comprehensive. He defines culture as a set of knowledge, beliefs, values, art, literature, political – social system, and tribal traditions, social life means which the humans obtain during their life and pass on for the next generations (King, 1974). But Castles says: culture should not be considered as a set of special values and beliefs of a society (Castells, 2011).

Some tried to differentiate between civilization and culture. They classify culture into two material and spiritual groups and regard only material group as the civilization. For this reason, Mac Iver applies culture only for mental, spiritual, artistic and literary achievements of human and he defines civilization as material life means, tools and forms. Therefore, there are differences and similarities between civilization and culture. Civilization (human

material achievements) is a quantitative and measurable category and can be expanded and transferred to other nations. Different societies with different beliefs can take advantage of material human achievements or civilization while it doesn't hold true for culture. Beside these differences, there are two evident similarities between culture and civilization: first, they are heritage of the past generations. Second, they are social phenomena (Castells, 2011).

Culture has abundant classifications of which one is general and special class. Special culture means training some habits of reason or correcting and adjusting some physical actions. General culture means the science which the intelligent and educated person has or means training which have given such trait to him. In this definition, culture is a set of reasoning advantages which give us science so that we can make our judgments correct and true and nourish our emotions and correct them. Word "culture" in sociologists' definition is different from the common and conventional interpretation. In folklore language, interpretation with and without culture means the one with literature and without literature while in science world, the cultureless person or society doesn't exist because any person and society have to accept values, beliefs and norms in order to protect and continue social life (Saliba, 1986). For this reason, culture is spirit of society (Zakariayee). On the other hand, culture means any object, habit, nature and thinking or practical way which human creates and transfers to others especially to the next generation (Ashori).

2. Globalization, cultural means and methods

Variety of cultural globalization methods is indicative of serious and expansive activity of globalizers for transformation of native, national and religious cultures on the one hand and shows its considerable effect on paving the way of globalization. However, it leads any nation and civilization to find a way to confront with it.

2.1. Globalization cultural tools

Undoubtedly, mass media, TV, computer, satellite and internet are the most important globalization cultural means. In fact, West issues western interpretation of modernity through its universal mass media. The Americans broadcast American films concurrently with Hollywood in villages of the world and this is called image hosting. These images are selected and interpreted desirably; therefore, it deprives the person of thinking and converts the world to a spectator because these censored images communicate with the world and achieve unreal interpretation of the world, media belong to limited number of the wealthy, therefore, it is not surprising that the North American wealth,

European and Japanese Union own 80% of power to purchase and make cultural investment in the world. Anyway, West and especially America have globalised dreams of Hollywood, Disney legends, Las Vegas culture through mass media (Hantington, 1999). In addition, mass production and mass consumption require common needs across the world, the work which new communication technology performs, new communication technology has been subject to globalization and a new revolutionary process, the revolution which resulted in dictatorship of mass media and communication powers. Due to technological and informatics revolution, world turned into a widespread communication network which doesn't know tribal and national borders in which the information is rapidly, directly and unilaterally exchanged and advertisement for supply and sale of the new western cultural products is provided and western values and patterns become prevalent. Free competition causes mass production of cultural commodity with low price through which cultural commodity which promotes western culture is given to the public with low price. This phenomenon permits the globalizers to interfere in other people's beliefs (Hantington, 1999).

- TV: TV has special and important position due to voice and animations among mass media. If three newspaper, radio and television reports of an event are prepared, television report makes the addressee familiar with that event more rapidly, carefully, broadly and deeply. Watching TV doesn't require literacy and special knowledge. In addition, it has varied programs. For this reason, major part of any human life is spent for watching TV. McLuhan said: human culture communication field was verbal until print was invented and after invention, it was written and at present, it is visual. Television programs sometimes turn into thoughts stupefying factor which doesn't enlighten those thoughts (Rashid Pour, 1975).

TV culture is unilateral. For this reason, it destroys human thought, doesn't give the viewer chance of thinking, exposes the viewer to explosion of image, voice, motion, light, mental stress etc and turns him to defenseless person which cannot defend himself against western television culture. Third world countries require financial, mental, artistic and technical investment in order to fight against destructive western TV programs and change TV information flow in their favor so that they can penetrate into European and American TV markets and programs (Smith, 1995). TV is involved with the public while is dominated by wealth and power. Wealth and power available in West causes dominance on the programs and technology of TV production and its application for uprooting the beliefs rooted in Third World. In order to achieve the above goals, they

benefit from mind control. This method which has been designed using terror and force can change the public belief. On the other hand, TV in West is a tool for commercial advertisements and sale of consumables and TV in East is a tool for publication of Western values by the globalizers. Although TV with western nature emphasize on liberalism, voluntarism, freedom and power of personal choice, it doesn't give the humans will. TV breaks will of the humans. In spite of TV, human doesn't select his way. For this reason, TV is called magic box (Casino, 1985).

- Computer: the most distinguished technical ability of the human has been manifested in computer and for this reason; computer has spiritual content and cultural message of the advanced and modern societies. Cultural message is delivered by computer. Computers communicate with the world by radio or computer center and satellite, obtain any information from museum, bank, library etc or transfer it to them. Therefore, use of pen, paper and book decreased because they give computer anything they write and keep it in his memory and they can take delivery of it whenever they want to do. Watching TV, listening to music, looking up the vocabulary, telephone information can be easily and rapidly obtained by computer. In near future, no one needs telephone, cinema, radio, television etc because it is filled by different abilities of computer (Hosseini Alhashemi, 1992). Computer is a system for precise computation. Computer calculation is done rapidly even it is not necessary to give calculation formula to computer in calculation of numbers and figures but the manufacturing company gives calculation formula to the computer. This saves budget and time. Instead, computer calculation prevents the human from thinking and producing thought and reduces thinking in the human. In fact, computer removes thought not creates thought. West intends to kill mental innovation and creativity by inventing computer and issuing it to the eastern societies and then inspire the brains which don't seek reasoning and thinking or are not able to think whatever it likes. This goal is rapidly achieved considering the main specifications of computer such as information storage, precision, indefatigability and simulation (Hosseini Alhashemi, 1992).

Satellite: there are many satellites in the earth orbit some of which are not military and relate to private section. This action has brought new issues in satellite images and industry which were harmful to the Third World such as:

- 1- Private section access to satellite images resulted in creation of new power centers and transfer of some part of power from governments to companies on the one hand and enabled these private companies to give their satellite images to

state or non-state actors in international area on the other hand and enabled them to supervise on activity of other countries using the satellite images, publish them or affect them.

- 2- Undoubtedly, satellite images have high precision, clarity and resolution; have positive effects but industrial espionage, unauthorized information gathering, design of terroristic attacks and military operations are the negative effects of Aerial photography. Access of cultural and physical terroristic groups to these images is not difficult because some of the satellites are held by the private section and any person or group which can pay price of the images can have access to these images.
- 3- Because satellite images give considerable advantages, the countries and companies tend to use it to mislead and corrupt local, state, regional and global competitor and opponents or make social crises management problematic by providing false information. Although it is not impossible to control and limit access to satellite images, it is very difficult because satellite technology belongs to the First World than the Third World (Shiroodi, 2003).
- 4- It is also difficult to analyze and interpret satellite images. Even applied satellite training which is conducted by the West with malicious interference. Therefore, the eastern inexperienced satellite analysts need long years to extract correct information from satellite information and they may not achieve this technology which is protected by the West. They require long-term trainings. Role of experience in increase of efficiency of the satellite images analysts should not be ignored. Incompatibility of the program content with value system of the society is problematic (Keihan Newspaper, 2000).

- Internet: expansion of internet plays role in increase of cultural exchange. Internet servers increased from 213 cases in 1981 to 43,230,000 cases in 1988 of which major part is cultural. Material and spiritual profitability of internets led the West to make huge investment in that. For this reason, the number of electronic multinational companies increased from 7 to 14 and the number of telecommunication multinational companies increased from 2 to 5 between 1990 and 1996 while the number of trading companies decreased from 7 to 4, the number of metal companies decreased from 6 to 3 and the number of chemical companies decreased from 18 to 16 (Soleimani, 2001). One of the reasons for rapid expansion of cultural communication is growing decrease of communication, telecommunication and computer expenses and it is predicted that telecommunication and computer

expenses are reduced in near future so that its expense can be neglected by the information exchangers and communicators. Reduction of communication expense didn't result in increase of cultural immunity but software and hardware systems of cultural exchanges in globalization process have threatening actual and potential ability against native cultures and cultural variety leading to loss of national and personal culture identity. Based on report of UN Organization, internet technology encourages products and models of the foreign countries, increases western consumerism and emerges new needs which cannot be met in Third World; therefore, it is result of social disaffection and political instability (Soleimani, 2001). On the other hand, one of the important affairs in global communication network is expansion of the globalization culture. This culture is based on cultural homogenization and exclusion of civilization pluralism. In this conspiring process, no culture but commonplace and materialistic culture of West which is known with five specifications of liberalism, humanism, secularism, democratism and instrumental rationality is not promoted. Therefore, any culture and thought which are out of these categories are fascist, retrogressive, static and terroristic (Nagibosadat, 2000).

Unauthorized equipments which internet creates are as follows:

- 1- Unauthorized access to documents of the institutes even with different arrangements which are made by the centers or persons to keep them.
- 2- Unauthorized copying of computer software
- 3- Vitiating rights of artists, writers and many innovators of cultural, scientific and artistic works due to access to their works and copying of their works
- 4- Financial misuses such as forged sale of commodity, access to confidential accounts and personal deposits of the persons etc
- 5- Misuse of private information relating to persons, institutes and its publication
- 6- Publication of the unethical images which are contrary to the public chastity. This subject is more evident in societies with different ethical models from the West (Nagibosadat, 2000).

2.2. Globalization cultural methods

Globalization cultural methods rely on mass of equipment which belongs to the West.

Globalization cultural methods are designed and executed based on ability of cultural tools but their orientation is anchorage of West culture in non-western lands.

- Protestantism: among the religions, Islam and Christianity have higher tendency to globalization.

Christianity had lower tendency to globalization than Islam. But in recent centuries especially some last decades, Protestant Christianity had more globalization tools and equipment than Islam had. Protestant or Christian reforms affected the western globalization project in two ways:

Firstly: it made the church obey to the government which is called Secularization.

Secondly: it regarded priests as intermediate of people and God which is called Protestant individualism. For this reason, it was possible to link the modified Christianity with West modernism none of which pay attention to ethical principles, war avoidance and economic exploitation avoidance. Protestant released west modernist capitalism from cultural and religious limitations in the world. For this reason, Waters believes that:

First: stopping or reducing secularism and growth of religious beliefs

Second: revival of the old material religions challenges the customized and secular globalization through the fundamentalism.

Protestantism is closely related to democratization process in the world. Democracy liberal systems defend expansion of western values in free election and personal rights. Western democracy which is mixed with secularist values seeks to found religion and religious values in western societies. Economic dependency and huge debts make Third World defenseless against democratization. Bad economic status in the Third World intensifies social unrests. One of the ways of temporary control of social unrest is injection of western democracy because the selected processes sometimes result in false legitimacy of political system. What occurs is a colonized democracy or borrowed democracy. Democratizers claim that the only way of controlling different political and social crises in the third societies is expansion of values resulting from Protestant such as formation of social agency centers, creation and support of free press etc. (Postman, 1993).

- Cultural imperialism: cultural imperialism means replacement of the western and American capitalism beliefs with national and third world values. Such imperialism seeks to make non westerns similar to the westerns in clothes, food, music, film, architecture etc. in this method, style, mark, taste, coca cola, McDonald, American Microsoft are promoted. For this reason, cultural imperialism is interpreted as Coca Cola, McDonald and McDisney colonization and some interpret it synonym of western cultural hegemony. Sometimes, cultural imperialism influence is so strong that it is imagined that Coca Cola removes wrinkles (Russia), cures diseases (Haiti) and converts copper to silver (Barbados). Perhaps, institutionalization or penetration of the referred

beliefs caused many people to regard Coca Cola as a native and national product (Tamilson, 2002). Cultural imperialism which is done by supranational media is involved in addition or transformation of nonwestern societies to penetration circle and western values. This attack of western supranational media makes the undeveloped countries subject to benefits of global dominating powers. This method is called neo-imperialism or western soft dominance which replaced old and coarse methods of the old colony. One of the achievements of cultural imperialism is institutionalisation of purchase culture meaning that:

Firstly, consumerism is promoted and injected in West and East.

Secondly, purchase turns into a recreation and is evident in all human activities including leisure times and holidays. Perhaps, it was because Serge Latouche regards cultural imperialism as directing the earth to a life formation in the world. Realization of this issue requires destruction of all life narrations in favor of western life (Tamilson, 2002).

Cultural attack: cultural attack was applied by Serge Latouche in book of Global Westernization. He believes that cultural flows in the central or western countries are produced and issued under their supervision and penetrate the surrounding world. Images, words, ethical values, judicial rules, political laws and competency criteria are directed by media from West to East or Third World. Information market is monopolized by four agencies of Associated Press, United Press, Reutter and France Press to such extent that most of the radios, newspapers and televisions are common and sometimes, the Third World imported 70% of the television program from West. The situation is severe in the African countries. France operated a free satellite information service besides radios, televisions etc for the Africa. This country broadcasts international news and documentary films in Africa. Thousand- hour free programs are sent to the African people every year and finance 80% of the French Speaking African cinema products while France prevents from formation or dynamism of African audiovisual industry through which wishes, needs, insights, behavioral prototypes, educational systems, biological methods, scientific ideology are transferred and institutionalized from France to East Africa. Anyway, satellite and informatics communication creates uniformity of western and eastern models by imposing western models (Tamilson, 2002).

- Hybridization of culture: Hybridization of the culture means mixture of culture of different lands to the extent that it makes national culture and purity invisible. Hybridization of culture can be defined as cultural combination or its adaptation. Hybridization of the culture falsely believes that hybridization in world

of animals causes stronger races but cultural hybridization couldn't have shown it results in stronger and more serious culture. Salman Rokshdi neglecting this issue defended Book of satanic Verses and wrote: satanic verses admire hybridization, impurity, mixture and change due to new and unexpected combinations of humans, cultures, ideas, policies, films, and wishes. Therefore, the main component in culture hybridization, combination, mixture and amalgamation but it evident that this mixture is in favor of western culture. Globalization accelerated process of mixing the cultures in favor of western culture and disrupted similarity of the national culture and showed its indifference to keeping the cultural consistency and keeping cultural distinction from non-national culture (Tamilson, 2002).

3. Conclusion

Globalization movement is toward culture de-identification. In globalization, protecting the cultural identity is a barrier against political, social and cultural development. In fact, hybridization of culture is de-identification of culture. In globalization, protecting cultural identity is against political, social and cultural development. For this reason, transformation or de-identification should be done. In fact, cultural independent identity prevents the native culture's blind and passive imitation of the global culture and imposition of culture and ideologies of import. Native culture is able to specify and prepare correct organizational management method, outcome of technique and consumption as well as social control method, while these factors are barriers against culture globalization. For example, relationship between technique and consumption can be found in African colonies so that people of the former English colonial countries prefer to consume goods made in England even with higher prices. Such behavior is available among the colonial people of France and other European countries. Therefore, tendency to consumption of western commodities indicates cultural African de-identification (Ardalan, 2001).

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