



Globalization, Multiculturalism, and Maqasid Theory

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Globalization is only possible through flowing of sets of information that transcend space and time. Since a culture is a set of given information that is unique in space and time-- i.e., set of thoughts, norms, values, spirituality, traditions, and a specific way of life--, the philosophical question arises as to what extent the flowing of the superhighway information can be achieved in a multicultural world without intruding on and affecting the unique set which comprises a cultures?

The problem came from the fact that the flowing of the global information highway is controlled and directed by a certain country's interest as means to an end. This process leads to capturing control internationally. The so called "leadership syndrome" most of the time manifests itself in the foreign policy, which implies using other cultures as a theater of exercising power.

This type of activity is morally unjustifiable and does affect other cultures as autonomous entities. In addition to that it also affects the values of beauty, uniqueness, diversity, and self-identification of other cultures.

The problem is philosophical in essence and persists in the following form: how to interact and communicate in a multicultural world without harming the identity of other cultures? How to keep the diversity without falling under absolute relativism? How to keep unity without falling under a relative absolutism?

Reflection upon this problem led me to advocate a new philosophical foundation to this problem, which I am presenting as a new theory in ethics. I call this theory the Maqasid Paradigm or Maqasid Theory. The novelty of this theory resides in the fact that it emphasizes the universality of moral values, at the same time it does recognize and preserve those values that are particulars and unique to a given culture. Thus it preserves both particularity and universality in ethics. As a result of the above achievement, both diversity and identity are seriously considered. It also solves the philosophical problem of the connection between reason and revelation in ethics.

I take Salamanca as a global case that is suitable for application of this theory. Salamanca played its own role in the global history. What singles Salamanca out, as a unique case is: first, the fact that it achieved its goal by preserving one of the essential values of our life, i.e., the intellect, through its intellectual institute, second, it achieved that without erasing the identity of other cultures with whom it has influential interaction. Thus, Salamanca through its university became indeed 'one of the four leading lights of the world' as Pope Alexander IV said in 1254.