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Social Sciences

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The Association of Muslim Social Scientists  
and  
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## The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences

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To facilitate academic review and production, authors must provide their complete name, address, phone number(s), current position/title, and name(s) of universities on the title page. Text and references must follow the format outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style*. All footnotes citing books must contain the complete title, name of the author(s), place of publication, publishing company, and date. For journals, the volume and number of the issue, as well as the pages used, must be provided. All foreign words must be underlined and transliterated. *AJISS* reserves the right to change the transliteration of all historical names, titles, and non-English terminology to bring them into conformity with its own style. Ten off-prints of the articles and two copies of book reviews will be sent to the author(s).

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## EDITORIAL

In this issue we have included the opening address of Ṭāhā Jabir Al-'Alwānī which was delivered at the First AMSS History Conference with the theme of "Strategies for an Islamic Perspective on History and Historical Writing," that was held on *Dhu al Qi'dah 1-2, 1411/May 26-27, 1990*. Al-'Alwānī states that the collapse of Marxism all over the world is a logical conclusion of the philosophies which circulated in the West with a stamp of undeserved academic authority and universality.

Western thought, he says, will explain the fall of Marxism by trying to revive philosophies removed from Marxism and condemning Marxism as being opposed to human nature, antithetical to freedom and democracy, and opposed to the natural flow of history. But the alternatives to be projected will not be essentially any different. Therefore, Al-'Alwānī warns, the glee we witness in the West at the collapse of Marxism will be short-lived because before too long the shortcomings of Western thought will become more apparent. What is needed for removing the suffering of mankind is a comprehensive alternate philosophy that presents a realistic and satisfactory interpretation of history, an overall conception of life, mankind, and the universe.

Al-'Alwānī argues that the Qur'anic interpretation of time, life, the universe, mankind, history, and good and evil provides contemporary humanity with a philosophical and civilizational alternative that is capable of leading mankind out of the present crisis.

It is in this context that the contributions of *AJISS* become relevant. Our writers are engaged in providing a critique of the Western disciplines and then highlighting the features of their Islamized versions. Abdul Rashid Moten attempts a contrast between the Western mode of political inquiry and the Islamic alternative. This underscores the fact that the methodology and epistemology of Western political science is built around the seemingly limitless power of natural sciences. Moten exposes the subjective and ideological nature of political science in its own epistemic landscape from real life situations. He concludes that the instrumentalist conception of political community and the final packaging of knowledge are all colored with the social, cultural, and historical experience of Western Christianity, which is also, paradoxically, materialistic and secular to the core. By identifying reason and revelation as the twin sources of knowledge, Islamic political thought is associated with such Qur'anic concepts as *Tawḥīd*, *Khilāfah*, *'Ibadah*, *'Adl*, and the like.

Mahmud Dhaouadi examines the roots of subjectivity in contemporary social sciences. He discusses the roots of ideological bias in Western social sciences and shows how positivism and empiricism are either not interested in the study of phenomena which do not fall within the range of the human senses or categorically dismiss their very existence. Ibn Khaldun's epistemology is shown as fundamentally different from what the Western social scientists have been practicing. The mind of the author of the *Muqaddimah* is shown to have been shaped by the Islamic epistemological outlook, in its attempt to understand sociological phenomena, which views man not as a mere animal but as a thinking being who moves deliberately toward good. Ibn Khaldun's presentation of reason and revelation as a harmonious whole sets him apart from as well as above and beyond the modern positivist-empiricist social scientists.

Coming to our legacy, Louay Safi attempts to trace the development of principles of Islamic jurisprudence and gives an assessment of the impact of Shari'ah on society. He argues that the law ceased to grow by the sixth century of Islam as a result of the development of classical legal theory and more specifically after the doctrine of infallibility of *ijma'* (juristic consensus) was articulated.

Boualem Bendjilali and Farid B. Taher discuss the role of a Muslim single seller as a zero efficiency loss monopolist from an Islamic perspective. In an Islamic economy there may exist a single seller of a particular commodity. The monopolist is expected to sacrifice a part of his or her own profit in favor of the welfare of the poor and needy of society. The paper formulates the objective function of the monopolist. It also derives the necessary optimal conditions for maximization.

We have a review article and a conference address in addition to three book reviews and three reports of conferences held in the United States and Malaysia. Our *IIIT/AMSS Newsbulletin* regularly provides news about seminars and conferences. We would welcome reports of academic conferences held on Islam and Muslims for publication in *AJISS*.

We continue to publish abstracts of dissertations done on Islam and Muslims in recent months. We have announced three IIIT dissertation awards of \$500 each beginning this year for dissertations completed during 1989-90. The three dissertations selected for these awards will be chosen from among those submitted from around the world. This, we hope, will encourage scholars and allow us both to identify potential Muslim social scientists in different parts of the world and to strengthen their continuous bonds with the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*.



## Guiding Light Selections From the Holy Qur'an

Comments by 'AbdulHamīd A. AbūSulaymān

### Translation

*In the name of Allah, Most Gracious,  
Most Merciful.*

قرآن كريم

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1. Ye are the best  
Of Peoples, evolved  
For mankind,  
Enjoining what is right,  
Forbidding what is wrong,  
And believing in Allah.  
If only the People of the Book  
Had faith, it were best  
For them: among them  
Are some who have faith,  
But most of them  
Are perverted transgressors.  
*Al 'Imrān (3:110)*

● كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ  
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ  
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ  
وَآكَثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ  
سورة آل عمران (٣: ١١٠)

2. (They are) those who,  
If We establish them  
In the land, establish  
Regular prayer and give  
Regular charity, enjoin  
The right and forbid wrong:  
With Allah rests the end  
(And decision) of (all) affairs.  
*Al Hajj (22:41)*

● الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ  
أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ  
وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ  
سورة الحج (٢٢: ٤١)

3. "Those who follow the Messenger,  
The unlettered Prophet,  
Whom they find mentioned  
In their own (Scriptures)  
In the Law and the Gospel—  
For he commands them  
What is just and forbids them  
What is evil; he allows  
Them as lawful what is good  
(And pure) and prohibits them

● الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ  
الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْنُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ  
وَإِلَّا نَجِيلٍ يَأْمُرُهُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ  
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ  
وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ

From what is bad (and impure);  
He releases them  
From their heavy burdens  
And from the yokes  
That are upon them.  
So it is those who believe  
In him, honor him,  
Help him, and follow the Light  
Which is sent down with him—  
It is they who will prosper.”  
*Al A'raf (7:157)*

الْحَبِيثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ  
وَالْأَعْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ  
فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِمْ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ  
وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ  
أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ  
سورة الأعراف (٧: ١٥٧)

4. The Believers, men  
And women, are protectors,  
One of another: they enjoin  
What is just, and forbid  
What is evil: they observe  
Regular prayers, practice  
Regular charity, and obey  
Allah and His Messenger.  
On them will Allah pour  
His Mercy: for Allah  
is Exalted in power, Wise.  
*Al Tawbah (9:71)*

● وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ  
أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ  
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ  
الزَّكَاةَ وَيَطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
أُولَئِكَ سَرَحْنَاهُمْ اللَّهُ إِنْ اللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ  
سورة التوبة (٩: ٧١)

5. Those that turn (to Allah)  
In repentance; that serve Him,  
And praise Him; that wander  
In devotion to the cause of Allah;  
That bow down and prostrate  
themselves in prayer  
That enjoin good  
And forbid evil; and observe  
The limits set by Allah—  
(These do rejoice). So proclaim  
The glad tidings to the Believers.  
*Al Tawbah (9:112)*

● التَّائِبُونَ الْعَابِدُونَ  
الْحَامِدُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ  
الرَّاكِعُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ الْأَمْرُونَ  
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّاهُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ  
وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
سورة التوبة (٩: ١١٢)

6. “O my son! establish  
Regular prayer, enjoin what is  
Just, and forbid what is wrong;  
And bear with patient constancy  
Whate'er betide thee; for this  
Is firmness (of purpose)  
In (the conduct of) affairs.  
*Luqman (31:17)*

● يَبْنِيْ اِقْرَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَاْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
وَاَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاَصْبِرْ عَلٰى مَا اَصَابَكَ  
اِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْاُمُوْر  
سورة لقمان (٣١: ١٧)

7. The Hypocrites, men and women,  
(Have an understanding) with  
each other:

● الْمُتَنَفِقُونَ وَالْمُتَنَفِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُنَّ مِنْ



They enjoin evil, and forbid  
 What is just, and are closed  
 With their hands. They have  
 Forgotten Allah; so He  
 Has forgotten them. Verily  
 The Hypocrites are rebellious  
 And perverse.  
*Al Tawbah (9:67)*

بَعْضٌ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ  
 عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ  
 أَيْدِيَهُمْ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ  
 إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ  
 سورة التوبة (٩: ٦٧)

When we look at the above verses our attention is immediately drawn to the concepts of *al amr bi al ma'rūf* and *al nahy 'an al munkar* (which means in general the ordering or enjoining of what is known to be or considered as right or good and forbidding what is considered or known to be as wrong or bad). It is very clear that these are very important and central principles, concepts, and values in Islam. They are important Qur'anically-prescribed features of Muslim societies. They represent the goal, quality, and measure of substance and performance of the Ummah both collectively and individually. *Lack of these concepts and qualities will mean that the individuals and societies follow the opposite concepts—al amr bi al ma'rūf and al nahy 'an al munkar— which are indicators and signs of hypocrisy.*

The Qur'an does not stop at this; in many verses it goes on to show how great and all-encompassing are the dimensions and magnitude of these principles and concepts.

8. O Prophet!

When believing women come  
 To thee to take the oath  
 Of fealty to thee, that they  
 Will not associate in worship  
 Any other thing whatever  
 With Allah, that they  
 Will not steal, that they  
 Will not commit adultery  
 (Or fornication), that they  
 Will not kill their children,  
 That they will not utter  
 Slander, intentionally forging  
 Falsehood, and that they  
 Will not disobey thee  
 In any just matter—  
 Then do thou receive  
 Their fealty, and pray to Allah  
 For the forgiveness (of  
 Their sins): for Allah is  
 Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.  
*Al Mumtaḥinah (60:12)*

• يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ  
 إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يَبِيَعْنَكَ  
 عَلَىٰ أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا  
 وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ  
 وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ  
 وَلَا يُبَايِعْنَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْقَرِيهِ  
 بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ  
 وَلَا يَعْصِيَنَّكَ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ  
 فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

سورة الممتحنة (٦٠: ١٢)

## 9. When ye divorce

Women, and they fulfil  
The term of their ('Iddah),  
Either take them back  
On equitable terms  
Or set them free  
On equitable terms;  
But do not take them back  
To injure them, (or) to take  
Undue advantage;  
If anyone does that,  
He wrongs his own soul.  
Do not treat Allah's Signs  
As a jest,  
But solemnly rehearse  
Allah's favors on you,  
And the fact that He  
Sent down to you  
The Book  
And Wisdom,  
For your instruction.  
And fear Allah,  
And know that Allah  
Is well-acquainted  
With all things.  
*Al Baqarah (2:231)*

● وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ  
فَبَلَّغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ  
أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ  
وَلَا تُنْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِنَعْتِدُوا  
وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ  
وَلَا تَنْخِذُوا أَيْتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا  
وَأَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ  
وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ  
وَالْحِكْمَةِ يَعْظُمُكُمْ بِهِ إِنْ تَقُوا اللَّهَ  
وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ  
سورة البقرة (٢: ٢٣١)

## 10. If any of you die

And leave widows behind,  
They shall wait concerning  
themselves  
Four months and ten days:  
When they have fulfilled  
Their term, there is no blame  
On you if they dispose  
Of themselves in a just  
And reasonable manner.  
And Allah is well acquainted  
With what ye do.  
*Al Baqarah (2:234)*

● وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ  
وَيَذَرُونَ أَرْوَاحًا يُرِصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ  
أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ  
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ  
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ  
سورة البقرة (٢: ٢٣٤)

## 11. There is no blame on you

If ye divorce women  
Before consummation  
Or the fixation of their dower;  
But bestow on them  
(A suitable gift),  
The wealthy  
According to his means,

● لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ  
أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً  
وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى التُّوسِيعِ قَدْرَهُ

And the poor  
According to his means –  
A gift of reasonable amount  
Is due from those  
Who wish to do the right thing.  
*Al Baqarah (2:236)*

وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدْرُهُ مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ  
سورة البقرة (٢: ٢٣٦)

12. Those of you  
Who die and leave widows  
Should bequeath  
For their widows  
A year's maintenance  
And residence;  
But if they leave  
(The residence),  
There is no blame on you  
For what they do  
With themselves,  
Provided it is reasonable.  
And Allah is Exalted in Power,  
Wise.  
*Al Baqarah (2:240)*

● وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ  
وَيَذُرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ  
مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ  
فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ  
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ  
سورة البقرة (٢: ٢٤٠)

13. Kind words  
And covering of faults  
Are better than charity  
Followed by injury.  
Allah is Free of all wants,  
And He is most Forbearing.  
*Al Baqarah (2:263)*

● قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ  
خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَذًى  
وَاللَّهُ عَنِّي حَلِيمٌ  
سورة البقرة (٢: ٢٦٣)

14. Make trial of orphans  
Until they reach the age  
Of marriage; if then ye find  
Sound judgement in them,  
Release their property to them;  
But consume it not wastefully,  
Nor in haste against their  
growing up.  
If the guaradian is well-off,  
Let him claim no remuneration,  
But if he is poor, let him  
Have for himself what is  
Just and reasonable.  
When ye release their property  
To them, take witnesses  
In their presence:  
But all-sufficient  
Is Allah in taking account.  
*Al Nisā' (4:6)*

● وَأَبْلُوا إِلَيْكُمْ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ  
فَإِنِ عَالِمُونَ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَاذْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ  
وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَن يَكْبُرُوا  
وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ  
وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ  
وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا  
سورة النساء (٤: ٦)



15. O ye who believe!  
Ye are forbidden to inherit  
Women against their will.  
Nor should ye treat them  
With harshness, that ye may  
Take away part of the dower  
Ye have given them—except  
Where they have been guilty  
Of open lewdness;  
On the contrary live with them  
On a footing of kindness and  
equity.  
If ye take a dislike to them  
It may be that ye dislike  
A thing, and Allah brings about  
Through it a great deal of good.  
*Al Nisā' (4:19)*

• يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ  
أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ لِتَذَهَبُوا  
بِبَعْضِ مَا ءَاتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَنْحَشَةٍ  
مُبَيِّنَةٍ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا  
وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا  
سورة النساء (٤: ١٩)

16. "But if they strive  
To make thee join  
In worship with Me  
Things of which thou hast  
No knowledge, obey them not;  
Yet bear them company  
In this life with justice  
(And consideration), and follow  
The way of those who  
Turn to Me (in love):  
In the End the return  
Of you all is to Me,  
And I will tell you  
The truth (and meaning)  
Of all that ye did."  
*Luqmān (31:15)*

• وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ  
عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَكْفُرَ بِمَا لَيْسَ  
لَكَ بِهِ ءِمْ لَمْ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا  
وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا  
وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ  
ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ  
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ  
سورة لقمان (٣١: ١٥)

17. It is prescribed,  
When death approaches  
Any of you, if he leave  
Any goods, that he make a  
bequest  
To parents and next of kin,  
According to reasonable usage;  
This is due  
From the God-fearing.  
*Al Baqarah (2:180)*

• كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ  
إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ  
إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةَ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ  
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ  
سورة البقرة (٢: ١٨٠)

18. Curses were pronounced  
On those among the Children  
Of Israel who rejected Faith,

• لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ

By the tongue of David  
 And of Jesus, the son of Mary,  
 Because they disobeyed  
 And persisted in Excesses.  
 Nor did they (usually)  
 Forbid one another  
 The iniquities which they  
 Committed: evil indeed  
 Were the deeds which they did.  
*Al Mā'idah (5:78-79)*

إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ  
 مَرْيَمَ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ  
 كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ  
 فَعَلُوهُ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ  
 سورة المائدة (٥: ٧٨-٧٩)

In the above verse and many other verses we find the Qur'an extends the concepts and the meaning of *ma'rūf* (the literal meaning of the word is "well-known") to cover many issues with many different aspects possessing a wide range of meanings, all of which have the common feature of good, reasonable, and adequate. The wide range of meanings of the word *ma'rūf* in English can be seen from Yusuf Ali's translation and commentary of the above verses where *ma'rūf* has been given the following meanings "just matter,"<sup>1</sup> "equitable terms,"<sup>2</sup> "reasonable manner,"<sup>3</sup> "reasonable amount,"<sup>4</sup> "reasonable [act],"<sup>5</sup> "kind words," "just and reasonable,"<sup>7</sup> "a footing of kindness and equity,"<sup>8</sup> "justice (and consideration)."<sup>9</sup> and "reasonable usage."<sup>10</sup>

19. Allah commands justice, the doing  
 Of good, and liberality to kith  
 And kin, and He forbids  
 All shameful deeds, and injustice  
 And rebellion: He instructs you,  
 That ye may receive admonition.  
*Al Nahl (16:90)*

● إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ  
 وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ  
 وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ  
 يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ  
 سورة النحل (٩٠ : ١٦)

<sup>1</sup>Al Mumtahinah, 60:12

<sup>2</sup>Al Baqarah, 2:31

<sup>3</sup>Al Baqarah, 2:234

<sup>4</sup>Al Baqarah, 2:236

<sup>5</sup>Al Baqarah, 2:240

<sup>6</sup>Al Baqarah, 2:263

<sup>7</sup>Al Nisā', 4:6

<sup>8</sup>Al Nisā', 4:19

<sup>9</sup>Luqman, 31:15

<sup>10</sup>Al Baqarah, 2:180

20. Recite what is sent  
Of the Book by inspiration  
To thee, and establish  
Regular Prayer: for Prayer  
Restraints from shameful  
And unjust deeds;  
And remembrance of Allah  
Is the greatest (thing in life)  
Without doubt. And Allah knows  
The (deeds) that ye do.  
*Al Ankabūt (29:45)*

● **أَتْلُ مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ  
وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِابْتِغَاءِ الصَّلَاةِ تَنْهَى  
عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ  
وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ  
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ**  
سورة العنكبوت (٢٩: ٤٥)

21. O ye who believe!  
Follow not Satan's footsteps:  
If any will follow the footsteps  
Of Satan, he will (but) command  
What is shameful and wrong:  
And were it not for the grace  
And mercy of Allah on you,  
Not one of you would ever  
Have been pure: but Allah  
Doth purify whom He pleases:  
And Allah is One Who  
Hears and knows (all things).  
*Al Nūr (24:21)*

● **يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ  
خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ  
وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَا مِنْكُمْ  
مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَنْ يَشَاءُ  
وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ**  
سورة النور (٢٤: ٢١)

22. "Do ye indeed approach men,  
And cut off the highway?—  
And practice wickedness  
(Even) in your councils?"  
But his people gave no answer  
But this: they said:  
"Bring us the Wrath of Allah  
If thou tellest the truth."  
*Al Ankabūt (29:29)*

● **أَيِّنْكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُونَ  
السَّبِيلَ وَتَأْتُونَ فِي نَادِيَكُمُ الْمُنْكَرَ  
فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَئِنَّا  
بِعَذَابِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ**  
سورة العنكبوت (٢٩: ٢٩)

23. (We also sent) Lūt  
(As a messenger): behold,  
He said to his people,  
"Do ye do what is shameful  
Though ye see (its iniquity)?  
Would ye really approach men  
In your lusts rather than  
Women? Nay, ye are  
A people (grossly) ignorant!  
*Al Naml (27:54-55)*

● **وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ  
أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ بُصِيرُونَ  
أَيِّنْكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً  
مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ جَاهِلُونَ**  
سورة النمل (٢٧: ٥٤-٥٥)



In the above verses we find *munkar* (literally those deeds or acts which lack approval, acceptability and to which objections are raised) is a concept of wide meaning and, like *ma'rūf*, represents an attitude, sense of direction, and frame of mind.

In other verses of the Qur'an we find *ma'rūf* is associated and put on the same level with *'adl* (justice) *iḥsān*, (exertion of oneself and sincerity), and *ū'ā'u dhu al qurbā* (giving in charity to neighbors and near of kin). The Qur'an also associates and equalizes *munkar* with *fāḥshā'*, the concept most associated with *munkar*, which is also used in the Qur'an to cover a wide range of meanings and issues.

With all this in mind, no doubt, Muslim social scientists should give great attention to these concepts of *ma'rūf* and *munkar*. They should try to understand them and their significance and magnitude and what kind of methodology and social institutions are needed to submit these concepts to the service of the Ummah and humanity. They represent essential traits and dimensions of the true Muslim community. They clearly represent a dimension badly needed in a world filled with all kinds of corruption, loss of values and helplessness, and suffering spiritual, moral, social, mental, and physical ills and diseases. Humanity today is being drawn into either one of two kinds of faulty social systems: one oriented towards bureaucratic, state, and police control; and the other a liberal-oriented society but suffering from moral corruption, addiction, mental disease, broken and one-parent families, crimes, violence, and other social ills. Muslim social scientists should work hard to get to the bottom of the issues of *ma'rūf* and *munkar* in order to establish a healthy, balanced, civilized, and humanistic society of *ma'rūf* and eliminate *munkar* from it.

It is astonishing that the issue of *ma'rūf* and *munkar* has not attracted any serious scholarly work from Muslim intellectuals and social scientists over the centuries, especially during the last century with the growing dangers and sufferings of humanity.

It is also surprising that the image of these all-encompassing Islamic concepts is simply one of state punitive acts related to rituals and morals or of moralistic acts and abusive remarks on the part of individual extremists.

It is surprising that these concepts seem not to have been put into wide, effective, and systematic use for a long time.

No doubt there is a very lengthy intellectual agenda in front of them before Muslims can benefit from these concepts and values. These concepts should be well understood and explained. We have to understand clearly the Qur'anic use and meaning which could not lend themselves to the sanction of state terrorist inhibition, enslavement of the population and destruction of their individual rights, privacy, and dignity. Neither could the Qur'anic use of these terms lend itself to the approval of moralistic regimentation and

supervision nor could the Qur'an justify the abusive behavior of extremists and mentally disturbed individuals. It is also equally true that these concepts are meant to prevent the breeding of corruption of all kinds, economic, social, moral, and spiritual, but are meant to establish healthy and balanced human societies.

It is clear the concepts of *ma'rūf* and *munkar* are dynamic concepts meant to create a dynamic frame of mind and attitude and to provide a natural sense of direction in human individuals and societies to be able to change realities and challenges with consciousness and wisdom. These concepts are meant to provide the bases for healthy, balanced social institutions and societies.

There is no doubt that a major part of the Sunnah of the Prophet (ṢAAS) and the righteous caliphs is an application of these concepts and principles.

Muslim social scientists have to find out how to understand and reapply these concepts, how to make them work, create a frame of mind and conscious dynamic Muslim mentality which is workable and effective in social institutions and societies. They need to study how to relate these absolute values to what is relative and changing and how, in a complex and changing reality, to recognize what should be considered *ma'rūf* and should be considered *munkar* in the light of the goals, principles, values, and priorities of Islam.

This kind of serious intellectual work necessitates a comprehensive analytical and practical approach to make goals and priorities clear. Means and goals are not confused. To achieve this, the people and leadership should be courageous, confident, and willing to carry responsibilities and reach out to higher levels of ideas and achievements.

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# Islamization of Knowledge: Methodology of Research in Political Science

*A. Rashid Moten*

Islamic science, as an active creative agent, once imparted life and motion to Islamic civilization and society. It is now confined within the walls of old schools and imprisoned among its classical books. Having embraced the new sciences and accepted Western behavioral modes of thinking, the Muslim intelligentsia has made Islam into an abstract spirit fossilized inside traditional forms of ancient mores, customs, rites, and rituals. This situation alone provides enough justification to reconstruct the methodology of Islamic sciences, but the on-going Islamization movement makes such an attempt even more pertinent. "To recast knowledge as Islam relates to it, is to Islamize it. . . . To this end, the methodological categories of Islam . . . must replace the Western categories and determine the perception of ordering reality."<sup>1</sup>

This article is an attempt to contribute to reconstructing the methodology of social sciences with specific reference to political science. This is accomplished by identifying and exposing, through systematic contrast with Islamic principles, the weaknesses of elements and key concepts molded in the crucible of Western culture and civilization. This is essential because Islamization warrants, ipso facto, liberating people from the world-view of the West so that they can strive toward that state of perfection reached in Madinah under Divine guidance during the age of the last Prophet (AAS) of Islam.

## Major Traits of Empirical Social Science

Western empirical social science is based upon the assumption that human behavior is patterned and that these regularities can be scientifically investigated

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<sup>1</sup>Isma'il R. al-Faniri. *Islamization of Knowledge, General Principles and Ijtihad Plan* (Pennsylvania: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1982). pp. 15-16.



and expressed as generalizations that approximate the universality of scientific law or theory in the physical sciences.<sup>2</sup> Confining the long tradition of social and political theory to "the dog house"<sup>3</sup> for living "parasitically on ideas a century old,"<sup>4</sup> the new science believes in the applicability of empirical and scientific methods to every field of inquiry. It marks the rejection of every form of knowledge that has its basis in the supposition that there is no reality beyond inner-worldly existence. The new science became synonymous with the movements of logical positivism and linguistic philosophy, which subsequently set the pace for the powerful growth of an intellectual movement which believes in a complete separation of "facts" and "values":

By the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly under the impact of Weber's ideas, the social scientist had accepted as axiomatic and unquestionable what he had learnt as a callow student; namely, that political values must be vigorously excluded from empirical research.<sup>5</sup>

Such empirical science has been characterized by its attempt to free nature from religious overtone, to abolish sacral legitimation of political power and authority, and to base its instruments of knowledge exclusively upon human reason, which enables man to discover laws of development inherent in a "rationally ordered" world. It has eschewed moral or ethical questions and has aspired to make science objective and value-neutral, "stating all phenomena . . . in terms of the observed and observable behavior of men."<sup>6</sup> Consequently, it has been concerned with methodology and observation, classification, and measurement. Research techniques have been borrowed from mathematics, physics, biology, and similar other natural sciences.

The growth of positivism in the social sciences generated fresh confidence among its proponents, but that proved false and short-lived. Faced with

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<sup>2</sup>See S. J. Eldersveld, et al., "Research in Political Behavior," in S. Sidney Ulmer, ed., *Introductory Reading in Political Behavior* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1961); R. A. Dahl, "The Behavioral Approach in Political Science: Epitaph for a Monument to a Successful Protest," *The American Political Science Review* 55 (December, 1961); David Easton, "The Current Meaning of Behavioralism," in J. C. Charlesworth, ed., *Contemporary Political Analysis* (New York: Free Press, 1967); Austin Ramsy, ed., *Essays on the Behavioral Study of Politics* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1962).

<sup>3</sup>Neil Riemer, *The Revival of Democratic Theory* (New York: Appleton Century-Crofts, 1961), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>David Easton, "The Decline of Modern Political Theory" in James A. Gould and Vincent V. Thursby, eds., *Contemporary Political Thought* (New York: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, Inc., 1969), p. 308.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>Dahl, "The Behavioral Approach in Political Science," p. 766.

mounting structural deformities in relations between the north and the south, increasing incidence of authoritarian rule and frequent violation of the moral conscience of the world in Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, and the Gulf, society is in a state of decay and dissolution.<sup>7</sup>

The need is to replace this paradigm with one which studies individual behavior within the context of an entire social system. Islam, as a total civilization, looks upon human life as an organic whole and approaches its problems in the light of moral values and social ideals (enshrined in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (AAS)). Based upon Islam, the methodology of Islamic social sciences cannot but be theocentric, which stands totally opposed to the Western conception of man and nature in all its details and ramifications and needs to be clearly spelled out.

## Reason and Revelation

As pointed out by S.H. Nasr, Western social science is anthropomorphic in nature in that it accepts individual human existence as the criterion of reality, to the total neglect of any higher principle. For the same reason, Western social science is reductionist, for it not only separates reason from revelation but rejects the latter as a means of knowledge.<sup>8</sup> Based upon Greco-Roman cultural tradition and rational philosophy, it accepts nothing which cannot fit the scale of reason and human intellect, and abiding by the same standard, it considers nothing as moral if it fails to yield maximum returns in material terms.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast, the civilization of Islam is deeply rooted in Divine revelation. As revelation is a distinguishing feature of the methodology of Islam, Muslim scholars took very keen interest in disentangling the various issues connected with it. However, the truth of revelation was always appreciated in the light of reason. From the very beginning, revelation's relation to reason continued to be of central importance in all philosophical and theological debates. Even al-Ash'ari, before whom the system of rationalist Kalam crumbled, strongly defended the use of reason, or Kalam, in explaining standard formulations of doctrine. It is also well known that Imam Abu Hanifah and his celebrated

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<sup>7</sup>This was realized even by those who earlier advocated behavioral persuasion in politics. See Michael Haas and Henry S. Mariel, eds., *Approaches to Political Science* (California: Chandler Publishing Co., 1970).

<sup>8</sup>See S. H. Nasr, *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man* (London: Longman, 1975); also *Science and Civilization in Islam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968).

<sup>9</sup>See A. H. A. Nadwi, *Religion and Civilization* (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research, 1970), pp. 62-70.

followers al-Jihawi, al-Maturidi and, indeed, al-Ghazali adopted the principles and methods of reasoning as an avenue to knowledge.<sup>10</sup>

This is in accordance with the Qur'an's repeated exhortations to reason out and weigh rationally all matters to enable one to follow the right way (see 59:2, 7:86, etc.). Rather than posing a problem "in the form of contrast between Divine Law and human reason;• as argued by Rosenthal, revelation and reason are complementary to each other.<sup>11</sup> For without reason, the truth of revelation cannot be appreciated. Nor would its divineness be recognized and acknowledged as such. Unlike some religious texts that present doctrine in mysterious language beyond rational comprehension, the Qur'an, in no less than 750 verses, exhorts the believers to observe, think, and ponder, to reason, comprehend, and understand nature, history, and human societies. However, as al-Maturidi has pointed out, reason and sense organs have their limits and at times "human intellect is obscured and influenced by internal and external factors" and thus "fails to give us true knowledge of things that are within its own sphere."<sup>12</sup> Revelation enlightens man, provides direction and purpose, and widens the scope of knowledge to include not merely the proximal world but the unseen everlasting abode as well. Divine revelation provides the landmarks and guideposts and thereby saves mankind the tragic cost of falling victim to inadequate knowledge, ignorance, and stagnant traditions. As the epistemologies of al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldun show, Muslims, for centuries, pursued knowledge through blending reason with revelation and heralded the golden age of science in Islam during the twelfth century. "What we call science arose as a result of new methods of experiment, observation, and measurement which were introduced into Europe by the Arabs.... (Modern) science is the most momentous contribution of the Islamic civilization."<sup>13</sup>

## Social Sciences Versus Natural Sciences

The world has suffered from the folly of the social sciences following indiscriminately the model of the natural sciences, with the result that technocratic solutions are being imposed even on problems with purely moral and ideological overtones. Imitation of the natural science model was based

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<sup>10</sup>For their contribution to Muslim philosophy, see M. M. Sharif, ed., *A History of Muslim Philosophy* (Weisbaden: Otto Hassarowitz, 1963).

<sup>11</sup>Erwin I. J., Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam: An Introductory Outline* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1962), p. 16.

<sup>12</sup>Al-Maturidi in M. M. Sharif, ed., *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, p. 263.

<sup>13</sup>Robert Briffault, *The Making of Humanity*, cited in Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, 1971), pp. 129-30.



on the desire for increased social prestige, the achievement of scientific respectability, and the quest for social status on a par with that of natural scientists.<sup>14</sup> In so doing, behavioral political scientists have assumed not only the stance of the physical model but also its epistemology and its assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the means of knowledge as well. They considered human behavior in an artificial manner, stripped the variables of their meaning in order to operationalize them, and have tended to bend, reshape, and distort the political map to fit the model they use to investigate it. As Deutscher puts it:

We concentrate on consistency without much concern with what it is we are being consistent about or whether we are consistently right or wrong. As a consequence, we may have been learning a great deal about how to pursue an incorrect course with a maximum of precision.<sup>15</sup>

The conclusion to be arrived at from the above analysis is that political science must abandon claims to approximating natural science without ceasing to aspire to comprehensive knowledge.

To be sure, the place of the *UO* sciences in the scheme of human knowledge is one and the same, i.e., to unfold and comprehend the Divine pattern. In the Qur'anic scheme, this knowledge (*'ilm*) is to be obtained through revelation or divinely ordained absolute knowledge (*'Ilm al-yaqin*), rationalism or inference based upon judgment and appraisal of evidence (*'ilm al-yaqin*), and through empiricism and perception, that is, by observation, experiment, historical reports, description of life-experiences and the like (*'ayn al-yaqin*).<sup>16</sup> Thus, the Islamic way of knowing accords full freedom to experience and experiment and to rational and intellectual inquiry within the circumference of revealed knowledge. It is indeed advisable to benefit from the best offered by one field for the better understanding of the other, but one must recognize the distinction between the two fields, which is in terms of research strategy and techniques.

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<sup>14</sup>Marshall B. Clinard, "The Sociologist's Quest for Respectability," *The Sociological Quarterly* 7 (1966), pp. 399-412.

<sup>15</sup>Irwin Deutscher, "Words and Deeds: Social Science and Social Fulfillment," *Social Problems* 13 (1966), p. 241.

<sup>16</sup>See A. Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation, Commentary* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1975), p. 1603.

## The Instrumentalist Conception of Politics

By virtue of their orientation to the model of natural sciences, the empirical political scientists have limited the scope of their inquiries to observable behavior: Politics came to be defined either as "the study of influence and the influential" (Lasswell) or the "study of who gets what, when, and how" (Deutsch) or "the authoritative allocation of values" (Easton). Similarly, political association or state is conceived as an instrumental apparatus for the pursuit of contingently determined ends that can be calculated according to a strategic-instrumentalist conception of rationality, i.e., expediency, gross national product, and utilitarian considerations.

It hardly needs mentioning that the instrumental conception of political association is not universal but culturally specific. Originating in the West, it reflects and at best fits only that particular society. Given such a conception, it is but natural for the Western commentators to regard the Iranian revolution, the Muslim resistance in Afghanistan, and the like as irrational and myopic simply because these are not averse to subordinating GNP to other considerations. Devoid of moral contents, politics in the West have become a "dirty game" or in the words of Isaac D'Israeli, "the art of governing mankind by deceiving them."<sup>17</sup>

The instrumentalist conception of politics and political association is at variance with the Islamic way of life, which is purposive and goal-oriented. Islam, therefore, stresses the need for organization and authority for the realization of its goals. The Qur'an condemns disorder and anarchy (2:205) and the Prophet (AAS) stressed the need for organization and authority in Muslim society. This emphasis has also been vividly expressed by scholars through the ages. 'Umar, the second caliph, believed that there could be no organized society without an imam (leader) to be obeyed. Imam Ibn Hanbal concurred and held the opinion that in the absence of an imam, anarchy and disorder would certainly ensue.<sup>18</sup> The towering Muslim political thinker al-Mawardi went further in stating that the existence of an imam, was as necessary as the striving for truth and the acquisition of knowledge.<sup>19</sup>

The reason for such heavy emphasis on organized authority, as explained by Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, is that "without political social organization man cannot reach his destiny."<sup>20</sup> To Ibn Taymiyah, moreover, "religion cannot exist

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<sup>17</sup>Cited in Bernard Crick, *In Defense of Politics* (London: Pelican Books, 1964), p. 16  
<sup>18</sup>See Yusuf ibn 'Abd al-Bari al-Qu'ubi, *Jam' Baya'ni al-ilm wa Rufluh*, (Madinah: al Maktabah al-'ilmiah, n.d.), p. 62.

<sup>19</sup>Abu'l-I'assan 'Ali Ibn Mu'anunad al-Mawardi, *Al-ALJkan al-Sulfmiah* (Cairo: 'Isa al-Babi al-Halibi, 1960), p. 5.

<sup>20</sup>Cited in Rosenthal, *Political Thought in Medieval Islam*, p. 14.

without it."<sup>21</sup> Sayyid Abul la MawdiidI maintained that the ultimate goal of an Islamic state is neither to maintain peace and raise the standard of living of its inhabitants nor to defend its frontiers. Its ultimate purpose is "to enforce and implement with all the resources of its organized power that reformatory program which Islam has given for the betterment of mankind."<sup>22</sup> The Islamic state is an ideological state, its approach is universal and all-embracing, and its mission is to establish virtue and justice in accordance with revealed guidance. In short, the state in Islam "is only an effort to realize the spiritual in human organization."<sup>23</sup>

Thus, in Islam, the state is conceived not as a means to ends that are separable from the state but as itself the locus of religio-cultural purposes. Such a conception leaves no room for separating religion from politics. Rather, it blends the two, conducts politics in accordance with revealed guidance, and uses the state as a servant of the Creator "inviting all to the good, enjoining virtue and forbidding vice" for the purpose of achieving piety (Qur'an 3:104; 5:3). It is this ideal which inspired and sustains the struggle for the liberation of Palestine and Afghanistan. For the Afghan Mujahidin as well as for the Palestinians, from the Islamic point of view, the state is not an instrumentality for the pursuit of other extrinsic ends. Rather, it is itself the focus of profound religio-cultural purposes which would allow them to fashion their life according to the revealed principles of individual and social behavior and would impart a sense of their own dignity. The West needs to be exposed to this Islamic conception of the state for a more informed and more articulate response to Muslim aspirations.

## The Islamic Framework for Analysis

The foregoing conception of the state is based upon the fact that Islam is a comprehensive system of life. Islam does not divide the world artificially and arbitrarily into social and profane or into religious and secular. In Islam religion and state are one organic unity that coheres into an undifferentiated social and political unity. As al Fariiqi points out:

[T]he Ummah is like an organic body whose parts are mutually and severally interdependent with one another, and with the whole. For the part to work for itself is for itself to work for each of

<sup>21</sup>Qamaruddin Khan, *The Political Thought of Ibn Taymiyah* (Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1983), p. 29.

<sup>22</sup>Sayyid Abul la Mawdudi, *The Islamic Law and Constitution*, tr. Khurshid Ahmad (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1967), p. 248.

BM. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 155.



the other parts as well as for the whole, and for the whole to work for itself, is for itself to work for each of the parts.<sup>24</sup>

The Prophet (AAS) has described the Ummah as "the well-settled and consolidated building, each part of which buttresses the other" and he compared it to "a body which reacts in toto with discomfort and fever whenever a part of it is hurt."<sup>25</sup>

Given the organic nature of the Ummah, the appropriate framework for analyzing the political phenomenon is to try to place parts within wider contexts. The individual, for instance, cannot be understood on its own terms, inasmuch as individual purpose and identity are constituted by participation in family relations; the family in turn must be placed in the wider context of social and political relationships and so on. Individuals can have a sense of themselves as individuals to the extent that they can relate their own purposes to wider social groups such as family, community, and state, and they can sustain a sense of individual identity so long as these wider groups maintain themselves as coherent wholes. It is for this reason that the Qur'an devotes much attention to the issues relating to family-the essential social unit, flanked by the individual on the one side and the universal Ummah on the other. Indeed, many Muslim thinkers consider family and society as synonymous since in an Islamic setting one is not feasible without the other.

To understand contemporary politics, it may be necessary to begin by observing that the traditional social symbols, which have informed every dimension of community life for centuries, have been assaulted by technological civilization to the extent that individuals, being less and less sure of family roles, are subjecting the axioms and assumptions of parenthood and parental responsibilities to constant redefinition. The crisis of authority at the family level is accompanied by the relative absence of compelling and widely shared overall social purpose, with the result that individuals lack a clear sense of their duties and obligations as members of the Ummah. Consequently, political relationships are characterized by cynicism, mistrust, and frustration, and the state experiences an increasing legitimacy crisis, which eventually renders any given government poorly equipped politically to cope with socioeconomic and political crises. An analysis of the political phenomena in an Islamic framework then proceeds by constructing an organic model of the Ummah with each separate part-politics, economics, social framework, etc. - in a defined organic relation to all the component parts.

The proposed organic model broadens the scope (i.e., a conception of

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<sup>24</sup>•Isma'il Raji al Fariiqi, *Tawid: Its Implications for Thought and Ufe* (Pennsylvania: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1982), p. 153.

<sup>25</sup>Cited in *Ibid.*

the nature of its subject matter) of the discipline of political science, for justifiable reasons. First, the "parts" in a functional sense are equivalent to the whole in that they maintain order: integrate, define, and try to attain goals. Second, the smaller units are easily accessible for investigation and often accommodate advanced methods of study. Third, placing parts within wholes widens the horizon of knowledge. It permits learning a great deal about macrocosms from microcosms. Finally, since Islam obligates every conceivable part of the society to seek actualization of the Divine Wtll, it is not appropriate for the investigator to restrict his or her study to any one or two aspects of the social order to the detriment of the other parts and of the whole.

## Facts and Values

One of the implications of the Islamic methodology outlined above is that political science cannot be based upon facts alone, for facts of human behavior are not dead, but alive. Facts take on meaning or significance only to the extent that they can be situated within a significant whole which provides a theoretically informed context for their interpretation. The simple recording of the fact, by itself, contributes very little to the understanding of political life unless it is related to other facts in an overall explanatory or descriptive account, that is, when it is placed within an ordered theoretical whole. The fact that a peace treaty was signed between Israeli prime minister Begin and Egyptian president Anwar Sadat could mean either a great deal or little depending upon its place within a much wider interpretive matrix. All facts relating to man are relative, as human behavior depends on human volition, which is shaped by beliefs and ethical ends. A fact does not describe itself; it does not perform according to mathematical formulae and equations. It is the analysts who give meaning to the fact by determining how it should be fitted into existing concepts and beliefs, and how far the existing concepts and beliefs should be modified and extended to accommodate it.

To emphasize the need for an interpretive matrix is to stress, in essence, the importance of values. The myth of value-free political science was exploded with finality by scholars like Thomas Kuhn, Syed H. Nasr, Naqib al-Attas, and by a recent past president of the American Political Science Association.<sup>26</sup> To make such a pretext reflects either hypocrisy or self-delusion. Value-free political science is a myth because values provide a matrix which shapes the selection of subjects for investigation, formulation of concepts, and selection

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<sup>26</sup>See David Easton, "The New Revolution in Political Science," *The American Political Science Review*, 63 (December 1969), pp. 1051-61.

of data for analysis and interpretation. If the knowledge is to be gained and used for the right purposes, values must be restored to their central position.

To be sure, Western political science is not value-free. Maintaining a demeanor of rigorous value-neutrality, most Western political scientists affirm the sanctity of Western liberal democracy, with its sole concern for profits and profit-maximization. To put it mildly, "they confuse a vaguely stated conventional democratism with scientific objectivity."<sup>27</sup> The knowledge thus produced is not neutral but "subtly fused together" with the character and personality of Western civilization, "so that others take it unawares, in toto, to be real knowledge per se."<sup>28</sup>

It is clear that all political actions are guided by some values or normative considerations and that all practitioners of political science have a set value system or some conception of the proper human ends. Understanding of the ordinary terms of political discourse presupposes acquaintance with the kinds of ends implied in common political experience. As such, values or normative considerations cannot be excluded from analysis.

## The Structure of Islamic Values

While Western political science confuses or conceals normative considerations, Islam states its values explicitly. The Stockholm seminar of 1981 on "knowledge and values" identified ten concepts which generate the basic values of an Islamic culture: *tawhīd* (unity), *khilāfah* (vicegerency), *'ibādah* (worship), *'ilm* (knowledge), *Ijālah* (permissible) and *Ijārah* (prohibited), *'adl* (justice), *zulm* (tyranny), *istīlāh* (public interest), and *q.hiyā'* (waste).<sup>29</sup>

The essential comprehensive characteristic of Islam and its primary basis is *tawhīd*, the unity of Allah, which affirms the radical monotheism of Islam. Allah is One, He has no partner, and there is none worthy of worship except Him. *Tawhīd* extends to all of creation and thus signifies the unity of Allah, the unity of the community of the faithful, the unity of life as a totality, and the unity of the temporal and the spiritual. *Tawhīd* provides one, single direction and guarantees a unified spirit for its adherents. It perfects the ethical

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<sup>27</sup>Christian Bay, "Politics and Pseudopolitics: A Critical Evaluation of Some Behavioral Literature" in Heinz Eufau, ed. *Behavioralism in Political Science* (New York: Atherton Press, 1969), p. 117.

<sup>28</sup>S. M. Naqib al-Atlas, *Islam and Secularism* (Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia, 1978), pp. 127-28.

<sup>29</sup>See Ziauddin Sardar, ed., *The Touch of Midas* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).



consciousness of mankind and endows humanity with the hidden power of "wisdom;" which nurtures and perfects it.

A corollary of *tawfīd* is *khilāfah*, mankind's vicegerency of Allah. As a vicegerent, mankind is not free but responsible and accountable to Allah. One's vocation and destiny, therefore, is the service of Allah, or fulfillment of Divine Will. Allah has "not created mankind and jinn but to serve Him." (Qur'an, 51:56). The *khilāfah* consists of the fulfillment of the responsibility of sustaining t̄ self and other creatures in accordance with the will of Allah. The faithful execution of this sublime responsibility is, in fact, the true nature of *'ibādah* (worship or service to Allah).

The concept of worship, *'ibādah*, is very wide in Islam. It does not mean merely ritual or any specific form of prayer, but a life of continuous prayer and unremitting obedience to Allah. *'ibādah* encompasses all activities of life-spiritual, social, economic, and political -provided they are in accordance with the rules as laid down and if their ultimate objective is to seek the pleasure of Allah.<sup>30</sup> As a *khilāfah*, man's activities may be grouped under two headings: *Uḥūq Allah*, i.e., duties and obligations due directly to Allah, and *Uḥūq al-'ibād*, duties to oneself, to fellow beings, and to other creatures for the pleasure of Allah.

Among the many manifestations of *'ibādah* and a prerequisite to its effective performance is *'ilm*, knowledge. In its totality, the concept of *'ilm* in Islam is very vast. It ranges in its meaning from the Sufi understanding of the term *ma'rīfah* (gnosis) to the interpretation of knowledge as it concerns every day activities of the individual.<sup>31</sup> *'Ilm*, in general, is divided into two categories: revealed knowledge, which basically includes the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and science-derived knowledge, which is acquired through experience, observation, and research. The former category is further sub-divided into *ḥuḍūr al-'ayn*, which is binding on every individual Muslim, and *ḥuḍūr al-kifīyah*, which is binding on the community as a whole but which can be discharged on its behalf by some members of the community.<sup>32</sup>

*'Ilm* is mentioned in the Qur'an with unusual frequency and has been paired, in verse 30:56, with *īmān*, faith, which, according to verse 3:71, follows upon knowledge. The pursuit of *'ilm*, according to a Hadith, is incumbent upon every Muslim even if it entails traveling to China. However, *'ilm* becomes a value only if it is pursued within the value-framework of Islam. Unlike the Western hackneyed phrase of "knowledge for knowledge's sake," or that

<sup>30</sup>Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdūdī, *Towards Understanding Islam*, Trans. Khurshid Ahmad, (London: The Islamic Foundation, 1980), p. 88.

<sup>31</sup>F. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant* (Leiden: E. J Brill, 1970). Though not translated, written from an Islamic perspective, this work contains a mine of information concerning knowledge in Islam and lists 117 definitions as given by various Muslim scholars. See Chapter IV.

<sup>32</sup>See Al-Ghazali, *The & o k of Knowledge*, tr. Nabih A. Faris (Lahore: Ashraf, 1963).

entire convoluted argument that "all knowledge is good," Islam considers *'ilm* as a value and an act of *'ibidāh* only when it is pursued for the benefit of the individual or the community and ultimately for gaining the pleasure of Allah.

In Islam, *'ilm* has to be value-based and must have a function and a purpose. In other words, knowledge is not for its own sake but serves as a way to salvation, and not all kinds of knowledge would serve the purpose. Consequently, Muslim scholars throughout history have occupied themselves in sifting out the kind of *'ilm* which is Islamically sanctioned. This led to the categorization of knowledge into *l;talal* and *l;taram*, permitted and prohibited, or the praiseworthy and the blameworthy. *l;jalal* includes all knowledge and activity that is beneficial for an individual, society, and the environment. An *'ilm* which is *l;Jal.iii* seeks to promote *'adl*, social justice, and *isti liiJ.*, public interest. *'Adi*, in all its multidisciplinary facets, and *istisliih*, with its wider dimension, ensure that knowledge is pursued to promote universal equity, individual freedom, social dignity, and values that enhance the well-being of Muslim society and culture.

*l;jariim* or blameworthy research includes all that is destructive for man and his environment in its physical, intellectual, and spiritual sense. Research promoting alienation, dehumanization, environmental destruction, and others which are per se evil are, therefore, rejected. These activities are tyrannical, or *l;Ulm*, and are categorized as *l;hijii*, wastage. Even astrology, which is part of knowledge, falls under this category. Its practice was declared unlawful by the Prophet (AAS), since the evil in it was greater than the good it contained. Mankind as the best of Allah's creation is endowed with conscience, wisdom, and discretion and is "inspired to strive together toward all that is good, to eradicate *l;Ulm*, and to establish justice and faith in Allah (Qur'an 2:148, 193).

It should be evident that the matrices of values outlined above are organically related to each other, and impart a unique character to the epistemology of Islam. The discipline of political science that emerges following such a strategy is able to rank a variety of human ends by reference to an overall sense of what is important and what is good in general. It introduces a principle of coherence into otherwise disparate human sciences; it reflects upon what is important and meaningful in human life. It thus offers a basis for discriminating between what is relevant and irrelevant, significant and insignificant, virtuous and vicious, which a political science conceived merely as a partial catalogue of facts cannot answer.

## The Madinah State as the Norm

As a system of values, Islamic methodology does not rest solely on facts, nor does it exclude normative considerations from analysis. The concept of what something "is" cannot be separated from a conception of what "ought to be." Thus the concept of "state" is analogical to the concept of an "ideal state" in that the former cannot be judged and evaluated without understanding the latter. Pre-behavioral Western social science did realize the need for such a model and hence attempted a kind of utopianism found in the writings of St. Simon, Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, and, of course, the "classless society" of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

For the Muslims, however, there is no need to resort to utopian idealism. There is unanimity among the Muslims that the Madinah state founded by the Prophet Muhammad (AAS) and later governed by the Rightly Guided Caliphs (*khulafa' al rāshidūn*) was the best ideal state ever found on earth and hence provided a normative standard. As well-defined by Sayyid Qutb:

That was a remarkable period, a sublime summit, an exceptional generation of people, a bright beacon. It was, as we have stated, decreed and willed by Allah, so that this unique image might be materialized in the situations of real life and recourse might later be had to it, in order to repeat it within the limitations of human capacity.<sup>33</sup>

This standard is independent from changing conditions and specific contexts and it is available as a criterion to be used for judging the value of existing conditions and institutions. Islamic political science is but a perpetual struggle toward the ideal of the Prophet (AAS) as the Perfect Man and his Madinah as the Perfect Polity. It is the mysterious touch of the ideal that animates and sustains the real.

It is well known that Muslim scholars of note worked within the parameters of Islamically defined knowledge giving equal status to all forms of scholarship. *Thefiqhah* of the classical period, wrote al Farqiiqi, were real encyclopaedists, masters of practically all the disciplines from literature and law to astronomy and medicine. They were themselves professional people who knew Islam not only as law, but as ideal and theory, as system of thought and life lived by millions of humans in actual practice.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Sayyid Qutb, *This Religion of Islam* (Gary, Indiana: International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations, n.d.), p. 165.

<sup>34</sup> Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge*, p. 18.



The political theorizing that emerged from these early scholars' pens is value-laden. Almost all of them invariably began their treatises with an inquiry into the purposes of political life and sought a theoretically grounded rational foundation for understanding political relationships. Their reflections are based upon deduced logic from Islamic ideals and principles. Shari'ah was never lost as the ideal. Thus they placed normative considerations at the center of their descriptive and explanatory analysis.

The achievement of early Muslim scholars is in part a result of their starting out by asking some of the right questions: What is politics and political association and what is it for? Their limitations were largely methodological—a void which was filled for the time being by the sociological analysis of Ibn Khaldun, with his emphasis on observation, comparison, meticulous use of reason and a multi-disciplinary approach to untangle the complexities of social and political life.<sup>35</sup> In so doing, Ibn Khaldun never wavered in finding out the correlation between the kinds of political association and the nature of human ends and purposes realized by these associations. In other words, Ibn Khaldun was engaged in moral reflection, which is in conformity with the Islamic insistence that *politics must be a quest for ethics* and that the two are inseparably linked with each other. This is one of the most valuable contributions of Islam to human society. The quest for ethics in politics is the first step toward the creation of an equitable, humane universal order.

## Conclusion

The contrast attempted here between the Western mode of political inquiry and the Islamic alternative helps illuminate not merely the deficiencies inherent in the former, but, more importantly, highlights the characteristic set of features inherent in the latter. The picture that emerges is that Western political science, its methodology and epistemology as the final product, is built around the seemingly limitless power of natural science. The subjective and ideological nature of political science has been effectively exposed from its own epistemic landscape and real life situations. There is no such thing as knowledge for the sake of knowledge. The image of a dispassionate, objective, and value-free political science is no longer in vogue. The instrumentalist conception of political community, theoretical formulation, empirical verification, and final packaging of knowledge are all colored with the social, cultural, and historical experience of Western Christianity which is also, paradoxically,

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<sup>35</sup>See Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964); Franz Rosenthal ed., *The Muqaddimah* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

materialistic and secular to the core. Such a science has not fulfilled and cannot fulfill the needs and requirements of Muslims and as such it cannot take social and cultural root in a Muslim society.

The Islamic alternative considers the pursuit of knowledge within the value framework of Islam. It abandons all claims to approximating natural science and its consideration of the nature of political association is guided not by the instrumentalist conception of the community but by the question of ends for which it exists. The decisive basis of political science is the distinction between part and whole and not that of fact and value. The part takes on significance by being situated within an encompassing whole with its matrix of eternal values enshrined in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the beloved Prophet Muhammad (AAS). Finally, Islamic political science aims at approximating the Madinah model, an association which embodied understanding of human ends. Where human ends are at issue, there is moral reflection. As such, political science in Islam is not a value-free enterprise. Islam insists that politics must be a quest for ethics and that political association, as well as individuals, have an obligation to act morally. Ethics and politics are inseparably linked—a lesson mankind must learn anew if it wants to restore sanity to the world gone awry.

*ʿIlm*, or knowledge, in Islam is an obligation enjoined upon mankind by the Creator. This knowledge can be acquired through revelation as well as reason, from observation as well as intuition, through tradition as well as theoretical reflection. These diverse ways of studying political phenomena must, however, be subservient to the eternal values of divine revelation. This entails associating the pursuit of knowledge with such Qur'anic concepts as *tawfiq*, *khilīfah*, *'ibadah*, *'ilm*, *cull*, *istilāʿi* and the like. Only the knowledge pursued within the matrix of eternal values of Islam, as *khilīfah* and ultimately for the pleasure of Allah, attains the status of *'ibadah*. This means, inter alia, avoiding all *ḥaram* activities promoting *ẓulm* and *ḡhīyī*.

The values enshrined in the Qur'an impart a universal character to Islam. This universality of Islamic values grants a universal status to a discipline subservient to the Islamic framework. In any case, the Muslim community which is under obligation to enjoin good and forbid evil has no viable future without recasting its discipline into an Islamic framework.

He who receives guidance benefits his soul and he who strays injures himself (Qur'an, 39:41).

**19th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS (AMSS)**

*Theme:*

**"Social Sciences and Social Change:  
An Islamic Perspective"**

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**16th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SCIENTISTS & ENGINEERS  
(AMSE)**

*Theme:*

**"Technological Issues and  
Development in the 1990s"**

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**Rabi' al Akhir 6-8, 1411/October 26-28, 1990  
(FRIDAY, SATURDAY, AND SUNDAY)**

**DEARBORN, MICHIGAN  
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## Islamic Law and Society

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Shari'ah (Islamic law) has been the dominant moral and legal code of Muslim societies for the greater part of their history. During the early centuries of Islam, Shari'ah facilitated the social growth and development of the Muslims, growth that culminated in the establishment of a vast empire and an outstanding civilization. By the close of the fifth century of Islam, however, Shari'ah began to lose its role as the guiding force that inspired Muslim creativity and ingenuity and that nurtured the growing spirit of the Muslim community (Ummah). Consequently, the Ummah entered a period of stagnation that gradually gave way to intellectual decline and social decadence. Regrettably, this painful trend continues to be more or less part of the individual consciousness and collective experience of Muslims.

This paper attempts to trace the development of the principles of Islamic jurisprudence, and to assess the impact of Shari'ah on society. It argues that the law ceased to grow by the sixth century of Islam as a result of the development of classical legal theory; more specifically, law was put on hold, as it were, after the doctrine of the infallibility of *ijma'* (juristic consensus) was articulated. The rigid principles of classical theory, it is contended, have been primarily induced by the faulty epistemology employed by sixth-century jurists.

Shari'ah, or Islamic law, is a comprehensive system encompassing the whole field of human experience. It is not simply a legal system, but rather a composite system of law and morality. That is, Islamic law aspires to regulate all aspects of human activities, not only those that may entail legal consequences. Hence, all actions and relationships are evaluated in accordance with a scale of five moral standards.

According to Shari'ah, an act may be classified as obligatory (*wajib*), recommended (*mandii.b*), permissible (*mubiiJJ*), reprehensible (*makruh*), or prohibited (*:ulriim*).<sup>1</sup> These five categories reflect the varying levels of moral

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<sup>1</sup>Abd al-Wahab Khalaf, *Ilm Usul al-Fiqh*, 8th ed. (Dar al-Kuwaitiyah, 1388/1978); Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 84.

demand placed on human acts by Divine *Will*. *Acts* that fall in the categories on the two opposite extremes are strictly demanded, whereas acts falling in the two categories around the neutral center of the scale are not as solemnly demanded, and hence their violation, though discouraged, is not condemned. To put it differently, while the individual is morally obliged to follow the commands of the first and last categories-i.e., the obligatory and prohibited-he is only encouraged to observe the commands of the second and fourth-i.e., the recommended and reprehensible.

It should be emphasized, however, that even the absolute commands of the law have essential moral, or more accurately religious, implications, and thus are not necessarily under state sanction. For instance, the pilgrimage to Mak.kah once in a lifetime is obligatory (*wajib*) for every Muslim who is physically and financially capable of performing this duty. Yet the state, according to Shari'ah, may not compel the individual to fulfill this personal obligation.

Notwithstanding the inextricable association between law and morality in Shari'ah, Muslim jurists conveniently differentiate between private and public morality-or, using Islamic-law vocabulary, *ḥuqūq Allah* (rights of God) and *ḥuqūq al 'ibīd* (rights of humans)-and hold that only the latter may be subject to legal sanctions. Private morality includes purely religious activities pertaining directly to the spiritual relationship between a human being and God, labeled as *'ibīdāt* (services). Since *'ibīdāt*, or services, do not have, for the most part, any social consequences, the individual, it is argued, is answerable to God for fulfilling them, not to society. Public morality, on the other hand, encompasses those patterns of behavior that have social consequences, appropriately labeled *mu'āmalat* (transactions). Because of the direct implications *mu'āmalat* activities have on society's ability to maintain public peace and order, their regulation may be legally enforced by the state. The division of individual obligations and duties into categories of public and private is, nonetheless, more apparent than real; for, according to Islamic theory, all human activities, regardless of whether they are public or private, are subject to ethical judgment, because all human beings are ultimately accountable to God for their actions.

Law and morality, though interrelated, are perceived by most Western lawyers to be two distinct and separate spheres. Positive law theories predominant in Western society insist that law is only one of a number of social mechanisms-including religion, morality, education, etc.-employed in society to ensure individual conformity to social norms. This means that the ability of Western law to regulate social behavior is limited by, and contingent on, the performance of other social institutions. Only when the ideals and values promoted by other social institutions are compatible with those of the legal system can the law function effectively. Addressing the

question of the impact of law on individual and social development, Iredell Jenkins argues that

law is not an effective instrument for the formation of human character or the development of human potentialities. It has a very limited power to make men into acceptable social members or to help them become accomplished individuals. Furthermore, law can set minimum standards and define broad guidelines to assure that institutions do in fact provide the services and promote the purposes for which they acknowledge obligation and claim credit. Though law cannot secure the essential similarities that are necessary to a sound society, it can eliminate gross dissimilarity among individuals and groups, and it can prevent serious nonfeasance or misfeasance on the part of other institutions.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast, the impact of Islamic law on society is pervasive and far-reaching, for Shari'ah is an all-inclusive system combining both the legal and moral realms. Shari'ah has guided the development and performance of not only legal institutions, but also those of other institutions and agencies of society, including governmental, business, and educational institutions. This aspect of Islamic law can partially explain to us the success the law had in transforming heterogeneous and incongruent societies into one relatively homogeneous political community during the early centuries of Islam.

## The pose of Shari'ah

According to Islamic theory, Shari'ah was revealed to provide a set of criteria so that right (*J.aqq*) may be distinguished from wrong (*bāṭil*). By adhering to the rules of law, the Muslims would develop a society superior in its moral as well as material quality to societies which fail to observe the revealed will of God. Shari'ah, as a comprehensive moral and legal system, aspires to regulate all aspects of human behavior to produce conformity with Divine Law. According to the fuqaha' (Islamic jurists), adhering to the rules and principles of Shari'ah not only causes the individual to draw closer to God, but also facilitates the development of a just society in which the individual may be able to realize his or her potential, and whereby prosperity is ensured to all. In other words, while religion, as a set of values and beliefs, establishes the goals and ideals which society must strive to attain, Islamic

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<sup>2</sup>Iredell Jenkins, *Social Order and Limits of Law: A Theoretical Essay* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 35.



law furnishes the code of conduct that should be observed by Muslims if they are to achieve the desired goals.

Islamic Law (Shari'ah) is closely intertwined with religion, and both are considered expressions of God's will and justice, but whereas the aim of religion is to define and determine goals (justice or others) the function of law is to indicate the path (the term Shari'ah indeed bears this meaning) by virtue of which God's justice and other goals are realized.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of Shari'ah, therefore, is to provide the standards and criteria that would gain the ends prescribed by revelation. According to Islamic legal theory, justice, as the ultimate value that justifies the existence of law and as the ultimate criterion for the evaluation of social behavior, cannot be realized apart from the understanding of the purpose of human existence. Such understanding cannot be discovered by human reasoning, as natural law theory asserts. It must be acquired by direct exposure to Divine Will through revelation. Therefore, justice may only be fully realized when Divine Law is recognized and implemented by society.

Justice can be defined either as material or substantive (the goals and ideals that law intends to further), or as formal or procedural (the procedures and standards that must be observed to realize the ends of law). Substantive justice is the set of ideals that depict the best Islamic society, which in the end Shari'ah endeavors to achieve. Procedural justice is the standards and patterns of behavior that must be adhered to if a just society is ever to be realized.

## The Development of Shari'ah

Classical legal theory was developed over the first five centuries of Islam. Initially, the Prophet was the sole legislator of the community (Ummah). Community affairs were regulated by Qur'anic statements revealed in a piecemeal fashion to instruct Muslims regarding the appropriate patterns of behavior in relation to the various problems and questions that confronted the first community.

The early verses of the Qur'an, revealed in Makkah before the establishment of the Islamic city-state of Madinah, consisted of general statements concerning divine attributes, as well as man's mission and destiny.

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<sup>3</sup>Majid I(hadduri, *The Islamic Concept of Justice* (Baltimore: Toe Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), p. 135.

With the establishment of the first Islamic state in Madinah, the Qur'anic verses began to include injunctions and statements concerning the characteristics of the just society, along with sporadic legal enunciations. In addition to his principal mission as the bearer and verbalizer of revelation, the Prophet (AAS) served as the head of the community and the interpreter of the Qur'an; he was always available both to clarify the intent of the Qur'anic verses and to respond to inquiries on issues and questions of which the Qur'an was either silent or ambiguous. The personal judgments made by the Prophet were later referred to as the Sunnah or Hadith, to distinguish them from the Qur'an.<sup>4</sup>

Initially the term Sunnah was used in reference to the practice of the Prophet (AAS) and early Muslim Ummah as they attempted to apply the injunctions of the Qur'an to daily life. As such the Sunnah was the living tradition of the community. The term Hadith, on the other hand, was used in connection with the utterances of the Prophet as they were circulated within the community and narrated by the Prophet's companions to relate his practices and directives to other Muslims. Gradually, however, the whole of the Sunnah, the living tradition, was reflected in the Hadith, and the two terms became completely consubstantial by the fifth/eleventh century.<sup>5</sup>

With the death of the Prophet (AAS) and the emergence of new circumstances and issues never before addressed by the Qur'an or the Sunnah, the question arose as to how the Shari'ah would subsequently be known. The answer was in the exercise of juristic speculation (ijtihad), a practice that had already been approved by the Prophet (AAS). However, a juristic opinion (*ray*) arrived at by the exercise of ijtihad could lead only to tentative conclusions or conjunctures (*z'ann*). Such judgments were thus considered by jurists as subject to abrogation and refutation. But when juristic opinions arrived at through ijtihad were subjects of general agreement by the jurists (*fuqahii*), they were considered incontrovertible, and hence binding for the entire community. The juristic speculation of individual jurists (ijtihad) and their consensus (*ijma'*) became, after the death of the Prophet (AAS), additional sources of Shari'ah, and new methods to define Divine Law.

Al-Shafi'i, an eminent classical jurist and the founder of one of the four major schools of law in the history of Islam,<sup>6</sup> presented in the second/seventh

•Fazlur Rahman, pp. 37-38.

<sup>4</sup>MUQammad ibn Almunad al-Sarkhasi, *U ul al-Sarkhasi*, Vol. I (Beirut: Dar al-Ma' rifah, 1393/1973), pp. 114-15; i\bdul Karim Zaydiin, *Madkhal li-Dirasat a/-Shari'ah al-Islamiyah*, 5th ed. (Mu'assasat al-Risalah, 13-47/4-76), pp. 108-18; and i\bd al-Majid Malmunud, *Al-Madrasah al-Fiqhiyah li-al-MulJadithin* (Cairo, Egypt: Diir al-Shabiib, 1972), pp. 4-5. See also Fazlur Rahman, pp. 56-61.

<sup>6</sup>There are four major schools of law in the Sunni branch of Islam: Hanafi, Mali.Id, Shafi' i, and Hanbali.

century the first discourse on the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), which was later compiled by his students in a book entitled *Al-Risā'ah* (The Discourse). Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, al-Shaf'i recognized the four major principles of *uṣūl al-fiqh*: the Qur'an, the Sunnah (tradition of the Prophet), *ijma'* (consensus), and *ijtihād* (juristic speculation). He, however, redefined the last three principles.

Before al-Shaf'i presented his thesis in *Al-Risā'ah*, Muslim jurists by and large regarded the Sunnah, whether in the form of the living tradition of the community or the circulated narratives of the Hadith, as the practical application of the Qur'anic injunctions as they were understood by the Prophet and his companions. As such, the Sunnah was used by jurists to gain insight into the meanings and practical application of Qur'anic principles. Furthermore, early jurists accepted a Hadith only when it was supported by the Islamic principles established by the Qur'an, and they did not hesitate to reject it when it conflicted with generally accepted rules.<sup>7</sup> However, al-Shaf'i insisted that the Hadith, being divinely inspired, could not be abrogated by the Qur'an, and thus the community was obliged to abide by its injunctions.<sup>8</sup>

As a result of al-Shaf'i's insistence on the intrinsic and independent authority of the Hadith, the Sunnah and Hadith were vested with superseding authority; for although the Qur'an continued, in theory, to be regarded as the primary source of law, the Hadith for all practical purposes was given predominance in formulating legal rulings. The Hadith was used not only to interpret the Qur'an, but also to limit its application and occasionally abrogate its injunctions.<sup>9</sup>

The third source of law in al-Shaf'i's legal theory was consensus (*ijma'*). To him, *ijma'* was not the consensus of the jurists but that of the community at large. Al-Shaf'i perceived two interrelated problems in the identification of *ijma'* with the consensus of the jurists. First, consensus of the jurists was used to perpetuate the living tradition of the various schools of law, preventing thereby the unification of Islamic law. Second, and probably the most crucial problem from the Shaf'i perspective, the consensus of jurists was used to

<sup>7</sup>See Ibrahim ibn Musa al-Shatibi, *Al-Muwafaqat fi Uṣūl al-Shan'ah*, Vol. 4 (Cairo: Al-Malṭabah al-Tijariyah, n.d.), pp. 6-7; Taqi al-Din ibn Taymiyah, *Raf' al-Malam an al-'Ammah al-'Alam* (Damascus: Al-Malṭab al-Islami, 1382), pp. 49-52; and AJ-Sarkhasi, pp. 340-42.

<sup>8</sup>Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shaf'i, *Al-Risā'ah*, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Dār al-Turath, 1399/1979), pp. 88-92.

<sup>9</sup>see al-Shatibi, *Al-Muwafaqat*, Vol. 4, pp. 8-9. Al-Shaf'i does not permit the abrogation of the Qur'an by the Hadith, nor the Hadith by the Qur'an; see *Al-Risā'ah*, pp. 110-13. And for a discussion of the rules of *nadikh* (abrogation) see al-ʿAlaʿ, ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Manūr, *Uṣūl al-Fiqh wa Ibn Taymiyah*, 1400 (1980).



reject the Hadith whenever the latter contradicted the prevailing doctrines of a particular school of law.<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, al-Shafi'i was quite successful in making the Hadith an incontrovertible source of law, the second principal source after the Qur'an. Yet the triumph of al-Shafi'i's thesis did not come without opposition. It was strongly resisted even by eminent jurists and supporters of the Hadith. Ibo Qutayba, for instance, continued to hold that the Hadith could be rejected by the consensus of the jurists, thereby giving *ijma'* priority over the Hadith:

We hold that *ijma'* is a surer vehicle of truth (or right) than the Hadith, for the latter is subject to forgetfulness, neglect, doubts, interpretations, and abrogation.... But *ijma'* is free from these contingencies.<sup>11</sup>

The final recognized source of law, according to al-Shafi'i, was *ijtihad*. Before al-Shafi'i, *ijtihad* was a comprehensive concept involving any method that employed reasoning for defining the Divine Law. Al-Shafi'i, however, confined juristic speculation (*ijtihad*) to the process of extending the application of established rules to new questions by analogy (*qiyas*).<sup>12</sup> Analogical reasoning, in classical theory, required that the efficient cause ('*ila*) of the divine command be determined so that the application of the command may be extended to other objects sharing the same effect. For example, the jurists determined that the '*ila* for prohibiting the consumption of wine was its intoxicating effect. By analogy, the jurists decided, therefore, that any substance that possessed the same effect must also be prohibited, even though it may not have been explicitly forbidden by the letter of the Qur'an or Sunnah.

By limiting juristic speculation (*ijtihad*) to analogical reasoning (*qiyas*), al-Shafi'i hoped that he could render the former more systematic and, consequently, ensure the unity of law, while opposing the efforts of those who would be tempted to usurp the law for their own personal ends. Analogy (*qiyas*), nonetheless, continued to be considered by a significant number of jurists as only one of several methods through which the principle of *ijtihad* could be practiced. The followers of the Hanafi and Maliki schools of law, for instance, employed the principles of juristic preference (*istislah*) and public good (*istihsan*) respectively, regarding them as appropriate methods to derive the rules of Shari'ah. Apparently, the former method was employed by the

<sup>10</sup>See Al-Shafi'i's *Al-Risalah*, pp. 401-403, 471-72, 531-35; N. J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1964), p. 59; and Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford, 1950), p. 64.

<sup>11</sup>Quoted in Fazlur Rahman, p. 14; Al-Shiit.ibi, vol. 3, pp. 19-21; and Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abdullah al-Juwayni, *Al-Burhiinfi Usul al Fiqh* (Cairo: Dar al-Ansari, 1400), pp. 624-25, 599-611.

<sup>12</sup>Al-Shafi'i, *Al-Risalah*, p. 505.

Hanafi jurists to counteract the Shafi'i jurists' attempts to limit the concept of juristic speculation to the method of reasoning by analogy. *Istihsan* (juristic preference) was an attempt to return to the freedom of juristic opinion (*ray*) that permitted jurists to make legal rulings without relying solely on analogy. For the more systematic jurists, however, rulings rendered through the application of *istihsan* were nothing more than arbitrary rulings or, as al-Shafi'i put it, "inna al-*istihsan* taladhudh" (*istihsan* is ruling by caprice).<sup>13</sup>

*Istihsan*, (consideration of public good) was another approach employed by Maliki, and to a lesser extent by Hanafi, jurists to escape the rigid form into which the Shari'ah was gradually cast by more conservative jurists (primarily the Shafi'i and Hanbali). The jurists who advocated the use of the *istihsan* method argued that the principles of Shari'ah aimed at promoting the general interests of the community; therefore "public good" should guide legal decisions wherever revelation was silent with regard to the question under consideration.<sup>14</sup>

## Classical Legal Theory

Despite the restrictions placed by al-Shafi'i and other scholars, Shari'ah continued to grow in terms of both its methodology and the body of new rules formulated in response to the concerns of a growing society. By the close of the fifth/eleventh century, however, the science of law began to decline, while the law itself was firmly cast into a rigid mold. It was during this advanced period of the history of Islamic legal thinking that the classical legal theory was formulated. But although the theory itself was the culmination of a long process of accumulation and growth, stretching over five centuries, its historical development was not reflected in the theory itself and was completely ignored by subsequent classical jurists.

Among the prime factors that contributed to the rigidity of law was the doctrine of the infallibility of *ijma'*. The principle of *ijma'* was defined first as the agreement of the early community, and was employed to substantiate the fundamental doctrines of the faith. With the establishment of the schools of law during the first two centuries, *ijma'* was redefined as the consensus of jurists on rulings originally established through juristic speculation (*ijtihad*).

The principle of the consensus of jurists was first designed as a means to substantiate the speculative judgments of individual jurists, and hence confer

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 500; see also Malcolm Kerr, *Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muhammad 'Abduh and Rashid Rida* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966), p. 90; Coulson, p. 40.

<sup>14</sup>Al-Shatibi, *Al-Muwafaqat*, Vol. 2, pp. 8-22.

on them a higher degree of certainty and authority. Gradually, however, the theory of the infallibility of *ijma'* was advanced, thereby turning the early pragmatic authority of the legal rulings which enjoyed consensus of the jurists into theoretical absoluteness.

According to the theory of the infallibility of *ijma'*, a juristic consensus on an issue should be considered as the final step toward understanding the "truth" of that issue. The doctrine of the infallibility of *ijma'* was supported by a Hadith in which the Prophet (AAS) was reported to have said: "My community shall never agree on an error."<sup>15</sup> As a result of this new definition of *ijma'*, jurists were discouraged from reexamining decisions or judgments on which consensus had been reached, for such reexamination was, according to classical theory, pointless and unnecessary. Thus, it was only a matter of time before jurists came to the conclusion that "all essential questions had been thoroughly discussed and finally settled, and a consensus gradually established itself that from then on no one could have the necessary qualifications for independent reasoning in law."<sup>16</sup>

Henceforth, *ijtihad* ceased to be one of the functions of the jurist, let alone a source of law. For one thing, *ijtihad* was perceived to be senseless after *Shari'ah* was completed and the essential questions answered. But in addition, "the qualifications for *ijtihad* were made so immaculate and rigorous and were set so high that they were humanly impossible."<sup>17</sup> Gradually the principle of *ijtihad* was replaced by that of *taqtid* (imitation), whereby the jurist was supposed to master the official doctrine of his school and apply it to new situations. This meant that "the doctrine had to be derived not independently from the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the consensus, but from the authoritative handbooks of the several schools."<sup>18</sup>

Clearly, the theory of the infallibility of *ijma'* was decisive in casting Islamic law into a rigid mold, for it mystified the relationship between the ideal and historical elements of law, that is, it confused law as a volatile and abstract ideal with the concrete rules derived from it and captured in the historical experience of a specific social organization.

The question arises here as to what extent can *Shari'ah* be regarded, as the classical theory insists, as the manifestation of the Divine Will? To answer this question we need first to distinguish the levels of meaning that separate the ideal from the existential in Islamic legal thought. In this connection the term *Shari'ah* or law may refer to either of the following four meanings:

<sup>15</sup>Fazlur Rahman, p. 78.

<sup>16</sup>Schacht, p. 73.

<sup>17</sup>Fazlur Rahman, pp. 78-79.

<sup>18</sup>Schacht, p. 73.



First, law may be perceived as the eternal set of principles which reflect the Divine Will as it is related to the human situation; that is, those principles that relate to the purpose of human existence and the universal rules that must be observed by men to achieve that purpose.

Second, law could be regarded as the revelatory verbalization of the eternal principles in the form of a revealed word or message that discloses Divine Will to mankind. The Qur'an, the manifestation of Divine Will, consists of two categories of rules: universal rules (*alJkiun kulliyah*) embodied in general Qur'anic statements, and particular rules (*aJkam far7yah*) revealed in connection with specific instances, which hence may be considered as concrete applications of the universal rules.

Third, law may be viewed as the understanding of revelation as reflected in jurists' oral and written statements. The Qur'an was revealed over a 23-year period in piecemeal fashion in response to the various questions and problems facing the evolving Muslim community. In order to define Divine Will on new situations never before addressed by revelation, Muslim jurists had to develop a legal theory that spelled out the Shari'ah, and establish the methods of deriving and applying its rules. The jurists had to define the overall objectives of Shari'ah, and, using inductive reasoning, rediscover the fundamental principles underlying the formulation of the rules of Shari'ah. Classical jurists had also to develop the appropriate method that could be used to define the fundamental principles of Shari'ah and expand their application to new situations.

Finally, law could be seen as the positive rules derived from the theoretical principles of Shari'ah and used to regulate social and individual behavior. These rules are collected in major encyclopedic works, as well as in numerous handbooks used by the several schools of law. It is this very specific and concrete meaning of law which usually comes to mind when the term Shari'ah is pronounced.

Evidently, the classical legal theory failed to distinguish the general and abstract ideals of Shari'ah from the specific and concrete body of doctrine. That is, it confused the ideals embodied in the Qur'an and the practice of the early Muslim community with the ideologies developed later by jurists. In fact, this confusion did not occur at the early stages of the development of Shari'ah, but only at a later stage, after the four schools of law began to take shape during the third and fourth centuries, and finally with the formulation of the classical theory of law.

Earlier jurists, including the founders of the major schools of law, recognized the difference between the ideal and doctrinal elements of law, for they did not hesitate to reject previous legal theories and doctrines, replacing them with others. It was this distinction that ensured the dynamism of Shari'ah and its growth during the early centuries of Islam. By constructing new theories,

and modifying the old legal theories, the connection between the ideal and existential was maintained and Shari'ah was thus flexible enough to respond to the concerns of a developing society. However, when the prevailing doctrine of the fifth century was idealized, Shari'ah lost its flexibility, and the relationship between law and society was gradually severed. Henceforth, the efforts of the jurists were directed towards resisting any developments that would render social practices incompatible with the existing legal code, instead of modifying legal doctrines so that new social developments could be guided by Islamic ideals.

The four levels of meanings that separate the ideal from the existential elements of law enable us to see the fatal epistemological error that the proponents of the classical legal theory commit when they insist on the infallibility of the principle of *ijma'*. The classical legal theory mistakenly asserts that the ideals which the law aspires to realize have been captured, once and for all, in the legal doctrines expounded by early jurists, and that classical legal doctrines, substantiated by *ijma'*, have attained absolute universality. Implicit in this assertion is the assumption that as legal decisions move from the domain of the individual to that of the community, they give up their subjectivity and specificity. When they finally become the subject of juristic consensus, legal decisions acquire complete objectivity and universality.

Such a perception is manifestly faulty, for it could be true only if we ignore the historical evolution of the human experience. As long as the future state of society, be it in the material conditions or social organization, is concealed and uncertain, law must keep the way open for new possibilities and change. It should be emphasized here that the relationship between the third and fourth meanings of Shari'ah (i.e., law as interpretation and as positive rules) is dialectical, and must be kept that way if law is to be able to function more effectively. Because in order for the ideal to have positive effect, its universality and objectivity must become embodied in a specific and concrete doctrine. Only when the universal ideal is reduced into particular and local rules and institutions can it begin to transform the human world. However, the embodiment of the ideal in a concrete rule or institution should always be regarded as tentative, and the possibility for future reevaluation or modification should likewise be kept open.<sup>19</sup>

The positive rules of Shari'ah as well as the legal doctrines that have been formulated by Muslim jurists are therefore tentative, because they have been formulated by fallible human beings situated in specific historical moments. The consensus (*ijma'*) cannot confer universality or absoluteness on rules or decisions agreed upon by any particular generation. All that *ijma'*

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<sup>19</sup>For further discussion on this point see Jenkins, pp. 333-35.

can do is to make the rules more objective for a specific community situated in a specific time and space. The claim that the positive rules of Shari'ah (or more accurately the rules of fiqh) and Divine *Will* are identical is erroneous and ill-founded, for it ignores the historical significance of the legal doctrine and the human agency that has been responsible for its development.

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The development of the classical legal theory by the fifth/eleventh century marked the beginning of a long process in which law was gradually detached from society. Up to that point, the divergence between rules of law and social practices was confined to the political arena, as the development of political institutions, namely the establishment of hereditary rule, ceased, after the fourth successor (Caliph) to the Prophet (AAS), to correspond to the principles laid down by constitutional theory. Despite the fact that the Islamic political system (caliphate) had become a hereditary system after the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty, it was never sanctioned or recognized by Muslim jurists (*fuqaha'*) as such. They maintained that the ruler (Imam) could be either elected (*ikhtiyar*) or designated (*'ahd*) and that the selected head of the community should meet certain physical, moral, and intellectual requirements. Al-Mawardi (d. 450/1058), for instance, predicated these two modes of selection on the practice of the Muslim community during the rightly guided caliphate. He based the election (*ikhtiyar*) of the Imam on "the precedent of the choice of Abu Baler (the first caliph) by election and that of 'Umar (the second caliph) by nomination."<sup>20</sup> Al-Mawardi also required that the Imam should receive confirmation (*bayah*) of the community (Ummah) or their representatives as it was practiced during the early caliphate, a practice that was modeled after the *bayah* of al-'Aqaba, in which people expressed their allegiance to the Prophet (AAS) and acknowledged his commission and leadership.<sup>21</sup>

To resolve the contradiction between the de jure requirements of involving the community (Ummah) or their representatives in the selection of the Imam and de facto hereditary rule, classical jurists (*fuqaha'*) divided the selection process into two stages: nomination (*ikhtiyar*) and confirmation (*bayah*). While most leading jurists and schools of law agreed that the ruler (Imam) may be nominated by one or two competent individuals, they differed as to what constitutes confirmation; though the widely accepted proposition was that

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<sup>20</sup>Haroon Khan Sherwani, *Studies in Muslim Political Thought and Administration* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1977), pp. 102-3.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*



it was the right of the community, through their local leaders (*ahl al-Ujwal- 'aqd*) and scholars ('Ulama), to confirm the ruler.

The jurists' failure to have any impact on the actual procedure through which the ruler was selected is reflected in the idealistic nature of the classical constitutional theory; the theory is primarily concerned with defining substantive rights and duties, while failing to address the procedures needed for securing these rights and duties.

The doctrine of the caliphate did not offer any adequate means of identifying the persons empowered to choose and install the Caliph, or, if necessary, depose him, nor did it indicate the process by which they should come to decisions. A wrongdoing ruler should be deposed if this will not invite anarchy, but the doctrine is silent on who is to decide this, or how.<sup>22</sup>

After the fifth century, however, law began to lose touch with reality, not only in the political realm, but also in the social and economic, or, using Islamic vocabulary, in the sphere of *mu'imaliit*. Furthermore, with the idealization of the fifth-century legal code, the law became increasingly rigid, unable to respond to the growing needs of society. To mitigate the rigidity of law in subsequent centuries, many jurists employed legal devices (*Jiyal shar'iyah*) through which "an act may seemingly be lawful in accordance with the literal meaning of the law, but could hardly be in conformity with the spirit or the general purposes of the law."<sup>23</sup> Indeed, by the eighth century, law became primarily concerned with procedural and technical matters, while ignoring substantive questions. This meant that classical jurists in later centuries had virtually subordinated substantive justice to procedural justice.

Despite the efforts to make Shari'ah flexible through the use of legal devices, Shari'ah's ability to respond to social concerns continued to diminish, while the gap between the rules of law and social practices broadened.

This trend continued until the collapse of the traditional sociopolitical order by this century, which was the result of the European colonization of the Muslim world. The European invasion of Muslim lands was the blow that shook Muslim civilization. As a result, Muslim jurists and scholars were faced with the challenge of explaining how, in the scheme of things, the Western world, which after all did not have the privilege of being ruled by Shari'ah, was able to attain military and scientific superiority over the Muslim community. One of the early responses was advanced by Jamal al Din al Afghani, who attributed Muslim decline to the deficient outlook promoted

<sup>22</sup>Kerr, p. 10

<sup>23</sup>Khadduri, p. 151; see also Coulson, p. 140.

by classical legal theory and its proponents. It is not revelation, al Afghani proclaimed, that should be held responsible for Muslim decadence, but the faulty interpretations of classical jurists. Al-Afghani was alarmed by the jurists' obsession with procedural and technical matters to the neglect of substantive questions. He thus accused classical jurists of wasting time and energy on trivial matters, occupying their minds with minutiae and subtleties, instead of addressing important problems facing the Muslim community.<sup>24</sup> Like al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, a leading modern jurist, asserted that Shari'ah would effect prosperity only when its objectives were properly understood, and its principles correctly interpreted and implemented.

The Shari'ah is designed by God to bring worldly as well as spiritual success to man. Its social prescriptions are assumed to assure the best and most prosperous of earthly communities, provided that they are properly observed.<sup>25</sup>

## Conclusion

Islamic legal theory asserts that law can only be established by an impartial legislator who has full knowledge of the purpose of human existence. By necessity, therefore, God must be the ultimate lawgiver of society. According to Islamic legal theory, Shari'ah is revealed to provide a set of criteria so that right may be distinguished from wrong. By adhering to the rules of law, Muslims are assured to develop a society superior in its moral as well as material quality to other societies that fail to observe revelation.

Because revelation ceased upon the death of the Prophet (AAS), the community lost its direct access to Divine Will. Hence the question arose as to how Divine Law was to be known. The answer was in the practice of juristic speculation (*ijtihad*), whereby jurists resorted to the use of independent reasoning (*ray*) to discover the principles embodied in revelation and then extend their application to new situations never before addressed by revelation. Because of the speculative nature of independent reasoning, jurists introduced the principle of juristic consensus (*ijma'*) to confer a higher degree of certainty and authority on their judgments.

In the fifth century, the doctrine of the infallibility of *ijma'* was introduced,

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<sup>24</sup>Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, "The Benefit of Philosophy," in *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*, ed. Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 120-21.

<sup>25</sup>Quoted in Kerr, p. U4.

whereby rulings that were subject to juristic consensus were considered to be incontrovertible. Jurists concluded that essential questions had been thoroughly discussed, and were therefore settled once and for all. Henceforth, law (rules of fiqh) lost its earlier flexibility and was cast into a rigid mold from which it has not emerged. Jurists could no longer consult the original sources of law, but had to derive new rules from the fifth-century legal code, which was idealized and codified in the handbooks of the several schools of law.

Clearly, the rigidity of law has been the result of the faulty epistemology of the classical legal theory, and more specifically the doctrine of the infallibility of juristic consensus. For the theory fails to distinguish between the various levels of meaning of the law, namely, the difference between the abstract ideals of law, and the concrete body of rules and doctrines. In other words, the classical theory mistakenly asserts that the ideals which the law aspires to realize have been permanently captured in the legal doctrines expounded by early jurists. As such, the classical theory has certainly been instrumental in hindering the development of Muslim societies and bringing Islamic civilization to ruin. After the theory assumed prominence in legal circles, the efforts of the jurists were directed toward resisting any development that would render social practices incompatible with the existing legal code, instead of modifying legal doctrines so that new social development could be guided by Islamic ideals.

After the fifth century, classical legal theory became the dominant paradigm around which Islamic law evolved. The theory was handed down unchallenged from one generation to another until the turn of this century, when Muslims underwent a devastating defeat at the hands of European powers. The defeat was overwhelming, indeed, for it exposed Muslims—who were still convinced that they were on the top of the world—to a superior mode of civilization, thereby compelling them to reevaluate their assumptions. The Muslims' humiliating defeat by outside forces was the anomaly that violated the central premise of the classical theory, for it became quite apparent that Shari'ah had ceased to produce the superior society it once created and sustained.



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# A Critical Assessment of the Issues of Objectivity and Subjectivity in Contemporary Western Socio-Behavioral Thought and its Muslim Khaldunian Counterpart<sup>1</sup>

*Mahmoud Dhaouadi*

The issues of *objectivity* and *subjectivity* in the contemporary knowledge of the behavioral and the social sciences represent a highly controversial debate whose solution has defied all attempts by those who have tackled it with analysis and discussion. There are presently *four* causes of bias which afflict the modern behavioral and social sciences.

- 1) Numerous studies in this field have explained the social scientist's inevitable bias as emanating from personality subjective factors. The sociologist or the psychologist, according to this view, can't entirely liberate himself or herself from individual inclinations, values, and interests in going about studying the phenomena which belong to each field. Total objectivity in the sciences of man and society is beyond human reach according to the German sociologist, Max Weber.<sup>1</sup>
- 2) In spite of the important role played by the social scientist's personality *subjective* factors in the making of his or her scientific bias, these factors are not, nonetheless, the only forces which determine the phenomenon of bias in contemporary behavioral and social sciences. Scientific bias could be the outcome as well of a *collective* or an *institutional*

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<sup>1</sup>This is a revised and expanded version of the author's study in Arabic published in the journal of *Al Mustaqbal Al Arabi*, No. 120, Feb. 1989 pp. 26-52.

<sup>1</sup>M. Weber, *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, translated by E. Shills and H. Finch (Chicago: Free Press, 1949).

bias. Social scientists often belong to particular schools of thought and theoretical paradigms which can't be entirely bias-free. Marxist functionalist sociologists are examples of that. Marxist thought, as we know, accounts for the explanation of socio-politico-psychological phenomena through the economic-materialistic forces. Similarly, behavioral psychologists explain human behavior as a response to external influences in the environment. As such, both Marxism and behaviorism do away with the subjective factors that could affect individual and collective behavior. Cognitive factors<sup>2</sup> and cultural factors (superstructure) are not taken into account by behaviorist and Marxist explanations respectively. Consequently, the behaviorist and the Marxist stand against "the subjective factors" constitutes a *collective bias* which involves practically all those scholars and thinkers who adhere to the behaviorist and the Marxist schools. The collective bias in question would eventually affect the credibility of the behaviorist-Marxist social scientists' hypotheses, concepts, paradigms, theories, explanations, and predictions.

Furthermore, with the development of modern structures and institutions for the enterprise of science, bias has taken an *institutional form* as well. For modern knowledge is becoming more and more an institutional knowledge. The latter emanates from universities, research centers, specialized institutions, etc. which have their own self-interests and ideologies and whose impact on the bias of their scientific knowledge is inevitable. Today's increasing efforts to establish an *interdisciplinary approach* capable of assembling at once all scientific contributions of behavioral and social sciences are seen as a good strategy for reducing the bias of each discipline that often claims that it is the credible reference for the explanation of individual and collective phenomena.

The call for interdisciplinarity<sup>3</sup> in the fields of behavioral and social sciences implies basically the rehabilitation of the epistemological unidimensionality of their perspectives. In other words, what is required from the sciences of man and society is the adoption of multifactorial perspectives in their understanding, explaining and theorizing about individual as well as collective behavior. This means implicitly that human behaviors, individual

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<sup>2</sup>H. Gardner, *The Mind's New Science: A History of Cognitive Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), p. 408.

<sup>3</sup>H.M. Blalock, Jr., *Basic Dilemmas in the Social Sciences* (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1984).



or collective, are by their nature enormously complex. The criticism of reductionist scientists and scholars in the behavioral and the social sciences is thus very legitimate.

- 3) The third factor which brings about bias in the behavioral and the social sciences is related to the ideological nature of these sciences. The roots of this can be traced to the fact that the behavioral and social sciences deal with issues which focus primarily on social life and its economic, political, and cultural parameters. As such, many thinkers believe that behavioral and social thought can't be entirely liberated from ideological factors: they can't be totally bias-free. The realization of the natural sciences' objectivity remains, thus, beyond the reach of the sciences of man and society. The German sociologist Habermas affirms that knowledge in general and knowledge of the behavioral and social sciences in particular are directly or indirectly influenced by the interests, the outlook, the concerns of thinkers, scientists and researchers. On this basis one can easily understand the feasibility of the co-existence at the same time and in the same place of the sociology of the *Right* and the sociology of the *Left*. This stipulates that bias or ideological dimension is an inherent characteristic in the nature of these sciences. This implies that the search for an ideal objectivity in the study of man and society is an impossible task. It is in this sense that we ought to consider the objectivity concept in the behavioral and the social sciences not as a static but rather as a dialectical notion. That is to say, in attempting to identify the nature of phenomena, the social scientist remains, on the one side, under the influence of his or her own socio-psychological background and, on the other, under the impact of the external social milieu. Consequently, the very foundations of the objectivity of the behavioral and the social sciences are of a dualistic nature. This state of affairs is likely to promote more subjectivity on the part of the social scientist's science. As pointed out, the latter's total liberation from personal as well as social influences is not plausible. It is on this basis that objectivity in the sciences of man and society constitutes a controversy. As in any other intellectual

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\*S. Ayb, *Ideological Influences in Sociology (in arabic)* (Beirut: The Arab Development Institute, 1983), p. 29.

controversy, the securing of a reasonable degree of objectivity in these sciences requires a continuous critical intellectual debate between the social scientist and his social milieu, on the one hand, and between himself and the available state of knowledge, on the other. This is what has been emphasized by the French sociologist Raymond Boudon in this regard.<sup>5</sup> For him the critique of the knowledge of the behavioral and the social sciences could take two forms: (1) internal critique which deals with the degree of the logic of the theories, the hypotheses as well as the plausibility of the concepts being used, and (2) external critique which attempts to test the foundations of the theories and their implications as far as their compatibility with the empirical facts is concerned. The social scientist's adoption of what Boudon calls *la critique rationnelle* is seen as the best method for securing a better credibility in the sciences of man and society.

- 4) In addition to the three outlined factors contributing to the bias of the behavioral and social sciences there is a fourth related one which is represented in *the tendency* of these sciences to generalize their concepts and their theories from one society or from one civilization to another. In not taking often into account the particularities and the specificities of human societies and civilizations, behavioral and social sciences tend to undermine their scientific objectivity and, thus, their scientific credibility. This state of affairs has been widely recognized especially in the last two decades by critical analysts of the corpus of Western modern behavioral and social sciences. For instance attempts to strictly apply American sociological theories of modernization and development on the Third World have been severely attacked by an increasing number of behavioral/social thinkers, particularly in socialist countries, in the West, and in developing societies. Daniel Lerner's theory of modernization<sup>6</sup> and William Rostow's theory of economic development<sup>7</sup> are but two illustrations of *ethnocentrism*. Lerner claims that Middle Eastern societies can't achieve modernization without adopting the Western model for modernization. As such, he believes in the *universal*

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<sup>5</sup>Boudon and Bourricand, *Dictionnaire Critique de la Sociologie* pp. 425-32.

<sup>6</sup>D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society, Modernising The Middle East*, 2nd Edition (New York: Free Press, 1964).

<sup>7</sup>W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

raised by the objectivity/subjectivity controversy facing the scientific credibility of modern behavioral and social sciences. The implications of this problematic on the identity as well as the progressive continuity of these sciences are far from being superficial. In our opinion, the crisis which the sciences of man and society have known in the last two decades or so is, to a great extent, organically related to the theory issue of the objectivity/subjectivity continuum.

### Voices of the Crisis from Within

It is no exaggeration to state that there has been a great deal of critical writing in the West since the seventies on the crisis of the behavioral and the social sciences. The titles themselves of certain books bluntly refer to the crisis in question. Alvin Gouldner's *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*<sup>11</sup> is one of the significant sociological works which underline the principal factors which would eventually lead to the coming of the crisis of sociology in Western societies. The book *Radical Reflections on the Origin of the Human Sciences*<sup>12</sup> emphasizes in turn that the crisis of the behavioral and social sciences is already a reality, and it is no longer a part of our imagination. The author of this book summarizes the aspects of the crisis this way: "there is today a widespread awareness that a crisis in the human sciences has taken place. Philosophers and social scientists alike have expressed increasing concern about this apparent lapse of the sciences of man into a situation of crisis. Regrettably, however, no clear and consistent account of the nature of this crisis and the factors that have occasioned it has been forthcoming. Indeed, the varied and conflicting accounts of the nature and source of the encroaching crisis have become infected with a conceptual crisis of their own."<sup>13</sup> The book *Les Splendeurs et miseres des sciences sociales*<sup>14</sup> depicts the crisis of the behavioral and social sciences with an alarming description. It is no longer enough to speak of the crisis of the behavioral and social sciences. The state of these sciences has deteriorated dangerously on several levels. It is more accurate to say that they are in a state of agony rather than that they are merely going through a crisis. It is time to admit that the behavioral and social sciences have provided us, so far, only with an imaginative corpus of knowledge.<sup>15</sup> The thesis of the work *Les Mythes*

<sup>11</sup>AW. Gouldner, *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1910).

<sup>12</sup>C.C. Schrag, *Radical Reflections on the Origin of the Human Sciences* (3<sup>rd</sup> Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1980).

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>A. Caille, *Les Splendeurs et miseres des sciences sociales* (Geneve: Librairie Droze, 1986).

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 5.



*fondateurs des sciences sociales*<sup>16</sup> is no different from those cited above. The author points out that the behavioral and the social sciences have not been able to remain committed to the spirit of objectivity. Consequently, they have failed to provide us with the objective knowledge which behavioral and social scientists have promised to deliver in the last three centuries. As such, the social functions of the sciences of man and society resemble those of religions.

Unlike the previous books, *La Place du desordre* is not a total attack on all social and behavioral sciences. It is rather a critical analysis of the theories of social change which have been assembled by these sciences since the Second World War. Boudon's criticism of the foundations of those theories has already been referred to in the preceding pages.<sup>17</sup> In his view, they are theories that can't be considered scientific because of their inclination for easy *generalization*. So, these theories are bound to contribute to the crisis of contemporary behavioral and social sciences outlined here.

The crisis of the sciences of man and society is not better on the applied side either. The success of the treatment of mental diseases both by clinical psychology and psychiatry is still *very* limited. The same is true also of the criminological sciences. Rehabilitation in advanced Western societies is increasingly viewed as a flop. This desperate situation has led a growing number of prison as well as rehabilitation center authorities, in Canada and the United States in particular, eventually to abandon or to begin to think to abandon the widespread rehabilitative philosophy which was quite popular, especially in the sixties and the seventies. The call for the punishment of the deviant and the criminal, instead of his/her rehabilitation, is being voiced more and more by criminologists in those societies.<sup>18</sup>

Our call for learning from the accumulated knowledge of various human civilizations in the understanding of man and society implies our flat rejection of the principal thesis of modern scientific thought which claims that *no* human knowledge is ever credible unless it is the result of the scientific spirit as defined in modern times. In our view, a part of the crisis of the behavioral and social sciences must be attributed to this narrow and shortsighted outlook of the meaning of scientific knowledge in contemporary Western academia, as we will see. One methodology which may enlighten us about the roots of the crisis of the behavioral and social sciences is to draw a comparison between the foundations, the principles and the visions of the Arab Islamic mind of Ibn Khaldun, on the one hand, and those of the contemporary Western mind, on the other. The former had heavily marked Ibn Khaldun's *Ilm al*

<sup>16</sup>P. Claval, *Les Mythes forukiteurs des sciences sociales* (Paris: PUF, 1980).

<sup>17</sup>Roudon, *La Place du desordre*.

<sup>18</sup>J. Wilson, *Thinking About Crime* (New York: Basic Books, 1983) and M. Cusson, *Pourquoi Punir!* (Paris: Dalloz, 1987).

*Umran al Bashari*, and the latter has profoundly shaped the nature and the orientation of modern behavioral and social sciences. The comparison of these two types of thought may drive us closer to the shores of the dilemma in question. Like every other human thought, modern sciences of man and society are bound to be influenced by the socio-cultural historical conditions as well as of the epistemological foundations on which they have been based and evolved. We believe that the first step to be taken in order to secure a credible diagnosis of the nature of the crisis of modern behavioral and social sciences must identify and reconstruct the factors which have shaped their content as well as their form in contemporary times.<sup>19</sup>

### **The Root of the Ideological Bias of the Behavioral and Social Sciences**

As it has been outlined, contemporary behavioral and social sciences have limited their scope of interest in the study of those phenomena which strictly fall within the range of the five human senses, that is, those phenomena subject to human observation, experimentation, and tangible manipulation. Such a position could only narrow man's wider potential resources for knowledge. This stand is as well a violation of the very ethics of the objectivity concept which the behavioral and social sciences have often claimed to defend. In so doing, the modern sciences of man and society have compromised the principle of total neutrality or that of fair objectivity toward the phenomena they aspire to study. Behavioral psychology's attitude toward the study of man's cognitive processes is a case in point.<sup>20</sup> The behaviorists have practically shown no interest in cognition and its impact on the individual's behavior. The denial of the role of man's cognitive dimensions in the shaping of human behavior constitutes a biased blow to the scientific credibility of behavioral psychology. Such a position puts behavioral psychology in a clear contradiction with the discipline of psychology in general. While the latter focuses its interest on the study of man's personality, behavioral psychology has done away with significant components of the human personality like its cognitive processes and its innate predispositions.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, metaphysical, religious, and spiritual aspects of the human personality have also faced the same fate at the hand of behavioral psychologists. Empirico-positivist social scientists have hardly hesitated to consider them as plain fabricated superstitions and myths. This outlook appears, nonetheless, to be tainted with biased overtones.

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<sup>19</sup>Keat and Urry, *Social Theory as Science*.

<sup>20</sup>Gardner, *The Mind's New Science*.

<sup>21</sup>*The Controversy of Soda/ Sciences in the Arab Hbrld (in Arabic)* (Cairo: National Center for Social and Criminological Researches, 1984), pp. 13-25.

for the sociologists, can only imply that human behavior is a simple type of behavior. That is, it is not influenced by a multitude of factors other than those of the outside milieu. Such a simplistic unidimensional perspective is in contradiction with the conclusions of an increasing number of modern studies in the behavioral and social sciences which concur that social phenomena as well as the behavior of the individuals are complex in nature.<sup>26</sup>

(2) In our opinion, behavioral psychology and the social determinist sociology, as represented by Durkheim, suffer from an acute confusion in their conceptualization of the stimuli/social forces which are at work in human behavior. Since they have generally distanced themselves from taking into account the role of invisible forces in shaping human behavior, the impact of spiritual influences and innate human personality traits on human behavior is discarded at once. The former are considered of magical, metaphysical nature. The latter may be seen as potential influential forces on human behavior but their invisible nature constitutes an *obstacle* for the empirico-positivist behavioral and social sciences. Had these sciences denied only the influence of the metaphysical/spiritual factors on human behavior, they would have caused no big surprise on their part. But to reject altogether real psychological human traits, drives, cognitive processes—for no other reason than their claim that they couldn't be studied by the empirico-positivist traditional observation, manipulation, experimentation—constitutes an obvious distorted conceptualization of what could affect and explain human behavior. This kind of *conceptual disarray* is likely to be the outcome of some sort of phobia on the part of the empirico-positivist social scientists who have the tendency to associate anything which is not observable and measurable by the logic of the five senses with the worlds of metaphysics, phantoms and spirits, whose very existence had been categorically dismissed by the father of positivism, Auguste Comte, in the 19th century. In retrospect, the basis of the two positions (a + b) is far from being on solid objective ground. The bias in question here could be accounted for through the reading of the European history of science since the Renaissance. The conflict between the church/royal authority alliance on the one hand, and the European philosophers and scientists on the other, has been well documented since the 17th century. In this conflictual context, ideological connotations are bound to surface and play an important role in group conflicts, particularly when one party attempts to dominate the other. As such, the logic of the *history* of positivism's emergence does not permit positivism to be as objective as it claims. The sociology of knowledge is the most appropriate branch of modern sociology which could formulate an articulate explanation for the spectrum of bias that has inevitably afflicted the empirico-positivist perspective. The claim of positivism's logic

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<sup>26</sup> Block, *Basic Dilemmas in the Social Sciences*.



that the true discovery of the nature of things lies outside the intricate entity of the human being as well as away from the metaphysical influences has, nonetheless, several implications on man's morale.

On the one hand, human nature has no longer any intrinsic mysteries to be explored and discovered. As such, it is no more than an empty shell with no depth whatsoever. On the other, the discovery of the laws, mysteries of the infinite universe becomes limited only to those which can be revealed and identified by the means of the five senses. This type of vision of things has not only constituted a blow to the relation between man and the world beyond, but has affected as well the nature of the image which man has made of himself. The empirico-positivist man's new image has no precedent throughout man's long history. He has become the master of the universe and its center at the same time. For him, there is hardly any existing universe but that universe which can be recognized and manipulated by his five senses; knowledge is credible as long as it is based on the knowledge and logic of tangible observation and experimentation.

In doing so, the empirico-positivist man has narrowed the scope of his experience with the limitless universe as well as with his own internal world whose mystery and secrets are potentially countless. This new outlook of modern man has indeed tightened the grips of self-imposing isolation on him. His universe has shrunk considerably, so the depth of human nature and that of the larger universe have been drastically shattered. This empirico-positivist attitude has, consequently, deprived modern man from being able to communicate with the greater universe with means other than the plain five senses. The empirico-positivist man's interaction with himself, with his fellow men, and with the vast universe has deteriorated to a degrading level known only among the nonrational beings. Many anomalies of modern times, from which the empirico-positivist man suffers, could be attributed to his *double rupture*: (a) a rupture between himself and his inside world, on the one side, and (b) a split between himself and the outside universe, on the other. It is against this background that one can understand why the dialogue between those dimensions of human depths has been strikingly mutilated under the reign of the empirico-positivist man.<sup>27</sup>

## The Behavioral and Social Sciences Are Special Sciences

Among the consequences of the empirico-positivist thought, as described above, is its silence on the study of certain distinct human characteristics.

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<sup>27</sup>B. Freedman, *To Be or Not to Be Human* (New York: Vintage Press, 1987).

What philosophers have called human freedom, will, spiritualism, and morality are hardly dealt with in the literature of modern behavioral and *social sciences*. There are a number of reasons for such a silence: (1) The empirico-positivist disciplines in question don't recognize *a priori* those human traits since they are considered as unreliable in nature; (2) The empirico-positivist methods and techniques of modern behavioral and social sciences are hardly fit to explore scientifically those distinct human traits; and (3) The recognition of the role of human freedom, will, spiritualism, and morality as influential forces on human behavior goes especially against the vision of social determinism to which subscribe passionately a number of contemporary social scientists. The strong adherence by Durkheim from sociology and the behaviorists from psychology to social determinism could be seen as the outcome of an imitation on their part of the deterministic laws of the sciences of physics, chemistry, and biology. There is obviously an exaggeration underlying this assumption here. That is, the deterministic laws of the behavioral and social sciences can't be identical to those prevailing in the natural sciences. The insistence to equate the dynamics of the natural and the social worlds, on the one hand, and the nature of their deterministic laws on the other, is an outlook which has no solid objective basis.<sup>28</sup> In our view, the behavioral and the social sciences which pay very little or no attention to the special distinct human characteristics in their understanding of the individual as well as of collective behavior are bound to be less credible in their explanations and their predictions. To be more specific, credibility of the various disciplines of the behavioral and the social sciences is due in part to: (a) the treatment of human behavior as no different epistemologically from that of non humans. Behavioral psychology is a case in point, and (b) the fashionable tendency on the part of the great majority of specialists of the behavioral and social sciences to adopt unidimensional perspectives in their attempt to explain individual behavior as well as social phenomena. Against this background, one can assert that in the real human world individual as well as collective behaviors are under the impact of *two* types of influences: on the one hand, those related to the distinct human particularities and, on the other, those pertaining to the external influences. Furthermore, each one of them displays a mosaic capacity of influences of its own on the human individual and collective behaviors. Still the cross-interaction between the two levels of influences is a continuing one. Given this intricate complex nature of the multitude of factors affecting human behavior and phenomena, one can appreciate the legitimacy of the call of an increasing number of specialists of these sciences to consider their laws and their theories as

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<sup>28</sup>The *Controversy of Social Sciences*, pp. 13-26, and Keat and Urry, *Social Theory as Science*, pp. 3-26.

particularist in nature and thus, limited in application.<sup>29</sup> In other words, the behavioral and the social sciences are special sciences. Their laws and their theories are not easily generalizable like those of the natural sciences. The lack of precise explanations and predictions of various theories of man's behavior and society's social dynamics could be attributed particularly to the principle of generalization adopted by a number of social scientists. The matter in the study of human behavior is still further complicated. The different and the changing nature of individual behavior and social phenomena from time to time and from one culture to the other certainly doesn't help the task of the social scientist in his or her pursuit to figure out precisely the forces at work in individual and collective behavior. Consequently, the search for behavioral and social sciences of credible laws, theories, etc., like the ones of the natural sciences, is far from being a realistic ambition.<sup>30</sup>

### The Khaldunian Mind and its Western Positivist Counterpart

A number of Western positivist thinkers have criticized part of Ibn Khaldun's social thought found in his *Muqaddimah*. They are, on the one hand, fascinated by his proof-oriented reasoning mind as displayed particularly in his analyses and theories of the social dynamics of the Arab Muslim civilization. On the other, they accuse him of irrational tendencies in his approach to the study and explanations of invisible non-material phenomena. Yves Lacoste and Neil Shrnitt went as far as dividing Ibn Khaldun's work into two categories: (1) Ibn Khaldun's written work in Qalat Bani Salam in Algeria, and (2) Ibn Khaldun's social thought which was written afterwards, especially during his old age in Cairo. Lacoste and Shrnitt and others like them consider the first type of Ibo Khaldun's work as rationalist, proof-based, and semi-empirical in nature. As such, it is seen as having a close affinity with the epistemo-philosophical perspective of contemporary positivist Western thought. This type of work is described by them as *original*. The second type of Ibn Khaldun's thought is viewed by the same thinkers as superstitious, irrational, and subjective. Thus, according to them, it contradicts the very basic assumptions and foundations of the former.

In our opinion, the accusation of Ibn Khaldun of some kind of split-thought is ill-founded. Because it does ignore (or pretend to ignore) the specific socio-historical conditions in which Khaldunian social thought was born and grew. This prejudged evaluation against the social thought of the author of

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HBoudon, *La Place du desordre*, p.

<sup>30</sup>*The Controversy of Social Sciences*, p. 20.



the *Muqaddimah* could have been avoided had those critics adopted a socio-historical perspective in their understanding of the nature of Ibn Khaldun's social thought. Ibn Khaldun had based his 'Umran work with its new concepts, methodologies, and theories on the Arab Muslim civilization's socio-historico-culturo-religio-political background. For instance, the Arab Muslim civilization did not witness in the same manner the number of phenomena which have led to the emergence of the positivist science in Europe. The phenomena in question were the despotism of kings, the Church's authoritarianism, and the skepticism directed against the thin credibility of the rationalist thought of the Renaissance. The well-known long history of the conflicts between the Church and the scientist in European societies since Newton's time does not have its counterpart in the history of science in the Arab Muslim civilization. Ibn Khaldun, for one, did not suffer from a conflict between his proof-based reasoning mind, on the one hand, and his religious metaphysical beliefs, on the other. As such, he attempted to understand, with an open reasoning outlook, both the nature of this observable world and that of the world beyond the five senses. According to the Moroccan thinker, Mohammed Abid Al-Jabri, "*the Muqaddimah* stands as a pyramidal and a unified constructed and developed thought in its content as well as in the organization of its chapters, paragraphs and the harmony which prevail among its various parts.

Ibn Khaldun was firmly committed throughout his *Muqaddimah* to logical thinking in his analysis and his deductions. Ibn Khaldun's focus on the understanding of supernatural phenomena (prophecy, dreams, mysticism, etc.) is far from being an abnormal deviation from his logico-rational framework. Supernatural phenomena are integral components of collective social gathering. The author of the *Muqaddimah* tried to find a sound justification for their existence in the Arab Muslim civilization. In doing so, *he did not go against the scientific spirit* but rather he remained objective vis-a-vis the study of the supernatural."<sup>31</sup>

In comparison with the contemporary Western empirico-positivist thought of the behavioral and the social sciences, we can assert that Ibn Khaldun's epistemology is fundamentally different from that which the Western founding fathers of these sciences have adopted since Comte's time. As shown, both positivism and Empiricism are either not interested in the study of the phenomena which don't fall within the range of the human five senses or they categorically dismiss their very existence. Ibn Khaldun on his part recognizes two types of phenomena: (1) The phenomena perceptible through the senses, and (2) those phenomena which are not perceptible through the

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JtM. Al-Jabri, *Al-Assabiyya and The State: Ibn Khaldun's Theoretical Perspectives in the Arab-Islamic History* (in Arabic) (Beirut: Dar Attalia, 1982), pp. 118-19.

senses. Unlike the empirico-positivist social scientists, Ibn Khaldun did not turn his face away from the second category of those phenomena.<sup>32</sup> On the contrary, he put a great effort to understand and explain them. The author of the *Muqaddimah* did pay attention to the understanding of such phenomena like divine revelation.<sup>33</sup> In his analyses of those phenomena, as in others, Ibn Khaldun relied solely on logical and rational evidence. As an example, we mention his argument concerning the limits of the human mind vis-a-vis the recognition of the phenomena which lie beyond the world of the senses. "Initially the knower believes that the world he knows is only that one he can recognize by his senses. The truth of the matter is otherwise. Isn't the world of the deaf limited to his *four* senses, since audible phenomena are excluded from his perception? Likewise, isn't the blind person deprived of the visible world? Accordingly, there may be phenomena which are beyond the recognition of our five senses."<sup>34</sup>

Ibn Khaldun clearly underlines here the extent of the limitations of the human mind's knowledge.<sup>35</sup> This is neither an attack on it nor is it a belittling of its appropriate capacity of knowledge. Thus, for Ibn Khaldun, the human mind is like a balance, the latter, whatever its precision and its authenticity, could only weigh a limited amount. It is legitimate, then, for humans to seek help from divine revelation in matters which fall outside the comprehension of the human mind.<sup>30</sup>

From the above background it appears very clear that the Arab Islamic Khaldunian mind differs from its Western empirico-positivist counterpart as far as the foundations on which they have based their knowledge of man and society. On the one hand, the mind of the author of the *Muqaddimah* is considerably shaped by the Islamic epistemological outlook in its attempt to understand the 'Umrani phenomena. On the other, the epistemology of the Western empirico-positivist mind is basically, as we have seen, the outcome of a set of socio-historical circumstances which European societies have witnessed since the Renaissance. The Khaldunian mind takes into account a multitude of factors in its understanding and explanation of phenomena.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibn Khaldun's philosophy of knowledge resembles very much that of the famous Muslim philosopher Al-Ghazali (1059-1111). The latter had emphasized the extreme importance of the human senses and the human mind in the acquisition of knowledge. But the senses-mind knowledge could not be the ultimate knowledge particularly as far as the metaphysical dimensions of human existence. Religion, Sufi experience become then a necessity to resort to.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah* (in Arabic) (Beirut: Dar Al-Qalam, 1987), pp. 91-119. I am obliged to use the Arabic version of the *Muqaddimah* because of the difficulty to find the English one in Tunisia where this study is written.

"Ibid., pp. 496-504.

"Ibid., p. 480.

<sup>33</sup> A. Sati' Al-f. Iusri, *Studies in Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddimah* (in Arabic) (Beirut: Dar Al-Kitab Al-'ilmi, 1967), p. 494.

It uses observation, experimentation, divine revelation, and spiritual experiences in formulating its acquired knowledge about universal phenomena. Thus, the Khaldunian perspective is profoundly Islamic in nature. It is a multifactorial perspective, open to all sources of knowledge which could help the scientist or the scholar to have a more credible knowledge of the phenomena he studies. The Western contemporary mind is empirico-positivist in nature. It limits, on one side, the horizon of human knowledge to the materialistic empirical sense-based knowledge. On the other, it disregards the importance of the other types of human knowledge. Because of its materialistic nature, the Western contemporary mind has been more susceptible to adopt the concept of rigid determinism with regard to the laws that govern and orient individual as well as collective human behavior. The crisis of Western behavioral and social sciences is partially attributed by the American philosopher Shrag to the prevailing extreme trends of social determinism that are easily reflected in the conceptualization as well as the explanation of those sciences. For the American political scientist Laswell man is a homopoliticus. The German sociologist Dahrendorf views man as a homosociologus. As far as Cassirer is concerned, man is homosymbolicus. Such perceptions of man express, indeed, a state of malaise and confusion on the part of contemporary Western behavioral and social sciences.<sup>37</sup> In response to that situation certain thinkers, like the philosopher of sciences Karl Popper and the French sociologist Raymond Boudon, have called for the adoption of the principle of indeterminism not only in the sciences of man and society but in the exact sciences as well. However, two things have to take place if the behavioral and the social sciences are to be appropriately reformed:

(a) The specialists of these sciences must promote the sense of *self-criticism* concerning their epistemology, their assumptions, their methodology, and their theories which they have founded and used in their study of man and society, and (b) science's modern outlook needs also to be rehabilitated. *Sciences must cease to rely solely on quantitative data as the only measure for the credibility of human knowledge.* In other words, behavioral and social sciences must, like Max Weber had done, give great importance to the role of non-quantifiable factors in the explanation of behavioral and social phenomena. The sciences of man and society must liberate themselves from unidimensional determinism and replace it, instead, with a multidimensional deterministic perspective. The latter has clearly more flexibility in accounting for complex behavioral and social phenomena under consideration. In our opinion, this is what Ibn Khaldun's 'Umran mind had stood for in his analyses, his laws, and his theories which he had established as a result of focusing on the dynamics of the Arab Muslim societies between the birth of Islam

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<sup>37</sup>Shrag, *Radical Reflections on the Origin of the Human Sciences*, p. 2.



and Ibn Khaldun's time. In recent years there have been many voices echoing the crisis of Arab Muslim sociology.<sup>38</sup> A great deal of what has been written in this regard fails to stress that contemporary Arab behavioral and social sciences suffer from two crises: (1) Arab social scientists' imitation of the empirico-positivist Western mind in their study of man and society, and (2) Arab social scientists' uneasy ambiguity as far as their willingness to embrace the author of the *Muqaddimah's* larger vision on how to secure credible knowledge. The latter as pointed out is not to be strictly provided by the senses but must also be open to extrasensory knowledge. There is growing evidence today that Ibn Khaldun's vision is more comprehensive and thus, better fit for the understanding of man and society.<sup>39</sup>

### The Study of Man as a Thinking Being or as an Animal

In the preceding pages we have drawn attention to some of the underlying causes behind the present crisis of the behavioral and the social sciences. We have indicated as well that *Ibn Khaldun's* general framework for the study of man and society appears to be more realistic than that of its modern Western counterpart. On the one hand, the author of the *Muqaddimah* adopts a social deterministic view as far as the explanation of social phenomena is concerned. But he has, on the other, an *epistemological outlook* of man which is profoundly different from that of the Western materialistic positivist mind. In the view of Ibn Khaldun, men resemble animals and differ from them at the same time. "All animals share with man his animality which is represented in his need for food, habitation, movement, etc. yet he is distinct from them. The latter allows him to secure his substance survival material through cooperation with others. It is also through his thought that man comes to accept the divine revelations brought by God's messengers and orient his behavior accordingly. In all that, man always uses his thinking and hardly could he cease to think."<sup>40</sup> For the author of the *Muqaddimah*, man is first of all a thinking being. His animality comes second in importance as far as his human identity is concerned. It is no exaggeration to state at this point that man's animality has become a central concept of Western specialists of the behavioral and social sciences since the publication of Darwin's theory on man's evolution.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Toward Arab Sociology* (collective work) (Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1986).

<sup>39</sup> The increasing criticism today addressed to Empiricism, Positivism, Social determinism, Materialist-Marxism etc. in the behavioral and the social sciences implies that there is an urgent need for those sciences to open up their perspectives and become interdisciplinary and multidimensional.

<sup>40</sup> *The Muqaddimah* (in Arabic) p. 429. The translation of the quotation is mine.

<sup>41</sup> Ch. Darwin. *The Origins of the Species* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984).

In our opinion, the understanding of today's crisis of the sciences of man and society must begin at this epistemological level which confuses the nature of man with that of the animal. A clear distinction between the two is bound to put true unique human nature back in its place. With that, the credibility of the behavioral and the social sciences can only improve. The widespread use of rats, pigeons, and monkeys in behavioral laboratory experimentations has become a scientific tradition particularly in psychology. The concepts, laws, theories, etc. . . . drawn from the results of these experiments are often generalized and applied sometimes literally to human behavior. In doing so, certain branches of the discipline of modern psychology, like behavioral psychology, tend to view the nature of man as practically no different from that of animals and birds. Given the same circumstances, man's behavior could only be expected to be identical to the behavior of pigeons, rats, and monkeys. In our view, this simplistic animal-man analogy represents an obvious epistemological distortion. When the very basic foundations of the theories, the predictions, and the explanations of individual as well as group behavior are established on false ground, their scientific credibility is bound to be considerably undermined. This situation would only harden the dimensions of the crisis of the sciences of man and society. Ibn Khaldun's assertion "that man is highly distinguished, from the other creatures, by his ability to think" is well supported by modern research in the domains of the physical anatomy of the brain as well as the thinking and the cognitive processes of the human mind. Neurologists have emphasized that man is privileged by the distinct organic nervous structure of his brain. Compared with the brains of non-human creatures, the human brain displays a more complex structure and it displays as well more diverse activities. For the French philosopher/sociologist Edgar Morin, the human brain is "*Une Machine hyper-complexe*."<sup>42</sup> As it has become established now in the neurological sciences, man's brain has a right and a left hemisphere. They are different and complementary at the same time. Their complementarity is complex in itself. It manifests at once cooperation and conflicts. Furthermore, Von Forester has described the human brain as a democratic organism. This implies that the human brain is complex in nature. It is far from being a totalitarian regime which unilaterally gives its orders, but rather it is a sort of federation of various regions where each one of them enjoys a degree of certain autonomy. The structure of the human brain, as referred to some of its features here, is the center of what is labelled as symbols by contemporary behavioral and social sciences. Man is strikingly distinguished by these symbols from other living creatures. Language, thought, religiosity, and cultural and social values

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<sup>42</sup>E. Morin, *La Methode 3: La Co11naissance de la Connaissance* (Paris: Le Seuil. 1986). pp. 85-114.

are distinct characteristics of human individuals and groups. In other words, the phenomenon of human culture in its socio-anthropological sense couldn't be plausible without the presence of that complex organic structure of the human brain.

Regardless of the nature of the definition of the concept of culture which we may refer to in references, books, and journals of modern behavioral and social sciences, we would find a general consensus among them concerning its definition. It is seen as that non-materialistic (symbolic, thoughtful, spiritual) dimension of man's entity. Written and spoken language, for instance, are important symbols which distinguish man's world from that of the other non-human living creatures. There is enough scientific evidence today which affirms that without the use of human language, the human brain would be unable to involve itself, particularly, in complex thought activities. Language appears, as well, to offer man the capacity to defy the constraints of man's short life span as determined by the imperatives of the biophysical existence of the human body. Language, in this sense, permits man to enjoy "some sort of eternity." Human ideas, human thought, human wisdom could not have survived the ages and secured an everlasting time, had there been no human languages. Furthermore, man's spiritual dimension appears to involve often his use of language. Man's usage of the word in his calling, praying to his God is found in all faiths and religions the world over and throughout human history. Thus, language is resorted to in religious context to activate and invigorate the pulse of man's spiritualism. Thus, there is on the one hand an intimate relationship between language as a cultural symbol, and the practice of man's spiritual rituals, on the other. Spiritualism is by definition the antithesis of man's materialistic side. Its role is to help man liberate himself from the constraints of this world and allow him to go beyond it to the non-destructible eternal world of human existence. Thus, human language empowers man to have the sacro-eternal experience. The latter is, no doubt, a very special characteristic of man, the thinking being as stated by Ibn Khaldun.<sup>43</sup> The process of thinking here has a wider meaning. It implies that mankind is capable of rational thinking, of cultural invention, of discovering scientific laws, of belonging to the spiritual world. Men and women, as thinking beings, are capable as well to choose between things and behavioral actions and with

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<sup>43</sup>In our opinion the understanding of the domain of man's symbols by contemporary scientists still suffers from their empirico-positivist bias. One can hardly encounter any reference to the *sacro-eternal* dimension of man's symbols in the enormous corpus of publications on the subject. Eternalizing man's voice, image, living acts through modern photo-audio-video techniques has not yet made the empirico-positivist scientists aware of how man's use of symbols (in written words, pictures, recorded voice, or filmed acts) permits him to experience a form of eternity, that is, an existence beyond his physical existence. *Symbols are man's soul. Their understanding is the key to the understanding of man.*



their will are inevitably subject to error and rightfulness in thought and judgment. Viewing humans as beings with a distinct process of thought in that wider sense gives them an entirely different image from that of humans who are identical or very similar to pigeons, rats, and monkeys. In our view, it is utterly unrealistic to expect the present crisis of the behavioral and the social sciences to take a turn for the better as long as the social scientists continue to ignore, in the study of humans, the dimension of thought as a profoundly distinct characteristic of them.<sup>44</sup> As spelled out before, Ibn Khaldun's assertion that a person is first of all a *thinking being* is a statement of everlasting credibility. The author of the *Muqaddimah's* striking perception and observations of the nature of mankind can't be understood with making reference to the social milieu in which he was born and had grown up. Ibn Khaldun was deeply influenced by the Islamic outlook both in his perception of mankind as a thinking being as well as in determining the very substance of the nature of human knowledge. His emphasis on mankind's distinction from animals by its developed and complex thought processes is in complete harmony with the image of human beings as found in the Qur'an. The Qur'anic verses which speak of thought as a distinguishing trait of humans are numerous. The verse: "verily we have honored the children of Adam. We carried them on the land and the sea, and have made provision of good things for them, and have preferred them above many of those whom we created with a marked preference."<sup>45</sup> This clearly refers to mankind's distinct capacity of thought. Consequently, in addressing human-kind the Qur'an has repeatedly called for the importance of thought and reflections: "Therewith causeth com to grow for you, and the olive and the date-palm and grapes and all kinds of fruit, Lo! Herein is indeed a portent for the people who reflect;"<sup>46</sup> "and He hath constrained the night and the day and the sun and the moon to be of service unto you, and the stars are made subservient by His command. Lo! Herein indeed are portents for people who have sense,"<sup>47</sup> "and whatsoever He hath created for you in the earth of diverse hues, Lo! *There is indeed a portent* for people who take heed,"<sup>48</sup> "Who has created seven heavens in harmony, thou (Muhammad) canst see no fault in the Beneficent One's creation; then look again: canst thou *see* any rifts? Then look again and yet again, thy sight will return unto thee weakened and made dim,"<sup>49</sup> "such as remember Allah, standing, sitting, and reclining, and consider the creation

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"Man's thought as one aspect of his symbols allows him to *eternalize* himself by his ideas which could become *sacred* for his followers.

<sup>44</sup>Surah XVa, verse 70.

••Surah XVI, verse 11.

.,Ibid., verse 12.

"Ibid., verse 13.

<sup>49</sup>Surah LXVII, verse 4.

of the heavens and the earth (and say): our Lord! thou createst not in vain . . .<sup>50</sup> In the Qur'an the call for thought and reflection is the privilege of man. This underscores sharply mankind's distinct thinking capacity as the radical divider between human beings and the remaining living creatures.

As far as the sources on which human knowledge must depend, Ibn Khaldun adopts an Islamic perspective in this regard. The use of the five senses as well as of that of human reasoning are the Islamic pillars for the establishment of credible human knowledge. As an authentic illustration of this, the Qur'an had practically avoided altogether to resort to the use of the philosophical approach in its arguments to prove the existence of the one God. Instead, it had invited the unbelievers to use their visual, hearing, and reasoning senses in their observable tangible world. "We shall show them our portents on the horizons and within themselves until it will be manifest unto them that it is the Truth,"<sup>51</sup> "and (also) in yourselves. Can ye then not see."<sup>52</sup> "(O mankind), follow not that whereof thou hast no knowledge. Lo! the hearing and the sight and the heart-of each of these it will be asked,"<sup>53</sup> "See ye not how Allah hath created seven heavens in harmony, and hath made the moon light therein, and made the sun a lamp?"<sup>54</sup>

These Qur'anic verses, like so many others, have called on man to commit himself for good to the use of his senses and reasoning in his pursuit of acquiring knowledge. That is indeed what the Moroccan thinker, Al-Jabri, has called the *burhani* (evidence) mind in the Arab-Muslim learned culture.<sup>55</sup> In other words, it is that mind which relies, in the development of its knowledge and science, on the observations and experiences made by his senses. Ibn Khaldun had certainly made great use of the *burhim'i* mind in his *Muqaddimah*. As such he was indeed the first historian and sociologist, in the entire human history of ideas, who wrote with scientific and analytical spirit about the dynamics of human societies and their history. The credibility of his writings in the *Muqaddimah* in particular has enjoyed high respect among ancient and contemporary scholars of various human civilizations.<sup>56</sup> From this perspective, we can easily assert that there is a great resemblance between the Khaldunian *burhim* mind, on the one hand, and the contemporary Western empirico-positivist mind, on the other. But the Muslim Khaldunian mind

<sup>50</sup>Surah III, verse 191.

<sup>51</sup>Surah XLI, verse 53.

<sup>52</sup>Surah LI, verse 21.

<sup>53</sup>Surah XVU, verse 36.

<sup>54</sup>Surah LXXI, verse 5 and 16

<sup>55</sup>M. Al-Jabri, *The Structure of the Arab Mind: Critique of the Arab Mind* (2) (in Arabic) (Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1986), See my review of his book in the *Arab Journal of the Social Sciences*, (Vol. 3. No. 1, April 1988), pp. 158-61.

<sup>56</sup>A.J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* *Vol* 3, (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 322.

differs radically from its Western counterpart on the second source of knowledge. While the author of the *Muqaddimah* believes in the existence of the world beyond our senses, the empirico-positivist mind rejects this categorically, as we have seen. The metaphysical world is hardly accessible to human senses and reasoning. Knowledge about it is to be sought in divine revelations according to Ibn Khaldun and other Muslim thinkers like Al-Ghazali.

Ibn Khaldun's mind stresses thus the importance of the cooperation between the sacred and man's acquired knowledge, a position which had been especially embraced by the thinkers of Arab Muslim civilization in its golden age. In Islam, the source of human knowledge is dualistic in nature: sacred-revealed and man-acquired knowledge. These two types of knowledge are referred to in Arabic as *naql* knowledge (knowledge whose basis is the Qur'an and the Hadith) and *aql* knowledge (knowledge whose basis is human reasoning). Within the Islamic perspective, these are seen as mutually complementary and not contradictory as the contemporary Western empirico-positivist mind tends to believe. These differences are the result of two different socio-historical realities, as pointed out earlier. On the one hand, the Islamic cultural environment has permitted throughout the ages different degrees of cooperation, solidarity, and co-existence between sacred revealed knowledge and reasoned man-made knowledge. While the history of Muslim civilization has rarely witnessed serious confrontations between the two, the history of Western civilization has known intense conflicts and tensions between them since the Renaissance in the 17th century. It is against this socio-historical background of greater Arab Muslim society and the greater contemporary Western society that we can understand that the cultural-historical circumstances in the former have been more favorable for the establishment of integrated sacred-revealed and reasoned man-made knowledge. Such a knowledge has obviously the advantage of enlarging man's scope of knowledge and, thus, liberating him from remaining entirely imprisoned in his narrow confined sensory world. Man's adoption of the *naql/aql* knowledge can only help him to extend himself beyond his senses and reach out to the infinite universe beyond. Muslim scholars and scientists' adoption of the importance of the concept of the sacred-revealed and reasoned man-made knowledge is a stand which can only reinforce their objectivity and motivate them to distance themselves from the pitfalls of prejudice and subjectivity. The Islamic perspective asserts that human knowledge is limited and incomplete: "they will ask thee concerning the Spirit. Say: the Spirit is by command of my Lord, and of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little"<sup>57</sup> . . . and over



every Lord of knowledge there is One more knowing"<sup>58</sup> does not disagree with the conclusions reached by the group of modern Western thinkers called the Philosophers of Science. Among the famous names are Karl Popper, Thomas Kuhn, Ivan Lakatos, and Paul Feyerband. According to them experimento-positivist knowledge is far from being able to establish unquestionable scientific generalizations. Mankind's thinking as well as perception don't qualify for claiming to have absolute correctness. All that they can hope for is to get near the truth but not having access to it all. Observation, as a favorite methodological basis of empirico-positivist sciences, is no longer considered foundational in the establishment of knowledge as it used to be in previous decades.<sup>59</sup> Hanson, for instance, rejects altogether the claim which stipulates that scientific theories are the outcome of objective observations. He believes that the scientist's own background, his theories, and his hypotheses influence considerably what he could observe. As such, there is no theory which has a neutral basis as assumed by the empirico-positivists. All this has led the philosophers of sciences to conclude that the empirico-positivist knowledge is ultimately *relative* in nature and consequently, far from being conclusive. This obviously implies that human scientific knowledge is bound to remain always subject to fault and error. Naturally, scientists are in search of the truth and they often think they have put their hands on it. But due to the doubt displayed by some from time to time concerning the credibility of their knowledge, they admit that their own supposed solid knowledge could be discovered to be false after all. Newton's physics had dominated the field for centuries. Then, it had backed away in light of Einstein's discovery of the law of relativity. Something similar is perhaps under way or is very plausible to take place in his physics in the near future as further discoveries in the subtleties of the world of physics will be made.

Thus, man-made knowledge based on reasoning, experimentation, and observation is far from being free from bias, shortsightedness, and limitation. It becomes, then, a sign of plain realism and modesty for humans to seek other sources of knowledge which are characterized, on the one hand, with high credibility, and which could serve, on the other, as a spiritual link that helps shorten the distance between man and this vast universe. Such an advocated attitude on the part of scholars and scientists is found throughout the pages of the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldun, the Muslim historian and

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<sup>58</sup>Surah XVII, verse 85.

<sup>59</sup>D.C. Philips, *Philosophy, Science and Social Inquiry* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1987), pp. 5-45 and H.W. Newton-Smith, *The Rationality of Science* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).

sociologist. He was convinced while writing his First Book<sup>60</sup> that he was making a scientific breakthrough in the historico-social sciences as manifested in *ʿIlm- ʿUmran*: (Sociology). In the establishment of the latter, Ibn Khaldun had successfully used the *burhani* mind. But at the same time he did not hesitate to make his confessions as to the limitations as well as to the narrowness of man-made knowledge and science. Indeed, the author of the *Muqaddimah* very often ends (as have Muslim scholars and scientists throughout the ages) the paragraphs and chapters of his *Muqaddimah* by stressing that the privilege of absolute certainty in knowledge and science belongs only to Allah. Ibn Khaldun, as we pointed out, suffered neither from internal tension nor from conflicts in his spectrum of knowledge. Man-made knowledge and sacro-revealed knowledge smoothly co-exist in the Khaldunian mind. This attitude of the author of the *Muqaddimah* toward these *two* types of knowledge is *typically Islamic* in nature. Islam, as a belief and a religious system, is based on the concept of the middle way (*al wasa(iyah)*: "Thus, we have appointed you a middle nation."<sup>61</sup> *Al-wasa(iyah* means that the scholar and the scientist must not side with either of the *two* sources of knowledge in question. Muslim scientists and scholars firmly believe that there ought not be any contradiction between sacred and man-made knowledge. Pragmatically speaking, the middle way attitude of Muslim scientists and scholars permits them to double check, so to speak, the credibility of the knowledge at hand. This is very crucial indeed particularly concerning the controversial social and moral issues. Alcohol drinking is an example. Nearly all modern available accumulated man-made knowledge on the subject demonstrates the negative affect of alcohol drinking on both the individual and collective society. Contemporary Muslim scholars and scientists double check this by consulting their sacred knowledge found in the Qur'an and the Hadith. The latter, as it is well known, forbid alcohol drinking.

As such, the Islamic perspective can't accept, on the one hand, the empirico-positivist knowledge perspective as being the only credible and final source of human knowledge. On the other, the Islamic knowledge perspective is not ready as well to adopt the thesis of the gnostic (the *'irfan*) mind as a solid basis for credible human knowledge, as claimed by the Muslim Sufis and other mystics.<sup>62</sup> Each of these two perspectives is viewed by the Islamic

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••fun Khaldun called his *Muqaddimah* The First Book to his entire Work of History, referred to as "Book of Lessons and Archives of Early and Subsequent History, Dealing With the Political Events Concerning the Arabs, Non-Arabs, Berbers and the Supreme Rulers, Who Were Contemporary With Them."

<sup>61</sup> Surah II, verse 143; see also the interview with the Egyptian thinker Zaki Najib Mahmud on the Arab mind and Arab thought in the journal of *Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi*, no. 114, 1988, pp. 123-127.

<sup>62</sup> M. Al-Jabri, *The Structure of the Arab Mind*, pp. 380-410.

approach as unbalanced as far as securing credible human knowledge is concerned. Cooperation and dialogue between man-made knowledge and the sacro-revealed knowledge constitute a firm middle way position which the Islamic vision considers as *the basis* for the establishment of a reliable and valid human knowledge. The adoption of this balanced attitude on the part of Muslim scholars and scientists would make them better predisposed than their Western empirico-positivist counterpart to receive and assimilate the ancient wisdom and science left by earlier human civilizations. The advocacy of "Middle Wayness" as the right stand in pursuit of more credible knowledge is recommendable. "Middle Wayness", by definition, permits the scholars and the scientists to embrace both sacro-revealed and man-made knowledge. Thus, credible objectivity has special criteria and meaning within the Islamic framework. Neither the contemporary Western empirico-positivist mind nor the gnostic mind is willing to endorse the synthesizing middle way mind which is adhered to by the typical Muslim scholar and scientist. Against this background, the ideal credibility of knowledge in the Islamic perspective is the result of a dialogue, debate, and complementarity between man-made and sacred knowledge. In this sense, human knowledge becomes more credible when it is the outcome of a dialogue between the earth and the sky.

مجلة



"The Contemporary Muslim"

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# A Zero Efficiency Loss Monopolist: An Islamic Perspective

*Boualem Bendjilali and Farid B. Taher*

## Abstract

In an Islamic environment, the behavior of a single seller is different from that of a pure monopolist. His ultimate objective is not to maximize profit but to please Allah. Profit is only one of his motives. Therefore, he is expected to be ready to sacrifice part of his profits for the social good if and when the social priorities so require. This brief study seeks first to formulate this problem in its deterministic setting and to derive the optimally necessary conditions. Second, it examines the case of a family of utilities of the Cobb-Douglas form.

## Introduction\*

The term monopoly has commonly been used in microeconomic literature to describe the market condition of a single seller (the only supplier) who behaves in such a way as to maximize profits. As a profit maximizer, the firm produces less and charges higher prices than would be the case under perfect competition. Such behavior by the profit maximizing firm has several adverse impacts: first, it imposes a social-welfare loss (or efficiency loss) by producing a  $P > MC$ ; second, it redistributes income from consumers to shareholders of the monopolist firm; third, it misallocates resources through the restriction of output. In addition, one may think of social costs of resources used by a monopolist firm for the protection and maintenance of its market power through nonprice competition practices, such as defensive advertising and non-necessary product differentiation.

In reality, the existence of such social costs calls for government

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interference through a set of alternative government pricing regulations. Unfortunately, however, government interference by itself destroys the market, and may generate an even greater efficiency loss to the society.

In an Islamic economy, monopoly as a market condition may prevail; in other words, the firm might be the only seller in the market. Nevertheless, the behavior of a Muslim firm is expected to differ from that of a non-Muslim monopolist because of the differences in their objectives. As a single seller, a Muslim producer is not expected to behave as a profit maximizer. The firm's decision-maker (manager, owner, shareholders) believes that restricting output in order to raise the price of a necessary good is a bad deed. According to the traditions of the Prophet (AAS), it is reported that he said:

"Whoever takes the advantage of a monopoly condition to raise the price to Muslims is a sinner,"

and that he also said:

"monopoly of food in Makkah is atheism."

In Islam, the utility function of an individual depends on the welfare of other members of the society. This distinctive characteristic was best described by the Prophet (AAS), when he said:

"Muslims in their mercy and compassion are among themselves like one body; if one organ is sick other organs would show symptoms of sickness, too."

Muslims also believe that they should earn righteously, and that trade transactions should be arranged on a fair basis. For Allah says:

"O ye who believe, eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities, but let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual goodwill, nor kill (or destroy) yourselves for Allah has been to you most Merciful." (4:29.)

Thus, a Muslim producer (single seller) is expected to be concerned about the welfare of the society, and therefore willing to partially sacrifice his or her own profits in order to avoid any loss in the welfare of the Muslim society in accordance with the preaching of the Messenger (AAS), as he said:

"Whoever is not concerned about Muslims' affairs is not a Muslim."



This behavioral approach of sacrificing profits for the benefit of society when it is needed has been mentioned by Siddiqi (10), who says:

"In an Islamic society behaviour of all economic agents is expected to be socially oriented, ready to sacrifice profits for the social good, if and when the social priorities so require."

This paper is an attempt to formulate the objective function of a single seller in an Islamic economy. The paper will also assess the welfare implications of the expected outcomes, in comparison with those of the conventional monopolist case.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 1 will briefly present the welfare loss associated with the profit maximizing monopolist, and will discuss the effectiveness of government intervention. Section 2, the main core of this study, provides the formulation of the suggested Islamic model and the derivation of the necessary optimal conditions with application to the class of Cobb-Douglas utility functions. Section 3 is devoted to the conclusion.

## 1. Profit Maximizing Monopolist

### Social Costs of Monopoly:

A pure monopolist in Figure (1) maximizes profit by producing ( $X_m$ ) (where  $MC = MR$ ), and charging ( $P_m$ ). However, if the monopolist in this market is replaced by a large number of perfectly competitive firms, assuming no changes in cost functions, the aggregate marginal cost curve  $M_c$  would coincide with the monopolist's ( $MC$ ) curve and would become the market supply curve  $M_s$ . Equilibrium would be attained at ( $X_J$  and ( $P_c$ ), which represent the society's efficient outcome because  $P_c = MC$  at this point.

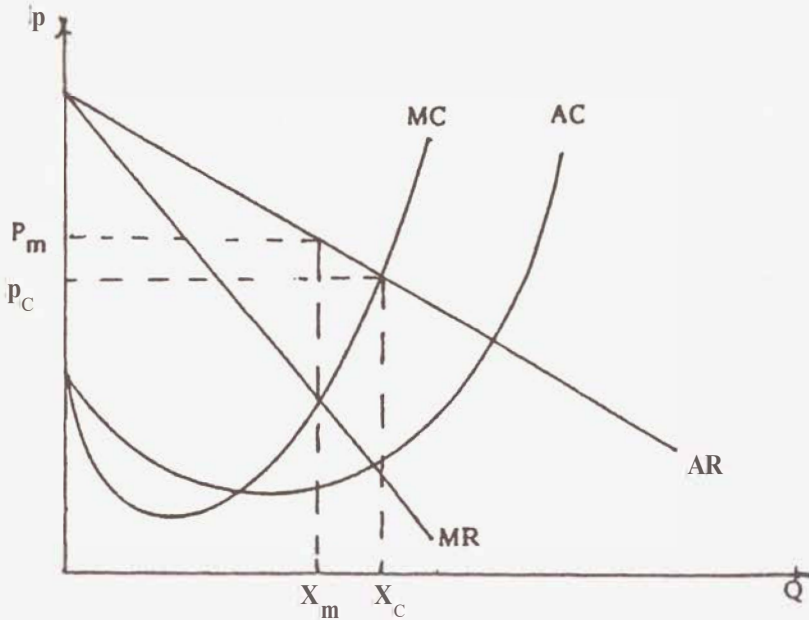


Fig. 1

The welfare cost of monopoly can be defined as the net gain in social welfare attainable by moving from  $(X_m, P_m)$  to  $(X_c, P_c)$ . Net gains may be measured by aggregating social benefits (area under the demand curve) and social costs (area under the marginal cost curve) between  $(X_m, P_m)$  and  $(X_c, P_c)$ , or the area  $Abe$ .

## Government Interference

Governments interfere in monopoly situations to protect the public interest by imposing regulated prices. Such prices are assumed to induce production by the monopolist who tries to compensate for the reduction in price by increasing sales.

Unfortunately, however, regulating a monopoly may not be feasible at all times. Government officials frequently lack precise information concerning demand and cost functions of the monopolist firm. Apart from the information problem, regulation can only be enforced at some real cost. While eliminating the inefficiency associated with monopoly, government intervention would lead to inefficiencies in resource allocations by drawing resources away from otherwise efficient uses. That is why government interference has always been regarded as second best.

In the Islamic economy, a single seller is expected to be concerned about the social welfare and therefore to be willing to partially sacrifice his profits in order to attain efficiency and minimize social welfare loss. Such behavior would lead to the best solution under monopoly conditions. This point is the focus of the following section.

## 2. The Model

### A. Assumptions

Let us assume a firm that produces a necessary good and assume that this firm is the only one in the market. Assume also that the firm is represented by its manager whose utility index depends on both profit and society's welfare. This dependence on profit and society's welfare in an Islamic environment comes from the fact that a Muslim economic agent has two main obligations: one toward self and family, and the second toward the society as a whole. Indeed, the Qur'an stresses the unity and caring among the individuals of the society. Moreover, the sayings of the Prophet (AAS) point out this dependence between the individual Muslim (e.g., the firm's manager) and the society as a whole. If we let  $W$  and  $\pi$  denote the society's welfare gain as shown in Section 1 and the firm's profits respectively, the entrepreneur's utility  $U$  can then be written as:

$$(1) \quad U = U(\pi, W)$$

However, one knows that the welfare gain  $W$  is a function of the firm's output  $Q$ . Therefore, equation (1) can be written as:

$$(2) \quad U = U(\pi, Q)$$

since  $W$  is a function of  $Q$ .

Let  $Q_{\max}$  and  $Q_e$  denote respectively the output levels corresponding to the maximum profit and the efficiency level of output, that is, to the quantity at which marginal cost equals price, as shown in Fig. 2.



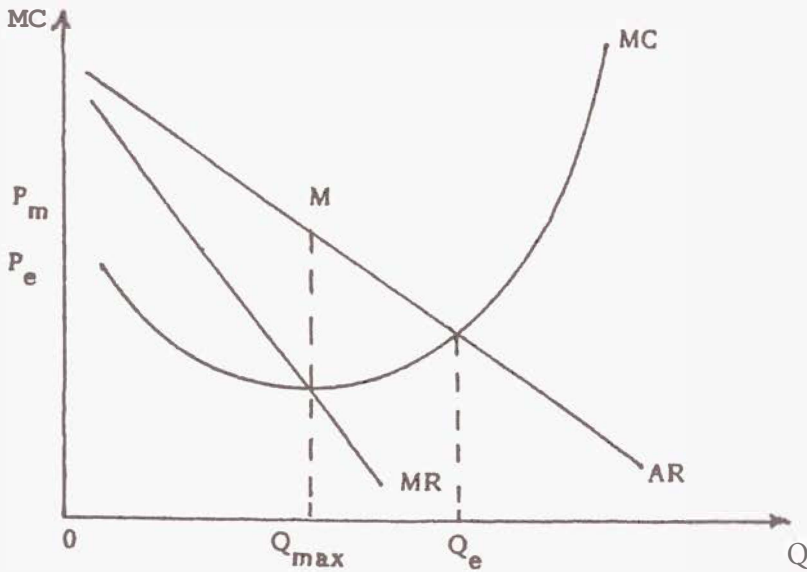


Fig. 2

In the case that the entrepreneur cares only about maximizing profit, he or she will produce at the level  $Q_{max}$  with a corresponding society's welfare loss equal to  $W_0$  where  $W_0$  has been defined in the first section. However, in the case that the entrepreneur cares about the society's welfare in addition to profit, the output produced will be between  $Q_{max}$  and  $Q_e$ . Indeed, the more the entrepreneur cares about the society's welfare the more he or she moves from the point M toward the efficiency point E. That is, the quantity produced moves from  $Q_{max}$  toward the level of output  $Q_e$ . At the efficiency point E, the society's welfare loss will be equal to zero.

The following properties of the entrepreneur's utility function  $U$  are assumed.

H.1 The marginal utilities of  $U$  with respect to both arguments are positive. In other words  $\frac{\partial U}{\partial \pi} > 0$  and  $\frac{\partial U}{\partial Q} > 0$ .

H.2 The second partial derivatives  $\frac{\partial^2 U}{\partial \pi^2}$  and  $\frac{\partial^2 U}{\partial Q^2}$  are negative.

H.3 The cross partial derivatives  $\frac{\partial^2 U}{\partial Q \partial \pi}$  and  $\frac{\partial^2 U}{\partial \pi \partial Q}$  are positive.

Assumptions H.1 and H.2 together mean that for a fixed level of output (for a fixed level of profit), the entrepreneur's utility function increases with a decreasing rate as profit (as output  $Q$ ) increases. Assumption H.3 indicates

that for a fixed level of profit (for fixed level of output), the entrepreneur's utility curve will rotate around the origins as a pivot as indicated in Fig. 3, as output increases (as profit increases).

In addition to the first three assumptions, we assume a given total cost function  $TC(Q)$  and a given total revenue function  $TR(Q)$ , Accordingly, we have a given profit function  $(Q)$ . The general objective function of the entrepreneur is to maximize the utility function subject to the profit-output transformation curve.

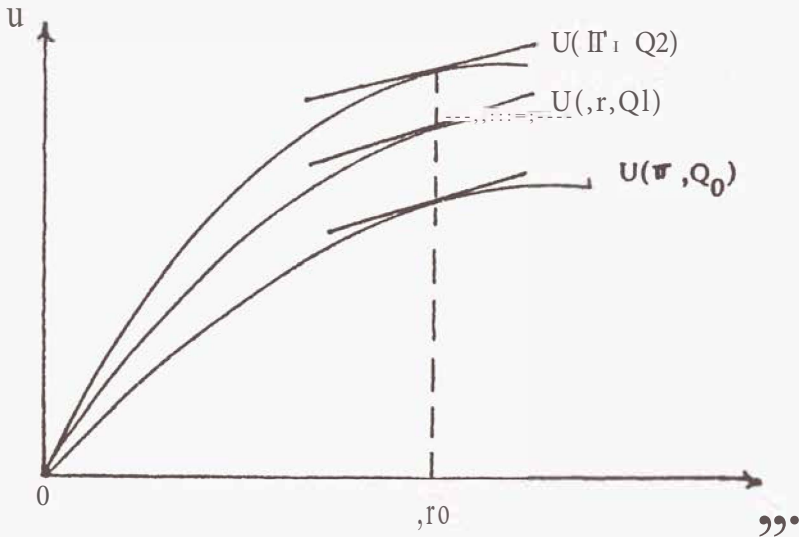


Fig. 3

Where  $Q_0 < Q_1 < Q_2$ .

The profit-output transformation curve can be written as:

$$(3) \quad \pi = TR(Q) - TC(Q)$$

where  $TR \cdot Q = p(Q) \cdot Q$

### B. Specific Formulation of the Decision Problem and Optimal Conditions

The utility maximization as perceived by the entrepreneur is:

$$(4) \quad \text{Max } U = \text{Max } U(\pi, Q) \quad \text{subject to}$$

$$\pi = TR(Q) - TC(Q)$$

The current-value Lagrangian is equal to:

$$(5) L = U(lr, Q) - A[lr - TR(Q) + TC(Q)]$$

The necessary conditions for maximizing the entrepreneur utility function are:

$$(6) \frac{\partial L}{\partial lr} = U_l - A = 0$$

$$(7) \frac{\partial L}{\partial Q} = U_Q - (MC - MR) = 0$$

$$(8) \frac{\partial L}{\partial A} = TR(Q) - TC(Q) - \Pi = 0$$

From equations (6) and (7) we get:

$$(9) -\frac{U_Q}{U_l} = MC - MR ; \quad A > 0$$

The left-hand side of equation (9) is the marginal rate of substitution between the level of output  $Q$  and the level of profit that is the  $MRS_{Q\Pi}$ . Namely, equation (9) can then be rewritten as:

$$(10) MRS_{Q\Pi} = MC - MR$$

and

$$(11) lr = TR(Q) - TC(Q)$$

Equations (10) and (11) represent the necessary conditions for maximization. We notice from equation (10) that in the case of  $MRS_{Qlr} = 0$ , this will imply that  $MC = MR$  and therefore we are in the case of a pure monopolist. On the other hand, in the case where  $Q = Q_e$  we have  $MC = p$  and hence the necessary condition (10) becomes:

$$MRS_{Qr} = p - p - p'Q = p'Q.$$

That is:

$$(12) MRS_{Qr} = - p'(Q) \cdot Q.$$

See Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 for more geometric clarifications. Therefore, in order for the firm to produce a level of output between  $Q_{-}$  and  $Q_{e}$ , the necessary condition becomes:

$$(13) 0 < MRS_{Qw} < - p'(Q) \cdot Q.$$



The current-value Lagrangian is equal to:

$$(5) \quad L = U(Ir, Q) - \lambda [Ir - TR(Q) + TC(Q)]$$

The necessary conditions for maximizing the entrepreneur utility function are:

$$(6) \quad \frac{\partial L}{\partial n} = U_n - \lambda = 0$$

$$(7) \quad \frac{\partial L}{\partial Q} = U_Q - (\lambda)(MC - MR) = 0$$

$$(8) \quad \frac{\partial L}{\partial \lambda} = TR(Q) - TC(Q) - n = 0$$

From equations (6) and (7) we get:

$$(9) \quad \frac{U_Q}{U_n} = MC - MR ; \quad t > 0$$

The left-hand side of equation (9) is the marginal rate of substitution between the level of output  $Q$  and the level of profit that is the  $MRS_{Qr}$ . Namely, equation (9) can then be rewritten as:

$$(10) \quad MRS_{Qr} = MC - MR$$

and

$$(11) \quad Ir = TR(Q) - TC(Q)$$

Equations (10) and (11) represent the necessary conditions for maximization. We notice from equation (10) that in the case of  $MRS_{Qr} = 0$ , this will imply that  $MC = MR$  and therefore we are in the case of a pure monopolist. On the other hand, in the case where  $Q = Q_c$ , we have  $MC = p$  and hence the necessary condition (10) becomes:

$$MRS_{Qr} = p - p - p'Q = -p'Q_c$$

That is:

$$(12) \quad MRS_{Qr} = -p'(Q_c) Q_c$$

See Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 for more geometric clarifications. Therefore, in order for the firm to produce a level of output between  $Q_{mu}$  and  $Q_c$ , the necessary condition becomes:

$$(13) \quad 0 < MRS_{Qr} < -p'(Q) Q_c$$

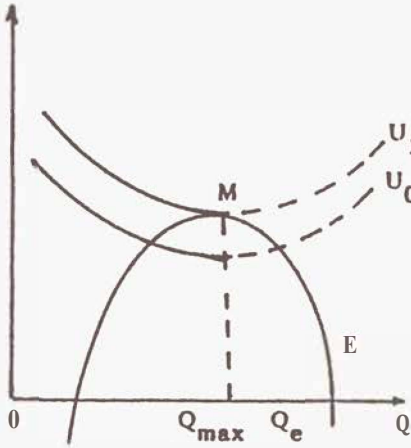


Fig. 4

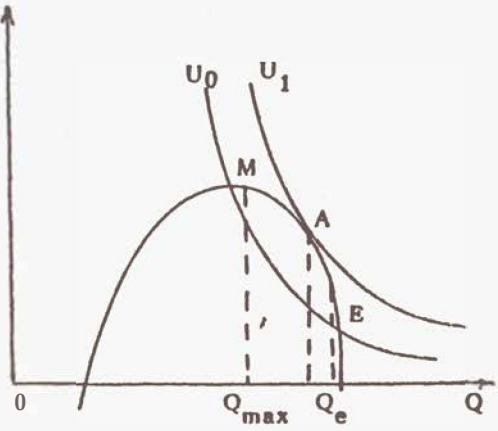


Fig. 5

Next, we would like to check the second order for maximization. By differentiating the first order conditions with respect to  $\lambda$  and  $Q$  we get:

$$A \cdot \begin{vmatrix} 0 & -1 & MR-MC \\ -1 & U_{\pi\pi} & U_{\pi Q} \\ MR-MC & U_{Q,\pi} & U_{QQ}^{-\lambda} (MC' - MR') \end{vmatrix}$$

where  $MC'$  and  $MR'$  denote the derivatives of the marginal cost and marginal revenue with respect to output  $Q$ . The second order conditions for maximization must satisfy  $A_1 < 0$  and  $A_2 > 0$  where:

$$\Delta_1 = \begin{vmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ -1 & U_{\pi\pi} \end{vmatrix} = -1 < 0$$

and after a simple computation we get:

$$I. 2 \cdot \dots (MC' - MR') - U_{QQ} - U_{Qn} (MR - MC) + (MR - MC) \frac{1 - u_{nQ}}{U_{nr}} (MR - MC)$$

$$2 = U_{\pi} (MC' - MR') - U_{QQ} - 2(MR - MC) \frac{U_{\pi Q}}{U_{\pi\pi}} - U_{\pi\pi} (MR - MC)^2$$

Using assumptions H1-H3 and the properties of the marginal revenue and marginal cost, we deduce that  $\dots_2$  is positive and hence the second order conditions are satisfied.

### C. Application to the Cobb-Douglas Class of Utilities

Let us next consider the class of utilities represented in the form of Cobb-Douglas. That is,

insert equation here

We notice first that  $MRS_{q,r} \neq 0$  since  $U_q \neq 0$ , since  $\beta > 0$  and  $r$  and  $q$  are strictly positive. Moreover,  $U$  is strictly quasi concave. This is easily shown by looking at the following minor determinants.

$$(14) \begin{vmatrix} 0 & a \frac{U}{\pi} & \frac{8}{q} \\ \frac{aU}{\pi} & a(a-1) \frac{U}{\pi^2} & \frac{a}{\pi} \frac{U}{q} \\ S \frac{U}{q} & \frac{a}{\pi} \frac{8U}{q} & \frac{8}{q^2} (8-1)U \end{vmatrix} = 8$$

Then the minors

$$(15) B_1 = - \frac{2}{\pi} < 0 \quad \text{and}$$

$$(16) a_1 = B_2 = \frac{8a^2 U^3 (a + S)}{R^2 q} > 0$$

We are interested in what follows in looking at the restrictions that must be imposed on  $a$  and  $\beta$  in order to get the level of output and level of profit



that maximize the utility function of the entrepreneur, other than the case of a pure monopolist. Given the total revenue and total cost function, let the profit function be given by:

$$\pi = pq - TC(q)$$

The problem becomes:

$$\max U = \pi \quad \text{subject to}$$

$$\pi = pq - TC(q)$$

The current value Lagrangian becomes:

$$(17) \quad L = \pi - \lambda [pq - TC(q)]$$

A simple computation gives the necessary conditions:

$$(18) \quad \text{MRS}_{q,n} = \frac{\partial \pi}{\partial q} = MC - MR$$

$$(19) \quad n \cdot pq - TC(q)$$

The second order conditions are derived from the following minors of the following Hessian.

Let

$$H \cdot \begin{vmatrix} 0 & -J & MR - MC \\ -1 & \frac{\partial^2 \pi}{\partial q^2} & \frac{\partial^2 \pi}{\partial q \partial n} \\ MR - MC & \frac{\partial^2 \pi}{\partial n \partial q} & \frac{\partial^2 \pi}{\partial n^2} \end{vmatrix}$$

We know from the first order conditions that we must have the following minors  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  as follows:

$$H_1 < 0 \text{ and } H_2 > 0$$

we get

$$H_1 = \begin{vmatrix} 0 & -J \\ -1 & \frac{a(a-1)U}{\pi^2} \end{vmatrix} \quad " -1 < 0$$

Moreover, using equation (18) we get by a simple computation

$$H_2 = U \left[ \frac{4\beta^2}{q} + \frac{\beta}{q} + \frac{a^2}{q} \right] + (MC' - MR')$$

we know that

$$MC' - MR' = \frac{\partial \pi}{\partial q} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{\partial \pi}{\partial q} = \frac{aU}{J}$$

Hence

$$(20) \quad MC' - MR' = \frac{\partial \pi}{\partial q}$$

Using this last information  $H_2$  becomes

$$(21) \quad H_2 = U \left[ \frac{a^2}{q} - \frac{4\beta^2}{q} + \frac{\beta}{q} \right] + \frac{aU}{q} (1-4a)$$

The second order conditions impose that  $H_2$  must be positive and hence, from equation (21) we must have  $(1-4a) > 0$ , that is,

$$(21) \quad 0 < a < 1/4$$

Equation (21) gives the optimal conditions that permit production between  $Q_{mu}$  and  $Q_e$ . In other words, the elasticity of the utility with respect to profit is restricted to be between 0 and 1/4 for the class of utilities of the Cobb-Douglas form, in order for the entrepreneur to maximize utility and produce an output between the quantity  $Q_{mu}$  corresponding to the level of output produced in the case of a pure monopolist and the efficient level of output.

### 3. Conclusion

In an Islamic economy, monopoly (single seller) as a market condition may prevail, however, the behavior of a Muslim is different from that of a non-Muslim, simply because their objectives and motives are different. A Muslim single seller is expected to sacrifice part of his profit (according to the degree of faith he possesses) for the benefit of the welfare of the poor and the needy of the society that is, for the benefit of the social welfare of the society. This paper has been an attempt toward achieving this goal. It formulated the objective function of a single seller in an Islamic economy. It also derived the necessary and sufficient optimality conditions for maximization. The last section examined the case of a family of utilities of the Cobb-Douglas form. This study has examined this problem in its deterministic setting as well as in its static form. Two potentially interesting issues that we do not address here are the possibility of examining this problem in its dynamic form and the other in its probabilistic approach. These two issues will be part of our future research.

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Review Article***Beyond the Post-Modem Mind\*****Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi'*

What can an accomplished Western theologian and philosopher offer to modern Islamic thought! Is there a need for the contemporary Muslim intelligentsia to learn from outside sources? And, if "a conscious and intellectual defence must be made of the Islamic tradition,"<sup>1</sup> does it mean that Muslims have to live in a state of mental inertia vis-a-vis the impressive Western tradition

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\*Huston Smith, *Beyond the Post-Modem Mind*. Updated and Revised Edition. New York: Crossroads, 1989.

<sup>1</sup>S. H. Nasr, *Islam and the Plight of Modem Man* (London, 1975), p. 148. Nasr's full statement on the matter reads as follows: "To conclude, it must be asserted categorically once again that to preserve Islam and Islamic civilization, a conscious and intellectual defence must be made of the Islamic tradition. Moreover, a thorough intellectual criticism must be made of the modern world and its shortcomings. Muslims cannot hope to follow the same path as the West without reaching the same impasse or an even worse one, because of the rapidity of the tempo of change today. The Muslim intelligentsia must face all the changes mentioned here, and many others, with confidence in themselves. They must cease to live in the state of a psychological and cultural sense of inferiority." Ibid. These broad statements of Nasr on the necessity of presenting Islam as a viable intellectual system form the basis of the Islamization of Knowledge Project that was initiated by the late Isma'il al Faniqi. Ziauddin Sardar summarizes the main drive behind this Project as follows: "The task before Muslim intelligentsia, then, is to develop, using the epistemology of Islam, alternative paradigms of knowledge for both natural and social sciences and to conceive and mold disciplines most relevant to the needs of contemporary Muslim societies. Only when distinctive Islamic paradigms and associated bodies of knowledge have evolved can Muslim scholars contemplate achieving synthesis on an appropriate footing with knowledge created by Western civilization." Ziauddin Sardar, *Islamic Features: The Shape of Ideas to Come* (London: Mansell, 1985), p. 104. Sardar, following in the footsteps of Nasr and al Fiirriqi, contends that a genuine Islamic theory of knowledge rests on two premises: 1) Concepts, epistemes, and paradigms should receive their "ideational" thrust from the main sources of Islam—namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah. 2) A contemporary Islamic theory of knowledge is unimaginable outside of the context of "cultural colonialism." This is best expressed by Sardar who maintains that: "The epistemology of Western civilization has now become a dominant mode of thought and inquiry to the exclusion of other, alternative ways of knowing. Hence, the totality of Muslim societies, indeed the planet as a whole, is being shaped in the image of Western man. This epistemological imperialism has deep roots going back over 300 years. Its origins lie in the beginnings of the European colonial adventure and the emergence of scientific rationality as the only legitimate method for understanding and controlling nature." Ibid., p. 86.

in philosophy, theology, and other humanistic and social sciences? Finally, what are the intellectual dangers of borrowing from a Western heritage which is diffuse in nature, and which is not free from ideology most of the time? Would we be accused of eclecticism and a lack of historicism?<sup>2</sup>

Undoubtedly, a major North African philosopher like Abdallah Laroui<sup>3</sup> would dismiss the whole theological project of Islam and Christianity, or even the whole theoretical enterprise of comparative religion, as irrelevant, ahistorical, anti-intellectual, reductionist, and obstructionist. The same attitude is shared by not a small number of Arab and Muslim social scientists who consider metaphysics a fading religious pastime that should have been driven away from the human mental endeavor long before Kant appeared on the scene. This orientation is sociologically developed by Bassam Tibi in his recent book entitled *The Crisis of Modern Islam: A Preindustrial Culture in the Scientific-Technological Age*, where he argues that the only viable approach to Islam in the modern world is the sociological method. Therefore, his aim is not to study the spiritual, philosophical, and social manifestations of Islam in today's world, but to understand it, "as it is incorporated into reality as a *fait social*-that is, a social fact."<sup>4</sup>

## Metaphysics and the Search for a Method in Religious Studies

Professor Huston Smith, who sees the validity of the argument that religion is a social fact, argues that the religious question is primarily metaphysical. Thus he offers a "synthetic construct" of religion: metaphysical and social. Put differently, Smith maintains that, transcendently speaking, religion is a priori and universal; whereas socially speaking, religion is subject to diversity and particularism. It is when we understand his "synthetic argument" that we begin to unravel his conceptual concerns: Smith is troubled by the modern philosophical assertion that truth is made and not found.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>In his controversial philosophical analysis of the predicament of the Arab intelligentsia, Abdallah Laroui argues that, "Arab intellectuals think according to *l'IM* rationales. Most of them profess the traditionalist rationale (salafi); the rest profess an eclecticism. Together, these tendencies succeed in abolishing the historical dimension. But if the intellectual erases history from his thought, can he erase it from reality? Of course not; history as past and present structure informs the present condition of the Arabs quite as much as it does that of their adversaries." A. Laroui, *The Crisis of the Arab Intelligentsia: Traditionalism or Historicism?* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. 153-54.

<sup>3</sup>A. Laroui, *L'ideologie arabe contemporaine* (Paris, 1967).

<sup>4</sup>B. Tibi, *The Crisis of Modern Islam: A Preindustrial Culture in the Scientific-Technological Age* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah press, 1988), p. xii.

<sup>5</sup>This notion is examined below.



What is, therefore, the real intention of the author behind writing such a book?<sup>6</sup> And what direction does he follow in justifying his goal? To start with, Smith's main goal is to show that though the Renaissance dealt a major blow to the religious quest, "religion" is still a philosophical issue. In that sense, the author's interpretation and criticism rest on the philosophical and theological tradition in which he places his arguments, so to elucidate the author's concepts, one must understand his intellectual framework. Smith is aware of the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the Enlightenment Project and its main architects, be they dead or alive. Smith considers contemporary analytical philosophy in Europe, as well as in the United States, heir to the Enlightenment Project. In addition to his awareness of the substantial "ideational" threat to theology from analytical philosophy, he is also concerned about the relevance of the religious factor to our social life. His discussion of religious malaise in society is premised on the rupture between religion and society in the secular world.

Smith discusses a significant motif in the modern Christian intellectual tradition: the compatibility of the scientific view of human nature with the Christian (religious) one. In that, he follows in the footsteps of Reinhold Niebuhr, who was ambivalent about the progress motif in Western societies. Niebuhr wrote that, "a further consequence of modern optimism is a philosophy of history expressed in the idea of progress. Either by a force immanent in

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\*This is a hermeneutical question which is developed by Hans-Georg Gadamer for the Christian tradition, and by Fazlur Rahman for the Islamic tradition. See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. Second, revised edition (New York: Crossroads, 1989), especially part II, and F. Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). Gadamer maintains that hermeneutics is necessary because "the literal meaning of Scripture . . . is not univocally intelligible in every place and at every moment." *Ibid.*, p. 175. But hermeneutics went through a number of structural transformations, especially in the modern period. In this regard, Gadamer notes that, "Hermeneutics had to rid itself one day of all its dogmatic limitations and become free to be itself, so that it could rise to the significance of a universal historical organon." *Ibid.*, p. 176. Rahman, on the other hand, maintains correctly that the sources of "Islamic intellectualism; namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah, have to be reinterpreted in light of modern conditions. The hermeneutical method defended by Rahman proposes a process of interpretation which "consists of a double movement, from the present situation to Qur'anic times, then back to the present. The Qur'an is the divine response, through the Prophet's mind, to the moral-social situation of the Prophet's Arabia, particularly to the problems of commercial Meccan society of his day." *Ibid.*, p. 5. Therefore, Rahman suggests a historical method of interpretation that takes the complex structure of the Qur'an, as well as the historical evolution of Islam, into consideration. For a discussion of Gadamer's hermeneutics see R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), especially chapter VII [pp. 315-6] where Rorty argues that truth is made and not found, and that hermeneutics is no longer interested in finding truth as much as it is interested in understanding the human sciences, i.e., philosophy, literary criticism, and religion.

nature itself, or by the gradual extension of rationality, or by the elimination of specific sources of evil, such as priesthoods, tyrannical government and class divisions in society, modern man expects to move toward some kind of perfect society. The idea of progress is composed of many elements. It is particularly important to consider one element of which modern culture is itself completely oblivious."<sup>7</sup>

As Smith argues throughout the book, the philosophers of the Renaissance believed firmly in the full possibilities of science. In a sense, they were optimistic about the present and future of mankind. They believed that science will solve man's eternal problems. Progress was the catchword of the 19th century as it was completely associated with industry, democracy and expansion. In other words, the mentality of the philosophers of science viewed the traditional biblical episteme as a hindrance to the potentialities of the human mind. To their mind, the Christian revelation was interpreted in a stagnant and debilitating manner, and it was time to break away from this

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<sup>7</sup>R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man. Volume I* (New York: Scribner's, 1964), p. 24. Niebuhr contends along the same lines of the main 18th and 19th century thinkers that progress is the main feature of the Renaissance. To better understand the historical context in which he places his argument, the following thoughts of Niebuhr are quoted: "The Renaissance as a spiritual movement is best understood as a tremendous affirmation of the limitless possibilities of human existence, and as a rediscovery of the sense of a meaningful history. This affirmation takes many forms, not all of which are equally consistent with the fundamental impulse of the movement. But there is enough consistency in the movement as a whole to justify the historian in placing in one historical category such diverse philosophical, religious and social movements as the early Italian Renaissance, Cartesian rationalism and the French enlightenment; as the liberal idea of progress and Marxist catastrophism; as sectarian perfectionism and secular utopianism. In all of these multifarious expressions there is a unifying principle. It is the impulse towards the fulfillment of life in history. The idea that life can be fulfilled without those reservations and qualifications which Biblical and Reformation thought make is derived from two different sources; from the classical confidence in human capacities and from the Biblical-Christian impulse towards sanctification and the fulfillment of life, more particularly the Biblical-eschatological hope of the fulfillment of history itself. R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man, Volume II*, p. 160.

On the notion of progress, see the following important works: J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress* (London, 1924); A. Comte, *Course de philosophie positive* (Paris, 1835-1852); M. Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique de l'esprit humain* (Paris, 1793); H. Spencer, *Illustrations of Universal Progress* (New York, 1881) F. Teggart, *The Idea of Progress* (Berkeley, 1949); A. J. Todd, *Theories of Social Progress* (New York, 1919). In his Introduction to the classical book on progress, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progres de l'esprit humain* [pp. 2-3], Condorcet says that "Ces observations, sur ce que l'homme a ete, sur ce qu'il est aujourd'hui, conduiront ensuite aux moyens d'assurer et d'accroître et d'accélérer les nouveaux progres que sa nature lui permet d'espérer encore. Tel est le but de l'ouvrage que j'ai entrepris, et dont le resultat sera de montrer, par le raisonnement et par les faits, que la nature n'a marqué aucun terme au perfectionnement des facultés humaines; que la perfectibilité, désormais independants de toute puissance qui voudrait les arrester, nont d'autre terme que la durée du globe OU la nature nous a jetés."

view to a much more mature one that was capable at emancipating the human mind from the shackles of external and past-oriented revelation.

Far from considering revelation a source of spiritual and historical rigidity and stagnation, Smith argues that the Transcendent is the only certain foundation on which man can build his future. In that sense, he agrees with Niebuhr that religion "interprets history from the standpoint of the eternal (i.e., since it sees the source and end of history beyond history), it gives the individual a place to stand within a world of meaning, even when and if the particular historical movement into which he is integrated should fail completely."<sup>8</sup>

Smith highlights what he calls "The Revolution in Western Thought" (pp. 3-16) in the first chapter of the book. He says that a deep-seated epistemological transformation has taken place in the Western world: "Quietly, irrevocably, something enormous has happened to Western man. His outlook on life and the world has changed so radically that in the perspective of history the twentieth century is likely to rank-with the fourth century, which witnessed the triumph of Christianity, and the seventeenth, which signaled the dawn of modern science-as one of the very few that have instigated genuinely new epochs in human thought. In this change, which is still in process, we of the current generation are playing a crucial but as yet not widely recognized part."<sup>9</sup> To put it simply, traditional metaphysics gave way to a new aggressive epistemology which is based on science and the deepening role of the human mind in the affairs of the universe. Smith says that, "no one who works in philosophy today can fail to realize that the sense of the cosmos has been shaken by an encyclopedic skepticism. The clearest evidence of this is the collapse of what historically has been philosophy's central discipline: objective metaphysics."<sup>10</sup> The scholastic argument about the revelation/reason polarity, which was an integral part of the intellectual environment of the medieval period and the early Renaissance, is no longer a significant issue today.<sup>11</sup> Human reason has occupied the center of all intellectual endeavor.

<sup>8</sup>R. Niebuhr, *ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>9</sup>H. Smith, *Beyond the Post-Modern Mind*; *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup>To better understand this issue from an Islamic perspective, consult the following: 1) Louis Gardet and M. M. Anawati, *Introduction à la rheologie musulmane* (Paris, 1948). 2) Ernest Renan, *Averroes et le schisme* (3rd ed., Paris, 1866). 3) Leon Gauthier, *La theorie d'Ibn Rochd (Averroes) sur les rapports de la religion et de la philosophie* (Paris, 1909). 4) Leon Gauthier, "Scolastique musulmane et scolastique chretienne"; *Revue d'histoire de la Philosophie*, II (1928). 5) A. J. Arberry, *Revelation and Reason in Islam* (New York, 1957). The same issue has been raised in both Judaism and Hinduism as well: A. Heschel, *God in Search of Man* (New York, 1965), and K. S. Murty, *Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedanta* (London, 1961).



The continuing rupture between revelation and reason since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution has produced a thoroughly secularized world. In this connection, an analytical distinction should be drawn between the West and Christianity. The modern West is the product of the process of secularization, whereas the chief assumptions of medieval Christianity are based on the following premises: "Reality is focused in a person, . . . the mechanics of the physical world exceed our comprehension, and . . . the way to our salvation lies not in conquering nature but in following the commandments which God has revealed to us."<sup>12</sup> Secularization has perpetuated an environment of alienation between man and God.

Smith maintains that a sense of fragmentation pervades the basic attitudes of Western man toward life and society: "I have argued that the distinctive feature of the contemporary mind as evidenced by frontier thinking in science, philosophy, theology and the arts is its acceptance of reality as unordered in any objective way that man's mind can discern."<sup>13</sup> Smith's response to the prevalent sense of epistemological and social fragmentation in the West is to call for the recovery of its historical and epistemological continuity with its past. The salient features of tradition are stability, focus, foundation, intention, and purpose. Therefore, Smith's intention is not to search for new foundations of knowledge as much as to reestablish the merits and relevance of the old ones. Thus his criticism of the post-modern mind involves a reaffirmation of a traditional language. He encourages us to look in the reservoir of our accumulated knowledge to find a viable solution to the predicament of modern man. As a consequence, he welcomes all human disciplines from epistemology to deconstruction and hermeneutics if they help us in excavating the deep layers of traditional meaning. He replaces the epistemic rupture, often discussed by Foucault, with a harmonious language and intention. In a sense, Smith is after finding a deep structure for our philosophical investigation.

## Smith's Concept of the Transcendent and Its Relevance to Modern Islamic Thought

Modern Islamic thought has preserved its internal integrity by stressing the importance of the transcendent in the secular environment. Two major modern Muslim thinkers come to mind: Jamal al-Din Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh. Their premises support the historical continuity and the modern

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usmith, *ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 16.



relevance of the traditional "transcendental" discourse and method. They stress "the Islamic model," which draws its theoretical orientation from both the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and which is inspired by the historical experience of the Prophet (AAS) and his companions.

In addition, the questions that Afghani and 'Abduh raised revolve mainly around doctrinal issues. From their side, the traditional Muslim intelligentsia contends that the doctrinal discourse concerns the purification of the fundamentals of religion. As Henri Laoust puts it: No doctrinal reform is possible without return to an original source. Therefore, the return to the just form of religion, and the affirmation of transcendent truth in a modern setting are the main preoccupations of modern Islamic thought.

The traditionalist language and method presuppose either a return to or a rejuvenation of past theological, philosophical, and cultural patterns. In that philosophical context, the Salafiyah movement was born. This movement sought to give birth to Islam in the modern world by re-embodiment of the early experience of Islam in the present. The concept of "history" a concept that has an immense and subtle philosophical meaning-is in fact peripheral to modern Salafiyah. As a result, the two basic declared positions of the Salafiyah-the return to an original and unadulterated Islam, and the opening of "the gate of reasoning"-are subject to many problems. Many representatives of the modern Salafiyah have approached religious problems outside of a new world context-a context in which industrialization, with its accessory problems, have strongly shaped the rise of new ideas and of socio-economic and political relations.

Contemporary Muslim intellectuals, therefore, find themselves face to face with a set of social and historical questions that await a theological answer. Muslim intellectuals remain faithful to their vision of past Muslim history-a vision based on the significant role revelation plays in the process of history. Muslim intellectuals, while reflecting on the traditional Islamic model, cannot seek refuge in isolation; they are required by revelation to participate in the making of present history. Consequently, it should be the task of Muslims, especially the educated ones, to be thoroughly acquainted with both their traditional sources of theology, philosophy, and history, and with the challenges of the modern world. In other words, Muslims have to transcend their sense of inferiority vis-a-vis the West, if there is any, by developing a new discourse that demonstrates complete comprehension of its history, culture, philosophy, and impact on the rest of the world. From this angle, Smith's book and method occupy a unique position since they orient us toward the epistemological mechanisms of the West and how they affect the religious phenomenon.

## Smith and the Enlightenment Project

One has to discuss the validity of Smith's argument in view of the philosophical project of the Enlightenment. The main goal of this project was to introduce a critical rational spirit into what were considered to be dull philosophical arguments of the medieval period. Smith is of the view that the premises of the Enlightenment are dead, but their consequences still survive with us today.<sup>14</sup> Two issues are relevant here: nihilism and progress. Smith argues that man need no longer be bound by a nihilistic attitude towards life because the death-of-God formula represents the spirit of a defunct era—the 19th century. The idea of progress, which was also the obsession of 19th century thinkers, has been weakened in the wake of the colossal consequences

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"J. Habermas comments on the rise of modernity in the West in the following manner: Hegel was the first philosopher to develop a clear concept of modernity. We have to go back to him if we want to understand the internal relationship between modernity and rationality, which, until Max Weber, remained self-evident and which today is being called into question. We have to get clear on the Hegelian concept of modernity to be able to judge whether the claim of those who base their analyses on other premise is legitimate." J. Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987), p. 4.

There is no doubt that Hegel [1770-1831] was a highly influential "idealistic" philosopher, and that his philosophy provided moral and intellectual legitimacy to German fascism, especially in this century. Hegel's systematic treatment of "objective universal reason" in his *Phenomenology of Mind*, and his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* reinforced the modern fascist notion that the *fahrer* was simply fulfilling the objectives of "universal reason," and that the individual members of society had to succumb to this reality. Hegel's political philosophy justified the Prussian state at the time as the only viable moral force in society. K. Popper has severely criticized the fascist elements in Hegelian philosophy: "Hegel rediscovered the Platonic ideas which lie behind the perennial revolt against freedom and reason. Hegelianism is the renaissance of tribalism. The historical significance of Hegel may be seen in the fact that he represents the 'missing link,' as it were, between Plato and the modern form of totalitarianism. Most of the modern totalitarians are quite unaware that their ideas can be traced back to Plato. But many know of their indebtedness to Hegel, and all of them have been brought up in the close atmosphere of Hegelianism. They have been taught to worship the state, history, and the nation." Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies: Volume 2* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 30-31. One proper connection could be made here between the views of Huston Smith, Jurgen Habermas, and Karl Popper. They all share the notion that modernity is still a dominant force in today's societies and that its roots are mainly philosophical, and that Hegel has been the single most influential philosopher in the modern period. Therefore, if the goal is to transcend modernity and postmodernity, one has also to transcend the moral and intellectual underpinnings of these social and political phenomena. For work on the social and political philosophy of Hegel, consult the following: M. B. Foster, *The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel* (Oxford, 1935); E. Weil, *Hegel et le rot* (Paris, 1950); A. Peperzak, *Le Jeune Hegel et la vision morale du monde* (The Hague, 1960). On Hegel's phenomenology, see the following important book: J. Hyppolite, *Geneses et structure de la Phenomenologie de l'Esprit de Hegel* (Paris, 1946).

of two world wars. The question is how to examine the premises and orientations of nihilism and progress in a world that is in need of a reformulation of its thought structure.

## Metaphysics and Historicism

What is historicism? And is it relevant to our philosophical debates? It is possible to argue that historicism is a critical and theoretical formulation, or a historical method which treats concepts, standards, and presuppositions in their historical context. For that purpose, historicism pursues "a complex reconstruction of the various intellectual expressions. Philosophical reflection, for the historicists, is no exception to these historical limitations. Consistently, historicism treats its own interests as bounded by interests, assumptions, and context."<sup>15</sup> In this sense, concepts and ideas cannot float in a vacuum; they must be discussed in a historical context.

Does Smith object to the above-mentioned formulation of historicism? He recognizes historical and social influences on religion. But, like Karl Popper, he would like to transcend the social and historical domain and investigate the metaphysical sources of knowledge. In that sense, his understanding of historicism is similar to the one presented by Popper: "I mean by 'historicism' an approach to the social sciences which assumes that historical prediction is their principal aim, and which assumes that this aim is attainable by discovering the 'rhythms' or the 'patterns; the 'laws' or the 'trends' that underlie the evolution of history."<sup>16</sup> There is no doubt that what Popper is attacking here is the epistemological foundation of Marxist historiography which, to his mind, makes false predictions about the future. My main concern, methodologically speaking, is to show that the sciences of metaphysics and history intertwined could perpetuate an ontological theoretical position which might help reintegrate man into both revelation and society at once.<sup>17</sup> A refutation of historicism as a social and historical

<sup>15</sup>R. D. Mico, *Historicism and Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p. xi

<sup>16</sup>K. Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (New York: Harper, 1957), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup>The following are major sources on historicism: D. Collins, *Renaissance Historicism: Selections from English literary Renaissance* (Amherst: Univ. of MA Press, 1987); F. Engel-Janosi, "The Growth of German Historicism," *Johns Hopkins University Studies in History and Political Science*, Series 62 (1944); E. Fackenheim, *Metaphysics and Hiswricity* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1961); G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1968); F. Hayek, "Scientism and the Study of Society: The Historicism of the Scientific Approach," in *The Counter-Revolution of Science* (1951); I. Johansson, *A Critique of Karl Popper's Methodology* (Oslo: Akameiforlaget, 1975); I. Lakatos, *The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes; Philosophical Papers*, Vol. I. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978); D. Lee and R. Beck, "The Meaning of "Historicism,"



method could simply mean a refutation of realism in religion and society, which I consider not to be the position of Huston Smith.

## Academia, Westernization, and the Third World

Chapter five, entitled "Flakes of Fire, Handful of Light: The Humanities as Uncontrolled Experiment" (pp. 114-32), is perhaps his most challenging section of the book. Smith proposes that the crisis of the humanities as an academic and intellectual phenomenon is pervasive, and the critical predilections of the Western mind have produced widespread dissatisfaction and alienation. Smith defines the humanities as the custodians of the human image, an image which, from a monotheistic point of view, is created in the fashion of God. The humanities carry two burdens: social and conceptual. Their social goal should be to facilitate the social interaction between man and man and man and God. Instead, advanced industrial societies are marked by a spiritual malaise which is the main cause of today's alienation. Alienation could be simply defined as the loss of vitality in man. Niebuhr, for instance, defines vitality as the ability of man to transcend his limiting physical and cultural environment by achieving a measure of unity with the divine. Alienation as the loss of vitality can be both internal and external. Internally, it manifests itself as a rupture—a split between man's mind and spirit. Externally, it is part and parcel of the loneliness and estrangement that characterizes the overpopulated modern world.

The conceptual aim of the humanities should be to introduce the student to a holistic, humanistic view of life. The academic division of labor, however, has made this task in recent years difficult. What Smith is tackling behind all of this is the impact of modernization on the Western mind. He certainly believes that this impact has been deep and negative. However, what he neglects to discuss meaningfully is the impact of Western modernization on the primordial traditions of the Third World.

Any cursory reading of the historical consequences of Europe's industrialization since the 16th century could reveal two facts: first, the triumph

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*American Historical Review*, V. 59 (1953-54), 568-77; M. Mandelbaum, *The Problem of Historical Knowledge* (New York: Liveright Publishing, 1938); H. Marcuse, "Karl Popper and the Problem of Historical Laws," in his *Studies in Critical Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 191-208; H. Marcuse, *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987); K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies. 2 Volumes*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962); K. Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism*; P. Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975); D. Roberts, *Benedetto Croce and the Uses of Historicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); R. D'Amico, *Historicism and Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 1989).



of the scientific mentality of the Renaissance, and second, the rupture this triumph produced between tradition and modernity. One could argue that the impact of Western modernization on Third World religions and cultures has been destructive mainly because of the political stagnation of many Third World societies in the period preceding Western penetration. At the conceptual level, there is a pervasive dichotomy between traditional concepts and newly-imported concepts. Furthermore, this dichotomy has given rise to a widespread social rupture. Take, for example, the nature and the function of the intelligentsia in the Muslim world. Some take the Islamic revelation and the Muslim intellectual achievement throughout the ages as their point of reference; others neglect that total tradition and claim that the intellectual achievements of Muslims in the past are incompatible with the demands and conditions of the present.

The solution that Smith gives to the "conceptual chaos" of today's world is ontological-epistemological. A thinker should be able to erect the conceptual foundations of a discipline epistemologically, and should, at the same time, share in the creative process ontologically. Detached/engaged duality should characterize the modern builders of systems of thought. The following quotation from Tillich could succinctly summarize Smith's methodology: "epistemology, the knowledge of knowing, is a part of ontology, the knowledge of being, for knowing is an event within the totality of events. Every epistemological assertion is implicitly ontological. Therefore, it is more adequate to begin an analysis of existence with the question of being rather than with the problem of knowledge."<sup>18</sup> Smith argues implicitly that the problem of the West is its

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<sup>18</sup>P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Volume I* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 71. Paul Tillich (1883-1965) is an eminent theologian of this century. Though his writing was mainly intended for a Western Christian audience, the educated Muslim cannot afford to miss two significant features about Tillich's inquiry into theological and philosophical questions: method and information. Tillich's method, which is distinguished by a superb clarity of style and analytical ingenuity, sums up the achievements of one of the greatest minds of our century. Description, interpretation, and systemization of knowledge, as well as the addition of historical and philosophical insights weave his methodological approach into a passionate and rich synthesis of arguments and concepts. It is no exaggeration to state that the intellectual vitality a reader might derive from reading Tillich's various works could generate essential ideas about the different disciplines of human knowledge-philosophy, theology, history, anthropology, and sociology. The following are important sources on Tillich's theology and philosophy: J. L. Adams, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science and Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1956); D. M. Brown, *Ultimate Concern: Tillich in Dialogue* (New York: Harper and Row, 1950). M. Eliade, "Paul Tillich and the History of Religionist *The Future of Religions*, Paul Tillich (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 31-36; I. Fagre, "Revelation and the Thought of Paul Tillich: A Study of Tillich's Concept of Revelation in Volume I of his Systematic Theology," *Theological Journal of Japan Lutheran Theological College*, No. 2 (1967), pp. 44-; R. E. Fitch, "The Social Philosophy of Paul Tillich," *Religion in Life*, Vol. 11 (Spring 1958), pp. 247-56; J. Gill, "Paul Tillich's Religious Epistemology,"

divorce of epistemology from ontology, and that the proper reconstruction of the essential connection between being and knowledge entails a holistic approach that begins with the question of transcendence. Smith, however, fails to work out a thorough reconstruction of theology as an a priori foundation of the human and social sciences. In other words, he keeps referring to transcendence as the root of human knowledge without paying sufficient attention to revelation, which is the cornerstone of the three monotheistic religions.

## Philosophy and the Role of the Theologian

As an engaged philosopher, H. Smith is disturbed by what he calls the crisis in Western philosophy (chapter 6). He says that the practitioners of philosophy in the West seem to have lost their ultimate point of reference. Philosophical systems appear, and others collapse. What accounts for the mess in Western philosophy? Smith identifies the situation as follows: "Philosophy . . . seems to be a singular mess, one evidence being the number of influential philosophers who see no future for the discipline, or at most a minimal one."<sup>19</sup>

Philosophers do not play the same leading role in modern culture as in the past, especially when philosophy and theology were allies. Smith states correctly that "philosophers were the ones who were qualified to monitor the conceptual foundations of culture's components, validating where appropriate, debunking where not."<sup>20</sup> He calls for the reintegration of philosophical assumptions in a holistic system of knowledge that includes the social sciences, as well as the humanities.

Smith is, however, not quite explicit about the future relationship between

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*Religious Studies*, Vol. 3 (April, 1968), pp. 477-98; D. H. Kelsey, *The Fabric of Paul Tillich's Theology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); W. Leibrecht, ed., *Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Paul Tillich* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959); B. Martin, "Paul Tillich and Judaism," *Judaism*, Vol. 15 (Spring 1966), pp. 180-88; A. J. McKelway, *The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich* (New York: Dell, 1967); H. Meynell, "Tillich's Theological Method; *The New Theology and Modern Theologians* (London: H. Meynell, 1967), pp. 137-56; R. S. Misra, "Concept of Reason in the Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich," *Religion and Society* (Bangalore/India), vol. 13 no. 2, (1964), pp. 15-33; R. P. Scharlemann, "Scope of Systematics: An Analysis of Tillich's Two Systems," *Journal of Religion*, Vol. 48 (April 1968), pp. 136-9; H. Veatch, "Tillich's Distinction Between Metaphysics and Theology; *Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 10(3), March 1957, pp. 529-33; and D. Weisser, ed., *Paul Tillich in Catholic Thought* (New York: Doubleday, 1969).

<sup>19</sup>Smith, *ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 138.

philosophy and theology. Tillich, for instance, in discussing the connection between philosophy and theology, inquires about the nature of both. He says that "philosophy and theology ask the question of being. But they ask it from different perspectives. Philosophy deals with the structure of being in itself; theology deals with the meaning of being for us."<sup>21</sup>

Smith is at his best as a theologian. Not only is he aware of theological and philosophical trends; he is also conscious of the value of social science contributions to religion. In this sense, he shares the concerns of many anthropologists and sociologists of religion such as C. Geertz,<sup>22</sup> E. Gellner,<sup>23</sup> B. Wilson,<sup>24</sup> P. Berger,<sup>25</sup> and their teachers E. Durkheim<sup>26</sup> and M. Weber.<sup>27</sup> Two main assumptions about the religious phenomenon characterize the work of these people, including Smith's: First, instead of diminishing in importance as a result of the encroachment of science and technology, religion has become highly differentiated and functional. Second, religion is responsible for the ultimate meaning in human life. For instance, in his celebrated essay on "Religion as a Cultural System," Clifford Geertz defines religion in the following

<sup>21</sup>P. Tillich, *ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>22</sup>See the following books by C. Geertz: *The Religion of Java* (New York: Free Press, 1960); *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (Stanford: Yale University Press, 1968); *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988). In his *Works and Lives*, Geertz reflects on the art of writing. Here he tries to develop a style of writing that is reflective of the power of ideas, which are, in turn, derived from all the fields of the human intellectual endeavor: philosophy, sociology, anthropology, history, political science, literature, and even mathematics. Geertz draws a distinction between authors and writers. The former are founders of systems of knowledge, whereas the latter are producers of books. This distinction is particularly important in the case of Muslim writers since many of them are producers of books and not authors of systems of knowledge.

<sup>23</sup>See the following works by Ernest Gellner: *Culture, Identity, and Politics* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1987), and his edited work titled, *Islamic Dilemmas: Reformers, Nationalists and Industrialization: The Southern Shore of the Mediterranean* (Berlin, 1985).

<sup>24</sup>See the following works by the British sociologist Bryan Wilson: *Contemporary Transformations of Religion* (Oxford University Press, 1976); *Magic and the Millennium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements* (New York: Harper, 1973); and "The Return of the Sacred," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 18(3), September 1979, pp. 268-80.

<sup>25</sup>See the following works by Peter Berger: *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Doubleday, 1969); *A Rumor of Angels* (New York: Doubleday, 1973); *The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness* (New York: Random House, 1973).

<sup>26</sup>See the following works by E. Durkheim: *Les Regles de la methode sociologique* (Paris, 1895) (*The Rules of Sociological Method* Glencoe, 1950); *Les Formes elementaires de la vie religieuse* (Pa.Ti. 1912) (*The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, London, 1915); *Sociologie et Philosophie* (Paris, 1924).

<sup>27</sup>See the following works by Max Weber: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner, 1958), and *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964).



terms: "religion is: (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in man by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods of motivations seem uniquely realistic."<sup>28</sup> To Smith religion cannot be ignored because, "[it] has been revolutionary and conservative, prophetic and priestly, catalyst and incubus. It creates barriers and levels them, raises church budgets and raises the oppressed, makes peace with inequity and redeems, to some extent, the world."<sup>29</sup> Religion has even prospered in the context of secularization:

As societies grew more complex, 'differentiation' set in, with religious and secular institutions assuming different functions. Indeed religious and worldly components of the individual psyche came to be differentiated. But this process, which some might call secularization, does not necessarily mean that religion is becoming less significant. In a world of specialists, religious specialists may be as credible as any other. Indeed, the fact that religion is increasingly individualized, and in a pluralistic world a matter of individual choice, serves to make it more important to an individual as such than when it was a more or less automatic part of tribal life. Further, religion's moral influence on seemingly secular institutions such as business and politics in a nation with a religious heritage may be indirect, but cannot be discounted."<sup>30</sup>

Therefore, religion is both socially relevant and metaphysically based. In a sense, Smith agrees with William James, one of the main architects of modern pragmatism in American philosophy, that religion is not only transcendent and abstract but pragmatic and socially useful.<sup>31</sup>

Smith's main point of reference is the metaphysical and historical experiment of monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Consequently, he presents religion as a two-dimensional relationship: The first is the subjective relation between God and man and the second is the social one between man and man. In this connection, *Smith* says: "Religion began in the individual's direct relationship with the transhistorical and ultimate-God by whatsoever name. From this inviolate starting point and continuing center, it has proceeded to shoulder, successively, concern for

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<sup>28</sup>C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*; *ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>29</sup>Smith, *ibid.*, p. 185.

JoR. Ellwood, Jr., "Modern Religion as Folk Religion," in *Modernity and Religion*, edited by W. Nicholls (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University, 1987), pp. 23-24.

<sup>31</sup>See William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (London: Longmans, 1913), especially Chapter VIII, pp. 273-301.

interpersonal relations and society's institutions and structures. To live up to its calling, it must now add to these agendas, concern for other species and life's sustaining environment."<sup>32</sup>

Smith argues that the epistemological foundations of the modern West have blocked out truth. He defines the Western mindset as "an epistemology that aims relentlessly at control, and thereby rules out the possibility of transcendence in principle."<sup>33</sup> As a result, this mindset is reductionist, mainly because it does not conceive of the world as an *a priori* creation of the transcendent power. Smith defines reductionism as an attempt to explain all phenomena by means of matter. According to Smith, the modern Western mindset presents the following assumptions: first, history can be controlled. Second, happiness can be bestowed. Third, truth is instrumental, or as Rorty has put it, truth is made and is not found. Though Smith does not expect the Western mindset "to collapse in the way an avalanche of snow periodically slides off a roof,"<sup>34</sup> he suggests a new way of life to be based on participation, intuitive discernment, transcendence, and fulfillment. In short, Smith searches for social engagement on the basis of transcendence. As a result, it is possible to describe Smith's method of analysis as that of philosophical theology.

From the foregoing, we can conclude that Smith's conception of human nature rests on the society/transcendence polarity. In other words, man (1) is the product of culture, and (2) is a spirit that possesses the ability to transcend. As a product of culture, man makes tools - both physical and conceptual - that connect him with reality. In other words, meaning and inner direction (*telos*) is at the center of man's existence. We can summarize Smith's discussion of the monotheistic view of man in the following epistemological manner:

- 1) God is transcendent and He is the Source.
- 2) God is not only reason, but vitality and the source of all existence.
- 3) Everything outside of God is contingent upon God-the world, animals, and man.
- 4) Man is finite in both body and spirit-a) dualism in unity, and b) man is made in the image of God. Therefore, we have to understand man from the vantage point of God and not reason.
- 5) Man is distinguished by his rational ability-by his ability to make conceptual tools, and his capacity to transcend himself.

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"Smith, *ibid.*, p. 193.

III *ibid.*, p. 200.

"*Ibid.*, p. 227.

- 6) Man is distinguished by self-consciousness.
- 7) God revealed himself in history. It is historical self-disclosure in the form of Christ. This is where history centers. Human history derives meaning from these revelations.
- 8) Man is a unity of will-it is altogether the will of God.
- 9) Man's essence is free self-determination, but man is a sinner and his sin is the wrong use of his will which leads to destruction. Sin is a priori and universal.

Opposed to the aforementioned view of man is the modern view which was born in the wake of the Renaissance. The Renaissance premises rested on the unlimited innate ability of man to rationally transcend the human predicament. The Renaissance as a collective ideological and social phenomenon was responsible for the annihilation of preindustrial social structures, and especially the intellectual underpinnings of these structures. The traditional ambiance of harmony between man and nature was no longer viable after the eruption of the Renaissance.

One implicit assumption that Smith provides throughout his discussion is the necessity of human engagement as an alternative to the crisis of orientation and spiritual malaise in Western societies. A key concept in elucidating "engagement" is ontology, which is simply defined as the science of being. The term "being" means the whole of human reality: the structure, the meaning, and the aim of existence. In that sense, the ontological elements can be classified in the following terms:

1) Vitality and Form. Vitality is equated with dynamics. Man's essential substance, which according to Smith is spiritual, is dynamic. In the Christian sense, this dynamism reaches out beyond nature and society because of man's capacity for transcendence. This transcendence is conditioned by man's will which, ideally speaking, should be derived from God's. Man's dynamic interaction with reality is a complex process that leads to continuous self-growth and self-consciousness. Man is distinguished from animals by consciousness. In addition to dynamics and form, man is distinguished by vitality and intentionality. Intentionality presupposes an inner aim (telos), and telos is the source of social dynamics and growth. Intentionality is defined as a human capacity to relate to meaningful structures, live in universals, grasp and shape reality. In other words, man is distinguished by his ability to create technical as well as conceptual tools that relate him to reality in its inclusive sense.

2) Freedom and Destiny. This is the second important polarity in human existence. Theologically speaking, freedom is as important to man as reason. Freedom presupposes the idea of responsibility, and responsibility presupposes destiny. Freedom is the freedom of the function or will of man. He is free



to function because he possesses a complete rational self. Freedom is experienced as deliberation, decision, and responsibility. These three elements of freedom constitute man's destiny. Destiny has two constitutive elements: social and transcendental.

3) Individualization and Participation. Man is distinguished by telos, the inner aim, which is the basis of his process of actualization. Christianity has granted man, every man, the possibility of participation in the will of God. Therefore, participation is essential for the individual, and not accidental. This participation guarantees the relational aspect of human life: man is related to God and to other beings.<sup>35</sup>

## Beyond the Postmodern Mind?

What is the condition of postmodernity? Smith comments on this by saying that: "Whereas in the past people argued and battled over which view of reality was true, the Postmodern position is that none are true."<sup>36</sup> In short, postmodernity argues that there are multiple realities that are not necessarily related. Postmodernism emerged both as "an academic movement" and as a political movement. Smith discusses theoretical holism as well as practical holism: "Theoretical holism argues for the organic character of thought: concepts cannot be understood in isolation; their meaning derives from the theoretical systems in which they are embedded. Practical holism goes on from there to argue that, because thinking invariably proceeds in social contexts and against a backdrop of social practices, meaning derives from-roots down into and draws its life from - those backgrounds and contexts."<sup>37</sup>

It is clear that modern and postmodern writers and thinkers<sup>38</sup> have

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<sup>35</sup>For a more comprehensive statement on the meaning of social existence and the sources of vitality in man's life, consult the second volume of Paul Tillich's *Systematic Theology* mentioned earlier.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 233-34.

<sup>38</sup>The following is a select bibliography on the meaning and history of modernism in both the West and Islam:

1) Modernity and Western Thought: P. Ackroyd, *Notes For a New Culture: An Essay on Modernism* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1976); B. Andrew (ed.), *The Problems of Modernity: Adorno and Benjamin* (New York: Routledge, 1989); C. Baudouin, *The Myth of Modernity* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1950); O. Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); P. Berger, *Facing up to Modernity* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); M. Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982); R. Bernstein, *Habermas on Modernity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985); J. Collins, *Uncommon Cultures: Popular Culture and Post-modernism* (New York: Routledge, 1989); H. Foster, (ed.), *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend Washington: Bay Press, 1983); D. Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity: Theories of*

confronted and tried to deal with the overwhelming sense of fragmentation and chaotic change that accompanied the Industrial Revolution. This is the reaction of such people as Luther, Marx, Nietzsche, Hegel, Goethe, Eliot, and Dostoevski. All these writers left behind them grand theories about life and society. Hegel, for instance, was a grand theoretician who saw life in a total, comprehensive way. His embracing vision came in response to fragmentation. In a sense, Hegel wanted to find meaning in totality. But many modern writers have noticed or recognized that the only secure thing about modernity is its insecurity; it is in a state of flux all the time. This state of flux is what defines the main nature of postmodernity. There are even more rapid changes now than before. In this sense, we could say that postmodernity is the continuation of modernity.

The project of modernity is centered around the machine; whereas the project of postmodernity is centered around the computer. The project of modernity created formalism in art and rationalism in philosophy. It tried to create a new language, so to speak. Because of its ability to mass produce, the age of modernity obliterated the distinction between high culture and low culture.

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*Modernity in the Works of Simmel, Kracauer, and Benjamin* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985); S. Gablik, *Has Modernism Failed?* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1984); C. Grana, *Modernity and Its Discontents: French Society and the French Man of Letters in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967); R. Gray, *The Imperative of Modernity: An Intellectual Biography of Ortega y Gasset* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); A. Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Post-Modernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); F. Jameson, "Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review*, Number 146, July-August 1984, pp. 53-94; A. Kaplan, *Rocking Around the Clock: Music Television, Postmodernism, and Consumer Culture* (New York: Methuen, 1987); D. Kolb, *The Critique of Pure Modernity: Hegel, Heidegger and After* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986); Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Post-Modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); S. A. McKnight, *Sacralizing the Secular: The Renaissance Origins of Modernity* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1989); A. Megill, *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); W. Nicholls (ed.), *Modernity and Religion* (Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1987); T. Reiss, *The Discourse of Modernism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982); A. Ross (ed.), *Universal Abandon? The Politics of Post-modernism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988); and G. Vattimo, *The End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Postmodern Culture* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

In *Modernity and Modern Islamic Thought*: C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933); Adonis (Illi Ahmad Sa'id), *al-Ihabit wal Mutalunwvil*, 3 volumes (Beirut: Dar al-'Aldah, 1974-1979); J. Ahmad, *The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960); M. Arkoun, *La Pensée arabe* (Paris: Vrin, 1975); M. Arkoun, *Essai sur la pensée islamique* (Paris: Vrin, 1973); Binder, L., *Islamic Liberalism: Critique of Development Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). See the following critical review of this book by the author: Ibrahim

Modernity had to confront the psychological, technical, sociological, and political problems of massive urbanization. It was the art of cities. In modernity, both poor and rich moved into the cities. In postmodernity, the rich were the first to escape from the cities. The urban poor, homelessness, and social poverty are the salient features of the age of postmodernity.

As mentioned above, the idea of progress was one of the most distinguishing features of the project of modernity. Nihilism, on the other hand, ushered us into the age of postmodernity. As a philosophical movement, nihilism is simply translated as the loss of a spiritual center.

How did modernity deal with disaster? We know that the idea of progress in the West was responsible for the immense devastation that resulted from two world wars. I think that modernity, in an attempt to defend itself, resorted

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M. Abu-Rabi', "Is Liberalism in the Muslim Middle East Viable? A Critical Essay on Leonard Binder's Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies," *Hamdard Islamicus* Vol. XII (4), Winter 1989, pp. 15-30; C. Bouamarne, *la Probleme de la libeHe huñ ine dans la pensee musulmtme* (Paris: Vrin, 1978); H. Djait, *La personolite er le devenir arobo-islamique* (Paris: Vrin, 1974); H. Gibb, *Modem Trends in Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947); Y. Haddad, *Contemporary Islam and the Chal.lenge ofHistory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982); H. Hanafi, *The Origin of Modem Conservatism and Islamic Fundamentalism in Egypt* (Amsterdam, 1979); H. Hanafi, "Des Ideologies Modemistes à l'Islam Revolutionnaire," *Peuples Mediterraneens* 21, October-December, 1982; A. Hourani, *Arabic lIwught in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970); T. Husayn, *The Future of Culture in Egypt* (Cairo, 1936); M. Ijarah, *Tayyariit al-fikr al-is/iim fi'l 'ülam al- arabi al-Jadi.th* (Principles of Progress As Viewed by Muslim Thinkers in the Modem Arab World) (Beirut, 1970); M. Lahbabi, *Le personalisme musulman* (Paris: Vrin, 1962); M. Lahbabi, *Le monde de demain: Le 7iers-monde accuse* (Casablanca: Sherbrooke, 1980); H. Laoust, "Le Reformisme orthodoxe des "Salafiyya," et Jes caracteres generaux de son organisation actuelle," *Revue des Etudes Islamiques* VI: 175-224 (1932); A. Laroui, *I lam et modemite* (Paris: Editions La Decouverte, 1987); S. Mahmassani, "Muslims: Decadence and Renaissance-Adaptation of Islamic Jurisprudence to Modem Social Needs," *The Muslim Rbrld* XLIV: 186-201 (1954); Z. Mahmud, *Tajdid al-fikr al-arabi*, (Renewal of Arabic Thought) (Beirut: Dar al-Shuriiq, 1971); R. Martin (ed.), *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985); R. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* (London: Oxford University) Press, 1969).

F. Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); F. Rahman, "Roots of Islamic Neo-Fundamentalism," in *Change and the Muslim Uorld*, edited by P. Stoddard (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1981); E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1978); H. Sharabi, *Arab Intellectuals and the West: The Formative li>ars, 1{75-1914* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970); J. Waardenburg, *LIslam dans le miroir de l'Occident* (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1963); and A. Zein, "Beyond Ideology and Theology: The Search for the Anthropology ofIslam," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 6, 1Q77: 224-54.



to mythology: the fight against fascism in both Germany and Italy was depicted as a fight to defend Western democracy and civilization. There is no doubt that both fascism and democracy were the product of modernity. The same occurred in Vietnam: The myth was to defend democracy. How can one do that when the devastating effects of modern advanced technology were unleashed against a peasant culture? This is still the major preoccupation of postmodern American movies.

In order to better illustrate the main features of modernism, postmodernism, and beyond postmodernism, I have constructed the following schematic table:<sup>39</sup>

### *Modernism*

art object/finished work  
 centralization  
 class struggle  
 construction  
 culture  
 family-orientation  
 form  
 hermeneutics  
 hierarchy  
 high culture  
 histoire  
 industrial  
 interpretation/reading  
 paranoia  
 patriarchy  
 power  
 presence  
 progress  
 purpose  
 revolt  
 narrative/grande histoire  
 state power  
 theory  
 religion

### *Postmodernism*

process, performance  
 decentralization  
 gender and ethnic struggle  
 deconstruction  
 subculture(s)  
 social separatedness  
 antiform  
 nihilism  
 anarchy  
 low culture  
 post-histoire  
 post-industrial  
 against inter./misreading  
 schizophrenia  
 women's liberation  
 multiplicity of power  
 absence  
 devastation  
 play  
 uprising(s)  
 anti-narrative/petit histoire  
 corporate power  
 paradigm  
 sects

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<sup>39</sup> I am indebted for the idea behind this table and some of its contents to Ihab Hassan. *n, e Postmodern Turn: Essays in Postmodern Theory and Culture* (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 1987), p. 91.

### Third world

#### *Modernism*

colonization  
 modernization  
 Westernization  
 stagnation of tradition  
 traditional culture

#### *Postmodernism*

nation-state  
 open-door policy  
 Americanization  
 tradition vs. modernity  
 liberalism

It is to be noted that one of the most significant features of "beyond postmodernism" is the resurgence of religion in both industrial and peasant societies. This phenomenon has clearly dominated the Islamic discourse, at least in the past two decades. Consequently, we can assume that Smith's call for transcending the post-modern mind is actually a call for return to the origins, or return to the pre-modern and traditional structure of thought and behavior.

### Conclusions

Huston Smith treats the religious quest as a universal spiritual phenomenon that has both objective historical form and a personal/mystical subjective form. Though his analysis does not dwell on Islam as a major religious phenomenon,<sup>40</sup> he understands its sources of vitality—both spiritual and historical. Moreover, Muslim intellectuals can learn from his treatment of the meaning, nature, orientation, and the role of religion in complex societies.

Smith's approach is asociological, though he is not against a sociological interpretation of religion. One needs to elaborate such major themes as society, human existence, and human intentions as a means of understanding the connection between the sacred and the secular.

Just like the German thinker Paul Tillich, Smith is on the boundary between philosophy and theology.<sup>41</sup> He uses philosophical concepts as a means

<sup>40</sup>He does, however, have a chapter on Islam in his book *The Religions of Man*, to be reissued in 1991 as *The Great Religions*.

<sup>41</sup>See P. Tillich, *On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch* (New York: Scribner, 1966). Tillich maintains that "anyone standing on the boundary between theology and philosophy must necessarily develop a clear conception of the logical relationship between them. . . . I answered by classifying all of the methodological disciplines as sciences of thinking, being, and culture; by maintaining that the foundation of the whole system of sciences is the philosophy of meaning; by defining metaphysics as the attempt to express the Unconditioned in terms of rational symbols, and by defining theology as theonomous metaphysics. In this way I attempted to win a place for theology within the totality of human knowledge." (Ibid, p. 55). In his

Book Review

***Towards Understanding the Qur'an***  
***Translation of Mawlānā Tajhīm al-Qur'an***

By Zafar Ishaq Ansari. Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1988/1408 (Vol. 1), 1989/1409 (Vol. 2)

Sayyid Abul Khā Mawdiid's multi-volume *Tajhīm al-Qur'an* is a major Qur'an commentary of the twentieth century. Written over a period of about thirty years, the work runs the gamut of Qur'anic- and Islamic-thought and doctrine, and is the *magnum opus* of a writer called by Wilfred Cantwell Smith "the most systematic thinker of modern Islam." As such, *Tajhīm* is an important work. An English translation exists, but clearly there was a need for a new translation, and that is what Zafar Ishaq Ansari attempts to provide in *Towards Understanding the Qur'an*, of which two volumes, covering the first six *surahs* of the Qur'an, have so far been published.

Ansari's translation may be called "authorized" in that it was the author's wish that Ansari render *Tajhīm* into English. The translation reads quite well. Being intimately familiar with Mawdiid's style, and being a writer of repute in his own right, Ansari has done a good job of rendering *Tajhīm* into English. Besides possessing a high degree of readability, the work has other notable features. The translator has furnished complete documentation for the quotations in the original work, including all *ahadith*, and, while retaining and translating the highly useful subject index of the Urdu original, has added a glossary of terms, biographical notes, a bibliography, and a general index. On occasions, alternative interpretations, offered by other scholars, are noted (e.g. of the object pronoun in *ya'rifanahu* in the Qur'an, 2:146 [*Towards Understanding the Qur'an*, 1:125], or of *alladhina yakhafana* in 5:23 [*ibid.*, 2:151, n. 45]), the reasons for the use of certain Islamic terms by Mawdiid (e.g. "caliphate" for pre-Islamic kingships, etc. [2:153]) are given, and terms and expressions which an Urdu reader would understand because of his particular cultural background are explained for the English reader. The amount of such notes and explanations seems to increase in Volume 2.

A few problems may be noted. Here and there certain portions of the original text are not translated. From the author's Preface and Introduction especially, several paragraphs have been left out. While every attempt is made to convey the general meaning of the parts omitted, the omissions in some cases are not indicated. Unlike the Biographical Notes, the Glossary of Terms, found in each volume, is not meant to be cumulative. There are, however, some repetitions in the Glossary of Vol. 2 (e.g. *Ahl al-Dhimmah*, Din, Hadith,



Hajj, *Il-rūm*, and *Jihiliyah*), and a few entries which one would expect to find in the Glossary of Vol. 1 (e.g. *ahl al-kitaab* and *fi sabil Allah*) are found in the Glossary of Vol. 2. Also, certain important terms (e.g. *mulkam* and *mutashibih* [see Q. 3:7]) are missing from the Glossary.

These problems aside, *Towards Understanding the Qur'an* is a noteworthy achievement. Zafar Ishaq Ansari should be complimented on making the principal work of Mawdiidi accessible to English readers. In the West, Mawdiidi as a thinker has received increasing attention in the recent past. This translation, which is likely to reach a large audience, should enable Western scholars to make a closer study of Mawdiidi's thought and ideas than has hitherto been possible. The volumes are attractively printed. One certainly hopes that Ansari will make translation of *Tajhim* his first priority, and that a complete translation of *Tajhim* will become available in a relatively short period of time.

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### Book Review

#### *Conversion to Islam Untouchables' Strategy for Protest in India*

By Abdul Malik Mujahid. Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1989

Many Indians were taken by surprise, anger, and dismay by several thousand South Indian untouchables when they converted to Islam in 1981-82. Hindu chauvinists violently reacted and formed the Vishva Hindu Prishad which later occupied the famous mosque built by the first Mughul ruler of India, Babur. Since then many attempts have been made to analyze the causes of the mass conversion which still continues, although not in large numbers. Abdul Malik's book carefully examines the regional and local causes as well as the consequences of this mass conversion to Islam. Malik explains the elements of the complex social matrix in which the untouchables used conversion as a "conscious and articulate protest" against a cruel and unjust caste system. This unique study provides a thorough sociological perspective that deepens our understanding of more than 200 million untouchables of India.

Malik explains, in the first chapter, the methodological and theoretical basis as well as the framework of his study. He raises relevant questions

that have been answered in the latter part of the book, questions such as: Why did the untouchables resort to the extreme measure of conversion? Were the conversions isolated cases or were they part of a long-term strategy? Why was Islam as a religion chosen? Malik suggests that the main variables in the process of conversion were the untouchables' "aggressive and assertive behavior." While developing his own thesis, Malik carefully examines similar studies by political sociologists such as Feierbend, Gurr, Grimshaw, Niebuhr and others. He critically evaluates their work and draws meaningful similarities. Yet he establishes a more comprehensive framework by redefining many terms such as violence and psychological violence in the context of the untouchables' conversion to Islam.

The second, third, and fourth chapters provide a detailed understanding of the caste system that is the core of Indian politics, the economic, social, political, and cultural milieu of the untouchables, the pervasiveness of untouchability in the Indian society, the nature of violence against the untouchables, and the helplessness of the untouchables in dealing with the political power that is embedded in the caste hierarchy of the social system in India.

Chapters five, six, seven, and eight basically answer the question: Why did the untouchables convert to Islam? These chapters provide a description of the Tamil villages, the leadership structure of untouchables in these villages and the leaders' perception of various government policies and actions towards untouchables, different ways of converting to Islam, a detailed study of Tamil Muslims, their economic, social, educational, and political status, and the impact of the Tamil-based Dravidian movement, against the caste-oriented Brahministic society, on the social awareness process of untouchables. Chapter eight looks into the factors that persuaded or motivated untouchables to choose Islam as their new way of life instead of Christianity or Buddhism.

In chapter nine Malik focuses on the much talked about "Arab Connection" and the impact of petro-dollars on conversion. While accepting that possibilities existed, Malik refutes the allegations based on his interviews and survey of the new converts. There are many interesting insights to this question that Malik brings forth. A new convert himself put it bluntly, "Why don't they purchase us back to Hinduism if we are on sale."

Chapter ten looks into the reactions, responses, and furor that the conversion generated in the Indian socio-political environment. In the last chapter Malik turns back to the theoretical discussion that he initiated in the first chapter. He examines the strengths and shortcomings of the main thesis of the historians and social scientists who have studied the spread of Islam in India. Although he was able to establish that all the theses (Coercion thesis, Reward thesis, and Social Mobility thesis) cannot properly explain the micro-level events such as the process of conversion, Malik remains one

step short of clearly presenting his own thesis, which one could read between the lines, but which deserved to be treated separately. There are few instances where one could disagree with Malik's observations or conclusions, such as his assertion that he "does not consider the conversions studied to be necessarily caused by a change of heart" (p. 8). Chapter ten, which deals with Hindu revivalism, could have been further expanded to seek the roots of Hindu chauvinism that have caused unrest, rebellion, and protests among not only the untouchables, but also on a substantially significant level among the Sikhs, Jharkhands of the Bihar, the Naxalites, the Assamese, and the Indian Muslims.

There is no doubt that Abdul Malik Mujahid has produced a very timely study that deserves the attention of scholars who are interested in understanding the socio-political matrix of the so-called largest democracy of the world. The book also contains three very useful appendices on 1) the studies of social stratification among Indian Muslims; 2) Ambedkar's conversion as a mild protest; and 3) women in the conversion process.

It would be fitting to conclude this review with the concluding remarks, from the foreword, by Lloyd and Susane Rudolph:

This searching book makes a major contribution to scholarship about religion and society. By carefully examining the local and regional causes and the national consequences of ex-untouchables' conversion to Islam in South India, the author has deepened our understanding of the beliefs and actions associated with the pursuit of social justice and equality in India.

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Book Review***Religion and Political Power***

*By Gustavo Benavides and M.W. Daly (ed.). NY: State University of New York Press, 1989, 240 pp.*

The upheaval in contemporary world politics reveals a renewed interest in religion; similarly, the current anarchy in religious thought and institutions often demonstrates a not-so-subtle interest in politics. Hence, for political scientists, among others, new studies of religion and politics are always welcome. Except for two essays in this volume, all were presented in 1986 at a seminar on "Religion and Nationalism," held under the auspices of the National Endowment for the Humanities at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The two essays mentioned, those of Alexandre Benningsen and Stephen Feuchtwang (who did not attend the seminar) were commissioned separately.

The editors of this collection are Gustavo Benavides, a lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies at Villanova University; and M. W. Daly, an assistant professor in the Department of History at Memphis State University.

The broad-ranging seminar explored the role played by religion in the emergence of the political life of modern states. From India and Sri Lanka to the Islamic Republic of Iran, to the resurgence of religious fundamentalism in the United States and its persistence in Israel, the participants discussed the many forms that the tension between religion and the modern state assumes. However, the thematic thread running through most of the discussions proved to be something more general than the state itself, although it is the state in which it is now manifested. That theme is the exercise of political power; more precisely, the exercise of political power in a context that mobilizes religious representations.

This volume, then, examines the interaction between two of the most charged topics in the modern world: religion and politics. It shows the inextricable connection between religious attitudes and responsibilities and political activities.

Following an introductory chapter which explores the religious articulations of political power, the authors examine the role played by religion in the current political situation in several countries. Approaching these cases as anthropologists, historians, sociologists, and political scientists, the authors make visible the dialectical relationship between religion and the pursuit of political power. On the one hand, they demonstrate the political significance

of religious choices and, on the other, the almost unavoidable need to articulate in religious terms a group's attempt to acquire, maintain, or expand political power.

The eleven subsequent essays look into the issue of religion and politics in India, Sri Lanka, China, the Soviet Union, the Sudan, Iran, Israel, the United States, Mexico, and Peru. These are indeed diverse countries when it comes to religion and politics. In terms of religions, the book covers Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. The underlying similarity in all these essays is the use of the method of sociology of religion to elucidate the relevance of the past to the present and to explain the traditionalization of modernity in an age of ideology.

In addition to the essays, the book contains pertinent notes and an index. All in all, the work may be seen as a religious articulation of power. Hans Morgenthau, the celebrated author of *Politics Among Nations*, first wrote in 1948 that politics "is a struggle for power." Probably unwittingly, one of the editors of the present study pushed the Morgenthau concept of power further when he said, in the first essay: "Power is a tension between interests, ideologies, classes, or individuals, and is always defended and contested, using all the weapons- physical and ideological at the group's disposal" (p. 1). The book, however, essentially ignores the present religious controversies surrounding the concept of power. It may be that the complexities arising from an analysis of the doctrinalization of religion made it difficult to tell the complete story about religions so numerous and so diverse in a compressed format. Nevertheless, the present work will stimulate both discussion and debate about the place of religion in our society.

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*Conferences, Seminars, and Addresses*

## Islamic Perspectives on the Question of History

*Taha Jabir Al-iLwiini*

Here at the outset, I should like to emphasize to my esteemed brothers and sisters that my knowledge of the study of history as an element in the contemporary social sciences is very limited. Yet, by making this admission before you, perhaps I can make my excuses early for asking too many questions, or for putting into words some of the major difficulties I have with this subject, and perhaps others have as well.

Indeed, when we think of this important branch of knowledge a number of issues immediately come to mind. Perhaps among the most significant of these issues are the following:

1. What is the overall meaning of human history? What is its legitimate subject? What are its contents?
2. Is there any way to connect, historically, the remarkable abundance of diverse and multiplex events experienced by humankind all over the globe? How are trends to be explained, in the light of logical, rational relationships that transcend the time and place of their occurrence, as well as the special limitations of peoples and societies? And, is there any way to translate what is gained from these events into laws and principles that may be applied to the present, or that may afford a glimpse into the future, or that may explain the meaning of good and evil?
3. Is it reasonable for us to think of human history as a logical, ordered process by means of which humankind proceeds from its beginning to its end? If so, was the master plan conceived from without? Or does it come about from history itself? Furthermore, is all this beyond the reach of man himself,



- so that he is unable to influence it? Or is the process, in fact, a part of his free will, of his conscious choice?
4. What is good? And what is evil? What are they to be measured by? What is their source? What does human will have to do with them? What is the role of humans in the occurrence of either one of them? What are the ways and means of realizing the good, and containing evil? What are the outside forces that work on these? Are they actual forces, imaginary forces, or supposed forces? And what is there to prove what kind they really are?
  5. What is evolution? And what is progress? What governs these things? And is progress the true objective of all history? How did the idea of progress arise? Is it possible to measure progress in terms of the progress and development of one society? And one people? Or may a judgment be made on the basis of analogy drawn with humanity in general?
  6. What is time? What is the reality of the past, present, and future? In consideration of what factors is it decided that a certain period of time is the past? And that another is the present? And that another is to be the future? And which of these periods is more deserving of receiving the appellation, "history"? Then, if all of these are entered into the logbook of history, can history or the historian enter other events and call them, implicitly, neither historical nor human? And does the intellectual ambit of the historian extend to the subject of what may occur?
  7. Is it possible to count or to observe the events of history, from the earliest times of man on earth? If we were to imagine this possible, would it be within our ability to find reliable academic sources that could verify what happened, and explain the ages of history? How may we overcome the plurality of historical truth? And the variety of its subjects? And the variance within it as it touches upon different societies and civilizations?

These are questions that must arise when one ponders over history, or speaks of it. Often, scholars of history are beset with these questions in the hope that they may define for contemporary man the reality of human history, and explain to him its meaning, and the significance of human will in the way it unfolds. These questions explain the contribution to history made by sacrifices endured by humans through the ages, the values and issues served by those sacrifices, and the objectives in the direction explain history is flowing.

These are questions that many of those concerned with the philosophy of history have attempted to answer. So Hegel and Kant, and Marx and Engels attempted to provide answers in the same way as Augustine before them, who tried to explain history in theological terms. It is not my intention to burden your ears here with an account of their explanations, theories, beliefs, or interpretations. Those, of course, are the grist, the rudiments of your specializations.

I would, however, like to draw your attention to what might be called the summary of the philosophical thinking undertaken by those individuals, which is that the meaning of history for all of them is very nearly "constant development along the way of constant progress toward a supposed goal for humanity."

Furthermore, they are all agreed that this definition is essential for any interpretation of historical movements, or of momentous historical events in the life of humankind, or for the purpose of setting for humanity any kind of meaningful objectives.

The theologian scholars of history link events of good and evil in human history with the will of God, and with His plan, and with the degree to which the deeds of mankind conform to that plan. Marx linked those events with the means of production. Others link them to human perfection, in an attempt to distance themselves from the standpoint of the theologian so as not to be thought "non-academic," or secular.

Indeed, the pervasiveness of Western thought and culture in today's world, and the folding of all other cultures in upon themselves, including Islamic culture, has made the sources for the answers to all these questions these very same Western philosophies-philosophies that represent a part of the philosophies of progress that appeared following the Enlightenment and that are considered on the whole, especially those dealing with history, to be secular readings of old theological problems.

Still, these philosophies, both the religious and the profane, have all been confronted, and continue to be confronted, by sharp criticism from within the same Western schools of historical thought. Nonetheless, the contemporary Westerner, in accordance with his custom to race toward pragmatism whenever he is unable to produce either a rational or a satisfactory academic alternative, finds solace in differentiating between reality and perceived reality, historical or otherwise. In this he intends either neutrality or self-deception before others, in order to escape the logical consequences of the answers he gives to the kind of questions that cannot be answered without reference to concepts like development, change, progress, growth, and becoming-concepts which he attempted to formulate in accordance with what he saw and chose, concepts to which he gave whatever meaning he pleased.

Western thought, as it watches the collapse of Marxism all over the world,

is now attempting to bury its head in the sand so as not to witness the logical conclusion of the philosophies to which it gave the stamp of academic authority and universality when such philosophies neither deserved nor earned. Now its attempt is to shield itself behind the balance of accumulated philosophies to its credit, and to revive these, far removed from Marxism, while claiming to be free of Marxism, which it now describes as being opposed to human nature, antithetical to freedom and democracy, and contradictory to the natural flow of history.

In these ways, Western thought explains the fall of Marxism. But in the attempt, it seems to be doing little more than offering protection for capitalist theory, and for the Western democracies which it portrays as being free of the fatal flaws that led to the downfall of Marxism.

The Western thinkers who are carrying out this exercise today are really attempting to stave off the same kind of capitulation for their own philosophies -philosophies they hope to present to Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Peoples' Republic of China as studied alternatives to Marxism; as if Marxism, in essence, never represented the sum and substance of all those other theories, even if it did differ with them in certain of its particulars.

Marxism made of European progress an entirely self-sufficient theoretical structure for theology that was worldly, man-made, and founded upon the refusal to recognize any otherworldly orientation, and upon discrediting the same academically, so as to maintain the materialist interpretation of history, which is not at all different from the rest of the Western philosophies except in regard to its explanation, in terms of production, of what constitutes good and evil.

So the outward glee in the West at the spectacle of collapsing Marxism will not last for long, not in my opinion. In the near future the weaknesses inherent in the West's own unnatural positions will be exposed-positions based on limiting philosophical generalizing about scientific results followed by the Marxists, positions that attempt to turn the clock back to a pre-Marxist era in order that peaceful and disciplined development might come about to satisfy some of man's spiritual aspirations, in addition to his material needs and desires. In this, however, Western thought is merely attempting to extract itself from generalizations, and to make use of what it supposes to be fragmented academic issues.

The suffering of humanity, however, will not come to an end as a result of any of that. In the same way that Marxism announced its bankruptcy, its Western philosophical sisters will be forced, sooner or later, to admit the same.

Indeed, contemporary humanity will not stop suffering, or be able to protect its accomplishments, unless it discovers an alternate philosophy, one so comprehensive as to be able to present a realistic and satisfactory interpretation of history, an overall conception of life, man, and the universe,



and a proper understanding of the issue of time. Only through such a philosophy will the West be able to revise its interpretation of the meaning of development, progress, change, growth, and so on.

Indeed, we may emphasize, in all confidence, that the Qur'an is the answer. The Qur'anic interpretation of time, life, the universe, mankind, history, and good and evil is the only interpretation capable of providing contemporary humanity with a philosophical and civilizational alternative that can shield mankind from the evil which now threatens him and all that he has achieved.

In no uncertain terms the Qur'an clarified the history of mankind, the origin of life, how mankind took up residence on earth, the purpose of existence, the details of what is of importance, and the laws which must be dealt with on the journey. Likewise, the Qur'an analyzed the phenomena of materialist movements and defined the link of the Creator to matter, in the same way that it defined the connection of mankind to matter so as to urge him to deal realistically with life, while sitting in a position of control, so that his dealings with life are transformed into a sort of fusion with unified creation, with the purpose of the Almighty, and with the universe. Thus, all sense of estrangement is erased as a natural and comprehensive peace descends as the blessing of the Almighty Hakim, the Merciful and Mercy-giving.

It was the Qur'an that taught man that good and evil were a test for him, and a trial, so that the best among people might be separated from the others—those whose deeds were the best, who most benefitted from their surroundings, who accepted the responsibilities of vicegerency, "*Khi'ifah*."

So this test is what inspired mankind to accept the responsibility of vicegerency and everything attached to it, whether civilizational or universal. Thus, human beings may set out in the world as a part of the universe, as participants in history, as beyond the limits of time and space. Meanwhile, their Creator cares for them and prepares them, subjugates all of the creation for them, causes the angels to bow down, and teaches mankind all of the names so that not a single door is closed to mankind or to their knowledge; thus ruling out the possibility of a Prometheus entering and stealing it.

Certainly, the expectation from Muslim scholars of history, more than anyone else, is that they will search for the treasures having to do with this subject in the Holy Qur'an; and that, by means of the wisdom therein, they will be able to present solutions and alternatives to the pressing issues of today, issues that continue to confound contemporary scholars and historians.

Yet, a search of this nature into the secrets of the Qur'an requires a comprehensive analytical methodology that will enable the historian to understand the universals dealt with in the Qur'an and the ways in which these bear upon the reality of the present, as well as the past and the future.

Undoubtedly, there are great breakthroughs to be made in this field,

and the challenge to thinking Muslims of our age, and of every age, is to strive in establishing the framework upon which a fresh understanding of the timeless truths of the Qur'an may be based.

May Allah (SWT) grant that each of us be of service to knowledge, to the Muslims, and to Din al-Islam!

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### Conferences, Seminars, and Addresses

## **The Islamic University: Dimensions and Dynamics**

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

*Mul'arram 8-10, 1410/August 10-14, 1989*

In order to promote a better and more comprehensive understanding of an International Islamic University within the dynamic socio-cultural setting of the contemporary world, the International Islamic University held a four-day seminar during *Mul'arram 8-10, 1410/August 10-14, 1989*. The seminar was also designed to look at the immediate and long-term development plans and strategies of the University to ensure that high international standards are maintained as well as practical relevance to the local socio-politico-economic environment. The Islamization of knowledge has multifaceted dimensions and implications for scholars in developing the integrated university curriculum with the appropriate teaching materials and the achievement of moral-intellectual excellence.

Originally planned as an internal affair, the seminar generated interest among the academic community in Malaysia and neighboring countries so that it finally involved over 600 participants, including the academic staff of the University. There were 26 speakers from various countries and disciplines.

Professor Abdul Hamid AbuSulayman in his introduction mentioned the need for Muslims to regain the intellectual dimension. He emphasized that Islamization of knowledge is not confined to the Shari'ah disciplines. Islamic thought integrates two sources of knowledge-revealed knowledge and human knowledge. He mentioned the plan of the University to introduce a system whereby graduates could, in five years, obtain two degrees-one in revealed and one in worldly knowledge.

In his usual erudite and scholarly manner Professor al-Attas discussed the purpose of the university and the Islamic concept of knowledge. He emphasized that the division into *fardhu 'ain* and *fardhu kifayah* did not imply that there was no connection between the two but the division was a moral one in order to prevent compulsory knowledge being absorbed into worldly knowledge. Professor al-Attas clarified that in order to understand what we want from a university we must first understand the nature of mankind and in order for us to understand the nature of mankind we must understand the Qur'anic teaching regarding human beings, which deals not only with the body but also with the soul.

The freedom so beloved of modern universities has meant that they no



longer reflect mankind because they deny the soul. The modern university has a body and a brain but no soul and therefore it does not reflect mankind. He mentioned the problem of the ignorant, the plagiarists, and the imitators. Wisdom, he pointed out, means knowing the limits of things and this is knowledge.

Then discussion followed on ten topics by distinguished panelists. The first topic was: What Makes a University Islamic? What are the Unique Features of an Islamic University? It was discussed by Ziauddin Sardar, Ishaq Farhan, and Abdul Rahman Doi. Ziauddin Sardar mentioned that a university should be a place where a society's intellectual heritage is discovered, thus leading society in a particular direction, and to be Islamic it must promote the Islamic world view. The knowledge available today is not neutral but reflects the vision of a particular society. Ishaq Farhan stated that an Islamic name, courses in Islam, and a dress code do not make a university Islamic. He said spirit, vision, and mission make a university Islamic. Whatever the discipline, the Islamic spirit should permeate the university. The knowledge must be unified and *Tawhid* must be reinforced. Students must be given a sense of responsibility. The philosophy and aims of the university, its view of knowledge, education, and instruction, student's life and activities of students, and evaluation are unique features of an Islamic university. Abdul Rahman Doi concluded that faith is a distinguishing factor lacking in secular-oriented universities and said that the power of reason had been neglected by most Islamic universities.

Topic 2 concerned "How to Foster the Integration of Human Knowledge into the *Tawfiqic* World View and Value System." Muhammad Kamal Hassan and Anis Ahmad were the presenters. Prof. Kamal said that it was important to recognize the guiding force of the First World Conference on Islamic Education, the need to study the Qur'an regularly, and the fostering of closer relationships between staff and students. As students move towards graduation they should be reminded that the purpose of seeking knowledge is to serve God and not individual glorification and self-advancement. He said that it was difficult to find Muslim academics who understood the true meaning of the Islamization of knowledge. Anis Ahmad referred to the dichotomy between human and revealed knowledge and said that real knowledge is not possible without constructively applying reason to the Qur'an and Sunnah. He emphasized the need to realize that the *Tawfiqic* world view encompasses not only knowledge and learning but attitudes and behavior. The *Tawfiqic* world view rests upon the role and nature of man, the universe, and the primary aims and objectives of human life and society. In the discussion the problems of staff and student attitudes were brought up.

Ishaq Farhan and Ilyas Ba-Yunus discussed "Post-graduate Research and Education: Policies and Priorities." Ishaq Farhan said that the differences

lay only in outlook, point of emphasis and view of education and knowledge. He said research should be given the importance it deserves, priority should be given to opening post-graduate programs, full-time research should be encouraged, research methodology should be taught, there should be a balance between theoretical and practical research, it should be inter-disciplinary, the quality should be high, there should be international cooperation, the results should be disseminated with practical steps taken, and research should be reorganized. Ilyas Ba-Yunus said that education at an Islamic university should reflect the idea of dedication to Allah (SWT) and the students should uphold good and prevent evil. He said that all knowledge should be gathered within the framework of revealed knowledge and there should be community involvement.

For topic 4 regarding "Future Cooperation Among Islamic Educational Institutions;• Mokhtar Shafii and Abdullah Ahsan presented their views. Abdullah Ahsan stated that cooperation was missing and suggested holding seminars, exchanging scholars, developing an ummatic consciousness and an understanding of the circumstances facing Muslims. Mokhtar Shafii stated that cooperation was necessary to resolve problems in the curriculum and syllabus and student discipline. He said that there was need for cooperation from experienced staff, transmitting information and values of Islamic life, more Islamic orientation to administrators, in student activities, and in research and knowledge.

In the discussion it was mentioned that the League of Islamic Universities did not seem to be functioning effectively due to poor leadership. The need for specialists to meet was emphasized and the fact that there should be cooperation regarding Muslim minorities.

"The Challenges of Achieving Excellence and All-Around Development: Academic, Islamic, Socio-Cultural and Leadership, How to Ensure the Credibility of the University and Employment Opportunities for its Graduates Without Losing Sight of Moral-Religious Excellence" was the topic discussed by Hisham al-Talib, Fathi Malkawi and Razali Nawawi. Hisham al-Talib mentioned that the question was not "how" but "what." He said that Muslims are neither dynamic nor are they convincing. Fathi Malkawi said that excellence was important and therefore quality came before quantity. There was the need to integrate knowledge. Prof. Razali Nawawi mentioned that the diversity of understanding and direction had caused staff to become confused, which had resulted in confused students. Students should be concerned with the political, cultural-academic, and spiritual situation of their country.

Topic 6 was on "Islamizing the Natural and Applied Sciences: What and How?" M.A.K. Lodhi and Ishaq Parhan were the panelists. Lodhi said that he wishes to emphasize the Islamization of science and technology which involves the Islamic view of the physical World, defining the role of Muslim

scientists, group efforts in various disciplines, basic issues, categorizing comparative research in the disciplines and Islamic values related to them, suggesting how to Islamize science. He said that the personality of the scientist must be Islamized. Ishaq Parhan said that revealed knowledge provided the outlook on acquired knowledge, emphasizing order and a way of expressing things. Muslim scientists should use science in the service of society and its value system.

Hassan Langgulong and Fathi Malkawi discussed the "Reconstruction of the Curriculum in the School of Education in an Islamic University and the Building of an Effective Islamic Theory of Education." Hassan Langgulong dealt with the need for a theory and four major areas of curriculum reconstruction: aims and objectives, content, method, and evaluation. Fathi Malkawi said that reconstruction would mean that the curriculum would cover core Islamic courses, professional courses, and compulsory and elective courses. An Islamic theory must be well-justified and consistent with the Islamic world view.

Parvez Manzoor, Syed Zainal Abidin, and Anis Ahmad dealt with the topic, Islamic Studies at "the University Level." Parvez Manzoor pointed out that Islamic studies are not an Islamic way of looking at the discipline as these studies emerged from the West. They are not part of the Islamic tradition and were part of the missionary enterprise. The universities in the Muslim world are mainly secular and those who graduate are not Islamists but professionals. The disciplines need to be restructured to agree with the Islamic world view. Anis Ahmad said that Islamic studies emphasize the heritage without an in-depth analysis of the sources. No new theories are discovered. He said that blaming the West would not help, history must be understood, post-graduate programs need to be specialized, courses need to be future-oriented, studies on the state and society, economics and finance, and ethics and social teaching need to be developed. Islamic studies need to be integrated with field work and minority and women's studies need emphasis. Syed Zainal Abidin emphasized that Muslims have been studying a dead civilization and that new, contemporary and real issues must be tackled.

On Islamization of the social sciences and the role of the spiritual values of Islam and revealed knowledge Ilyas Ba Yunus and Mohd Nor Nawawi discussed the urgency to speed up Islamization in this field. The discourse on human nature and society in the Qur'an can be used as a basis for scientific and psychological explanation. Aidit Ghazali drew attention to three proposals on issues of methodology in Islamizing disciplines by Muhammad Akram Khan, Muhammad Arif, Muhammad Anas Zarqa and Muhammad Yusuf al-Qardhawi. There are many questions that need to be addressed regarding methodology.

The advantages and disadvantages of a double-major approach where



students learn both the relevant Islamic knowledge and issues related to the field was discussed by Prof. Abdul Rahman Doi and Assoc. Prof. Razali Nawawi. Abdul Rahman Doi felt that the approach was both integrative and expansive and enabled the students to go beyond their specialization, although it had implications for the student in regard to the time spent obtaining a second Bachelor's degree rather than a Master's. Razali Nawawi said that one problem was deciding on the field of specialization and ensuring sufficient courses to obtain recognition.

Ahmad Totonji and Fathi Malkawi discussed "The Role and the Making of a Professor at an Islamic University." Fathi Malkawi said that the professor in an Islamic university is a pioneer and he emphasized the need for research and community service. It was important to build up a sense of commitment. Ahmad Totonji made clear that a university cannot be more Islamic than its teachers and therefore the personal example of the professor is as important as his or her knowledge. Islamic understanding, knowledge, and commitment are important. He felt that a professor should be evaluated according to his or her success in imparting knowledge and having a positive attitude towards students and towards continuous learning.

In discussing "The Disciplines to be Taught at an Islamic University" Arifin Suhami, Anis Ahmad, and Siddiq Fadhil covered many issues. Arifin Suhami dealt with the framework in which the subjects should be taught and said that the philosophy and objectives must commit the university to the Islamization of knowledge and in the university all knowledge should be taught within the *Tawliidi* paradigm. Anis Ahmad dealt with the subjects such as *s'irah*, comparative history, world religions, current affairs, and international relations, the history of ideas, psychological studies, computer and information science, economics, and the Qur'an and Hadith. The methodology should be critical and integrated with the possibility of the exchange of ideas between younger and more experienced academic staff. Siddiq Fadhil mentioned the need to participate effectively and contribute to the Islamic revival. Muslims must be responsive to global and regional needs and he emphasized the need for Malay studies to comprehend the Islamic legacy. He mentioned the disturbing trend for the Malay language to be divorced from its Islamic roots. Malay is a Muslim language but Indonesian linguists (Christians and Javanese) are trying to disassociate the Malay/Indonesian language from its Islamic roots. There has also been wholesale borrowing from Western languages without sufficient effort to look for Malay and Arabic roots for new terminologies, thus bringing in cultural pollution through the concepts brought in by adopting foreign terminologies.

"The Teaching of Language at an Islamic University" was discussed by Iqbal Manzoor and Ismail Ibrahim. Iqbal Manzoor mentioned that although words may be the same, the underlying reality is different. This means that

Arabic as the language of revelation is central as the same concepts of ambiguity do not exist. He mentioned the need to prevent linguistic incursions and the need to revive Arabic. Ismail Ibrahim mentioned the problem of the teacher as a role model and the difficulty of teaching to different groups. He called for an association of Muslim languages and stated that while Arabic was important most of the world's Muslims spoke another first language.

The discussion that ensued was related to the problem of the dominance of English and the need for better and modern methods to be applied to the teaching and learning of Arabic. All agreed that Muslim students must master both Arabic and English. The problem of Islamic values in teaching was mentioned and it was felt that there is a need for better orientation of Arabic teachers and better textbooks and methodology.

"The Role of Students and the Policy of Student Development in an Islamic University" was the next topic, in which Muhammad Kamal Hassan dealt with academic affairs and workload and student affairs related to the inculcation of spiritual commitment and the need to promote a respectable, confident, and comfortable Muslim personality. Special gifts and leadership qualities need to be developed. Ahmad Totonji mentioned the need to develop feelings of brotherhood and for the academic staff to mention the power of prayer. He said that academic excellence and co-curricular participation were not mutually exclusive. The moderator, Tan Sri Ainuddin Wahid, stated that all Muslims had to seek knowledge.

One important question raised in the discussion of creativity was that students must be encouraged to be critical or else initiative will be suppressed. There must be interaction between academic staff and students outside the classroom.

Syed Abdul Hamid al-Junid and Sayyid Tahir discussed "Developing the Discipline of Economics: State of the Art and Plan of Action." Syed Abdul Hamid al-Junid looked at the present scenario and said that initially those who had written about Islamic economics had been neo-classical economists. He then traced developments over the past 25 years. He said that within the Islamic economics discipline there are four kinds of contributors:

1. The Western/secular-trained economists who use numerous neo-classical concepts and it would seem they have not really commenced from the Islamic world view;
2. The Shari'ah-trained scholars who have some positive things to say about the nature of an Islamic economic system but whose exposure to Western economics is minimal;
3. The modernist approach which consists of eliminating variables felt to be abhorrent to Islam and substituting them.
4. The graduates of Islamic universities who have training that

includes criticism of the Western model. They are questioning the assumptions of the first group;

He suggested the need to develop a coherent view of Islamic economics, a proper notion of semantics, a clear understanding of methodology, the need for Arabic, and a code of ethics.

Sayyid Tahir said that initially basic ideas had been discussed and that a consensus had been reached on the impermissibility of interest. The normative content of Islamic economics has been recognized. He said the literature was becoming more specified and detailed. He also mentioned methodology.

In the discussion it was pointed out that we talk more of growth than the beneficiaries of growth; in Islam the target is people not growth per se. Our lifestyle is Western and not moderate and our main aim should be collective self-reliance and emphasis should be placed on the utilization of indigenous resources. The lack of any central coordinating body on Islamic economics was raised but Syed Abdul Hamid al-Junid said that varying views were not necessarily bad. To the question as to how far one could say that there is Islamic economics the answer was that at the theoretical level the hypothesis had not been sufficiently developed for testing. There was need for the institutional arrangements and the emphasis on profit-loss sharing but not lending-borrowing.

The topic on "How Islamic Universities Can Help their Students Comprehend the Islamic Legacy as well as Contemporary Knowledge and Methodology and at the Same Time Prepare them to Face the Future" was considered by Pctrez Manzoor, Ziauddin Sardar, and Anis Ahmad. Parvez Manzoor opened the discussion by posing the question of how the Islamic legacy can be integrated with modern knowledge. He said that Muslims must know the legacy and know modern knowledge and also our aim. We really need an Islamic vision for the future world order. Modern civilization and its concept of knowledge must be challenged but Muslims need to be clear both as to the goal and the methodology. Ziauddin Sardar said that the legacy should be presented as a dynamic, living entity, not as history. The legacy must be rediscovered critically. Comprehension of contemporary knowledge is also important and Muslims must understand that they are at the moment marginal people in the world, that the problems facing them are complex, and that all that happens in the contemporary world is interrelated. Students must be prepared to face the future and be aware that the future can be shaped. Anis Ahmad placed emphasis on the interplay between continuity and change in the legacy. He felt that an integrated approach was necessary and the commencement of research methodology early. The Islamic approach to various issues needs to be understood.

"The Development and Teaching of Shari'ah and Fiqh in an Islamic



University" was discussed by Alunad Ibrahim, Muhammad ½ta al-Sid, and Mahmud Saedon, who started the discussion by looking at the historical picture. He mentioned the need for a mastery of Arabic, reference to the sources, an understanding of the historical development of Shari'ah and fiqh, and a love for the field. Muhamad ½ta al-Sid mentioned the need for better standards of Arabic and suitable textbooks. Ahmad Ibrahim differentiated between Shari'ah and fiqh and mentioned the dominant role of English law in Malaysia.

The final topic was "Models of the Most Appropriate Organizational and Administrative Structure of an Islamic University and the Sort of Student-Teacher Relations that Should be Fostered in an Islamic University." Ishaq Farhan, Fathi Malkawi, and Mohammad, Nur Manuty discussed the issue, with Ishaq Farhan starting the discussion by saying that at this stage the best model could not be detailed. He suggested that the model should, however, have Islamic integrity, be clear about the basic functions of an Islamic University, have the correct approach to knowledge, and be open to various sources of knowledge. Decision making should rely on authentic information, full representation and participation must be possible, academic staff administration must be flexible, and there must be effective communications systems. There must be some independence for the chief executive, there should be many representative councils, and a unit for public relations. Fathi Malkawi concentrated on teacher-student relations and stressed the need to build an integrated and complete Islamic personality. Professors must know their students well, they should promote interaction, and they must be fair and just. Mohammad Nur Manuty said that Islamic relations should be stressed and there must be respect for each other. There must be sacrifice of time and a totally Islamic orientation.

In the discusison it was emphasized that university administrators must be clear on their functions and that all members of the university community must understand that their mission is that of Islamization. Fathi Malkawi said that administrators should not play an important role and they should not be allowed to create too much bureaucracy and much administration could be handled by academic staff. There was dissatisfaction about directions given by administrators without discussion. The need for checks and balances on freedom was mentioned. It was important to make sure the members of the university community conduct themselves in an Islamic manner. The need for consultation was recognized and it was emphasized that the structure of the International Islamic University in Mal<sub>a</sub>y<sub>s</sub>ia was based on consultation and the principle of *shura*.

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Conferences, Seminars, and Addresses

## Strategies for an Islamic Perspective of History and Historical Writing

AMSS First History Seminar  
Buffalo, New York

*Dhu al-Qi'dah 12, 1410/May 26-27, 1990*

The idea of holding the first History Seminar, which was introduced at the 18th Annual Conference of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS), came to realization in Buffalo, New York on *Dhu al-Qi'dah 12, 1410/May 26-27, 1990*.

A total of fifteen papers were presented by Muslim historians coming from across the United States. Taha J. Al-'Alwan's opening address was presented by Sayyid Muhammad Syeed, the General Secretary of the AMSS. Al-'Alwani, who is the President of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IDT), challenged Muslim historians to devise concepts and methodologies based on the wisdom of the Qur'an that will demystify human global history and make it possible to present solutions and alternatives to today's problems. He asked historians to look for the unifying factors that can make sense out of human history and to think about mankind's reactive or proactive role in the historical process which might lead to universal goals.

The banquet speaker, Professor Pareshan G. Khattak, Vice Chancellor of the Azad Kashmir University at Muzaffarabad, a historian himself, dedicated his address to an account of the Kashmiri Muslim struggle for freedom and its place in current history.

The first session included two papers designed to present an overview of issues to be considered at the conference. The seminar coordinator, Aftab Ahmad Khan of Buffalo State College, spoke on "Establishing Some Principles and Guidelines for Islamization of History; in which he focused on the need for Muslim self-reliance in the writing and interpretation of their own history as well as that of the rest of the world with the aim of exposing the world-unifying concepts and reflections of *tawliid*. He called for the adoption of a five point program toward beginning the process of Islamization of history. This was followed by Professor Akbar Muhammad of SUNY at Binghamton, who presented a paper entitled "On Islamic History, Muslim History, and the Social Milieu."

Focusing on the legacy of certain individual historians or thinkers, three panelists presented the ideas of men spanning North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. Ausaf Ali of Los Angeles spoke on Ibn Khaldun, Ibrahim

Abu-Rabi' of the University of Texas at Austin spoke on Sayyid Qutb, and Arifa Farid of the University of Karachi, Pakistan, presented Iqbal's approach to history. Mohammad Yusuf Siddiq of MIT looked at epigraphy as another source of Islamic historiography.

Expanding the scope of interest to entire geographic areas, Omar Khalidi of MIT spoke on the historiography of Muslim India, analyzing three different schools of thought, and Musa Hakim of SUNY at Buffalo presented a paper on West African Islamic history from the viewpoint of ideas that have been generated on the subject.

Shifting the range of vision to historiography and interpretation, Ghulam Haider Aasi of the American Islamic College in Chicago spoke on the history of religions and Islamic historiography, Muhammad Mukhtar Curtis of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor outlined some principles for understanding and interpreting classical Islamic texts, and Khalid Y. Blankinship of Temple University in Philadelphia suggested an Islamic periodization of world history. Connecting approaches to history with other disciplines, Ahmad S. Massasati of the University of Utah at Salt Lake City presented an Islamic perspective of the relationship of history with geography.

In order to zero-in on how the West views the East, Sheikh M. Safiullah, also of the University of Utah, gave an Islamic critical review of the book *The Cambridge History of Islam* while Mohammad M. El-Behairy of Buffalo, New York, spoke on countering the Western stereotypes of "Islamic fundamentalism."

At one of the concluding sessions, Aftab Ahmad Khan outlined a proposal for establishing an American Islamic History Society, which was warmly received and is seriously under discussion.

The Seminar was attended by over one hundred persons. For further information please contact: Aftab Ahmad Khan, 299 Allenhurst Road, Buffalo, NY 14226. Tel: 716 834-0716.

IDT  
Herndon, VA



## Conferences, Seminars, and Addresses

### **The Third International Zakah Conference**

**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

*Shawwal 19-22, 1410/May 14-17, 1990*

The first International Zakah Conference was held in Kuwait in 1984 (1404 H) at the invitation of Kuwait Zakah House. The second International Zakah Conference was held in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in 1986 (1406 H), at the invitation of the Zakah and Income Tax Department of the Kingdom. The Third International Zakah Conference, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, intended to achieve the following goals:

- i) To provide a comprehensive picture of different socio-economic and organizational dimensions of Zakah institutional systems currently operating in Muslim countries and communities.
- ii) To study the economic significance of various institutional frameworks.
- iii) To focus on the effects of the mandatory payment of Zakah to the state.
- iv) To compare different systems of Zakah collection and disbursement in use in different IDB member countries.
- v) To provide a forum for exchange of views and sharing of experiences of Zakah administration both for scholars and administrators.

The principal theme of the Third International Zakah Conference was the institutional framework of Zakah.

The conference was jointly organized by: i) Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI) of IDB, Jeddah, ii) Islamic Affairs Division, Minister of Religious Affairs in the Office of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, iii) Zakah and Income Tax Department, Ministry of Finance and National Economy, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, iv) Zakah House, Kuwait, and v) International Shari'ah Board for Zakah, Kuwait.

The conference began with a welcome address on behalf of the President of the Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah. The address highlighted the importance of the conference in contributing toward the establishment of a more effective Zakah system in the Muslim Ummah. Mr. Abdul Ghafar bin Baba, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, in his opening speech, emphasized

the potential of Zakah in eradicating poverty in the Muslim world in general and Malaysia in particular.

The first session was chaired by Dr. Al Sheikh Mohamad Al Habib bin Khoja, OIC Fiqh Academy, Jeddah. In this session H.E. Dr. Hamid Al-Ghabid, Secretary General of OIC, gave the keynote speech of the conference. He noted that in addition to being an *'ibiulah*, the economic function of Zakah is to reduce disparity between the rich and the poor in the society. He also pointed out that the Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISP), established by the OIC, has also been authorized to collect Zakah by virtue of a fatwa obtained to this effect. The Zakah funds so collected are to be disbursed both in Muslim majority and Muslim minority countries according to the Shari'ah criteria.

The second session was chaired by Dr. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman, Rector, International Islamic University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In this session Mr. Fouad Abdullah Al Omar, Vice President, Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah, presented a paper entitled, "Comparative Study of Zakah Systems: General, Administrative and Organisational Dimensions." The paper presented comparisons of different aspects of Zakah administration in various Muslim countries. It was commented upon by Dr. Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, Director General, Orphan's Property Development Department, Amman, Jordan. The third session was chaired by Dr. Mohamad Omar Zubir, King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah. In this session two papers were presented: one by Mr. Mohammad Akram Khan of Pakistan, and the other by Mr. Ahmed Ali Al Saouri of Sudan. Both papers dealt with the Shari'ah, administrative and financial control of the Zakah system. Mr. Muhammad Akram Khan's paper was a comparative study of Pakistan and Kuwait, while Mr. Saouri's paper focused on Sudan. Both the papers were commented on by Dr. Mohammad Ata Al Syed of the International Islamic University, Malaysia. The fourth session was chaired by Dr. Abdul Hamid Othman, Director, Islamic Center Malaysia, in which Mr. Abdul Aziz Mohamad Rashid Jomjoun and Mr. Jamal Taufiq Jarnaluddin presented a case study of Saudi Arabia.

The fifth session was chaired by Dr. Abdul Sattar Ghaddah of Kuwait. In this session Dr. Ahmad Ali Abdullah of Sudan presented a paper entitled, "Comparative Study of Zakah Systems-Zakah Properties." Hasan Abdullah Al Amin of Saudi Arabia gave the commentary on this paper. The sixth session, chaired by Dr. Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, included a paper by Dr. Abidin Ahmad Sallamah of Sudan entitled "The Practical Economic Results of Compulsion and Non-Compulsion of Zakah Payment." The commentary on this paper was given by Dr. Rida Saadallah of IRTI. The seventh session was chaired by Prof. Dr. Kamal Hassan of IIU, Malaysia. In this session the paper presented was a case study of Zakah administration in Malaysia, jointly authored by a team of six experts of the Kulliyah of Economics, IIU, Malaysia. The eighth session was chaired by Fadlul Rahman Faridi.

In this session Dr. Faïd Mohammad of the IIU, Islamabad, Pakistan, presented a paper entitled, "Relationship Between Legal Obligation to Pay Zakah and Voluntary Expenditure." This paper raised some interesting issues and provided empirical data as evidence. The commentary on this paper was given by Muhammad Arif, IIU, Malaysia. The ninth session was chaired by Monzer Kahf. In this session two papers were presented; one by Fadlul Rahman Faridi and the other by Abdul Qader Dhahi Al-Ajeel of the Kuwait Zakah House. Faridi's paper was entitled, "An Analysis of Zakah System in India: Its Collection and Distribution." Abdul Qader's paper was entitled, "A Study on the Activities of Zakah Institutions that are based on Non-Compulsory Payment of Zakah-Case of Kuwait Zakah House." Both the papers were commented on by Dr. Mohamad Ali Al-Qari of Saudi Arabia, and generated interesting discussion. Dr. Faridi's paper and its data was of special interest as it focused on the Muslim minority situation. Abdul Qadir's paper provided the information that in certain cases the Kuwait Zakah House uses its funds for disbursement outside of Kuwait, i.e., in the Arab and Muslim countries as well, and helps the genuinely deserving who meet the Shari'ah criteria.

The tenth session, chaired by Abdul Qadir Al Ajeel, included a paper by Abdul Rahman Al Sumait of Kuwait entitled, "Comparative Study of the Efforts of Zakah Organizations with Regard to Information Awareness." It was commented upon by Adil Al Fallah.

The eleventh session, chaired by Mohamad Ali Al Qari, consisted of a paper by Mr. Pervez Ahmad Butt, entitled, "Zakat Collection: A Case Study of Pakistan." The twelfth session was chaired by H.E. Al Sheikh Yusof Al Hajji, Kuwait. In this session Monzer Kahf presented a paper entitled, "The Practical Models for Zakah Collection and Disbursement." The paper was an extensive analytical study of different models of Zakah systems being administered in various Muslim countries. Its comparative approach contributes to one's understanding of the strengths/weaknesses of various models that are currently being applied in different Muslim countries. The commentary on this paper was given by Abdul Sattar Abu Ghaddah. The thirteenth session was chaired by Hassan Abdullah Al Amin. In this session two country case studies were presented; one on Sudan and the other on Yemen. Mohamad Ibrahim Mohamad's presentation was on the Sudan, while Mohamad Yahya Al-Xdi's on Yemen.

### ***Observations:***

From the conference papers and the discussions of the participants following four main observations can be derived:



- i) The issues discussed in and raised by the papers show that Zakah administration in the Muslim world is going through a process of learning by doing. In view of this phenomenon, such international conferences provide a very effective forum for the Shari'ah experts, economists, and administrators to share experiences and views with each other and improve the efficiency of the system in their respective countries.
- ii) There seems to be a general sentiment favoring the government-administered Zakah system.
- iii) Those involved in actual Zakah administration and/or its study are feeling the challenge and are eager to learn from each other's experiences.
- iv) If a government-administered Zakah system is strictly implemented and is actually able to collect the full potential of Zakah, then the future of those private charitable organizations which provide tangible services to the society and are mainly supported by Zakah funds will have to be seriously considered. The role of *sadaqāt* in such a situation becomes even more important.

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## IIIT Dissertation Award 1991

The International Institute for Islamic Thought (IIIT) takes pleasure in announcing the *IIIT Dissertation Award* for contributions to Islamic thought. Three awards valued at \$500 each will be disbursed annually.

Dissertations completed between August 1989 and August 1990 are eligible for the 1990 Award. Entries will be read by a three-member committee. All entries must be in triplicate and accompanied by a letter of acceptance for the degree. When sending only one copy, it should not be bound, for ease in photocopying.

Dissertations in languages other than English must be accompanied by an abstract in English. Please submit your entries to the IIIT Dissertation Award Committee, P.O. Box 669, Herndon, VA 22070.

## ABSTRACTS

### Dissertations and Theses on Islam and Muslims

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**Administrative Reform in Kuwait: Indigenous and Ecological Perspective.** Al-**Abhaib, Willeed A., Ph.D.** University of Southern California, 1989. Chairman: Wesley Bjur.

The administrative reform experience of Kuwait is investigated in this study using an indigenous and ecological approach. The basic objective is to understand why all past administrative reform attempts have failed and what can be done to improve and to develop the current public administration system in Kuwait.

As an analytical framework, Bjur and Zommodian's model for indigenous administrative theories is adopted and utilized with some modifications. Using this model, the cultural, social, political, historical, and technical dimensions of the public administration system and the administrative reform process in Kuwait are investigated and described.

It is found that there are many technical and ecological obstacles to the Kuwaiti administrative reform case. It is found also that there is a profound gap between the espoused theory (the Weberian Rational Model) and the theory-in-use (the Tribal Model of Management). The paradigmatical, metaphorical, and methodological differences between these two interacting theories are analyzed and specified according to the analytical dimensions of Burrell and Morgan's scheme of sociological paradigms.

To avoid the negatives and to utilize the strengths of both theories, an Islamic Administrative theory is proposed as an indigenous alternative solution for the case of Kuwait. The answers to such questions as: why it is a good solution for Kuwait, what are its basic characteristics and its metatheoretical assumptions, and how it can be transformed to specific practical details and recommendations, are presented in the final chapter of the study. (Copies available exclusively from Micrographics Department, Doheny Library, USC, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0182.)

**At the Edge of the World: International Trade and Traders in Muslim Spain (1000-1250).** Constable, Olivia Remie, Ph.D. Princeton University, 1989. 478pp. Order Number DA 9003638.

This dissertation concerns the changing role of Muslim Spain ("al-Andalus") in Mediterranean commerce between 1000 and 1250 A.D., from the demise of the Umayyad dynasty, through Tuifa, Almoravid, and Almohad regimes, to the fall of Seville in 1248. During this period, al-Andalus was fully integrated within

the Mediterranean trading network, functioning as a transit zone between the Islamic commercial sphere of the southern Mediterranean (North Africa and Egypt) and the Christian markets of southern Europe. However, Andalusian international trade was dramatically affected by the Spanish *reconquista* and Crusades elsewhere in the Mediterranean, together with the overall growth of European military strength, commerce, cities and industry.

By the later 13th century, the Spanish economy had changed completely. The routes of western Mediterranean trade had come into Christian hands, shifting from an east-west axis between Tunisia and al-Andalus to an Italian orbit; the Muslim and Jewish merchants who had dominated earlier trade were replaced by Christians; and Iberian exports were different. Notably, the Andalusian silk industry declined under Christian rule, as Spain began to produce wool.

Many different sources contain information on Andalusian commerce, including Arabic chronicles and legal works, Jewish merchant letters, Latin notarial records, and archeological data. All have been employed in this examination of Andalusian trade, and in combination they serve to elucidate the function of this little understood commercial area.

After a brief foreword, describing Andalusian history and its dual status as both an integrated region of the Muslim world and a border territory at the edge of the Islamic west, the dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter I delineates historiography of the field, problems, and research methodology. The next three chapters (II-IV) form the core of the thesis, devoted respectively to routes of trade, the different merchant groups involved in trade (Muslims, Jews, and Christians), and commodities. Chapter V explores the role of the Andalusian ruler in international commerce, and the concluding chapter draws this data together, and examines Andalusian commercial patterns in the context of the wider Mediterranean world.

**Class and Social Change: The Civil War and the Structural Crisis of the Lebanese System.**  
Krayem, Hassan Hussein, Ph.D. University of Southern California, 1989. Chair: Carol B. Thompson.

By focusing on the development of the Lebanese social formation under dependent capitalism, this dissertation investigates the characteristics of class and social structure in Lebanon. The analysis investigates the relationship between the development of the socio-economic structure and the civil war in Lebanon. It focuses directly on the internal aspects of the conflict in Lebanon without ignoring the regional and international context.

The Lebanese system is experiencing a total crisis in its economic, social, and political systems. An analysis of this crisis is given, tracing its historical development in relation to the class structure in order to address the question of, what role do class divisions play in Lebanon?

To account for this role, the study contrasts the major alternative theories of development with the theories of modernization. A critical analysis of the theory of national democratic revolution is central to the study in order to explain the process of change and to define the specific national and democratic tasks facing Lebanon.

A second task followed throughout the chapters is an analysis of the historical formation of the socio-economic structure, its uneven development and the impact of this rapid and distorted growth which led to intensive social polarization, that constituted a major component of the causes of the civil war. By 1985, the socio-economic crisis intensified with the Lebanese economy reaching near collapse. The economy lost its regional intermediary role and a structural change is needed to resolve its crisis.

The social structure has witnessed several changes during the civil war, with the process of social polarization increasing. Although sect appears to be the strongest ostensible social identity, several aspects of the emerging social relations indicate development of a stronger class identity.

The political crisis of the system is reflected by the collapse of the political sectarian system which is based on the national pact of 1943, and by the total collapse of all political institutions. The inability of the present class alliance, of domestic and international interests, to resolve the crisis endangers the whole system.

Finally, the study concludes by discussing the prospects for change in Lebanon. (Copies available exclusively from Micrographics Department, Doheny Library, USC, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0182.)



Class Structure in Saudi Arabia. (Volumes I and II). Al-Sultan, Ali Ahmed, Ph.D. Michigan State University, 1988. 444 pp. Order Number DA 8912545.

The purpose of this study about Saudi Arabia is designed to = i n e contemporary Saudi class structure. The research question is: What is the new class structure that is developing in Saudi Arabia? The introduction of this study covers the period of 1902-1932 and briefly skims Saudi modern state formation in order to lay the groundwork for the origin of Saudi society that, until 1932, was composed of five different provinces.

It became fairly clear that Saudi society, before the discovery of oil, was mainly composed of a large nomad community and a much smaller settlers' community. A small segment of merchants from the towns served the t<sup>h</sup> communities. At this early stage of development Saudi society was not quite egalitarian, but the differences within the population were not great.

Following the inflow of oil in Saudi Arabia, state revenues increased tremendously, particularly after World War II. The oil fields employed a good segment of the Saudi population, while public expenditure tended to be a vital source of personal fortune. To a great extent, the educational program that was implemented by the State not only facilitated social modernization, but also initiated the development of the new Saudi middle class.

The main finding of the study is that Saudi society is now composed of three social classes, namely: an upper, middle, and working class. Each class is composed of several occupational categories and is divided into traditional and new segments.

The *working class* represents 79.3 percent of the population, the middle class is 14.3 percent, and the upper class is only 6.4 percent. This means that the class structure of Saudi society is pyramidal in shape.

Finally, the study takes note of the fact that the emergence of a new class structure has produced a number of problems. Three are briefly noted: an emerging potential struggle between indigenous industry and comprador segments of the upper class over local markets, which threatens the position of the traditional middle class; a conflict between secular-trained progressives and religious conservatives; and the withdrawal of the Saudi working class from the lowly paid manual labor jobs, which leads to a high rate of expatriate labor. (Abstract shortened with permission of author.)

The Concept of the Just War in International Law. Mushkat, Roda, LL.D. University of South Africa (South Africa), 1987. Promoter: H. Booysen.

The thesis addresses itself to the concept of just war from a primarily, but not exclusively, international legal perspective. The aim of the study is to examine the concept in all its international legal and related aspects with a view to assessing its contemporary meaning, relevance, applicability and usefulness. The underlying assumption is that recourse to war and its conduct should occupy a central place in the study of international law, for it is irresponsible to overlook this destructive phenomenon and unrealistic to expect its eradication in the short and medium terms, if at all.

International lawyers are not alone in their concern with the management of armed conflict within the bounds of acceptable norms. The subject has also featured extensively in conceptual and empirical inquiries by historians, theologians, moral philosophers and those who approach war from an interdisciplinary policy perspective. Understandably, the present study largely falls within the legal tradition insofar as substance, methods and presentation are concerned. At the same time, an attempt is made to broaden the scope of the investigation by incorporating insights and findings from other disciplines. The ultimate object, therefore, is to analyze the concept of the just war, both in its descriptive and normative dimensions, by relying on all academic tools which can be comfortably accommodated within an international legal framework.

Given the complexity of the concept of the just war, it is not treated in the thesis as a unitary one. Rather, it is tackled by means of four questions which have loomed large, whether explicitly or implicitly in discussions of permissible use of force throughout the ages. These questions are: (1) whether war is ever justifiable, (2) who may wage war, (3) when war may be waged (*jus ad bellum*) and (4) how war should be waged (*jus in bello*). Each of the above questions is dissected within a self-contained chapter and collectively the four chapters constitute the substantive core of the thesis.

A Critical Analysis Of the Epistemological Basis of Ibn Khaldun's Classification of the Sciences. Johnson, Steve Alan, Ph.D. Indiana University, 1989. 303pp. Director: Salman H. Al-Aru. Order Number DA 9012210.

Some contemporary Muslim scholars view Ibn Khaldun's fourteenth century classification of the sciences in the *Muqaddimah* as the model for reuniting the philosophical and religious sciences in an Islamic curriculum they perceive to be bifurcated by Westernization. This study shows that Ibn Khaldun, in line with al-Ohazzali, appealed more to theological and pragmatic ('winnic) arguments than philosophical arguments to unite the two domains of knowledge. The question is raised in what sense the knowledge domains can be epistemically united in agreement with the Islamic doctrine of *tawhid* when Ibn Khaldun's faculty psychology, spiritualized cosmology, and habit view of science are philosophically inadequate and rejected by many contemporary Muslims. An effort is made to use R. Chisholm's contemporary foundationalist epistemology, and Ross' extension of Chisholm's theory to include testimonial knowing, as the theoretical basis for an epistemic reunification of Ibn Khaldun's knowledge domains. Chisholm and Ross' theories are criticized for making *de se* believing basic to *de dicto* and *de re* believing, assuming belief is a necessary condition for knowledge, and for their inability to account for "knowing how to" forms of knowledge. It is concluded that Chisholm and Ross' theories fail to achieve the desired epistemic unification and it is recommended that a coherentist understanding of *tawhid* and coherentist epistemology be investigated by Muslim scholars.

Delegitimation and the Right to Revolt: A Study in Sunni Muslim Political Thought. Karbal, Mohamed Mofteh, Ph.D. University of Missouri-Columbia, 1989. 168pp. Supervisor: Arthur L. Kalleberg. Order Number DA 9010572.

Islamic revivalism has had a vast impact on the politics of the Arab countries during the last two decades. Politicians and scholars have become interested in what they have labeled as "militant Islam." Academicians have participated in a lengthy debate on the causes for the use of violence by Islamic groups. The dominant explanation has been the argument that "militant Islam" is the backlash effect as a rejection of modernity by traditional Muslims.

In general, most of the scholarly work did not value or even consider the political ideas of Muslim thinkers. In other words, few scholars were able to explain recent Islamic revivalism within the framework of political Islam.

This dissertation attempts to explain the resurgence of Muslim groups through the context of Islamic political theory. It also examines the ideological conflict in the Arab countries and how a particular ideology might suppress other ideas and groups. This dissertation attempts to prove that the recent rise of what had been labeled as "militant Islam" was caused by various reasons.

The main reason is the Islamists' belief in the establishment of an Islamic state. Any other type of government would be non-Islamic; therefore, Muslims should reject it. However, the reason behind the attitude of rejection is the absence of political freedom in the Arab countries.

Egyptian and Sudanese Practice on State Immunities With Particular Reference to the Islamic Perspective. Rahman, El Fatih El Rasheed Abdel, Ph.D. University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom), 1988. 457pp. Order Number BRD-86430.

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This study examines the evolution of the restrictive theory of immunity and identifies the various rationales which have contributed to its emergence at three levels. In the present study it is shown that all legal systems do not treat issues of sovereign immunity similarly. A comparative law study provides the opportunity to examine different approaches to immunity and explore the characteristics peculiar to society that are responsible for generating a particular approach.

Pan I deals with the origin of the rule of state immunity and the evolution in legal analysis which gave rise to the restrictive theory of sovereign immunity under contemporary international law.

The purpose of Pan II, namely Egyptian and Sudanese Practice on the subject, is to show that, although the phenomenon of restrictive immunity is widespread, there are nevertheless profound divergences even between two neighboring Arab states and even undeniable incoherences within one of them. This pan endeavors to clarify those practices and to relate them to contemporary international practice. The

objective seems particularly appropriate in the light of the development of new kinds of commercial activities undertaken by these countries in developing nations to promote foreign investment and trade.

Part III deals with the Islamic conception of sovereign immunity. The examination of the Islamic perspective verifies the extent of its past contribution to the development of the rule of state immunity and surveys the possibilities of its further contributions in the future. Through this approach, contemporary rules of international law of sovereign immunity will probably prove to be more readily accepted, widely recognized and strongly supported.

The conclusions which build on the preceding parts are provided in the last chapter.

**Islamic Banking, a Case Study of Kuwait.** Kabbara, Abdulrahman Haitham Shoukat, Ph.D. University of Technology, Loughborough (United Kingdom), 1988, 476pp. Order Number BRDX87299.

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In the aftermath of the Islamic resurgence movement, the call for the abolition of interest and the introduction of profit and loss sharing schemes gained momentum. Islamic writers have concentrated on describing the operations of an Islamic bank in an interest based economy and others have outlined the principles and functions of the Islamic economy. However there has not yet been a comprehensive study dealing with the implications of abolishing interest in a specific country.

Therefore the major objective of this thesis is to examine the possible introduction of interest free banking in Kuwait, its implications, operations, advantages and disadvantages. It also focuses upon the transformation process necessary to bring about these required changes.

The first chapter presents an overview of the Islamic economic system and its underlying principles; these are the cornerstone for any transformation from the conventional economic system to a new Islamic system. The second chapter focuses on Islamic banking, its methodology, objectives and main operations in theory and practice. The third chapter deals with the main features of the Kuwaiti economy. An emphasis is put upon the existing banking system and the role of the central bank in conducting its interest-based monetary policy.

The thesis then describes the changes required in the current financing instruments employed by Kuwaiti banks in order to adapt to a new Islamic system. In this respect it is assumed that the current banking structure will remain intact. Stress is placed upon the changes required in the short, medium and long-term financing instruments used domestically.

The central bank's changing role and the monetary policy implications of a new Islamic system are also analyzed.

The final chapter summarizes the findings and recommendations of the thesis and the advantages and disadvantages of interest-free banking with reference to Kuwait.

**Islamic Banking in Theory and Practice.** Rabooy, Mohammad Ebrahim Mohammad Sultan, Ph.D. University of Exeter (United Kingdom), 1988. 460pp. Order Number BRDX 86448.

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*The aim of the study.* This study is dedicated to test the theory as well as the practice of the Islamic Banking System under Islamic Shari'ah (Law), with the aim of finding a solution to the controversy surrounding this subject.

*The method of the study and the sources of information.* The theoretical section of the study is arranged as follows: (1) *Chapter 1.* This is a short chapter about the prohibition of interest under Islamic Law. (2) *Chapter 2.* This chapter is about finance and investments in the private sector following Islamic thought. (3) *Chapter 3.* This is about the Islamic Banking System in the modern Muslim scholars' view.

The practical section is arranged as follows: (1) *Chapter 4.* This chapter is about the role of the Islamic banks in international financial markets. (2) *Chapter 5.* This presents a case study of the Dubai Islamic Bank, the first Islamic bank in the world. (3) *Chapter 6.* This chapter is a case study of Islamic Banking in Sudan. Sudan has six Islamic banks now. When Numayri was President, the Islamization of the whole banking system in Sudan was begun, but it was unsuccessful-why? (4) *Chapter 7.* This chapter is about the Islamic Bank International in Denmark, the only Islamic bank (with perfect license) outside the Islamic world. How does it work under the Danish Law of banking? (5) *Chapter 8.* This is about the Kuwait Finance House, which is considered by many Muslim scholars and bankers as the most successful Islamic bank in the world. Is that correct? (6) *Chapter 9.* In this chapter I have reached



the conclusion that it is impossible to adopt and adapt the conventional bank for it to work perfectly efficiently under Islamic Law. Accordingly, I have set up an alternative approach which in my view is relevant to Muslims. (Abstract shortened by UMI.)

**Islamic Political Culture and Authoritarian-Military Rule: An Analysis of the Nature of Rule in Pakistan.** Hasan, Asbraful, Ph.D. University of Alberta (Canada), 1989.

This study, presented in five chapters, examines the political culture of Islam in the context of Pakistan and attempts to relate it to the nature of rule in Pakistan. The first chapter provides the setting for the study by outlining the theoretical framework and by explaining the terms and concepts which are basic to this study. The relationship between religion, political culture and the nature of rule is set out in this chapter and the reasons underlying a two-step approach to studying political culture are also explained in detail.

The findings of the study are examined in the subsequent three chapters. In the case of the findings pertaining to doctrinaire Islam, as outlined in chapter 2, a primarily authoritarian perspective, based on the premise of the military's pre-eminence in Muslim society during Muhammad's lifetime and under the Rashidun caliphs, emerges. However, rudimentary elements of republicanism were also noted to be part of the fundamental framework of Islam.

In the third chapter, the manner in which the authoritarian-military attributes of doctrinaire Islam found expression and meaning in the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent is analyzed. The process of cultural continuity and change, which occurred due to the inputs originating from the subcontinent and the period of British rule in the region, is also discussed in this chapter.

An examination of the nature of rule in Pakistan in the post-independence period comprises the major thrust of the discussion in chapter 4. The pendulum-like oscillation which Pakistan experienced between authoritarian-military and authoritarian-civilian rule is explained and analyzed in this chapter within the overall framework of the study.

The thesis concludes with an assessment and further integration of the major findings. An effort is also made in the concluding chapter to deal with the question of what lies ahead in Pakistan's political future and the issues which the political leadership will have to reckon with in order to ensure the future viability of Pakistan as an independent sovereign state.

**Maknūn and Baluchistan From the Early Islamic Conquests Down to the Mongol Invasion.**

Al-Hujmaidi, Sa'd Ibn Sa'id, Ph.D. University of Manchester (United Kingdom), 1988. 396pp. Order Number BRD-86456.

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The objective of this study is to reveal the history of Baluchistan, i.e. the land and its inhabitants, in an era which has been put to neglect by historians, i.e. during the first six centuries of Islam.

There are four factors to distinguish this work. First, it affords a well-detailed account of the history, geography, and settlements of Muslims in Baluchistan following the scholarly fashion by analyzing the data from primary sources, so that new and authoritative ideas can be procured.

Second, it has also put together all the scattered information about the history of this country in an almost forgotten epoch. So it makes room for this country in the history of Islam in medieval times, which was not clear before this study.

Third, its uniqueness lies in the fact that no previous effort has been made to disclose the history of Baluchistan as pointed out above. Its history is thus substantiated now from authentic sources.

Fourth, this study provides interested researchers with new guidance in various fields which have hitherto been left untreated.

**The Medina as an Expression of Social Values.** Zeghlache, Ham7JI, Ph.D. University of Virginia, 1987. 225pp. Order Number DA 8903897.

This study is an attempt to relate space and social values. The empirical focus of the study is the city in Islamic culture as exemplified in the Medina of Tunis, Tunisia. I present an analysis of the values and world view underlying the concept of the Medina such as the metaphoric relations of "container" and "contained," "sacred" and "profane," "men" and "house," the "inside" and the "outside," "public" and

"private," and "society" and "city," as they relate to the concepts of social space which can be found in the work of Marcel Mauss and Emile Durkheim. This project is an investigation of the spatial ordering of the city and the classical texts that described and guided city building. The data deriving from the above sources are supplemented by interviews with exponents of traditional knowledge. Preliminary analysis identifies the social and ideological correlates of the city as "closed" space. The idea of "closed" space is explored in its metaphoric relation to the individual, house and person. The impact of colonialism on the Medina results in changes in arrangement of city space which amount to an "opening" of closed space.

**The Methodology of Abrogation and its Bearing on Islamic Law and Qur'anic Studies.** Habil, AbdUTrahman Yousif, Ph.D. Indiana University, 1989. 240pp. Order Number DA 9012208.

The traditional doctrine of Qur'anic abrogation (naskh) is not simply an exegetical theory that can be rejected, as it is often done, by attempting to reconcile abrogated verses with abrogating ones. Naskh basically raises certain legal issues that involve, in addition to Qur'anic verses, the absence of the rulings of some of these verses from the actual theory and practice of Islamic law. The gist of this study is to highlight this obvious, but usually ignored, fact, and to argue that rejection of naskh has a direct bearing on the question of the origins of fiqh in general.

It appears, moreover, that internal evidence of *Waskh* can be obtained from the Qur'an itself. There exist, for instance, the phenomena of "repetition" (takrār) and "re-revelation" ('arq al-aya), which may point to the general process of 'arq al-Qur'ān, or the annual 'arwāḥ, that used to take place, according to well-known traditions, during the Prophet's lifetime. Two other types of naskh are also considered: cross-sura abrogation, and consecutive abrogation, which are both represented by classical examples. In point of fact, all the cases of abrogation discussed in this study may be viewed as examples of the classical mode of ruling abrogation (naskh al-ukum). However, the claims of wording omission (naskh al-tildwa) cannot be substantiated satisfactorily.

An attempt is made as well to define, in light of the doctrine of naskh, some questions related to the collection of the Qur'an, the Companion codices, and the variant readings, and to underscore certain points concerning the history of Qur'anic exegesis and the role of Qur'anic legal verses in the formation of Islamic law. The latter question has also some important implications for the origin of all schools of fiqh.

Beside its bearing on the history of fiqh, and the history of both the text of the Qur'an and its exegesis, and its significance for the interpretation of individual verses, the doctrine of naskh may also offer some contributions toward the derivation of general hermeneutical principles pertaining to the interpretation of the Qur'an as a whole.

**Motivating Underachieving High School Students in Saudi Arabia.** Malki, USJma Khalil, Ph.D. University of Florida, 1988. 121pp. Chairman: Barry Guinagh. Order Number DA 8923996.

The main objective of the study was to determine the effect of a group counseling procedure that was designed to help underachieving Saudi secondary school students with IQs of 115 or greater to improve their academic performance. A secondary objective was to estimate the number of underachievers among low achievers.

The McHolland Success Group Process (MSGP) was developed and first used by James McHolland in 1971 with community college students in the United States. It is a success-oriented process that uses Glasser's reality-therapy procedures as well as some principles of educational psychology. The process modifies and channels the underachievers toward achievement through the use of goal setting, commitment to achieve those goals, and time management sheets to monitor their time spent on academic activities and nonacademic activities.

One hundred thirty male secondary school students in urban Makkah, Saudi Arabia, were identified as low achievers. This number represented 11% of the school population (n = 1200). Among those 130 low achievers, 55 students (42% of the low achievers) were considered underachievers, scoring 115 or above on the Youth Intelligence Test, an intelligence test in Arabic developed by Zahran in 1976. The randomized experiment was designed with one treatment group, which received the MSGP treatment for 1 hour a week for 10 weeks, and two control groups. The first control group met with the researcher to discuss current events in order to control for the Hawthorne effect, and the second control group

received no treatment. The students' achievement grades from the year prior to the study were used as a pretest measure of academic achievement. Their mean achievement scores, obtained at the end of the semester in which the study was conducted, were used as a posttest. Forty-four students remained until the end of the study.

Analysis of covariance did not reveal any significant impact of the MSGP treatment on achievement ( $p > .05$ ). Possible reasons for these results were discussed along with implications and recommendations for future research.

**Muslim-Christian Relations: A Program of Interactive Dialogue.** Saba, Michael Peter, Ph.D. The Union for Experimenting Colleges of Universities, 1989. 443pp. Order Number DA 8914873.

To date Muslim-Christian dialogue as an interfaith relationship has been conducted primarily on theological topics. During the twentieth century Muslims and Christians have had increasingly more contact and there are consequently more opportunities for interaction between them. This study focuses on a program of interactive dialogue between Muslims and Christians and the sociological dimension of this dialogue.

This project demonstrating extensive studies the background of Muslim-Christian relations and gives a historical overview of this relationship. It examines the history of Muslim-Christian dialogue as an organized effort and illustrates the relative deficiency of sociological concerns in this dialogue movement.

The project utilizes extensive practical experiences in the Muslim world and data from Muslim participants in these experiences to organize a program of interactive dialogue. The program was developed utilizing an interdisciplinary approach concentrating on education and international relations as a basis for the projects that were developed.

Three conferences were designed, organized and implemented which emphasized the practical nature of Muslim-Christian dialogue. Each conference integrated information gained from the previous conference sessions.

The first two conferences brought together Christian clergy and lay leaders with Muslim participants to discuss problems of common concern on issues of particular importance to both groups. These conferences focused on the issue of Jerusalem and the significance of the status of the city to its Christian and Muslim residents.

The third conference organized business and political leaders from the Christian and Muslim worlds to concentrate on business interchange.

An annotated bibliography on Muslim-Christian dialogue is included in the research. A cross-cultural training manual to utilize in future Muslim-Christian dialogue was also developed for this project.

A videotape film was produced on the final conference and the script and background materials are included in the written portion of the study.

**Pakistan Since Independence: The Political Role of the 'Ulama'.** (Volumes I and II). Akhtar, Safir, D. Phil. University of York (United Kingdom), 1989. 804pp. Order Number BRDX 8712&

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The 'ulama' (men of Islamic learning) occupy an important position in the Muslim society. Pakistan is no exception to this general phenomenon. Although they were always on the periphery of political decision-making throughout Muslim rule in South Asia (1206-1857), their influence on the masses was never in question. During the colonial period (1857-1947), however, the development of Islamic thought resulted in a division of Muslim society into two distinct sections: "Islamic modernists," and orthodox, Muslims who were under the influence of the 'ulama. Secularist ideas could not gain ground amongst Muslims on account of their minority status in South Asia. Religion constituted the bedrock of their identity.

At the emergence of Pakistan, it was the "Islamic modernist" section of Muslim society which held the reins of power, and successfully controlled the institutions of the power-structure. On the related issues of polity and society in Pakistan, it was not a matter of surprise that a conflict of orientation persisted between the "Islamic modernists" and the orthodox, Islam. The 'ulama' staked from a weaker position and developed the political skills needed to assert their views. The failure of the dominant class to fulfill its promises enabled the 'ulama' to expose their true nature.



At the same time, the 'ulama, divided amongst themselves on the basis of sects and subsects, could not agree on an alternative political strategy. In actual fact, they were more effective in achieving negative ends (such as help to topple a government) than in capturing the reins of power even though their electoral strength has always been low). Their undoubted skill in manipulating and using the modern paraphernalia of political mobilization would appear to provide them with the apparatus, albeit in the long term, to consolidate a political alternative to the existing dominant class in control of state power. In the short and medium term, however, it is unlikely that the "Islamic modernist" elements will be dislodged from power.

Saudi Arabian Economic Aid to West Africa: A Case Study of the Gambia and Sierra Leone, 1975-1985. Sillah, Mollammed-Bassiru, Ph.D. Howard University, 1988. 463pp. Order Number DA 8919672.

The purpose of this study is to explore, examine, and analyze the political and economic relationships between Saudi Arabia and Africa, with special focus on two West African states, namely, Gambia and Sierra Leone. Another objective of this study is to trace the historical and cultural contacts that had existed between Saudi Arabia and Africa. (It is said that for centuries, political, commercial, and cultural ties had existed between Africa and the pre-Islamic Arabia. Arabian merchants had traded along the coasts of East Africa. The Arab Muslim traders (especially the Arabo-Berbers) transmitted the Islamic faith to West Africa. But the subjugation of Africa to foreign domination, the introduction of Christianity and European languages contributed to the temporary interruption of African-Arab relations. This resulted in the diversion of commercial activities to Europe from both regions by undermining the Trans-Saharan and the Red Sea trade routes.

The findings of this study are the following: (1) that the Saudi-African connection has been strengthened by the petrodollar and program of Saudi Arabia and by the decision of African leaders to give support to the Afro-Arab alliance; (2) that Saudi aid to Africa, especially in the Gambia and Sierra Leone has increased since its inception in the mid-1970s; (3) that the Saudi-African connection is being reinforced by the proliferation of Islamic groups in both the Gambia and Sierra Leone; (4) that the growing relationship between Saudi Arabia and Sierra Leone is making the Islamic identity of Sierra Leoneans more and more evident outside Africa; (5) that Saudi Arabia's relationship with Africa, and especially the Gambia and Sierra Leone, has resulted in greater number of students in Saudi Arabian schools and universities and also in greater number of pilgrims; (6) that the longevity of the Saudi-African connection would depend in the long run, not on Saudi largesse but on mutual respect between the Saudi people and their African counterparts. (Abstract shortened with permission of author.)

The Social Context of Rural to Urban Labor Migration Decisions in Developing Countries: The Case of Malaysian Women. McDaniel, Antonio, Ph.D. The University of Chicago, 1989.

This research seeks to explain rural-to-urban migration within developing countries. Rural-to-urban migration is a direct response to larger social forces, such as industrialization, famine, and poverty. This perspective holds that an understanding of the social unit which is responding to these social forces by migration is critical to our understanding of rural-to-urban migration. Most migration occurs at the individual or family level, thus the need to study the behavior of these individuals and their families. In developing countries the family influences the migration behavior of individuals.

Concern regarding the behavior of rural-to-urban migrants in developing countries has generated numerous studies. The basic model assumes that individuals act to maximize their own utility. What is meant by "own" is not theoretically examined in this case. On the other hand, some studies consider the proper unit of analysis to be the family, a consideration not usually theoretically developed.

The findings of this research support the argument that individual and family characteristics are important in understanding the determinants of migration decisions. There is a significant improvement in our analysis if family structure is seen as an important variable in predicting migration. By looking at Malaysian women the family context of migration decisions is exemplified. The hazard rates of migration differ substantially for individuals by their area of origin, education, and ethnicity, and family factors, such as marital status, residential status, particularly home ownership, and *family* wealth.

**Social Justice: From the Islamic World-System to the European World-Economy, a Study of Power Legitimation.** Kusha, Hamid R., Ph.D. University of Kentucky, 1989. 454pp. Directors: Dwight Billings; Gerald T. Slatin; Robert W. Olson. Order Number DA 9001434.

This study examined the theoretical possibilities of extending Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system methodology into the non-capitalist Islamic world prior to its incorporation into the European World-Economy. Wallerstein's methodology has already been applied to describe the Ottoman Empire's incorporation process. However, this application has covered the economic rather than ideological and political aspects of the incorporation. A secondary purpose of the present study is to provide theoretical inquiry into the nature of the incorporation in terms of ideological specificity of the Islamic world of which the Ottoman Empire was an important constituent and was the first among the Islamic states to be incorporated. In this respect, the issue of social justice which constituted the kernel of the Islamic theories of power legitimation in the Islamic world and its economic system has been investigated.

By employing a world-system approach, it is argued that the issue of social justice was instrumental in the rise of the Islamic world-economy (700-1750) in an extensive part of the Old World. This issue also impacted the quasi-transformation of the Islamic World-Economy (with its agrarian citted society features) into the Islamic world-empire (610-786), the Islamic (Abbasid) world-system (809-1300) and the Irano-Ottoman historical bloc (1300-1750). From 1750 to the present, the Islamic world-economy is going through a process of disintegration/incorporation into the capitalist (European) world-economy. However, the issue of social justice has not lost its primordial character in the process of social change in the Islamic world.

**The Socioeconomic Aspects of Child Health in Gezira, Sudan.** Eltigani, Ftigani Eltahir, Ph.D. The Johns Hopkins University, 1989. 246pp. Order Number DA 8923676.

This study attempted to estimate the level, pattern, and differences in childhood mortality levels in Gezira. Estimates derived from maternal histories data showed that there is a decline in childhood mortality levels in Gezira in recent years. The decline is larger for males than for females, particularly between the ages of one and four years.

Most childhood deaths are due to diseases that are caused by poor environmental and sanitation conditions. Diarrhea represents the major cause of childhood deaths.

There are differences in childhood mortality levels among the population of Gezira. These differences are attributed to differences in household location, parental education, mothers' economic activity, household head occupation, and the ethnic origin of the parents. There are also mortality differences that are due to mother's age at childbirth, length of birth intervals and birth order of the child.

A framework that combines both the socioeconomic background of both the household and community and health input "intermediate" variables was used for analysis of childhood mortality differentials. The empirical estimation of the statistical models derived from the framework, showed that the household background factors exert their influence on childhood mortality, through their impact on the demand for the health inputs. Health input variables such as prenatal care, water source to the household, mother age at childbirth, length of birth interval, and whether the child is bottlefed, are all important variables in determining the child survival chances. All of the variables above are influenced by mother's and father's education, father's occupation, parents' ethnic background, and availability of health and social services in the community.

The study showed the need to reorient the direction of the health delivery system in Gezira towards a more preventive approach. The present system, which is geared towards providing curative type health care, is not suitable to handle health problems caused by poor environmental conditions. The current system, particularly at the village level, is underutilized because the health unit lacks the necessary equipment and supplies to provide the required services.

**A Study to Identify Competencies Needed for Adult Basic Education Teachers in Saudi Arabia.** Al-Thoupey, Awad A., Ph.D. Michigan State University, 1989. 239pp. Order Number DA 8923827.

This study was designed to identify the perceptions of teachers, administrators, and supervisors of adult basic education (ABE) programs in Saudi Arabia regarding the competencies needed for ABE teachers, and to determine the reported/perceived needs for professional development of ABE teachers.

Data for this study were collected through a questionnaire distributed to a random sample of 149 teachers, 43 administrators, and 15 supervisors of ABE. Of the 207 questionnaires distributed, 204 (98.5%) were returned and used (147 teachers, 43 administrators, and 14 supervisors).

Frequency and percentage distribution were used to describe the sample characteristics. The mean and standard deviation were used to represent the degree of importance of selected competencies and competency areas for all groups of respondents, and the mean percentage was used to represent the degree of need of those competencies and competency areas for ABE teachers: professional development.

Results of the analysis of data indicated that: (1) Ten competencies were perceived by all groups as "very important for ABE teachers": (a) knowing the goal of teaching reading, writing, and mathematics to adult learners; (b) ability to use a variety of appropriate adult teaching methods; (c) knowing learning differences between children and adults; (d) knowing that adults need to be treated as adults at all times; (e) ability to establish mutual respect with adults; (f) communicating effectively with adult learners; (g) ability to relate content to real-life problems of the adult learners; (h) ability to use instructional media provided to adult learners; (i) knowing major causes of illiteracy and its problems; and (j) keeping informed on new developments, recommendations, and issues in ABE. (2) ABE curriculum area was rated as most important and needed by ABE teachers. (3) Teachers reported least need for their professional development than did administrators and supervisors. (4) In general, teachers who had attended in-service training in ABE, of an older age, and with more experience in teaching adults, reported a low need for professional development in competency in understanding of all ABE areas.

Recommendations were made to the General Trust for Adult Education and institutions which provide pre-service or in-service training for ABE teachers, and for further research.

SuhraMirdi's Theory of Knowledge. Amin vi, Mehdi, Ph.D. Temple University, 1989. 354pp. Major Adviser: Hossein Seyyed Nasr. Order Number DA 9007336.

Suhrawardi was a Persian philosopher of the 12th century and the founder of the school of "illumination" (*ishraq*). He not only critically analyzed the rationalistic philosophy of the Peripatetics but by drawing from a variety of traditions such as Zoroastrianism, Pythagoreans, Hermeticism and Neo-Platonic philosophy he created an entirely new philosophical paradigm whose influence is still strong in many parts of the Islamic world.

The central task of my thesis was to undertake an indepth and detailed study of Suhrawardi's theory of knowledge. The question I was concerned with is what does Suhrawardi mean when he says he knows the truth? To analyze Suhrawardi's epistemology I have first considered most of his writings in Persian and Arabic where his theory of knowledge is discussed. I have then considered his critique of empiricism, rationalism and other means of gaining knowledge.

Following a philosophical analysis of Suhrawardi's ideas I have elaborated on his mystical writings and then attempted to demonstrate the following: (1) The means by which illumination is attained. (2) The rational basis of illumination as a pure methodology for the knowing of truth. (3) The scope and limits of this type of knowledge. (4) The nature of the type of knowledge that is attained through illumination. (5) The relationship between illumination, knowledge, truth and certainty. (6) Suhrawardi's theory of knowledge known as knowledge as presence."

Following an extensive discussion of the above topics I have considered the influence of Suhrawardi and his school of illumination on Islamic philosophy in Iran and other regions. This discussion which is historical in nature also explains the roots of some of the philosophical movements which were inspired by Suhrawardi.

Finally, I have offered a critical analysis of Suhrawardi's philosophy and some of the charges which have been made in regards to his philosophy.

Two Plays by the Islamic Dramatist, Ali Ahmad Bakathir, Translated into English with Critical Commentary. Hamid, Mohamed AbuBakr, Ph.D. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1988. 363pp. Adviser: Burnet Hobgood. Order Number DA 8908697.

Arab dramatists are still largely unknown, particularly in the U.S.A. This dissertation is a step partially to fill that gap through the translation and critical study of two plays by Ali Ahmad Bakathir (1908-1969), one of the most original Arab playwrights. Bakathir was a prolific writer born in Indonesia, brought up in S. Yemen (his original home) and then lived and died in Egypt. Bakathir contributed influentially



to modern Arabic literature in several literary genres: drama, poetry, and the novel. In addition to his great sum of poetry, he wrote more than sixty plays, six novels, many one-act plays and short stories. Bakathir's study of English literature, and of Shakespeare in particular, guided him to some of the innovations he pioneered in Arabic literature such as the use of free verse, which became a medium of later Arabic verse drama. However, Bakathir wrote the majority of his plays in prose, which stemmed from his belief that drama could be poetical without the restrictions of meter.

In fact, it was Bakathir's commitment to Islamic ideology throughout his entire life which made him unique among his contemporary Arab dramatists; his works were dedicated to representing the Islamic ideology in all aspects of life. His artistic mission was to establish firmly Islamic drama in the field of Arabic literature.

The author is not aware of any plays by Bakathir which have been translated and published in English, nor of any critical study written in the United States specializing in his dramatic works. Like most modern Arab dramatists, Bakathir is better known in French language studies.

The first play translated in this work is *The Secret of Shahra'ut* (1952), a romance inspired by *The Arabian Nights*. Bakathir's dramatization is a new interpretation in the light of psychological insight. The second play is *Farat and Marat* (1962), a moral fantasy representing the Islamic view of man's future in the universe. It makes possible that man can reach other planets and stars, and discover their secrets there as he does on earth. These dramas are among Bakathir's best works in their treatment of great universal themes; hence, they represent two methods in his thought and dramaturgy. They also introduce aspects of Islamic and Arabic culture to the Western reader.

The IV translations endeavor to convey in English their original Arabic flavor and intentions. The practice of Bakathir the dramatist reinforces his artistic intention to create moral dramas for Islamic theatre and to offer new conceptualization to contemporary western drama and criticism.

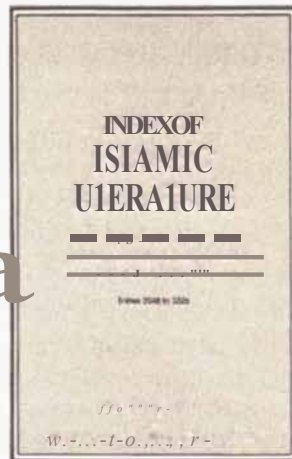
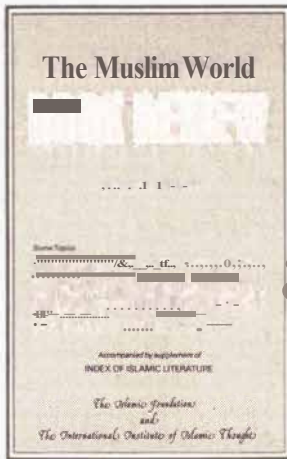
**Virtue and Virtuosity: Politics in a Post-Kantian World.** Honig, Bonnie Helen, Ph.D. The Johns Hopkins University, 1989. 562pp. Order Number DA 8923694.

In this essay, I examine the ways in which a number of different theorists conceive of the disenchantment of modernity and I analyze the merits and viability of their attempts to theorize a politics in response to the modern condition. I approach each thinker through a concept suggested by his or her own work: Kant, through the concept of respect for persons; Nietzsche, through his critique and recovery of responsibility; Arendt, through her account of the will; Rawls and Sandel, through their conceptions of the self and subject.

I argue that in spite of their differences, Kant, Rawls, and Sandel share some basic presuppositions about the relationship between politics and subjectivity. And I note that although each endorses a different political programmatic—republican, liberal, and communitarian, respectively—they all assign similar roles to politics, looking to politics primarily as an instrument of settlement. I categorize the political theories of these three thinkers as "virtue theories of politics" and juxtapose them to a virtue theory of politics which draws on Nietzsche's critique of virtue and his valorization of virtue, and on Arendt's account of politics as virtuosity. And I note that both these virtue theorists gesture to Machiavelli in their use of the concepts of virtue and virtuosity.

I argue that virtue theories of politics typically presuppose some essential, or natural, or pliant self which is only enabled by and not also resistant to the construction of subjectivity required by the particular political and social orders they favor. Their politics are juridical, devoted primarily to the establishment of law and order and to the bracketing or exclusion of contingency. Virtue theorists of politics, by contrast, look to politics as the site of resistance to the imposition of order. For the sake of virtue, they oppose the interiorization of the order of virtue or subjectivity which virtue theories require. They argue that virtue and politics postulate contingency and resistance as well as the possibility of order and so they advocate a more highly politicized set of arrangements, one which recalls the vitality of the ancient Greek *agora*.

I conclude that the set of issues highlighted by the virtue/virtuosity opposition outlined here are more provocative than those at the heart of the dominant debates in contemporary Anglo-American political theory. And I suggest that this virtue alternative should be attractive to liberals, although they will be reluctant to consider it because they do not share its commitment to politicization and because it is at odds with their own commitment to a politics-free private realm.



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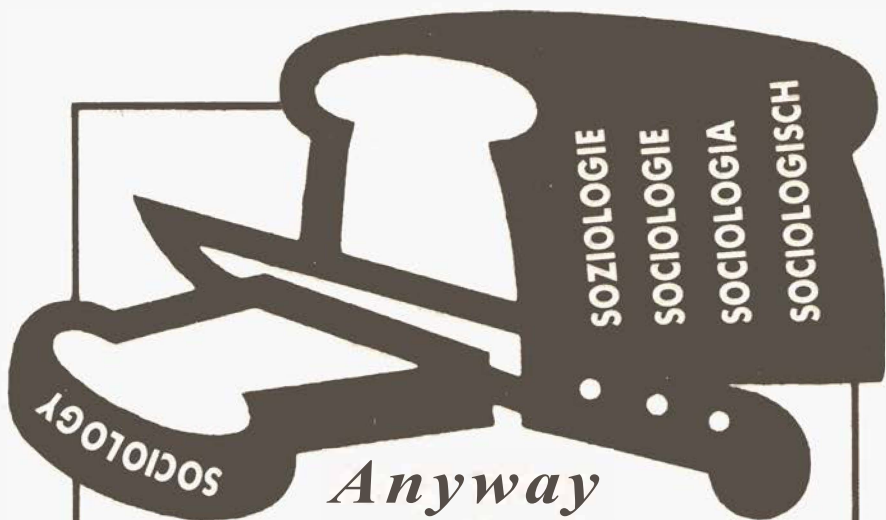


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