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Editorial

Civilizational Crisis in a New Stage

The transfer of the American embassy to the occupied Al-Quds Al-Sharif, in flagrant defiance of the international laws and the UN Security Council resolutions approved by the United States of America itself, is a single move from a stage that lasted for fifty-one years since 1967 when Israel occupied the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif in the June War, to the fourteenth of June 2018, to a stage open to all sorts of possibilities where the already severe crisis in the region is still worsening. This move will make the question of Palestine take a critical turn that diminishes chances of settlement and makes crises even graver at levels in the short and long terms. At this stage, which is very critical at all levels, the world will face highly complex and intractable problems that mark the emergence of a new civilizational crisis where dialogue decreases, its voices are silenced and humanity is disappointed of the efforts deployed over recent decades in order to build a new world order on the basis of firmly established rules of international law and the values of tolerance, understanding, coexistence, dialogue and solidarity between nations and peoples.

This setback in the world order established in the wake of the Second World War with the foundation of the United Nations Organization following the ratification of its charter by the founding countries in San Francisco, USA, in 1945. This confirms that the international law is being violated, the world is going backwards and that progress in all fields is emptied of its human essence which has until recently been one of the strongest fundamentals of the international policy that is based on keeping international peace. This situation affects badly the very idea of progress which is one of the fundamental ideas begotten by the human mind at the time of Enlightenment as it is widely conceived of nowadays. Consequently, our world has entered a dark period where force prevails over the right and brutality over law and order; a period

that can be described as the “new retrogression” which surpasses with its destructive effects all of the other reactionary waves witnessed by humanity throughout its history.

The catastrophic event which shook the world on the 14th of June 2018 is not only a particularly serious shift in the American policy which unconditionally supports Israel, the state of aggression, occupation, usurpation, repression and murder, but it is in its essence an indication of a qualitative move in the violation of the charter of the United Nations initiated by the United States thus leading the world in a dark abyss. This event which bears the seeds of destruction will certainly have a strong negative effect on world peace and security and on the future of the world order which is hoped to establish peace and security, and spread values of dialogue among nations and alliance among civilizations to allow for human life to flourish.

Over the twentieth century and in the first two decades of this century, our world has suffered from several crises. Though some of them were addressed and settled for good, some others are still adversely affecting the process of building world peace and stabilizing the situation in the world, while others have worsened in such a way as they give birth to greater and more severe other crises. However, the current one which broke out with the transfer of the American embassy from Tel Aviv to the occupied Al-Quds Al-Sharif is unprecedented and unmatched because it constitutes a flagrant disregard for the charter of the United Nations, the resolutions of the Security Council, the decisions of the General Assembly of the United Nations and the decisions of the International Court of Justice. In addition, it's a falsification of history and its facts, a deception for the international community. Thus, it is by all standards a crisis of the human conscience. As such, it is a civilizational crisis in a new stage because the world has entered into a dangerous period of its contemporary history as standards have been disrupted, concepts spoiled, values shaken and international laws violated in an unprecedented way when the US administration, which is the super power supposed to protect and uphold peace and law and make the new human civilization, defied the entire world.

Among the aspects of the civilizational crisis in its deep notion are the dissociation of political decisions from the moral values, the prevalence

of power over the right, the triumph of injustice over justice, the defeat of good intentions in front of evil propensities, the expanding waves of hatred, discrimination, racial and religious segregation and their prevalence in the relationships between people and in the political, cultural and intellectual life, the spread of political corruption which is far more dangerous to people than moral vices, the over-reliance on force, capabilities, influence and hegemony and their use in aggressions against peoples, violation of their rights, plundering of their resources, encroaching on their vital interests, endeavoring to maintain them under the control of forces of domination and repression which enslave, impoverish and force the human being to surrender thus undermining his will and dignity. Today, these aspects are dominating the world stage and are getting even more striking in the policies contradicting international laws adopted by the super powers which all converge on the goals they seek to attain though they do not often agree on the means to do so.

The civilizational crisis is a crisis of the human conscience, a crisis of the international law, a crisis of sublime values, noble principles, equity standards and a crisis of the international politics. The incident that inflames the situation, defies the international community, falsifies history, flouts the legitimate rights of a people who was dispossessed of his land and whose half was dislocated, spoils the human conscience and pushes the world to the edge of the cliff especially when it emanates from a super power with great international influence. In such a situation, the human crisis, which is in essence a civilizational one, ushers the world into a new stage of confrontation wherein the victims in all cases are the peoples who can't defend their interests, preserve their gains, protect their resources and legitimate rights to live in dignity, sovereignty and national independence while keeping their civilizational identity and cultural, spiritual and historical specificities.

Our world of today is heading towards a period of uncertainty and fear at the levels of international policy as well as the international political thought. It has almost lost direction amid the tidal waves of hatred, racism, segregation, extremism, injustice and aggression on the weak and defenseless peoples. The super powers bear the responsibility of the degradation of the international situation to reach this degree of instability, express violation and flagrant disregard for the international law perpetrated by a great country that

has proved through its adopted policies that it disavows the basic spirit of its independence document and renounces the principles of its constitution when it unconditionally takes side with the Zionist state which occupies the Palestinian territories and doggedly maintains its claim to make of the Muslim Arab city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif its eternal capital in a blatant defiance of the international legitimacy.

Those are the major roots of the new stage of the international civilizational crisis which has triggered off a surge in the spread of terrorism in all its forms including state terrorism which is practiced by countries that falsely claim to be democratic and by others that claim to be the origin of the sovereignty of law and democratic rule. Actually, their practices proved them to betray and explicitly act against the fundamentals on which they were established to the extent that their true image which contradicts the human values on which they were established is exposed to the world. That is a sheer and complex paradox that occasions a crisis that is exacerbating nowadays to the extent that it has become a civilizational crisis whose dangerous far-reaching repercussions that threaten the whole world are hitting hard the international community.

To react to this new version of the civilizational crisis which broke out on 14 May 2018 with the opening of the American embassy in the Arab and Muslim city of Al-Quds AL-Sharif occupied by Israel, the international community should combine efforts to restore respect for the international law, credibility for the international thought and awakening for the human conscience. These urgent actions are the battles of reform that must be fought by cultivated elites, creators of constructive ideas as a homogenous and united bloc so as to save the world from the threats and overcome the challenges and international difficulties it faces. The final goal is to address the civilizational crisis that has entered a new stage which pushes humanity that aspires to peace and to building a new world from which flows a spirit-based humanity, towards an uncertain destination.

The exacerbating civilizational crisis bears with it an international political crisis which drives the world to a dangerous turning point. The only way out of it is through going back to the international law, making recourse to it and invoking in it in all affairs of the international policies in order to bring

peace to the whole world, save the human civilization from disaster, gear efforts towards comprehensive and sustainable development whose fruits will benefit the present and future generations. There is no other way to save the world from other more severe crises which have a deeper impact on human life than this way that should be pursued to build a brighter and more secure future for the human family at large.

There is a direct correlation between the civilizational crisis and the major political crises which break out in various regions of the world. If the first one happens, the second ones occur too and vice versa because the civilizational crisis is the result of the political, economic, moral and intellectual crisis. The crisis in its general conception means the imbalance of the intellectual and moral forces in a given society. Redressing this imbalance requires redressing the international conditions as a whole, rationalizing the international policies and rehabilitating the human values and principles to make them prevail in the taking of life-and-death decisions and adopting vital positions and contribute to the making of the future of the world.

Islam Today

ISESCO and the Shaping of the Future of the Islamic World

Dr Abdulaziz Othman Altwajri*

Today's world is experiencing a critical stage which will usher into a new historical era where humanity will be facing tough challenges that will be difficult to cope with and to eventually overcome. On top of such challenges whose precursors are already bearing on modern societies is **the anticipation of the future** in a bid to lay the ground for a brighter era to emerge. This is a very complex process called "**shaping the future**" in futurological literature.

These challenges and all associated difficulties originate in the **disrupted balance of values, principles and the international law system**, which has resulted in an atmosphere of uncertainty in international politics. As you know, when such uncertainty permeates into the spheres of law and politics, it gives rise to multifaceted crises whose severity threatens the stability of societies and undermines world peace.

Despite this somehow bleak introduction, we should not despair of reversing the situation, nor should this dash our hope and confidence in securing a better future, and rebuilding our strength on solid foundations, based on a vision that anticipates the future in such a way as to shape it according to our own aspirations to comprehensive progress and prosperity, sustainable security and peace.

The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) was founded in 1982 to serve as a driving force of joint Islamic action to ensure

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the development of Muslim societies and to promote their advancement in the areas of education, science, culture and communication.

Its objectives as laid out in its Charter are as follows:

- a) To strengthen, promote and consolidate cooperation among the Member States and consolidate it in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, as well as to develop and upgrade these fields, within the framework of the civilizational reference of the Islamic world and in the light of the human Islamic values and ideals.
- b) To consolidate understanding among peoples inside and outside the Member States and contribute to the achievement of world peace and security through various means, particularly through education, science, culture and communication.
- c) To publicize the correct image of Islam and Islamic culture, promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions, and work towards spreading the values of justice and peace along with the principles of freedom and human rights, in accordance with the Islamic civilizational perspective.
- d) To encourage cultural interaction and to support the aspects of cultural diversity in the Member States, while preserving the cultural identity and protecting the independence of thought.
- e) To consolidate complementarity and coordination among the specialized institutions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture and communication and among the Member States of ISESCO, and promote cooperation and partnership with the similar governmental and non-governmental institutions sharing the same interest, inside and outside the Member States.
- f) To take further interest in Islamic culture, highlight its specificities and publicize its landmarks in intellectual studies, scientific researches and educational curricula.
- g) To work for establishing complementarity and correlation among the educational systems of the Member States.

h) To support the efforts of the educational, scientific and cultural institutions for Muslims in non-Member States of ISESCO.

Working towards the educational, scientific, cultural and communicational development of the Islamic world as part of the pursuit of these goals requires concerted efforts, tapping the full existing potentials and provision of the necessary resources. To this end, ISESCO is heading forward with a crucially important strategic objective consisting in ensuring a better future for the Islamic world, which faces a multitude of political, economic, developmental and security challenges.

These challenges are compounded by others that are no lesser in gravity, such as the prevalence of sectarian conflicts, doctrinal fanaticism and religious strife tearing Muslims apart. Today, sectarian clashes that are no longer discreet or undeclared are on the increase, gravely jeopardizing the spiritual and cultural unity of the Muslim Ummah and constituting a hard core of tension and mistrust within Muslim societies. This danger is besieging us all and we have time and again drawn attention to it and appealed to the wise of the Muslim Ummah to confront it with the necessary seriousness, sincerity and sense of responsibility. This is probably a good opportunity for me to shed some light on the efforts of ISESCO in this regard. The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization prepared a **Strategy for Bringing Islamic Madhahib Closer Together**, approved by the Islamic Summit Conference along with the mechanisms of its implementation. As one of these mechanisms, the Supreme Consultative Council for Bringing Islamic Madhahib Closer Together was created under the aegis of ISESCO and brought together a select group of scholars from different Islamic schools of thought.

But out of scientific integrity and in recognition of the painful truth, we can but admit that the provisions and orientations of this Strategy are not implemented and a hidden hand within the community of Muslims is persistently igniting sectarian strife and endeavoring at all costs to advocate sectarianism, undermine the security of Muslim societies and incite strife within them. This only leads to more acute crises and creates hotbeds of instability that have erupted in many parts of the Islamic world.

There is no denying that the conflicts and wars tearing to shreds the unity of the Islamic world and undermining its entity are mostly the fruit of a sectarian frenzy whose protagonists are planning to lay claim to the Islamic world from east to west. For sure, all such schemes are certainly doomed to failure, as Allah says in the Holy Quran [***For the scum disappears like froth cast out; while that which is for the good of humankind remains on earth.***]⁽¹⁾

It is interesting that the instability, wars, conflicts and chaos prevailing in many parts of the Islamic world are giving license to foreign powers to interfere in the internal affairs of some Muslim countries, and provide a gateway for their invasion of Muslim societies, controlling national policies and breaking the ranks of national unity in unstable countries in pursuit of their own interests. This has placed the Islamic world in the position of a target in many plots that wreak havoc with its stability and jeopardize security and general economic and social Islamic conditions of Muslim populations, ultimately propelling the Islamic world back into regression or stalling its march towards the future.

Such are the broad lines and distinct features of the Islamic world as they were in the past and as they happen to be today.

But what about tomorrow?

What have we prepared for the future?

The first step in building the future of the Islamic world as we aspire to, is to eradicate illiteracy in all its forms, functional illiteracy, digital illiteracy and information illiteracy. It also entails developing and improving the quality of education by adopting modern and world class educational systems, starting with the training of teachers who believe in the vision of change, capable of leading the drive for change, mastering information technologies, resourceful, seasoned professionals who are capable of interacting with students and colleagues, knowledgeable about modern sciences and the culture of their

(1) *Surah Ar-Ra'd, verse 17.*

societies. By the same token, the financial standing of these teachers needs to be imperatively improved.

Secondly, by modernizing curricula and renovating the schooling system, and by reforming and modernizing university education in terms of the knowledge, organizational and technological structures, taking into consideration the global context. This is referred to as “**the quadrilogy of educational development**” and aims to develop the university and promote its mission and role in supporting global sustainable development, support and develop scientific research, and encourage innovation and creativity in sciences and technology.

Thirdly, by fighting corruption in general, be it political, administrative, or judiciary corruption, and by reinforcing economic complementarity among countries of the Islamic world, expanding intra-Islamic trade, the exchange of professional technical, financial and administrative expertise, and spreading the culture of work, productive, scientific and critical thinking in all spheres, and competitiveness in productivity and creativity. Such is the path to integrate the information society which represents the gateway to comprehensive growth, economic prosperity, scientific advancement, creativity and innovation in all fields, in such a way as to enable the Islamic world to be active player in the development of knowledge.

Moreover, the Islamic world cannot achieve stability and sally forth on the path of progress without first fighting the sectarian ideologies, doctrinal and ethnic radicalism, and conflicts raging on between Muslims. In fact, when sectarian thought and doctrinal and ethnic fanaticism spread their tentacles and prevail, they carry within them the seeds of self-destruction and result in a general weakening of the Muslim entity, paralyze the movement of the Islamic world and prevent it from rising, advancing or progressing. To a large extent, all of this hinges upon the implementation of the OIC Charter on conflict resolution and on reinforcing Islamic solidarity in the face of foreign covetousness and designs.

The tumultuous crises gripping the Islamic world today as a result of escalating conflicts and multiple disputes cannot always be attributed to

external factors. Most of this is in fact the fruit of internal oppression and the tyrannical mentality and abuse of an authority that should have been a national authority. However, this does not obviate the fact that foreign hands played a role in one way or the other, in triggering and exacerbating fratricidal conflicts and wars between Muslims that obstruct the course of comprehensive sustainable development.

In this respect, it is necessary to mention the many hotspots that span the entire surface area of the Islamic world, from Afghanistan to Somalia, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon, Mali, Nigeria and many others. Worthy of mention too is the occupation of parts of the Islamic world such as Palestine where the occupying Israeli entity continues to persecute the Palestinian people; in addition to the Azerbaijani province of Nagorno-Karabakh being under a heinous Armenian occupation which defies all relevant international laws. Other examples include the Spanish-occupied Moroccan cities of Sebta and Melillia and the Malwiyya Islands⁽²⁾; as well as East Turkestan in China known today as Xingiang Uyghur, and the terrible ordeals experienced by Muslims in Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, Angola and Central Africa, who are subjected to persecution and genocide and deprived of their rights as citizens living in their one and only homeland.

Many efforts have been made to advance the Islamic world in many aspects over the five past decades, since the creation in 1972 of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (now the Organization of Islamic Cooperation) in the aftermath of the first Islamic Summit Conference held in Rabat in 1969 at the invitation of His Majesty King Hassan II, and his Majesty King Faical Ibn Abdulaziz Al Saud, may Allah's mercy be upon them.

There are three clues to changing the conditions of the Islamic world through a wise Islamic approach, and using this approach as a starting point to draw an outline of the future. In addition to modernizing educational systems,

(2) Widely mistaken for the "Chafarinas Islands" by the media. This mistake was pointed to by the late Abdelouahab Benmansour, ex-historian of the Kingdom of Morocco.

developing the educational process and supporting scientific research in all the fields of knowledge, they also involve modernizing public lifestyles in general. Indeed, educational systems cannot be developed, nor can scientific research be boosted and encouraged and given a topmost priority status if general conditions in the Muslim and Arab countries remain as they are, in the grip of poverty, instability and vacillation between political and economic experiences and policies that have proven their inefficiency and pointlessness. Profound reforms are needed to restore the dignity of human free will, spread trust, revive hopes, diffuse the fires of anger and anxiety, disperse the clouds of fear and suspicion and banish any hesitations and reluctance to partake of the general issues preoccupying society.

In its eighth section dedicated to **human rights and good governance, the Ten-year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century**, adopted in 2005 in Makkah al-Mukarramah by the 3rd Extraordinary Islamic Summit, calls on Member States to: *“Seriously endeavor to enlarge the scope of political participation, ensure equality, civil liberties and social justice and to promote transparency and accountability, and eliminate corruption in the OIC Member States.”*

The adoption of this programme of action embodies the commitment of Muslim countries to global reform of general conditions, in philosophy, practice and policy. It also reflects their commitment to change, renewal and modernization in order to catch up with the march of advanced nations and embark on a new Islamic civilizational cycle.

Having clarified the above facts, it becomes legitimate to ask the following question:

How would conditions in the Islamic world have been had the recommendations of this extraordinary Islamic summit, held eight years ago and many other recommendations, decisions and strategies adopted within the framework of joint Islamic action, been implemented, or at least in their first stages of implementation?

The Islamic world is squandering one opportunity after the other, and it is high time such a negative streak was brought to an end in the lives of Muslims.

If most Muslim countries had the strong will, determination and capacity to carry into action all the decisions and recommendations of the many Islamic conferences, particularly Islamic Summit conferences, the sessions of the OIC Foreign Ministers Council and the sector-dedicated conferences organized by ISESCO, conditions in the Islamic world would have been so much improved in many aspects. The Islamic world has numerous abundant resources and great geographical and demographic advantages to advance at all levels, free its willpower from the foreign pressures arising from greedy neo-colonial policies, and assert its position on the international scene.

These weighty challenges facing the Islamic world today and for long eras before that, cannot annihilate hopes or weaken the will and desire to act. Rays of hope peek at the horizon and positive signs can be perceived by those who ponder and scrutinize the situation at hand. The Islamic world will rise from its stumble and will, by the grace of Allah, overcome all the challenges barring its way to progress and prosperity by consolidating Islamic solidarity, reinforcing unity within the respect of diversity and multiplicity, and within the national sovereignty of each OIC Member State, face up to external designs with well coordinated if not unified policies, and with strong positions that are inspired from the OIC Charter, the UN Charter and the rules of international law.

The evolution of the development notion has resulted in a nobler concept in content, broader in scope and deeper in significance. This is known today as **global sustainable development** and is the most recent international concept adopted by the United Nations and its affiliated agencies. Many international conferences were held in the last two decades to address global sustainable development, ISESCO taking part in some of these as the Islamic entity specialized in the development of education, sciences, culture and communication in the Islamic world.

In view of this significant evolution of the concept of development in the global sense, the United Nations issued the **Millennium Declaration** in September 2000. The third chapter of this Declaration, dedicated to Development and Poverty Eradication affirms the following commitments:

1. We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from

the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want.

2. We resolve therefore to create an environment - at the national and global levels alike - which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty.
3. Success in meeting these objectives depends, inter alia, on good governance within each country. It also depends on good governance at the international level and on transparency in the financial, monetary and trading systems. We are committed to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system.
4. We are concerned about the obstacles developing countries face in mobilizing the resources needed to finance their sustained development. We will therefore make every effort to ensure the success of the High-level International and Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development, to be held in 2001.
5. We also undertake to address the special needs of the least developed countries. In this context, we welcome the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held in May 2001 and will endeavor to ensure its success.

But for lack of a firm international resolve, only little has been done to implement these commitments made by the international community to support global sustainable development efforts around the world. In terms of depth and political, economic, social and civilizational dimensions, these commitments are correlated and crosscut in one way or the other the fields of action of ISESCO. Through them, ISESCO endeavors to develop Muslim societies, achieve a global educational, scientific and cultural sustainable development whose fruits would be reaped by the Islamic world in its battle to overcome the millennium challenges.

Gathered at the World Millennium Summit, the United Nations Member States, all 192 states and no less than 32 international organizations, resolved to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. These are eight main goals that constitute an international programme for global development. Unfortunately this deadline has elapsed, but the fixed targets were not met⁽³⁾.

As we review these noble goals that embody international willpower and provide a broad framework for the achievement of a global sustainable development, we realize that they carry a strong similarity to the goals pursued by ISESCO within its fields of competence and contained in its successive three-year action plans and in **the Ten-year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century**, as adopted by the 3rd extraordinary Islamic Summit meeting held in Makkah Al Mukarramah in 2005. These goals are:

First: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

Second: to achieve universal primary education.

Third: to promote gender equality and empower women.

Fourth: to reduce child mortality.

Fifth: to improve maternal health

Sixth: to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.

Seventh: to ensure environmental sustainability.

Eighth: to develop a global partnership for development.

We can generally say that ISESCO is a key role-player in the international endeavors to create an international partnership for development of which the Islamic world would be an integral part with its diverse resources and tremendous capabilities. ISESCO participates in the implementation of **the Ten-year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century** within the scope of its fields of expertise and

(3) Millenium Development Goals, United Nations, New York.

the limits of its resources. **ISESCO is therefore involved at many levels in shaping the future of the Islamic world.**

This Islamic and international partnership in bolstering the efforts to bring about a balanced and fully integrated growth in such vital fields as education, sciences, technology, innovation, culture, communication, the environment and childhood, is the seal marking ISESCO's new Three-Year Action Plan adopted in 2015 by the 12th General Conference held in Baku and which aspires to bring about the Islamic world's advancement and meet the millennium challenges.

In education, the plan focuses on two major priorities which are: 1) renewal of Member States' educational policies towards a transition from teaching to learning, 2) and enhancing the role of education in development and coexistence. From these two priorities flow a number of axes that drive towards supporting global sustainable development in the Islamic world.

In the field of science, the Three-Year Action Plan focuses on two main priorities: 1) gearing science and technology output to achieve socio-economic gains, and 2) science-based effort to conserve biodiversity and natural resources.

As for culture, the action plan centers on two principal priorities:

- 1) Promotion of cultural diversity, reinforcement of cultural rights and intercultural dialogue, and preservation of heritage within the cultural policies of Member States, and 2) strengthening cultural roles of the civil society's different social classes towards the achievement of sustainable development in the Islamic world.

As what concerns social and human sciences, the two following major priorities were determined:

- 1) Activating the role of social and human sciences in entrenching social peace and cohesion,
- 2) Harnessing the results of social and human studies in the service of society's prosperity.

Moreover, in terms of giving body to the partnership and cooperation with Arab, Islamic and international organizations, civil society institutions during the next three years, it was decided that this endeavor, undertaken as part of the prerogatives of the Directorate of External Relations and Cooperation, would espouse a perspective that strengthens the important and positive achievements of the cooperation policy adopted by the General Directorate under the Organization's successive action plans and where the outputs of cooperation and its executive mechanisms translate into integrated programmes and projects that address fundamental issues and propose radical and effective solutions, within set timeframes, in coordination with the beneficiaries and executive and cooperating parties, and based on quality criteria and assessment indicators that properly assess the impact on the ground of these programmes and projects. In this regard, two projects will be implemented:

- Project on consolidating cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations and bodies,
- Project on consolidating cooperation with civil society institutions and promoting humanitarian work.

As for developing the action of the Center for Planning, Information, Documentation and Publishing (CPIDP), two priorities were determined namely, improving methods of strategic planning, follow-up and evaluation of ISESCO's activities; and working towards integration into the society of knowledge and ICTs. These priorities will be carried out through three projects:

- Project on boosting the capacities of the human resources working in the fields of planning, follow-up and evaluation, and providing data and statistics in the Organization's fields of action,
- Project on promoting the use of ICTs to develop the action of ISESCO and the competent parties in Member States,
- Project on strengthening the capacities of ISESCO's human resources and providing electronic and computer equipment used in printing, documentation, publishing, and distribution.

With regard to the Center of Information and Communication, created within the framework of the present Action Plan, the following three priorities were set: enhancing the Organization's intellectual radiance and publicizing its activities; consolidating the right of access to information; and finally the professional and legal handling of stereotypes about Islam and Muslims in the Media. These priorities will be concretized through the following three projects:

- Project on harnessing information technologies and public relations to further enhance the international radiance of ISESCO,
- Project on access to information and the right to responsible expression in the media and communication sectors,
- Project on the professional and legal handling of stereotypes about Islam and Muslims in the media.

As is evident from this brief overview, ISESCO's different points of focus, which are broken down into programmes and activities implemented within the framework of a good planning process and carefully considered projects and from a clear vision and a profound sense of responsibility, reflect the support that ISESCO extends to development efforts undertaken in the Islamic world to bring about a firmly-grounded renaissance of the Muslim Ummah.

And as the magnitude of the task exceeds by far ISESCO's capacities, and since the buildup of problems hindering the Islamic march of development is growing in the midst of the instability prevailing in most Muslim countries, the role of ISESCO is to contribute with practical reflection, realistic conceptualization, future planning and general guidance through its successive action plans. Through this process, ISESCO rises to the status of a prestigious house of expertise open onto far horizons in all aspects related to education, sciences, culture, communication, environment and childhood. It shares its comprehensive and sagacious expertise with Muslim countries to build their capacities and improve the performance levels of national policies in these fields.

Based on the famous postulate of modern scientific practices, which considers the strategic planning of the future of the Islamic world as a solid pillar the action aimed at developing societies and individuals, ISESCO has placed the strategic planning for the development of the Islamic world among its priorities. To this end, ISESCO has developed seventeen (17) strategies which, combined together, represent a global development strategy in its fields of action. These include **the Cultural Strategy for the Islamic World, the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation, the Strategy of Cultural Action outside the Islamic World, the Strategy for Cultural Takaful in the Islamic World, the Strategy for Development of Biotechnology in the Islamic World, the Strategy for Management of Water Resources in the Islamic World, the Strategy for Development of University Education in the Islamic World, the Strategy for ICTs Development in the Islamic World, the Strategy for Development of Renewable Energies in the Islamic World, and the Strategy for Development of Cultural Tourism in the Islamic World.** These strategies, of which the majority were adopted by the Islamic Summit at its successive meetings, cater for the educational, scientific, cultural and communication development needs of the Islamic world. Should the need arise for new strategies, ISESCO will again take the lead in preparing them and monitoring their implementation.

If we revert to the **Ten-year Programme of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Islamic Ummah in the 21st Century**, in the implementation of which ISESCO plays a part, we will find the following commitments under the heading 'Development, Socio-Economic and Scientific Issues':

- 1. Call upon the Member States to sign and ratify all existing OIC trade and economic agreements, and to implement the provisions of the relevant OIC Plan of Action to Strengthen Economic and Commercial Cooperation among OIC Member States.*
- 2. Mandate COMCEC⁽⁴⁾ to promote measures to expand the scope of intra-OIC trade, and to consider the possibility of establishing*

(4) The Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the OIC.

a Free Trade Area between the Member States in order to achieve greater economic integration to raise it to a percentage of 20% of the overall trade volume during the period covered by the plan, and call on the Member States to support its activities and to participate in those activities at the highest possible level with delegations possessing the necessary expertise.

- 3. Promote endeavors for institutionalized and enhanced cooperation between the OIC and regional and international institutions working in the economic and commercial fields.*
- 4. Support the OIC Member States in their efforts to accede to the World Trade Organization (WTO), and promote concerted positions between the Islamic Member States within the WTO.*
- 5. Call upon the OIC Member States to facilitate the freedom of movement of businessmen and investors across their borders.*
- 6. Support expanding electronic commerce among the OIC Member States and call on the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry to strengthen its activities in the field of data and expertise exchanges between chambers of commerce of the Member States.*
- 7. Call upon the Member States to coordinate their environmental policies and positions in international environmental forums so as to prevent any adverse effects of such policies on their economic development.*

Under the heading "Supporting Development and Poverty Alleviation in Africa", the Ten-year Programme of Action sets the following undertakings:

- 1. Promote activities aimed at achieving economic and social development in African countries, including supporting industrialization, energizing trade and investment, transferring technology, alleviating their debt burden and poverty, and eradicating diseases; welcome the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), adopt to this end, a special programme for the development of Africa.*
- 2. Call upon the Member States to participate in international efforts to support programmes aimed at alleviating poverty and capacity building in the Least-Developed Member States of the OIC.*

3. *Urge donor Member States to cancel bilateral and multilateral debts to low-income Member States.*
4. *Urge international specialized institutions and organizations to exert greater efforts to alleviate poverty in the Least-Developed Member States and assist Muslim societies, the refugees and displaced in the OIC Member States, and Muslim Minorities and Communities in non-OIC Member States; urge States to contribute to the World Fund for Solidarity and Combating Poverty.*

With regard to “Higher Education, Science and Technology”, the programme of action sets the following commitments:

1. *Effectively improve and reform educational institutions and curricula in all levels, link postgraduate studies to the comprehensive development plans of the Islamic world. At the same time, priority should be given to science and technology and facilitating academic interaction and exchange of knowledge among the academic institutions of Member States, and urge the Member States to strive for quality education that promotes creativity, innovation, and research and development.*
2. *Assimilate highly-qualified Muslims within the Islamic World, develop a comprehensive strategy in order to utilize their expertise and prevent brain drain phenomenon.*
3. *Entrust the General Secretariat to study the creation of an OIC Award for Outstanding Scientific Achievements by Muslim scientists.*
4. *Call upon Muslim countries to encourage research and development programmes, taking into account that the global percentage of this activity is 2% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and request Member States to ensure that their individual contribution is not inferior to half of this percentage.*
5. *Take advantage of the important results of the World Summit on Information Society, held in Tunis, in which all Member States actively participated with a view to close the digital gap between the developed and developing States and request the General*

Secretariat to follow up these results in order to build the capacities of Member States to adhere to the information society which, in turn, will sustain development in Member States.

- 6. Encourage public and private national research institutions to invest in technology capacity-building, in areas of advanced technologies, such as the acquisition of nuclear technology for peaceful uses.*
- 7. Review the performance of the OIC-affiliated universities so as to improve their effectiveness and efficiency, and call for participation in the two Waqfs (Endowments) dedicated to the two universities in Niger and Uganda, and provide support to the International Islamic University in Malaysia.*
- 8. Call upon the Member States to extend enhanced support to the Islamic University of Technology in Bangladesh in order to enable it to contribute more towards capacity building of the OIC Member States through human resources development.*
- 9. Urge the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) to further enhance its programme of scholarships for outstanding students and Hi-Tech specializations aimed at developing the scientific, technical, and research capabilities of scientists and researchers in the Member States.*

These were the commitments in whose implementation ISESCO is involved at the level of those falling under its broad scope of action. ISESCO's action plans, particularly the previous Three-Year Action Plan (2013-2015) and the current one which will expire by the end of 2018, cover all these fields with no exception, and for that reason we chose at ISESCO to derive our inspiration from the OIC's Ten-year Programme of Action and to be enlightened by its general guidelines when we set out to devise the Three-Year Action Plan and Budget for 2019-2021.

Such is the roadmap for ISESCO's contribution to shaping the future of the Islamic world.

For all these consideration, ISESCO is an integral part of the joint Islamic action system operating under the aegis of the Organization of Islamic

Cooperation for the advancement of the Islamic world. It is committed to assisting Member States in devising their national policies in the fields falling within its scope of action, implementing and developing these policies and guaranteeing their quality at all levels.

By the same token, ISESCO considers the Islamic world's development to meet the millennium challenges as a civilizational mission and a collective responsibility that no party can shoulder without the support and participation of other parties dedicated to joint Islamic action. It also considers that the major challenges, with emphasis on the attribute 'major', facing our Ummah in its present and future call for joining hands at all levels, mobilizing the Islamic societies' dynamic powers to face these challenges with the necessary degree of wisdom, courage and strong Islamic solidarity.

The future of the Muslim Ummah is being created in the lecturing halls of universities and think-tanks, taking shape in innovative minds, edified by the determination of people who are accountable before Allah (SWT) then before their own conscience and their communities. The future is also created on the arenas of constructive action, fruitful production and tireless dynamism, within a framework of good governance, social justice and respect for human rights that Islam guaranteed for all mankind, in an atmosphere of concord, tolerance and coexistence, and based on Islamic solidarity, the ultimate aim being to promote world peace.

The development of the Islamic world in the fields that fall within ISESCO's scope of competence is the solid basis for building the future that ushers the Muslim community into a stage of further advanced, prosperity, and security and stability because the making of the future starts from building minds that innovate and invent, and from building the highly skilled competencies who provide societies with the working and production means to move forward in the right direction to achieve progress in all fields. Thus, ISESCO has initiated a great development in the scientific meaning of comprehensive sustainable development and developed a method that is adopted for practical application through the incessant and steadfast work it undertakes as part of its strategic future vision, in accordance with the strategic planning it adopts as a working a

method and based on the consecutive three-year action plans through which it contributes to making the future of the Islamic world.

Through ISESCO's comprehensive strategy and goals, and based on the expertise its has accumulated over the last three decades, I'm fully convinced that building the Islamic world starts from the elimination of all forms of illiteracy, developing education and improving its quality, modernizing curricula and renewing educational systems, reforming and modernizing higher education, combating all forms of corruption, promoting economic complementarity among Islamic countries, spreading the culture of work, production and scientific and critical thinking and competition in production and yield. I have elaborated on these issues and given an overview of ISESCO's efforts in these fields. Given the magnitude of the burdens shouldered by ISESCO, its central role, as I already mentioned, is to contribute with scientific thinking, practical method, realistic theorizing, future planning and general orientation through implementing the consecutive action plans. All of this has made of ISESCO an outstanding and high profile expertise house.

On the Refinement and Purification of Islamic Heritage

Dr Mohamed Emara*

Our Islamic heritage is the legacy held by the Ummah, the legacy by which it has lived, enhancing and developing it in different fields of knowledge, science, thought, literature and arts, from the rise of Islam to modern times. It is the heritage that revitalized and absorbed the myriad heritages of the Ummah's different peoples who had evolved over the eras preceding the advent of Islam.

Of this legacy, some is divine revelation, sacred and infallible and that is the Holy Quran: **[Then We have given the Book for inheritance to such of Our servants as We have chosen,]** (*Fatir*, verse 32). The Prophet's true Sunnah represents his explanations and clarifications of this Quranic message, acquiring its own infallibility if it is narrated with a sound and uninterrupted chain of narration, or if it is practical, having taken body in real life, been witnessed to by the Ummah and practiced by its successive generations.

This sacred heritage - both the revelation and the Prophet's clarifications of this revelation - is not referred to as thought, for the thinking process is purely human, a man-made creation and the fruit of reflection, contemplation and pondering, all of which are human qualities that Allah the Almighty transcends: **[There is nothing whatever like unto Him and He is the One that hears and sees (all things).]** (*Ash-Shura*: verse 11).

This sacred heritage is a perfect, absolute and omniscient divine science, it is the source of existence, whereas human thought is a body of man-made

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knowledge. Part of it is religious and results from Man's reflections about divine revelation, and the other part is worldly and is the fruit of reflection on existence. For this reason, Allah (SWT) is referred to as the all-knowing, and not as the thinker or the knowledgeable because knowledge is an acquisition, is partial and often preceded by a state of ignorance, all of these being attributes of Man that cannot apply to the Almighty Allah (SWT).

One example of this distinction in heritage is Charia and fiqh. Charia is an immutable divine revelation whilst fiqh is the result of human ijihad endeavours that are governed by the Charia's frame of reference and its rules. The legislator in this case can only be Allah – who cannot be described as a scholar/jurist – while the scholar is the person engaged in ijihad to interpret Charia rules– and therefore cannot be described as the legislator.

Since the Islamic Ummah's creativity, which gave body to this Islamic heritage, is neither sacred nor infallible thought, it falls entirely under the label of ijihad which is not sacred and therefore can be reviewed. In fact, in many instances, it is our duty to revisit this form of heritage.

Since the establishment of the recording art in our civilization - more than a thousand years ago-, Islamic heritage has experienced a form of verification known as refinement or review, intended to revisit and present this heritage in an enhanced and improved way, be it in form or content.

Those reviewing the catalogues of the millions of Arab and Islamic manuscripts, and the titles of books published on the basis of these manuscripts, will come across thousands of titles that are in fact refined and edited versions of books written by former authors.

In the first glossary to ever catalogue the publications printed by Arab publishers in modern times, namely *Mu'jam al-Matbu'at al-'Arabiyya wa al-Mu'arraba*⁽¹⁾ by Yussuf Sarkis (AD 1956-1932) who catalogued all the publications that had been released by the twenties of the 20th century, we will find many titles that confirm that heritage review is an old and firmly established tradition resorted to in dealing with heritage.

(1) First edition, Cairo, 1928

There are books such as *Tahdhib al-asmaa wa al-Lughaat*, *Tahdhib Islah al-Mantiq*, *Tahdhib al-Tarikh al-Kabir* by Ibn Asaker (AH 499-571/AD 1105-1176), *Tahdhib al-Mantiq wa al-Kalam*, *Tahdhib al-Wosoul ila 'Ilm al-Ossoul*, *Al-Lubab fi Tahdhib al-Ansab*, etc. There are also other works that were printed after this date such as *Tahdhib Sirat Ibn Hisham*, *Tahdhib al-Kamil fi al-Lugha wa al-Adab*, *Tahdhib as-Suhhah*, *Tahdhib al-Aghani*, and many more books exemplifying this approach to heritage.

In fact, if we look at the major works written about the Noble Sunnah, we will find all of them - the *Sahihs* and the *Musnads* - have at their foundation this art of refinement, screening and selection from among everything narrated and attributed to the Messenger (PBUH). *Sahih al-Bukhari* - considered the most correct and verified hadith book - was the fruit of Al-Bukhari's (AH 194-256/AD 810-870) endeavours in verifying, screening, critiquing, examining and scrutinising according to the rules and principles of hadith narration and understanding, culminating in some three thousand hadiths - if we exclude repeated ones—extracted by al-Bukhari from more than sixty thousand hadiths attributed to the Messenger (PBUH). That is the very essence of editing these multitudes of narrations.

While Imam al-Suyuti (AH 849-911/AD 1445-1505) collected in his *Al-Jami' al-Kabir* hundreds of thousands of hadiths and Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (AH 241-164/AD 780-855) collected in his *Musnad* some thirty thousand hadiths, Imam Malik Ibn Anas (AH 93-179/AD 712- 795) limited himself in his *Muwatta* to hundreds of hadiths only. All of these represent varying degrees of the attempts to screen, examine, critique and scrutinise—i.e. refine these narratives.

This selection method is clearly observed among Sunnah scholars as they deal with compilations of narratives. For example, al-Bukhari's *Sahih* takes precedence over other *sahihs* and *musnads*, and what was agreed upon by the two sheikhs - al-Bukhari and Muslim (AH 204-261/AD 820-875) has a privileged position compared to what they failed to agree on. Other titles in hadith followed, choosing and selecting from the *sahihs*, such as *Safwat Sahih al-Bukhari*⁽²⁾ by the polymath Abduljalil Aissa (AH 1305- 1400/AD

(2) Published many times. The last edition was published in 7 volumes by Al-Hadi Publishing House, Cairo, 1993.

1888-1980) and *al-Muntakhab min al-Sunnah* compiled by the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Egypt.

This process of review, selection, screening and perfecting was undertaken with many books on the interpretation (*tafsir*) of the Noble Quran. At times, these came in the form of abridged versions, select compilations and briefs.

While this approach to heritage - through its review and purification - was popular among our ancestors who applied it to different heritage fields, it would be no exaggeration to say that we truly need - in the current intellectual reality - a revival of heritage verification and review in order to rationalize modern Islamic thought and achieve a true reconciliation between this heritage and the infallible divine revelation on the one hand, and between this heritage and scientific facts on the other. For example:

1. Many Israelite myths found their way into old Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*) books, either when they addressed the history of ancient nations and the notion of genesis, or other metaphysical subjects such as the world of the unseen, great happenings or other tales of the apocalypse to occur towards the end of times.

If Islam has been and continues to be unique in the way it sparingly speaks of the metaphysical world, as a way of prompting the mind instead to strive and be creative in the material world, these Israelite myths have diverted the Muslim mind from its intended mission and smothered it in a deluge of mythology that can claim no roots in Quranic revelation and of which no mention exists in the hadiths consistently and correctly reported on the Messenger (PBUH).

Valuable studies have been written on this aspect of Israelite narratives in Quranic exegesis books, and the need to review these books –i.e. purge them - of these Israelite intrusions. Among such books are the writings of the late Sheikh Mohammed Hussein al-Dhahabi (AH 1333-1397/AD 1915-1977) *Al-Israiliyyate fi Tafsir wa al-Hadith*⁽³⁾ and *Al-Ittijahat al-Munharifa fi al-Tafsir: Dawafi'uha wa Daf'uha*⁽⁴⁾. The

(3) Wahba Library Press, Cairo, 1999.

(4) Wahba Library Press, Cairo, 1986.

latest of these studies is a PhD dissertation prepared at Dar al-'Ulum in Cairo and in which the author traces the Hebrew roots of the Israelite narratives that infiltrated exegesis and history books. This study was published by the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs.

The Holy Quran came as an intellectual miracle that spurs the mind to think, ponder and reflect, and the Islamic religion is a true science in the strict sense of the term – i.e. the fruit of evidence, reasoning and logic – as in the words of Imam Malik Ibn Anas: “*This religion of ours is knowledge, and if we are taught this religion, we must ponder who is imparting this knowledge to us.*” For these reasons, reviewing old *tafsir* books and purging them of the myths and superstitions that permeated them is a sine qua non condition for bringing these interpretations into consistency with the logic of the Quran and with the Quranic method of valuing knowledge and scholars. [***There is no god but He: that is the witness of Allah His angels and those endued with knowledge standing firm on justice. There is no god but He the Exalted in Power the Wise.***] (*Al-Imran*: verse 18).

The perfection and refinement of these interpretations is a prerequisite to freeing the readers of *tafsir* books from the superstitious or myth-based approach and connecting them to the scientific method and faith-based rationality without which there can be no way to progress and advancement.

We need to purify these books – interpreting the Holy Quran - to rid them of Israelite narratives, while preserving as intact old manuscripts and earlier editions to serve as reference works for scholars and experts. This is neither strange nor novel. We have in libraries an immense repository of books on magic, sorcery, numerology, astrology and divination, perused by only those scholars and researchers who can produce documents from their universities or research centres certifying to their academic need to access and peruse this heritage.

The same approach should apply to the legacy of *tafsir* works - after its refinement into editions intended for the general public's consumption, thus limiting access to the source documents to specialized researchers who can study them in their historical contexts and research the causes that allowed their infiltration by these Israelite narratives.

2. In the science of Islamic faith - Islamic theology - we will come across many debates between theologians about divinity and metaphysics, subjects about which Islam was circumspect out of consideration for the limitations of the human mind – with its relative perception abilities – in understanding its truths and mysteries, and even the inability of the language to put into words the essence of these truths. These debates have filled up immense volumes that reflect the divergences of theology schools and of the followers of non-Islamic dogmas and religions, particularly those of Persian, Indian and Gnostic and esoteric philosophers. These debates then shifted from the sphere of academic and intellectual divergence to an outright conflict between Islamic doctrines. They were exploited in their wrong context, causing the fallout in Muslim ranks and giving rise to many loathsome forms of fanaticism and intolerance. These antagonisms reached such extent that one of the prominent scholars in this science – Hujjat al-Islam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (AH 450-505/AD 1058-1111) once wrote: “*You could submit a matter to al-Ash’ari and he would concur with you, but if you were to mention that it is also the opinion of the Mu’tazilites, he would reject it after having accepted it, and vice versa.*»

When he wrote his short but valuable book *Risalat al-Tawhid*, Imam Sheikh Muhammad Abdu (AH 1266-1323/AD 1849-1905) perfected and refined Islamic theology as he purged it from the tumult of ancient scholastics whose dogmatic differences gave rise to many controversial issues. When Imam Muhammad Abdu purified these doctrines from sectarian fanaticism, we discovered the immense common ground that is shared by all these leanings around the dogmas, perceptions and matters around which the divergences arose and filled old theology books.

Therefore, we need to review our theology heritage in such a way as to draw out the tenets set out divine revelation through categorical texts with clear supporting evidence, and present this heritage to the Ummah at large, while limiting access to the manuscripts and to this heritage in its old editions to specialized scholars.

Hujjat al-Islam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali engaged in such review of Islamic theology when he wrote his books *al-Iqtissad fi al-I’tiqad*, *Iljam al-Awam ‘an ‘ilm al-Kalam* and *al-Madhnun bihi ‘3ala Ghayri Ahlihi*.

He set a clear distinction between what is necessary for the general public and what falls within the exclusive ambit of specialists. The same approach was adopted by Ibn Rushd (AH 520-595/AD 1198-1126) in his interpretation of Quranic verses that are similar.

3. A third field of Islamic heritage that needs to be reviewed is our Sufi heritage. Sufism is the science of hearts and actions, and no Muslim scholar has left his mark on Islamic culture without having combined the philosophy of reason and the piety of hearts. Indeed, the reasoning mind awakens and controls the whims of the heart, the result of this fusion being the Islamic all-encompassing and balanced culture of the middle stance. This culture is innocent of the fractures caused by sharp contradictions between reason and tradition, which contradictions have borne such bitter fruits as the heartless 'experts' and the mindless 'scholars'.

Our legacy of Sufi books has been invaded by mounds of superstitions and myths that were embedded in them in the form of miracles and supernatural wonders.

There is no denying that such miracles and wonders enjoy consensus within the Islamic community as a sign of divine benediction for those whose souls were purified through spiritual exercises and unburdened from the weight and dark demands of material life. Thus, their spiritual faculties have evolved along with their ability to fight back, in the same way that physical strength and body muscle are built through sports, to break the boundaries of what is normal and ordinary.

Yet, the followers of this path have agreed by consensus to abstain from proving any of the miracles and wonders documented in the books perused by the general public, to prohibit the use of these miracles in challenges or to seek to convince the masses about them, as was the case with the miracles of prophets and messengers.

The fact that Sufi books were replete with accounts of these miracles and wonders runs counter to the ways of Sufi disciples. It is possible that those who introduced such accounts into these books wished to profit from Sufi tariqas and have no link to or close relationship with this science of hearts and actions.

Imam Muhammad Abdu spoke at length about the fact that much of what was attributed to Imam al-Sha'rani (AH 898-973/AD1493-1565) in his book *al-Tabaqat* had nothing to do with al-Sha'rani himself and was in fact perniciously attributed to him by those who were after profit. In addition to mysticism and Sufi heritage, we are faced with a strange intrusion on the Islamic ways of religious Sufism, i.e. the Batini Sufism that originated in Gnostic, Greek and Indian traditions. These traditions are foreign to the Islamic middle stance which is a mix of reason and tradition, Charia and fact, empiricism and spirituality, and between the facts of the metaphysical world and the signs of the visible world that are embedded in hearts and horizons.

For all these reasons, our Sufi heritage is also in need of refinement and purification to present the public and intellectuals with the true characteristics of true mysticism and confer balance on the culture of those who walk this path, while keeping the manuscripts of this heritage and its older editions for the exclusive use of researchers and specialists.

4. There is a fourth, extremely critical, field that emerges as we address the perfection of heritage, and that is the civilizational history of the Islamic Ummah.

I always struggle to find an answer when young people ask about my favourite book, the one I would vouch for and recommend for them to read about the history of Islam and Muslims.

Old historians have recorded history using the methods of the event chroniclers, i.e. they collected stories and events and affixed to each piece of historical record its chain of narration. They failed to strike a balance between the information and the analysis of its objectivity and exactitude, mindful of the generations to come after them. And so far we also have failed to accomplish the mission of purifying and perfecting history.

Let us use as a most eloquent example of the need to review history the narrative of what is known as the 'Great Upheaval' (*Al-Fitna al-Kubra*). Those who read the volumes written about the history of the 'Great Upheaval' and the wars that raged on between the Companions, may

Allah be pleased with them, are left with the notion of a 'coup' staged by the Companions against Islam and against everything they were schooled in under the Messenger (PBUH). This negative - and even dramatic-portrayal that has filled history volumes was created for many reasons, foremost of which were the infiltrations of Persian shu'ubism in this history. Their aim was to demonize the image of Islam and of the Arabs who removed Persia's Khosrow, as well as Shiites insidious attempts to vilify the Companions who had delayed the accession of Ali Ibn Abi Taleb to the caliphate (BH 23-AH 40/AD 601-661)(52 BC), such as Abu Bakr as-Seddiq (BH 51-AH 13/AD 573-634), Omar Ibn al-Khattab (BH 40-AH 23/AD 584-644), and Uthman Ibn 'Affan (AH 47-35/AD 577-656), may Allah be pleased with them all.

In this portrayal, created by Shu'ubists and Shiites, there is a total absence of the scientific approach in chronicling this upheaval. This approach asserts that the Companions never suffered divergences about religion – as faith, Charia and value system – i.e. the core of religion, and its fundamentals, pillars and principles. In fact, their differences were confined to politics which are substantive matters and do not affect dogma, principals or pillars, just as political parties differ in their programs but concur in their patriotism and their attachment and loyalty to the homeland and to the key elements that make up the nation's identity, such as religion, language and history.

Yes, the Companions differed about politics, i.e. substantive issues and fiqh matters, areas where the criteria of difference relate to benefit and harm, right and wrong, and not to faith or lack of it. In jurisprudence, even the jurist who errs has the reward of his *ijtihad* according to the golden fiqh rule: *"If a judge makes a ruling, striving to apply his reasoning (ijtihad) and he is correct, then he will have two rewards. If a judge makes a ruling, striving to apply his reasoning and he is mistaken, then he will have one reward."*

From this angle, all the companions, even those who fought against each other, are diligent and worthy of reward. Their difference does not undermine their eligibility as a segment in the chain of narration that transfers religion to the generations that followed them. In the Holy Quran, difference – in matters other than faith - even when reaching the stage of internecine fighting, does not take any of the opponents outside the sphere of faith: ***[If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel make ye peace between them:***

but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of Allah; but if it complies then make peace between them with justice and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair (and just). The believers are but a single Brotherhood: So make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers: And fear Allah that ye may receive Mercy.] (Al-Hujurat, verses 9-10).

Divergence, and even infighting in politics, jurisprudence and substantive matters do not take any of their parties outside the sphere of faith. Even the transgressors who refuse peace and choose to fight about politics remain within the folds of the Ummah, as long as they believe in the doctrine of Islam, its constants and pillars and adhere to these beliefs and these pillars.

The Kharijites, who invented the scourge of excommunication (*takfir*), were the ones to shift political difference from the realm of the substantive and scholarly to that of faith and the fundamentals of faith. They proclaimed their opponents as apostates and as reneging on their religion. The same approach was adopted by the Shiites who made the office of the imam and the caliphate – which belong in the sphere of politics and jurisprudence – as one of the fundamentals of faith and from there proceeded to declaring as apostates the Companions who had shifted backwards the ranking of Imam Ali among the Rightly-guided Caliphs.

The scourge of excommunication was behind the rapprochement between the Kharijites and the Shiites despite their sharp divergences, true to the rule that says that both the extreme right and the extreme left stand on the same ground, the ground of the wrong stance and extremism that these divergent factions share.

This only confirms the soundness of the methodical approach to history writing –including the history of what is known as the ‘Great Upheaval’. This approach tells us that differences in politics, substantive law and jurisprudence should not result in the dark portrait drawn of the Companions in the books chronicling this Upheaval. Further proof of the soundness of the scientific approach that must govern the purification and perfection of historical heritage is the position of Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib vis-à-vis the parties in this conflict.

There is no better way today to unravel these mixed history pages and determine the «nature of the divergence» that arise between the Companions and the scope of this difference, than the method developed and introduced by Imam Ali who was party to this conflict and to the fighting that accompanied it. During the battle of Siffin (AH 37/AD 657) which opposed him to Mu'awiyah Ibn Abi Soufyane (BH 20-AH 60/AD 603-680), he was asked about the position of his political opponents with regard to faith in Islam, when the Kharijites and after them the Shiites considered them as apostates-, Imam Ali, may Allah bless him, said: *“By Allah, when we clashed in battle our God was one, our Quran was one and our qibla was one. We do not claim to have a stronger nor a weaker faith than theirs, but our conflict is about the shedding of Othman Ibn Affane’s blood of which we are innocent. We fight them over the interpretation, seeking to bring them back into the folds of the community (political) and we do not fight them over the revelation.”*

When asked about the casualties of the two camps, he said: *“I pray for our fallen and theirs to go to paradise.”*

He defined the nature of the conflict and then its scope, as well as its distance from the core of religion, and confined it instead within the limits of fiqh jurisprudence and politics.

The truth of this approach - which emphasizes that divergence in politics, even when reaching the point of fighting, does not evict its parties from the circle of faith in Islam - has emerged even when fighting took place at the Holy Mosque between al-Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi (AH 40-95/AD 660-714) and Abdullah Ibn az-Zubayr (AH 1-73/AD 622-693).

Yes, this fighting took place within the Masjid al-Haram but when the *muezzin* called for the prayers, the embattled factions would lay down their weapons and pray behind one imam. No party accused the other of apostasy.

This is the approach that should be applied as we set out to perfect our heritage in history, and particularly the history of the Great Upheaval, to redress the image of the Companions, that unique generation raised in the school of the Prophet and moulded by the Messenger (PBUH) as he hoped to see them, that established religion and created the Islamic state and civilization, defeated the great colonial powers – the Persians and the

Romans – and changed the course of history. The true image of this unique generation would thus be revealed in history books, with no shame or denial of the differences that occurred between them around matters of policy, legal theory and substantive law.

It is also important to neutralise the peril of excommunication that found its way into the books of doctrinal history, breaking the unity of ranks of the Ummah and continuing to act as 'mine fields' and loopholes triggered and exploited by the intruders whenever they see fit. In reviewing and perfecting history, it was equally necessary to restore the balance of powers that created this history.

The civilizational march of the Nation of Islam was marked by the glorification of the Ummah and the minimization of the state nation throughout the centuries preceding the advent of the modern European national state model during the reign of Muhammad Ali Pasha (AH 1184-1265/AD 1770-1849). It is the Ummah, and not the state or the authority, that stands as the Almighty Allah's vice-regent on earth. The Ummah established religion, founded the state, accomplished the conquests and created the civilization. The Waqf institution was the major financial institution that revolutionised the making of Islamic civilization in all its fields, from the drop of milk for the infant to the music played to hospital patients, to the orchards that feed strangers and passers-by, to mosques, schools, public libraries, and even naval fleets and the dispatching of soldiers to man fortifications in the name of Allah, all of this was funded by the Ummah through endowments. At times, these amounted, in a country like Egypt for example, to more than half the surface area dedicated to agricultural land, while the weight of the State at that time was still very limited.

But our history writing was plagued by the tendency to shed all the light on the history of states, authorities and sultans, while the Ummah disappeared from the pages of history. Historical records reflected then only the empty half of a cup, recording only the parts where tyranny prevailed and aberrations took the upper hand, so much so that the ignorant said: 99% of this history is darkness, nothing more than the history of the executioner and his leather mat. They failed to explain how this civilization flourished and spread its shining light to the world even whilst under the dark reign and deviations of the state.

Restoring the balance of history thus requires rewriting the history of the Ummah, and not only that of the states and sultans. This is the duty of purifying history by introducing the sources that chronicled the lives of generations of scholars, jurists, interpreters, hadith specialists, sages, philosophers, Sufis, holy men, physicians, writers, poets and even singers and musicians. Add to these the sources that recorded the history of places, countries, sources of wealth, production patterns, trade, markets, squares, and even buildings, architecture, monuments and stones.

By properly writing the history of the Ummah, and truthfully chronicling reality, the image of the civilized history of the Muslim Ummah reaches its complete state, and the true worth of the components of this history is revealed. To limit this history to sultans and governors is an aberration that needs to be corrected.

The same applies to the Ummah's madhahibs and its intellectual currents.

Recently, we have seen how some young people who have little knowledge of nationalist history attribute revolutionary, resistance and martyrdom acts to certain marginal doctrines and deny the same to the Sunnis who represent 90% of the Ummah.

The process of reviewing historical heritage must therefore highlight and assert that:

- The Sunnis are the ones who laid the foundations of religion, established the state and carried out the conquests that banished the hegemonic Roman and Persian powers which had ruled over the East for centuries before the advent of Islam.
- The Sunnis and their followers were the ones to crush the Crusades which lasted two centuries (AH 489-690 /AD 1096-1291) and which set out to recover the East after its Islamic liberation. They managed to penetrate at that time through the gaps and vulnerable spots caused by the Fatimid Shiite state with its misguided Batini beliefs and its alienation from the Ummah's general public.
- It was the Sunnis also who pushed back the Tatar invasion that threatened the existence of the Ummah and Islam. In fact, it was them

who introduced Islam to the Tatars when these marginal doctrines, that some ignorantly believe to be revolutionary, were the ones who opened, in acts of betrayal, the gates of Baghdad before Hulagu (AD 1217-1265), just as they opened them before the Hulagu of the twenty-first century.

- It was the Sunnis who led the national liberation movements against modern Western colonial expansions throughout the Islamic world, while these sects yielded to the lure of foreign and colonial seduction at many junctures in that history.

Thus, awareness of history, and not just the reading of history, can help refine and perfect this historical heritage in a way that restores balance to the doctrines and intellectual currents that took this history to glorious heights, a history that is a fundamental component of the Ummah's identity and the benchmark of its belonging and loyalty to the civilization of Islam.

A fifth field of heritage in need of perfecting is the field of literature and arts.

Abu Nawas (AH 140-198/AD 757-814) was one of the finest, most delicate and beautiful Arab poets. But would any sane person propose his poems, composed in praise of wine, homosexual overtures, open sexuality and overall debauchery, -though he repented all of this before his death - to be taught to our teenage boys and girls at schools and universities? Can they be sanctioned for open readings on the radio, satellite channels, and in newspapers and magazines?

Or do we need a toned down version of Abu Nawas' poems to teach our daughters and children and spread among the public, while his full poetic works remain well preserved but for the exclusive use of scholars and specialists?

I recall that I was going to sit for my BA exams at Dar al-'Ulum when a female student asked me about some love poem by the Andalusian poet Yahya al-Ghazal (AH 157-250/AD 864-774), the poet in residence of Abdulrahman Ibn al-Hakam Ibn Hisham (AH 176-238/AD 792-852) and one of the most romantic poets I have ever read in romance and love poetry. The student insisted that I dictate to her the verses written by this poet as we were getting ready to start the exam. I acquiesced to her request but was highly

embarrassed and mortified as I read out, to a girl, verses that were so tender yet so immoral, depraved and shameless.

If we do not wish to deprive our daughters, sons and the general public from studying, preserving and enjoying heritage, we must work on it to choose and edit versions that can be taught to our children and are suitable for public consumption, while all these poems remain in their original form for the exclusive use of researchers, scholars and critics.

An Egyptian court has asked, as part of a judgment it issued, that an edited copy of ***One Thousand and One Nights*** be made available to be taught at our schools and from which explicit sexual scenes and texts would have been removed.

I recall that the most virulent objections to this request and the refusal to edit ***One thousand and One Nights*** under the pretext of preserving heritage, came from the ultra-secularists who seek to do away with the Sharia and tamper with the Prophetic Sunnah, claiming the sanctity of heritage.

The book ***Al-Aghani*** by Abu al-Faraj al-Asfahani (AH 356/ AD 967) is the greatest encyclopaedia of Arab heritage in literature and arts. This encyclopaedia was published in an edited and verified version called ***Tahdhib al-Aghani***, a simplified version that had been purified of what should not be spread among the people.

If the present paper addresses the editing of content of many Islamic heritage books written about various subjects, there is also a form of perfection that targets form with the aim of facilitating the reading of these heritage books and the transfer of their ideas to the readers.

In books dealing with the Sunnah, for example, as well as in historical records, we find a listing of the names of narrators of hadiths and events that stretch over more lines than the hadith itself or the event recorded. This length can even break the attention or thought sequence of the reader searching for meaning in these hadiths and accounts.

Still, refining form in heritage books should not be undertaken at the expense of the proper recording of hadiths and accounts. Instead, it must be done by taking the chains of narrators and their names to the footnotes of the

edited versions of these books, just as they are and keeping them within their brackets, to remain true to academic documentation rules and achieve continuity of thought and ideas for the readers of the book's annotations.

When I verified *Kitab al-Amwal* by Abu Ubaid al-Qasim Ibn Salam (AH 157-224/AD 774-838), one of the major reference works on finances and Islamic economics, I followed this method when editing the form of the text, moving the names of hadith and account narrators to the footnotes and thus facilitating the flow and context of ideas and hadiths by making them connected and easy to read.

We must add that the proposal to refine and perfect our Islamic heritage has been part of the major reform projects in our religious education, addressed by the prominent names in the modern school of revival and renewal. These include the Grand Sheikh Mohammed Mustafa al-Maraghi (AH 1298-1364/AD 1881-1945), the sheikh of al-Azhar who fulfilled the dream of his teacher Sheikh Muhammad Abdu in reforming Azhari education, and who stated in a document he wrote about the reform of al-Azhar in 1928: *"The Quran must be studied well, and the Sunnah must be studied well and understood in line with the rules and standards of Arabic language and according to the appropriate academic norms. We must move away in their interpretation from everything that knowledge has proven to be wrong and everything that contradicts the rules of Arabic grammar. Faith and transactions must be purged of all the novelties and additions attached to them, and Islamic traditions must be reviewed to restore them to their harmony with the tenets of true Islam. Islamic jurisprudence must be studied in a free manner, far from fanatic attachment to some doctrine or the other, and its rules must be studied as related to their well-evidenced origins. The purpose of these studies should be the preservation of the principles enshrined in the Quran and Sunnah, and of the rulings that enjoy consensus, and to examine ijihad rulings to ensure that they are adapted to the different times and dispositions of nations, as our predecessors from among scholars used to do."*

Sheikh al-Maraghi outlined the objectives sought from learning Islamic religious and linguistic sciences, and declared that refining and perfecting the books dealing with these sciences is the way to achieving these purposes and objectives.

Readers of the books of prominent scholars who set out to renew our Islamic and linguistic heritage in the 20th century, such as Sheikh Muhammad Abi Zahra (AH 1316-1394/AD 1898-1974), Sheikh Abdul Wahab Khallaf (AH 1375/AD 1956), Dr. Abdulrazzaq Al-Sanhoury (AH 1313-1391/AD 1895-1971), Sheikh Ahmed Ibrahim (AH 1291-1364/AD 1874-1945), Sheikh Mohammed Al-TaHER Ibn Achour (AH 1296-1393/AD 1879-1973), Sheikh Mahmoud Shaltout (AH 1310-1383/AD 1893-1963), Sheikh Mohammed al-Khudari (AH 1289-1345/AD 1872-1927), Dr. Abbas Hassan (AH 1318-1398/AD 1900-1978), and Sheikh Mustafa az-Zarqa (AH 1322-1420/AD 1904-1999), and others who set as their steadfast referential the fundamentals of Islamic science and renewed methods and applications, will come to the conclusion that refining Islamic heritage is of momentous importance in bringing about the appropriate intellectual and cultural conditions for new generations of innovative scholars who would lead the Ummah to freeing itself from the civilizational quagmire in which it finds itself today.

Islamic Fiqh Councils, universities of Islamic sciences, Arabic language academies, historical foundations, and Islamic and historical studies departments at Arab universities must invite each other to a scientific dialogue that identifies the ways to accomplish such great mission, that of refining and perfecting Islamic thought and the history of Islam and Muslims to facilitate the interaction of today's generations with the treasures of this heritage.

What Challenges Face Islamic Sciences in Modern Times?

Dr Mohammed El-Kettani*

Modern times are characterized by a remarkable acceleration in the pace of development and progress in all spheres of our material and intellectual life and in a way that transcends all forms of heritage, tradition and moral values. This general context prompts us to wonder about the fate of Islamic sciences which represent an integral part of the heritage and identity of the Islamic Ummah. This is the question around which this symposium is held today.⁽¹⁾

Before we address this subject, it is necessary to start by identifying the notions featuring in its title, namely Islamic science, challenges and present times.

The term Islamic sciences refers to the body of cognitive processes accumulated by early Muslims and relating to fundamentals of scientific interaction with Islam's key references, i.e. the Quran and Sunnah, as well as the methodologies to be adopted in order to understand their texts and erect the edifice of the Islamic Ummah on the authentic frame of reference that is the oneness of faith and Charia and the consideration of the Arabic language as one of the crucial mechanisms of achieving this unity. Islamic sciences have thus emerged simultaneously with the rise and establishment of the Islamic State and the consolidation of its unity and continuity, especially within the vast spectrum of environments such as Iraq, Iran and Asia, the Levant, Egypt and North Africa. These sciences set the foundations of social and cultural order and served as

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(1) The seminar was organized on 9-10 May 2018 by the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco in cooperation with the Abdelhadi Boutaleb Foundation for Culture, Science and Intellectual Enlightenment, at the headquarters of the Academy. This lecture was given in memory of the late Moroccan scholar Abdelhadi Boutaleb (1923-2009).

the receptacle of Islamic thought, stimulating it to keep pace with progress, innovation and openness onto other cultures, including those of India, Persia and Greece. Thanks to the intimate relationship between Islamic thought and the guidance of the Quran, this thought was constantly conscious of its responsibility in embodying the message of the Islamic Ummah of which the mission and vision were defined in the Quran when the Almighty said: **[Thus, have We made of you an Ummah justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations,]**⁽²⁾ and also when He said: **[Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.]**⁽³⁾

Challenges are what Islamic sciences face today in their social, political and cultural environment, some are self-generated challenges and other are more objective ones. These refer to constraints and pressures that contribute to dislodging these sciences from their positions and shattering their connection with their environments with the aim of isolating them from reality and marginalizing them. In the eyes of the enemies, these sciences have become an old heritage that has nothing to do with the lives of Muslims today. It is undeniable that a challenge may carry a positive connotation or a negative one. A challenge invites a response from those it addresses, i.e. it triggers positive reactions that could either be to meet and overcome it, or negative ones when it translates into weakness and defeatism, then intimately submission or even disintegration.

The notion of modern times refers to what contemporary times represent in the history of mankind and what they stand for in terms of unprecedented and global progress in various aspects of human life, such as scientific and technological progress, the West's great achievements through discoveries and victories and its tremendous abilities to communicate and harness natural energies. Let us not forget the progress that civilizational and cultural interaction gave rise to, the dissolution of the social, cultural and identity forms of unity of the great civilizations that the West came to dominate, and

(2) *Al-Baqara*, verse 143.

(3) *Aal-'Imrane*, verse 110.

even more, the devastating wars and class, regional and regional disparities that this progress has given rise to around the world.

First of all, knowledge has been one of the most impactful Islamic concepts and values in guiding the course of Islamic history. It is the fundamental value within Islam's value system, so much so that it takes precedence over that of faith. Faith is of no worth if it is not supported by knowledge and learning. Allah says addressing the Messenger (PBUH): [***Know, therefore, that there is no god but Allah.***]⁽⁴⁾ And also: [***Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants, who have knowledge.***]⁽⁵⁾ Knowledge is therefore the cornerstone of the Islamic civilization. Given the crucial role of science, we need to shed more light on the emergence and development course of Islamic sciences in the history of Islam.

The history of Islamic sciences experienced two phases:

The first one was the phase of emergence and takeoff. During this phase, Islamic sciences went through their inception stage, then progression and fulfillment, advancing in tandem with the establishment and rise of the Islamic civilization in the shade of which the entire world was basking in back in the Middle Ages. Then these sciences entered a phase of stagnation and isolation, impacted by the deterioration that had prevailed over the Islamic world, ultimately leading to its fall under the yoke of European colonialism.

The second phase is the era of reawakening in modern times. During this phase, the Islamic world reclaimed its self-awareness and Muslims endeavored to free themselves from European colonialism. During this phase which phase continues today, calls for reform and renewal emerged, advocating the revival of cultural heritage and the renewal of its ties connection to Islamic sciences, and opening up to Western civilization. In this paper, we will examine the factors of prosperity and those of decline in order to identify what needs to be done to meet the challenges facing Islamic science in our times.

(4) *Muhammad*, verse 19.

(5) *Fater*, verse 27.

The Holy Quran called Muslims to embody the Ummah of the just balance, morally responsible for spreading the values of truth, goodness and justice, an Ummah that is responsible for upholding the oneness of the Lord of the Worlds in ways untainted by the shadow of association and idolatry or intermediation between the Creator and the created. The Quran made knowledge the launching pad towards reaching the universal truths it advocated. Thus, it was only natural that this call be founded on the eradication of pagan, mythical and superstitious thought and promoting the role of the reasoning mind in fathoming the ways of nature.

The knowledge upheld in the Quran is one that has multiple sources and methods, varying in accordance with its subjects. When it comes to the world of the unseen the source of knowledge is revelation. When this knowledge relates to pure certainties the referential becomes the application of reason and evidence supported by logic. When it comes to the phenomena of nature and material life, the method adopted is observation, extrapolation and experimentation and the cause-effect association. With regard to history, the process involves tracking, analyzing and documenting. The concept of knowledge in Islam cannot therefore be said to have been foreign to its civilization. Indeed, it embodied the call of the Quran and Islamic thought opened up to the knowledge of former nations as a way of consolidating its own approach in all aspects that do not contradict its beliefs.

Because Islamic civilization was founded on this dual basis of faith and knowledge, it played a dynamic role within the context of human civilizations and thus made many achievements. This was the case, for example, in medicine, chemistry, astronomy, mathematics and geography, bringing about tremendous progress in these sciences under Muslim rule compared to their previous state. Many Western scholars specializing in the history of learning stand witness to this. Among these were Aldo Miele⁽⁶⁾ (d. 1950),

(6) The Orientalist Aldo Miele is the author of *Arab Science and its Role in Global Scientific Evolution*, translated into Arabic by Abdul Halim Al-Najjar and Dr. Mohammed Yussuf Moussa. The book was published by Dar al-Qalam in 1962, in 698 pages. It addresses the history of science under Muslims until the European Renaissance.

author of the book *Arab Science and its Role in Global Scientific Evolution*, and the German Max Meyerhof⁽⁷⁾ (d. 1945) author of many books on Arab medicine and pharmacy. Evidence lies in the fact that the books written by Muslim scholars continued to serve as reference works in many European universities until the beginning of the 17th century. These historical facts show that Muslims started with a clear concept of knowledge that brought them to discover the universal laws governing nature and mankind. They embraced the legacy of Greece, India and Persia by studying it and identifying that which fitted in with their approaches and fields of interest.

By espousing this holistic approach, Muslim scholars set out to establish the transmitted body of knowledge and engage in and develop rational sciences. A multi-layered scientific movement with various approaches emerged with these scholars to keep pace with the prosperous Islamic civilization and its expansion throughout the entire old world. Attention should be drawn to the fact that this intellectual movement will only evolve thanks to its strong connection to its social environment society and the civilizational dynamism that fuels it and propels it ahead towards greater progress by harnessing this knowledge and intellectual creativity in the field of trade and urban expansion.

It was only natural for Muslims that the scientific movement would start from the very beginning, prompted by the social and political phenomena and variables they were subjected to. The most significant of these occurred right after the death of the Prophet (PBUH) and the ensuing events. These included, for example, the perceived need to commit the entire text of the Quran to writing and categorize the various readings; especially after the Arab tribes embraced Islam and began to memorize the Quran. These endeavors to memorize the Quran were motivated by the high mortality rate among readers and memorizers of the Quran during the Ridda wars, as well as by the eruption of succession disputes after the death of the Prophet

(7) Max Meyerhof is a German-Jewish physician and scientist who conducted research into the history of medicine and pharmacy under Arab rule. He lived in Cairo from 1903 until his death. He practiced medicine (ophthalmology), wrote more than 300 dissertations, studies and essays and authenticated many Arabic manuscripts pertaining to in medicine and pharmacy.

(PBUH). Other factors included the spread of Islam in conquered lands and the appearance of mispronunciations and linguistic perversions once Arabic became spoken by a great many peoples. Add to this the reported hadiths of the Prophet himself, some being authentic and others fabricated in order to serve specific political dogmas and tribal affiliations.

The memorization of the Quran was undoubtedly the first prerequisite and needed to be consolidated through a systematic scientific methodology based on the establishment of uninterrupted transmission and that resolved all forms of divergence resulting from the multiplicity of readings. The Quran is the miracle of Mohamed's prophecy, and this miraculous nature resides in its wording, form and meanings. Any alteration in these would affect its style and wording, undermine the essence of this miracle and generate divergences in legal rulings. However, provisions needed to be made for a degree of difference to accommodate disparities in the dialects of tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. For this reason, seven recitation ways (letters) of the Quran were declared permissible.⁽⁸⁾ Scholars enumerated these letters, defined them and identified the instances in the Quran where they feature, listed the instances most used, most famous and most exceptional compared to the frequent reading ways and their level of compatibility with the master copy of the Quran. Scholars refuted all allegations and doubts cast on the Quran as a result of differences in readings and countered them using indisputable evidence from Quran and that resonated with the fulfillment of Allah's promise: [***We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption).***](9) This is what was achieved through the science of readings, that is to authenticate the Quranic text that we read today in standard form throughout the Islamic world.⁽¹⁰⁾

Islamic theology emerged and evolved after the succession conflicts around the caliphate and the horrific events that occurred after the siege of 'Uthman

(8) *An-Nshr fi al-Qiraat al-'Ashr* by Imam Ibn al-Jazri, part 1. Page 19 and beyond. Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut.

(9) *Al-Hijr*, verse 9.

(10) See the chapter from *Jadal al-'Aql wa al-Naql* (vol 1, pp. 213/280) where all issues related to the writing down of the Quran were addressed. Dar al-Thaqafah, Casablanca, 1992.

Ibn Affan (d. 35 AH) who was assassinated in his house. Following these troubles, political factions such as the Kharijites, the Mu'tazilites, the 'Uthmaniya and the Murjites emerged, along with notions such as the grievous sinner, the relationship between faith and deeds, and between human will and the notion of pre-destiny and free choice. In such atmosphere, charged with doctrinal differences, a faction by the name of the Mu'tazilites who believed in freedom of will and divine justice, rejected divine characteristics that could lead to anthropomorphism, and responded at the same time to the beliefs of the Magi, the Jabriyya and the Rafidha. Hundreds of books and treatises were written in defense of these positions, thus sparking a profound debate within the Islamic faith, more so after the Mu'tazilites spoke of the creation of the Quran. When these divergences became too deep and began to undermine the unity of Muslims, the Imam Abu Al Hassan al-Ash'ari (d. 324) opted for a middle stance position, rejecting anthropomorphism and affirming moral attributes and limiting transcendence to what had been agreed upon by the predecessors. Salafism thus emerged and responded to many of the interpretative views that were influenced by foreign philosophy or doctrines. Tackling these dilemmas through rational evidence or a moderate approach became literally known as the science of discourse (Islamic scholastic theology) either because engaging in these matters was merely talk and unrelated to actual deeds, or because its main focus was divine words. What remains undisputed is that this science achieved tangible results through times by preserving Islam's moderate approach to understanding religious matters as well as repressing the proponents of interpretation and anthropomorphism. It continued to fulfill this mission until the era of civilizational stagnation when Ibn Khaldoun (d. 808) declared that this science was no longer required since heretics and atheists had become extinct.⁽¹¹⁾

Since the Prophet's biography, with its hadiths, qualities, deeds and statements, represents the second most important source of Islamic law after the Qur'an, its recording was considered as important as the recording of the Quranic text, the Sunnah being the practical application of the contents of the Quran.

(11) *Al-Muqaddimah*, page 591, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 1988.

The need for this recording grew stronger after the spread of lies and fabrication of *hadiths* which had not been compiled and recorded as the Quran had been. Instead, it remained dependent on memory but for a few exceptions, despite the unwavering dedication of the Companions to memorizing it and narrating it with its proper chains of transmission. Just before the 2nd century of the hijra, the Umayyad Caliph 'Umar Ibn 'Abdulaziz ordered his governor in al-Madinah, Abu Bakr Ibn Hazm, to record what had been proven to be true of the Messenger's Sunnah or hadith (PBUH) for fear that this knowledge might be lost and its scholars die.

Regardless of divergences in views about the recording or not of the *hadith* from the very beginning, it is historically proven that the writing of some hadiths was undertaken from the time of the Companions to that of the followers, and that by the time the second century of Hijra began, the memorizers of the Sunnah and those in charge of its recording and transfer in their books had exceeded two-hundred in number among the young followers and their own followers.⁽¹²⁾ Thus, a growing comprehensive scientific movement emerged around the study of the Sunnah and its codification following several methods, the inference of *fiqh* rules from these writings, exposing fabricated content, determining the rules and principles of codification, including authenticating the names of narrators, and thoroughly following up on any distortions or fabrications. By the 3rd century, *hadith* categories had been classified as correct, good and weak, which classifications were to become widely used among *hadith* scholars, and major reference books such as the *sahihs*, the *sunan* and *mustadraks* appeared along with hadith compendiums. The term *hadith* became an umbrella covering many research fields that dealt with such aspects as the chains of narration and the conditions of transmission such as continuity, breaks or fabrication. The objective of scholars was to mark the various categories of *hadiths* and label them as correct, good, weak, irregular or denounced.

Over the centuries, *hadith* scholars have stood as the stronghold defending the Prophetic Sunnah and fending off the attacks of skeptics who challenge

(12) See more ample details about this subject in *Dirasat fi al-Hadith al-Nabawi wa Tarikh Tadwinih*, Dr. Muhammad Mustafa Al-A'dhami, p. 221 and beyond, University of Riyadh, 1396 AH.

its content and methods, after the end of the 4th century AH and once *hadiths* scholars had fully compiled every word narrated about the Prophet (PBUH) and subjected it to critical and methodical verification of these *hadiths* and their narrators, validating some and invalidating others. The interest scholars took in this science was motivated by the fact that it embodied a source of Islamic legislation of no less importance than the Quran, if not more important since it clarifies the tenets of the Quran and addresses in detail what was mentioned in broader terms in the Quran.

Fiqh, or Islamic Charia, relates to all aspects on which this Ummah's social system is founded, i.e. the religious obligations expressed in terms of the *halal* and the *haram*, the recommended, the disliked and the permissible and that Islam decreed in its quest to perfect the divine religion that Allah elected for Mankind. This religion encompasses all good morals, rights and obligations and fulfills the objectives pursued by Islam such as preserving fundamentals, giving due consideration to improvements and combining the happiness of this world with that of the Hereafter.⁽¹³⁾

All Muslims, the general masses and the select elites, know that there can be no life for the Islamic Ummah without its Charia which is founded on moderation and the middle stance, bringing benefits and warding off evils, and applying reason while accepting faith. The Charia is a detailed system for society and individuals, omitting not the smallest of life's details, and this inclusiveness in itself is a source of pride for Islamic jurisprudence.

It was only natural for the in-depth knowledge of this Charia to become an essential pursuit for Muslim societies throughout the ages. The companions and their followers and those who followed them one era after the other dedicated themselves to the preservation of this Charia, the transmission of its rules, the pondering of its texts and the inference of the specific from the general, in line with the methodology set by the science of jurisprudence. The general framework of this Charia was defined during the Prophet's time and after his migration to al-Madinah. It was during those times that were revealed

(13) Mohamed Ibn Hassan al-Hajoui (1396 AH). *Al-Fikr al-Sami fi Tarikh al Fiqh al-Islami*. Part 1, p. 11 and beyond. Dar al-Thurat, Beirut.

the provisions setting out what was permissible and what was prohibited, the pillars of Islam were defined and legal obligations were laid down. The Prophet's tradition in those times, both in words and deeds, clarified the general rules enshrined in the Quran. Charia sources were identified as the following four: the Quran, the Sunnah, consensus and deductive inference which comprises deductive analogy, juristic discretion, and the considerations of public interest. The emergence of different *fiqh* schools is owed to the extent to which they relied on this last source. These divergences first appeared in the first century regarding the way Charia laws were perceived: were they reasonable in gist and aimed at serving the greater good and warding off evil, or were they provisions of worship that dictated application and blind adherence. From these differences emerged the proponents of opinion and analogy and those of text and *hadith*. These schools of thought survived through the ages, leaving behind a *fiqh* legacy that was worthy of serving through the ages as a reference body in the renewal of Islamic *fiqh*.

The scientific movement necessitated at the same time that Arabs progress from being an illiterate nation to a nation of reading and writing, in compliance with the Quran's teachings. Muslims perceived the need for a writing industry which was at its budding stage at the time, and for setting the rules of grammar and linguistics to prevent language distortions and solecisms. At the same time, there was a growing need for the reproduction of copies of the Quran, *hadith musnads* and divans, and for recording treatises and covenants. There was an equally growing need for paper, for scribes and the tools of the writing industry. In the meantime, early linguists set the rules of grammar to make it a didactic and scientific tool in the preservation of the Arabic language. This required the codification of linguistic resources and the recording of the poetry heritage of tribes so it could serve as a reference tool in correcting speech and refining literary tastes. The science of rhetoric also saw light as proof of the miracle of the Quran, to be used by the generations to come and that would not have the disposition or tools to grasp such miracle which must remain alive and ever renewing through the centuries.

The scientific movement in Islam started from faith and from the Charia, i.e. from the Quran and *hadith* contents, but also from the guidance these provided as a way to consolidating Islam through scientific reflection and reasoning after being founded on pure faith in the revelation. Thus, reason

was associated with faith at all phases of the inception of Islamic sciences, especially jurisprudence and theology.

Thanks to the openness by Muslims to the myriad cultures they came across in conquered lands and which extended eastward to China and westward to Andalusia, the body of knowledge accumulated by these nations was transferred to the Islamic society in fields such as medicine, engineering, astronomy and mathematics, either through its translation, or through its teaching and application under the encouraging eye of the caliphs themselves. Thus, traditional Islamic sciences merged with philosophical sciences.

The sciences inspired from the legacies of other nations as in medicine, chemistry, astronomy and mathematics were borrowed along with their methodologies as it was not possible to give precedence to tradition or bow exclusively to the command of religion. However, once they reached the stage of maturity, these transfers were subjected to verification, criticism and review through an empirical or critical approach. Islamic science historians observed that the translated Greek legacy was not spared the critique of Muslim scholars, foremost among whom we find jurisprudence scholars, astronomers and physicists such as Ibn Taimiyyah. (d. 728 AH) who criticized the Greek logic at great length⁽¹⁴⁾, the astronomer Abu Abdallah al-Battani (d. 317AH) who went way beyond the theory of Greek astronomer Ptolemy (d. 161 BC) on the stability of the solar system, asserting that the time equation gradually undergoes a slow change. Another scholar was Abu al-Rayhan al-Bayruti (d. 440AH) who was among the first to state that the earth revolves around itself and that the speed of light was much faster than that of sound. Suffice it to mention the words of Aldo Miele (1950AD) uttered in esteem of Al-Bayruti's experiments in calculating quantum weight, deeming these results as some of the scientific achievements made by Muslims in experimental physics long before Europeans.⁽¹⁵⁾

(14) Dr. Ali al-Nashshar (1947) "*Manahij al-Baht 'Inda Mufakkiri al-Islam wa iktishaf al-manhaj al-'Islami fi al-'alam al-'islami*". Page 144 and beyond. Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, Cairo.

(15) Aldo Miele. *Arab Science and its Role in Global Scientific Evolution*. Translated into Arabic by Abdul Halim Al-Najjar and Dr. Mohammed Yussuf Moussa. P 194 and beyond, republished many times including the editions of: Dar Annahda Al-Arabiya, Beirut, 1984, and Dar Assalam, Cairo, 2017, Dar Al-Qalam, Cairo, 1962.

In the same vein, Ibn Khaldoun (d. 808 AH) spoke about the experimental intellect, how it occurs and the processes it follows to develop the science related to natural events and phenomena.⁽¹⁶⁾ Experiments are the process by which the mind takes cognizance of partial events which complement each other until they form a systematic knowledge of a given subject. This is the source of knowledge about nature and the reason we believe that the experimental approach acquired its status as a reference, especially among Muslim physicians, without contradicting religious faith, even if some religious texts may contain evidence of such contradiction. Lisan Eddine Ibn al-Khatib (d. 776 AH) says in his treatise on The Plague quoted by the orientalist Gustave E Von Grunebaum (d. 1972): “*The existence of contagion is established by experience and by trustworthy reports on transmission by garments, vessels, ear-rings; by the spread of it by persons from one house, by infection of a healthy sea-port by an arrival from an infected land [and] by the immunity of isolated individuals.*” To appreciate the audacity of this idea – says the orientalist—it is important to remember that the Prophet (PBUH), as reported by some narrators, had explicitly denied the existence of contagion. Ibn al-Khatib proceeds to proclaim this bold principle and says: “*A proof taken from the traditions has to undergo modification when in manifest contradiction with the evidence of the perception of the senses.*”⁽¹⁷⁾

The conclusion we draw from these historically documented facts is that Muslims developed rational and empirical sciences as much as they did Charia science during their golden age. However, this intellectual excellence began to be affected by many weakness and stagnation factors which would be impossible to address in full here. We will limit ourselves to mentioning factors such as the political tyranny that had begun to prevail within Muslim societies, the intensification of sectarian and doctrinal strife, and the depletion of the Ummah’s resources due to internal and external wars, most

(16) *Al-Muqadimmah*, page 593, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, 1988.

(17) Gustave E Von Grunebaum: *Muslim Civilization*, translated by Abdul-Aziz Tawfiq Jawid and Abdelhamid El-Abadi, p. 426 and beyond, GEBO, Cairo, 1994. Regarding the *hadith* quoted see *Sunan Abu Dawoud*, authenticated by al-Albani, vol. 2, p. 740. This refers to the *hadith* of Abu Huraira: “*There is no infection, or superstition, or haamah (flying insects called haamahs) or safar (a worm called safar believed to live in every person’s stomach).*”

important of which were the Crusades and the Tatar and Mongol invasions of Muslim lands in the Levant. Thus, the verve to pursue scientific research and knowledge dwindled and the mind ceased to be applied except in superficial spheres. This state was further exacerbated by the restrictions imposed on *Ijtihad* endeavors, the growing streak of excommunicating all those engaged in philosophical pursuits or rational sciences, and the dominance of Sufism over intellectual and cultural life, leading to a weakening of these sciences in the Mashreq and the Maghreb.⁽¹⁸⁾

At this point in history (9th century AH or 15th century AD), Europe was experiencing a sweeping ranging renaissance in politics, economy, science and discoveries, in total contrast to what was happening in the Islamic world. One of the breakthroughs made at that time was the redefinition of the notion of science which now related mainly to research in physical sciences, biology and sociology through an exclusively experimental approach. This resulted in remarkable advances, unprecedented economic development and a slew of military victories, especially in conquering Islamic countries and encircling them by land and sea.

While these events and transformations were unfolding, the Islamic world was living under the yoke of European colonialism from the beginning of the 19th century. Muslims were also in awe of Western science and its inventions. They felt the need to overcome their backwardness and free themselves from dependence on Western countries. This played a part in their reclaiming of their sense of identity and taking conscience of the great challenges ahead.

In the same context, the awakening of Muslims began to take shape through their ardent pursuit of education. Specialized schools and institutes were established, the traditional and modern educational systems were merged, students were sent to European universities to acquire modern sciences, and reform and renewal movements were launched by scholars and reformists. Yet, despite the progress achieved by Muslims over the 20th century decades thanks to this awakening, the gap between the two worlds, Muslim and

(18) See detailed analysis of this in *Al-Islam wa al-Hadara al-Islamiyya* by Muhammad Kurd Ali, in the chapter dedicated to science and doctrines in Islam, page 69 and beyond, 1936, Cairo, republished in 1968, Cairo.

European, continued to widen as a result of the sharp disparity in the pace of progress in each part and of the stark differences between the two societies. One is in fact dominated by a democratic system, harnesses applied sciences in the best possible way and applies reason in all spheres of life, and the other is a society ruled by tyranny and division, torn apart by models of tradition or imitation of the West, while the majority wallows in illiteracy, ignorance and superstition. The challenges and arenas of confrontation between the Muslim East and the European West have thus become multiple. The internal challenges arising from the Muslims' reality and thought can be distinguished from the external ones resulting from the European cultural invasion that came hand in hand with colonialism.

At the forefront of these internal challenges we find the evolution of Islamic societies under the influence of the European regimes that hailed with colonialism, extending to language, educational systems, science branches, and economic, administrative and legal systems. The lives of Muslims either voluntarily or forcefully bow to these systems. Islamic culture and sciences in particular have lost their meaningful presence in the life of Muslims. Their programs were neglected and confined within the institutions of traditional education of which the graduates are only qualified to serve as teachers in these very same institutions. As for public life, they find no way of accessing it, being totally unprepared to integrate it either through industry, trade, management or a scientific occupation.

None of the figureheads of reform and Islamic thought paid attention to this aggravating phenomenon and the dichotomy of a closed traditional educational system of which the tributaries have gone dry over time and which became totally cut off from life, and a sophisticated modern educational system fueled by the emulation of the West and its ever renewing models.

Growing generations in the Islamic world were affected by what was conveyed to them at European universities and schools that operate in various languages, starting with a culture that alienated them from their identity, influenced by different intellectual currents. Some of these currents advocated Westernization and secularization, others called for the total rejection of Islamic heritage, some advocated isolationism and extremism, while others persistently called for renewal in moderation and balance, all

of which plunged Islamic thought in a spiral of conflicting currents. The vast Muslim masses drowned in illiteracy and marginalization, influenced by what is sentimentally and religiously appealing and provoking, and weighed down by the burdens and hardships of everyday life. This is the second challenge facing Muslim sciences, namely the absence of consensus among Muslims, profoundly torn apart by sectarianism.

When the awakening began and the Islamic heritage revival movement emerged and renewal and reform ideas saw light, a great deal of attention was paid to the many phenomena that were dividing Muslims and the principles and values that united them. Scholars also focused on Islamic jurisprudence and how to reinstate the application of Islamic law as the mainstay of their lives at all levels. This occurred in the second half of the last century, a time marked by exceptional intellectual activity, most important of which was the creation of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation pursuant to the resolution of the Third Islamic Summit held in Mecca in January 1981, whose founding conference was held in June 1983 and established its seat in Jeddah, the publishing of many encyclopedias on jurisprudence and of in-depth studies, the organization of international conferences and symposia on Islamic law issues and in the invitation to codify Islamic *fiqh*, and to organize its various branches, drawing a comparison with positive law, and opening the door to *ijtihad*. During this period, calls for the application of Charia law were becoming louder. However, it became evident that reinstating Charia law depended not only on the application of *ijtihad*, but also on political will or, in their own words, on the Islamization of government. This was the turning point that spawned fundamentalist movements that called for the establishment of Islamic rule and plunged many Muslim societies into the quagmire of terrorism, the disruption of peace and security and the hindrance of development projects, as well as the counter reaction that followed through an international war led by the media against Islam, as is only too well known.

The Moroccan university was not immune to these widely diverging currents. It was only natural that openness to Islamic heritage and its sciences be strengthened as a counter reaction to the influence of Western thought, particularly after the creation of departments of Islamic studies at the faculties of humanities in Moroccan universities.

The sum of a quarter of a century of the history of this Ummah draws the attention to its scientific production and invites us to evaluate the renewal and progress achieved by Islamic sciences. Positives to mention in this regard are the achievements of Islamic studies in terms of forging links with Islamic heritage in all its arts and frames of reference, the publishing of its heritage and drawing comparisons with the corresponding Western thought in legislation, civilizational and economic systems and human rights, albeit in a partial way that lacked the ability to fully understand Western thought and its philosophical bases. These studies were limited to reviving heritage and reclaiming what it had produced and that was suitable for those times, all the while remaining restricted by their conventional methods. Today, there is a sense that the Islamic sciences we inherited from our ancestors have reached a dead end. Some lack innovation and the ability to reconnect with reality, such as Islamic jurisprudence, others have exhausted their creative energy and the purpose behind them, while others yet have lost all connection to today's reality.

In an era such as ours, marked by the notion that economic and social problems have become the subject of strategic development studies, science is no longer a pursuit for its own sake as was the case in the past. Learning is sought as a means to advance, develop economic life and provide health and information services. Knowledge is now sought to achieve prosperity and wealth and move the wheels of modern civilization forward. This is the general context that the Moroccan university is called upon to integrate and respond to, lest it should lose its very *raison d'être*.

Today, we find ourselves at a point in the history of contemporary civilization where we speak of the society of knowledge, communication and information. We are busy developing strategies to advance scientific research and questioning all forms of learning and science in their relationship to sustainable development, investment in clean energy and environmental conservation in a world that is preoccupied by democracy, social justice, security and prosperity, and by the need to lay bridges of dialogue among civilizations and cultures. In this context, the question arises: What future for Islamic sciences?

This question validates our concerns and should be answered decisively in these times when our educational and scientific systems are faced with the

choice of building the future by making learning and training the lever for development for young generations.

If some believe that there is no point in the existence of Islamic sciences within universities and educational institutions in view of the absence of any role they can play in development, we must point out that this shallow perception of the role of Islamic sciences in the lives of Muslims today is the same narrow vision that underestimates the role of human sciences such as philosophy, literature and history in Mankind's life today, believing that they have mostly lost their force of impact and relevance in our universities and elsewhere, including in those of the United States of America. Since the middle of the last century, these sciences have become the subject of questionings as to their role in the development of society in any tangible way.

There is no doubt that this narrow vision that focuses on man's physical reality as a producer and a consumer, stems from the materialistic view of human life as governed by material mechanisms and biological laws. Human life is instead a weave between matter and thought, i.e. the interaction between body and soul. Intellectual sciences are as necessary as the science of the matter and the value of the spiritual is no lesser than that of the matter. Recognizing the importance of this duality for the human being is the gateway to building a balanced human life. And while the whole world needs today to restore this balance between matter and spirit, i.e. between the scientific approach and the moral approach, it needs to develop human sciences which alone can develop the spiritual dimension and confer some morality on the process of creating human civilization. The Islamic world is in great need of developing these elements and more capable of achieving the noblest ends thanks to the lofty values enshrined in its Islamic sciences and its middle stance approach.

Furthermore, this narrow vision of the role of Islamic sciences overlooks a fundamental aspect in Muslim life, namely that of identity of which the part cannot be ignored in restoring the confidence of Muslims in their existence and in their civilizational mission. Islamic sciences are the frame of reference of this identity and the mainstay of any Islamic society, to preserve its faith and protect it from misinformation and doubts. Needless to say, the Quran and the Sunnah have been throughout the ages the targets of challenges to their veracity and to doubts about their contents. Islamic jurisprudence has

always grappled with events and the turpitudes of time despite the closing down of the window of *ijtihad*. Islamic theology or philosophy never ceased to address both atheist leaning and materialistic doctrines. The Islamic Ummah only managed to withstand the challenges inherent to every stage in its history thanks to its steadfast attachment to its religion and its Islamic sciences, and the keenness of its scholars to preserve this heritage which fuelled it with the elements necessary to maintaining this steadfastness and survival.

Just as the identity of the Ummah cannot survive without knowledge of its history and inspiration from its achievements and values, it cannot either surrender its faith and religious values and raise young generations on respecting those values and identifying with them. And while the entire world needs today to restore the balance between the demands of the matter and those of the spirit, and between the scientific approach and the ethical one, it also needs to develop the human sciences that seek to foster intellectual and spiritual values. The Islamic world needs to develop humanities and Islamic sciences after reforming their methods because each addresses one dimension or the other of its identity. These sciences can in fact meet all the challenges that rise before them by adhering to the following approaches:

First, ensure that Islamic sciences reconnect with to our reality and benefit from the methods adopted by human sciences in the West and thus guarantee that they open up to the social, psychological and human phenomena. Our sciences would thus become focused on the life of the Muslim who is steeped in his faith and values. Through this we hope this new connection will instill dynamism that can bring about renaissance and creativity.

Secondly, purge the image of Islam as a history, an ideology and a heritage from the corruptions and distortions that have come to undermine it, by adopting a pragmatic approach to any allegations, falsehoods and fabricated claims about our religion and history. This can only achieve its intended purpose if we engage in a civilized dialogue with cultures and religions in the world's various languages.

Thirdly, engage in the practice of a pragmatic reading of Islamic sciences from a perspective of *ijtihad* that is sufficiently elevated to meet the expectations of a contemporary thought imbued with rationality and achieve development and social justice.

The Islamic thought targeted by these sciences is called upon today to embark on these areas and make use of communication and information technologies in all fields where knowledge meets ethics and through which human rights can expand and the environment can be protected. Only the contribution of Muslims today in these areas will make it possible to eliminate stereotypical views.

Finally, can we say that it is Muslims who are facing these challenges and not Islamic sciences? Islamic culture with all its religious, legislative and ethical value systems merges within a universal comprehensive vision, a balanced vision that embodies moderation and the middle stance, and the adoption of reason and tradition at the same time, each according to its field and specialty. Islamic culture is thus a universal culture that needs to be addressed from this all-inclusive perspective.

We conclude by saying that that Muslims are the ones facing these challenges. This dictates that they transform those challenges into incentives, and develop well devised strategies staggered over phases and stages, starting with altering the backward mentalities of Muslims, liberating their dysfunctional will, bringing about the conditions necessary to reclaim their long trampled dignity, and guaranteeing their rights to freedom and to participation in the planning of their future. Only then, can they restore Islamic sciences to their rightful place in their intellectual and spiritual lives for the greater good.

The Spirit of Islamic Civilization

Dr Abdellah Laroui*

Raising questions on the spirit of Islamic civilization faces highly complicated knowledge and methodological challenges. In a previous article on von Grunebaum⁽¹⁾, I tied the question to some premises including:

First: the question of the spirit of civilization goes beyond the sphere of factual history since the historian is neither required to pose nor to answer such a question.

Second: Today, it's rather anthropology that needs the concept of the spirit of civilization to become an independent discipline. For this very reason, it borrows automatically from the studied civilization itself. Thus, anthropology adopts the position of tradition "in the sense of imitation" without any criticism, while contenting itself with interpreting such tradition in the light of another tradition that is equally subjective and spontaneous.

Third: Getting into the issue of the spirit of civilization will inevitably end up in establishing a modern Islamic scholastic theology (*Ilm al-Kalam*) that can be comprehensible to other civilizations, requires satisfying some conditions that shall be detailed later on.

Let us simplify each of these three points.

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(1) See "***The Arabs and Historical Thought***", Beirut, Dar Al-Haqueeqa, 3rd edition p. 103ff.

1-The Sunni and the orientalist:

Regarding the question, what is the spirit of Islamic civilization? The traditionalist Islamic thinker gives an answer and the orientalist gives a different one. Thus, how do the two answers diverge and converge?

The Islamic traditional thought starts from two premises:

The first one is ruling out development in faith, i.e. spirit. This is clear: Islam is the same in every time and place. The traditional thought supposes that the content of symbols is the same throughout generations despite linguistic, racial and environmental differences. But, this is an untenable premise.

The second premise is the compatibility between faith, behavior, social organization and the historical process. In other words, the meanings signified by the words of faith which are presumably invariable, are spontaneously and entirely translated into the daily behavior of individuals, organizations, and into the collective actions inside and outside the territory of Islam. This compatibility may have existed in a certain time like in the early days of Islam due to the divine inspiration; but this essential condition is not explicitly mentioned by the traditional thought which addresses situations as if such inspiration still exists.

However, orientalists influenced by the methodology of cultural anthropology advance two premises:

First: the course of development unveils the meaning of faith which no longer means the origin that the community preserves, but rather the general tendency followed by interpreters of faith over centuries. For the Islamic traditional thought, Sunna (the Prophet's tradition) is the core of the Islamic call (*da'wa*) and has never changed. But for orientalists, it is the outcome of historical development.

Second: faith is a factor that limits human potentials in human civilization. In this sense, faith, morals, political system, artistic expression and intellectual production are all compatible. Anything that contradicts faith seems like a failed and incomplete attempt.

The Sunni differs from the orientalist in that he exclusively considers the origin (disregarding the fact that he is the one who interprets such origin at

every moment of history) while the orientalist believes in the end of history (disregarding the fact that it's him that stops evolution arbitrarily). Thus, each one of them commits his own mistake and both share the third mistake of assuming the compatibility of thought and reality, and faith and history. The Sunni believer assumes compatibility while the anthropologist builds his new science on that. No one of them can objectively demonstrate his claim and commit the historian by such claim.

From the historian's viewpoint, the temporal reality is the primary element that is often broader than any idea we can derive from it regardless of conditions and situations.

2- The historian's position:

Following his method in studying facts, the historian in principle refuses:

- 1- The compatibility of history to the idea we conceive of it,
- 2- The myth of origin adopted by the Sunni.
- 3- The utopia of the end of history adopted by the orientalist anthropologist.

The historian necessarily distinguishes between the following levels: factual history, social and political organizations, behavior and faith. Each of these levels limits the possibilities of the following level. The second may affect the first, but it may not explain all its changes because the first level contains the second one. It's impossible to explain all historical facts by organizations alone, or organizations by behavior, or behavior by faith alone.

In such case, it's quite clear that it's difficult to interlink the three notions mentioned at the title of this article (spirit, civilization and Islam) and also link each of them with the notion of history.

The historian talks about Islamic civilization only figuratively to mean the material, scientific, artistic aspects, etc. which flourished in the territories which witnessed the Islamic call (*da'wa*). The dependence of those aspects on the Islamic faith is a source of great divergence between historians who often utterly neglect that interdependence.

But what about the Western historians who don't cease to research in the spirit of the Roman, Renaissance, and Middle Age civilizations?

First, we think that the above-mentioned civilizations are part of a unique history “in the view of Westerners of course”. We also believe that the historians who conducted this research were pioneers of comparative history and cultural anthropology.

They may be right to consider Islamic civilization as a dead one like the Greek and the Roman and make of it an episode of the general and unified history as they see it. Do Muslims agree with them? This is the question raised at the level of knowledge!

The Islamic historian may study the spirit of the Umayyad, Fatimid, or Almohad civilizations as he may study any other human civilization after unifying them in a specific perspective. However, he may find it difficult to look for the spirit of Islamic civilization while considering Islam as a religion of the natural disposition (*Fitra*) that has no relation whatsoever with any other civilization, and holding the civilization that flourished on the land of Islam as not entirely Islamic but rather mostly Islamic in its aspects. Not to cite but the position of Islamic jurists (*Fuqaha*) on the state: the question “When was the state Islamic?” is a very tricky one that has so far provoked controversy among historians.

3- A modern Islamic scholastic theology (*Ilm al-Kalam*)

The previous remarks do not mean that the question on the spirit of Islamic civilization is futile or useless. They rather mean that anyone who puts such question departs from factual history and embraces the scholastic theology (*Ilm al-Kalam*).

If anyone responds in a traditional way, then he is a traditional scholar of *kalam* (*mutakallim*). And if he complies with the rules that shall be mentioned later on, he is a modernizer *mutakallim*. What distinguishes scholastic theology from history is that it complies with two rules: the rule of premises and the rule of debate.

The first rule involves the time in which the scholar of *kalam* lives as the number of possible solutions for any problem is limited in each era. There are roles that are allotted to every party to debate, and every party should play only one role. Referring back to the comparisons made by eminent writers in

successive periods (Ibn Hazm, Nicholas of Cusa, Massignon...), we clearly notice that the roles assigned to the Islamic sects and those assigned to the Christian sects differ according to the available possibilities in a certain time.

The second rule involves the logic of debate which automatically pushes towards focusing on aspects of contradiction and on disregard of resemblances. If presumably a Muslim faces a Christian, he will of course prefer transcendence (oneness) to pantheism (Trinity). Then we may truly say that the spirit of Islam (the apparent characteristic of the Islamic belief) is transcendence. Yet, we must not forget that the logic of debate⁽²⁾ urges us to disregard any pantheism phenomenon in Islam and consider it as a heresy. If the same position were an opposition to Buddhism or Confucianism, the peculiarity of Islam would appear differently.

The role played by Islam at a particular time, in which we see the true spirit of Islam, is twice limited, on the one hand by the existing opponents and on the other hand by the identity of the main opponent. Anyone researching today in the question of the spirit of Islamic civilization is involuntarily subject to the two rules and has a limited number of distinctive features among which he may choose a feature as a symbol of his identity. He may claim that he unveiled the invariable and ever-lasting spirit of Islam, but it's a subjective belief that may not be imposed on historians.

We have said that the scholar of *kalam* today reiterates the discourse (*Kalam*) of past scholars and may modernize. The condition for modernization is to comply with the above mentioned conditions. Such recognition entails three consequences:

First: Observing the subject matter, i.e. behavior, society and history. The subject matter should be considered per se not through the individual belief. In other words, it should be admitted that Islam is exotic today. Without this admittance, there should be no realism in thinking and no dialogue with the other.

(1) Compare with the concept of polarity in the article on Clausewitz's theory, page 91.

Second: Inventing a theory of belief, in other words, setting up a scale for ranking belief which expresses all possible roles at the present time. This is necessary to encompass others' beliefs that cannot be disregarded.

Third: Unveiling the logic of past reformist movements, or interpreting the Sunni interpretations.

These are the conditions for continuity, realism and dialogue with the other. If the scholar of *kalam* doesn't meet them, he will seem to others as a person with a rude and natural faith, thus becoming a just grade of the other's belief.

Conclusion:

The historian describes, and justifies when possible, everything he calls the Islamic civilization. In the absence of an agreed rule, the historian is not required to distinguish between what is and what is not Islamic in that civilization. Concerning the spirit of Islamic civilization, the historian, as an individual may assume it, but he can't confirm the objectivity of the assumed spirit, or demonstrate the link between that spirit and the aspects of the civilization being studied, though scholars of *Kalam* may agree with the results he may achieve.

The historian may give up his methodology to become a scholar of *kalam* provided that he is honest to his reader and avoids to present his scholar theology (*kalam*) achievements as historical discoveries.

If it were possible, I would stop here, but I know that there is an active intellectual movement which seeks to determine the identity of Islamic civilization in comparison with other civilizations. I believe that it hasn't so far met all of the above-mentioned conditions, but it progresses fast towards its goal. In my view, the notions that Islamic civilization is hinged on are these four concepts:

- Natural disposition (*Fitra*)
- Justice
- Transcendence (*tanzih*)
- Good morals

These are a set of interlinked values (behavioral, taste, intellectual) which distinguish Muslims from others. They characterize the community of Muslims – I don't mean the Islamic society – and distinguish it from other communities. They are invariable and cannot be transcended in the current temporal perspective no matter how the current social conditions change.

Is it possible to justify the aspects of the civilization we call Islamic and all the events of the history we call Islamic by these values? It's evident that this is not possible.

I recognize what the modern scholar of *Kalam* says about the spirit of Islamic civilization, and as an individual, I share his conclusions. Nevertheless, his discourse is limited by the following situation: the situation of Muslims' civilization and the situation of civilizations Muslims consider as their competitor. It's a discourse that shows the present identity of Muslims, not the identity of Muslims of the past or of the future.

Religion and Modernity

Within the Context of Globalization and Diversity of Secularization Pathways

Dr Mohamed-Sghir Janjar*

Introduction

After the Second World War until the eighties of the last century, the theoretical paradigm called “Secularization”⁽¹⁾ dominated religious sociology and in the description and analysis of religious phenomena within the context of modernity - or rather the so-called “religious modernity”. This paradigm is a conceptual interpretation network which was elaborated from the study and analysis of the religious evolution of Western European societies which built a long-term political modernity in conformity with the principle of independence from religious authority. Thus, building on the experience of Western Europe, sociology has constructed an ideal type which has epistemologically prevailed up to a recent time when a an awareness of the existence of a divide between the model that emanated from the European modernity in general, and the modernization pathways being undergone by large parts of the world.

Three factors have contributed to the emergence of a critical awareness within the boundaries of that paradigm in its original version:

- The emergence of a new discourse based on some theoretical discussions which re-read and re-interpreted the central premise of

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(1) We've chosen the term “secularization” to distinguish it from “secularism”. Secularization is used to describe and analyze complex social and religious phenomena from a developmental and teleological perspective that stresses the diminishing spaces of religion and its shrinking influence in the symbolic systems and in modern societies in general.

the “Secularization” paradigm in the light of the changes happening in the religious scene in modern world.

- The deep changes and far-reaching transformations in technology leading to the surge of connection and interdependence between communities which were theorized since the seventies under the title of “globalization”.
- The severe criticism leveled to social sciences from outside Europe called “methodological nationalism”. Post-colonial studies contributed much to this methodological criticism through showing the relativity of the social discourses generated by European modernity and criticizing their claimed universality.

Hence, the central question which recurred in the theoretical discourses in religious sociology over the last decades is as follows: does European “secularization” represent the ideal model for religious modernity or is it just an aspect of the possible “secularization”? Is it not possible to talk in S. Eisenstadt’s method⁽²⁾ who propounded multiple modernity on several pathways for religious modernity? How is it possible to approach the hypothesis of secularization in this case? Is it through dispensing altogether with or through reconstructing it?

Secularization hypothesis subject to criticism:

What has made the secularization hypothesis worse is the increasing sociological discourses pushing towards an opposing reading that insists on “religion comeback” and questions Weber’s theoretical model on rationalization process, which he termed “disenchantment of the World”⁽³⁾. There are even some critics of the secularization theory who view it as just an

(2) Shmuel N. Eisenstadt: “*Multiple Modernity as Challenge to Sociology*”, in *Mauss magazine*, n° 24, 2004, pp. 189-204.

(3) The collective book supervised by a former theoretician of secularization, the American researcher Peter L. Berger represents a great moment for questioning the basic concepts underlying “secularization” as a major theoretical paradigm model in the sociology of religious phenomena. The title of this book refers to the theoretical desire to shift the trend of Weber interpretation expressed by the phrase “disenchantment of the world”.

See “*the Re-enchantment of the West*”, supervised by Peter L. Berger, Paris, Bayard, 2001.

ideology –in the sense of a false consciousness- of a number of researchers filled with cosmopolitan representations and behaviors which distanced them from what is going on in the world to become prisoners of assumptions not supported by real social phenomena and facts.⁽⁴⁾

Advocates of the «religion comeback» hypothesis circulate some information to prove the credibility of their claim, the most important of which is the great interest in religions in the modern world. Fundamentalism has become for many researchers a subject of studies and a research trend for many big academic institutions throughout the world, and a tool to draw funding from large institutions. A good example is the theme of Islamism which has specialized centers and research departments inside majors universities in Europe and America, thus surpassing the circles of traditional orientalism. Furthermore, religions have become a media material on almost a daily basis for prominent TV channels. Demand on experts and researchers specialized in religious movements and activists and their opponents has also soared. Religious themes have become the basis for many TV programs and hundreds of TV channels specialized in religion have also been created. Moreover, publishing (including newspapers, magazines, books, reports...) has scaled up its interest in religion in its different dimensions. The Internet has undoubtedly contributed not only to the dissemination of the religious material, but also to making religion topic for international debate.

Through hundreds of field studies supported by figures, academic research seeks in its turn to highlight the impressive revival of religiosity in different forms and practices including rituals, practices, representations, consumption styles, reading, dresses, discourse, demand on religious expertise, etc., in different countries and civilizational fields (North and South America, Indian Peninsula, the Arab-Islamic world, some European countries such as Poland, Ireland, and Croatia, and also among Muslim migrants living in European countries).

(4) Peter Berger thinks that if we except Western Europe where the secularization theory seems now consistent and supported by facts, the claim that today's world is globalized is wrong because the facts in vast parts of the world prove otherwise as religion is making a strong comeback. Berger admits that he, together with others since the fifties of the twentieth century, have contributed to drafting the secularization literatures which he now considers as totally wrong. Op cit. p.15.

The surge of religiously-motivated terrorism and its culmination in the September 11th, 2001 attacks, the ensuing “war against terrorism” led by the United States, and the transformation of many political conflicts from being ideological in nature influenced by the stand-off between the West and West into religious ones, all contributed to giving religion a geostrategic dimension clearly manifest in the international debates on “the conflict of civilizations”, or the various initiatives to activate and advance “dialogue between civilizations and faiths”.

Secularization as a conceptual and hermeneutical network

The conceptual network which derives from the concept of secularism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries started with the founding fathers of modern sociological thought⁽⁵⁾. But its intellectual roots go back to the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century. In their study of religious phenomena, those founders drew upon the European historical experience and extrapolated its conclusions to other human communities. They thus considered the “advanced situation” of their societies as the ultimate goal of human history; a history that they conceived of as a necessary, regular and cumulative activity. It's an activity that moves up from a lower level to a higher one in an ascending “progressive” trend which Europe represents its culminating aspect.

This supposed progressive vision largely explains some aspects of confusion which besets the secularization paradigm. If the link between modernism and the waning influence of religion finds its empirical credibility in the case of Western Europe and Canada, America was immune to this scheme since the nineteenth century. However, secularism as a focal point of the interpretation scheme set by the founders of sociology relies on a wide range of supporting concepts arranged according to a paradigmatic logical contradiction. Transition from magic to science is in parallel with transition from “mechanical solidarity” that prevails in primordial communities (tribe, clan...) to “an organic solidarity” that characterizes more complex communities. The same goes for

(5) Wenamely mentions Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Ferdinand Tönnies.

transition from imitation to logic and from oral cultures to what Jack Goody calls “the logic of writing”⁽⁶⁾ which also refers to the transition from agrarian communities to a complex society in the modern sense where the distribution of tasks prevails and the defined specializations grow.

Secularization is defined as the outcome of “a historical process through which an increasing number of human activities break away from the influence of religious institutions and of the authority of the sacred”⁽⁷⁾ which is called in the sociology of religions “functional differentiation”. If secularism has failed to entirely rule out religion from peoples’ lives, it has managed to curb its influence and weaken its influence on people’s values and behaviors thus making religion shift gradually from a framework that controls and explains everything to an activity like any other human activities. This shift is described by Marcel Gauchet using Max Weber’s expression “disenchantment of the world” as an “exit” from religion, i.e. leaving a world where religion constitutes the constitutive and binding element of society; the element that controls its political form and the major actor that determines the types of social relationships.

In the twentieth century, when field research methodologies in religious fields emerged, social sciences have produced a set of information and knowledge about religious beliefs, values and practices in Western Europe and thus contributed to promoting the thesis of secularization. These are some premises regulating social approaches in the religious field:

- The decline of institutional religiosity

While field research often shows that a large portion of people state that they have a religious sentiment and that they believe differently in some religious sanctities, very few of them still espouse the idea that they belong to this

(6) Jack Goody: “*The logic of writing: the domestication of the savage mind*”, translated from English and presented by Jean Bazin and Alban Bensa, Paris, publisher Minuit, 1979;

(7) See : “*La liberté de choisir : pluralisme religieux et pluralisme politique dans le catholicisme français*”, Paris, édition : La Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1993, p. 338.

church or to that congregation. The numbers of individuals adhering to the traditional religious institutions, Catholic or Protestant, is dwindling while the number of those who express their adherence to specific values, or to what specialists call “a homeland of thoughts” is increasing.

- Privatization of religion

Researchers also notice in the European space itself a strong and steadfast trend of decline in religious influence in society as it no longer covers, as it used to do before, all facets of the life of individuals and groups such as the economy, politics, art or education. Except the traditional religious schools, all of those fields have managed to attain their independence from religion and started to produce their own rules and become bound to their own logic. The phenomenon of privatization of religion is manifest in the separation of the private from the public and in the gradual transformation of religion into a personal and intimate affair that concerns individuals without any interference of the state or any public institution.

- Subjectivation

In parallel with the privatization of religiosity, the external definition of what is religious regresses, i.e. orientation and institutional supervision that is beyond the will and choice of the individual. By contrast, the subjective conception, i.e. religion and religiosity as conceived of by individuals is gaining ground. Hence, an ignorance for example of the traditional institutional religious culture was starting to emerge amongst the youth which is subsequently replaced by a personal combination (do-it-yourself) of elements borrowed from various fields like considering friendship, justice and freedom as religious values.

- Relativism

Subjectivation and relativism converge on their distance from religious institutions. Several research studies for instance show that very few Catholics still believe that Catholicism is the only true religion. Even amongst the faithful who practice religious rituals (the weekly prayers at the church for instance), the relativist view of religion has become acceptable and well understood. Likewise, the majority of the faithful in Western Europe think that

there are several ways to achieve truth and that religious belief is no more than one of those ways and not the only one. It has also become clear that the value of authenticity, in the sense of self-faithfulness and to what the individual considers truth that is based on his own experience. Consequently, many in Europe have a value far more important than truth in the traditional institutional religious sense.

Decline of demand for institutional religious practices

Field research studies also show a drop in demand for collective institutional religious practices and rituals in Europe especially as many now think that their Christian identity is not defined by the collective institutional rituals and practices but rather derives its originality from individual initiatives and practices (individual prayer, thinking and reflecting on the metaphysics, helping others...). This means that there is a sort of dissociation between the true Christian belonging, from the individuals' viewpoints, and the acceptance of the official doctrines and instructions which do not satisfy their expectations and needs. Some may for example believe in the existence of heaven alone and refuses to believe in hell punishment. This is a pragmatic behavior towards religious beliefs that correlates with individualism and relativism and drives religiosity towards being individual and optional fitting the nature of the secular European societies.

Globalized modernity and the crisis of the secularization paradigm

Even though the theory of secularization as it was formulated through the European experience around the middle of last century still has great procedural ability suitable for understanding religiosity trends in Europe, it faces major problems in attempting to describe, analyze and understand events happening on the religious scene in the rest of the world. Even inside the European sphere, the secularization paradigm doesn't function in the same easiness as in societies like Ireland, Poland, Croatia and Old Bavaria. Wherever historical conditions led to overlapping between the religious and national identities, a disparity in pace of the processes of secularization and

modernization is noticed. There is also a lack of organic relationship between the decline of religious institutions' influence (secularization of society) and the decrease in the presence of religion in individuals' consciousness. Many religious beliefs and practices take new forms. Likewise, the religious institutions which lose their spiritual influence in society still play different roles of social or religious natures. This change in the functions and meanings of the components of religions shows that the relationship between modernity and religion in Europe itself is a complex one that doesn't accept any simple reading or interpretation.

According to a number of indicators adopted in the secularization thesis the situation gets even more complex when we take into consideration the case of the United States of America which has made significant strides in social modernization. Nevertheless, they witness a strong presence of religiosity compared to the societies of Western Europe. The dynamism of religiosity in North America and its revolving and composite nature draw the attention of observers and monitors of religious affairs all over the world. It suffices to mention some remarkable phenomena such as the large scale commercial use of TV channels by Evangelists, the gigantic churches, the astonishing dynamism of some religious groups (Pentecostalism and the Mormons)⁽⁸⁾, and embracing the Asian religions and beliefs (Buddhism) among the cultivated social classes. The American model is also manifest in the ability of religious groups and institutions to adapt with the dynamics of modernity and market their offer according to the demand of its adherents including mastering market and marketing mechanisms (churches conducting opinion polls and marketing their offer according to the demand of their followers), adopting the new methods of management, embracing the values of pluralism, freedom and tolerance in the religious field.

If we take into consideration the international religious scene, and monitor strategies adopted by religious institutions and movements and religion in

(8) The Pentecostalism is a Protestant religious movement which emerged in the late nineteenth century in the US. It spreads very fast in several regions such as Latin America, Africa, Europe and Asia especially in South Korea. The Mormonism is a faith that started with Joseph Smith in the middle of the nineteenth century in the United States of America. Most of Mormons belong to "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints".

general to adapt to modernization and globalization contexts, we clearly notice how the theory of secularization in its classical form loses its hermeneutical effectiveness. The prevailing attitude among researchers in theology in general has until recently been assuming that the reform of religious institutions and updating (aggiornamento) the teaching of religion and the religious thought in a large scale, are among the requirements of survival and continuity for any religion at the times of modernization and globalization. This requires adapting to the elements of the modern times (sciences, plurality, relativism, freedom of opinion and belief, etc.). However, the map of religion shows that it was the opposite that happened. The influence of the classical Protestant trend and the Roman Catholic Church which undertook its internal reform at the Second Vatican Council at the beginning of the sixties of last century is incessantly decreasing inside Europe as well as in other parts of the world (Latin America, Africa and Asia). By contrast, the fundamentalist movements which refuse to embrace the values and sciences of modernism and adapt to their requirements (the Evangelist movements, Pentecostalism, the Islamic movements, the Jewish Orthodox current...) are gaining ground.

Generally, observers of modern religious movements notice that a conservative wave has invaded the international religious landscape as it is not limited to fundamentalist Islam, Protestant Evangelism and Pentecostalism as some may believe, but it has also hit Buddhism and Hinduism and also among Shinto⁽⁹⁾ and Sikh faiths. The effects of this conservative wave on the Roman Catholic Church are manifest in its tendency in the last two decades towards revising some of the achievements of the theological endeavor of the Second Vatican Council. In the Islamic case, comparison is being made between the reformist current aspiring to reconcile with modernity as expressed by the renaissance movements in the Arab Mashreq and by the reformist ones in the Indian subcontinent on the one hand, and on the other hand the second wave which started with the "Muslim Brotherhood" in the late of the twentieth century and culminated with the Iranian Revolution and the emergence of the fundamentalist movements in the Sunni world.

(9) Shinto followers adhere to the ancient faith of Shintoism present in Japan which feature a number of habits and rituals which characterize the life of the Japanese. The Sikhs believe in the Sikhism which is a monotheist religion founded by Guru Nanak in the north of India in the 15th century.

It is noticed that those religious conservative movements largely differ from the first reformist wave which started within the circles of the European Protestant theologians in the nineteenth century, and continued with Muslim renaissance pioneers to evolve among the Catholics in the form of the orientations of the Second Vatican Council. These movements tried to give theological answers to the challenges posed by the scientific and industrial revolutions, the technical developments and social and moral changes which characterize modern societies. They also sought to reach to the rationalist intellectual currents and thus integrated in their approach to their faiths and religious traditions some of the methodological achievements of modern human sciences which they have used to re-read their fundamental texts. The second wave of religious fundamentalists which grew after the triumph of modernism in its economic, social, political and scientific dimensions was particularly characterized by a return to the strong religious sentiments, simple rituals and identity aspects and a renunciation of the complex theistic rationalism. It was also characterized by an extreme caution of high culture which marginalizes or excludes the role of transcendence and the beliefs linked to metaphysics and supernatural phenomena in addition to clinging to the slogan of going back to the origin of belief in its initial purity.

Despite the existence of common denominators between the different movements of religious revival in the modern world, researchers mention a set of specificities linked to the nature of the relationship which each movement establishes with the components of modernity and modernization. Thus, focus is often laid on the political dimensions and orientations of the Islamic revival in its different manifestations (traditional scholars, puritan worshiping, cultural or jihadist Salafism, Muslim Brotherhood, new Sufism, etc.). Despite the fact that it has effective religious dimensions, they are difficult to reduce only to the political one only. It's a movement that is spread over a large geographical area (from North Africa to the Sub-Saharan region and from the Middle-East to Southeast Asia) in addition to the Muslim immigrant communities in the Europe and America.

The movement is characterized, namely among the very conservative circles, by reviving the religious discourses (fatwa for instance), habits (dress) and the representations and practices which appear in many cases in sharp opposition with the requirements of modern life. It is also characterized by

its radical positions which still raise international controversy especially when it engenders legislations and behaviors that contradict the modern view of human rights. To date, some attitudes regarding the relation between religion and the state, women status, the moral behavior in daily life (hijab, prohibition of gender mixing in public areas, etc.) and some aspects of moral and religious intolerance all constitute elements of conflict with modern culture in its globalized Western version. The Islamic revival has endeavored to create a counter-culture or sub-culture – as in the European and American Diasporas – that features a set of behaviors and symbols with identity dimensions (dress, beard, lifestyle, etc.). It's evident that Islamic revival spreads among the young in particular and women, in urban areas and among the educated social and middle classes. In addition, the intensity of religious conservatism differs from one Muslim country to another according to the history, system and heritage of each society.

The Evangelist revival movement witnesses a growing dynamism. Its expansion covers a large geographical area (the Far East, China, Korea, the Philippines, the South Indian Ocean, Sub-Saharan Africa, in some areas of Eastern Europe and Latin America where more than 40 million Evangelist Protestants live)⁽¹⁰⁾. Though Protestantism has penetrated societies of Latin America only recently, some researchers have noticed that the influence of the new religion has been manifest in the emergence of new consumption and employment attitudes and behaviors. Besides, American Evangelists have spread new ethics in the fields of education (encouraging education to read the Bible), and contributed to pressing towards the rejection of the violent masculine culture which is prevalent in Latin American countries as part of their traditions. This has facilitated women's access to the public space, taking responsibility inside the Evangelist churches and participation in the administrative and managerial activities within these religious groups.

Another manifestation of the growing presence of religion in the modern world is that many international issues take religious character such as the

(10) The Evangelist community is dominated by the Pentecostal current which combines the Orthodox Evangelism and rigorous morality, adopts some festive expressions close to the rituals of hadra dances practiced by some Islamic Sufi congregations, and also focuses on the spiritual healing.

religiously motivated terrorist actions and wars (in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Mali, etc.) and the conflicts between religious groups (between Hindus and Muslims in India, or between Christians and Muslims in Sudan, etc.); in addition to the social conflicts expressed in a religious language which occasionally develop into conflicts with international dimensions.

The economic globalization has contributed to intensifying immigration in an unprecedented way. This has led so many people to practice their religious beliefs and rituals within societies which are totally alien to them, and consequently made so many religions live inside some societal and civilizational contexts and spaces which entirely differ from the original contexts in which they historically emerged. Since religion has for so long been structurally confined to limited geographical areas and been expressive of the local conditions of people, current globalization has transformed it into “a floating thing”, in Clifford Geertz’s term⁽¹¹⁾, which has no strong ties with any prevalent habit or any existing long standing institutions. The American anthropologist concluded the outcomes of this change in the sociological theorization of religion stating that a form of Simmel decentralized network (referring to the German sociologist George Simmel) spreading according to multi-dimensional general links “has substituted the mutually reinforcing groups unified by collective representations (which were Durkheim’s dream). Therefore, religion as a social force has not weakened, but it seems instead that it has gained greater strength recently. On the contrary, it has changed, and will change more and more”⁽¹²⁾. It’s the same conclusion reached by Olivier le Roy⁽¹³⁾ when he studied the impact of globalization, migrations and the accelerating social and cultural changes on the different fundamentalist religious expressions (Protestant, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, etc.) as the pace

(11) Clifford Geertz, “*La religion, sujet d’avenir*” in “*Mutations des sciences sociales*”, Paris, edition: Sciences humaines, 2007, p. 428.

(12) Op. Cit., pp. 428-429.

(13) Olivier Roy uses the concepts of “deterritorialization” and “deculturation” to express disengagement between religiosity and its geographical origin on the one hand and its roots or cultural heritage on the other hand. He shows that fundamentalism couldn’t be globalized without adopting the principle of disengagement between religion and its traditional cultural layer. See: Oliveir Le Roy: “*La sainte ignorance: le temps de la religion sans culture*”, Paris, Ed. Seuil, 2008.

of movement of spiritual resources (religions) grew thus enabling them to settle in geographical areas and cultural environments that differ from their original homeland. This situation has forced their followers to dissociate them from their origin and cultural layer and reduce them to a set of plain symbols with an identity function. They are exactly the floating, moving and uprooted symbols mentioned above by Geertz. Olivier Roy also describes this religious devoid of its cultural and historical soil as “the pure religious”, harmonious with general economy, that imposes on migrant communities –geographically and culturally – to recall their texts that are now established outside their original cultural contexts, that is to say by adopting a direct and spontaneous reading that neglects the heritage of the past and its thick layer of interpretations.

Conclusion:

Towards building a notion of secularization in the light of the plurality of religious modernism processes

Through this review of the ongoing debate at the international level on the theory of secularization we come up with the conclusion that if we except some extremist attitudes calling for total renunciation of this paradigm and considering religion as a symbolic and social force with more presence now than in the times of the founding fathers of the sociology of religion (the attitude of Peter Berger for instance), most sociologists, though they have contributed to the epistemological criticism of the theorization thesis and to its related conceptual network, do not categorically reject the thesis of secularization put forward by the founding fathers of the sociology of religion in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While they stress, as did Geertz, that religion has a life at the time of the recent modernity and globalization, they draw attention to the factors of change affecting religion and religiosity in their interaction with the social dynamics of religion. Therefore, they take into consideration the enormous complexity of characterizing the relationship between religion and secularization at the time of globalized modernity, a thing that the thesis of secularization in its original form could not have taken into account.

A model of this critical revisiting of secularization paradigm together with an explanation of the new methodological arrangements which should be

adopted to approach religious phenomena in our modern times are found in Geertz's late texts. Since the social status of religion has changed, and has become more complex and multi-formed, new methods of description and analysis of religion and its role in society are needed. Hence, Geertz argues that social sciences need to formulate a new concept of religion and its role in society; a concept that benefits from the lessons learned from the deadlock of the secularization thesis in its old version and allows for approaching the religious dynamics in the era of globalization. For that purpose, Geertz suggests a set of methodological orientations which according to him are likely to frame the social approach to religious phenomena.

If the secularization thesis often takes a mechanical teleological form, it is, according to Geertz, because it over-relied on the positivist approaches which use quantitative and statistical methods to describe religiosity (measuring the rate of those who believe or practice certain religious rituals like praying, fasting, etc.). This was possible only because the social researcher took the attitude of the observer of religious life from a higher position. This position presupposes believing in a premise and requires the researcher to know beforehand the fate of religious phenomena and the inevitable course of secularization. Since the epistemological environment of the social sciences is now disengaged to a large extent from the teleological and linear visions which dominated the positivist soil where those sciences emerged, the social approach to the religious phenomena is required to focus more on the phenomenological, semiotic and hermeneutic approaches which study religion from the perspective of conceptions and attitudes linked to the "purpose", connotations and meanings of things; i.e. those arguments which make part of what is called "the meaning of life", through focusing on the subjective context of the production of meaning and ways actors construct their vision to the world. This is expressed by Geertz through a methodological and ethical necessity that makes the researcher take seriously "the native's viewpoint"⁽¹⁴⁾ and accept to take the risk of phenomenological analysis and communication and with the subjectivity of the actors in order to understand

(14) Geertz calls it "the native's viewpoint".

their thoughts and feelings and access to the hermeneutic frames they use to produce meanings and assess events around them.

The phenomenological attitude advocated by Geertz falls within a methodological and epistemological perspective that is inspired from the analyses of Max Weber who argues that the researcher should exert effort to grasp the “reasons” and grounds that frame actors’ behavior on the assumption that any social action is a rational one, even if the actor aims through it to achieve esthetic, religious and moral goals. This means that rationalism in the social field is not abstract. It’s rather, in Weber’s view, often part of a cultural context.

Therefore, giving up the attitude of the “observer from a higher position” by the social researcher studying religion will necessarily push him, according to Geertz, to approach the religious phenomena as modern events in formation of which he knows nothing about their fate and final stages..This contradicts what was happening in the past when the researcher was armed with the thesis of secularization considering the religious phenomena object of his observations as mere historical events (the present of the other = the past of Europe) of which he knows everything about their the history and future course. This is what the temporal and existential modernity of the religious phenomena mean. This is to say, the researcher is not outside such phenomena but rather he is affected by them and is forced to interact with them.

From Geertz’s perspective, the reconstruction of the paradigm of “secularization” requires a qualitative change in approaching the social sciences of religion in such a way as measurement and assessment operations of the decline or the expansion of a certain religion become secondary when compared to seeking to explain the successive transformations occurring inside various religious traditions in the time of globalization: seeking to understand the contexts of transformation and re-formation being undergone by any religion when it melts in the so-called “suspicions and disorders of modern life”⁽¹⁵⁾.

(15) Geertz Clifford: Op. Cit.

Arabization: Its Economic Importance and Necessity for Development

Dr Abdelali Ouadghiri*

Concept definition and removal of ambiguity:

Since the very beginning of the Islamic state, Arabic was its official language in all life aspects including education, economy, administration, etc. The Caliph Omar ibn Al-Khattab was known for, among other things, issuing the first Islamic currency in Arabic. He was later followed by the Umayyad caliphs who prohibited using the other currencies of Persian and Byzantine origin. Since the era of Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwan, the treasury departments were Arabized instead of the Farsi, Greek, Coptic or other languages which had been used in different to provinces. The other administrations had been using Arabic since the times of the Al-Rashidun Caliphs namely the administration of the army. Since the beginning, the founders of the Islamic state were keen to use the official language in all the administrative and economic affairs as a corner stone for building the autonomous and independent state that owns its decision-making power and freedom from external dependence. In the following periods, when Muslims initiated a comprehensive scientific and cultural advancement, they resorted to translating books from other languages and enriching Arabic with foreign words, and expanding its vocabulary and expressions. Thus, the notion of Arabization in the old Arab heritage, at this era and up to the beginning of the modern time, meant only borrowing the needed words from other languages into Arabic after modifying their pronunciation and naturalizing them in Arabic forms or without any

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modification or transformation when not necessary⁽¹⁾. There was clear and urgent need for borrowing foreign words during the times of the translation of sciences and the transfer of all that was available in other civilizations and cultures and needed for Muslim's progress.

Today, Arabization has two complementary notions⁽²⁾: The first one is to coin Arabic terms equivalent to foreign terms to enrich our language, develop its expressive capabilities and update its vocabulary and structures after many centuries of cultural and civilizational backwardness and linguistic puritanism undergone by our societies so as to enable this language to keep up with modernity and facilitate its use at all levels and specialties of education and in the fields of modern sciences, economy, advanced technology and in other

(1) In Al-Jawhari's "**Al-Sihah**": "*The Arabization of a foreign term is to be pronounced by the Arabs in their way. It is said: the Arabs have Arabized the term to become Arabic*". But Sibawayh had, about two centuries before that, divided the foreign terms into categories: some of them were borrowed by the Arabs, and some of them not. The Arabs were forced to change the pronunciation of some of them when they don't find any correspondence in Arabic. They kept some others in their initial form when there was no need for pronunciation modification. (See the book Sibawayh's "**Al-Kitab**", volume 2, chapter: The Arabized foreign words). In his book "**Irtishaf Al-Darb**", Abu Hayyan maintained Sibawayh's divisions and presented them more clearly. Al-Suyuti in his "**Al-Muzhir**" and others quoted him.

(2) Some divide it, according to these two notions, into Mashriki and Maghrebi. In his book "**Arabization and its coordination in the Arab world**", p. 521, "Mohamed Al-Monji Al-Sayadi said: "*If the Arabic language owned in the Mashrek (the Levant) its capabilities, even relatively, until the era of foreign rule, that language imposed some rigorous restrictions on itself in the Maghreb. According to those historical considerations, Arabization in the Mashrek had consequently become a further step in the scientific progress, and in the Maghreb a national cause. In the Mashrek, it may be a question of luxury (...) or finding concepts for any new words Based on this difference in the conception of Arabization, experts from the Mashrek think that even talking about Arabization is nonsense as opposed to the Maghreb. Arabization is a reality in the Mashrek for so long, and it is no longer a national or even methodic issue. Yet, specialists may deal with the issue and discuss technical questions, i.e. questions relating to coining scientific terms, hold the necessary symposiums and conferences at the level of the Arab world and reflecting on developing the existing institutions or establishing other supplementary ones....*"

If this division was apparent in the seventies and eighties of last century when the Mashrek countries were relatively distant from the strong influence of the foreign linguistic expansion, today, I think, things have changed with the invading and dominating linguistic globalization that penetrates from the gate of the economy, technology and culture. Therefore, I can't anymore see any difference between the two parts of the Arab world in this regard. Both of them are facing the same challenges as French is dominating one part and English is dominating the second.

vital fields. To attain this goal, academies of the Arabic language were set up and scientific and research centers have been engaged in coining terms and coordinating Arabization between the different bodies active in the field.

The second one makes of Arabic a language of teaching different types sciences and arts; the official language of the administration, economy, commerce, media and all public services instead of the foreign languages which dominated and prevailed in several aspects of social life especially in the Maghreb region. The objective is to achieve total independence and freedom from cultural and linguistic invasion which accompanied and continued after the colonial expansion⁽³⁾ and from all forms of political, economic and cultural dependence. Actually language and its deep civilizational dimensions are the basis of such dependence especially at the time when Arabic suffers from various forms of marginalization, oppression and regression that raise real concerns about its future. It is quite normal that the Ummah and its conscious classes in particular give due attention to the common and unifying language and work to strengthen and rehabilitate it, and compensate for any shortfalls on the one hand and redeem the position it deserves and affirm its presence in all aspects of life on the other hand. Language is one of the symbols of the Ummah, the tongue of its civilization and the reservoir of its culture and history that embody its identity, expresses its sovereignty and preserves its viability.

In this latter sense, Arabization means rehabilitating the first official language in every Arab country and use it instead of foreign languages as a mother language and the linguistic common denominator of all its ethnic, cultural and religious components, and its local and regional linguistic and dialectal diversity. Whatever we call this process: Arabization, anchoring the national language or re-localizing it, the meaning is the same and the goal is to firmly re-establish the Arab Islamic cultural identity which this language comprehensively, accurately and deeply expresses.

Localizing, or re-localizing Arabic in the way it was before the European colonization and the domination of foreign languages can only be done through the generalization of its use in:

(3) I prefer the use of "occupational" instead "colonial" for the Arabic word (استعماري) because its translation into "colonial" is not accurate.

- All the social services such administrations, in all of their departments and branches, and in all laws, decrees, correspondence and deliberations they issue; education in all its stages, levels and specialties, the written press, radio and TV including the advertisements and programs they broadcast including entertainment and sports program; culture in all its aspects and forms including the theatre, cinema production, drama, movies, songs and rehearsals.
- The economic sector including various institutions like banks, companies, expertise and consulting houses, engineering offices, insurance, tourism, industry, commerce, legal transactions, contracts, commitments and services.
- All aspects of public life that require the use of Arabic including factories, streets, cafés, restaurants, entertainment places, writing of posters, signs and names of streets and roads, traffic signs, commercial and non-commercial stores, trademarks of manufactured goods, products and inventions.

In brief, what is meant by this process is to make the first official and constitutional language sovereign in every Arab country in such a way as to leave no room for any foreign language to take any place whatsoever or any sector, public or private or allow it compete, harass or displace it to the second or third position. The first official language is an integral part of the sovereignty of the state or society that uses it. Sovereignty is undividable or reducible in any form whatsoever.

In this meaning, Arabization has no relationship with the arbitrary and unfounded arguments of opponents and claims of the prejudiced who claim that Arabization is insularity, self-centeredness and rejection of using foreign languages. However, this is no more than a call for placing the national official constitutional language at the position of leadership and sovereignty and ranking it first in terms of consideration and second in terms of use. What we notice in our Arab world is the domination of the foreign language (French or English) in all aspects of private and public life and the gradual reduction and marginalization of the role of the national language to the extent of transforming it inside its land and sovereign territory into a second or third class language and gradually threatening its very existence or at least pushing it to seriously regress and decline despite the fact that all national constitutions in principle ensure to it a legal protection and a prominent place. Concerning the teaching, mastery and

advanced study of foreign languages according to need and necessity, they are undoubtedly, strongly and urgently so required that all education systems in all their stages and levels should integrate them in their programs.

We still call in all of our writings to distinguish between two quite different types of multilingualism: multilingualism at the level of individuals and multilingualism at the level of the state.⁽⁴⁾ Individuals have the full right and

(4) There is another dichotomy of the multilingualism: the natural multilingualism and the acquired multilingualism. The first one is the natural result of the existence of more than one national language in one country as a result of the multiplicity of ethnicities and nationalities. The second one (the acquired) is the result of learning foreign languages in addition to the national language or languages. The natural diversity is two forms. The first one is when each language independently prevails in one province of the same country (the case of Switzerland, Belgium, and Canada). Thus, each province has the right to use its local language in all aspects of life on an equal footing with the languages of other provinces. But the necessity of coexistence and solidarity between the peoples of the provinces require the use of one common national language, otherwise the unity of the country would be threatened to disintegrate sooner or later despite the formal unity consisting of the federal system adopted by such countries because the linguistic unity is the cement that binds together the people of one country. In the second form, no national language exclusively dominates in one province but is rather spoken by groups of people scattered all over the different provinces of the country. In this case there is more need for one of the national languages to play the role of the common language unifying the country thanks to its potentials enabling it to play that role. Otherwise, the opportunity is given to a foreign language to lead at the detriment of all of the national languages. This is exactly the reality in the majority of African countries and a number of Asian and Latin American countries with high number of national languages.

The acquired multilingualism is also divided into two types. In one type the acquisition of a certain foreign language or two languages (one first and one second languages) is, under the linguistic policies of the state, restricted or prohibited for learners in schools, administrations and in other fields as is the case in most Arab countries and other French, British, Spanish and Portuguese old colonies in different parts of the world. France imposed on most of the Maghreb countries its language at the detriment of Arabic and Amazigh in its different dialects. This intruding heritage was passed to the independent states that preserved it over time. They even promoted the foreign language to the rank of *de jure* and *de facto* official language despite the fact that the national constitutions oppose that. This type of multilingualism is the most dangerous type one because it subjugates the citizen and denies him the opportunity to open to another or other languages even if they are more useful to him and to the future of his children unless he exerts his personal efforts. In the other type, the learning of foreign languages is allowed in such a way as to make the individual free to learn any foreign language without any restriction from the state or the educational institution. In such a case, the wise state should intervene by establishing a linguistic plan that protects the common official national language against the domination and tyranny of the foreign language until it gains full sovereignty inside its homeland while distributing functions and roles with other national languages based on the capability and competence of each one of them. The national languages are not all equal in maturity, experience, expertise and ability to shoulder education in all its stages and specialties.

freedom of the acquired multilingualism which means acquiring foreign languages beside the mother language and the common official national language (the language of the nation)⁽⁵⁾. They should be given all opportunities and the necessary support to learn as many languages as possible to benefit from them in their professional and scientific lives, serve their countries and Ummah and use them for the endless number of purposes. Hence the use of the adage “each language is a man” is true and correct. However, the state, with all of its organs, services and institutions, should abide exclusively by the national and official language. No state organ, or person acting on behalf of the state, or addressing people in written or orally may be allowed to use any foreign language except in absolute necessity. The state should encourage the learning of all languages to its citizens willing to learn or use them for useful purposes. Nevertheless, it should not allow itself or anyone representing it to use any language other than the official language that is legally recognized in every field. The use of that official national language is in itself respect of the law; otherwise it is a violation of the law.

Hence, the acquired linguistic multilingualism is essentially the choice of individuals because it develops their capabilities, helps them in their work, research, openness, tourism, commerce and acquiring expertise, skills, etc. Yet the state should cling to the common official national language, or the one that should be common to all its people, the way it clings to its national flag, territorial borders and all the symbols of its sovereignty so as to protect its identity and to the harmony of its components and its linguistic security. The fundamental principle in countries is the unity of language and anything that breaches that principle is an exception.

Contrary to the widespread idea, Arabization provides for every individual the ability to acquire one or more foreign languages according to his choice, desire and capabilities. But compulsory bilingualism imposed in many parts of the Arab world, namely in the majority of the Maghreb countries (Morocco,

(5) See the difference in our distinction between the mother language and the language of the nation in our book: “*The Language of the Nation and the Mother Language*”, published in Beirut in 2013.

Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania)⁽⁶⁾, hinders the freedom of choice as it practically deprives the citizen from the right to choose among a number of foreign languages and use whichever and whenever he likes and forces him instead to use only one foreign language. Even in education, one foreign language, called the first foreign language, is given absolute priority over other ones. No one is allowed to study sciences and technology courses, for example in higher education, in any language other than the language imposed by the official educational system. However, when we practically start to uphold the principle of the sovereignty of the national language and its supremacy over other languages and place all foreign languages equally at the second position to enable the citizen to choose the language he wants for himself and for his children, then Arabization will have the additional value of liberating the market of foreign languages and giving the citizen full freedom without imposing on him any foreign language. In this sense, we may see the world from all perspectives and equally benefit from all its experiences and cultures, and open our doors for healthier influences from wherever they come from without any insularity and rejection of a foreign language rather than another one as is the case in the Arab world where the Maghreb countries exclusively adopt French and the countries of the Mashrek adopt English.

In this sense, Arabization has an additional third value which is to do justice to the official national language even if it's not Arabic and forbid its marginalization, unfair competition, substitution or exclusion by intruding foreign languages. This is exactly what happens once the citizen is given the freedom to learn the foreign language or languages he likes instead of imposing on him one of them. Then, the citizen will be sure that all foreign languages are practically and legally at the same ranking after the first national language.

In sum, any claim that the exclusive adoption of the national language in education is rejection of learning and mastering foreign languages or refusal

(6) Bilingualism, which means the use of two languages, Arabic and another imposed language, becomes, when the state chooses one foreign language and exclusively favors it. English for example is the adopted language in the Arab Middle-eastern countries besides Arabic and French the only foreign language adopted and recognized in different transactions besides Arabic in the Maghreb. Eventually we face a bilingualism of Arabic/English imposed in the Mashrek and Arabic/French imposed in the Maghreb.

of openness to the world and to the Western cultures. Such a claim is an attempt to mislead people and distort reality. The objective of Arabization, as we understand and advocate it, is totally the opposite of what is claimed because giving sovereignty to the common national language, or to the language of the nation as I like to call it, in all fields including education makes us become more open to all languages and cultures namely the useful ones like English.

- They claim that Arabization means the rejection of the other local national languages (like the Amazigh languages of North Africa, Kurdish in Iraq and Syria, the African languages in Mauritania, the Sudan, etc.) and also favoring the Arab nationalism at the expense of other nations which have been living within the Arab communities for centuries discharging of their obligations and enjoying their rights. The truth is that it's no more than a call for using the **"language of the nation"**, i.e. the language recognized by all as the linguistic common denominator of the entire components of the Arab Islamic nation since Arabic is the language of the Ummah in general, i.e. the Ummah in all its cultural, linguistic, religious, civilizational and racial components. This doesn't deny to any component the right to use, disseminate, preserve and be proud of its local language (mother language). Redeeming the common Arab Islamic cultural identity doesn't mean obliterating its other local and regional identity components which have their specificities and charm. Diversity is wanted inside rather than outside, with unity rather than against it because the concept of "the Arab Islamic nation" refers to a greater and more comprehensive entity that includes all of its components even the religious one. The Jews, Christians, the Sabians and other peoples of other faiths who have different cultures, languages, dialects and specificities still preserved to the present day, have always been living within the Arab Islamic state.
- Another claim considers Arabization as backwardness and regression caused by the backwardness and decline of Arabic. In the view of its opponents, Arabic is no longer useful for sciences and unable to keep up with development, the spirit of the modern times, openness and progress, etc. because classical Arabic is tied to religion which makes it strongly linked to the past and to the sacred which hinder its emancipation, development and progress towards the future.

- They also claim that it is an initiation to religious extremism, terrorism and the making of religious extremists and zealots who prevent Arab countries from progress and social and economic development.
- Another claim is that Arabization leads to the decline of the level and quality of education, which is totally the opposite. We have shown in a special research⁽⁷⁾ the incoherence of this claim and the gross fallacies it contains.

These and other claims are founded neither on logical facts and truths nor on any unbiased and objective opinion. They instead emanate from ideological and political stances of well-known sources and origins, or from calls hostile to the Arabs and the Arab and Islamic culture which go back to the eras of occupation and foreign cultural and linguistic invasion as well as to the era of orientalist culture. These claims also emanate from the racist calls circulated by the Other's extremists: some nationalist extremists belonging to communities living within the Arab world but hate the Arabs and Arabic for nationalist reasons and oppose the Arab unification especially when the foreign interests ally with and converge with the interests of some of advocates of extremist nationalist tendencies. We have already responded to these claims and the like in previous studies that may be consulted in case of interest.

Before the European occupation, Arabic was the language of administration, education, economy, commerce, culture, religion and all transactions. Besides Arabic, there were Arabic dialects, and languages and other dialects of non-Arabic speaking peoples. Each one of them undertakes the function assigned to it in an integrated and synergic distribution of roles, and in coexistence, agreement and harmony without conflict or discord. This situation had continued until the Western invasion swept over the Arab Islamic world and as a result brutally imposed its language and culture exploiting the weakness, subjugation and helplessness of the Arab world. The influence of this situation continued until even after decolonization. It

(7) Dr Abdelali Ouadghiri: "*Arabic, the Language of Instruction and Education Reform*", the magazine "World of Education" in Arabic, issue 26, Rabat, 2016.

is manifest in weakening, marginalizing and gradually excluding Arabic from several areas of its use thus leading to deep cracks in the social structures of the Arab world. This has some negative repercussions on the comprehensive development including the cultural, social and economic development as we will detail later. Therefore, I insist on saying that claiming Arabization in the long run is a mere call for redeeming the situation of Arabic before colonization and foreign cultural invasion which brought in the domination of the foreign language on many aspects of life in Arab countries. The European occupier worked hard to undermine and weaken Arabic and mobilized all of its efforts to devalue and underestimate it to make of it a small local dialect among hundreds of other African and Asian dialects which have never had any consideration in the scientific, cultural, civilizational and historical fields. Its purpose was to replace Arabic with its own language and enable it to play all the roles and assume the functions Arabic used to assume.

The other reasons of Arabization are numerous. The most important one is regain the identity and personality and protect them against foreign linguistic dependence and cultural and intellectual assimilation. This symbolizes total independence in its deep, comprehensive and necessary meaning to achieve total economic, social and cultural progress where the unifying common language plays an essential role to redeem the unity of the nation.

Therefore Arabization is two types:

The first type is easy and simple. It consists of allowing Arabic to borrow the vocabulary items, structures, and idiomatic expressions. Today, as before, Arabic is able to assimilate thousands of foreign vocabulary items and is experienced to do so, either through translating their meanings or just borrowing them with simple adaptation to the Arabic phonological and grammatical patterns without any translation. Actually, and since the beginning of the modern renaissance, as it happened in the first renaissance in the Abbasside era, hundreds of specialized dictionaries of science and arts terminology which were needed in all aspects of life were made. These dictionaries are there and need only someone who is ready to explore them.

The second type is deeper, more comprehensive, difficult and dangerous because it is the only dependable basis to preserve the identity and the cultural and intellectual independence, the cornerstone of renaissance, and

lever of the desired true comprehensive development. As such, undertaking Arabization properly and efficiently depends on the political decision that requires from the Arabs and Muslims resolve and determination at this critical moment of the nation's history. At the beginning, we will demonstrate the necessity of Arabization for the Arab renaissance and its importance for developing the Arab economy. We shall conclude with exploring the impediments to Arabization and the reasons behind the lack of the Arabization decision and its implementation.

Arabization: basis for comprehensive economic and cultural development

The essence of research in the relationship between Arabization and the economy is exploring its relationship with the comprehensive cultural, social and economic development; in other words, it is studying the dialectical relationship existing between the development of the national language, which is at the same time the nation's unifying common language, and the sustainable comprehensive and cross-cutting development. Development is the key word that has replaced the term "renaissance" which has been exhausted by over-use.

There is no doubt that there are many requirements for a cultural, social and economic take-off or a true comprehensive development in all of the economic, social and cultural areas. But what's most important for us is the existence of the following elements:

- 1- Social and political security and stability which require to be built on two solid bases. First, a considerable degree of freedom, ensured by law and the supremacy of justice and equity, and the protection of constitutional rights. Freedom is a prerequisite for creativity and innovation; and justice is the basis of government and rule, i.e. the basis of stability and confidence which provide the favorable climate for construction, hardworking and dedication to work. Second, a great degree of unity and solidarity and harmony between the components of society and the nation; and the strengthening of the unity of religious, civilizational and cultural belonging. All of these lead to maintaining peace and security within society at large. Language has a paramount importance and role therein.

- 2- A unified human capital whose labor force and brains are mobilized to incessantly engage in building. All forces of the nation are direly needed. If a segment of society fails to take part in the developmental effort, the losses will be greater and vice versa. The larger agglomerations are, the greater the scale of force and yield become. Union is strength. The Arab bloc is the strongest human bloc in the world. If it is well exploited and mobilized, its economic and developmental yields will be considerable and influential.
- 3- Intellectual capital: A person needs to use and mobilize all of this human energy at once, engage it in all fields of development without deactivating part of it, generalize knowledge and disseminate awareness and education as widely as possible regardless of costs in time and money. This investment is necessary because it is indisputably a sure and successful investment. The lessons learnt from the countries which achieved significant leaps in comprehensive development in record time (such as Korea, Finland etc.) is that investment in human resources is most important, beneficial and fruitful because human resources are always more valuable than anything that man can own or benefit from. Water resources may be depleted, and natural resources exhausted, but investment in human resources through training and education is endlessly sustainable and renewable especially that fertility rate and demographic development in the Arab countries is far higher than in Western countries. Nothing serves development more than the universalization of education and the dissemination of knowledge and awareness. For development experts, education ranks very high at the scale of criteria used in measuring the level of comprehensive development in a certain society. Education comes first before health and individual income because these two indicators basically depend on the first indicator.

The dependence of comprehensive development on education and knowledge is evident. The high rate of development in a society is closely tied to the high rate of the active participation of individuals, men and women alike, in development. This may not happen unless this society reaches the level of intellectual and scientific satisfaction.

However, the intellectual capital is not dependable unless it is sufficiently owned, localized, protected and ensured. Where does knowledge come from? And how is it possible to localize and harness it to serve comprehensive development namely the economic development?

Knowledge is two types. The first one is inherited and is continuously reused and reinvested and the second one is new: We import or borrow it to keep up with development. All peoples who wish to keep up with the developed world are forced to import a considerable amount of knowledge, sciences and technologies from countries which outclassed them to avoid being complacent with regurgitating their own heritage. There is a need for disseminating the borrowed knowledge and generalizing benefiting from it through education. But this is useful and practical only for a short time. For long term, the borrowed knowledge should be localized and transplanted within society and adapted it to the atmosphere, nature, soil and air of the new environment, taking into consideration the conditions, specificities, objectives and goals of that society. Duplicating or borrowing it without adaptation would not serve at all.

Importing and acquiring knowledge:

There are two ways to import knowledge or part of it:

First: Its importation and dissemination in its original language within society as a whole. This requires the generalization of using that language and imposing its learning and mastery on all individuals and segments of society. This way is the one that has been adopted by the countries which had been linguistically, culturally and economically colonized. All or most of them are the countries which subsequently gained formal independence and eventually became satellite states of the previous colonizer economically, politically and culturally. This way involves two risks:

- a) Continued cultural and linguistic dependence which ultimately leads to the economic and political dependence. With the long settlement of the foreign language in society and firm establishment within its classes as a whole, the Arabic language is facing increased fierce competition to the extent that it is totally obliterated.

- b) Limiting the sources of knowledge to only one instead of opening to all international diverse sources, methods, forms of knowledge and cultures.

Second: Transferring knowledge in the common national language. And through this language knowledge should be disseminated and generalized until it is well assimilated. This is the method adopted by the countries which got rid of dependence, assimilation and backwardness to attain self-made emancipation, development and creativity.

Therefore, the universalization of education to generalize localization and participation in development may be achieved properly and usefully only through the use of the common unifying national language (which is classical Arabic for all of the Arab countries) for the following reasons:

- 1- Language is not just a tool for transferring knowledge that may be substituted for another tool at any time and any place without provoking a negative impact. Language is more than a language. It has a relationship with the human soul, passion, and feeling. It is also linked to the way of thinking and the world view of every human community that share one language. It is the memory of that community and the reservoir of its culture, history and civilization and the fruit of its experience and expertise. Thus, it is the sign of its distinction, difference, originality and specificity, and the symbol of its sovereignty, identity, existence and the source of its pride.

The theory that considers “language as mere tool or a means” can be applied, even if it were right, only to very small entities which don’t have mature or qualified language rather than to a great nation which has a great civilization and culture like the Arab Islamic civilization and a language with centuries-old experiences and a remarkable intellectual, scientific, literary and artistic output that covers a vast geographical extent and a wide human diversity.

- 2- Learning a foreign language requires several complex operations:
 - a) Understanding the language of instruction thoroughly and accurately. This may not be achieved by any person in a short time.
 - b) Understanding, grasping and assimilating the scientific subject matter.

c) Mental translation to convert the studied subject matter from one language to the national one.

Learning in the national language reduces all of those operations and the time needed for them. As a result, learning in it is faster and more beneficial as opposed to the unfounded wide-spread assertion that teaching in the Arabic language causes the decline of education quality and poor training.

- 3-** Learning in the national language is less costly. For example, how much would it cost educating more than 36 million people (the population of Morocco now) in a foreign language in terms of money and time, training teachers and various educational professionals and preparing school and university textbooks? How much would it cost to educate more than a billion Chinese if China used a foreign language to educate all of its population? The same goes for Japan and other countries which have made enormous strides in education and development based on their languages instead of borrowed languages. But if education is done in more than one language, the cost will be more than double.

In general, the financial and moral cost of importing knowledge, especially if it is maintained in its original language, is extremely high. When language is imported, it is not imported alone as it comes with scientific and educational books and all other cultural products issued in that language including films, drama works, cultural and educational programs, satellite TV channels, radios, newspapers and magazines, songs and all that the language contains and stores including ideas, ideologies, cultural content, traditions, customs, spiritual and material values including food, drink, dress, family planning and all forms of education and human behavior, and also the economic and commercial aspects related to language. The majority of foreign words are in the form of names and descriptions of foreign goods we import and consume, tools we use, lifestyles and behaviors we adopt, imitate and become accustomed to. If you export your goods and culture, you export your language, thought, behavior, lifestyle and education and vice versa. What do we need for the future of our Arab societies? Do we need them to remain an

open market for all types of consumption, or to become production forces, manufacturing plants and export ports? In the first case we will become mere inactive societies, wasted energies and weak and submissive entities. In the other case, we become a society of knowledge, innovation, production and development; and a source of force of action and productive work⁽⁸⁾.

- 4- All the models from small and big countries which have managed to achieve a breakthrough in the field of education used their mother tongues as a tool for transferring and teaching knowledge while keeping open to learning more useful foreign languages.
- 5- The teaching of sciences and knowledge fully in the common national language (the unifying language of the nation) is a strong factor for the democratization of education, i.e. ensuring the right of fair distribution of education and reduce class disparities between the learners. This leads to the increase of the cultural integration and social cohesion; two factors of the success of sustainable, comprehensive and stable development, as we have mentioned above.

(8) In this regard, it's worth quoting a paragraph by Mahmood Al-Sayyid in a research published in the magazine "*Al-Taarib*", (Arabization) in Damascus, issue n° 50/2016, titled: "**The importance of teaching medical sciences in Arabic**" in which he says: "*It's worth mentioning that the role of language in the economy and development is equal to the role of criticism, and that the country which invests in learning and teaching the foreign language to import rather than export is the loser, and that the party that country that succeeds in teaching its language to in increase its exports doubles its profit (it wins the cost of investing in learning its language by the others, and wins the cost of translation in export operations.) Translation added to the non-spread of the scientific language in the mother tongue within society is beneficial in the case of importing rather than in exporting. Language is a human capital. If some segments of society don't master it, this adversely affects employment, training and promotion opportunities. However, the mastery by the members of society of the language of science has an economic benefit that increases with the better mastery of the scientific language in the mother language. This happens only if scientific education is entirely carried out in Arabic. Instruction in a foreign language facilitates brain immigration which causes the loss of the human capital. Hence the need is urgent for teachers and students to understand the economic benefits of mastering the Arabic language in addition to mastering the foreign languages on the condition that instruction is done in Arabic. Modern technologies, (information and communication technologies and technologies of language etc.,) provide a tool and an opportunity for translation and spreading the language of science and technology among the Arab working forces thus increasing the speed and scale of knowledge and reduces its cost."*

- 6- An advantage of teaching knowledge and science entirely in the common national language is that it helps in attaining knowledge complementarity which is the subject of increasing interest day after day. Sciences are interlinked and each one complements the other one. Bridging them results in a deep understanding of the phenomena which may not be grasped until they are seen from all perspectives. When the language of all forms knowledge and sciences is unified, many impediments curbing the ability of researchers or students to continue their intellectual tourism in integrated and interlinked fields. Therefore, it's no wonder to find amongst ancient scholars many who combine many scientific disciplines which may appear very divergent in terms of specialization but are interlinked and complementary in terms of the comprehensiveness of knowledge.⁽⁹⁾
- 7- Teaching all forms of knowledge and sciences in the common national language is a necessary means for reviving, enriching and developing it to become the language of knowledge in all fields including the economic, the social and the technological ones. The qualification of the national language starts from here. Those who claim that Arabic is underdeveloped and deficient should understand that language doesn't grow or develop while it is neglected and deactivated but rather through using it in all fields - even gradually - until it is honed like a rusted steel instrument and its shortcomings are remedied. It's well-known that language dies as a result of negligence and lives, develops and grows through its use. It's like a road, it develops when it's used and dies when it's given up.

(9) We mention as an example of the well-known scholars Ibn Rushd (Averroes) the physician, author of "*Al-Kulliyat fi al-Tibb*" (General Principles of Medicine); Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, who excelled in jurisprudence, philosophy, logic, science of discourse, Sufism and literature, the philosopher and thinker who explained Aristotle and authored "*The Incoherence of the Incoherence*"; Ibn Rushd, the competent jurisprudent, author of "*Bidayat al-Mujtahid wa Nihayat al-Muqtasid*" (Primer of the Discretionary Scholar); Ibn Sina (Avicenna), the philosopher and natural scientist, the reputed physician, jurisprudent and polymath, author of "*Kitab al-Shifa*" (The Book of Healing); and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti who wrote in every field of knowledge including medical sciences etc.

“A camel⁽¹⁰⁾ walking down an old road, the road lives when it is used, but dies when it is neglected”⁽¹¹⁾

- 8- The universalization of education in the common classical Arabic language in the long run leads to strengthening the ties of cohesion between the peoples of the Arab world either in the Mashriq or in the Maghreb and bars the road for those who seek to divide them through cutting the tie of the unifying language and isolating one from another. This is the possible outcome of strengthening the foreign language to the detriment of Arabic as a language of education, the economy, etc. It may also lead to transforming the local dialects into national languages that differ depending on the difference of the geographical borders of each Arab country especially that the call for using dialects in education and information is revived.

Knowledge and linguistic security:

Importing knowledge in its foreign languages do not eventually lead to the protection of the knowledge wealth and achieve the so-called “knowledge security”. Knowledge is invaluable wealth; its presence is highly vital and necessary for the development of society. Therefore, owning knowledge, rather than borrowing or hiring it, alone can ensure and achieve this security. The best way to do that is to transfer knowledge into the common national language (the mother language) and transplant it inside our societies with this language exclusively. The study of this topic is summarized in the following points:

- a) When the purpose is achieving sustainable and comprehensive development to the largest possible extent and not for a short or limited period of time or for specific circumstances, instruction in the national language becomes necessary for localizing, transplanting and adapting knowledge to the local environment. Its localization depends on the level of its assimilation, representation and digestion

(10) In the Arabic verse: يموت بالترك ويحيا بالعمل (عَوْدٌ عَلَى عَوْدِ لَأَقْوَامِ أُولِ) the first word “aoud” means the camel, and the second one means the road. (see the translation above)

(11) A verse by the ancient Arab poet Abou Noukhayla Al-Rajiz bin Hazn bin Zaeda.

in such a way as to fully benefit from it. The body benefits only from digestible food that can be transformed into nutrients. The process of digesting knowledge may not occur properly unless the national or the common national language is used.

- b) Only through education in the national language that it is possible to transmit knowledge to the different classes of society thus enabling it to store it in the same way underground layers store water which is a national reserve necessary for the continuity of life. If this goes for any form of knowledge, it goes more for the scientific and technical one which may not be, when transferred from its original foreign environment to a new environment such as the Arab one, well and fully assimilated, represented and benefited from unless it is transferred, by translation or otherwise, through the most widespread common national language (the mother language); the one that is historically, civilizationally, culturally and religiously tied to society and well, and fully anchored and transplanted in its soil. In this regard, the language of the nation is the gastric acid necessary for digesting food. Researchers frequently quote a wise and outstanding educator saying: *"If you teach a person in his own language, you transfer knowledge in that language; but if you teach him in another language you only transfer that person to that language"*, i.e. to that language and to its culture.
- c) In the event of importing knowledge and technologies in their foreign languages while limiting their use to specialists, the spread of such knowledge and technologies will remain limited to those few people. This results in limiting the rate of participation in the awareness pertaining to development and to speeding up its pace. Therefore I would argue that only through the common unifying national language (the language of the homeland and the nation) we can vulgarize knowledge to become accessible to all people with no exception whatsoever. A simple example is that the transfer of the medical, pharmaceutical and health information in general and the relating nutrition and prevention information will make all members of society know how to take care of their health and preserve the safety of their bodies and environment, and which food and medicines are harmful and which are healthy. This happened in our Arab scientific heritage after the Arabization of medicine, pharmacy, astronomy, chemistry,

engineering, etc. When those sciences were transferred into Arabic initially and were taught, acquired and produced in the language that all people understand, it was possible to own and innovate in it and it was also possible for every individual to understand, read and benefit from it. As a result, health sciences (medicine, pharmacy, food, health education and environment sciences) were transformed into easy to learn and quote systems and reviews⁽¹²⁾.

Access to private information has become easier for all and open to anyone who speaks his national language. Even the terms used in these fields have become widespread and in circulation instead of being enigmatic and incomprehensible to all except to those who understand foreign languages and Latin script and have reasonable knowledge of those specialties⁽¹³⁾.

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- (12) Among the books which were widely circulated in the past on medicine, pharmacy, medicines, food, self-protection we cite: Al-Antaki's "**Tadhkira**", Al-Jazaeri's "**Kashaf Al-Romouz**", Ibn Al-Baitar's "**Compendium on Simple Medicaments and Foods**", Al-Ghassani's "**Garden of Flowers**", "**the Shakrouni System of Medicine**", Al-Suyuti's "**Book of Grace in Medicine and Wisdom**", etc. Such books were different depending on the difference of the Arab Islamic countries throughout eras and ages. Some of them were produced in the form of bilingual dictionaries combining classical Arabic and the local regional languages. See many examples of this in our book: "**Lexicography in the Maghreb Arab up to the end of the fourteenth Hijri century**" (Rabat 2008).
- (13) Dr Mahmood al-Sayyid says in his above-mentioned article on the importance of teaching applied medical sciences in Arabic "*When medicine students used Arabic in their actions of diagnosing illnesses and prescribing medicines, their language of learning in the fields of health sciences was Arabic and this used to help them communicate, understand their patients and understand the causes of their sicknesses. So many deaths occur because of lack of understanding between the physician and the patient. Now so many mistakes have occurred in diagnosing because the doctor doesn't know the place of the sickness as a result of the failure of the doctor to understand the patient's statement about the sickness. It's evident that the teaching of health sciences in the language of the community, which is classical Arabic language will help learners accomplish their mission easily in their future careers when dealing with their patients. In addition, the understanding of nurses and assistants and all of the healthcare staff of the knowledge and procedures contributes to the advancement of this sector among members of society. This is all due to the sound understanding of the components of the health process in the mother language etc. In sum, the teaching of the health sciences in Arabic helps Arab students to express their ideas in their mother tongue in writing, speaking and reading while mastering the foreign languages which help them continuously reading medical references and research papers in magazines in light of knowledge influx in the present time which is the age of science and technology.*"

When considering how many industries and trades flourished in the Arab Islamic world including painting, manufacturing of leather, metals, glass, pottery, wood, decoration, carving, textiles, construction, shipbuilding etc., you will find out that they were originally in the form of theories and knowledge based on exact sciences in the fields of chemistry, physics, engineering etc. which were mastered by very few scholars who transferred some of them from other nations, languages and supplemented them from their expertise, experience and efforts. Later on, these scholars and teachers spread their knowledge amongst their students and the general public in the language these students understood, which is Arabic. In Turn, these transferred them to their successors in such a way as they were widespread among the general public. Over time, the outcomes of those exact sciences and knowledge were transformed into trades and traditional industries in which every member of society was able to excel and innovate without need for foreign languages because they had become part of the popular culture and the traditional trades and handicrafts.

- d) The society which doesn't undertake this transformational operation will be forced to gradually give up its language and the relating culture, values, history, and distinctive features and will eventually witness a radical identity transformation. Its language will accordingly vanish over time or at last declines to become a mere oral language that is used within a popular context till it's totally left in oblivion. Ideally, it would become a pidgin language distorted by so many intruding terms and transformations.

Society is expected to assimilate the borrowed knowledge and science while preserving its character and distinction. It should seek to digest and adapt them according to its needs and their utility, supplement them and innovate in them at a later stage rather than melting away in such a way as to obliterate all aspects of its identity.

- e) In addition, no society may live on importing all of its needs from sciences and knowledge for a long time. If it does that, it means that it has no existence and efficiency and that it will forever be a charge on others and submissive to their orders. However, it is supposed to become a producer instead of a consumer, an inventor and creator instead of an imitator. The process of invention and creation may be

conducted only through the national language. And this is a stage that comes after the localization of foreign knowledge.

In summary, the balanced and comprehensive cultural, social and economic development depends on the well-informed and large participation of members of society. The higher participation is, the higher growth rate gets. If this needed large participation depends on the level of awareness and knowledge that is disseminated among the largest human community, which depends in turn in its development on the level of education, cultural instruction and awareness raising, this latter element depends necessarily on language through which it is possible to achieve the society of knowledge and access easily, cheaply and rapidly to education and obtain different forms of knowledge. This language cannot be other than the common standard language (the language of the homeland and nation) that is capable of generalizing education and producing, transferring, simplifying, localizing knowledge and firmly establishing it within society, then digesting, transferring and assimilating it while preserving identity, originality and distinction. And any borrowed foreign language would not be able to fulfill all those tasks.

When we use Arabic in all areas and at all educational levels and specialties, we achieve another goal: the revival and development of this language. We also take the right path to develop and renew it, refresh pride and confidence in it and attain our linguistic security.

For those who still question the eligibility of the national language (I mean here Arabic) to perform the educational functions and transfer world knowledge in scientific and technological specialties necessary for development, and also question its validity and competence etc., we simply say that if we hadn't had a unifying common language capable of fulfilling the above-mentioned functions, we would have been obliged to make one and qualify it with our determination and commitment to make it capable of performing all of those functions as did some of the emerging countries and nations which have been until recently almost inexistent⁽¹⁴⁾ and weak with many diverse languages,

(14) Israel at the beginning of its establishment was a state made up of groups from the Jewish Diaspora. Each one speaks the language of the country from which they come. The adopted policy of language unification made of Hebrew a unifying and common language. Without that policy, it would have been impossible to build a strong, developed and educated country despite its hostility and occupation of the Palestinian territories.

alone a great nation like the Arab Islamic one which is endowed by Allah with a language that is steeped in history with rich productivity, creativity and excellence in all scientific and literary fields. Nevertheless, we so much underestimate it and ignore its value that an Orientalist derides us saying: "*The Arabs have a great language that they don't deserve*".

Linguistic unity and its relationship with the socio-economic development:

In my book "*The Language of the Nation and the Mother Language*"⁽¹⁵⁾, I talked about the achievements of sociolinguists in their studies of the relationship between monolingualism and multilingualism and the development or underdevelopment of a country. Most of them tend to affirm the existence of a dialectical relationship between the increasing poverty and the multilingualism in a country. The proponents of this view argue that the conclusion they reached when comparing the linguistic maps with the maps of wealth and comprehensive economic and human development in the world show that the more the regions are developed, industrialized and advanced in sciences, economy and material civilization, the less the languages they use are. This is characteristic to the countries of the North. On the contrary, it is noticed that the poor and more underdeveloped countries are (including countries of Africa, most of Asian and Latin American countries), the more surprising the number of languages exist there. It is even noticed that these regions, which have the biggest number of languages in danger of extinction, are the poorest ones in the world. Joshua Fishman, a distinguished American sociologist, one of the specialists in sociolinguistics who studied the relationship between linguistic diversity and economic underdevelopment, noticed in a study that "the countries which are linguistically coherent are those where the individual's income gets higher, while it gradually gets lower in linguistically incoherent countries (multilingual countries). This means that the living standard gets higher with a lower number of languages and vice versa. A correlation between monolingualism or multilingualism and the individuals' living standard

(15) Ouadghiri: "*The language of the Nation and the Mother Language*", p.83 ff.

depends on the role language plays in the comprehensive development including human development, including its role in social solidarity which further strengthens society materially and morally and in creating a society of knowledge; spreading education; generalizing awareness and acquiring, localizing and transplanting sciences and technologies as mentioned above.

Florian Coulmas, one of the scholars who amply discussed this issue, in his book "**Language and Economy**" dealt in many pages with the common language as a necessary part of the social development. The book contains many paragraphs that are highly relevant to our topic. He says for example: "*It's unlikely that a high level of the socio-economic development is compatible with multilingualism. This view reflects a widespread belief amongst language planners that is based on that close correlation between the actual monolingualism and the economic development existing in the industrialized nations (...). Multilingualism appears in many different forms and doesn't go hand in hand with prosperity except in very particular cases of certain languages. Conversely, multilingualism is generally correlated to a low level of economic development especially in the countries lacking in a dominating common language that is used by all people rather than a small elite as a national tool mostly used for organizing the political and commercial relationships as in many African countries*"⁽¹⁶⁾. He also says: "*Linguistic cohesion is a feature specific to the European countries where this is understood as natural and beneficial.*"⁽¹⁷⁾ He adds that "*the industrial production requires standardized and organized methods and also needs mobile, coherent and highly educated people. These requirements entail the need for using one unified language through which all members of society who participate in the economic process can communicate.*"⁽¹⁸⁾ He supported his statements with a number of charts and statistics featuring the clear proportionality between the population number and the level of individual income and the number of languages. A clearer example of this is his comparison between Japan

(16) Florian Coulmas: "**Language and the Economy**", pp.43-53, translated by Ahmed Aouad, "Aalam Al-Maarifa" series, issue 263, Kuwait, 2000.

(17) Op. cit. p. 53.

(18) Op. cit. p. 44.

and the Sudan. The First is a rich country with a population of 122 million people in 1990 and a per capita income of US\$ 21.000 a year. The second is a poor country with a per capita income of less than US\$ 480 a year and with almost 135 languages.⁽¹⁹⁾ Hence, Coulmas concludes that *“the number of languages in the industrialized countries is often in units while in the developing countries it is in tens and hundreds.”* (p. 34) Coulmas' argument relied on Jonathan Paul who used in his study **“National Development and Multilingualism”** this short expression which says: *“the country which is largely divided linguistically is often a poor country.”* Coulmas also quotes the same idea (in pp. 146-147) in Terence O'Brien's words in a study he published in 1979: *“Multilingualism is an obstacle to trade, and the movement of labor, technology and information in general.”* He explains that saying that *“the linguistic borders hinder economic complementarity and improvement of the desired life standard, and in many Third World countries, multilingualism slows down the pace of modernization. If it doesn't make the dissemination of basic knowledge entirely impossible, it definitely slows it down.”*

One of contemporary scholars who espouse this idea is the renowned French socio-linguist Louis-Jean Calvet. He also compared a number of statistics relating to the distribution of languages in the continents. The comparison shows that the number of languages in the world is decreasing the further we go into more developed regions like Europe. Therefore, he was himself forced to ask the following question: *“Is it a coincidence or out of necessity that the poorest countries or continents have the highest number of languages, and that the richest countries or continents tend to feature monolingualism? In other words: Should these countries choose to have one language to build themselves? This means that the developing countries should adopt a form of monolingualism; or at least have a unifying language that acts in complementarity with rather than to the detriment of the languages of other countries.”*⁽²⁰⁾

(19) This is what Coulmas states. But Wikipedia its Arabic version states that the Sudan has 300 languages in and about 521 in the French version.

(20) Louis-Jean Calvet: **“Le marché aux langues”**, p. 174.

It can therefore be inferred from the foregoing that the unified common language inside any country is a factor of comprehensive development, especially that monolingualism reflects the high level of the social, cultural and intellectual harmony that exists between the components of society. The higher the level of cohesion and integration is, the stronger society becomes. It is well-known that unity is force. There may be more than one national or official language in a society. Each one has a status and consideration; yet the language common to all classes and segments of society is the one that is more qualified than others to perform the function of the unifying cementing language, the language of national unity. If monolingualism is of paramount importance in developing any country, it is more important in developing a human mass made up of a group of countries and peoples like the Arab world. It is an exclusive divine blessing to this people.

From the economies of knowledge to the economies of language:

Today, economy and human development experts agree that modern economy, unlike the traditional one, is no longer based mainly on material wealth and natural resources, but rather on investing in the immaterial wealth that consists of knowledge and its products and resources for their importance, sustainability and fast regeneration and development. Knowledge has become the most important source of wealth for society and *“information and knowledge have become an essential support in taking decision. New concepts have emerged like the concept of intellectual capital, as opposed to the concept of the financial and material capital, and the concept of ‘the force of the intellect’ as opposed to the ‘force of labor’. Within the knowledge-based economy, the role of innovation as an engine of development and a drive for competitiveness is growing. Besides, the forces of globalization are strongly pushing towards elevating knowledge to a status that makes of knowledge-based economy increasingly the essence of the relative feature of societies...”*⁽²¹⁾ With this new concept which has rehabilitated knowledge,

(21) Muhaya Zeitoun: *“Education in the Arab World in Light of Globalization and Market Culture”*, p. 107.

culture and the intangible wealth to take its natural position in the international economic cycle, we from time to time today hear the growing calls of some countries which oppose the standards adopted by the international organizations and institutions in ranking countries disparately on the scale of development because they don't take into consideration the intangible aspects when grading a country.

We might argue that the knowledge on which economy is based exclusively means the scientific research and technological innovation which are closely related to the development of industry, agricultural and food production, informatics and generally anything technical. But the truth is that the concept of knowledge wealth which is nowadays a vast area for investment is in fact far greater and more encompassing than that as it includes anything relating to culture, science, knowledge, research, creativity and innovation in general, be it scientific, purely technological, cultural or artistic and also anything relating to the intellectual, literary, philosophical, social fields that belong to human sciences which produce constructive ideas and conceptions capable of reshaping the world and bring happiness to humanity. This notion also includes anything relating to information namely media of communication, information, informatics, networks and technologies and cultural production like books, various traditional and modern arts such as the cinema and drama productions, theatre, music, sculpture, photography, singing, decoration, carving, translation, language teaching, culinary arts, fashion design and the relevant industries and technologies (cultural industries).

There is no doubt that knowledge in all its forms, types and manifestations which all form the so-called society of knowledge, is closely related to the culture which produces it and to which it belongs on the one hand and to the language through which it is expressed, formulated, acquired and conveyed on the other hand. In any case, no knowledge is possible without language. The interconnection between language and knowledge in such a necessary way makes us believe that the economy of knowledge is strongly tied to the economies of language. Knowledge capital cannot be dissociated from the linguistic capital; they are two sides of the same coin. From this perspective, we can confidently argue that the importance of any language in the modern time undoubtedly emanates from its interrelation with knowledge, i.e. with this intangible fortune which has become of great value in the modern economy.

The importance of English for example does not stem from its being the best language of all as it may be imagined or from the number of its native speakers because it comes third behind Chinese and Spanish in this regard, but rather from being the language that is widely used in sciences and knowledge. Actually, it's the language of science par excellence. With this distinctive feature, it prevails over all other languages of the world. As a result, anyone desiring to read or publish anything new in his scientific, research, cultural and artistic field of specialization and reach out to the largest possible audience should take English as a tool for production and exportation. English has become a dominating language in the world business, trade, the media, etc. It dominates knowledge, research, and innovation. It is through science, education, thinking, research and invention that the Economy has achieved development and progress.

Investment in language: The French model

Since language is the means of knowledge, and language has become, as mentioned above, the axis of the economy and the engine of investment, language, in its turn, has become subject of investment. English for instance has become the language of science, culture, knowledge, research, education, economy, commerce, tourism, information and communication, etc. It is also the language that helps find an adequate job and generate high income. As such, it was necessary for it to become a commercial good coveted in the market of languages like any commercial good.

The insatiable demand on learning English all over the world regardless of its high costs and budget strains on people, and the huge and growing number, day after day, of language institutes, centers and universities which take it as a language of teaching all sciences and knowledge at an early age, its rapid spread across the globe are quite visible to everybody. The question is how many books, textbooks and teaching tools, which are all in English, would these schools, centers and institutes need? And how much money would it cost them to develop their teaching programs, pedagogies and skills which facilitate the methods of its fast learning? How many teachers, educators and pedagogical trainers, administrative staff and employees they need for all teaching levels? And how much money does this English language economic activity the yield? Isn't it true that a large part of the success achieved by private education in our Arab world is essentially due to the importance given to the use of foreign languages for teaching the different school subject

matters which are strongly demanded in the job market, the economy and public life? Can't we see the number of written, audio or video books, films, songs, cultural, entertainment and sports programs produced in English or translated into it, and the number of radio stations, satellite news and non-news TV channels which broadcast in English, and how many high profile experts and brains specialized in audio-visual information and communication, broadcasters and employees they attract?

The model of the English language which has become the language of economic, cultural and linguistic globalization is clear and known to everybody.⁽²²⁾ Let us now touch upon the French language which has not yet managed to become a language of globalization neither in economy nor in culture despite the considerable efforts France deploys to impose its presence in large parts of the world and its endeavor with all means possible to make of it an instrument of spiritual invasion and cultural and intellectual domination on the one hand, and of economic domination and political dependence on the other. France, with a population of less than 70 million people, neither has a large geographical surface nor sufficient natural resources⁽²³⁾. But the surface area of its outreach and influence are far larger than that. Since its revolution at the end of the 18th century, it adopted a model policy to unify its languages and dialects in one common language which is standard French and made it the basis of its political,

(22) Britain was one of the great European nations which first invested in its English language after having spread and localized it in the countries it occupied by force. In addition, the British Council, established in 1943, with the state's support and sponsoring, played a crucial role in spreading English all over the world. Now it has strong presence in no less than a hundred and ten countries. Egypt was one of the first countries outside Britain to host a branch of the Council in 1983. The huge funds spent on the Council (most of them come from the English language teaching revenues) are estimated at more than £530 million (about \$700 million) every year. A director of the Council said: "*The real black gold for Great Britain is not the North Sea oil, but the English language. We should fully exploit it*". (See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Council)

A clear indication of the immensity of the material and moral benefits both Britain and the US obtain from spreading their language is the fact that this language has become the language of globalization that prevails all over the globe. It's the first international language of trade, economy, industry, technology, consulting houses, informatics and information. It's also the language of science, invention, culture, art and all industries associated with them.

(23) According to the report of the French Statistic Bureau on 18 January 2016, the population of France is about 66 million people. Other statistics show a more or less number. In all cases, it is less than 76 million today.

administrative, cultural, geographical and social cohesion. With the beginning of the colonial era in the history of modern France, the opportunity to make a qualitative leap, which could not be made without standardization, arose to the French language. The invasion of many African and other countries enabled France to make the second step of its linguistic plan harnessing all of its potentials to spread it and strengthen its presence in all the countries it had colonized since the nineteenth century through using both the stick and the carrot policy. As a result, French managed to remove from its way most of the national languages of those colonies as it is clear today in the African and other French speaking countries. The goal of France from the beginning was to make the third step of the linguistic plan which consists in relying strongly on French to build its moral and cultural power and in investing it in such an unprecedented scale that it gradually changed into a solid basis on which the most influential and efficient part of its modern economy is founded.

Since France is a medium-sized country with limited population and resources and an industrial production which alone can't enable it to impose its economic domination, it had thought, since the beginning of its colonial era, of making its language and culture an essential leverage of its traditional economy and an inexhaustible source that supplies its economy with renewable energy. For this reason, we notice that after withdrawing from the countries it used to occupy, it gains huge profits from the large investments it had made in spreading its language and sowing its seeds in all the regions it could reach inside and outside Europe (in Africa, Asia and Latin America). The fourth and last step made as part of the French linguistic plan consisted in establishing a large economic market made up of almost sixty member states most of which are France's former colonies forming the Francophonie member states.⁽²⁴⁾ The basis on which this large market was built is the French language and culture. The goods mostly traded therein are the cultural and intellectual goods made in Molière's language including the French education and the associated programs and economy (such as expertise in education, training, teacher

(24) The official number of Francophonie member states is 85 countries, and 62 observer countries. Member states are not all French-speaking, including the countries of North Africa and even countries which have little thing or even nothing to do with the Francophonie such as Qatar, Egypt, Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria and Greece. See the official website of the International organization of the Francophonie on: <https://www.francophonie.org/>

training and educational supervising which has become a traded good), the book and its industry (including school books and programs in every art and specialty for all levels from kindergarten to the doctorate levels, and everything related to book industry like printing, publishing, distribution, etc.) and printed and digital newspapers, films, songs, educational games, music, etc. and anything cultural and artistic; and technological and informatics knowledge and expertise; and all other types of knowledge (including knowledge in agriculture, commerce, business management, bank management, consulting houses, accountancy, etc.). All of this production, in which the French capital has a large contribution and the French treasury obtains much of the profits, is consumed by Francophone countries.

All of this is understood and clear to every person concerned with this affair. In our book "***The Francophonie and the French Linguistic Policy in Morocco***", we presented several texts which expressly show the plans prepared by France during the colonial era to empower and spread its language through the stick and carrot policies and through the war it waged against Arabic in general and classical Arabic in particular. This policy has been maintained even after the independence of the colonized countries. Though the practical and material proofs that can be noticed and followed on the ground are sufficient to testify of those plans, we may still add some textual proofs authored by decision makers in modern. First, in his well-known saying by reported by many sources, President Charles De Gaulle said: "*the French language has achieved for us what the armies failed to do*"⁽²⁵⁾. This idea is expressed in different ways by outstanding figures of the French foreign policy especially in the Maghreb and in West African countries. That policy is still maintained to this day. We should not forget that many of the foundations on which the Francophonie Organization was built were laid during De Gaulle's rule and under his sponsoring in the sixties of the last century.⁽²⁶⁾

(25) see our book "***The Language of the Nation and the Mother Language***", p.54.

(26) In 1960, the first conference of the French speaking countries was held. The International Council of the French Language and the High Committee for defense and expansion of the French language were set up in 1966. In 1967, the French-speaking Parliamentary Assembly (FPA) was established. Following the Francophonie Summit held in Niamey, Niger in 1970 a number of other institutions were created including the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT) which became later the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF).

The last sayings of French decision makers I read are some ideas recorded by Jacques Attali in one of his recent books titled “**One Hundred Days for the Success of France.**”⁽²⁷⁾ Attali is a prominent academician politician and economist. He worked for a long time as advisor to President François Mitterrand (from 1981 to 1991), president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)⁽²⁸⁾ and held many other positions. His book is a comprehensive cross-sectorial plan which he suggested for adoption by any candidate who will become president for the 2017-2022 period if he has the determination to achieve a remarkable success for himself and for his country. The following are some ideas and recommendations Attali suggested in his plan:

Attali begins the series of his ideas and suggestions by talking about the importance of relying on the language and culture in the French foreign policy saying that cultural diplomacy is “*a tool of influence because the power of its influence and distribution network all over the world arouses the jealousy of other countries. The French song, for instance, is the most exported in the entire world and not only in the French speaking countries alone. The same goes for the cinema and literature.*” (p. 49). Culture is “*a strategic sector in the French economy considering its characteristics and role as an engine for the future of the economy of knowledge and also its exportation power.*” (p. 52). He then mentions the investment of his country in education saying: “*In the twenty first century, we think that the future of any country depends as never before on the level of knowledge its citizens have.... France invests in its educational system considerable financial and human resources. France’s annual expenditure on every citizen ranks second after the United States’ at the primary school level and first at the secondary school level.*”⁽²⁹⁾ (p. 97). He further mentions some models which were implemented in the cultural field outside France and the funds spent to promote the French cultural and

(27) Jaques Attali: “**100 jours pour que la France réussisse**”, Fayard, Paris 2016.

(28) EBRD: The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

(29) The cultural network abroad now has about 150 cultural centers and 800 French Leagues (Alliances Françaises) where some 450 students learn French and about 400 thousand readers subscribe to their electronic libraries. They organize fifty thousand cultural events every year. (p.411).

linguistic foreign policy which he thinks still needs a new impetus. Considering that this policy needs a new push, he issues the following recommendation: “*we should give our cultural, educational and linguistic diplomacy a new push and consider Francophonie the centerpiece of our foreign policy.*” (pp. 114-115).

In other parts of his book, Attali deals with the Francophonie organization and its importance in promoting the French cultural and linguistic goods. He says for instance that the Francophonie group which now includes 274 million French speaking people “*may become the fourth economic, geographical and linguistic bloc by the year 2050 because it will consist of 770 million French-speaking people. Indeed, this is an important resource with significant economic potential though neglected by our diplomacy either from the right or the left.*” (p. 111) That's why he insists on including this recommendation within the political agenda of the French president despite the fact that its content already exists and is implemented. Actually, there is nothing new in it except increasing insistence and confirmation when “*he calls for making the Francophonie spherepart of the economic field and seeks on that basis to create a Francophone economic union.*”

To serve the economy of its country, the French foreign policy has always been relying on the French linguistic and cultural diplomacy. Consequently, most of the ideas expressed by Jaques Attali in 2016 are in fact neither new nor innovative since they have been frequently reiterated for a long time in similar phrases by other persons who were in key positions leading the linguistic and cultural policy of their country over the last decades. One of them is Jean Luis Roy, once Secretary-General of the Agency of Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT) and member of the Supreme Council of the Francophonie, who says in his book “***Francophonie: Community Project***”⁽³⁰⁾: “*We may say that Francophonie is affected in almost all its activities by the economic dimension of development*” (p. 126). He moreover expresses the same idea using the new term he called: “sustainable Francophonie” (*la francophonie durable*) which emerges out of “overlapping interests between the north and the south”. By the north he means the Francophone

(30) Jean-Louis Roy: “***La Francophonie: Le projet communautaire***”.

north made up of France, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg, by the Francophone south the former French colonies in Africa, Asia and Latin America, in addition to some former Belgian colonies. The sustainable Francophonie means the one that is likely to continue for as much time as possible. This may be achieved only if the southern Francophonie disappears.

“The future of Francophonie in the north will be limited unless Francophonie of the south, which represents the majority⁽³¹⁾, achieves a significant level of economic development.” (p. 127). This means that the north should help the south in creating a sustainable development likely to allow the north itself to benefit from it in such a way as to keep large markets of the south where it sells its goods particularly the linguistic and cultural goods. France and its linguistic alliance in the north have no interest in the transformation of the southern Francophonie into a financially bankrupt state with no capability to buy or reimburse its debts. Jean Louis Roy said: *“To find additional and supplementary markets, which we have already mentioned, we need productive and solvable people”* (p. 133). Among the proposals he puts forward to save the southern countries of the Francophonie from bankruptcy, whose consequences will be devastating to the north, is to look for financial support from the World Bank and other international lending institutions and inject it in the economies of these countries to create small and big projects and businesses in order to make their markets capable of absorbing goods, technologies and expertise exported from France and its allies from the northern Francophonie, including most importantly the cultural, scientific, knowledge and linguistic products. This idea which was first advocated by Jean Louis Roy in 1991 became subsequently a reality as every state from northern Francophonie supplies annually a number of the countries of the southern Francophonie⁽³²⁾ with funds from their national budgets.

It's a smart idea that is based on a clear commercial and profitable logic: France and its allies in the north do not provide aid to the poor southern

(31) In terms of the number of countries and people speaking French.

(32) See the amounts of money provided in the form of aid by countries like France, Canada, Belgium and Luxembourg to the countries of southern Francophonie. P. 22ff, in the document of the International Organization of Francophonie titled: ***“The Economic impact of the French language and the Francophonie”***.

countries members of the Francophonie Organization out of love or humanitarian solidarity, but rather to preserve a large consumer market for their goods and products especially the linguistic and cultural products.

The series of projects carried out or announced to be implemented by France in African countries and elsewhere before 1991 and even by the end of the last decade of the twentieth century, for which it allocated huge funds, all fall under this cultural and linguistic diplomacy espoused by the author. In this vein, Jean Louis Roy revealed some of them in a speech before the French president at the opening of the Third International Book and Teaching Materials Exhibit in Senegal in 1991 including opening 300 libraries in rural areas in Africa and launching several other projects in different parts of the world⁽³³⁾. In addition to this, thousands of education scholarships are granted by the French Agency for International Cooperation to students from different countries of the world especially in the Francophone ones⁽³⁴⁾ to pursue their higher studies in France, thousands of schools affiliated to the French Mission schools present in every corner of the globe, thousands of cultural centers which carry out various cultural activities, the generous technical and financial aid supplied to support the French governmental and private education in the Francophone countries, providing countries with the political, technical, moral, media and financial support especially when such support involves implementing educational or information projects in return for preserving the status of the French language in education, administration, etc., and other activities that cannot be traced or counted.

(33) Among the projects he mentioned: setting up the satellite TV channel TV5 and other radio station networks designed to cover 16 countries by 1995, 225 centers for cultural and reading centers, 15 offices for language learning, organizing 20 international book fairs, creating an international distance training centers in 1991 benefiting 20 countries and expanding it to cover the Indian subcontinent as of 1992. In addition to other cultural projects which, according to him, were carried out or still under way such as the African Center for Information, Publishing and Book Distribution, the project of supporting French books publishers and the International School of Bordeaux whose activities attracted by the end of 1991 about 8000 trainees.

(34) The above-mentioned document of the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF) shows a long list of educational scholarships granted by only one organ of the Francophonie: the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (the Francophonie University Agency) to which 784 Francophone university institutions from 98 countries are affiliated.

Education in the French language has become a highly vital matter in the foreign policy of France since it is strongly linked to its economic, political and strategic interests to the extent that France is prepared at any time to intervene against any regime in power that considers emancipation from cultural and linguistic dependence or changes its linguistic policy to substitute any foreign language or French with the national one.

As mentioned above, this trend is long-standing in the French policy for a long time. In the eighties of last century for example, Jean Jaques Celeri, Secretary of the French TV network TV5⁽³⁵⁾, which broadcasts to the world and to the Francophone region in particular, was asked the following question: “*Does France seek to establish good relationships with the African countries?*” He answered: “*Certainly yes, what’s important is the economic market. When I was a civil servant at the ministry of foreign affairs, they used to send us in mixed committees to a foreign country. We often met at the airports our colleagues in the economic committee. Culture comes first, then business. The French government between 1981 and 1986 understood well that matter. Through culture, we can make a lot of things*”.⁽³⁶⁾

Above all, the International Organization of the Francophonie, whose large institutions began to emerge since the sixties of the last century as stated above, was made an international framework for the promotion of the French cultural goods in this huge market. Accordingly, it was decided to give the countries using the French language a privileged and special status compared to other countries in terms of economic and commercial transactions. Today, this organization has become a great international network that operates in every field and reaches everywhere. Its affiliated or parallel institutions are in tens.⁽³⁷⁾

In addition, France’s investment in its language and in spreading its culture is not limited only to this apparent side, or at this type of the benefits, but it

(35) In an interview published in the Morocco-based French magazine *Kalima*, issue of January 1988. See our book “*On Culture and Identity*” p.72 commenting on his statement.

(36) op. cit. p. 5.

(37) See: “*l’impact économique de la langue française et de la francophonie*”.

encompasses another aspect which is: how the learning of French becomes a spiritual attachment to France, the French language, and the French society, history, culture and tangible and intangible civilization? In other words, how to make the learner of French change from a mere learner of French (a Francophone) into a Francophile, i.e. any lover who is spiritually attached to the French language, culture and civilization in morals, behavior and thought? And how the spiritual and cultural attachment becomes an economic one? And how can a moral thing be transformed into liquid money and material profits that can be injected into various commercial markets? Any person spiritually attached to the French language, especially when he is familiar with it since childhood and who at any time intends to read any book or any newspaper, he would not choose any book or newspaper other than the French ones; and if he intends to listen to a song he would prefer the French one; or wants to send his children to school, he would prefer to send them to French institutes and universities. If you ask him about the intellectuals, poets, writers, philosophers and artists he knows, he would mostly give a list French or French speaking ones. If he needs treatment, he would go to a French doctor and to the French hospital and choose the French medicine. If he needs a machine, clothes, shoes, necktie, food or drink, he would always choose the French product or anything similar to it. If he wants to spend his holidays, he would firstly prefer to take a French plane, go to France or to a French speaking country. Likewise, he would do the same if he needs an international lawyer or an economic, military, political, technical or legal adviser or even a sport trainer or a clown. The same goes for anything else among the needs of individuals and countries, both important and trivial.⁽³⁸⁾ Overall, taste, behavior and the model in all things become French in the first place. Even the constitutions of the countries falling within the orbit of France

(38) See: A. Ouadghiri: *"The Language of the Nation and the Mother Language"*, p. 47. It would be useful to add that this statement from the book of late Mustapha Benyakhlef, former director of the Higher Institute of Statistics Sciences in Morocco titled: *"Towards a High Level Arabization"*, p. 30 in which he says: *"From an economic perspective, it is evident that communication easiness is a decisive determinant in choosing business customers and partners. It's normal to see that the engineer, doctor, business managers import to his country the machinery and goods which he is familiar with and in which he is extremely confident."*

and its laws naturally become a true copy of the French constitution and laws. Accordingly, the linguistic and cultural dependence inevitably become economic and political.

What we have so far said about French also applies to English and to any other language that is much loved in the same way as described above.⁽³⁹⁾

Another aspect that can further clarify the profits the western countries make from their successful policies aiming at investing in language is that their current economies are largely based on highly qualified foreign brains who studied in foreign languages. These migrant brains on whom families and native countries had spent considerable amounts of money to educate and train them till they obtained higher degrees (master's and PhDs) massively flow to France and to other Western countries in search of adequate jobs they don't find in their native countries and also because they are familiar to the life style, mindset and the type of life prevailing in the country they learned its language and loved its culture. In turn, the western economy seizes this valuable opportunity and relies on it to such a large extent that it cannot do without all of these competencies coming from abroad, not only because of their qualifications and good training but also because they are essentially trained in the languages of those countries. By contrast, the countries which produced those migrant brains are deprived of their potentials and productivity and their economies do not benefit from them to build their economies and lead the process of development therein. Rather, the beneficiary is the European and Western host countries in general. Consequently, they benefit twice: first because they exhaust these competencies on which their economies and development depend, and second because they don't contribute or minimally contribute to training those migrant competencies. The largest part of the costs of their training and education are borne by the families of those competencies and by the public funds of their countries. This reality applies

(39) In the north of Morocco where Spanish is widespread among the entire population after it was colonized by the Spaniards at the beginning of the 20th century, even after independence, the population there prefers everything of Spanish origin. In the other regions which fell under the French occupation, the dominant taste in everything is French.

to all Western countries and languages, but more to France, Britain and the United States of America which have the largest proportion of the world economy thanks to spreading English.

What then is the position of Arabic?

The situation presented above is aimed to show the extent to which the Arabs have neglected their language and that type of thinking which makes Arabic secure the position English, French or other major living languages occupy despite the fact that it is the fourth most wide-spread language.

It's our right to ask these questions: What prevents Arabic from having the essential function of development and shaping the society of knowledge? And what prevents it from becoming the language of knowledge production which is the most important wealth of modern economy? And what prevents it from transforming it from an ordinary language into an economic and investment product?

What prevents it from all that is that its speakers are no longer proud of it and lost their confidence in it as they have done in many values of their civilization and culture as they disdain them and fancy that they no more fit modernity, development and technology. They have underestimated and scorned their language and consequently excluded it partially or entirely from all the vital fields of society including, commerce, economy, industry, information, tourism, banks and services and banned its use in teaching modern sciences especially at university and higher studies level. As result, Arabic is neither a language of engineering, physics, chemistry, sciences, biology and mathematics, nora language of economics, statistics, medicine, pharmacy and other sciences and technologies even simplerand ordinary tasks like commerce, services, business management and administration. Then, how can we expect Arabic to become a language of knowledge,the most important wealth in modern economy,in its comprehensive meaning?

At this point, we go back to our focal point: The comprehensive development which we want for our Arab countries economically or socially should be built on a solid ground, which is in this case the widespread knowledge in which everyone takes part based on his potentials, capabilities and level

and also according to the task he can skillfully perform. The only basis for broad knowledge is the universalization of education at all levels. This may happen in any society and may give the expected results that are capable of bringing about a radical change in society and in its culture and conscience, and entirely transform it into a homogeneous and strongly unified bloc and subsequently into a productive force. This can be achieved only through the common national language (for each Arab country) and the unifying language of the Arab nation for the Islamic Arab world in its entirety and with all its cultural, linguistic and racial components.

This equation should be fully grasped to understand the fact that Arabic is a highly vital question and an essential requirement to initiate the comprehensive scientific and economic renaissance we need for our Arab world.

Arabic: a factor of Arab economic unity:

While development and economy experts talk about the need for the existence of a large human bloc likely to sustain the prosperity of the economy as economy and trade need a large market to sell products⁽⁴⁰⁾, the human bloc the Arab world has is of considerable size (about 400 million people). It can be as twice as big the French-speaking population of the world (around 270 million people). The European community exceeds it only by a slight difference (about 440 people after the exit of Britain whose population is approximately 60 million) given that the population of Europe is continuously dwindling while the population of the Arab and Islamic world is continuously increasing. Contrary to other blocs, the Arab world share many characteristics that make it an ideal economic market. Most important of them are several elements of homogeneity namely the unity of language, culture, history, common civilization and the continued geographical area in addition to the religious factor embodied by Islam which unifies the great majority of the Arab people. Even the followers of other religious sects consider themselves as sons of one Islamic civilization. Conversely, the major element missing in the European Union bloc is the linguistic unity. Europeans considered

(40) In the afore-mentioned study "*Education in the Arab World within Globalization and Market Culture*", the researcher Mohaya Zaytoun concludes that the pillars of progress (comprehensive development) are three, represented by a triangle: economic blocs, technical and knowledge progress and democracy. (p.110)

all possibilities to agree on one unifying language but in vain. They have even considered going back to Latin or using the constructed language Esperanto, but they neither agreed on that. If the Arab countries want to benefit from this factor (the factor of the unifying common language) to consolidate the foundations of their unity in all its cultural, social and political dimensions and strengthen their economic ties and commercial exchanges which are at their lowest level,⁽⁴¹⁾ they should apply as soon as possible the policy of Arabization which involves the necessary use of Arabic for acquiring knowledge in education, commerce, tourism, economy and in all aspects of public and private life.

When several researchers talk about the factors of the Arab economic unification, (such as easing the transit of goods across the borders, aligning customs procedures, unifying economic systems, dissociating the economic integration from political differences between the Arab countries, unifying the Arab capital markets, expanding the Arab free trade zone, and other measures)⁽⁴²⁾, they neglect invoking, or even citing, the need to strengthen the factor of the Arab linguistic unity (including the unification of the linguistic and educational policy and the formulation of a sound strategy for that purpose, cooperation in the Arabization of education in the technical and exact science branches and in higher education in general, and also of economy and inter-Arab trade). As a result of the calls to transform local dialects into national languages instead classical Arabic, this factor of unity may be undermined

(41) According to an economic report prepared by the general secretariat of the Federation of GCC Chambers on the occasion of the 3rd session of the Arab Development, Economic and Social summit held in Riyadh, the volume of trade between the Arab countries based on the latest statistics was below 10% while their trade exchanges with the rest of the world are steadily increasing. (see the website of the of: Islamic Banking Magazine on 20 January 2013):

http://www.islamicbankingmagazine.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=19910&Itemid=298#.WQN4ykXyjcc

According to the data contained in the address of King Mohamed VI of Morocco at the 28th summit conference of the African Union in Addis Ababa on 30 January 2017, trade exchanges between the countries of the Maghreb are less than 3%.

(42) See for example a number of studies published in the book: *"The Arab Economies and the Contradictions of the Market and Development"*, Center of Arab Unity Studies, Bayreuth, 2005, namely the research of Hamdy Kanaan titled: *"The Arab Economic Cooperation: A Practical Vision"*, and the research of Abdelghani Imad titled: *"Economic Complementarity and the Common Arab Market: Reasons of Backwardness and Requirements of Take-off"*.

and consequently disappears altogether. In the event this transformation is a reality, it will be a great threat to the Arab unity whose many aspects are based on the unity of language and the cultural aspects linked to it. If this is combined with the strengthening position of foreign languages inside the Arab countries and their domination over the language of trade, economy, services and the most important specialties of higher education and other transactions to the detriment of Arabic, we can imagine the fate the Arabic language in medium and long term. An example of the current situation of Arabic is that an obstacle impeding Arab investments in the Maghreb is the problem of language. Specifications, investment files, tenders, contracts and insurance documents are all done in French which excludes a number of Arab investment companies which use Arabic and English.

Therefore, the Arab countries should benefit from the existence of a common language between them and seek to strengthen it to scale up commercial cooperation and exchanges and economic complementarity between them instead of neglecting it. Only the enemies of the Arab countries and other rival economic blocs will capitalize on this negligence.

The Arab economy may also draw on the Arabic language to expand the volume of the human bloc attached to it. The Islamic countries bloc which uses Arabic to a certain degree for religious and cultural considerations may become a strong resource for the common Arab economy. The Arab countries may contribute to scale up the dissemination of Arabic in the Islamic world which includes about sixty countries (the number of Muslims now is about a billion and a half people) and set up a special fund for supporting this dissemination and encourage the Islamic countries thereto. Thus, Arabic may become an instrument, among others, for strengthening commercial exchanges between the Arab and Islamic countries.

I lived for a long time in sub-Saharan Africa during which I incessantly wondered why the Arabs have failed to foster and sponsor promoting the dissemination of Arabic and Arab education in the region and in the African continent in which more than half of the population are Muslims⁽⁴³⁾ despite

(43) Estimates on the number of Muslims in Africa range between 45% and 59%. If we take the median figure, the rate would be more than 50%. In all cases, the biggest Islamic bloc exists in Africa, followed by Asia, Europe and then America.

the fact that this question is such vital that it should not be ruled out of the plans of Arab strategists. If they do that one day, the entire African economy will be partner to, interdependent with and integrated in the Arab economy in as much as it is dependent on the French economy in West Africa and on the English economy in East Africa or even more.

I talked earlier about the miracle made by France through focusing on spreading its language in its former colonies especially in the countries of West Africa and the Sahel spending on that huge amounts of money both at the colonial and post-colonial eras. I also pointed out that now France reaps the fruits of its past investment. On the contrary, we have offered Africa only a few religious preachers and counselors and a bunch of books of the Holy Quran and some mosques and wells instead of building schools, universities, hospitals and spreading Arab and Islamic education, granting generous scholarships, encouraging and sponsoring learners of. Is it with such assistance that we can build a true and strong partnership with Africa, especially the economic and cultural ones, and benefit from the promising large African market if we think with an economic logic at a time when all great powers including China, the US and the other different economic and human blocs are courting Africa and competing for its promising market? What our Arab countries may be reproached for is that they want to build strong economic and commercial ties with Africa, but they are forced do so through using other languages such as French and English as part of the Arab world uses English to access to that market while the other part uses French. This means that we are trying to access the African continent, with which we share geography and history, and cultural, civilizational, linguistic and religious heritage, via the European economy, language and culture (either French or English). In this way, we provide a free service to the European economy and other free services to the Western cultures⁽⁴⁴⁾. Accordingly, we pay the price of the intermediation which we don't necessarily need if

(44) Mustapha Benyakhlef said in his book "***Towards a High Level Arabization***", page 30: "*A survey was conducted on a sample of Africans to answer this question: Is Franco-African cooperation primarily in the benefit of Africa or France? 90% of the respondents said that it benefited France.*" Dr. Benyakhlef commented on that saying: "*There are some concrete and real examples showing that the linguistic and cultural hegemony is actually benefiting the country which intervenes commercially and economically from a purely commercial profit point of view.*"

we use our Arabic language which is spoken by more than a third of Africa's population and is also used, in one way or another, by more than a half of its population as Muslims.⁽⁴⁵⁾

In the pre-colonial era, the African economy was strongly interdependent with the Arab Islamic countries namely those in the Greater Maghreb. Arabic and Islam were the basic element of this interdependence between the Arab and African economies. In fact, education in Africa was all done in the Arabic language which alone had remained for centuries the language of science, knowledge and writing. Moreover, Arabic was used in the practice of the Islamic religious rituals, administration, trade, and correspondence. Today, however, Africa resorts directly to the Western countries to satisfy its needs in technology, advanced know-how and diverse knowledge and shun the Arab countries except for studying literature and sharia sciences or for performing Hajj and Omra. We may ask about the amount of the material, moral and technical aid provided by the Arab governments to the African countries which preferred to join the League of Arab States since their independence (such as the Comoros, Djibouti, and Somalia) and to others which could have been motivated to join the League (such as Chad and Eritrea)?nThe conditions of Arabic in these countries are so regrettable and deplorable especially that we notice that some of them are succumbing to the generous incentives of the West and give up Arabic for the benefit of European languages like French and English.

Therefore, Arabic can become an instrument to be used by the Arab countries to enhance cohesion and integration between them and strengthen the social, human and cultural ties. It can also become a strong factor for increasing the volume of the commercial exchange, achieve economic complementarity, stimulate tourism and facilitate the movement of goods. Arabic can also be invested in promoting economic and commercial cooperation as well as enhancing the cultural and scientific one between the Arab and Islamic world and the African and Asian countries.

Lastly, Arabic and the related cultures and cultural industries may be transformed into an intangible knowledge capital that has a prosperous economic market

(45) See: Ouadghiri: "*The Arabic Language and the Islamic Culture in West Africa: Aspects of the Moroccan Influence*", p. 124, Faculty of Letters and Humanities' Press, Mohamed V University, Rabat, 2013.

and into a commercial good suitable for investment in the way Western countries invest in their languages and in everything pertaining to that language, be it written or published such as books, films and songs; various scientific, intellectual, cultural and artistic works; educational programs, information, communication networks, etc.

However, all of this depends on whether the Arab countries have the determination, will and decision to achieve what we think is the right thing.

What are the impediments of Arabization?

From a theoretical perspective, Arabization is a conceptual question whose objective is clear. Only the ignorant of the reality of things, the ill-intended, those who benefit from the marginalization and even absence of Arabic, or those who conspire with the nation's rivals against its vital interests may dispute the importance and necessity of Arabic to achieve the comprehensive development of the Arab peoples and countries.

If we examine a number of factors which prevent the implementation of Arabization despite the failed or stumbling attempts made by certain Arab countries, and also despite the existence of official decisions issued by Arab summits, ministerial meetings and high institutions emanating from the League of Arab States, etc., we will notice that they are all the result of other factors and reasons some of which are internal and some are external although they are interrelated.

In fact, only one thing prevents the implementation of Arabization: The absence of the political decision⁽⁴⁶⁾ on the part of all the Arab countries because such serious a decision, which may drastically change the situation of the Arab

(46) Dr. Kamal Dassouki, member of the Academy of Arabic Language in Cairo, says: "It's not the political decision that is needed as the country's constitution stipulates that Arabic is our language (...), and the obstacles to Arabization are not legal either." He gave as an example some teachers of Arab universities who experienced teaching some exact sciences subjects, including Dr. Ahmed Diab who took a personal initiative to teach anatomy science in Arabic at the Tunisian University of Sfax which was well received among the students (See his research titled "***It's Time for the Decision of Teaching the Unified Specialized Glossary in the Subject Matter of Specialization to Support the Arabization of Higher Education***", published in the magazine of the Academy of Arabic Language, Cairo, issue n° 76, 1995.

In fact, the problem is not in the Arab constitutions since each one of them includes a provision that stipulates that Arabic is the official language of the country. But the problem

and Islamic nation, will enable it restore its identity and dignity, promote its independence and unity, and develop its economy, is not likely to have an effect and impact and may not be as successful as expected unless it is taken collectively by all or at least the majority of the Arab countries. However, any action taken separately by one country is doomed to failure and unsustainability. Some countries have individually tried since independence to go ahead with Arabization, but the division of the Arab world, added to other internal and external factors have made these countries, as individual and separate as they are, fail and retreat.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Among the evident reasons which continuously hinder the application of this decision is the influence of the foreign powers which find their interests in keeping the Arab world divided and mired in conflicts, embroiled in economic and political powerlessness and cultural alienation. This influence does not lie only in the political and economic pressures and horse trading incessantly practiced by those powers on each Arab country to force them to give up the idea of Arabization, but also in their constant policy which is attempting to separate the Mashriq from the Maghreb linguistically and culturally since the 19th century (the beginning of occupation), which is clearly manifest in France policy since its occupation of most of the Maghreb region. This separation policy relies on some fundamentals including: An attempt to change the

lies in giving effect to this provision through enacting organic laws and decrees which bind all citizens and government institutions to use Arabic. Alone, the enacting of decrees and organic laws would not suffice. What is mostly needed is that the government should ensure the application of the laws it promulgates fully and appropriately. Another important point is convincing all classes of the Arab societies of the importance of attachment to their Arabic language and commit administrations and all public and private institutions to use Arabic exclusively in official matters, and also oblige university teachers to use it in teaching all subjects matters and sciences. The existence of some university teachers who are ready to use Arabic for teaching in every Arab country is not enough because the general policy of the country doesn't encourage Arabizing higher education. Actually, governments neither promulgate binding laws thereon, nor make this issue a priority of their vital programmes and of their strategic plans at the present time because they have not yet taken the necessary decisions.

(47) The Countries of the Maghreb have so far succeeded in Arabizing primary and secondary education, but they haven't managed to Arabize higher education in its different technical and scientific specialties. Now, the Arabization of scientific subject matter in secondary schools is gradually given up to ultimately be done in the preparatory schools.

unified language of the people and replace it with foreign languages (English in the Mashriq and French in the Maghreb), the distortion of the image of classical Arabic which is the strong bond uniting the two parts of the Arab world after religion, spreading all negative ideas likely to repel the Arabs from their language as a dead or backward language unsuitable for development, modernity, education, industry, trade, economy, etc. and trying to inflate Arab dialects and convince people that they are their national languages and that classical Arabic is a foreign language for them. After the geographical division of the Arab world, the colonial powers tried to divide it linguistically as well. Furthermore, the separation policy relies on reviving local racial and national passions and push people to believe that classical Arabic is a common enemy for the dominant foreign power and non-Arab ethnic minorities in the Maghreb region.

The wave of globalization is another external reason hindering the implementation of Arabization. Actually this wave has gone beyond its economic stage to invade the cultural and linguistic sphere. The ardent advocates of globalization and its language, which is today English, now believe that the other languages are useless and worthless. This claim is now appealing to many people in the Arab world namely in its eastern part, thus making English a great rival of Arabic whose function has become secondary in economy, sciences, education, commerce, etc. On the contrary, we notice that France that is strongly engaged in economic globalization, insists on protecting its cultural and linguistic specificity, clings to the unity of its language and doesn't tolerate only a very limited use of some local languages and national dialects within its territorial borders (like Basque, Breton, Catalan, Alsatian and Occitan languages)⁽⁴⁸⁾, and wages an uncompromising war against English as a rival that threatens its cultural and linguistic specificity. But France is at the same time very enthusiastic to spread its language abroad and unreservedly supports its presence especially in the Francophone region

(48) In 1999, the French government conducted a census of regional languages and dialects and the languages of minorities used in the country and came up with 75 dialects and languages. In the same year, it signed 39 out of 98 articles of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, but immediately after that, it refrained from ratifying them to suspend their application.

as stated above. The urgent question is why is France capable of fiercely countering the globalization of the English language inside and outside its territory given that it is a medium-sized country with few people, resources and potentials and its language also ranks far behind Arabic while the entire Arab world by contrast (22 countries with 400 million people) doesn't speak out to counter the linguistic and cultural globalization which threatens Arabic to recede and decline inside its countries?

The other problems which all form an internal factor that impedes the implementation of Arabization include:

- The spread of destructive ideas within the Arab countries as a result of foreign influence in such a way as to repel people from their language and push them to neglect if not disdain and belittle it, and consider it a language that is unfit for modern times and unqualified to perform a number of functions such as education, economy, commerce, scientific and technological research, etc., and that its learning is useless.
- Citizens are not forced by law, subject to penalties and sanctions for defaulters, to use their national language in all fields, except in some legal decrees issued in some Arab countries though most of them need to be activated.
- Absence of compulsory mastery of classical Arabic for candidates for any position in their countries especially sensitive positions, which has occasioned the prevailing feeling in the Arab world that the mastery of the foreign language rather than Arabic is essential to find a job. The self-evident question for most of young people is: why should we learn Arabic then? What's the point in its study if there is no demand at all for it on the job market?
- The tremendous pressures exerted by the lobbies of foreign languages (the Francophone lobby in the Maghreb and the Anglophone lobby in the Mashriq) which occupy important positions in the decision-making and responsibility circles and variously benefit from their presence within those circles. For instance, the Francophone has been exerting huge pressure on the Maghreb countries to dissuade them from conducting Arabization. And if one day, they initiate Arabization, they will reverse their decision the following day.

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- The refusal of the majority of university teachers working in scientific and technical colleges and higher institutes to use Arabic on the pretext that it is difficult for them to switch from English or French in which they studied into Arabic. Actually, this is just because of their laziness and complacency because they in fact went to bilingual (Arabic-French or Arabic-English) primary and secondary schools. Since most of them studied scientific school subjects in Arabic or have private lessons in scientific terminology, a small intervention from the authorities in charge of higher education through granting them light support to enhance their mastery of Arabic and scientific terminology and raise their awareness of the importance of using the national language and its convenience for fast learning and deep understanding, would solve the problem easily. There are many experiences by teachers who took personal initiatives to administer their classes in Arabic instead of the foreign language with remarkable results despite the fact that university administrations neither encouraged them to go ahead with their project nor motivated their colleagues to follow their example. Actually, there are so many methods that can be adopted to gradually Arabize higher education, scientific colleges and institutes and help teachers to join this initiative (such as imposing classes of Arabic and scientific terminology in every specialty at the first years of university studies, opening Arabized departments and streams beside the other non-Arabized departments and streams and providing material incentives and promotions for teachers who do this experience successfully, etc.).
 - The cultivated elite, which is supposed to lead such necessary reform in their countries, fight for it, mobilize the public opinion and active forces to that end as it used to do during the days of the movement of liberation from the French and the British occupation, is now inactive, divided and in disarray and abdicated its duties.
 - The overall weakness of the Arab system as a result of division and disagreement. Actually this stark decision requires planning and unified strategy that emanate from a strong and coherent Arab system that protects and ensures the path to it.

In the long run, Arabization is one of the most difficult political decisions that might be taken in any Arab country currently. The political, economic,

cultural and identity repercussions of such a decision jeopardize the prevailing world order thus making it always alert to freeze, impede or circumvent it. Nevertheless, like all great things in the life of nations and peoples, Arabization is absolutely necessary and particularly vital for all the reasons I presented in this research. Everything an Arab country may spend and invest in it, including funds, energies, strategies, plans, sacrifices and struggles is a worthy investment, a required effort and an ambition that must be achieved.

Humanist Thought in the Religious Discourse

Dr Mohammad As-Sammak*

The divine revelation is the basis of religion; and the human interest is the goal of revelation and also the essence of its message and the noblest of its goals.

There is even a human interest in believing in God rather than the opposite since belief is based on mercy and compassion, on good and doing good, and on the exchange of love.

The best people for Allah are those who are useful to his dependents. Allah is not interested in prayers or fasting, but in the piety of the individual when practicing such worships for piety affects relations between people. The general rule of belief in Islam says: "*The best person is the one who is useful to people*".

In religious literature, there are so many examples and hadiths on this principle including this hadith which recurs in Islamic and Christian religious literature: "*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ...*"⁽¹⁾

The speaker here is Allah but He speaks on behalf of the person who suffers from hunger, thirst or sickness ... God has no need for food or drink, and no need for fasting, praying or zakat. His reason behind commanding such worships is to make us learn and practice compassion and love for there is in them good for all humanity.

However, when religious reasoning (*ijtihad*) fails to keep up with the changes and developments of man's needs, and fails to intellectually keep up with

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(1) *Hadith Qudsi*.

the changes of times and the transformation of their conditions and effects, and when it fails to exert the required intellectual endeavors to deduce new rules and regulations, and instead embraces (or feels comfortable with) past achievements which have become obsolete and out of place, religion is unwillingly turned from an instrument meant to serve, emancipate and honor the human being, into an objective per se absolutely used to subjugate the human being and even enslave him. Instead of being a divine revelation intended for the good and interest of humans, religion makes the human being subservient to religion which in its turn becomes a locked in and stern ideology. In that way, belief is dissociated from its noble spiritual and humanist objective to become no more than rituals and formalities that are revered for their sake.

The Holy Quran narrates the story of the first Muslim and father of prophets Abraham (Peace Be upon Him) with his God. The Quran says that Abraham requested God saying: [***My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead.*** ***Allah replied, "Have you not believed?" Abraham said, "Yes, but [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied.***"]

The miraculous action which Abraham performed upon Allah's order ended with Abraham's slaughtering four birds, cut them into pieces, mixed those pieces and scattered them on several distant heights. Later on Abraham stood in the middle of those heights and called the birds which were slaughtered and scattered into pieces to come to him. Then the birds came to him swiftly alive.

The religious thought considered for so long this miraculous event, but it rarely dived into the deep meaning of Abraham's saying: [***only that my heart may be satisfied.***]

Does that mean that Abraham's heart was not satisfied? Is doubt an expression of dissatisfaction? Isn't doubt the clearest manifestation of dissatisfaction? Didn't he want to leave no stone unturned on this? In other words, does it mean that Abraham adopted doubt to achieve absolute truth of belief? (it's the school of thought that underlies Descartes' philosophy).

(2) *Al-Baqarah*: 260.

Did the father of the prophets dare to ask his God for proof of His ability to create? Almighty Allah understands the reasons of Abraham's doubt and put him to an experience of which the miraculous results cleared up all his doubts and strengthened his belief. The most stringent test to this belief was Abraham's execution without any hesitation of his Lord's instruction to sacrifice his only son Ishmael (who was given to him by Allah at an old age) as an act of piety and obedience to Him.

Hence, we can ask this question: Would the Prophet Abraham obey his Lord's command if he still harbored any doubt in Allah's ability to create, recreate and consequently revive his son Ishmael as He revived the four birds? Would this new and strong belief be possible unless Abraham went through the stage of rational doubt and consequently after clearing up that doubt?

This means that adjustment belief is not a true and faithful one, that the blind and irrational belief is not a true and proper one, and that the belief of inheritance and dependence is not a reasonable and responsible one.

Allah is recognized and worshipped only through reason. Thus anyone who has no reason is discharged of all legal and civil obligations.

Doubt is no less than a manifestation of reason. This manifestation is the wide gate that leads to absolute belief achieved successfully by Abraham following his conversation with his Lord.

There are large differences between blind loyalty belief and the open mind belief. Loyalty belief is embodied by Noah, and rational belief is embodied by Abraham (Peace be upon them)

When Noah failed to convince his people to believe in God, God revealed to him that He was able to destroy them by the Flood. Noah obeyed his Lord's revelation without questioning⁽³⁾. However, Abraham argued with God when He revealed to him that He was able to destroy Sodom for the disobedience and disbelief. Moses also argued with God when He revealed to him that He was able to torture his people to reprimand them. Muhammed also argued

(3) [*And Noah said, "My Lord, do not leave upon the earth from among the disbelievers an inhabitant."*] (Nuh: 26)

with Allah when He revealed to him that He was able to destroy his people by the two mounts surrounding Mecca for their disbelief and persistent rejection of His message. But, Noah accepted without hesitation God's revelation to flood his people who drowned in the Deluge.

According to religious narratives, Noah, even after the flood, stayed in the ark a whole week waiting God's order to leave it and start reconstruction of what had been destroyed⁽⁴⁾, though the divine purpose from the creation of the human being is to inherit and populate Earth.

Noah (Peace be upon him) was a prophet rather than a leader. But other prophets like Abraham, Moses and Muhammed were prophets and leaders at the same time. Belief that is based on loyalty is not like the belief that is based on reason. For example, there are 613 calls for belief in the Old Testament without using the term of loyalty even once. The holy Quran calls people in general and believers in particular in several verses to think, reason and reflect. Such a call goes beyond the belief of blind loyalty in respect for humanity of man and to calling him to embrace a higher rank of belief that is based on reason and logic.

Hence, dealing with revealed religious texts was based, and should be based today and tomorrow, on the principle of open reason and analytic reasoning so that religion, as we say in Islam and on Islam, remains appropriate for all times and places. Religion can be appropriate by its capacity to achieve the purposes of Sharia through respecting the human character of man and preserving his dignity. It's a noble mission that requires «Abraham-like» innovative leading scholars rather than «Noah-like» loyal dependent scholars.

The Holy Quran describes Abraham (Peace be upon him) as the first Muslim. This is confirmed in Hajj rituals (one of the five pillars of Islam). Therefore, the call to emulate Abraham doesn't contradict considering the Prophet Muhammed (Peace be upon him) the best role model, but it instead complements it.

(4) May be to wait for the flood to recede and earth to dry up.

Basically, there is a big difference between the religious text revealed by Allah and the interpretation of this text. The religious text – namely the Holy Quran- is a sacred invariable text that has absolute knowledge. But the comprehension of this text is human, and anything human is subject to doing wrong and right. (Imam Al-Shafii says: “*Our opinion is correct with the possibility of being wrong and the opinion of those who differ with us is a mistake with the possibility of being correct*”). Therefore, it is not an invariable comprehension. Human understanding is variable. It keeps up with the changes of time and place. So it is an understanding that keeps pace with the transformations in human knowledge. Without this accompaniment which involves a permanent openness and continued transformations, comprehension of the revealed texts will give up its mission and abandon its message of becoming an understanding that establishes a jurisprudence that serves human being and his interests. However, if the scholar is free and open on the sciences of his time and aware of the needs of the people of his time, he will find himself – or will put himself – facing new challenges and addresses them with a new vision, mentality and theory through which he will set up new jurisprudence rules.

When religious reasoning (*ijtihad*) is used to serve the ruler (at the time of dynasties and during the Mongol and Mamluks and others), and when some religious scholars were forced to become subservient to rulers, it was wise to exert efforts to stop *ijtihad*. However, that period is over now and the reasons for that situation disappeared. The twenty first century has new requirements for *ijtihad*. This century's person may not address the situations he faces with the jurisprudence achieved by the eminent jurists many centuries ago in the light of the knowledge of their time.

Today is not yesterday and the knowledge of the past is not the same as that of the present. Consequently, the challenges are not the same. Some scholars innovated and worked hard to deduce specific rules from maxims of Islamic law to meet the needs of the people of their times. Our societies today aren't lacking in such scholars who are able and capable to deduce new specific rules from those maxims in such a way as to meet the requirements of our era and satisfy its human needs.

Most of the radical and extremist jurisprudence rules which raise controversies today were elaborated in the Abbasid era when the Islamic state was at its

heyday. The Abbasid caliphate could be the strongest state of its time. That jurisprudence endeavor was the fruit of its time and a response to it.

Yet, that jurisprudence do not suit this era of 57 Islamic countries most of which live on foreign aid... and under the protection of non-Muslim countries.

In a conference held in Collège de France in 1862, Ernest Renan said: "*All countries under the rule of Islam are doomed to stay in a barbaric state. True belief makes the Muslim believer a person who is close to science and unable to learn and open to a new idea because the trait that characterizes him is his dislike for sciences and his firm belief that scientific research is useless and futile and even blasphemy in itself*".⁽⁵⁾

"*If you start from the idea that research is an infringement on the divine rights, you inevitably end up in intellectual idleness*".⁽⁶⁾

This intellectual idleness is what characterizes the position of «idle Islam» according to Massignon⁽⁷⁾ - against the colonial cultural offensive and the rivalry between communism and capitalism to ascertain their technological supremacy. It's this intellectual idleness that turned its back to the developments and upheavals that struck the world and reshaped it ethically, morally and scientifically. The Islamic thought idly failed to cope with them with open mind, true belief and non-artificial sanctity.

It's true that this criticism was very severe but not defamatory. The criticism originated from within Islam itself, (Muhammad Iqbal in Pakistan, Muhammad Abduh, Mahmoud Hamdi Zakzouk in Egypt and Shakib Arslan in Lebanon, etc.) but in a less severe tone.

The Egyptian thinker and director of Bibliotheca Alexandrina Dr. Mustafa al-Fiqi said that "*the absence of the role of reason, the widespread of superstition, the adoption of metaphysical analysis and the preference of traditional evidence (naql) over rational proof ('aql), which all have led to*

(5) E. Renan: "*De la part des peuples sémitiques dans l'histoire de la civilisation*", ed. Michel Levy Frères, Paris 1862.

(6) E. Renan : "*L'islamisme et la science*", ed. Calmann Levy, Paris, 1983

(7) L. Massignon: "*Ecrits mémorables*", ed. Gallimard, Paris TI, 1975, p. 657.

ruling out sound thinking, the universal view of development; and the true understanding of the relation between the different elements of life and living creatures”.⁽⁸⁾

He further states that *“the Arabs and Muslims in most of their countries continued using their wrong understanding of religion instead of the correct understanding of life, thus permanently blaming Islam with or without any evidence”.*

The world of the twenty first century is facing major changes regarding the relationship with the other. To appropriately and constructively address these changes in the service of humanist thought and relations, there is a need for civil, jurist, and legal accompaniment of such changes.

Being aware of that, Muslim scholars expressed their concern about the situation in a conference held in Mecca in August 2017 under the theme: “Hajj Meeting” which gathered 72 Muftis and scholars from different Islamic countries.

The document adopted at this meeting stressed the urgent need for *“modernizing the religious discourse in such a way as to take into consideration temporal, spatial and situational differences, keep consistent with Islam’s tenets and identity, address modern societies’ problems through avoiding instant reactions and anger which disregard long-term effects, and take the initiative in every pressing issue through giving original and sound Islamic views to accomplish the legitimate interests of the nation”.*

The meeting also called for *“encouraging research and studies which promote the principle of moderation and tolerance in Islam and show its importance, seek to promote it and disseminate it among civilizations, refute the suspicions of extremists who harbor reductive or perverted ideas that contradict the maxims of Islamic jurisprudence and objectives of the Sharia, and strengthening belief in the universal principle of difference, diversity and pluralism while showing the right through the right path”.*⁽⁹⁾

(8) *Al-Hayat* newspaper, published in London, 3 October 2017.

(9) *Asharq Al-Awsat* newspaper, 5 September 2017.

Human society has already moved in that direction. At the civil level, several international instruments have primacy over domestic laws which contradict their provisions including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and the instrument on the rights of minorities, etc.

At the religious level, namely the Islamic, there has been a need to reread the sacred religious texts and also take guidance from the works of precedent jurists to deduce from these texts rules which were in line with the purposes of the Sharia to serve people. This is exactly what Al-Azhar Al-Sharif and other religious institutions have done in the Islamic world and what the above-mentioned "Hajj Meeting" stressed in 2017.

Fundamentally, Islam believes in the unity and diversity of humanity and lays the foundations and principles for respecting the ethnic, cultural and religious diversity and plurality in such a way as to make of such holistic principles the essence of the Islamic faith without which the Muslim's belief is incomplete.

In the Holy Quran there are so many verses which stress respect of diversity. Almighty Allah has honored the human being. The divine honoring for the human being encompasses all human beings and not only believers, or some people or even some believers.

Furthermore, Allah has made the human being His vicegerent on earth without any distinction between one nation, or one people and another. Allah created all the people from one soul to confirm their equal nature. Then, He made them nations and peoples with different tongues, colors, races and laws. If he wished otherwise, he could simply say to it: Be, so it is.

In addition, Allah created people differently and wanted them to be different. That's why they shall remain different till Judgment Day. Yet, Allah urged them to know and reach out to each other as there is much interest for all people in acquaintance that is based on accepting and respecting difference. Difference expresses itself and exists only through freedom. Thus, difference and freedom are an inseparable duo. Expressing respect for the divine will, (i.e. respecting difference which exists and continues to exist thanks to His will), requires the freedom of exercising such difference and respecting the right to manifest it. Allah, and Allah alone, according to the Quran, shall decide

on judgment day - and only on Judgment Day on matters people differ upon. This means that no human being (or any authority) is entitled to judge the conscience of the other or declare himself judge or authority on his belief. Conscience judgment is the exclusive prerogative of Allah Who is so close to us.

Furthermore, the human being does not exist out of himself or for himself. Actually, he is part of a community. The individual selfhood which has the right to difference and to the free practice of such difference is part of a collective selfhood. Consequently, this individual's right is a public right that forms the basis for a collective identity.

The collective humanist thought is centered in the religious discourse on many important elements from which I pick up the following two interrelated ones:

- The state's national identity and character.
- The overlapping between believers belonging to different faiths and cultures within the same nation state and in the world as a whole. It's an overlapping that deepens and becomes even stronger day after day through globalization and modern communication and social media.

I shall deal with these two points and explore the way Al-Azhar Al-Sharif deals with them.

First: On the identity of the nation state

In principle, there is a great difference between theocracy which is neither advocated nor witnessed by Islam and the state which has religion as a reference advocated by some Muslim jurists.

In the state with a religious reference, power is accountable to people (In his inaugural speech as caliph, Abu Bakr As-Siddiq said "*If I do well, then help me; and if I act wrongly, then correct me ...*", because the practice of power is a human act. According to Al-Mawardi, the ruler may do well or do wrong, thus power is a human act devoid of any sanctity. The ethics of rule and practice of power, are based on religious values – which no religion monopolizes. This is therefore the source of reference.

The method of exercising power, even in religion-based state, has been since the early days of history open to the experiences of others. Al-Mawardi said: “*As required by the condition of the time*”. The condition of the twenty first century is different from of the past centuries. Today, it is represented by the multi-religious and doctrine nation state. It is the state that rules neither by nor over religion, a state that ensures equality between citizens and respects human rights and public and private liberties, thus ruling out the principle of the dominant authoritarian majority or the disadvantaged and vulnerable minority.

For these reason, Al-Azhar adopted in June 2011 the document entitled “***Al-Azhar Document on the Future of Egypt***” putting forward the following general principles:

First: supporting the establishment of the modern, national, constitutional and democratic state founded on nationally agreed constitution that separates the powers and its governing legal institutions, fixes the system of government, ensures rights and obligations equally for all the people in such a way as the legislative power lays in the hands of the representatives of the people in alignment with the true Islamic concept (referring to the religious reference).

Second: the document states that Islam leaves to people the right to manage their communities and choose the mechanisms and institutions that save their interests provided that the general principles of the Islamic Sharia are the main source of legislation in such a way as to ensure to followers of other faiths the right to abide by their faiths in civil status issues (reference to religious reference).

Third: the document further urged for the adoption of the democratic system based on the direct universal suffrage which is the modern method to implement the Islamic Shura principles for it provides for pluralism and the peaceful transfer of power, defining competencies, monitoring performance, holding officials accountable to the people's representatives, seeking people's public interest in every legislation and decisions, running the state's affairs by law -only by law- prosecuting corrupt people, establishing complete transparency and the freedom of circulation and access to information.

Fourth: the document renews commitment to basic freedoms both in theory and attitude, to total respect of human rights in general and the rights of

women and children in particular, stresses the principle of pluralism and respect for monotheist religions and considers citizenship a matter of responsibility in society.

Second: On coexistence between different religions and cultures:

International statistic studies present figures about overlapping between believers from different religions and cultures that can be summarized as follows:

- 1- Rise of the rate of faiths and religions' believers to 84 per cent of the world population that is over seven billion people.
- 2- A third of the world's Muslims who are about one billion six hundred million people live in non-Muslim countries (with Christians in Europe and the Americas, with Buddhism in China and Hinduism in India ...)
- 3- Spread of Christianity southward to the third world. While up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, 85 per cent of Christians were living in Europe and the Americas, a third of them are now living in Africa alone and two thirds live in Asia and South America.
This means that Christianity, among other religions, is also spreading. It's no longer the religion of the colonizer rich white man, but also the religion of the poor persecuted colored man.
- 4- There are many aspects of politicization of religion in the world. I mention just three here:
 - Attempts to make of India a Hindu state.
 - Attempts to make of Thailand and Myanmar a Buddhist states.
 - Attempts to make of Israel a Jewish state.

However, no one of these attempts has succeeded so far. It's also worth mentioning the failure of the attempt to convert parts of Syria and Iraq into the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and its denunciation by Al-Azhar in particular and by other Islamic authorities. It should be said that there is an Islamic official consensus to reject and denounce this attempt and its instigators.

In the light of overlapping between followers of different religions, the world needs to promote and bolster the culture of accepting religious difference and pluralism and institute such acceptance in jurisprudence and constitution. Al-Azhar has actually been committed to that in its three conferences held in its headquarter in Cairo between 2014 and 2017. In fact, with the absence or the exclusion of this culture, world peace is exposed to danger.

Hence, al-Azhar, through stressing that peace is the basis of relations between all peoples, seeks to highlight the humanist thought of the Islamic religious discourse which is based on this rule.

In the conference organized by Al-Azhar on world peace, with the attendance of Pope Francis in its closure session in April 2017, Al-Azhar chief Imam Dr. Ahmed Al-Tayib explained the philosophy of peace in Islam as follows:

The message of the Prophet Muhammed (Peace be upon him) is not a separate and independent religion from the message of Jesus, Moses, Abraham and Noah (Peace be upon them); it's rather the last episode in the series of monotheist religions which started with Adam and ended with the Prophet of Islam. These messages from beginning to end are consistent in their content and do differ only in practical and variable legislations. Each one of them has its own practical laws which fit their time and place and their followers. This explains the agreement of all faiths on the ethical standards and morals. The Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes recounted in it are all formulated in the same emotional language and have the same purpose. Concerning the philosophy of peace in Islam, I shall present it in the form of messages that logically entail each other. These messages are as follows:

The Holy Quran recognizes the reality of difference between people in religion, belief, language, and color and that the will of Allah decided to create His servants differently and that «difference» is Allah's law which never changes or disappears until the end of time.

The reality of difference in religion entails logically the right of «freedom of belief» which, together with the difference in faith, represents the two faces of the same coin. Freedom of belief requires necessarily rejection of religious coercion. In fact, the Quran is clear on allowing freedom of belief and the rejection of any religious coercion.

Regarding the relation between people with different faiths and those who are free to choose theirs, the Holy Quran fixes that relation within two frameworks:

First: the framework of dialogue; not any dialogue but polite and orderly dialogue especially when it is between a Muslim and a Christian or a Jew: Allah says: [***And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is best***] (*Al-Ankabut*: 46), and [***And speak to people good words***] (*Al-Baqara*: 83)

The **second framework** is communication for knowing each other, understanding cooperation and mutual influence: [***O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted***] (*Al-Hujurat*: 13). Almighty Allah Reminds us in this verse first of the unity of origin, and then of the relation of communication and acquaintance that suits this unity.

Conclusion:

The general rule in Islam is based on the idea that Islam is a religion that is good for all people in every place and time, that Islam's message brought by the Prophet Muhammed (Peace be upon him) is not the only divine message but the last one, that belief in the previous divine messages, either mentioned in the Quran or not such as Christianity and Judaism, being as numerous as peoples and cultures, are the basis of belief in Islam. Therefore, there is no belief in Islam without belief in the preceding messages. That's why humanity has never believed in only one religion. Peace, and peace for all and with all people, cannot be achieved through unity of religion: [***To each of you We prescribed a law and a method***] (*Al-Maida*: 48) and the unity of element: [***we made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another***] (*Al-Hujurat*: 13). Peace, as an expression of the divine will in its existence, durability and wisdom, is based on the principle of love between people (even the love for the enemy) and on the principle of respecting pluralism and diversity between them.

Respect for this pluralism in all its religious, doctrinal, cultural and racial manifestations, is respect for the divine will. Thus, any attempt to reject or jeopardize it is an infringement and disregard of that will.

The Holy Quran says that Allah created all people from a single soul. [***It is He who created you from one soul and created from it its mate that he might dwell in security with her.***] (*Al-A'raf*: 189). Allah also said: [***O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul.***] (*An-Nissa*: 01). Almighty teaches us that humanity is one. As such, love for the other is love for oneself. In the long run, it is the love for the divine will. If human love for Allah doesn't pass through the human being, it will not ultimately reach Allah for anyone who doesn't love men per se doesn't love Allah and Allah doesn't love him.

The Quran, Science and the Scientific Vision: Between Past, Present and Future

Dr Mohammad Aslam Parvaiz*

There are three components in the makeup of human nature. First of these are the hereditary traits that Man inherits from his genitors, the second are his roots and environment, and the third is his culture. Genetic traits are less important since their role is limited to creating a soundly minded person. Studies and research have shown that ordinary humans are born with an average sound mind and can perform all basic functions. The other two elements (i.e. man's roots, environment and culture) play an important role in his work and activities.

The knowledge angle in Man, as another manifestation of his nature, reflects the culture and education he was exposed to. If we look at modern times, we will find that Muslims, despite the diversity of their colors, races, countries, languages, doctrines and behavioral particularities have all come to agreement on one aspect: their lack of interest in science and their underdevelopment in this area. This phenomenon is visible among Muslims around the world, especially those living in the Indian subcontinent and its surroundings, a state of matters that calls for stepping up the efforts to resolve this critical issue with no further wasting of time. The regression of Muslims in all matters scientific is the result of significant inadequacies in education and in the culture they have acquired over the years.

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There is however an important question to ask: What do we mean by culture and education? If we are referring to the secular culture dispensed and promoted today at modern educational institutions, and if we were to consider it as incomplete, our young people would not have been left lagging behind in science by the other graduates of these modern educational institutions. If we refer to the Islamic culture taught at traditional religious schools, and if we contend that it is inadequate, sciences would not have prospered among Muslims between the 6th and 12th centuries. Muslim scientists would not have been able to render such tremendous services to humanity in these fields and to pave the way for modern science. We need to delve into past eras to identify the causes behind the very existence of today's state of matters, and to know how to address the underlying problems and how to resolve them.

There were times in human history when people thought culture to hold a purely religious connotation. Man was spurred to acquire such religious culture that was believed to grant him access to everything else he needed in life and guarantee the prerequisites of his material and spiritual success as an individual and as a community. We should know that there are two sources of knowledge:

The first one is revelation from God Almighty, and the second one is the quest for understanding the miracles and manifestations of the universe. Prophets were given the first source while researchers were given the second one. Revelation was the only source of learning and knowledge in the early stages of human history. The messages, commandments and teachings of the Almighty reached Man through the channel of prophets and messengers and constituted the one and only means of education and culture. Allah (SWT) mentioned this approach to learning and knowledge in several places in His book. He taught Noah (peace be upon him) how to fashion the ark, saying:

[So We inspired him (with this message): "Construct the Ark within Our sight and under Our guidance."] (*Al-Muminoum*, verse 27).

The Almighty also said about Joseph (peace be upon him):

[When Joseph attained his full manhood We gave him power and knowledge: thus do We reward those who do right.] (*Yussuf*, verse 27).

[He said: "Before any food comes (in due course) to feed either of you I will surely reveal to you the truth and meaning of this ere it come to pass: that is part of the (Duty) which my Lord hath taught me. I have (I assure you) abandoned the ways of a people that believe not in Allah and that (even) deny the Hereafter."] (Yussuf, verse 37)

If we consider the limited rules and means that Man had in those times, the situation becomes clearer in our minds. Allah (SWT) clarified the other means and sources of learning and knowledge when the world's population grew and human life requirements expanded with the passage of time. New sciences and arts came into existence thanks to the endeavors of researchers and scholars. Imam al-Ghazali, may Allah have mercy on him, says that the emergence of an effective intellect is only possible through the purity of beliefs and religious faith, and that in consequence, the primary teachings to be imparted must be in line with the religious tenets and principles. Yet, he was also opposed to the limitations imposed on education and suggested that sewing, farming and woodwork be included in the school curricula he proposed, being mindful of the prerequisites of that age.

When Muslims reached and settled in India, they first established religious schools to ensure the survival and continuity of their religion. Only religious books were taught at these schools and there was no mention in their curricula of logic, philosophy, mathematics or such sciences until the 13th century AD. Yet, these same subjects were being taught in the Islamic countries of those days as we learnt above from Imam al-Ghazali. Thus, the teaching of mundane material was gradually introduced into curricula.

Education and culture in India did not fall under government tutelage during the times of Muslim sultans and there was no centralized system. Until that time, education was free and outside the control of Muslim rulers and kings in general. The educational process and the creation of schools were the fruits of individual endeavors in general. At first, mosques in all villages served as schools, and Quranic schools were built next to mosques to provide six years of elementary education to children. The teacher was appointed by a rich philanthropist or organization to officiate at these schools where the children of the poor children were also taught. This is how the schooling of Muslims in India began, and Islamic education in India continued to follow this model

under the Mongol Empire and rules that preceded it, namely as the fruit of individual efforts. Still, these Quranic schools and educational institutions were showered with valuable gifts from rulers and knowledge lovers. The Mongol ruler Jalaluddin Mohammad Akbar was a great lover of learning and an ardent advocate of education. For the first time, his Government took the initiative of creating a special educational authority whereby Muslim and Hindu children were allowed to study side by side with no discrimination. Though the curricula were different, the students shared classes such as mathematics, science and others. Under the Mongol reign, an ardent interest was taken in education in science and industry fields, and even more so in medicine which drew the admiration of all and benefited to Muslims and Hindus alike.

A new educational trend was observed towards the end of the Muslim rule over India. Worthy of mention for example were the educational activities undertaken by some Muslim rulers in Hyderabad. A Faculty of Oriental Sciences was established in Hyderabad under the name of Dar al-'Ulum (1853-54 AD). This constituted a first step towards public education and Arabic, Farsi, Marathi, Telugu⁽¹⁾ and English were taught there. The acquisition of these languages enabled the teaching of classical literature. Studying was not only free of charge there, but students were also awarded grants as incentives. In 1859, a school was established in each province with Farsi as the medium of instruction and another school using the local language. The curriculum of these schools included mathematics, history and geography as well as languages. Their benefits extended to all people without any distinction on grounds of religion, race or color. In 1887, a modern school was established following the European syllabus and catered to both Muslim and Hindu children.

Having addressed our homeland India, we should move on to the era known as the golden age of Muslims, a time when Islamic sciences reached their pinnacle. In his book *Introduction to the History of Science*, the famous historian George Sarton admitted that if the period between the 7th and 12th centuries were to be divided into sections of fifty years each and if each part were to be attributed to a prominent scholar, all of these time segments

(1) Marathi and Telugu are national languages in India.

would be attributed to Muslim scholars. George Sarton went on to say that it was Muslims who fulfilled all the needs of humanity and that they were the greatest philosophers, the best mathematicians, and the greatest historians of their time. Robert Brifalt wrote that sciences did not exist before Islam and that Muslims took immense interest in medicine which flourished in their hands. He added that before the advent of Islam, medicine was actually more charlatanism than science.⁽²⁾

One of the greatest historical achievements of Muslim scholars was the interest they took in experimentation, observation and deduction. This had not been observed in any consistent way in the world before Islam. Muslims sensitized the entire world to the importance of this. Robert Brifalt wrote that the Greeks codified, laid down principles and clarified them in their own language, but empirically-based deduction was against Greek disposition. Science is based on experiments and observations, and Arabs introduced the Europeans to these methods, asserting that there is no doubt that present time sciences are among the greatest achievements of Islamic culture. George Sarton corroborated this notion⁽³⁾, saying that one of the greatest achievements of the Middle Ages was establishing experimentation, which approach was introduced by Muslims and remained in use until the 12th century AD.

From the dawn of Islam, Muslims have taken special interest in learning and knowledge. The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) were fond of learning and this deep passion was fostered in them by the Quran and the Prophet (PBUH). Muslims obeyed the commands of the Quran, and managed to acquire science and arts in a short time, even making many useful additions to them. They also ruled over most parts of the world, a rule that the Europeans could not vanquish for centuries despite their strenuous efforts.

The Indian author Maulana Abul Kalam Azad draws a comparison between Europe and the Islamic world in medieval times in his book, *Ghubare-Khatir* (***Sallies of Mind***)⁽⁴⁾ saying that the Europeans indulged in the religious faith

(2) *The Making of Humanity*, London, 1983.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: "***Sallies of Mind***". The Arabic translation by Jalal Said Al-Hafnawi, the National Center for Translation, Cairo, 2016..

to the point of madness, while Muslims were the people of knowledge and science. Europeans tried to fight Muslims using prayers as their weapons while Muslims fought with war machines and battle tools. The Europeans relied on God only, and Muslims relied on Allah (SWT) but also on the instruments, machines and weaponry that Allah created. Europeans believed in spiritual power and Muslims believed in spiritual and material might. Europeans expected miracles while Muslims expected results. Miracles did not materialize but the results of hard work were tangible and the face-off culminated in the Islamic conquests and the defeat of the Europeans.

In this book, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad spoke about the Crusades of the 12th century. At that time, Muslims mastered the use of mangonels to launch fireballs at their enemies. These war machines burned down the headquarters of the Frankish forces during the 5th Crusade. Historians say that the Franks were so terrified that their commander, Lord Walter, advised them that in the event the Muslims threw fireballs at them, they should kneel down and pray to Jesus Christ to save them from that calamity. Maulana Azad said the Frank beliefs were nothing but illusion and their prayers were of no avail as they suffered the most terrible defeat.

New sciences and scientific inventions played an important part in the Muslims' triumph over their enemies. Yet, for some internal and external factors (which will be addressed later), Muslims abandoned the quest for knowledge during those times and became similar to the Europeans between the 7th and 14th centuries. They began to place their faith in prayers only and neglected science and adherence to it. Maulana Azad referred to this intellectual deviation when he described the Russian invasion of Bukhara:

“When the Russians besieged the city of Bukhara early in the 19th century, Bukhara’s governor ordered his people to concentrate on the collective prayer known as Khatme Khwajaghan in all schools and mosques. As the Russian cannons were destroying the city’s fortifications on one side, Bukhara’s residents were busy at the other end chanting the mantra: “Yamuqalliba al-Qulub, yamuhawwila al-ahwal” (Oh Lord, changer of hearts and turner of situations!). The result was a battle where bombs were used on one side and the Khatme Khwajaghan was used on the other. There is no doubt that supplications and prayers are useful to those with determination

and willpower, but for the lazy they simply become a tool of idleness and of immobilization.”⁽⁵⁾

The history of Islamic civilization and urbanization can be divided into two phases. The first one covers from the 7th to the 14th centuries AD, while the second one stretches from the 14th century to present times. It is easy to observe that the state of Muslims in the two eras differs widely with regard to science. Muslims were advanced in science during the first phase as Europe wallowed in ignorance, superstitions and mistrust. Observing the second phase, we find that the situation changed. By that time, most of Muslims had moved far away from sciences and were drowning in ignorance, corrupt ideologies and shirk while Europe was shining thanks to Islamic sciences. Speaking about the first phase of Islamic civilization, the famous author Donald Kimble said that during the Islamic era of scientific excellence, Europe was living in darkness, torn apart by conflicts and injustice and subjected to the religious supplications and superstitions that were rife among people.⁽⁶⁾

The second aspect that sets the first and the second phases apart is that Muslim sciences and arts in the first phase were rich, wide-ranging and comprehensive, and scientists were not only skilled in natural sciences but also in religious ones. For example, Jabir Ibn Hayyan learned religious sciences from Imam Jaafar al-Sadiq in al-Madinah before he became involved in scientific research. It is possible that his deep knowledge of Allah's book steered him towards the path of scientific research. Abu Bakr Zakaria al-Razi and Abu Ali Ibn Sina were pioneers in medicine along with their proficiency in religious and philosophical sciences. Yacoub Ibn Ishaq excelled in theology along with musical, natural, optical and mathematical sciences.

Charles Gillespie carried out a valuable study on Muslims in the first phase and drew up a list of polymaths who contributed to the advancement of science between the 7th and 15th centuries AD and who laid down the foundations of the present age scientific renaissance. He mentioned in this list the names of one hundred and thirty scholars of whom one hundred and five hailed from Muslim countries, ten were from Europe, but most had received their

(5) Ibid.

(6) Arabian Medicine and its Influence on the Middle Ages, London, 1926.

education at Andalusian universities (University of Cordoba, the University of Granada and others). It appeared that almost 90% of all scientists were from the Islamic world and the same percentage was noted in the fields of invention and scientific literature.

Let us now review the current situation, or the second phase of Islamic history. According to a 1981 study, no Muslim country is listed among the 25 countries with the most published scientific books each year. In 1996, less than 1% of the authors of scientific literature in the Islamic world contributed with their scientific writings in the scientific periodicals and journals published around the world. In the first phase, when Muslims constituted 15% of the world's population, their contribution to scientific activities reached 90%. Today, Muslims account for 22% of the world's population, yet their contribution to science is estimated at less than 1%. At the heyday of the Islamic civilization, Baghdad had two hundred bookshops that sold books on subjects such as religion, astronomy, natural sciences, mathematics, chemistry, medicine and so on. At that time, people also took great care of the private libraries in their homes, organized scientific salons, and reflected on the new discoveries and sciences, studying them in the light of the Holy Quran. Today, the works of Abu Bakr Zakaria al-Razi, Jaber Ibn Hayyan and Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq al-Kindi are rarely found in the library of any Islamic institution, or in a public or private library.

Maulana Abu al-Hassan Ali al-Nadawi says: *"It is a historical fact and a lesson for people because Muslims, after having rendered such immense services to mankind in science, they lost their scientific and research path and clung instead to customs and traditions, lagging behind the West in science and industry."* Edward Attiya says describing the situation of Muslims today: *"Muslims have lost the ability of reflection and creativity and knowledge has become for them a mere exercise in the memorization of old books."* But this is not all. Muslim scholars have begun to write annotations for ancient books, annotated those annotations, and then considered these as scientific services. They squandered the abilities and faculties bestowed on them by God Almighty on superstitions, criticism and non-essential issues instead of putting them to good use in scientific research.

Let us now review the factors that led to the Muslims' ascension and then to their current regression so we can determine how to remove these factors

once we understand them. Man undertakes an action for two reasons: either he is pursuing money, prestige or similar goals, or is moved by passion, desire and duty. There is no doubt that the Muslims' connection to science and arts revolved around these two reasons. The Holy Quran was the first reason that prompted the Muslims to search, investigate and study the universe after Allah's Messenger (PBUH) was sent. The Quran provided a powerful impetus for Muslims to ponder their existence and the universe. Muslims had the honor of being companions to the Prophet (PBUH) and they sought inspiration from the Quran and considered it as their guiding light and shining beacon. The situation gradually changed after the death of the Messenger (PBUH) and then deteriorated further after the rule of the caliph 'Uthman Ibn Affane (may Allah be pleased with him). The ranks of the Muslims broke and the desire for power and rule grew and discrimination became widespread among people. Around this time, the process of collecting and codifying the *hadiths* of the Messenger (PBUH) began. Factions evolved around differences about the veracity of *hadiths* and their chains of narrations and these *fiqh* divergences and debates sparked hostilities among Muslims. On the other hand, the Islamic rule was steadily expanding and new countries were joining the lands of Islam. Some converted to Islam willingly having being touched by the light of guidance, others converted to protect their interests and to be in the good graces of the Muslim rulers. The intellectuals and thinkers of the parties that converted to Islam after their defeat and who were busy investigating the factors behind the might of Muslims and for the ways of destabilizing them, concluded that the Quran was the source of power for Muslims. Muslims excelled in all spheres of life thanks to the Holy Quran. Their enemies understood that no change could possibly be brought to the Quran and decided to adopt another tactic. They tried to drive the Muslims away from their Quran and fill their thoughts with other matters. The fruits of this strategy were soon noted. The attention of Muslims to the Quran was no longer as assiduous as it should be. Muslims transferred their research and study endeavors to less worthy matters and the teachings of Islam began to take many colors and shades. Muslims received new books that contained wiles and diversions and where they found ways to integrate their customs and traditions into Islam. Islam became a simple means of guaranteeing good life in the Hereafter without departing from the customs and traditions inherited from ancestors.

In this fathomless abyss disappeared the new society that had been created under the shining light of the Quran, and Muslims became feeble in intellect and action under the plots of Islam's enemies. Muslims were preoccupied with reading verses and memorizing the Holy Quran, but forgot to ponder and reflect on Allah's miracles which are visible throughout the universe. Knowledge sources dried up and stagnation and regression replaced them. The window of reasoning and analogy was closed off and the door was instead opened widely to transmission and imitation. Imam al-Ghazali was conscious of the plots hatched against Islam and Muslims, yet most Muslims did not heed his writings and his argument that the advocate of pure imitation and total rejection of reasoning was an ignorant. In his book ***The Incoherence of the Philosophers***, Imam al-Ghazali criticizes the opponents of scientific or cosmic facts: *"He who thinks that it is his religious duty to disbelieve such things is really unjust to religion, and weakens its cause. For these things have been established by astronomical and mathematical evidence which leaves no room for doubt."* He goes on to say: *"If you tell a man, who has studied these things so that he has sifted all the data relating to them, and is, therefore, in a position to forecast when a lunar or a solar eclipse will take place: whether it will be total or partial; and how long it will last, that these things are contrary to religion, your assertion will shake his faith in religion, not in these things because these matters are governed by mathematics."*

Imam al-Ghazali gave a comprehensive definition of science in his book ***Ihyaa 'Ulum Ad-Dine*** (The Revival of the Religious Sciences) and strongly criticized the approach taken by Muslims in his time:

"Sciences whose knowledge is deemed fard kifayah comprise all sciences which are indispensable for the welfare of this world such as: medicine which is necessary for the life of the body, arithmetic for daily transactions and the division of legacies and inheritances, as well as others besides. These are the sciences which, because of their absence, a community would be reduced to narrow straits. But should one who can practice them rise in that community, it would suffice and the obligation to acquire their knowledge would cease to be binding upon the rest of the community. No one should be astonished when we say that medicine as well as arithmetic is of the sciences which are fard kifayah."⁽⁷⁾

(7) Abu Hamid al-Ghazali: ***Ihyaa 'Ulum ad-Dine***. Chapter 2 on Praiseworthy and Blameworthy Learnings, their forms and rules.

The second factor that contributed to the spread of scientific research among Muslims was that most Muslim rulers were enthusiastic about knowledge and learning. However, when disputes arose between Muslim rulers, they began to lose their power and neglected science and research. Added to this was the fact that some rulers were averse to any criticism against them or their doctrines, which created an environment where freedom of thought had receded. Furthermore, because of wars, the environment was not suitable for engaging in science.

The injustices of people against each other worsened and the disposition of rulers changed. They mostly began to violate the ordinances of Allah, so much so that scholars who were true to themselves were forced to either disobey the rulers or withdraw from worldly life. The debate around Greek philosophy began during the rule of al-Mamoun. After the Tatar invasions, Muslims were shocked and found comfort in Stoicism and the despair, deprivation and fatalism it was founded on. The Tatars spread this state among Muslims and it became easy to rule a submissive people who opted of stoic endurance. In this state of despair, Muslims found serenity in sanctuaries and zawayas and the number of geniuses dwindled among them. Maulana Abu al-Hassan al-Nadawi says in this regard:

“Most scholars and thinkers turned to metaphysics and paid little if no attention to natural sciences and beneficial arts. For centuries, they directed all their endeavors toward sciences and studies that were totally unrelated to religion and the world. They did not engage in any of the sciences and experiments that could influence the harnessing of cosmic natural forces or bring about the material and spiritual supremacy of Islam across the world.”⁽⁸⁾

As a result, the state of Muslims became similar to that of Europeans around the time the Roman Empire fell apart. Europeans embraced Christianity for the sake of spirituality only and religion was kept separate from science. Christians steered clear of religious sciences (or new sciences) and declared as heresies the works of Euclid, Plato, Galileo and others. They burned the libraries that housed these books, including the famous Bibliotheca

(8) Abul Hassan Ali al-Nadawi: *Assira' bayna al-Fikra al-Islamiyyawa al-Fikra al-Gharbiyya fi al-Aqtar al-Islamiyya*. Dar Al-Qalam, Kuwait, 1983.

Alexandria which was burned down by the Romans in the 5th century AD. Such was the state of Muslims when they fell into the hands of hypocrites and oppressors and wandered away from the Quran and from useful secular sciences. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad says about the deterioration of Muslims: *“Knowledge was restricted to the spiritual and religious spheres which had been stagnant before. The new sciences were considered contradictory to Islam. In 1857, the Library of the Daulawi College was looted and English and scientific books were destroyed. The tools of science were shattered being considered as Satanic machines. The looters carried Arabic and Persian books with them and sold them cheaply. Because of their aversion to science, Muslims became the weakest of all peoples in the early 20th century, economically and militarily. In 1918, the European forces seized Al-Quds. The Supreme Commander of these forces (General Allenby) declared that: ‘The wars of the crusaders are now complete. The battle was a great moral victory for the British Empire,’ as if the Muslims had been defeated for eternity.”*

Science was divided into religious and secular sciences to suit the designs of the enemies. People were focused on the teaching of *tafsir*, *Hadith*, jurisprudence, Sufism, the mysteries of Charia and philosophy, and neglected the new sciences as worldly sciences, confident that the pursuit of such sciences benefits only those who desire material life and believe in this world only. They believed that it was impossible to mix religious with secular sciences. But is that really the case? Let us analyze this aspect. We need to understand the definition of science in its specific sense, and of knowledge in its more general sense. Many mistakenly believe that sciences are limited to scientific subjects such as geography, economy, language etc., which is not the case. Science is a system of knowledge covering general truths or the operation of general laws especially as obtained and tested through scientific method. This definition of science is provided by the famous English Webster dictionary. Let us now look at the general meaning of knowledge in dictionaries. It is total cognition and perception of the truth of reality and certainty (Cf. for the Arabic definitions: Al-Zubaidi’s *Tajal-‘Aruss* and Al-Bustani’s *Muheet al-Muheet*). A man of knowledge is said to be one who had grasped knowledge of the truth of something. It also means knowledge of something that distinguishes him from others (*Maqayees al-Lugha* by Ibn Fares). It appears that the concept of knowledge and science are one. Therefore, the synonym of ‘science’ is

knowledge in the English-Arabic dictionary *al-Mawrid*. For the same reason, you will find that Arabs use the term «faculty of science» in reference to the section where one studies science. In the Holy Quran, knowledge is what is seen with the eye and heard with the ear and felt by the heart (the heart meaning here the mind). Allah (SWT) says in *Surat of al-Israa*: [**And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge; for every act of hearing or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).**] (*Al-Israa*, verse 36).

In the introduction to his book *Tarikh Falasifat al-Islam fi al-Mashreq wa al-Maghreb*, Mohamed Lutfi says: “*The Book of Revelations sent to the most eloquent of all Arabs was not only the codification of religion but also a work of reference for about three hundred branches of science in Charia, language, history, literature, nature, Philosophy, and others. Most of these sciences originated from the Quran itself and were inferred by scholars from its scriptures. Many of them were established to serve the Quran. This type of science is called a «medium» or a «channel»*”⁽⁹⁾. Sheikh Tantawi Jawhari said in the introduction of his *tafsir’ Al Jawaher fi Tafseer al-Quran al-Karim*: “*Let this book be a strong impetus for the study of the higher and the nether worlds. Let this Ummah give birth to those who will surpass the Franks in agriculture, medicine, mineralogy, arithmetic, engineering, astronomy and other sciences and industries. And why not when the Quran contains more than seven hundred and fifty verses on knowledge and learning?*”⁽¹⁰⁾

Now, let us ask ourselves this question: Why did Allah and the Messenger (PBUH) exhort Man to seek knowledge? If Allah commanded something, it can only have benefits for Man’s religion and worldly life. For example, ablutions and prayer carry the benefits of cleanness and physical exercise. When a person prays, his mind is preoccupied with the praise of Allah for His guidance, leading to stronger piety and better mental and psychological health. The pious person draws closer to Allah during prayers and thus

(9) Mohamed Lutfi Jum’a: *Tarikh Falasifat al-Islam fi al-Mashreq wa al-Maghreb*, p. 14, Hindawi Foundation for Education and Culture, Cairo.

(10) Tantawi Jawhari: *Al-Jawaher fi Tafseer al-Quran al-Karim*, vol 1, p. 3. Publications of al-Maktaba al-Islamiyya Library, Cairo, second edition, 1350 AH.

praying helps Man to draw religious and material benefits. And such is the case with all of Allah's other commands.

Man continued to be guided by prophets who are messengers from the Almighty. The cycle of prophecy was sealed by the Prophet (PBUH). Allah revealed His Book to him and thus brought religion to a full circle. There is an important benefit to note: Satan wished to continue misleading Adam's progeny until the Day of Reckoning and asked Allah to allow him time for that, and Allah granted him such time. Thus, Satan will continue to drive Man astray until the resurrection. Who then will guide Man and how would this guidance be? The Holy Quran will guide the Islamic Ummah and all peoples until the Day of Judgment and science is the key to this work. Science is a powerful medium between the Creator and the created, and through knowledge we take cognizance of things, their composition and their attributes. We see in the creation of the Almighty the greatness of the Creator and minds are astounded at the perfection of the measures and the proportions of creatures. When we look at the history of knowledge and scientific discoveries, we find that the more knowledge and understanding Man acquires, the more he is faced by mystifying and overwhelming mysteries. Man became even more intrigued when he observed cell formation through the lenses of his microscope, and so on so forth as the mysteries of the universe continue to unfold before Man. If the scientist is a believer in God, he would discover the manifestations of Allah's powers in the universe, and his faith and trust in the Almighty would increase through that knowledge. The scientist who does not believe in God and is not guided by the light of the Quran will be immersed in the quest for material benefits. For such reasons, Allah commanded the study of His laws and the manifestations of His power in the universe. It is reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said: "*Scholars are the heirs of the prophets and the prophets do not leave behind a dinar or a dirham but rather, only [leave behind] knowledge, and whoever acquires it, has, in fact, acquired an abundant portion.*" (Al-Tirmidi and Abu Dawoud).

The above was inspired from the Holy Quran. Allah (SWT) says: [**Say, "It is He who has produced you and made for you hearing and vision and hearts; little are you grateful."**] (*Al-Mulk*, verse 23). Man studies the miracles of Allah (SWT) that abound in the universe through sight, hearing, and heart (in the sense of mind). The best manifestation of gratitude for the

gift of these faculties is to use them for what Allah intended them for since they will be accountable before the Almighty. Allah says: [**Say, "Observe what is in the heavens and earth. But of no avail will be signs or warners to a people who do not believe."**] (*Yunus*, verse 101). The act of observing refers in language to seeing, contemplating, thinking and pondering. We therefore need to deeply and diligently study the universe. For example, since Allah (SWT) commanded Muslims to pray, they must take great care of the conditions of praying, such as purity of clothing, of place, ablutions, and the performance of these prayers according to the correct ritual. Allah also ordered us to meditate and reflect on the universe. We must therefore roam the universe, invent fast vessels to travel and other means and machines that would support this contemplation exercise and the study of all things. Allah (SWT) says: [**And how many a sign within the heavens and earth do they pass over while they, therefrom, are turning away. And most of them believe not in Allah except while they associate others with Him.**] (*Yussuf*, verses 105-106). Many aspects are mentioned in this verse. One of these refers to the people who do not ponder the miracles of the heavens and the earth and their oblivious passage besides these miracles. If man does not draw lessons from Allah's divine verses and does not ponder them, he would not believe in Allah's absolute power in the universe, and may thus open himself up to association of other deities with Allah, thus become deserving of Allah's punishment as warned in the Divine Book: [**Do they not look into the realm of the heavens and the earth and everything that Allah has created and [think] that perhaps their appointed time has come near? So in what statement hereafter will they believe?**] (*Al-A'raf*, verse 185).

The word «verse» was used in the Holy Quran with two meanings. One is a reference to the verses of the Quran, and the second is the miraculous manifestations abounding in the universe. Allah urged Man to study the manifestations of miracles scattered in the universe. The number of verses detailing the rules of praying, fasting, zakat, pilgrimage, divorce, etc. in the Holy Quran are one hundred and fifty verses, while the verses relating to knowledge are seven hundred and fifty-six verses. This is not intended to belittle the importance of religious provisions, but to say that the pillars of Islam alone such as praying, fasting, *zakat*, pilgrimage and others do not stand for the totality of religion, and that we must engage in the study of

the universe as commanded by the Almighty to unravel its mysteries and for people to follow the path of guidance.

The Quran mentioned knowledge and urged for its pursuits in these two verses: [***Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby fruits of varying colors? And in the mountains are tracts, white and red of varying shades and [some] extremely black. And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving.***] (*Fatir*, verses 27-28). There are two important elements in these two verses. Firstly, there is a secret in the different colors of the universe, which we find in genetics and geology. Secondly, only men of knowledge truly fear Allah. Thirdly, worshipers come in different classes, some may have no knowledge, but scientists and people of knowledge have the greatest fear of Allah because of this very knowledge of Allah.

Kufr or denying the existence of Allah takes two ways: Firstly: verbal denial and secondly denial through actions. For example, a child may verbally reject an order from his father, but sometimes he does not express this denial in words, yet he does not obey his father's order. That is how we have become today. We took some teachings of the Holy Quran, and ignored other commands. Allah says: [***So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part? Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life; and on the Day of Resurrection they will be sent back to the severest of punishment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.***] (*Al-Baqara*, verse 85). In another verse, Allah says: [***O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely [and perfectly].***] (*Al-Baqara*, verse 208).

Ponder this: are we not weak and vulnerable in these times because we embraced some of the Quran but ignored the rest? Success is hidden in the commands we shirked. We have banned the study of the universe, and our educational institutions have abandoned these sciences claiming they are non-religious. Allah says: [And [warn of] the Day when We will gather from every nation a company of those who deny Our signs, and they will be [driven] in rows. Until, when they arrive [at the place of Judgment], He will say,

“Did you deny My signs while you encompassed them not in knowledge, or what [was it that] you were doing?” (*An-Naml*, verses 83-84). Though this verse carries pieces of wisdom about pondering the universe and nature, we divided science into the religious and the secular. This was a plot hatched by the enemies of religion and the dismissal of religious tenets as referred to by the Quran: ***[And they will continue to fight you until they turn you back from your religion if they are able. And whoever of you reverts from his religion [to disbelief] and dies while he is a disbeliever - for those, their deeds have become worthless in this world and the Hereafter, and those are the companions of the Fire, they will abide therein eternally.]*** (*Al-Baqara*, verse 217).

The problem is that when we shunned religion, we also shunned science and the disposition to learning and knowledge. Today, we are similar to the blind since we read Allah’s verses but fail to understand them or to perceive the manifestations of His might in the universe.

Having reviewed this state of matters, we must engage in reflection on how we can change it. Dividing science into the religious and the secular has divided our scientific institutions. Religious sciences are not taught at modern institutions, and religious schools are unable to assimilate all sciences. The human being is only useful if he can have a religious culture along with his knowledge of modern sciences. The mind that evolves in the light of the Holy Quran has the human inclination and the Islamic spirit that prompts it to engage in charitable actions. Islamic teachings are not intended to teach the pillars of Islam, but rather to teach the system of life that the Holy Quran commanded.

It is clear from all the above that we must return to the Holy Quran in all cases. We need to understand the Quran and formulate our school curricula according to it. We must establish all inclusive scientific institutes to educate Muslim scholars. We must change mindsets that see spending money on mosques and **madrassas** as an ongoing charity and that spending this money instead on modern schools is a waste or a worldly pursuit and a quest for fame. The dissemination of any useful knowledge is a religious act and we must train Muslim scholars who are well versed in the modern sciences. We must build ‘pilot schools’ where particular attention will be paid to a “fully

integrated curriculum” that includes teaching the Holy Quran, translation and interpretation, languages as well as modern sciences. After graduating from these secondary schools, students would have the option to either study modern sciences or attend religious schools to master the sciences of *Hadith*, *Fiqh*, and Islamic Charia. Each student would thus acquire an education in the teachings of the Holy Quran and walk in their shade his entire life. These Quranic teachings will prompt students to observe experiment, analyze, research and reflect, or engage in what we call scientific thinking. A scholar who acquires his science through this approach will be able to project a true image of Islam before the world. It is time we admitted our mistakes, but without shedding tears for them or blaming others, because all of this would be to no avail. The Almighty commanded us to strive and work hard, so we must rise up and build a good and useful society in order to live respectably in this world and happy in our everyday life.