

The Articulation of Islamic Resistance Discourse in the Qur'an

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Abstract

The discourse of Islamic resistance has become a significant political and ideological force in contemporary international affairs. Clarifying its conceptual foundations from the Qur'anic perspective is essential to enhance its theoretical coherence and analytical rigor. This study examines the foundational principles, key characteristics, and core elements of Islamic resistance as articulated in the Qur'an. The central research question is: 'How is the discourse of Islamic resistance constructed in the Qur'an?' This article contends that the Qur'anic discourse of Islamic resistance centers on Islam, articulated through privileged signifiers such as human dignity, social justice, freedom, legitimate defense, jihad, and the negation of domination. In contrast, signifiers such as domination, aggression, arrogance, and the humiliation of human beings define the antagonistic field that shapes the discourse's identity through opposition. Drawing on Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's discourse theory, the study adopts a discourse-analytical approach to explain how Islamic resistance is articulated within the Qur'anic worldview. In this framework, discourses compete to construct political identities by assigning meaning to contested signifiers. The identity of Islamic resistance is established positively through justice, human dignity, freedom, defense, jihad, and resistance to domination, and negatively by excluding signifiers such as arrogance, oppression, injustice, aggression, exploitation, and structural

inequality. The findings indicate that by emphasizing universal values, human dignity, social justice, national freedom, and opposition to domination, the Qur'anic discourse of Islamic resistance positions itself as a comprehensive and universal normative system. Its ongoing confrontation with hegemonic and imperial discourses arises from their reliance on domination, injustice, denial of human dignity, and systematic violations of rights. This antagonism reflects the Qur'anic view of the enduring struggle between truth and falsehood, and between justice and oppression.

Keywords: Islamic Resistance, Discourse Theory, Human Dignity, Social Justice, Jihad, Legitimate Defense.

Introduction

The discourse of Islamic resistance is firmly rooted in the identity and normative foundations of Islam. It draws its legitimacy from the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition, in which justice, human dignity, freedom, and opposition to oppression are central ethical principles. In recent decades, this discourse has become a leading intellectual and political paradigm in the Muslim world, shaping resistance movements against occupation, colonialism, and hegemonic domination. The international system now features competing political discourses, each offering its own interpretation of security, justice, peace, and human rights. Within this context, the Islamic discourse of resistance provides an alternative normative framework grounded in divine revelation rather than in secular power or political expediency. Resistance is thus understood not only as military confrontation but as a comprehensive civilizational project to defend justice, uphold human dignity, protect the oppressed, and resist all forms of domination.

Although scholarship on Islamic resistance is expanding, few studies have directly examined its discursive formation from the Qur'anic perspective. Most research has focused on political events, regional conflicts, or ideological movements, with limited attention to the Qur'an's internal discursive structure. This gap underscores the need for a systematic analysis of how the Qur'an constructs the discourse of Islamic resistance and articulates its core concepts. This study addresses the central question: 'How is the discourse of Islamic resistance constructed within the Qur'an?' To answer this, the article applies Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's discourse theory. By identifying the nodal point, privileged signifiers, floating signifiers, and antagonistic relations, the study explains how the Qur'an shapes the identity of Islamic resistance and differentiates it from rival hegemonic discourses. The research ultimately demonstrates that the Qur'anic discourse of resistance constitutes a comprehensive normative system grounded in justice, human dignity, freedom, and the rejection of oppression.

١. Literature Review

To date, no comprehensive study has specifically examined the nature and rationale of Islamic resistance from the perspective of the Holy Qur'an. Existing scholarship has primarily focused on the jurisprudential foundations of Islamic resistance, its treatment in the works of Muslim thinkers, or selected dimensions of the concept. A substantial portion of the literature has also concentrated on the Qur'anic notions of arrogance and oppression, as well as the characteristics of hegemonic powers in the Qur'an and other Islamic sources. Among the major contributions in this field, Eftekhari (٢٠٢٠ AD/١٣٩٩ SH) proposes a conceptual model of Islamic resistance, while Asefi (٢٠١١ AD/١٤٣٢ AH) examines its jurisprudential foundations. Negahban and Abolhasani (٢٠٢٠ AD/١٣٩٩ SH) analyze the principles, necessity, conditions, obstacles, and consequences of

resistance from a Qur'anic perspective. Khorasani (۲۰۲۰ AD/۱۳۹۹ SH) investigates the relationship between belief in monotheism and Islamic resistance. Likewise, Yusefi Moqaddam (۲۰۲۴ AD/۱۴۰۳ SH), in "Islamic Resistance from the Perspective of the Holy Qur'an," discusses the foundations, objectives, outcomes, and methods of resistance through a collection of scholarly essays. Zaheditir and Dargahi (۲۰۲۱ AD/۱۴۰۰ SH) evaluate approach resistance from a sociological perspective, examining its various dimensions within the Qur'anic framework.

Another body of scholarship has focused on the discourse of arrogance and hegemony as the constitutive "other" of Islamic resistance. Representative studies include Eftekhari and Babakhani's semantic analysis of arrogance in the Qur'an (۲۰۱۵ AD/۱۳۹۴ SH), Salimi and colleagues' study of the term based on semantic collocation (۲۰۲۰ AD/۱۳۹۹ SH), Mahdianfar's discussion of arrogance and oppression in the Qur'an (۲۰۱۹ AD/۱۳۹۸ SH), Javaherdehi's analysis of the characteristics of the arrogant (۲۰۱۹ AD/۱۳۹۸ SH), Mousavi's examination of Qur'anic methods of confronting arrogance (۱۹۸۲ AD/۱۳۶۱ SH), and Mansouri's comparative study of the oppressed and the arrogant in the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition (۲۰۱۱ AD/۱۳۹۰ SH). Despite these valuable contributions, the discursive construction of Islamic resistance in the Qur'an has not yet been investigated as an independent subject of inquiry. The present study seeks to fill this gap by drawing upon discourse theory to reconstruct the Qur'anic discourse of Islamic resistance through a systematic comparison with the discourse of hegemony. By identifying the principal nodal point, privileged signifiers, and antagonistic relations, the article provides a comprehensive account of how the Qur'an constructs the identity and normative foundations of Islamic resistance.

۲. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

۲.۱. The Concept of Resistance

The concepts of resistance and its opposing, non-constructive concept of arrogance constitute the fundamental concepts of this study and therefore require clarification at the outset. In addition, an explanation of discourse theory and discourse analysis, which serve as the theoretical and analytical framework of this research, is of considerable importance. This section briefly examines both topics.

۲,۱,۱. The Concept of Resistance

Although the term resistance is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an, the concept appears through the root steadfastness in both verbal and nominal forms across numerous verses. In Surah al-*Fuṣṣilat*: ۳۰, the Qur'an explicitly emphasizes the necessity of perseverance and steadfastness in the face of adversaries (Negahban & Abolhasani, ۲۰۲۰). The term steadfastness is derived from the root (*q-w-m*), meaning continuity, firmness, and perseverance (Zamakhsharī, ۱۹۹۲: ۵۳۸). Some scholars argue that steadfastness encompasses such concepts as moderation, stability, and constancy (Zabīdī, ۱۹۹۳ AD/۱۴۱۴ AH: ۲, ۷۶۸). In Qur'anic terminology, steadfastness refers to steadfastness in religion and adherence to the path of truth in the face of deviation (Ibn 'Āshūr, ۱۹۹۹ AD/۱۴۲۰ AH: ۱۱, ۲۸۲). Within this framework, the concept of resistance emerges as opposition to aggression and domination.

In another interpretation, steadfastness signifies a person's determination to persist in an undertaking, striving to accomplish it completely and correctly without deficiency or corruption (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ۱۹۹۶ AD/۱۴۱۷ AH: ۱۱, ۴۷). Resistance and steadfastness also represent the fulfillment of the divine mission entrusted to the Prophet (Ṭabrisī, ۱۹۵۲ AD/۱۳۷۲ AH: ۵, ۳۰۴). More generally, resistance denotes standing firm against individuals or forces that, out of hostility or antagonism, seek to subjugate others. Accordingly, some lexicographers have defined it as opposition and confrontation (Amīd, ۱۹۸۳ AD/۱۳۶۲ SH: ۹۷۹).

In political discourse, resistance becomes relevant when the rights of states are violated by predatory powers or by the international system of domination. Within the discourse of Islamic resistance, it refers to opposition, perseverance, and steadfastness against internal and external obstacles to the progress and development of the Islamic community created by its adversaries. The discourse of Islamic resistance possesses a distinct political identity centered on the master signifier of Islam, emphasizing defense against aggression, the struggle against oppression, resistance to global arrogance, and justice in international relations. Today, the Islamic Republic of Iran, together with groups engaged in resisting the hegemonic policies of the global system of domination and Zionist occupation in Palestine and Lebanon, constitutes what is commonly referred to as the Axis of Resistance.

٢,١,٢. The Concept of Arrogance

The discourse of arrogance represents the non-constructive counterpart to the discourse of resistance, and one of the principal objectives of the discourse of resistance is the rejection of the discourse of arrogance. In the Qur'an, arrogance and pride denote self-aggrandizement, the pursuit of dominance, and the desire to exalt oneself over others (Q. ٢٨:٣٩). Pride is derived from the root (*k-b-r*), meaning to display greatness and seek superiority over others (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, ١٩٩١ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ٦٩٧). Lexically, the term refers to self-conceit, the pursuit of superiority, the rejection of truth, and defiance of reality (Dehkhoda, ١٩٩٨ AD/١٣٧٧ SH). Likewise, *Ibn Manẓūr* defines it as a desire for superiority and a refusal to accept the truth, born of arrogance and obstinacy (Ibn Manẓūr, ١٩٩٣ AD/١٤١٤ AH: ٥, ١٢٦).

The root (*k-b-r*) and its derivatives occur ١٦١ times across ٥٧ chapters of the Qur'an in a total of ١٥٣ verses. Of these, ٥٦ instances specifically involve the term

arrogance and its derivatives, reflecting the significance of this concept in the Qur'anic discourse (Salimi et al., ۲۰۲۰).

In the context of this study, arrogance refers to a political identity characterized by domination, hegemonic ambition, aggression, and hostility in international relations. The discourse of arrogance is inherently oppressive because it is founded upon a sense of self-superiority and an illegitimate claim to greatness that the individual or entity does not rightfully possess (Ṭabrisī, ۱۹۹۱ AD/۱۴۱۲ AH: ۱, ۱۱۴). Hostility toward the Islamic system, interference in the affairs of other nations to advance one's own interests (Statements of the Supreme Leader, January ۲۹, ۲۰۱۵), and oppression and aggression (Khomeini, ۲۰۱۰ AD/۱۳۸۹ SH: ۷, ۴۸۸) are among the defining characteristics of the discourse of arrogance, placing it in direct opposition to the discourse of Islamic resistance.

Within Islamic thought, the struggle against arrogance is inseparable from the Muslim community's religious faith. Without confronting tyrants and arrogant powers, faith and religious commitment remain fundamentally incomplete (Statements of the Supreme Leader, December ۳۰, ۱۹۸۹). Consequently, the confrontational orientation of the discourse of resistance toward the discourse of arrogance stems from the latter's inherently oppressive and Pharaoh-like nature. Opposition to injustice and the struggle against oppression therefore constitute the enduring path and defining principle of the discourse of Islamic resistance (Statements of the Supreme Leader, December ۲۰, ۲۰۱۳).

۳. Theoretical Framework

Discourse refers to a set of signifiers and signs that, by referring to a central signifier, form a unified semantic whole. Foucault defines discourse as a set of statements and propositions that achieve unity at a given time (Sajjadi, ۲۰۲۰ AD/۱۳۹۹ SH: ۴۶). From the perspective of Laclau and Mouffe, discourse is a field

in which a network of signs is formed, and their meanings are temporarily fixed within it (Jørgensen & Phillips, ۲۰۱۹ AD/۱۳۹۸ SH). In other words, discourse is a communicative totality within which meaning is continuously reconstructed and produced (Laclau, ۱۹۸۸: ۲۵۴). Discourse has a contingent nature and is therefore always subject to instability. According to Laclau and Mouffe, the social meaning of signs, words, speech, actions, and institutions is represented within the concept of discourse (Sajjadi, ۲۰۲۰ AD/۱۳۹۹ SH: ۴۸). In this theory, every meaningful act is discursive, since activities and phenomena become intelligible only when situated within a specific discursive framework. Identity politics is the center of conflict between discourses in international relations. Following the collapse of the bipolar world order, the confrontation between Islamic and Western discourses replaced the earlier East-West (liberalism vs. Marxism) dichotomy. Although such a confrontation appears inevitable in discourse analysis, since "Othering" and enemy construction are inherent features of political discourses in defining identity boundaries (Howarth, ۲۰۰۰: ۱۶۵), Samuel Huntington's theory of the "Clash of Civilizations" played a major role in intensifying it.

Subsequent developments in the international system, such as events in the Middle East and Islamic countries, the rise of Islamism, the September ۱۱ attacks, the Arab Spring, and the growing influence of Islamic thought, all demonstrate the significant role of Islamic discourse in international relations. The strengthening of the political identity of Islamic discourse has placed the discourse of arrogance and the system of domination under serious challenge. From this point onward, political Islam has been introduced as a disruptive "Other" to the Western hegemonic order, bringing into international relations concepts such as human dignity, social justice, political freedom, and human security. The political identity of Islamic discourse has proposed an alternative international order based on justice. This counter-hegemonic discourse emphasizes human dignity rather than

humiliation, and national independence and freedom rather than captivity and servitude, thereby constituting an anti-hegemonic discourse in international relations. Its diplomatic orientation is based on confronting domination and rejecting the logic of dominance and subordination (Khamenei, ۲۰۰۷ AD/۱۳۸۶ SH).

Articulation is the process through which discourses construct identity by establishing relationships among elements and assigning meaning to signifiers around a central nodal point, thereby organizing them within a discursive chain. Any practice that establishes a relation between elements in such a way that their identities are defined through that relation is called articulation (Sajjadi, ۲۰۲۰ AD/۱۳۹۹ SH). According to Laclau and Mouffe, articulation is a practice that establishes relations among different identities in such a way that these identities are mutually defined (Laclau, ۱۹۸۸: ۲۵۴). Through articulation, elements within a discourse acquire specific meanings and become "Moments." To explain the temporary fixation of meanings and identities, Laclau and Mouffe use the concepts of "Hegemony" and "Antagonism."

Floating signifiers are signs whose meanings are contested by different discourses. These meanings are temporarily fixed around a central nodal point within each discourse. The nodal point is a privileged sign around which other signs are organized and articulated. The concept of hegemony is derived from Gramsci. He developed it through a dialectical relationship between base and superstructure. In Laclau and Mouffe's view, hegemony refers not only to political leadership but also to mental and psychological leadership. Hegemonic intervention leads to the dissolution of rival discourses and the formation of a new discourse.

Although possession of political, economic, and military tools is important for achieving hegemony in international relations, soft power and persuasion are of greater significance. A discourse becomes hegemonic when it has the power to

persuade, gain consent, and secure public support. Hegemonic discourse achieves dominance by transforming its signifiers into collective representations and legitimizing its narrative of international relations. Credibility and availability (problem-solving capacity) are two key elements of hegemonization. However, due to the contingent nature of discourses, the stabilization of a hegemonic political identity is temporary, and discourse is always subject to instability (Laclau & Mouffe, ۱۹۸۵: ۲۸۲). The questioning and delegitimization of the internal logic of hegemonic discourse is its main challenge.

According to Fairclough, in a discursive order, the dominance of one ideological formation over others leads to the naturalization of meanings through ideology and politics. Resistance usually emerges from agents who define their position within an alternative discursive order (Fairclough, ۱۹۹۸). The application of discourse theory in the Islamic approach is carried out while preserving essentialism, the primacy of truth, and avoiding absolute relativism.^۱ In this approach, principles are treated as absolute in doctrinal foundations, while interpretative relativity applies at the level of issues. In the discourse of Islamic resistance, signifiers such as human dignity, freedom, justice, and equality represent essential identity. At the same time, oppression, superiority-seeking, and coercion are considered inherent features of the discourse of arrogance. From this perspective, the latter is inherently a source of insecurity and fear (Khomeini, ۲۰۱۰ AD/۱۳۸۹ SH: ۶, ۲۵۶).

۴. The Articulation of the Islamic Resistance Discourse

The Islamic resistance discourse is articulated around the central signifier of Islam. Signifiers such as dignity, justice, freedom, Jihad, defense, and the rejection of

^۱. Scholars such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, David Howarth in *Discourse*, and David Howarth, Aletta J. Norval, and Yannis Stavrakakis in *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change*, among others, have argued that discourse theory provides an appropriate analytical framework for the study of political, ideological, and religious discourses, including Islamic studies. See: Haghighat, Seyed Sadegh. (۲۰۲۲). *Research Methodology in Political Science* (۷th ed.). Qom, Iran: Mofid University Press.

domination are articulated around this central signifier, thereby granting the discourse its identity. In contrast, the hegemonic discourse, structured around the central signifier of liberalism and characterized by floating signifiers such as superiority-seeking, domination, interventionism, self-interest, and unilateralism, is positioned as the "Other" and rival of the Islamic resistance discourse, and occupies a hegemonic position in the international order. Just as the Islamic resistance discourse constructs the identity of the hegemonic discourse as its constitutive outside, the hegemonic discourse is also considered the condition of possibility and continuity of the Islamic resistance discourse. The responsibility of combating corruption and social reform (enjoining good), as well as opposing oppression and domination (defense), forms part of the religious foundations of the identity of Islamic resistance (Asefi, ۲۰۱۱ AD/۱۴۳۲ AH: ۲۱).

In Qur'anic literature, signifiers such as human dignity (al-Isrā': ۷۰), social justice (al-Ḥadīd: ۲۵), political freedom (al-Insān: ۲; al-Kahf: ۲۹), jihad (al-Ḥajj: ۳۹), defense (al-Baqarah: ۱۹۴), and the rejection of domination (al-Nisā': ۱۴۱) are among the most important elements represented in the structuring of the Islamic resistance discourse. While these signifiers, due to their universal and human character, constitute the identity of the Islamic resistance discourse, the hegemonic discourse, due to its domination-oriented nature, negates these signifiers and leads to the violation of these human values. From this perspective, the Qur'an defines arrogance as characterized by rebellion, excessive desire, superiority-seeking, humiliation of human beings, injustice, intervention, and plundering, and considers it the basis for the formation of the identity of the Islamic resistance discourse. The simultaneity and coexistence of resistance and arrogance arise from the nature of domination itself, because "As long as domination exists in the world, struggle will exist as well" (Imam Khomeini). Some Western scholars have also described the

emergence of the Islamic resistance discourse as a reaction to the domination-seeking nature of modernist discourse (Linklater, ۲۰۰۶ AD/۱۳۸۵ SH).

۴.۱. The Signifier of Human Dignity

The Holy Qur'an presents the human being as a noble creature endowed with inherent dignity. The protection and preservation of human dignity constitute one of the principal signifiers of the discourse of Islamic resistance, and no one, including the individual himself or herself, has the right to violate this dignity (Javadi Amoli, ۱۹۹۰). The term dignity has been defined as purity from defilement, benevolence, generosity, chivalry, and magnanimity (Dehkhoda, ۱۹۹۸). It also denotes freedom from baseness and degradation (Javadi Amoli, ۱۹۸۷: ۲۱).

Within the discourse of Islamic resistance and from the perspective of the Holy Qur'an, every human being is endowed with dignity. As the Qur'an states: "Indeed, We have honored the children of Adam" (Q. ۱۷:۷۰). Accordingly, every human being possesses an inherent dignity that distinguishes humanity from all other creatures (Jalili, ۲۰۲۲: ۱۴۹). Although there is considerable scholarly debate regarding whether human dignity is inherent or acquired, the author of "*al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*" argues that the Qur'anic verse refers to the condition of all human beings irrespective of their spiritual excellence or divine distinction (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ۱۹۹۶ AD/۱۴۱۷ AH: ۱۳, ۱۵۶). Likewise, Allamah Jafari maintains that God has intrinsically honored all descendants of Adam, and that individuals are therefore obliged to recognize and respect one another's dignity and worth (Jafari, ۲۰۰۱: ۱۵۷).

Human dignity is a fundamental human right that belongs equally to all individuals solely by virtue of their humanity (Mir Ahmadi et al., ۲۰۱۴). Consequently, everyone is obligated to respect this right and must refrain from any action or

conduct that would violate or undermine human dignity (Javadi Amoli, ۱۹۹۰). Respect for human dignity, therefore, requires the prohibition of all forms of political behavior incompatible with human dignity, including cruel, degrading, and humiliating treatment within any political system (Jafari, ۱۹۹۸ AD/۱۴۱۹ AH: ۱۴۹). The discourse of Islamic resistance further emphasizes an interpretation of human rights that is consistent with and grounded in human dignity (JaVadi Amoli, ۲۰۰۲: ۱۶۲).

Respect for human dignity, as a universal human value, has the potential to promote cooperation among nations rather than conflict and to serve as a foundation for the unity of humankind and the global community (JaVadi Amoli, ۲۰۱۱: ۸۰). By incorporating the signifier of human dignity into its discursive articulation, the discourse of Islamic resistance affirms the equal rights of all human beings, including followers of different religions, and recognizes their inherent human rights, thereby upholding the intrinsic worth of every person (Khomeini, ۲۰۱۰: ۶, ۴۶). Such a human-centered approach, founded on equal respect for the rights and dignity of all people, removes many sources of conflict and hostility and provides a suitable foundation for peaceful coexistence and sustainable security in international relations.

Within the field of international relations, although the concept of human dignity has not always been treated as an independent principle, it nevertheless constitutes the normative foundation of such principles as the right of people to self-determination, justice, and freedom. Respect for national sovereignty and the right of nations to determine their own political destiny are direct implications of the principle of human dignity. Consequently, interference in the internal affairs of other states and violations of their national sovereignty amount to the humiliation of peoples and the denial of their inherent dignity. From an ethical perspective, domination, exploitation, and unjust control over another nation degrade both its

identity and its people. From the perspective of the discourse of Islamic resistance, the discourse of arrogance, through domination, claims of superiority, and intervention in the affairs of other nations, elevates certain peoples above others, thereby violating the principle of human dignity. Such intervention deprives nations of their right to self-determination and subjects them to humiliation. Both practices constitute major sources of conflict and insecurity in international relations. In contrast, the discourse of Islamic resistance regards the defense of human dignity not only as a universal moral value but also as an indispensable prerequisite for establishing lasting international peace and security. For this reason, it consistently emphasizes rejecting arrogance and hegemonic domination.

٤,٢. The Signifier of Justice

The establishment of justice and the realization of equity among people are identified in several Qur'anic verses as among the principal objectives of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) mission (Q. ٥٧:٢٥). The Holy Qur'an further commands believers, particularly rulers and those entrusted with the affairs of the Muslim community, to uphold justice in the exercise of authority (Q. ٤:٥٨). Moreover, justice is presented in several Qur'anic passages as one of the defining characteristics of piety and God-consciousness (Q. ٥:٨).

The Prophetic traditions and the teachings of the Imams likewise emphasize the centrality of justice, identifying its implementation and protection as among the foremost responsibilities of an Islamic government. Justice is regarded as one of the distinguishing features of Islam and the foundation of all moral virtues (Ansari Ismail, ١٩٨٤ AD/١٤٠٥ AH: ٣٩). According to Ayatollah Khamenei, justice means ensuring equal opportunities for all members of society and guaranteeing that public resources and facilities are accessible to everyone without discrimination (Khamenei, ٢٠٠٦: ٨٨). He further defines justice as adherence to the rule of law,

arguing that any action contrary to the law constitutes a violation of justice (Khamenei, ۱۹۸۹: ۲۵۱).

Within the discourse of Islamic resistance, justice is therefore understood not only as a moral and religious obligation but also as a legal and political principle that ensures equality, fairness, and the rule of law. Such an understanding of justice provides an essential foundation for peaceful coexistence, social stability, and sustainable peace and security in international relations.

Justice is likewise a fundamental and universal value. All religions, divine missions, and heavenly prophets have organized their teachings and calls upon the principle of justice (Faḍlullah, ۲۰۰۸ AD/۱۳۸۷ SH: ۱۵۰). Every individual endowed with sound reason and a balanced nature recognizes justice through innate disposition and rational judgment (Jafari, ۱۹۹۴ AD/۱۳۷۳ SH: ۳۹۷). Justice is not confined to the sphere of Muslims alone; rather, it encompasses both Muslims and non-Muslims. Consequently, an Islamic government is obligated to protect even a non-Muslim against injustice committed by a Muslim.

The discourse of Islamic resistance regards the rule of law, equal access to opportunities, and equitable enjoyment of the world's material and scientific resources as concrete manifestations of justice and as rights belonging to all nations. Commitment to the principles of justice and equality is considered the basis of lasting security and the expansion of cooperation in international relations. Conversely, violations of justice, inequality, excessive ambition, and profiteering, which are characteristic features of the discourse of arrogance, are viewed as causes of division and conflict in international relations. For this reason, they constitute one of the principal grounds for confrontation between the discourse of Islamic resistance and the discourse of arrogance.

From a positive perspective, justice consists of striving to establish just conditions of life, enacting just laws, and implementing justice throughout society. From a

negative perspective, justice requires rejecting all manifestations of oppression and injustice that contradict it. From the standpoint of the discourse of Islamic resistance, one must pursue social justice, support the deprived and the oppressed, and confront oppressors (Khamenei, ۱۹۹۴ AD/۱۳۷۳ SH). Oppression constitutes one of the defining signifiers of the discourse of arrogance (Q. ۲۸:۳۹-۴۰). Therefore, the negative dimension of justice, namely, resisting oppression, defines the principal orientation of the discourse of Islamic resistance in opposition to the discourse of arrogance. Hatred of oppression and opposition to oppressors constitute fundamental principles within the discourse of Islamic resistance.

Pride leads to the violation of human dignity; superiority results in oppression and aggression; and interference in others' affairs constitutes a violation of justice. Interventionist practices within the discourse of arrogance infringe on the national sovereignty of states and thereby violate international justice. Accordingly, the discourse of Islamic resistance regards the defense of justice and the struggle against aggression and intervention as a collective responsibility. As stated, "The arrogant powers of the world intend to interfere in the affairs of other nations; this very situation has become the driving force behind the struggle of the oppressed and the downtrodden peoples of the world." (Khamenei, ۲۰۱۳ AD/۱۳۹۲ SH) Within the discourse of Islamic resistance, justice represents the fundamental and underlying signifier, and lasting global peace can be achieved only through the realization of justice, non-interference in the affairs of other nations, and respect for the independence of peoples. As Imam Khomeini stated: "We hope that world peace will be established based on the independence of nations, non-interference in one another's affairs, and respect for the territorial integrity of the countries of the region."

۴.۳. The Signifier of Freedom

Freedom constitutes one of the central and foundational signifiers of the discourse of Islamic resistance. From the Qur'anic perspective, the concept of freedom is derived from the teleological nature of creation and humanity's divinely ordained purpose. The Holy Qur'an portrays human beings as free, morally responsible agents endowed with the capacity to choose their course of action (Q. ١٨:٢٩; ٧٦:٣; ٩٠:١٠). The freedom to choose between the paths of guidance and misguidance, as affirmed in these verses, is rooted in the dual nature of the human being.

Within Islamic discourse, human nature is neither inherently evil nor absolutely virtuous. Rather, human beings possess an innate capacity for both good and evil. As Javadi Amoli explains, "By virtue of the intrinsic freedom and free will bestowed upon human beings, they can determine the nature and direction of their own actions through conscious choice... choosing either the path of guidance or that of misguidance." (Javadi Amoli, ٢٠١٨: ١١٥)

Within the discourse of Islamic resistance, the signifier of freedom acquires a meaning distinct from that of liberal conceptions of freedom by virtue of its articulation with the central signifier of Islam. In this discourse, freedom is interpreted as closely related to the signifier of justice. Accordingly, the limits and scope of freedom are determined by justice; human freedom extends only insofar as it does not contradict the requirements of justice. At the same time, the sphere of freedom is broad, encompassing individual, social, national, and international freedom.

Like human dignity and justice, freedom is regarded as a universal human value that deserves recognition and commitment by all people regardless of their cultural or ideological differences. This is because unconditional submission to rulers is contrary to the innate nature of human beings (Javadi Amoli, ٢٠١١ AD/١٣٩٠ SH: ٢٩٠). From the perspective of the discourse of Islamic resistance, freedom in the international arena signifies the political independence and self-determination of

the members of the international community. Respect for the freedom of nations strengthens the foundations of peace and international cooperation. In contrast, the denial of freedom and the subjugation of other peoples generate the conditions for conflict and divergence among states. The discourse of Islamic resistance regards freedom as an inherent right of all human beings. It considers its violation to constitute both an affront to human dignity and a breach of justice. This understanding inevitably places the discourse of Islamic resistance in confrontation with the discourse of arrogance. Just as policies of domination and intervention violate justice, they also deprive human beings of their freedom. Consequently, the discourse of Islamic resistance maintains that liberation from the domination and captivity imposed by arrogant powers is an indispensable prerequisite for human welfare, genuine security, and the establishment of lasting peace in international relations.

٤,٤. The Signifier of Defense

Defense literally means to repel, prevent, or ward off harm (Farāhīdī, ١٩٨٥ AD/١٣٦٤ SH). In Islamic jurisprudence, it refers to repelling enemies' attacks and aggression. More specifically, defense denotes resisting assaults against the lives, property, honor, and territorial integrity of Muslims and protecting them against such aggression. From the perspective of the Holy Qur'an, the principle of defense is not limited to a particular nation or religious community but represents a universal and rational principle. According to Allamah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, the universality of defense is rooted in human nature and reason (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ١٤, ٣٨٥). Likewise, Imam Khomeini maintains that defense is a natural and rational necessity (Khomeini, ٢٠١٠ AD/١٣٨٩ SH: ١٦, ١٩٣). Consequently, within the discourse of Islamic resistance, the concepts of jihad and defense are not confined to geographical borders; rather, they extend wherever aggression,

oppression, and corruption exist. Defense against aggression therefore encompasses all forms of violation, including attacks on fundamental human values (Motahhari, ١٩٨٩ AD/١٣٦٨ SH: ٦٣).

The Holy Qur'an identifies the prevention of corruption and evil on earth as the principal philosophy underlying defense (Q. ٢:٢٥١; ٢٢:٤٠). Commenting on these verses, Allamah *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* argues that defense and, when necessary, armed struggle prevent corruption because they restore the social and fundamental rights of communities that arrogant and oppressive powers have violated (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٢, ٣٠٦). Within the discourse of Islamic resistance, defense occupies a central and indispensable position. Indeed, resistance derives its meaning from the defense of human values, while defense itself safeguards the objectives and ideals of resistance. In the Qur'anic discourse, defense is primarily articulated through the lens of defensive jihad and extends across various dimensions of individual and collective life. Defense therefore is not merely a military concept but also encompasses the protection of justice, freedom, human dignity, and the rights of oppressed peoples against all forms of aggression and domination.

٤.٥. The Signifier of the Rejection of Domination

The negation of domination is one of the most significant Qur'anic signifiers within the discourse of Islamic resistance. Based on the principle of negation of domination, opposition to systems of domination in international relations constitutes one of the defining characteristics of this discourse. The signifier of the rejection of domination is derived from the Qur'anic doctrine known as negation of domination, which is based on the verse: "And Allah will never grant the disbelievers a way over the believers." (Q. ٤:١٤١) In Islamic jurisprudence, the principle of negation of domination has been regarded as one of the governing

principles that regulate the relations between an Islamic state and non-Muslim states. Although some exegetes interpret the verse as denying only the legal or normative superiority of unbelievers over believers, others, relying on the indefinite noun *Sabīlan* occurring in a negative context, which in Arabic conveys a universal meaning, argue that the verse establishes a general rule prohibiting every form of domination or superiority of non-believers over Muslims (Alidoust, ٢٠٠٤ AD/١٣٨٣ SH).

Different interpretations have likewise been offered concerning the meaning of the term *Sabīl* (way or authority). Some commentators understand it to signify proof or argument; others maintain that the verse refers to a creational rather than a legal reality, implying that unbelievers will possess no decisive proof against believers on the Day of Judgment. A third group rejects both interpretations and argues that the verse should be understood in its broad sense, namely, the negation of every form of domination, control, or supremacy by non-believers over believers in both this world and the Hereafter. Within the discourse of Islamic resistance, therefore, the rejection of domination is not merely a jurisprudential principle but also a political and civilizational doctrine. It requires resistance against all forms of political, military, economic, and cultural hegemony that undermine the independence, dignity, and self-determination of nations. Accordingly, domination, intervention in the internal affairs of other states, and the denial of national sovereignty are regarded as incompatible with justice, freedom, and human dignity. By rejecting every manifestation of hegemonic control, the discourse of Islamic resistance seeks to establish international relations.

Conclusion

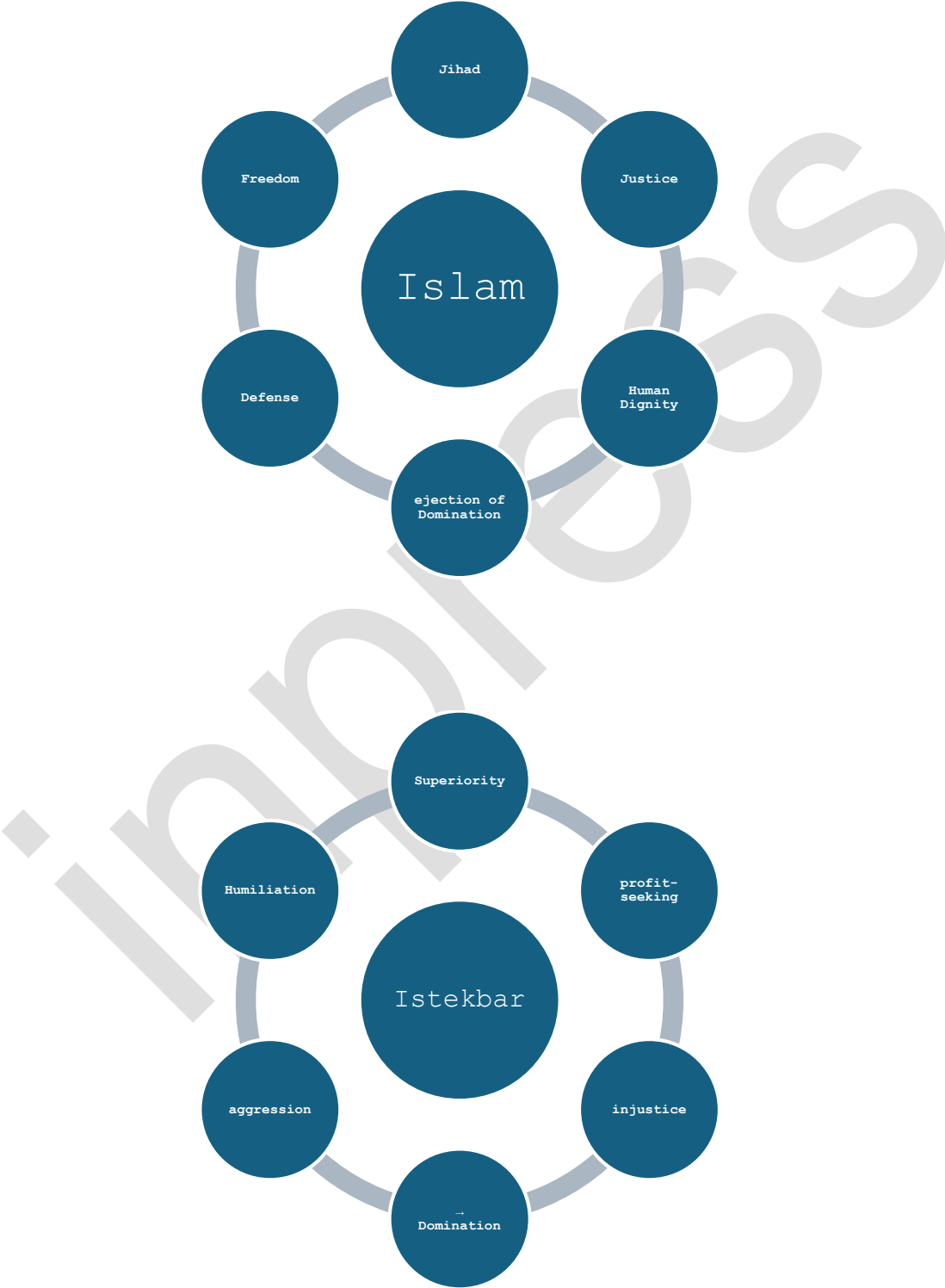
Shared human values promote convergence and international cooperation. Strengthening these values supports peace, security, and coexistence. The

discourse of Islamic resistance emphasizes signifiers such as human dignity, social justice, freedom, defense of human values, and rejection of domination and oppression. These signifiers reflect the common aspirations of humanity and foster international cooperation. Their universal and inclusive nature shapes the identity of Islamic resistance. Conversely, the discourse's negative identity is defined by rejecting hegemonic signifiers like domination, superiority-seeking, aggression, intervention, and denial of self-determination. With its anti-hegemonic stance, the discourse of Islamic resistance calls for ongoing resistance to hegemonic domination and intervention.

The Qur'anic formulation of Islamic resistance highlights its humanistic, inclusive, and universal character. While promoting coexistence and peace, this discourse identifies hegemony and domination as primary sources of conflict and war. Its confrontational stance is rooted both in Qur'anic teachings and in opposition to the hegemonic discourse that contradicts human dignity. From the perspective of Islamic resistance, hegemony marked by colonialism, superiority-seeking, expansionism, arrogance, and humiliation, causes conflict and threatens international security. To achieve sustainable human security, rejecting hegemonic discourse is essential. Thus, the discourse of resistance upholds human values and maintains opposition to hegemony as long as domination and aggression persist.

The discourse of Islamic resistance versus the discourse of hegemonic domination

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