Studies in Contemporary Islam

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The West, Islam, and the Democratic Imperative

Antony T. Sullivan[*]

These are difficult times in relations between the West and the Islamic world. Wars and rumors of war abound, and terrorism (although rarely its context) dominates the headlines. A shooting war continues between the United States and al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan, and war evidently impends between the United States and the United Kingdom on the one hand and Iraq on the other. Fundamentalisms—Muslim, Christian, and Jewish—metastasize. Atop all else, violence reigns unchecked in Israel and the Occupied Territories, making effective responses to assorted other challenges enormously more difficult. With unprecedented polarities between the West and the Islamic world, and with seething anger among Muslims worldwide against the United States, can one possibly argue that democracy (although not necessarily incarnated according to Western models) will in fact characterize the future of Muslim countries?

My short answer is yes. As this paper will demonstrate, the obstacles to the establishment of viable democratic systems in the Arab Muslim world are enormous. But in these darkest of times, there is indeed hope. There is compelling evidence that, as both

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dream and demand among contemporary Arabs and Muslims, democracy is the only game in town.[1]

Whether democracy, in the sense of some form of responsible and responsive government with roots in a developing civil society, has a future in Muslim and Arab countries over the long term may depend on which of two competing visions of how the world works proves to be closer to the truth. First, there is Samuel P. Huntington's thesis, originally outlined in an article entitled "The Clash of Civilizations?"[2] and subsequently detailed (although with major alterations) in a book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.[3] In these works, Huntington posits an impending conflict between cultures, pitting (primarily) Islamic civilization, as represented especially by its Arab core, against the West and Western values, as incarnated in the United States. Then, there is Francis Fukuyama's argument, first presented in an article entitled "The End of History?"[4] and later expanded in a book, *The End of History and the Last Man*.[5] Fukuyama maintains that a remarkable consensus has developed throughout the world concerning the fundamental legitimacy of liberal democracy as a system of government, given its triumph over hereditary monarchy, fascism, and communism. In that sense, Fukuyama (following G. W. F. Hegel and Karl Marx) argues, history (understood as a single, coherent, evolutionary process comprehending the experience of all peoples in all times) may be considered closed.

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[1]This paper will focus on developments in the Arab Muslim world only. Arab Muslims constitute only about 20 percent of the 1.2 billion Muslims worldwide. However, it is in the Arab region where many of the subjects addressed here take the most acute form.

[2]*Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1993.

[3]Simon and Schuster, 1996.

[4]*The National Interest* (Summer 1989)

[5]The Free Press, 1992.

A world at war, as prophesied by Huntington a decade ago and which seems all too possible today, is certainly not a world in which democracy will flourish—anywhere. But if democracy, liberty, and the craving for personal or social recognition are as fundamental to universal human nature as Fukuyama argues they are, then we may indeed have arrived at that halcyon point in time where events—even the most spectacular events—will continue to occur, but where the greatest questions of political philosophy may be considered to have been definitively answered. If, in the end, Fukuyama's thesis proves to be closer to the truth than Huntington's, then the possibility of the development of viable systems of democratic governance in the central Islamic lands—and their preservation elsewhere in the Muslim world—seems to brighten considerably. What is certain is that, today, across the entire spectrum of Arab and Muslim political opinion, one hears demands for an end to the systems of military authoritarianism and sectarian nepotism regnant almost everywhere and for an opening up of the political process to broad popular participation. And that, surely, is very good news.

There is, in Muslim culture, an ancient and profound legacy of what one might call a liberal political economy.[6] That legacy, I would suggest, is fundamentally congruent with contemporary democratic values. In the Islamic world, during the European Middle Ages, the Islamic liberal tradition, which was rooted in the Qur'an itself, found expression in both politics and

[6]In this paper, the word "liberal" is used to convey a meaning that is the *opposite* of what "liberal" and "liberalism" are understood to mean in the United States. Here, the word "liberal" conveys a sense of limited government, decentralization, free trade, and respect for property rights. That is, the word as used here designates the opposite of the statism that most Americans now take liberalism to mean. Contemporary Europeans still use the words "liberal" and "liberalism" in their original senses, following the classic formulations of such seminal twentieth-century political economists as Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich von Hayek.

economics. Vitiated in later centuries, especially under Ottoman rule over Arab lands after 1516, Islamic liberalism received a new lease on life with Napoleon's conquest of Egypt in 1798 and the subsequent spread of Western influence in the Islamic world. Throughout the nineteenth century and until the middle of the twentieth century, most observers had little doubt that the ultimate Arab destiny was democracy. This state of optimism changed after the so-called Free Officers and Gamal Abdul Nasser seized power in Egypt in the early 1950s and after imitative military and ideological regimes were subsequently established in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and the Sudan.

The most spectacular ideological revolution, of course, took place in 1979 in non-Arab and Shi'i Muslim Iran. That cataclysmic event served to deepen pessimism everywhere about the chances for liberalism and democracy in Muslim countries. Even as Iran now seems to be moving hesitantly along its own route toward more representative governance, immobility and reaction remain entrenched in most Arab states. These countries, both aggressively secular and putatively Islamic, are now regarded across the Islamic world as having simply struck out. They all conspicuously failed to deliver on each of their three most salient promises—namely, to defeat Israel, to achieve economic development, and, above all, to practice democracy. It is time, Arabs increasingly believe, to reassert the older traditions of liberalism and decentralization, to reject the suffocating statism of recent decades, and to begin to implement systems of governance that are responsive to the wishes of those who would be citizens rather than subjects.

In that regard, no more authentic precedent is available to Muslims for the pluralism and toleration requisite for contemporary democratic government than the Constitution of Medina, which was approved in 625 C.E. by the Prophet himself. The constitution states:

> The Jews of Bani 'Auf form one nation together with the Muslims. The Jews have their religion, their followers, and themselves, and so have the Muslims. One who transgresses and commits a crime does harm only to himself and his family. The Jews shall be responsible for their financial affairs, and the Muslims for theirs. Together they shall fight those who wage war against the signatories of this pact. Their relations shall be guided by mutual sympathy, wishing each other well, and by righteous conduct, not sinfulness.[7]

Today, the small minority of Muslim extremists that practices violence might be accused of not being fundamentalist enough. How can such radicals, who constantly claim to follow the Prophet's example, ignore such a remarkable prescription for tolerance that came from the hand of Muhammad himself?

To avoid the outbreak of any conflict of civilizations and to fight the war against terrorism effectively, American and European supporters of the price system, limited government, and individual liberty must reach out to Arabs and Muslims who share those general ideals. Today, perhaps more than ever in the past, there exists an imperative for American and Western supporters of freedom to establish links with their counterparts in the Middle East, many of whom are struggling to advance a democratic agenda against very great odds. One of the great ironies since 11 September 2001 is that more of such outreach has not been done.

As far as economics and economic systems are concerned, evidence from the Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad, and Islamic history is indisputable. In text and tradition, Islam and Muslims in most places and in most times have understood that their faith mandates what today is called a free market system. Recall that the Prophet Muhammad was himself an entrepreneur and widely traveled merchant and that his personal prescriptions on a proper political economy as demonstrated in the *hadith*

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[7]As quoted in Khalid Duran, *Children of Abraham: An Introduction to Islam for Jews* (Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav Publishing House, 2001), 92.

(collected traditions of what he is reported to have said and done) are fully congruent with those of Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations*. Both the Qur'an and Muhammad endorse private property, condemn price fixing, mandate free trade, and emphasize the importance of ethics—honesty in particular—for a robust economic life. "Men shall have the benefit of what they earn, and women shall have the benefit of what they earn," the Qur'an states (4:32). Further: "Do not devour your property among yourselves," the Qur'an instructs the believers, but "trade by mutual consent" (4:29). Most remarkably, perhaps, the Qur'an mandates morality: "Give a full measure when you measure out," it states, "and weigh with a fair balance" (17:35).

Free market principles are also embedded in the *hadith*.[8] "Whoever takes any part of land without having a right to it," Muhammad is reported to have said, "he shall be . . . sunk down into the earth on the day of resurrection to the depth of seven earths."[9] Moreover: "Whoever withholds cereals that they may become scarce and dear is a sinner."[10] And again: "The truthful, honest merchant is with the prophets and the truthful ones and the martyrs."[11]

Minerva's owl may indeed take its flight at twilight. There is, perhaps, no better example of the accuracy of this aphorism than the political economy of Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406). Born forty-four years after Grenada, the last jewel of a once brilliant Andalusian Islamic culture, fell to the Christian reconquest of

[8]The citations that follow are taken from several of the six recognized Sunni Muslim collections of *hadith*. The collections were made by Bukhari (d. 878), Muslim (d. 883), Abu Dawud (d. 897), Tirmidhi (d. 901), Ibn Majah (d. 905), and Nasa'i (d. 925). The collectors employed thorough and surprisingly modern methods to validate the traditions they selected to pass on to posterity.
[9]Bukhari, 46:13.
[10]Muslim, 12:8.
[11]Tirmidhi, 12:4.

the Iberian Peninsula, Ibn Khaldun knew well the decentralized, borderless Islamic world that continued into his own time and throughout which long-distance trade and free markets continued to flourish. In the *Muqaddimah* (Prologue) to his *Universal History*, he articulates a political economy of liberty that clearly anticipates Smith and that is being rediscovered in much of the Arab and Muslim world.

In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun explains why government should be limited, why property rights are important, how capital is created, why free trade is vital, and (perhaps most vividly) why taxes should be kept low. The political economy of Ibn Khaldun reads like a blueprint for the free market approach of President Ronald Reagan. If economic freedom and individual liberty are interrelated, discussion of Ibn Khaldun's political economy might constitute an excellent basis for dialogue on democracy, freedom, and civil society between friends of freedom in the West and in the contemporary Muslim world.

Here, I can only offer some highlights of Ibn Khaldun's economic thought. Concerning property rights, Ibn Khaldun writes:

> Whoever takes someone's property . . . does an injustice . . . it is the dynasty that suffers from all these acts, inasmuch as society is ruined when people have lost all initiative . . . know that the arbitrary appropriation by the government of men's property results in the loss of all incentive to gain . . . a loss of incentive will lead to a slackening in enterprise, the slackening being proportional to the extent and degree of confiscation. The state of a society and the prosperity of business depend on the intensity of human efforts and the search for gain.[12]

[12]See chapter 5, "On the various aspects of making a living, such as profit and the crafts. The conditions that occur in this connection. A number of problems are connected with this subject," in Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah, An Introduction to History*, translated by Franz Rosenthal (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958; Bollingen Series 43), 2:309-408, passim.

Indeed.

On tax policy, Ibn Khaldun sounds as though he is the real author of the Laffer Curve, which gained such notoriety during the Reagan years:

> Now where taxes are light, private individuals are encouraged to engage actively in business: enterprise develops. . . . As time passes and kings succeed each other . . . they impose fresh taxes on their subjects . . . (and) sharply raise the rate of old taxes to increase their yield. . . . People get accustomed to this high level of taxation, because the increases have come about gradually, without anyone's being aware of who exactly it was who raised the rates of the old taxes or imposed the new ones.[13]

Sounds familiar, does it not? Ibn Khaldun continues:

> The effects on business of this rise in taxation make themselves felt. . . . Production falls off, and with it the yield of taxation. The rulers may, mistakenly, try to remedy this decrease in the yield of taxation by raising the rate of the taxes. . . . This process of higher tax rates and lower yields (caused by the government's belief that higher rates result in higher returns) may go on until production begins to decline owing to the despair of businessmen. . . . The main injury of this process is felt by the state, just as the main benefit of better business conditions is enjoyed by it. From this you must understand that the most important factor making for business prosperity is to lighten as much as possible the burden of taxation on business men, in order to encourage enterprise by giving assurance of greater profits.[14]

Ibn Khaldun pithily summarizes his argument: "At the beginning of a dynasty, taxation yields a large revenue from small assessments. At the end of the dynasty, taxation yields a small revenue from large assessments."[15] Need more be said?

But, one might well object: That was then, this is now. What specific evidence can be adduced today to demonstrate that the historic commitment of Islamic society to liberal principles is at all reflected in its contemporary Arab Muslim core? No doubt,

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[13]Ibid.
[14]Ibid.
[15]Ibid.

there is much evidence to suggest that the picture is uniformly bleak. In his essay "The 2001-2002 Freedom House Survey of Freedom: The Democracy Gap," Adrian Karatnycky states that, since the early 1970s, the "Islamic world—and, in particular, its Arabic core—have seen little significant evidence of improvements in political openness, respect for human rights, and transparency."[16] This report describes the "democracy gap" between the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds as "dramatic."[17] Only 23 percent of the Muslim countries, as against 76 percent of the non-Muslim countries, have democratically elected governments; "there are no electoral democracies among the 16 Arabic states of the Middle East and North Africa."[18] According to the report, the dichotomy between Muslim and non-Muslim states persists even on the African continent, where only one of twenty Muslim countries—Mali—is rated "free," while eight of the thirty-three non-Muslim countries are so rated. These are hard tidings. Why is this so?

A large part of the answer is provided in a report prepared for the United Nations by a team of some thirty *Arab* social scientists under the direction of a distinguished Arab advisory board, which included Thoraya Obaid, a Saudi who is executive director of the United Nations Population Fund; Mervat Tallawy, an Egyptian diplomat who heads the Economic and Social Council for West Asia; and Clovis Maksoud, director of the Center for the Global South at American University (Washington, D.C.) and formerly the Arab League's representative at the United Nations. The lead author was Fergany, an economist and director of the Al Mishkat Center for Research in Egypt. Rima Khalaf Hunaidi, director of the Arab

[16]See Adrian Karatnycky, "The 2001-2002 Freedom House Survey of Freedom: The Democracy Gap," in Freedom House, *Freedom in the World, 2001-2002* (New York: Freedom House, 2002), 10.
[17]Ibid.
[18]Ibid.

Regional Bureau of the United Nations Development Bureau, was the driving force behind the project, in which women were involved at all stages.

Perhaps the most significant thing about the *Arab Human Development Report 2002* is that it constitutes no paternalistic or "Orientalist" advice to the Arab world from the outside; rather, it demonstrates a dramatic new willingness on the part of Arab intellectuals to look within their own societies and report without fear or favor what they find there. Published in June 2002 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the report demonstrates, above all, a new disposition by Arab intellectuals to eschew assignment of blame for the myriad problems of Arab society to the West, to imperialism, or to Israel (although the flagrant injustice of the Israeli occupation is certainly mentioned). On the contrary, this report places the Arab world itself in the dock. The honesty of the report is almost Shakespearean: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings." One may hope that this report, in and of itself, may constitute hard evidence that, despite ample contrary data, democracy will ultimately prove as irresistible in Arab countries as it increasingly has across so much of the rest of the globe.

In many ways, the report picks up where Karatnycky left off. Its fundamental themes are liberty and democratic governance. Indeed, the report includes a personal contribution by Nader Fergany that demonstrates that out of seven regions of the world, the Arab countries (defined as the twenty-two members of the Arab League) had the very lowest "freedom score" in the late 1990s. The indicators used in the report were political rights, civil liberties/civil society, and independence of the media. But again, the question persists: Why is all this the case? What are the reasons for the remarkable deficit of both democracy and liberty in Arab Muslim countries?

The answer given in the report is a comprehensive lack of human and economic development in the region. Knowledge (as reflected both in education and research and development), utilization of the talents of women, and economic growth all lag behind most of the rest of the world. The report makes clear that if individuals are uneducated, repressed, or culturally stifled, and if governmental policies obstruct the economic growth necessary for accommodating the needs of exploding populations, democratic governance of any sort can hardly be expected. Freedom, knowledge, and the status of women—a country can fall short in one or even two of these areas, Maksoud has observed, and still forge ahead. Singapore, for example, has managed to prosper without offering much freedom. But, as Maksoud notes, countries or cultures that suffer from shortfalls in each of these areas are inevitably in a very bad way. Sadly, that is where the Arab Muslim world finds itself today.

Economically, the Arab situation is grim. The total Arab gross domestic product (GDP), at approximately $531 billion, is less than that of Spain, which stands at $595.5 billion. During the 1960-1990 period, the total productivity in the Arab world increased at an annual average rate of only 0.2 percent, while it rapidly accelerated in other parts of the world. In 1960, the Arab per capita output was higher than the average of the group of countries called the Asian Tigers; now it is half of that of Korea. In 1960, the productivity of Arab industrial labor was 32 percent of North America's; by 1990, it had fallen to 19 percent. Real wages, too, have declined. Over the past twenty years, the growth in income per head, at an annual rate of 0.5 percent, has been lower than anywhere else in the world except in sub-Saharan Africa. At this rate, says the report, it will take the average Arab 140 years to double his income, a target that some other regions are set to reach in less than ten years. Today, twelve million people, or 15 percent of the Arab labor force, are unemployed, and, if present trends continue, the number could

rise to twenty-five million by 2010. The report identifies deregulation, privatization, and human capital development as the essential basis if the situation is going to begin to be reversed. But given the colossal failure of economic development to date and the progressive impoverishment of much of the region, is it really any surprise that democratic governance is in such short supply?

The situation may get worse before it gets better. Precisely at the time when the Arab world has failed to meet the challenge of economic development, its population is exploding. Today, the Arab Muslim countries count 280 million people, and the report calculates that their population will reach 410 to 459 million by 2020. Today, 20 percent of Arabs are under the age of fourteen—the world's largest cohort of young people. Historically, such bulges in youth population have marked times of unusual political instability and violence. Is there any reason to believe that the Arab Muslim world will prove an exception to this rule? Are there any grounds to expect that the tide of Arab births, given almost ubiquitous economic failure, will not add to the difficulty of achieving democracy, liberty, and the rule of law?

Then there is the matter of knowledge and of research and development. The quality of Arab education has deteriorated remarkably. There is a severe mismatch between the labor market and the educational system. The report suggests that analytical and creative skills are especially in short supply. Adult illiteracy rates have declined but are still very high: sixty-five million adults are illiterate, almost two-thirds of them women. Some ten million children still have no schooling at all. Only 0.6 percent of the population uses the Internet. The investment in research and development is less than one-seventh of the world average. The report recommends increasing the share of research and development from less than the current 0.5 percent of the GDP to 2 percent by the end of the decade. The report also calls

for augmentation of human capital in information technology, mathematics, theoretical physics, and economics.

Finally, the Arab Islamic world's failure to utilize the talents of women is related to and renders more severe all of the aforementioned problems. The report states that one in every two Arab women can neither read nor write. In higher education, women are significantly underrepresented. Participation of Arab women in the political and economic life of their countries is among the lowest in the world. Women occupy only 3.5 percent of all seats in parliaments in Arab countries, compared to 11 percent in sub-Saharan Africa and 12.9 percent in Latin America. In some countries with elected national assemblies, women are still denied the right to vote or hold office. Society as a whole suffers, the report concludes, when half of its productive potential is stifled. The report urges that immediate steps be taken to initiate the process of empowering women in all areas.

Given this gloomy reality, how can one be optimistic concerning the possibility of a democratic future for the Arab Muslim world?

Part of the answer to this question is embedded in data collected by Pippa Norris of the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and Ronald Inglehart of the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. The data demonstrate that Muslims are "huge fans of democracy" and may in fact be "slightly more gung ho about democratic values than citizens in Western countries."[19] The "basic ideas of democracy," Norris observes, "are now virtually universally accepted around the world." In Islamic countries as elsewhere, democracy indeed "is viewed as the only game in town."[20] If democratic governance

[19]Richard Morin, "Unconventional Wisdom," *The Washington Post*, 28 April 2002, B5.
[20]Ibid.

is held in such high regard on the popular level, and if the demand for it from organizations in Arab civil society continues to increase, cannot one be optimistic that, over time and with proper cultivation and encouragement, a new Muslim Arab world may yet emerge? If it does, the political structures of that "new" Arab world will almost certainly resemble the parliamentary systems characteristic of many of the Muslim states in the Middle East before the middle of the last century. Furthermore, one may guess that any such new world will incarnate at least some of the liberal principles characteristic of traditional Islamic civilization.

The ongoing research by Norris and Inglehart is part of the World Values Study, a global investigation of sociocultural and political change. Four "waves" of public opinion surveys have been conducted. The project started in 1981 as the European Values Study, and surveys were originally carried out in twenty-two countries. A second wave of surveys, made in forty-three nations, was completed in 1990-1991; a third, covering fifty countries, was finished in 1995-1996; and a fourth, which covered more than sixty countries, was done in 1999-2001. The data utilized by Norris and Inglehart are drawn from the third and fourth waves of the survey, or from the period 1995-2001. The researchers make a comparative analysis of data collected from seventy-five Islamic and non-Islamic nations and draw on more than one hundred thousand interviews. Of particular relevance to this paper is the fact that data were gathered from three representative Arab Muslim states (including the most populous), namely, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco. In addition, data were collected from six non-Arab Muslim states: Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, and Albania. The Muslim majorities in these nations range from 71 to 96 percent.

Norris and Inglehart group countries into nine major "contemporary civilizations" based largely on the predominant religious legacy in each society. Their civilizational units include

Christian, Islamic, Russian and Greek Orthodox, Latin American (predominantly Catholic), Sinic/Confucian (South China, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam), Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist, and sub-Saharan African. They focus on determining how attitudes toward democracy vary between individuals living in different "civilizations," paying particular attention to the views of Muslims and Westerners. Norris and Inglehart have discovered not divergence, but remarkable similarity, in the opinions about democracy held by those living in the West and by those living in Islamic societies. Both groups scored equally high on a scale that measured how well people think democracies perform. Actually, Islamic societies ranked higher than Western ones on a scale that measured attitudes toward democratic ideals, although the difference was slight.

To determine social attitudes, Norris and Inglehart asked respondents eight questions that were designed to measure attitudes toward democracy and democratic ideals. The respondents were asked, for example, whether they approved of having a democratic political system, whether they approved of "having experts, not government, make decisions," and whether they thought it was better to have a "strong leader who does not have to bother about parliaments and elections." They were also asked questions dealing with divorce, homosexuality, and abortion.

There are four principal findings of the study. First, when political attitudes are compared (the comparison including evaluations of the performance of democracy in practice, of support for democratic ideals, and of disapproval of strong leaders), there is minimal difference between the Islamic world and the West. Second, rather than any "clash of civilizations" pitting the Muslim world against the West, the real divide today is between the post-Communist states in Eastern Europe (exemplified by Russia, the Ukraine, and Moldova)—which display minimal support for democracy—and many other

countries that display far more positive attitudes, including both Western *and* Islamic nations. Third, support for a prominent societal role for religious authorities is stronger in Islamic societies than in the West, but the dichotomy is not simple: the data show that many other types of society—including the sub-Saharan African countries as well as many Catholic states in Latin America—also support an active role for religious leaders in public life. Fourth, and perhaps most significantly, the data demonstrate that there is a substantial cultural cleavage between the West and the Islamic world in social beliefs about gender equality and sexual liberation. In this regard, the West is far more egalitarian and liberal than *all* other societies, especially Islamic nations. Norris and Inglehart report that this gap has steadily widened in recent years, as the younger generation in the West has become more liberal in its sexual mores while its counterpart in Islamic societies has remained deeply traditional. The main point here is that, while significant differences do exist between the West and the Islamic world, those differences relate to culture and social mores rather than to politics or to attitudes toward democratic governance.

The research of Norris and Inglehart indicates that Western societies have become markedly different not only from Islamic nations, but from most of the rest of the world. Cited in support of this conclusion are the ongoing Western sexual revolution that started in the 1960s, the fundamental changes in the nature of modern Western families, and the less constrained Western lifestyles. In affluent Western societies, gender equality has made enormous headway and has transformed cultural values in a fashion that has occurred nowhere else. Nevertheless, Norris and Inglehart report that, in the arena of politics, there is no question that Western and Islamic societies are similar in their positive orientation toward democratic ideals. Support for democracy, they note, is widespread among Islamic publics, even those of authoritarian states.

All of this leads one back to Huntington and Fukuyama. The work of Norris and Inglehart suggests that Huntington is both right and wrong, and that Fukuyama, indeed, is perhaps more right than he knows.

Clearly, Huntington is right that culture matters—and matters a lot. There can be no doubt, as Norris and Inglehart state, that religion and religious legacies do leave a distinct imprint on contemporary values. But, as they also observe, Huntington is mistaken in assuming that the fundamental clash between the West and the Islamic world concerns a radical difference of opinion over democracy. They note that Huntington fails to identify the most basic cultural fault line between the West and Islam, which concerns the issues of gender equality and sexual liberation. As Norris and Inglehart neatly put it, the real cultural gulf separating the Islamic world from the West involves Eros far more than Demos. Fukuyama is offered strong empirical support by Norris and Inglehart's research. Their conclusions constitute a powerful endorsement of his thesis that, throughout the world today, the democratic ideal stands alone and triumphant, without any serious ideological competition. If ideas do have consequences, one may conclude that some form of democratic or responsive governance impends almost everywhere. History, in Fukuyama's sense, may indeed be approaching its end.

Until recently, civil society was not robust in the Arab Islamic world. Typically, Arab societies have been torn between authoritarian regimes on the one hand and tribes, clans, and/or sects on the other. Today, however, there are signs that civil society, clearly animated in one fashion or another by notions of democracy, is stirring. One index of the pressures that civil society is exerting on the extant political order is the attention that authoritarian regimes are now devoting to contain that society. Organizations advocating the rights of women, and human rights generally, now operate in North Africa, Egypt,

and (to a lesser degree) the Levant. Professional associations of doctors, lawyers, and engineers that typically practice democracy within their own ranks and increasingly demand the same in the larger society have been established. A wide variety of Islamic social service organizations now provides medical care, family counseling, educational opportunities, and recreational facilities that governments do not or cannot offer. Regimes (Egypt being a stellar example) consider such developments as inherently subversive of authoritarian rule (which they indeed are) and are targeting individuals and institutions in civil society as they rarely have in the past. A case in point is Egypt's recent arrest, conviction, and imprisonment on trumped-up charges of the distinguished political scientist and director of the Ibn Khaldun Center in Cairo, Sa'ad ed-Din Ibrahim, along with twenty-seven of his associates at the center. But the mounting repression is good evidence of the new challenges to authoritarianism that are now issuing from civil society. Today, the real question is when, not whether, the old political order will begin to give way.

Everywhere in the Arab and Muslim world, discussions of and demands for democracy have intensified. "[D]emocracy is the only acceptable form of government," observes Hussein A. Hassouna, ambassador of the League of Arab States to the United States and the United Nations. "Arab . . . participants at the Africa-Europe summit held under the aegis of the Organization of African Unity and the European Union in April 2000 recognized . . . the necessity of democratization, while condemning all anti-democratic forms of succession to power."[21] Hassouna argues that Arab countries are "rapidly moving on the path to democracy" and cites pressures to that end from the media, human rights groups, and civil society in general.[22] Across

[21]See Hussein A. Hassouna, "Arab Democracy: The Hope," *World Policy Journal* (fall 2001), 49; available from http://www.mafhoum.com/press3/112S64.pdf.
[22]Ibid., 51.

the Arab world, there now exist "women's [advocacy] groups, organizations defending the rights of minorities, and organizations whose purpose is to raise people's civic consciousness."[23] All of this is true, and all of it is very good news.

Most Muslim fundamentalists concur. For example, Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi writes: "It is the duty of the Islamic Movement . . . to stand firm against totalitarian and dictatorial rule, political despotism and the usurpation of people's right[s]. The Islamic Movement should always stand by political freedom, as represented by democracy. It should clearly declare its refusal of tyrants."[24] Muhammad Omar Farooq observes that Qaradawi is perhaps only the most prominent of the moderate Islamists who are calling for democracy; other influential figures doing the same include Khaled Abou al-Fadl, Khurshid Ahmad, and Fathi Osman. "Islam is not only compatible with . . . democracy," Farooq argues, but democracy "is essential to Islam."[25] Muzammil H. Siddiqi advocates recognition of the dignity and equality of all human beings, universal human rights, and freedom of thought, conscience, and belief.[26] The warmth of moderate fundamentalist support for democratic governance may be a direct result of the persecution that many such Islamists have suffered at the hands of the dictatorial regimes strewn across the Middle East.

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[23]Ibid., 52.

[24]See "Islam's Approach Towards Democracy," *The Message International* (April/May 2002); available from http://www.messageonline.org/2002aprilmay/cover1.htm.

[25]Mohammad Omar Farooq, "Islam and Democracy: Perceptions and Misperceptions," *The Message International* (April/May 2002); available from http://www.messageonline.org/2002aprilmay/cover2.htm.

[26]Muzammil H. Siddiqi, "The Spirit of Tolerance in Islam," *The Message International* (April/May 2002); available from http://www.messageonline.org/2002aprilmay/cover5.htm.

Democratization in the Arab Islamic world would be accelerated were the United States to endorse and work for it. A cynic might say that it is not only in Iraq where regime change may be required. Unfortunately, a fear of Islamist successes in elections has persuaded the United States to countenance the sorts of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East that it has rarely supported elsewhere. Over time, this policy has proved increasingly counterproductive. Moderate fundamentalists who have been excluded from the political process have been radicalized, and those few who have been permitted to participate in the process (as in Jordan) have refrained from attempting to introduce radical alterations into the established political system. Especially given the requirements of the current war on terrorism, one can only be pleased by the more proactive policy to promote democracy in the Arab world recently adopted by the Bush administration.

Ultimately, an understanding of and a demand for democracy may increase in the Islamic Middle East as a result of the efforts of institutions located in the West. Here, I will mention only two of the organizations located in the United States that, through their educational outreach and public policy programs, are attempting to promote liberty and representative government in the Arab Islamic world. One is the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, and the other is The Fund for American Studies. Both are located in Washington, D.C.

Established in 1999, the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID) is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to promoting a better understanding of democracy in the Islamic world. The center states that it has three main objectives: (1) to promote the ideal of democracy as the best option to avoid political violence and achieve lasting stability in Islamic countries, (2) to propagate democratic principles in the Muslim world, and (3) to engage both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars of Islam in an effort to promote political liberalization

in the Islamic world. To this end, the center has initiated an ambitious series of seminar and international conference programs that engage groups, parties, and governments from Muslim countries in public debates that focus on fostering interpretations of Islam congruent with democratic governance. Both secular and religious voices are included in the discussion. The center publishes a newsletter, *Muslim Democrat*, which is distributed internationally.

The CSID's current activities, underway or planned, include three two-day workshops on democracy to be held in Morocco, Egypt, and Yemen; training workshops on "democratic values in Islam" in the Arab Islamic world; symposia on representative government for non-American Muslim students at American universities who plan to return to their countries of origin; and production of a television program featuring dialogue between American and Muslim scholars concerning the compatibility of democracy and Islam. Arrangements are under way to assure that this program will be broadcast widely in the Middle East and elsewhere in Arab countries and in the larger Muslim world. The activities of the CSID demonstrate the potential that Muslims outside the Islamic world have to influence debate within it. Truly, when one speaks of the democratic imperative in the Middle East, one must accord major importance to Muslim and non-Muslim organizations outside of the region that are working toward that end.

In its description of the Muslim Democrats Network, the CSID demonstrates the thinking that permeates all of its programs. "The calamity of the September 11th terrorist attack," the organization observes,

> shocked Muslims all over the world. On the one hand, it underscored the dire conditions in the Middle East and the urgent need for democratic reform in Muslim countries. Up until recently, democrats suffered the most at the hands of military dictatorships and secular governments, be they Marxist, pan-Arab nationalist or socialist. Due to the failure of these ideologies . . . many of the

region's people have turned to religion as a method of protest against political repression and economic hardship. . . . However, recent attempts to govern in the name of Islam and the general politicization of Islam at the hands of religious leaders and/or Islamic parties have brought dismal results. In particular, the many acts of political violence committed in the name of Islam by radical groups have stimulated a debate among democrats on how to deal with different interpretations of Islamic values, especially the compatibility of Islam with the modern socio-political [ideals] of democracy, human rights, and pluralism. . . . Muslim scholars in Europe and America have . . . been contributing to the democracy debate in Muslim countries. The Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy . . . believes that promoting a debate between liberal Islamists and other democrats on an interpretation of Islam which is modern and compatible with universal human rights . . . will strengthen democrats in their struggle against extremism and authoritarianism.[27]

With such new international initiatives as the CSID linking democrats in the West with those in the Arab Muslim world, can one really be pessimistic concerning possibilities for a better future for the long-suffering people in that region?

The Fund for American Studies (FAS) is making its own important contribution to the same end. Founded in 1967 as the Charles Edison Youth Fund and renamed The Fund for American Studies in 1987, FAS currently operates six summer institutes as part of its effort to teach the basic principles of a free society to graduate and undergraduate students in the United States and around the world. Institutes on comparative political and economic systems, business and government affairs, and political journalism are held annually at Georgetown University. An institute on philanthropy and voluntary service is conducted in Indianapolis, Indiana. Institutes are also offered in Hong Kong and Prague for students from East Asia and Eastern Europe, respectively, on economics and democratic political systems.

[27]From the formal application of the CSID, "Muslim Democrats Network," as presented to the National Endowment for Democracy, which is supporting this activity.

Finally, an institute is held in Greece for students from the Balkans, Turkey, Egypt, all of the Arab states of the Levant, and Israel and the Occupied Territories. The institute in Greece focuses on political philosophy, economics, and conflict management. The ultimate objective of this institute, like that of all the other institutes that the FAS conducts abroad, is to teach the principles of freedom to students who come primarily from countries where liberty and democracy may long have been in short supply. For present purposes, it is FAS's International Institute for Political and Economic Studies (IIPES) in Greece that is of particular interest.

The IIPES offers an interdisciplinary curriculum divided into components on philosophy, political economy, and conflict management/resolution. Three hours of graduate or undergraduate credit, as appropriate, are offered by Georgetown University, and instruction by American faculty (drawn from Georgetown University, Johns Hopkins University, Brigham Young University, and the University of Michigan) is supplemented by presentations from diplomats and by lectures delivered by guest professors from the region. The pace of the program is intense and demanding. A variety of formats is offered to enable students to exchange ideas about themselves, their societies, and their futures, both individual and national.

The philosophy component features selected readings drawn from the great books of both the Western and Islamic traditions; one of the major texts to receive attention is the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldun. This component fosters discussion of the philosophical principles that underlie a free society and are supportive of cooperative relationships among civilizations. Lectures emphasize the nature of civilizations, the dynamics of historical change, and how the possibilities for a peaceful future in the Balkans and the Middle East might be enhanced. Classes explore how societies can most appropriately organize themselves to enhance democratic governance and individual

liberty. Attention is also given to the responsibility of citizens to their communities.

The political economy component focuses on the principles of democracy and market economics and applies those principles to the eastern Mediterranean region and the Balkans. Lectures contrast the characteristics of authoritarian and democratic regimes and evaluate the economic and political benefits of democracy. Students explore modalities for fostering and sustaining civil society in the countries of the region. Attention is given to the structure and operation of a market economy, with emphasis placed on such topics as free trade, private property rights, and the role of government in the economy.

The component on conflict management introduces students to the basic principles of conflict resolution through interactive problem solving, simulations, and small-group discussions. Students analyze theories of conflict resolution and synthesize lessons learned for future application in their own countries and regions.

Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of the IIPES is that it offers students whose countries are or recently have been at war with each other a safe and neutral environment for the sort of exchanges that could occur nowhere else. Serbs meet with Croatians, Greeks with Turks, Syrians with Israelis, and Israelis with Palestinians. Conversations are nonstop, day and night, over meals, at the beach, and during parties and dances. Faculty are on call at almost all hours for academic purposes as well as to intervene in arguments when intervention may be needed and to assist students to disagree without being disagreeable. Tension is typically electric, but the student learning curve is perpendicular.

Over the past seven years, the IIPES has taught the lessons of liberty to approximately 455 students. Annually, another sixty-five or seventy students are added to the mix. This reserve of human capital is now beginning to emerge from graduate and professional training and to advance professionally in

government, the media, and the private sector. Do not the accomplishments of the IIPES, along with the promise of the CSID, provide good grounds for optimism that a new and democratic Arab Muslim world will indeed be born someday?

Optimism, of course, can never be prophecy. The seminal models of alternative futures for both the West and the Islamic world, as presented by Huntington and Fukuyama, still lack conclusive validation by events. There is much to suggest that Fukuyama may have the better of the argument. But if democracy is in fact the final destination of the Arab Muslim world, one must still inquire as to what the time frame for that victory might be. Specifically, what evils may still have to be suffered before victory is won? Much will depend on whether war breaks out between the United States and Iraq. If war does occur, all bets are off. In the Arab and Islamic world, a war between the United States and Iraq, whatever the international sanction, would almost certainly be perceived as a clash of civilizations. Huntington's vision of a bad and darkening future would then surely earn new credibility. Instability, turbulence, and anger in Arab countries and among Muslims worldwide would likely increase greatly. And democracy in the Islamic world, and probably also in the West, would sustain a body blow.

Nevertheless, one may speculate that even were the worst to occur, that would not be the end of the story. In the long run, Fukuyama's argument concerning the inevitable universalization of democracy might well still prove to be correct. Wisely, Fukuyama has not offered a timetable for that happy consummation. We do live in interesting times.

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Economic Development, Globalization, and Muslim Countries

Mohamed Aslam Haneef[*]

Introduction

Economic development has been one of the central concerns of countries in the Muslim world for the last fifty years. The 1950s and 1960s were generally periods of economic growth, with most newly independent Muslim countries continuing, albeit with some modifications, the "system" established by their colonial masters. Many Muslim countries' objective continues to be to "catch up" with the developed countries, utilizing the models developed and followed in the West or proposed by Western scholars and consultants.[1] While issues of poverty, growth, and

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[1]The perceived failure of these growth models and the oil boom years of the early 1970s also coincided with—some would say caused—the worldwide Islamic resurgence and generated some Muslim scholars' and some Muslim countries' interest in finding indigenous solutions to their "development" problems—hence, the popularity of "Islamic economics."

inequality continue to plague the Muslim world, another phenomenon has, especially since the telecommunications revolution of the 1980s, come to the fore: globalization. In fact, the tremendous changes that occurred in world societies in the 1990s heralded what some would call a new phase in the age of globalization. We hear of buzz terms such as "e-commerce," "e-politics," and, more recently, "k-economics" and "k-politics." The reaction and participation of Muslims and the Muslim world in this new global setting have varied widely and need greater analysis and commentary. Unfortunately, Muslims have not contributed much to the discussion or debate in question. Few scholarly studies from an Islamic perspective are available. This paper provides a general critical survey of literature in the areas of development but focuses more on the phenomenon of globalization in the 1990s, trying to identify issues that must be addressed by Muslim countries in their policy-making agendas in the twenty-first century.

Section I of this paper offers a brief overview of the concept of development in the 1990s and looks at the shift to a much wider view of development put forward by international organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations. It notes that there is nothing in this wider definition of development that Muslims should find unacceptable. Section II discusses globalization. Contrasting definitions, perspectives, and implications of globalization are noted from the literature surveyed, and the conspicuous absence of Muslim contribution to the discourse is acknowledged. Section III presents, using selected data obtained from secondary sources, preliminary observations on the relationship that exists between globalization and economic development in selected Muslim countries. The data, though inconclusive, seem to support the view that countries that have "globalized" are also those that have "developed" the most. Section IV treats selected issues that are relevant to a future Muslim discourse on development and

globalization, arguing for promotion of greater dialogue and interaction rather than of confrontation among the nations of the world.

I. The Debate on Development

Development and progress (in the widest sense) have been the two most important issues for Muslim countries in the latter half of the twentieth century. In the 1950s and 1960s, modernization theories (especially of the neoclassical vintage) gained prominence. The 1960s also saw Marxist and dependencia alternatives (the latter adopting a more "structuralist"[2] approach to development) being proposed in many developing countries. Both capitalist and socialist models argued mainly for material growth and development, and Muslim countries emulated these models.

While economics-centered models dominated academia and policy circles from the 1950s to the early 1970s, a wider view of development and progress also gained ground during that period in both the developed countries (DCs) and the economically developing countries (EDCs). In many EDCs, the call for culturally sensitive development was gaining momentum. In many Muslim countries, calls for indigenous solutions, some promoting Islamic views of development and progress, were put forward. These calls also coincided with changes occurring in the West, especially in major international organizations, such as the World Bank. Issues of the environment, quality of life, and human development became the cornerstone of these organizations' development agenda. As stated in the foreword of the *World Development Report 1999/2000*,

[2]For a discussion of the various schools of thought in development studies and their implicit assumptions and worldview in Western economics, see K. Cole, 1999.

> Development thinking has evolved into a broad pragmatism, realizing that development must move beyond economic growth to encompass important social goals—reduced poverty, improved quality of life, enhanced opportunities for better education and health, and more. . . . These lessons and insights are incorporated into the Comprehensive Development Framework, recently initiated by the World Bank to address the challenges of development in a more holistic, integrated way by bringing in aspects such as governance, legal institutions, and financial institutions, which were too often given short shrift earlier.

Furthermore, the report (1-30) acknowledges that the World Bank has learned some important lessons from its more than fifty years of development experience. Macroeconomic stability is a prerequisite for growth, which, in turn, can promote development. Trickle-down economics is a myth, and developmental efforts must address human needs directly. Development requires policies that are comprehensive in approach. Sustainable development requires institutions that promote social inclusion and are responsive to changing circumstances. Both the market and the state complement each other, and economic and social policies and political culture are interdependent. While policies are important, the processes involved—that is, their implementation—are no less so. Development is now seen in a very broad context. Nobel laureate A. K. Sen personifies the change in outlook in his latest book, *Development as Freedom* (1999, Oxford University Press).

There is nothing in the World Bank's report that would be unacceptable to developing, including Muslim, countries. The shift away from mere economics to a more comprehensive look at development is perfectly in line with an Islamic perspective on development and progress. All works written by Muslims, from the early work of Ahmad (1980) right up to the latest work by Chapra (2000), speak of the Islamic view of development as being holistic and multidimensional. However, some in the EDCs have viewed this comprehensive approach, especially since it is

propagated by institutions like the World Bank, as a plot against the EDCs. According to them, EDCs would be required to slow down, would naturally fail to achieve the growth targets, and, in turn, would have to make even greater sacrifices and become more backward—to the ultimate advantage of the rich, developed countries. Particular areas of conflict involved are environmental preservation, social and human rights standards, and liberalization.

In the past decade, but especially in the last five years, institutions like the World Bank and especially the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been accused by some in the EDCs (and also by those in the developed world who do not share the ideological underpinnings of the dominant neoliberal view) as being nothing more than agents of the West or as being debt collectors for the rich. This heightened confrontation between the IMF and some EDCs was accelerated by the East Asian financial crisis, which later turned into economic, social, and political crises. Only months before the Thai baht collapsed, countries in East and Southeast Asia were being hailed as miracle economies. Features that were being cited as the causes of the miracle, which could be emulated by other developing countries (as found in the 1993 *World Bank Report*), were suddenly being blamed as being the reasons for the crisis. With the benefit of hindsight, it is now almost unanimously agreed that there were internal and external causes of the crisis.[3]

Muslim scholars need to reiterate their position with regard to the issue of development. Before they commit to any position, however, they would need to make, using an Islamic framework, a keen analysis of the Muslim countries' development experience in the last fifty years, of these countries' strengths and

[3]There is a vast amount of literature on the East Asian economic crisis. See K. S. Jomo, ed. *Tigers in Trouble* (New York: Zed Books, 1998) for analysis and bibliography.

weaknesses and the sources of these strengths and weaknesses, and of EDCs in general. Sadly, such analyses, when they are done, employ conventional economic models. Very few works by Muslim scholars even attempt to develop an Islamic framework of analysis. The few exceptions in the whole corpus of contemporary Islamic economic literature are the works by Chapra (2000) and Choudhury (1992, 1996). Generally speaking, Muslim scholars have not been able to develop Islamically coherent, logical, and consistent conceptual frameworks to evaluate the development experience of Muslim countries.

II. The Debate on Globalization

Nearly all writers[4] who have discussed the "origins" of globalization seem to mention one or the other of the following time periods as its possible date of inception: the dawn of civilization; the sixteenth century, at the time of capitalist Europe's expansion; the middle of the nineteenth century; the post-World War II era; the 1970s, especially with the crumbling of the Bretton Woods fixed exchange rate system; and the 1990s, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the advent of the information technology revolution. Mittelman (2000) provides a useful way of getting past these debates by viewing globalization according to "pace, scope and intensity." He terms the period prior to the sixteenth century the period of "incipient globalization," the period until the 1970s that of "bridging globalization," and the period since the 1970s (especially the 1990s, we would add) that of "accelerated globalization." Some question the very existence of globalization (Hirst/Thompson, 1996); some speak of its promises (Fukuyama, 1989); some warn of its disruptive potential (Barber, 1996); some see it as a "two-way process"

[4]See for example, Scholte in Bayliss/Smith, eds. (1997), Lechner/Boli, eds. (2000), and Mittelman (2000).

(Gray, 1998) leading to "creolization" or hybridization (Lechner/Boli, 2000); some, using empirical data, have termed the doomsday scenario a myth (Sadowski, 1998). Muslim contribution to the debate so far has been minimal. Intuitively, one would take Islam to be very accommodating to the essence of globalization, if globalization were taken to mean interaction and dialogue. The difficult issue, though, is, On whose terms will such interaction and dialogue take place? This issue will be taken up later.

Even if globalization were nothing new—that is, even if it were just a continuation or an extension of what is already known as international relations—or even if, like Hirst and Thompson (1996), we were to reject the so-called strong version of economic globalization—the "hyper-globalization" view—the change occurring in the way, scope, and intensity of relations between individuals, groups, and nations will have to be accepted. Those who deny globalization, calling it nothing more than "globaloney," are mistaken. We agree with Friedman (1999) that the present era of globalization is different not only in degree, but, in some ways, in kind as well. We also agree that no country can blindly reject globalization. Today, no development agenda can afford to ignore the impact, positive or negative, of globalization. The approach of blind emulation and the approach of emotive rejection are equally wrong, for globalization is a multidimensional phenomenon that can, and ought, to be looked at from various points of view, which, in turn, will be determined by one's worldview or ideological orientation.

As mentioned earlier, academic analyses of globalization started appearing only in the 1990s (see, for example, the heading "globalization" in the *International Bibliography of Social Sciences,* which surveys more than one hundred thousand articles in more

than twenty-five hundred academic journals worldwide).[5] Three definitions of globalization suffice to represent the scope and, implicitly, the ongoing debate on the topic:[6]

> Globalization can . . . be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice-versa. (Giddens, 1990)

> Globalization does not simply refer to the objectiveness of increasing interconnectedness. It also refers to cultural and subjective matters (namely, the scope and depth of consciousness of the world as a single place). (Robertson, 1992)

> Globalization is what we in the third world have for centuries called colonization. (Khor, 1995)

The first two definitions are offered by Western academics (the first is a central adviser to Britain's prime minister, Tony Blair), the third by a Malaysian political economist who runs the Third World Network, a nongovernmental organization that has argued vehemently against the neoliberal globalization agenda that is said to dominate the contemporary international debate. The definitions allude to the divergent positions of the proponents and opponents of globalization. However, the divide

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[5]However, some of the ideas found in the literature on globalization were already being discussed in the 1950s, when writings on growth theory appeared (for example, by W. Rostow). The writings of the 1960s and 1970s discussed modernization theory, economic interdependence, the global village (since McLuhan, 1964, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 2nd ed. [New York: New American Library]), world society (John W. Burton, 1972, *World Society* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press]), and international society (Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

[6]These definitions, together with others, are given in Scholte in Bayliss/Smith (1998). Higgot/Reich (1998) also attempt a categorization of globalization definitions and positions.

between the two groups is not necessarily between a developed West/North and a developing East/South. The proponents and opponents of globalization—quite in congruity with the spirit of globalization, we might say—are to be found all over the world, and they have formed credible global alliances. It may be fashionable, perhaps also politically expedient, to see the matter in terms of a conflict between a neocolonial or imperialist West/North and a colonized or colonizable East/South. But even when the existence of such categories as the "rich-North" and "poor South" is granted, it remains a fact that pockets of poverty exist in the North and enclaves of affluence exist in the South. While some have coined the term "Global North" and "Global South" to denote this division, others have used variations and modifications of the "elite theory" to explain the state of affairs.[7] The issue is less of geography and more of power and control. It is very important that Muslims take note of this distinction and contribute to the debate.

The first two of the above-cited definitions imply that globalization is not a unidimensional phenomenon. "Social relations" covers both the objective and the subjective dimensions of politics, economics, culture, and, some would add, religion. While many of the views of globalization tend to focus narrowly on a single dimension of the phenomenon, globalization, in the present writer's view, comes in a package. Whether the contents of the package are acceptable from an Islamic perspective and whether they can be modified is an issue

[7]Kowalewski (1997) coined the term "global establishment" to refer to the rich and well connected wherever they are and the term "non-established" to refer to the poor and disadvantaged, both in the South and in the North. It is in this light that books such as *The Global Trap* (Martin/Schumann, 1998) posit the creation of a "20-80 society" and that books like *Globalization: The Human Consequences* (Zygmunt Bauman, 1998) talk of a "consumer society stratified into tourists and vagabonds," said to be a consequence of "globalization from the top."

that deserves attention. In developing their response(s) to globalization, Muslims can benefit by studying the opposition to the dominant neoliberal form of globalization found in countries like Germany, France, and Japan, for globalization not only yields economic benefits, but also entails social and cultural—and economic—costs, which are not always mentioned in treatments of globalization.

Currently, three theories of globalization are competing with each other and have their proponents in the field of politics. The neorealist, neoliberal, and world system schools of thought each have subschools. In the economic sphere, the schools of thought on globalization range from the neoclassical to the dependencia views, with the Keynesians and institutionalist/ structuralists falling somewhere in between.[8] Muslim scholars, on account of their training and background, may be inclined to favor one or the other of these schools, but the task ahead for them is to develop the ability to analyze, evaluate, and, where needed, adapt the positions taken by these schools. This has to be one of the components of the agenda of the so-called process of Islamization of knowledge. But the fact that the agenda has not made much progress in the past twenty years should indicate the difficult nature of the undertaking. The subject of globalization has been addressed in detail in two Muslim periodicals: *American Journal for Islamic Social Science* volume on globalization (vol. 15, no. 3), published by the International Institute of Islamic Thought in Virginia, and *Journal of Economic Cooperation Among Muslim Countries* (1998), published by an Ankara-based subsidiary of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). In both these volumes, but especially in the latter, articles based on empirical data discuss the huge challenges facing the Muslim world at present. Farhang Rajaees *Globalization on Trial* (2000) is

[8]For a discussion of these schools, see Bayliss/Smith, eds. (1997) and Lechner/Boli, eds. (2000).

probably the only recent analytical work by a Muslim dealing with the phenomenon of globalization. Invoking Ibn Khaldun's theories, the book offers a coherent argument to the effect that the only way for Muslims to deal with globalization is by adopting the approach of civilizational dialogue. We will come back to this idea in Section IV.

III. Some Observations on the Relationship between Development Performance and Globalization

We noted above a lack of empirical works about the relationship between development and globalization. This paper, while not providing an in-depth study of the actual economic performance of Muslim countries, highlights, using tables, a few relevant findings. As stated in the United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report 1999/2000*, statistics can not only be used to support a case, they can also be overused, underused, misused, and abused to support a variety of different positions and vested interests. It is also important to understand the place and function of statistics in presenting a case. Of course, the availability of credible data and the transparency and legitimacy of methods used are prerequisites to any empirical work.

Table 1 lists standard demographic and economic data of selected Muslim countries from Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa that represent income levels as defined by the World Bank. The table, thus, depicts these countries' general economic performance. Table 2 provides selected social and human development indexes of the same countries, representing wider dimensions of development. Table 3 supplies selected data representing the countries' openness or global interaction, used as an indicator of globalization.

Table 1: Selected Muslim Countries:
Population, Income, Growth and Structure of Output

	Population 1999 (mil.)	Income group	% GDP Growth ('80-'90/'90-'99)	Share of Agri. as % of GDP ('90/'99)	Share of Man. as % of GDP ('90/'99)	Share of Ind. as % of GDP ('90/'99)	Share of Serv. as % of GDP ('90/'99)
Algeria	30	Low. Mid.	2.7/1.6	14/13	12/11	45/54	41/33
Bangladesh	128	Low	4.3/4.8	28/21	15/17	24/27	48/52
Cameroon	15	Low	3.4/1.3	25/44	15/11	29/20	46/36
Egypt	62	Low. Mid.	5.4/4.4	19/17	24/27	29/33	52/50
Indonesia	207	Low. Mid.	6.1/4.7	19/20	21/25	39/45	41/35
Iran	63	Low. Mid.	1.7/3.4	24/—	12/—	29/—	48/—
Malaysia	23	Upp. Mid.	5.3/6.3	19/14	26/35	40/44	41/43
Mali	11	Low	0.8/3.6	46/47	9/4	16/17	39/37
Morocco	28	Low. Mid.	4.2/2.3	18/17	18/17	32/32	50/51
Mozambique	17	Low	-0.1/6.3	37/32	10/13	18/24	44/44
Nigeria	124	Low	1.6/2.4	33/41	6/5	41/62	26/-3
Pakistan	135	Low	6.3/4.0	26/26	17/17	25/25	49/49
S. Arabia	21	Upp. Mid.	0.0/1.6	6/7	8/10	50/48	43/45
Turkey	64	Upp. Mid.	5.4/4.1	18/18	20/16	30/26	52/56

Source: Tables 1, 11 and 12 of *World Development Report 2000/2001*, World Bank.

Table 2: Selected Muslim Countries:
Selected Human and Social Development Indicators

	Nat. Pov. Line % of pop (yr.)	% Below US$2 PPP a day	Gini Index (yr.)	Pub. Exp. on Ed as % of GNP ('80/'97)	Pub. Exp. On Health % of GDP ('90-'98)	HDI Rank-ing*	GDI Rank-ing†
Algeria	12.2 ('88)	15.1 ('95)	35.3 ('95)	7.8/5.1	3.3	107	91
Bangladesh	42.7 ('91-'92)	77.8 ('96)	33.6 ('95-'96)	1.1/2.2	1.6	—	—
Cameroon	40.0 ('84)	—	—	3.8/—	1.0	134	111
Egypt	22.9 ('95-'96)	52.7 ('95)	28.9 ('95)	5.7/4.8	1.8	—	—
Indonesia	11.3 (96)	66.1 ('99)	36.5 ('96)	1.7/1.4	0.6	109	90
Iran	—	—	—	7.5/4.0	1.7	97	84
Malaysia	15.5 ('89)	—	48.5 ('95)	6.0/4.9	1.3	61	57
Mali	—	90.6 ('94)	50.5 ('94)	3.7/2.2	2.0	165	137
Morocco	13.1 ('90-'91)	7.5 ('91)	39.5 ('98-'99)	6.1/5.0	1.3	124	103
Mozambique	—	78.4 ('96)	39.6 ('96-'97)	3.1/-	2.1	168	139
Nigeria	43.0 ('85)	90.8 ('97)	50.6 ('96-'97)	6.4/0.7	0.2	151	124
Pakistan	34.0 ('91)	84.7 ('96-'97)	31.2 ('97)	2.1/2.7	0.9	135	115
S. Arabia	—	—	—	4.1/7.5	6.4	75	76
Turkey	—-	18.0 ('94)	41.5 ('94)	2.2/2.2	2.9	85	69

Source: Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7 of *World Development Report 2000/2001*, World Bank, and *Human Development Report 2000*, UNDP.

*A composite index developed from health, education, and gross domestic product (GDP) figures
†An index measuring the HDI according to sex.

Table 3: Selected Muslim Countries: Integration with Global Economy

	Share of X as % of GDP ('90/'95)	Share of M as % of GDP ('90/'95)	Trade (X and M) as % of GDP ('96)	Gross Pri. Cap. Flows as % of PPP GDP ('88/'98)	Gross FDI as % of PPP GDP ('88/'98)
Algeria	17.76/23.73	15.60/23/05	—	0.7/—	0.0/—
Bangladesh	7.84/10.77	17.14/22.36	33.47	0.3/0.8	0.0/0.2
Cameroon	16.54/24.39	12.70/14.08	38.61	5.7/-	0.7/—
Egypt	5.38/5.69	19.18/19.41	36.64	2.5/3.8	1.1/0.6
Indonesia	24.20/21.86	20.73/20.00	40.02	0.6/4.4	0.2/0.9
Iran	3.59/18.76	2.96/12.03	26.81	0.4/1.1	0.0/0.0
Malaysia	68.70/84.40	68.12/88.85	143.99	4.2/7.6	1.9/2.6
Mali	10.26/10.03	29.18/43.06	55.00	1.7/1.7	0.2/0.6
Morocco	17.71/12.37	30.56/23.40	46.32	1.6/1.1	0.1/0.4
Mozambique	26.54/15.67	63.26/83.71	—	0.1/2.3	0.1/1.6
Nigeria	31.68/12.98	13.31/6.17	—	4.1/4.1	0.7/1.1
Pakistan	14.17/13.42	18.72/19.25	35.64	0.7/1.6	0.2/0.3
S. Arabia	42.43/40.95	23.00/21.84	68.74	9.3/9.1	0.2/2.2
Turkey	8.92/12.52	15.50/20.69	35.81	1.6/4.5	0.2/0.3

Sources: Website for the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRTCIC), Ankara, a subsidiary organization of the OIC, and World Development Indicators 2000 at the website of the World Bank.

Tables 1, 2, and 3 suggest some conclusions regarding the relationship between development (measured, especially, through the use of economic indicators) and globalization. While more cross-sectional and time-series analyses are needed to arrive at definitive conclusions, the following preliminary observations can be made:

1. Countries that have globalized to a higher degree have also performed (in terms of economic, social, and human indicators) the best in the last ten years, e.g., Malaysia. We will argue that this (while not attested to by the available data) is also true of the period stretching back to the 1960s—whether we are looking at growth, per capita income, poverty eradication, or the human development index. For example, Friedman (1999) quotes a study made by Harvard's Jeffrey Sachs that indicates that "open" economies grew 1.2 percentage points more than "closed" economies. Since the East Asian financial crisis of 1997-98, however, it has been acknowledged that short-term portfolio flows (represented in the gross private flows in Table 3) can also be a source of instability. Hence, "opening up" must be supported by other legal and institutional factors. It must also be borne in mind that the available data do not allow us to determine causality.

2. Worsening inequality may be the one negative consequence faced by the countries that have become economically more liberal, although the data are not conclusive. Looking at the Gini Index, Mali and Malaysia have, relatively, the highest degree of inequality among the countries presented (data for Saudi Arabia and Mozambique were not available). While this may seem to offset somewhat the successes in the area of development, at least in the case of Malaysia, it should be noted that, according to the prevailing neoliberal view of globalization (which posits neoclassical economic assumptions and meanings of development and progress), it is justified as acceptable, subject to certain conditions. If we were to use either

an institutionalist/structuralist view or a world systems view of globalization (each has different assumptions and assigns different meanings to development and progress), the evaluation of the outcomes and performance would certainly differ. The issue Muslim scholars must ponder is, What is/are the Islamic view/views on development and progress, and how can development and progress be defined, translated into some performance measure, and achieved?

3. Muslim countries that belong to certain regions (Southeast Asia) or possess abundant natural resources (for example, Saudi Arabia, which has oil) have performed better than countries that belong to certain other regions (sub-Saharan Africa) or lack natural resources. One, nevertheless, finds "poor" countries in the Southeast Asia region, such as Laos and Cambodia. Economists generally agree that economic development depends on the following factors, among others: initial conditions (resource endowment), physical geography (coastline), demographic change (young population), factor accumulation (capital, labor), technological progress (innovative ability, productivity), public policy (the right policies), investment/export orientation, and a stable political and social climate. While Malaysia and Indonesia (and countries in the Asia-Pacific region in general) have been hailed as countries that have met (at least until the 1997-98 crisis) many, if not all, of these preconditions of development, other countries in the region, such as Laos and Cambodia, have not. Some countries in the Middle East have just been "fueled" by oil, while most African countries have been marginalized (see, for example, Mittelman [2000] for an interesting insight into the case of Mozambique).

4. Globalization seems to have widened the development disparity not only between the North and the South, but also within the North and within the South. For example, while Malaysia and Indonesia have undergone a major transformation (with both good and bad consequences), countries in sub-Saharan

Africa have been called by some as being in the "lost continent in the age of globalization" (Edoho, 1997). Figures for capital flows to EDCs in 1997 indicate that 95 percent of this capital went to a mere 26 out of 166 EDCs, the Asia-Pacific region being the largest recipient (Third World Network). There is also an increasing number of reports about the exploitative nature of investments made by businessmen from certain countries in the South in other, less-developed countries. This would seem to indicate that the economic models and practices adopted by the former may be no different from those of the existing neoliberal school. Sadly, almost nothing has been written, much less put into practice, to present an "Islamic" alternative.

5. EDCs still rely heavily on trade, especially on trade with the developed world. From figures given in the International Monetary Fund's Direction of Trade Statistics (1998), intra-OIC trade is still only about 10 percent of the total OIC trade. In the case of Malaysia, while the trade/gross domestic product (GDP) is calculated to be 144 percent, only an average of about 4 percent of trade is with OIC countries. The United States is the main trading partner of and investor in Malaysia. Furthermore, small, open economies like Malaysia cannot close their trading links. Since its local market is very small, Malaysia has no option but to export to the global market. The United States being the world's biggest consumer society, it is not surprising that American demand for Malaysian exports is a major source of export earnings for Malaysia. Consequently, America's continued economic growth, which determines the quantity of America's imports, is vital for Malaysia.

IV. Globalization: From Clash to Dialogue

It was mentioned earlier that resistance to globalization is very diverse in terms of scope and players. American domination is not an issue in Muslim countries only. Barber (1996) and Gray

(1998) give examples to show that even among Europe's rich and powerful, the richer and the more powerful win at the expense of others. The way in which the neoliberal market view has forced social markets in Western Europe out of the scene, at least in the short run, very clearly shows that we are dealing with a winner-take-all society—and with a zero-sum game. But, as Gray, utilizing Karl Polanyi's arguments (*The Great Transformation,* 1957), shows, the logic of "short-termism" inherent in the neoliberal school is not sustainable in the long term. Costs will be incurred, if not in the economic sphere, then in the social and political spheres, and will give rise to countermovements. The renewed life of Keynesian economics, of institutionalist economics, and even of Marxist views in the last few years seems to support this position.

Playing the globalization game, especially the dominant neoliberal view, has been likened to putting on the "golden straitjacket" (Friedman, 1999), which has its own rules, logic, standards, and norms. Friedman likens those who embrace it as going for the "Lexus," which represents "progress." Those who resist it do so for various reasons. Some do so because they want to maintain their "olive trees," that is, their traditions, cultures, religions, etc. According to Friedman, even "strong" countries, such as Germany, Japan, and France, stand no chance against the forces of the "Lexus." Those who embrace the free market system, have appropriate macroeconomic policies, and develop and implement the "rule of law and standards required" by the system will benefit. Those who do not or cannot, will be left out. Friedman then divides countries according to their response to globalization. Some put on the golden straitjacket all the way (like the United States); some go part of the way (India, Egypt); some put it on and then take it off (Malaysia, Russia); some try to tailor it differently (Germany, France, Japan); some try to resist (due to oil resources); some are just isolated (North Korea, Cuba, and the Sudan). We may add another category—those of

countries (such as those in sub-Saharan Africa) that want to join the game, but with which nobody is interested in playing. While Friedman does talk of the need to find a "balance between the Lexus and the Olive tree" and speaks of the need for "glocalism" (a local version of globalization), it seems as if this balanced position is only applicable and viable to the first category of countries, that is, those that embrace the system.

One could legitimately ask why Friedman's local version of globalization must be confined to countries that fully embrace the golden straitjacket. Muslim scholars must attempt to define the parameters and features of an *Islamic local version* or maybe even an *Islamic substitute* of the game. They almost never use Islamic frames of reference when criticizing the present system. For example, in the recent East Asian crisis, some Muslim leaders were very critical, and rightly so, of the adverse effects of an unstable currency market. Unfortunately, despite the clear position of Islam with regard to *riba* (interest), *gharar* (aleatory transaction), and *maysir* (gambling), no critique of them using an Islamic frame of reference has been made. Rather, use has been made of structuralist/dependencia views to argue for the creation of a new financial architecture. The failure of Muslims to formulate Islamic alternatives has caused them to miss an opportunity offered by the crisis faced by mainstream conventional economics.

Muslim scholars must go beyond political statements and rhetoric with regard to globalization. The neoliberal project promoting deregulation, liberalization, and privatization, which was emulated so proudly by some Muslim countries, is suddenly being condemned by some as a conspiracy to destroy Muslims. Michael Porter's *Can Japan Compete?* (2000) adds salt to the wounds of the proponents of the Japanese/Asian model. In his analysis of various Japanese firms and their performance over the last decades, he posits the view that the Japanese model has actually not been as successful as it was made out to be. His

study seems to show that the companies that succeeded in Japan were those subject to the rules of competition and good economics, not those protected and supported by the state. His analysis, if accurate, would refute some of the Asian leaders who have so earnestly sought to promote their version of the whole Asian values debate.

Rajaee's *Globalization on Trial* was cited above. In developing an Islamic response to the globalization phenomenon, Rajaee makes a distinction between "conflict" models and "cooperative" models, favoring the latter. Using a "civilizational" approach based on "dialogue," he presents an approach that "celebrates diversity of ideas." Approaches represented by the traditional (Western) division of knowledge into politics, economics, culture, and religion, as well as the various "conspiracy" theories, are "exclusionary" and/or one-dimensional. Rajaee argues for an approach that treats knowledge holistically, utilizing all means and methods of attaining knowledge—methods that shun reductionism, are not hostage to an either-or approach, and engage and interact with one another. Drawing on both Islamic and Western scholarship, he discusses what civilizations are, how they come about, and what causes their decline. He optimistically sees the new "information civilization" brought about by the present era of globalization, underpinned by pluralism, as an opportunity for civilizational dialogue.

Any rational individual would see dialogue rather than confrontation as the better way forward. Since the events of 11 September 2001, getting back to a dialogue seems to have become even more difficult than before. Proponents of the clash model seem to have gained the upper hand in influencing policymakers. However, all those who are concerned about the future of humankind should realize both that dialogue is the only way forward and that dialogue will require ability, sincerity, courage, and confidence. On the Muslim side, dialogue will require

serious scholarship to ensure the presentation of authentic Islamic alternatives. Some of the twentieth-century Muslim scholars who have argued along these lines are Muhammad Iqbal, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Fazlur Rahman, and Ismail al-Faruqi. Despite their differences, these scholars seek to address contemporary issues and problems from standpoints originating within the Islamic worldview. The whole debate on the Islamization of knowledge is actually about the ability to evaluate and then Islamize contemporary knowledge while, at the same time, reforming Muslim traditional heritage and creating new bodies of knowledge that will help human beings live better lives.

Muslims must learn to live with difference of opinion. A pluralist environment is characterized by interaction between different viewpoints. Subscription to an "Islamic" position need not mean wholesale rejection of everything that originates in the non-Muslim world or among non-Muslims. In fact, all the Muslim scholars mentioned above agree that some of the ideas and practices found in the Muslim world itself must be reformed, if not rejected. The question, On whose terms should the "interaction" take place?, is certainly an important one. Unless Muslims are able to build theoretical constructs that are developed from an Islamic epistemological base, unless they are confidently secure in their tradition and are, at the same time, knowledgeable about the contemporary scenarios, and unless they have the necessary intellectual capacity, moral courage, economic strength, and political will, they may not be able to engage with rival viewpoints or philosophies on their own terms or on terms with which they feel comfortable.

Conclusion

This paper has tried to argue that Muslims need to provide greater intellectual input into the debates concerning

development and globalization. While some work has been done on the former subject—development—little if anything contribution has been made to the latter—globalization. Criticisms of globalization emanating from the Muslim world have been limited to the realm of politics (anti-West rhetoric) and economics (Third-Worldist views). The limited Muslim response, moreover, has been neither holistic nor multidimensional. In the area of Islamic economics, considered the most advanced of contemporary Islamic social sciences, there has been both internal and external criticism pointing to the lack of a philosophy of Islamic economics (Nasr, 1992). Efforts at developing Islamic economics have not proceeded from an Islamic framework, have not generated a distinctive body of theories and models, and have not employed "indigenous" tools and modes of logic and thought. Consequently, instead of emerging as an independent, interdisciplinary approach to building economic structures, Islamic economics has ended up as a "sub-discipline of Western economics" (Sardar, 1988). Some, like Kuran (1993), see Islamic economics merely as an economic manifestation of Islamic fundamentalism, lacking any serious and coherent intellectual content.

In a Kuala Lumpur conference held in August 1999 on economic development, Muslim cooperation, and globalization, contributors acknowledged that Muslim countries need to achieve a higher degree of integration in order to solve the economic issues facing them and that they should do so without creating the perception of resorting to regional protectionism. While not playing the globalization game could be an increasingly costly alternative for Muslims, their playing the game with its present rules could lead to the sacrifice of some of their fundamental values and principles. Putting forward their own game would require immense intellectual effort and political will on the part of Muslims, while trying to modify the rules of the present game would set them several challenges,

especially in view of the existing power structure of international politics and economics.

The way forward has to be one of dialogue rather than one of confrontation between civilizations. Muslims must find solutions that somehow combine the modern with the traditional. They must know themselves, and they must know the Other—with which they must engage and interact.

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Review Essay

Scholarship or Sophistry? A Review of Bernard Lewis's *What Went Wrong?*

M. Shahid Alam[*]

It would appear from the fulsome praise heaped by mainstream reviewers on Bernard Lewis's most recent and well-timed book, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*, that the demand for Orientalism has reached a new peak.[1] America's search for new enemies that began soon after the end of the Cold War very quickly resurrected the ghost of an old, though now decrepit, enemy, Islam. Slowly but surely, this revived the sagging fortunes of Orientalism, so that it speaks again with the treble voice of authority.

The mainstream reviewers describe Bernard Lewis as "the doyen of Middle Eastern studies," the "father" of Islamic studies, "[a]rguably the West's most distinguished scholar on the Middle East," and "[a] Sage for the Age."[2] It would appear that Lewis is

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[1]Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[2]The first three quotes are from the *New York Times*, the *National Review*, and *Newsweek*, respectively, and are showcased on the Oxford University Press website: www.oup-usa.org/isbn/0195144201.html. The last quote is the title of an article from *Jewsweek*, 4 September 2002; available at www.jewsweek.com/
israel/092.htm.

still the reigning monarch of Orientalism, as he was some twenty-five years back when Edward Said, in his *Orientalism*, dissected and exposed the intentions, modalities, deceptions, and imperialist connections of this ideological enterprise.[3] This Orientalist tiger has not changed his stripes over the fifty-odd years that he has been honing his skills. Now, at the end of his long career—only coincidentally, also the peak—he presents the summation, the quintessence of his scholarship and wisdom on Islam and the Middle East, gathered and compressed in the pages of this slim book that sets out to explain what went wrong with Islamic history and that has so mesmerized reviewers on the right.

Who Is Bernard Lewis?

We will return to the book in a moment, but before that, we need to step back some twenty-five years and examine how Said, in *Orientalism*, has described this Orientalist tiger's stripes and his cunning ploys at concealment. Said gets to the nub of Lewis's Orientalist project when he writes that his "work purports to be liberal objective scholarship but is in reality very close to being propaganda *against* his subject material." Lewis's work is "aggressively ideological." He has dedicated his entire career, spanning more than five decades, to a "project to debunk, to whittle down, and to discredit the Arabs and Islam." Said writes:

> The core of Lewis's ideology about Islam is that it never changes, and his whole mission is to inform conservative segments of the Jewish reading public, and anyone else who cares to listen, that any political, historical, and scholarly account of Muslims must begin and end with the fact that Muslims are Muslims.

[3]Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978).

Although Lewis's objectives are ominous, his methods are quite subtle; he prefers to work "by suggestion and insinuation." In order to disarm his readers and win their trust and admiration, he delivers frequent "sermons on the objectivity, the fairness, the impartiality of a real historian." This is only a cover, a camouflage, for his political propaganda. Once he is seated on his high Orientalist perch, he goes about cleverly insinuating how Islam is deficient in and opposed to universal values, which, of course, always originate in the West. It is because of this deficiency in values that Arabs have trouble accepting a democratic Israel—it is always "democratic" Israel. Lewis can write "objectively" about the Arab's "ingrained" opposition to Israel without ever telling his readers that Israel is an imperialist creation and an expansionist, colonial-settler state that was founded on terror, wars, and ethnic cleansing. Lewis's work on Islam represents the "culmination of Orientalism as a dogma that not only degrades its subject matter but also blinds its practitioners."[4]

Lewis's scholarly mask slips off rather abruptly when he appears on television, a feat that he accomplishes with predictable regularity. Once he is on the air, his polemical self, the Orientalist crouching tiger, takes over, all his sermons about objectivity forgotten, and then he does not shrink from displaying his sneering contempt for the Arabs and Muslims more generally, his blind partisanship for Israel, or his bristling hostility toward Iran. One recent example will suffice here. In a PBS interview broadcast on 16 April 2002, hosted by Charlie Rose, he offered this gem: "Asking Arafat to give up terrorism would be like asking Tiger to give up golf."[5] That is a statement

[4]All the quotes are taken from Said, 314-320.

[5]Jay Nordlinger, "Arafat and Tiger, Nimoy and Shatner, Reagan and Wayne, &c.," *National Review Online*, 2 May 2002; available at www.nationalreview.com/impromptus/impromptus050202.asp.

whose malicious intent and vindictive meanness might have been excusable if it came from an official Israeli spokesman.

After this background check, do we really want to hear from this "sage" about "what went wrong" with Islamic societies, or why, after nearly a thousand years of expansive power and world leadership in many branches of the arts and sciences, they began to lose their élan, their military advantage, and their creativity and, starting in the nineteenth century, capitulated to their historical adversary, the West? And, though Islamic societies have regained their political independence, why has their economic and cultural decline proved so difficult to reverse? Yet, although our stomachs turn at the prospect, we must sample the gruel Lewis offers, taste it, and analyze it, if only to identify the toxins that it contains and that have poisoned far too many Western minds for more than fifty years.

Where Is the Context?

What went wrong with the Islamic societies? When this question is asked by our "doyen of Middle Eastern studies," especially when it is asked right after the attacks of 11 September, it is hard not to notice that this manner of framing the problem of the eclipse of Islamic societies by the West is loaded with biases, value judgments, and preconceptions and even contains its own answer. There are two sets of "wrongs" in *What Went Wrong*? The first consists of "wrongs," deviations from what is just and good, that we confront in contemporary Islamic societies: Lewis undoubtedly has in mind a whole slew of problems, including the political, economic, and cultural failings of the Islamic world. In addition, this question seeks to discover deeper "wrongs," deviations from what is just and good that are prior to and at the root of the present "wrongs." Lewis is concerned primarily with this second set of "wrongs."

The first problem one encounters in Lewis's narrative of Middle Eastern decline is the absence of any context. He seeks to create the impression that the failure of Islam to catch up with the accelerating pace of changes in Western Europe is a problem specific to this region; there is no attempt to locate this problem in a global context. This exclusive Middle Eastern focus reveals to all but the blinkered the *mala fides* of *What Went Wrong?* Lewis cannot hide behind pious claims that a historian's "loyalties may well influence his choice of subject of research; they should not influence his treatment of it."[6] His exclusive focus on the decline of the Middle East is not legitimate precisely because it is designed to—and it unavoidably must—"influence his treatment of it."

Once Western Europe began to make the transition from a feudal-agrarian to a capitalist-industrial society, starting in the sixteenth century, the millennial balance of power among the world's major civilizations shifted inexorably in favor of Western Europe. A society that was shifting to a capitalist-industrial base, capable of cumulative growth, commanded greater social power than slow-growing societies still operating on feudal-agrarian foundations. Under the circumstances, it was unlikely that non-Western societies could simultaneously alter their foundations while also fending off attacks from Western states whose social power was expanding at an ever-increasing rate. Even as these feudal-agrarian societies sought to reorganize their economies and institutions, Western onslaughts against them deepened, and this made their reorganization increasingly difficult. It is scarcely surprising that the growing asymmetry between the two sides eventually led to the eclipse, decline, or subjugation of nearly *all* non-Western societies.

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[6]Bernard Lewis, *Islam in History: Ideas, Men and Events in the Middle East* (London: Alcove Press, 1973), 65.

While Lewis studiously avoids any reference to this disequalizing dynamic, another Western historian of Islam, not driven by a compulsion "to debunk, to whittle down, and to discredit the Arabs and Islam," understood this tendency quite well. I am referring here to Marshall Hodgson, whose *The Venture of Islam* shows a deep and, for its time, rare understanding of the interconnectedness, across space and time, amongst all societies in the Eastern Hemisphere. He understood very clearly that the epochal changes under way in parts of Western Europe between 1600 and 1800 were creating an altogether new order based on markets, capital accumulation, and technological changes, which acted upon one another to produce cumulative growth. Moreover, this endowed the most powerful Western states with a degree of social power that no one could resist. Hodgson writes:

> Hence, the Western Transmutation, once it got well under way, could neither be paralleled independently nor be borrowed wholesale. Yet it could not, in most cases, be escaped. The millennial parity of social power broke down, with results that were disastrous everywhere.[7]

Clearly, Lewis's presentation of his narrative of Middle Eastern decline without any context is a ploy. His objective is to whittle down world history, to reduce it to a primordial contest between two historical adversaries, the West and Islam. This is historiography in the crusading mode, one that purports to resume the Crusades—interrupted in the thirteenth century—and carry them to their unfinished conclusion, the triumph of the West or, conversely, the humiliation and defeat of Middle Eastern Islam. Once this framework has been established, with its exclusive focus on a failing Islamic civilization, it is quite easy

[7]Marshall Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*: *Conscience and History in a World Civilization*, 3 volumes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 3:200.

to cast the narrative of this decay as a uniquely Islamic phenomenon, which must then be explained in terms of specifically Islamic failures. Thus, Lewis's agenda in *What Went Wrong?* is to discover all that was and is "wrong" with Islamic societies and to explain their decline and present troubles in terms of these "wrongs."

If Lewis had an interest in exploring the decline of the Middle East, he would be asking why the new, more dynamic historical system that lay behind the rise of the West had not emerged in the Middle East, India, China, Italy, or Africa. If he had asked this question, it may have directed him to the source and origins of Western hegemony. But Lewis ducks this issue altogether. Instead, he takes the growing power of the West—its advances in science and technology—as the starting point of his narrative and concentrates on demonstrating why the efforts of Islamic societies to catch up with the West were both too little and too late. In other words, he seeks to explain a generic phenomenon—the overthrow of agrarian societies before the rise of a new historical system based on capital, markets, and technological change—as one that is specific to Islam and is due to specifically Islamic "wrongs."[8]

If one focuses only on the Middle Eastern response to the Western challenge, it does appear to be too little and too late. The Ottoman Empire, once the most powerful in the Islamic world, had lost nearly all its European territories by the end of the nineteenth century, and the remnants of its Arab territories were lost after its defeat in the First World War. At this point, the Ottoman Empire had been reduced to a rump state in northern Anatolia, with the British and French occupying Istanbul, the Greeks pushing to occupy central Anatolia, the Armenians extending their boundaries in eastern Anatolia, and

[8]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 151-152.

the French pushing north in Silesia. Yet, after defeating the Greeks, the French, and the Armenians, the victorious Turks managed to establish in 1922 a new and modern Turkish nation-state over Istanbul, Thrace, and all of Anatolia. The Iranians were more successful in preserving their territories, though, like the Ottomans, they too had lost control over their economic policies in the first decades of the nineteenth century. However, if one compares these outcomes with the fate suffered by other regions—barring Japan, China, and Thailand, nearly all of Asia and Africa was directly colonized by the Europeans—one has to conclude that the results for the Middle East could have been worse.

Uncurious Ottomans

There is even less substance to Lewis's claims about Middle Eastern inertia in the face of Western threats, especially when we compare their responses to these threats with the record of East Asian societies.[9]

First, consider Lewis's charge that the Muslims showed little curiosity about the West. He attributes this failing to Muslim

[9]Unlike the Islamic world, China, Korea, and, after an early period of openness, Japan pursued a policy of minimal contact with Western nations. After 1760, China restricted all foreign trade to one port, Canton, where foreigners were permitted to reside only during the trading season, which lasted from October to March. Starting in 1637, Korea banned all contacts with foreigners, except the Chinese, a policy that earned it the reputation of the Hermit Kingdom. In the same year, Japan's trading contacts with Western nations were restricted to one annual visit by a Dutch ship to the tiny island of Deshima. China did not open additional ports to foreign trade until after her defeat in the Opium Wars (1840-1842); the Japanese opening was forced in 1850; and Korea did not open her doors to Western nations until 1882. William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 643-648; Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1999), 121.

bigotry that frowned upon contacts with the infidels.[10] This is a curious charge against "a world civilization" that Lewis admits was "polyethnic, multiracial, international, one might even say intercontinental."[11] It also seems strange that the Ottomans, and other Middle Eastern states before them, were quite happy to employ their Christian and Jewish subjects—as high officials, diplomats, physicians, and bankers—traded with the Europeans, bought arms and borrowed money from them, and yet, somehow, loathed learning anything from the same infidels. In addition, Muslim philosophers, historians, and travelers have left several very valuable accounts of non-Islamic societies. One of these, Biruni's monumental study of India, still remains without a rival for its encyclopedic coverage, objectivity, and sympathy for its subject. Clearly, Lewis has fallen prey to the Orientalist temptation: when something demands a carefully researched explanation, an understanding of material and social conditions, better pin it on some cultural propensity.

Lewis is little aware how his book is littered with contradictions. If Muslims were not a little curious about developments in the West, it is odd that the oldest map of the Americas—which dates from 1513 and is the most accurate map from the sixteenth century—was prepared by Piri Reis, a Turkish admiral and cartographer.[12] It would also appear that the number

[10]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, chapter 2.
[11]Ibid., 6.
[12]Gregory McIntosh, *The Piri Reis Map of Europe* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 2000). Lewis creates the impression that once this map had been drawn, it was deposited in the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, "where it remained, unconsulted and unknown" until it was discovered in 1929 (*What Went Wrong?*, 37). There is no basis for this assertion. In fact, Reis prepared two maps of the world, one in 1513 and another in 1528; besides these, he drew many other charts and maps that were assembled into a book, *Kitab-i-Behriye* (Book of the Sea), which was made available in two editions. See

of Muslims who had left accounts of their observations on Europe were not such a rarity either. Lewis himself mentions no fewer than ten names, nearly all of them Ottomans, spanning the period from 1665 to 1840, and this is far from an exhaustive list. One of them, Ratib Effendi, who was in Vienna from 1791 to 1792, left a report that "ran to 245 manuscript folios, ten times or more than ten times those of his predecessors, and it goes into immense detail, primarily on military matters, but also, to quite a considerable extent, on civil affairs."[13] Diplomatic contacts provide another indicator of the early growth of Ottoman interest and involvement in the affairs of European states. Between 1703 and 1774, the Ottomans signed sixty-eight treaties or agreements with sovereign, mostly European, states.[14] Since each treaty must have involved at least one diplomatic exchange, the Ottomans could hardly be accused of neglecting diplomatic contacts with Europe.

According to Lewis, the Ottoman decision not to challenge the Portuguese hegemony in the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century was a failure of vision. Despite some early warnings from elder statesmen, the Ottomans did not anticipate that the Portuguese incursion would translate some 250 years later into a broader and more serious European challenge to their power. As a result, they chose to concentrate their war efforts on acquiring territory in Europe, which, Lewis claims, they saw as "the principal battleground between Islam and Europe, the rival faiths competing for enlightenment—and mastery—of the world."[15] It is of no interest to Lewis that the Ottomans, departing from their

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Gregory McIntosh, "A Tale of Two Admirals," *Mercator's World: The Magazine of Maps, Atlases, Globes, and Charts* (May-June 2000).

[13]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 27.

[14]Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 75.

[15]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 15.

own tradition of land warfare, had built a powerful navy starting in the fifteenth century and created a seaborne empire in the eastern Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and the Red Sea. If the Ottomans chose to concentrate their resources on land wars in Central Europe rather than challenge Portuguese hegemony in the Indian Ocean, this was not the result of some religious zealotry. It reflected the balance of class interests in the Ottoman political structure. In an empire that had traditionally been land-based, the interests of the landowning classes prevailed against commercial interests that looked to the Indian Ocean for their livelihood. Although the decision not to contest the Portuguese presence in the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century was fateful, that policy was rational for the Ottomans.[16]

A Military Decline?

Several Orientalists—Lewis amongst them[17]—have argued that the military decline of the Ottoman Empire became irreversible after its second failed siege of Vienna in 1683 or, perhaps earlier, after its naval defeat at Lepanto in 1571. In an earlier work, Lewis declared that "[t]he Ottomans found it more and more difficult to keep up with the rapidly advancing Western technological innovations, and in the course of the eighteenth century the Ottoman Empire, itself far ahead of the Islamic world, fell decisively behind Europe in virtually all arts of war."[18]

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[16]Andrew C. Hess, "The Evolution of the Ottoman Seabourne Empire in the Age of the Oceanic Discoveries, 1453-1525," in *The Global Opportunity*, ed. Felipe Fernández-Armesto (Variorum, 1995), 218. The Ottoman decision should not be imputed to any impossibility of acquiring the naval technology; the North Africans managed to do this toward the end of the sixteenth century (Hess, 222).

[17]*What Went Wrong?*, 151.

[18]Bernard Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1982), 226.

This thesis of an early and inexorable decline has now been convincingly questioned. Jonathan Grant has shown that the Ottomans occupied the third tier in the hierarchy of military technology, behind innovators and exporters, at the beginning of the fifteenth century; they could reproduce the latest military technology with the help of foreign expertise, but they never graduated into export or introduced any significant innovations. The Ottomans succeeded in maintaining this relative position, through two waves of technology diffusion, until the early nineteenth century. However, they failed to keep up with the third wave of technology diffusion, based upon the technology of the industrial revolution, that began in the mid-nineteenth century. The Ottomans fell below their third-tier status only toward the end of the nineteenth century, when they became totally dependent on imported weaponry.[19]

If we put together the evidence made available by Lewis,[20] it becomes clear that the Ottomans were not slow in recognizing the institutional superiority enjoyed by Europe's military. A debate about the causes of Ottoman weakness began after the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699, growing more intense over time. A document from the early seventeenth century recognized that "it was no longer sufficient, as in the past, to adopt Western weapons. It was also necessary to adopt Western training, structures, and tactics for their effective use." The Ottomans began to dispatch special envoys to European capitals "with instructions to observe and to learn and, more particularly, to report on anything that might be useful to the Muslim state in coping with its difficulties and confronting its enemies." Several of these envoys wrote reports, occasionally quite extensive and

[19]Jonathan Grant, "Rethinking the Ottoman "Decline": Military Technology Diffusion in the Ottoman Empire, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries," *Journal of World History* 10 (1999), 1:179-201.
[20]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 20, 25-29.

detailed, on their European visits, and these reports had an important impact on thinking in Ottoman circles. The first mathematical school for the military was founded in 1734, and a second one followed in the 1770s.

While Ottoman military technology generally kept pace with the advances in Europe, at least into the first decades of the nineteenth century, it took the Ottomans longer to introduce organizational changes in the military since they ran into powerful social obstacles. As a result, the first serious attempts at modernizing the army did not begin until the late eighteenth century, during the reign of Selim III, who sought to bypass the problems of reforming the existing military corps by recruiting and training a new European-style army. Although, by 1806, he had raised a modern army of nearly twenty-five thousand, he had to abandon his efforts in the face of resistance from the ulama and a Janissary rebellion. The task of modernizing the Ottoman army was taken up again in 1826 after the Janissary corps was disbanded, and in two years, the new Ottoman army included seventy-five thousand regular troops. Simultaneously, the Ottomans introduced reforms in the bureaucracy and also reformed land-tenure policies with the objective of raising revenues.[21]

And yet, these efforts at modernizing the Ottoman military—quite early by most standards—failed to avert the progressive fragmentation and eventual demise of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I. One might join Hodgson in thinking that this was inevitable, that agrarian societies in Asia and Africa could not modernize fast enough in the face of the ever-increasing economic and military power of the modern

[21]Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993), 58, and J. C. Hurewitz, "The Beginnings of Military Modernization in the Middle East: A Comparative Analysis," *Middle East Journal* 22 (1968), 2:149.

Western nation-states.[22] Perhaps this assessment is too fatalistic, and it is contradicted by the case of—among others—Russia, which was spared colonization or subjection to open-door treaties. A comparison of the two quickly reveals that the Ottomans' efforts at modernization were undermined by several extraneous factors. The Ottoman Empire, which straddled three continents, lacked the compactness that might have made its territories more defensible. What proved more fatal to the Ottoman Empire was the fact that the Ottoman Turks, though they constituted its ethnic core, made up less than a third of its population and occupied an even smaller part of its territories. Once nationalism reared its head in the nineteenth century, the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire was well-nigh unavoidable. The Ottomans faced one insurrection after another in the Balkans, each backed by some European power, until the last of these territories had broken free in the early decades of the twentieth century. Not only did these insurrections reduce the revenues of the empire, but by diverting its attention and resources to war, they delayed the modernization of the military and economy. Eventually, during World War I, the Arab territories of the empire were wrested away by the British and French with support from Arab nationalists.

The Egyptian program to modernize its military, started in 1815 under the leadership of Muhammad Ali, was more ambitious and more successful. It was part of an integrated program of modernization and industrial development financed through state ownership of lands, development of new export crops, and state-owned monopolies over the marketing of the major agricultural products. In 1831, Egypt's Europeanized army consisted of one hundred thousand officers and men, and in

[22]Lewis, of course, argues in *What Went Wrong?* that the modernization did not go far enough because of fundamental flaws in Islamic institutions. We will return to this argument.

1833, having conquered Syria, it was penetrating deep into Anatolia when its march was halted by Russian naval intervention. When the Ottomans resumed the Syrian war in 1839, the Egyptians routed the Ottoman forces and were rapidly marching westward, poised to capture Istanbul for Muhammad Ali.[23] At this point, all the great European powers, except France, intervened, forcing the Egyptians to withdraw, give up their acquisitions in Syria and Arabia, reduce their military force to eighteen thousand, and enforce the Anglo-Ottoman Commercial Convention, which required the lowering of tariffs to 3 percent and the dismantling of all state monopolies.[24] By depriving Egypt of its revenues and dramatically reducing the military's demand for its manufactures, these measures abruptly terminated the career of the earliest and most ambitious program to build a modern, industrial society in the periphery.

Lewis faults the Ottomans and Egyptians of the nineteenth century for seeking to build an effective military response on the foundations of a modern industrial economy. He thinks it odd that these countries "tried to catch up with Europe by building factories, principally to equip and clothe their armies."[25] Apparently, Lewis is unaware that the Ottomans—and especially Egypt—were breaking new ground in their efforts to modernize their manufactures, a road that would soon be taken by most European countries. Nearly every country that lagged behind in the nineteenth century and was forced to catch up with Britain built its strategy around industrialization, and the military in many of these countries formed an important initial market for

[23]The Egyptian superiority during the Syrian campaigns was quite decisive; they won easy victories even when they were outnumbered two to one. David Ralston, *Importing the European Army* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 89.
[24]Hurewitz, 145-48.
[25]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 46-47.

their nascent industries. Of course, Lewis had no choice but to demean the military and industrial responses to the Western threat. As we will see, he believes that the Ottomans should have been working harder to remedy their cultural deficiencies, such as their less-than-enthusiastic appreciation for European harmonies.

Industrial Failure—But Why?

Lewis declares that the industrialization programs launched by the Ottomans and Egypt "failed, and most of the early factories became derelict."[26] These programs were doomed from the outset because their promoters lacked a proper regard for time, measurement, harmonies, secularism, and women's rights—values upon which Western industrial success was founded.

We must correct these jaundiced observations. Far from being a failure, the Egyptian "program of industrialization and military expansion," according to Immanuel Wallerstein, "seriously undermined the Ottoman Empire and almost established a powerful state in the Middle East capable eventually of playing a major role in the interstate system."[27] Muhammad Ali's fiscal and economic reforms, between 1805 and 1847, brought about a more than ninefold increase in government revenues.[28] At their height in the 1830s, Egypt's state monopolies had made investments worth $12 million and employed thirty thousand workers in a broad range of industries that included foundries, textiles, paper, chemicals, shipyards, glassware, and

[26]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 145-148.
[27]Immanuel Wallerstein, *Unthinking Social Science: The Limits of Nineteenth Century Paradigms* (London: Polity Press, 1991), 14.
[28]Helen Anne B. Rivlin, *The Agricultural Policy of Muhammad Ali in Egypt* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), 120.

arsenals.[29] By the early 1830s, Egyptian arsenals and naval yards had acquired the ability to "produce appreciable amounts of warships, guns and munitions," elevating Egypt "to a major regional power."[30] Naturally, these developments in Egypt were raising concerns in British government circles. A report submitted to the British Foreign Office in 1837 sounded the right note: "A manufacturing country Egypt never can become—or at least for ages."[31] Three years later, when Istanbul was within the grasp of Muhammad Ali's forces, a coalition of European powers intervened to roll back his gains, downsize his military, and dismantle his state monopolies. These measures successfully reversed the periphery's first industrial revolution.

The Ottomans launched an ambitious program of industrialization in the early 1840s, but it had little chance of success and was abandoned within a few years of its inauguration. Since the early nineteenth century, the unequal treaties limited the Ottomans to import tariffs under 3 percent, severely limiting their ability to protect their manufacturers or raise revenues for investments in development projects. In 1838, the Anglo-Turkish Commercial Convention forced the Ottomans to dismantle all state monopolies, dealing another blow to their fiscal autonomy. It speaks to the determination of the Ottomans that they sought to launch an industrial revolution despite their adverse fiscal circumstances. In the decade starting in 1841, the Ottomans had set up, to the west of Istanbul, a complex of state-owned industries that included spinning and weaving mills, a foundry, steam-operated machine works, and a

[29]M. Shahid Alam, *Poverty from the Wealth of Nations* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000), 115.
[30]John Dunn, "Egypt's Nineteenth-Century Armaments Industry," *The Journal of Military History* 61 (1997), 2:236.
[31]L. S. Stavrianos, *Global Rift: The Third World Comes of Age* (New York: William Morrow, 1981), 218.

boatyard for the construction of small steamships. In the words of Edward Clark: "In variety as well as in number, in planning, in investment, and in attention given to internal sources of raw materials these manufacturing enterprises far surpassed the scope of all previous efforts and mark this period as unique in Ottoman history."[32] Several foreign observers saw in the Istanbul industrial complex the potential to evolve into "a Turkish Manchester and Leeds, a Turkish Birmingham and Sheffield," all wrapped in one.[33] In addition, other modern industrial, mining, and agricultural projects were initiated during the same period in several other parts of the Ottoman Empire. But these grand projects could not be sustained for long. Once the Crimean War started, the Ottomans were forced to borrow heavily from foreign banks, and before long, strapped for funds, they abandoned most of these industrial projects. Thus ended another bold experiment in industrialization, early even by European standards, but whose failure was linked to the loss of Ottoman fiscal sovereignty.

It's in Their Culture

According to Lewis, the real culprit behind the political, economic, and military failures of the Middle East over the past half a millennium was Muslim culture. Lewis identifies a whole slew of problematic cultural traits, but two are singled out for special attention: the mixing of religion and politics and the unequal treatment of women, unbelievers, and slaves. Both, according to Lewis, are Islamic flaws.

Lewis argues that secularism constitutes a great divide between Islam and the West: the West always had it, and Islamic

[32]Edward Clark, "The Ottoman Industrial Revolution," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5 (1974), 1:67.
[33]Ibid., 68.

societies never did. Secularism, as the separation of church and state, "is, in a profound sense, Christian." Its origins go back to Jesus—his injunction to give God *and* Caesar, each, their due—and to the early history of the Christians when, as a minority persecuted by the Roman state, they developed the institutions of the Church with its "own laws and courts, its own hierarchy and chain of authority." This was quite unique, setting Europe apart from anything that went before and from its competitors. In particular, the Muslims never created an "institution corresponding to, or even remotely resembling, the Church in Christendom."[34]

These claims about a secular Christendom—an oxymoron in itself—and a theocratic Islam are problematic. Lewis rests his case upon two propositions. First, he contrasts the presence of the Church in Christendom against its absence in Islamic societies. Second, he works on the presumption that the existence of a Church, a hierarchical religious organization different from the state, necessarily implies a separation between religion and political authority. For the most part, these claims are contestable.

The existence of a Church in Christendom is not in dispute, but the contention that there existed nothing like it in Islamic societies is contradicted by history. The Prophet and the first four caliphs combined religious and mundane authority in their persons. In addition, most Islamic thinkers have maintained that the ideal Islamic state, modeled after the state in Medina, must be guided by the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah. The Islamic practice in the centuries following the pious caliphs, however, departed quite sharply from the canonical model as well as the theory.

[34]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 96.

In one of his numerous attempts at distortion, Lewis asserts that the "pietists" retreated into "radical opposition or quietist withdrawal" when they failed to impose "ecclesiastical constraints on political and military authority."[35] This is only part of the picture. In the bigger picture, we find that the pietists turned vigorously to scholarship. Starting from scratch and independently of state authority and without state funding, the early pietists developed the Islamic sciences, which included the Traditions of the Prophet, biographies of the Prophet and his companions, Arabic grammar, and theology. Most significantly, these pious scholars elaborated several competing systems of Islamic laws—regulating every aspect of individual, social, and business life—on the premise that legislative authority was vested in the consensus of the pious scholars—or, in the case of Shi'ites, in the rulings of the imams. The state had executive powers, but it possessed no legislative authority. In effect, Islam had evolved not only separate political and religious institutions, but separate executive and legislative powers as well. It was the pious scholars—with their competing schools of jurisprudence—who constituted the informal legislatures of Islam long before these institutions had evolved in Europe.[36]

Lewis's second proposition—that separation between religion and political authority flows from the presence of a Church—is equally dubious. There can be no separation between religion and political authority if religion is organized into a Church with power over the lives of people. If the Church itself commands power, it becomes, *ipso facto*, a rival of the state. It

[35]Ibid., 99.

[36]Lapidus writes that since the middle of the tenth century, "Muslim states were fully differentiated political bodies without any intrinsic religious character, though they were officially loyal to Islam and committed to its defense." Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 364.

follows that the Church can and will exercise its power directly to regulate the religious, economic, and social affairs of the community and indirectly by using the state for its own ends. Once Christianity became the official religion of the Roman state, the Church progressively increased its power: it used the power of the state to eliminate or marginalize all competing religions; it gained the exclusive right to define all religious dogma and rituals; it acquired properties, privileges, and exclusive control over education; it expanded its legislative control over different spheres of society. In time, since the Church and state recruited their higher personnel from the same classes, they also developed an identity of class interests. In other words, although they remained organizationally distinct, the Church and the state mixed religion and politics.

One expects that a separation of religion and political authority would produce a measure of tolerance. Yet, the adoption of Christianity as its official creed led the Roman state, hitherto tolerant of all religious communities, to inaugurate a regime of growing intolerance toward other religions and even toward any dissent within Christianity. As Daniel Schowalter says, "By the end of the fourth century, both anti-pagan and anti-Jewish legislation would serve as licenses for the increasing number of acts of vandalism and violent destruction directed against pagan and Jewish places of worship carried out by Christian mobs, often at the instigation of the local clergy."[37] Although the practice of Judaism was not banned, by the end of the fourth century, a variety of decrees prohibited conversion to Judaism, ownership by Jews of non-Jewish slaves, and marriage between Jews and Christians, and Jews were excluded from most

[37]Daniel N. Schowalter, "Churches in the Context: The Jesus Movement in the Roman World," in *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*, ed. Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 570.

imperial offices.[38] In dogma, theology, legislation, and practice, the Church and state crafted a regime that suppressed paganism and marginalized all other non-Christian forms of worship.

According to Lewis, modernization in Islamic societies was set back by a second set of cultural barriers—namely, the inferior status of unbelievers, slaves, and, especially, women. It is not that these groups labored under stricter restraints than their counterparts in Europe, but that their unequal status was "sacrosanct" in that they "were seen as part of the structure of Islam, buttressed by revelation, by the precept and practice of the Prophet, and by the classical and scriptural history of the Islamic community." As a result, these three inequalities have endured; they were not challenged even by the radical Islamic movements that arose from time to time to protest social and economic inequalities.[39]

Lewis's claims are problematic for several reasons. The first problem is their lack of historicity. Implicitly, Lewis bases his case on a reading of European history that inverts causation between economic development and social equality. He would have us believe that Europeans developed because their flexible legal systems moved faster to create a more egalitarian society, a necessary basis for rapid progress. This shows a curious indifference to chronology. In the course of establishing its global capitalist empire, Europe conducted the Inquisition, expelled the Moors and Jews from Spain, waged unending religious wars, burnt witches at the stake, and granted few legal rights to women. In addition, they were creating in the Americas economic systems based on slavery that would be abolished only after the 1860s. In Russia, serfdom remained the basis of the economy at least until the 1860s. The equality Lewis speaks of began to arrive in slow increments at the beginning of the

[38]Ibid., 582-583.
[39]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 83-84.

nineteenth century, and it was a byproduct of economic development, not its precursor.

Lewis's claims about inequalities in Muslim societies lack historicity on another score. It is a bit surprising that "the doyen of Middle Eastern studies," who has spent more than fifty years studying the history of the region, is unaware of at least a few challenges to the alleged inferior status of women or unbelievers. In the early centuries of Islam, there were at least three groups—the Kharijis, the Qarmatians, and the Sufis—that did not accept the legal interpretations of the four traditional schools of Islamic law as sacrosanct. Instead, they looked for inspiration to the Qur'anic precepts on the moral and spiritual equality of men and women, claiming that the early applications of these precepts were time-bound. The Kharijis and Qarmatians rejected concubinage and child marriage, and the Qarmatians went further in rejecting polygamy and the veil. In a similar spirit, the Sufis welcomed women travelers on the spiritual path, permitting women "to give a central place in their lives to their spiritual vocation."[40] In sixteenth-century India, the Mughal emperor Akbar abolished the *jizyah* (the poll tax imposed by Islamic law on all non-Muslims), banned child marriage, and repealed a law that forced Islam on prisoners of war.[41]

The "most profound single difference" between Islam and the West, however, concerns the status of women. In particular, Lewis argues that Islam permits polygamy and concubinage and that the Christian churches prohibit it.[42] Once again, Lewis is exaggerating the differences. In nearly all societies, not excluding the Western, men of wealth and power have always had access to

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[40]Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 66-67.

[41]Ahrar Ahmad, *Islam and Democracy: Text, Traditions, History* (Black Hills State University, Fall 2001, mimeo), 25.

[42]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 66.

multiple sexual partners, although within different legal frameworks. Islam gave equal rights to all the free sexual partners of men as well as to their children. The West, driven by a concern for primogeniture, adopted an opposite solution by vesting all the rights in a man's primary sexual partner and her offspring. All the other sexual partners—a man's mistresses—and their children had no legal rights.[43] Arguably, Europe's mistresses might think that the Islamic practice favored women.

It would appear from Lewis's emphasis on polygamy and concubinage that they were very common in Islamic societies. In fact, both were quite rare outside the ruling class; this is attested to by, among others, European visitors to eighteenth-century Aleppo and nineteenth-century Cairo. A study of documents relating to two thousand estates in seventeenth-century Turkey could identify only twenty cases of polygamy. Keeping concubines was most likely even rarer.[44]

Lewis quotes from the reports of Muslim visitors who were startled to see European men curtsying to women in public places; this is supposed to validate the "striking contrasts" in women's status in Europe and Islam.[45] Once the bowing and curtsying are done, we need to compare the property rights enjoyed by women in Europe and Islam, a quite reliable index of the social power of women both inside and outside the household. In this matter, too, it is the Muslim women who had the advantage until quite recently. Unlike her European counterpart, a married Muslim woman could own property, and she enjoyed exclusive rights to income from her property as well as the wages she earned. In Britain, the most advanced country in

[43]Marshall G. S. Hodgson, "Cultural Patterning in Islamdom and the Occident," in *Rethinking World History*, ed. Edmund Burke III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 155.
[44]Ahmed, 107-108.
[45]Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 65.

Europe, married women did not acquire the right to own property until 1882.

The ownership of property gave Muslim women a measure of social power that was not available to women in Europe. A Muslim woman of independent means had a stronger hand in marriage: she could initiate a divorce or craft a marriage contract that prevented her husband from taking another wife. Muslim women often engaged in trading activities, buying and selling property, lending money, or renting out stores. They created *waqfs*, charitable foundations financed by earnings from property, which they also administered. A small number of women distinguished themselves as scholars of the religious sciences. According to one report from the early nineteenth century, women attended al-Azhar, the leading university in the Islamic world. Ahmed concludes, on the basis of such evidence, that Muslim "women were not, after all, the passive creatures, wholly without material resources or legal rights, that the Western world once imagined them to be."[46]

What Went Wrong?

In an earlier era, before the Zionists developed a proprietary right in Palestine, the least bigoted voices in the field of Oriental studies were often those of European Jews. Ironically, Lewis himself has written that these pro-Islamic Jews "were among the first who attempted to present Islam to European readers as Muslims themselves see it and to stress, to recognize, and indeed sometimes to romanticize the merits and achievements of Muslim civilization in its great days."[47] At a time when most Orientalists took Muhammad for a scheming imposter, equated

[46]Ahmed, 111.

[47]Bernard Lewis, "The Pro-Islamic Jews," in *Islam in History: Ideas, People, and Events in the Middle East* (Chicago: Open Court, 1993), 12.

Islam with fanaticism, thought that the Qur'an was a crude and incoherent text, and believed that the Arabs were incapable of abstract thought, a growing number of Jewish scholars often took opposite positions. They accepted the sincerity of Muhammad's mission, described Arabs as "Jews on horseback" and Islam as an evolving faith that was more democratic than other religions, and debunked Orientalist claims about a static Islam and a dynamic West.[48] It would appear that these Jews were anti-Orientalists long before Said.

These contrarian positions had a variety of motives behind them. Even as the Jews began to enter the European mainstream, starting in the nineteenth century, they were still outsiders, having only recently emerged from the confinement of ghettos, and it would be scarcely surprising if they were seeking to maintain their distinctiveness by emphasizing and identifying with the achievements of another Semitic people, the Arabs. In celebrating Arab civilization, these Jewish scholars were perhaps sending a none-too-subtle message to the Europeans that their civilization was not unique, that the Arab achievements often excelled theirs, and that Europeans were building upon Islamic achievements in science and philosophy. In addition, Jewish scholars' discussions of religious and racial tolerance in Islamic societies, toward Jews in particular, may have offered hope that such tolerance was attainable in Europe, too. The discussions may also have been an invitation to Europeans to incorporate religious and racial tolerance in their standards of civilization.

Yet the vigor of this early anti-Orientalism of Jewish scholars would not last; it would not survive the logic of the Zionist movement as it sought to create a Jewish state in Palestine. Such a state could only emerge as a child of Western imperialist

[48]Martin Kramer, ed., *The Jewish Discovery of Islam* (Tel Aviv: The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 1999), 1-48; available from http://www.geocities.com/martinkramerorg/JewishDiscovery.htm.

powers, and it could only come into existence by displacing the greater part of the Palestinian population, by incorporating them into an apartheid state, or through some combination of the two. In addition, once created, Israel could only survive as a military, expansionist, and hegemonic state, constantly at war with its neighbors. In other words, as the Zionist project gathered momentum, it was inevitable that the European Jews' attraction for Islam was not going to endure. In fact, it would be replaced by a bitter contest, one in which the Jews, as junior partners of the imperialist powers, would seek to deepen the Orientalist project in the service of Western power. Lewis played a leading part in this Jewish reorientation. In the words of one Zionist Orientalist, Lewis "came to personify the post-war shift from a sympathetic to a critical posture."[49]

Ironically, this shift occurred when many Orientalists had begun to shed their Christian prejudice against Islam, with several of them making amends for the excesses of their forebears. Another factor aiding this shift toward a less polemical Orientalism was the entry of a growing number of Arabs, both Muslim and Christian, into the field of Middle Eastern studies. The most visible upshot of these divergent trends was a polarization of the field of Middle Eastern studies into two opposing camps.[50] One camp, consisting mostly of Christians and Muslims, has sought to bring greater objectivity to their study of Islam and Islamic societies. They make an effort to locate Islamic societies in their historical context, arguing that Islamic responses to Western challenges have been diverse and evolving over time and do not derive from an innate hostility to the West or some unchanging Islamic mindset. The second camp,

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[49]Kramer (1999).

[50]For a recent evaluation of the conflict between the two camps, see Richard Bernstein, "Experts On Islam Pointing Fingers At One Another," *New York Times*, 3 November 2001, sec. A, 13.

now led mostly by Jews, has reverted to Orientalism's original mission of subordinating knowledge to Western power, now filtered through the prism of Zionist interests. This Zionist Orientalism has assiduously sought to paint Islam and Islamic societies as innately hostile to the West, modernism, democracy, tolerance, scientific advance, and women's rights.

This Zionist camp has been led for more than fifty years by Lewis, who has enjoyed an intimate relationship with power that would be the envy of the most distinguished Orientalists of an earlier generation. He has been strongly supported by a contingent of able lieutenants, whose ranks have included the likes of Elie Kedourie, David Pryce-Jones, Raphael Patai, Daniel Pipes, and Martin Kramer. There are many foot soldiers, too, who have provided distinguished service to this new Orientalism. No roster of these foot soldiers would be complete without the names of Thomas Friedman, Martin Peretz, Norman Podhoretz, Charles Krauthammer, William Kristol, and Judith Miller.

In my mind's eye, I try to visualize an encounter between this distinguished crowd and some of their eminent predecessors, like Hienrich Heine, Abraham Geiger, Gustav Weil, Franz Rosenthal, and the great Ignaz Goldziher. What would these pro-Islamic Jews have to say to their descendants, whose scholarship demeans and denigrates the societies they study? Would Geiger and Goldziher embrace Lewis and Kedourie, or would they be repelled by the latter's new brand of Zionist Orientalism?

Book Reviews

Ghulam Haider Aasi. *Muslim Understanding of Other Religions: A Study of Ibn Hazm's Kitab al-Fasl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwa' wa al-Nihal*. Islamabad: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Islamic Research Institute, 1999. Comparative Religion series, no. 1. xviii, 231 pages. ISBN 1-56564-092-6. Paperback. Price not indicated.

The encyclopedic scholar and theologian Ibn Hazm (d. 456/1064) continues to stimulate Islamic intellectual discourse, not least because of his seminal ideas on the many subjects on which he wrote. Aasi's work notably anticipates what is probably the most recent examination of Ibn Hazm's contribution to interfaith critique, namely, S. M. Behloul's *Ibn Hazm's Evangelienkritik: Eine methodische Untersuchung* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

With an illuminating foreword by Zafar. I. Ansari and an equally illuminating introduction by Tamara Sonn, Aasi's work sets out to further our understanding of the scholarly tradition of understanding the Other. The book consists of nine chapters and a rich bibliography. Chapters 1 and 2 are introductory, the former discussing the Qur'an and other religious traditions, the latter, Muslims' encounters with other religions. The life and political milieu of Ibn Hazm is the subject matter of Chapter 3, and it is here that the author establishes Ibn Hazm as the *facile princeps,* the first truly distinguished Muslim historian, of the religious ideas of mankind. chapter 4, the shortest in size but not in substance, is a remarkable introduction of *Kitab al-Fasl*, which,

by Philip Hitti's testimony, is the most valuable of Ibn Hazm's surviving works and, in the words of Ibn Hazm himself, the most comprehensive on sects, heterodoxies, and denominations (60). Chapter 5 presents the theoretical framework within which Ibn Hazm's approach, his utilization of material, and his analytical methods are to be seen, particularly in relation to his characterization of religious beliefs and doctrines. Ibn Hazm identifies observation, sense perception, and reason as the distinctive human faculties for comprehending the truth (65-67) and classifies all religious traditions and ideologies into six categories (78). In his classification of human religious traditions, Ibn Hazm puts Judaism in the sixth category, and, whether by coincidence or design, discussion on Judaism is the subject matter of the sixth chapter in Aasi's work. Ibn Hazm's thorough knowledge of the Torah is evidenced by his analytical discussion of the theory of abrogation—which constitutes a major disagreement between the Muslim and the Jewish traditions—and by his critique of the text of Hebrew Scriptures. It is not surprising that chapter 7, the longest in the book, treats Christianity. In this chapter, Aasi showcases Ibn Hazm's remarkable analytical acuity. He shows how Ibn Hazm debunked the concept of the Trinity by drawing on the Christian Testament and Christian rationalism and how, using the method of *reductio ad absurdum*, he showed the theory of incarnation to be a mere contrivance.[1] Chapter 8 deals with Asian religions, namely, Sabaeanism, and Manichaeanism/ Zoroastrianism, discussing their peculiarities and subsects. Ibn Hazm's familiarity with the religious systems of India and the Far East is also evidenced in this chapter. Chapter 9 presents conclusions of the study.

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[1]A recent study on incarnation is David Thomas, ed. and trans, *Early Muslim Polemic against Christianity: Abu Isa al-Warraq's "Against the Incarnation"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002; University of Cambridge Oriental Publications series, no. 59).

The main impetus for Muslims' study of "other peoples and their faiths comes from the Qur'an."[2] The pristine unity of the human race, hence, of faith; the monolithic nature of the Abrahamic religious system, which unfortunately suffered corruption of various kinds and in different degrees in the succeeding doctrinal traditions, particularly in Judaism and Christianity; and the need to engage votaries of other beliefs in informed dialogue and to reveal their inadequacies or inaccuracies through superior argument and facts all have their roots in the Qur'an. Moreover, the Prophet Muhammad's specific command to Muslims neither to support nor to refute the People of the Book's doctrinal or religious interpretations implies an injunction to study the theological paradigms and matrices of the Jews and the Christians.[3]

With the evolution of the science of *kalam* and the discussion about the principle of harmony between reason and revelation, the *mutakallimun* became inclined to include, in their scholarly treatises, data on other religious systems, a development that was enhanced by interaction, if not confrontation, with Christian and Jewish philosophical theologians in Damascus and Iraq. Aasi provides prosopographical details of early Muslim responses to this phenomenon. He refers to Jahiz's (d. 255/868) refutation, in *Ar-Radd 'ala n-Nasara*, of the concept of the Trinity and to his critique of the mutual and exclusive contradictions in the authors and in the contents of the four canonical gospels. Aasi also refers to Ya'qubi's (d. 257/870) data and discussions of other religious traditions in his universal history of the world as catoptric examples of the earliest Muslim efforts to examine specific

[2]See Ahmad. F. Yousif, "Studying the 'Other': Challenges and Prospects of Muslim Scholarship on World Religions," *Studies in Contemporary Islam,* 2 (2000), 1:39.

[3]See *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d.), 6:338-39, *hadiths* 460 and 461 s.v. "Kitab al-i'tisam bi-'l-Kitab wa 'l-Sunnah."

doctrines of the "others" (36-40). It should, however, be noted that Jahiz had a more fundamental reason for being excessively captious in regard to Christians: he was uncomfortable, if not mortified, with their dominance of the chancellery, which conferred on them political and material preference at the expense of Muslims.[4] Evidence of documentary bequests with regard to interfaith discourse, however, seems to antedate somewhat the period proposed by Aasi. According to Josef van Ess, interaction and dialectical discussion with non-Muslims, particularly with Christians, and to a lesser extent with Jews, reached a crescendo in Iraq by the time of Ibrahim b. Hani, otherwise known as Nazzam (d. circa 220-230/835-845). Whereas the central issue of discussion with the Jews was the thesis of abrogation (*naskh*) of the Mosaic Law by the Qur'an, a wider spectrum of debate was created with the Christians on such topics as the sonship of Jesus, the Trinity, and Christology. Probably the oldest surviving documentary evidence, in Muslim scholarship, of verbal interaction or disputation with other religionists is the text of a discussion between Nazzam and a Jew.[5]

In *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847), Karl Marx (1818-1883) drew attention to theologians who insisted that their faith was sanctioned by God whereas everyone else's faith was a human construct.[6] With the method and analytical rigor exhibited in *Kitab al-Fasl*, Ibn Hazm exposes the inherent inaccuracy and,

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[4]Epistle XVII: "Refutations of the Christians" in Charles Pellat, *The Life and Works of Jahiz*, translated from the French by D. M. Hawke, The Islamic World Series (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 87.

[5]Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, 6 vols. (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991-1997), 3:392-397. On Nazzam, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, 11 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2002), 7: 1057-1058.

[6]See David McLellan, ed., *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 209.

indeed, the overgeneralization reflected in Marx's proposition. A familiar stereotype in Western comparativist scholarship is that Christian and Muslim theologians often apply one set of standards or criteria to their own faith and a completely different one to the faith of the other. Aasi's analysis of Ibn Hazm's method of utilization of material convincingly wards off that charge from Ibn Hazm. Aasi shows, moreover, that, whereas the overriding impulse behind the European Christian scholars' study (exemplified by St. Thomas Aquinas's thirteenth-century *Summa Contra Gentiles* [x]) of other religions is to demonstrate, often subjectively, those religions' shortcomings, Muslim scholars' motivation for studying other religions is to present and interpret facts as objectively as possible with a view to invalidating the doctrines of those religions.

There are a few errors of style and spelling in the work under review: "consisten" (xiv; read "consistent"); "exclusit" (2; read "exclusivist"); "known a to the Christian" (45; read "known to the Christian"). The word "critiqueness" (75) is infelicitous, while the reference to Dhahabi's *Siyar* (50, n.) is incomplete. These minor points by no means detract from the quality of Aasi's work as a historic contribution to the *fin de siècle* Muslim scholarship about the Other.[7]

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Javeed Akhter. *The Seven Phases of Prophet Muhammad's Life*. Ed. Sabreen Akhter. Oak Brook, Ill.: International Strategy and Policy Institute, n.d. 178 pages. ISBN 0-

[7]A very useful study on the subject from the classical period to the present is Jacques Waardenburg, ed., *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

9647204-3-4. Price not indicated.

In his autobiography, Frederick Max Müller, the controversial nineteenth-century icon of British Orientalism, speaks of "quiet scholars," and, judging by the book under review, it would not be wrong to place Akhter in this category. Classical works on the Prophet Muhammad's *sirah*—for example, those of Tabari, Mas'udi, and Ya'qubi—mostly contain linear prose narratives that present no systematic analytical classification of the reports that make up the *sirah*. To offer such classification is precisely the objective of Akhter's work. John O. Voll's foreword makes it clear that many of the paradigms previously employed to sustain negative judgments about Muhammad's person and mission have since given way to an objective acknowledgment of his position as a role model whose life holds special schematic value.

By devoting each of the book's seven chapters to a particular phase of the missionary continuum of the Prophet's life, the author has eschewed the historical niceties and details that are of little interest to the lay reader, for whom the work is intended in the first place (the writer himself is a practicing physician and a self-taught Islamicist). The parallel drawn, in chapter 1, between the decadent pre-Islamic period and the perverse modern Western society shows Muhammad's mission to have as much corrective value today as in the Arabia of fourteen centuries ago. This is a significant angle introduced by Akhter to *sirah* scholarship.

In Akhter's portrayal of Muhammad as one who went from being an obscure seeker of truth to a proclaimer of the Divine message, the Prophet comes across as a remarkable endurer of unprovoked assaults on person, honor, and belief. Moreover, Muhammad's qualities of perseverance, broadmindedness, and aplomb are reflected in his relations with votaries of other belief systems, especially the Jews and Christians. The establishment,

in Medina under Muhammad, of a prosperous community governed by Divine law after the tribulations and persecutions experienced by the Prophet and his followers provides a teleological explanation of the concept of *hijrah* in Islam: a propitious environment is a *sine qua non* for the realization of lofty plans and goals, and this is well illustrated by Akhter in reference to contemporary life. But the one significant aspect of the Medinan phase of the Prophet's life is the "Covenant of Medina," which represents the most viable constitution the world can have in a pluralistic setting. Akhter shows how pluralism differs from particularism (65-66): the former promotes a sense of equality rather than of toleration. The significance of the distinction is brought out in today's world, especially in societies where Muslims are victims of institutional oppression and negative stereotypes.

The true meaning of jihad as struggle against personal or societal injustice is admirably explained by Akhter (chapter 7), who refutes, through that explanation, the exclusivist—and often mischievous—statement of the concept in purely aggressive and military terms. On the whole, the image of the Prophet given in the book is—rightly—that of the Perfect Man: a persevering caller to truth, a stoic optimist, a pluralistic leader who is humble in victory, courageous in defeat, firm in dispensation of justice, respectful of friend, sympathetic to opponent, and, above all, a spiritual leader of substance. One aspect that is all but neglected in Akhter's work is that of the Prophet's family regime. The low regard for family values in the contemporary world would certainly find an effective antidote in the Prophet's model.

The author not only succeeds in achieving his declared objective—namely, to present, in a holistic rather than in an anecdotal manner, the dynamics of the Prophet's life (123)—but also states eloquently the current epistemic shift in the *sirah* scholarship now highlighting the liminal aspects of the anecdotal discourse as they relate to contemporary realities and problems.

The book, which was probably published in 2001 (the Acknowledgments suggest that, as no date of publication is indicated), represents a fascinating document in personality analysis by someone other than a *Fachmann*, a specialist, in Islamic history.

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Ronald Segal. *Islam's Black Slaves: The Other Black Diaspora*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001. xi, 273 pages. ISBN 0-374-52797-0. PB $14.00.

Those who are familiar with the preeminent black American scholar, the late John Henrik Clarke, know that he spoke relentlessly of Islam's culpability in the black slave trade. For black scholars like Dr. Clarke, the Atlantic slave trade was Africa's black holocaust. Indeed, many blacks died during their enslavement in the Old World. Black slavery also helped to build many Muslim states in northern Africa, in the Middle East, and in the Americas or the New World, in that blacks once constituted the overwhelming work force in the past.

Ronald Segal's *Islam's Black Slaves*, however, argues that black slavery in Islam was a different kind of slavery, that it was not as brutal and dehumanizing as the "peculiar institution" that developed in North and South America—the argument implying that black slaves were treated more humanely by Muslims and that black slaves also had legal rights under the sacred scripture of the Qur'an and Islamic law. As such, Segal's book is another contribution to the body of knowledge that shows that Muslims participated in black slavery on a large scale. Equally important, under Islam, according to Segal, black Africans who were captured in battle or kidnapped were still condemned to spend

their lives in some type of servitude—sometimes even after intermarriage or commingling between slaves and their Muslim masters. But, Segal maintains, they were never subject to severe punishment in the Muslim World as they were in the New World, as evidenced by the infamous "slave codes," which limited the daily lives of blacks in almost every respect in the United States.

According to Segal, "Slaves in Islam were directed mainly at the service sector—concubines and cooks, porters and soldiers—with slavery itself primarily a form of consumption rather than a factor of production" (4). Toward this end, Islamic law, or the *Shari'ah*—through Divine revelation or design—stipulated that slaves be treated benevolently. The comparative information about the participation of Muslims in the African slave system proves that nothing was ambiguous about Islam's black slaves during the early conversion of Africans to the religious faith and civilization of the Islamic world.

Many more studies could be cited to demonstrate that Muslim historians have neither overlooked nor denied the fact that members of the Islamic faith participated in the institution of black slavery. It must also be understood that, under Islamic law, a black slave was considered both property and a person at the same time. Even more important, Arab slave hunters and Muslim slave masters could buy and sell slaves of African descent as if they were valuable commodities.

Segal provides an assessment of the role of Muslims in integrating with their slaves and settling along with them in the lands of India, Turkey, Egypt, Spain, and the Ottoman Empire. The Moors took control of Spain in the eighth century. During the period of the Christian reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula, the Muslims who remained in the country were allowed to maintain their way of life and to keep their African slaves. But after 1492, Muslims (and their slaves) were either forcibly

expelled from Spain and Portugal or required to convert to Christianity.

Muslim vassals, middlemen, and merchants transported slaves even to China, where, supposedly, "black slavery was peripheral and connected to the currents of trade" (67). Furthermore, in India, "black slaves came to play a major part in government, and the descendants of black slaves retain a vestigial identity [even] today" (67).

There was also a viable and strong presence of black slaves during the Muslim reign of the great Ottoman Empire, and black Africans played a significant role in building up that glorious and ill-fated dynasty. It should also be pointed out that Muslims participated in the black slave trade even in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where "Iranians of African descent" today, particularly in the black community of Bandar Abbas, are treated with a bit of scorn and contempt (124).

In recent years, the subject of Islam's involvement in black slavery has attracted considerable attention and has excited much interest and debate. Muslim involvement in this slavery is not as well documented as Christians' trafficking in the (oftentimes) illicit and horrid enterprise of black slavery.

Another factor that should not be overlooked in this work is Segal's discussion of Libya's role in the perpetuation of a form of benign servitude in northern Africa that exists even in present times. Segal attempts to show that Muslims did not necessarily play a disproportionate role in the exploitation of black slaves in North Africa, though they certainly stimulated the export of Africans to other parts of the known world. Accordingly, a deeper and more comprehensive study of Muslim slavery in the entire African world is necessary, and a book-length treatment is especially warranted.

Although slavery is not legally recognized by Western industrialized nations and by governments in today's international community, it persist (blatantly) in some places,

such as in Mauritania and in the East African nation of Sudan (213-223), where more than four million Sudanese have recently been displaced.

Finally, Segal's book tries to ascertain how much empirical evidence is supplied by the record concerning black slaves under Muslim-controlled states of the past.

Unfortunately, in his epilogue, the author strays from the main subject by offering his reflections and commentary on the Nation of Islam leader, Louis Farrakhan, and his lieutenants and on the racism and backlash of the black Muslim movement in America. Nevertheless, *Islam's Black Slaves* is a balanced, entertaining, and highly illuminating account of the enslavement of Africans in the Islamic World of the seventh century.

Ultimately, we must learn from reading Segal's provocative *Islam's Black Slaves* so as to develop a greater understanding of the myths, lies, truths, misinformation, and the role played by Muslims in the black slave trade. Indeed, a book like Segal's can only enhance our knowledge of the ancient slave tradition and of and the development and unfortunate tragedy of black slavery under Islam.

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Beverly B. Mack and Jean Boyd. *One Woman's Jihad: Nana Asma'u, Scholar and Scribe*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 2000. xv, 198 pages. ISBN 0-253-21398-3. Paperback. Price not indicated.

A legendary figure among women, famous across West Africa for 150 years, Nana Asma'u deserves to be better known outside her geographical homeland. In *One Woman's Jihad*, Beverly B. Mack and Jean Boyd have given us a brief introduction to her life and

times, complete with a selection of her poems and a glossary of terms in Arabic, Fulfide, and Hausa, bringing into sharper focus the shadowy figure of a distinguished nineteenth-century Muslim woman.

As Sufis of the Qadiriyyah order, Asma'u and her family were Sunni Muslims. She was born in 1793, the daughter of Shehu Usman dan Fodiyo. Her father was the spiritual, military, and political leader of the Sokoto Caliphate in present-day northern Nigeria. From 1804 to 1830, Usman dan Fodiyo and his son Muhammad Bello fought a series of battles in a campaign to reform Islam and to unify the existing Hausa states under a caliphate. Both her father and her brother were prolific authors. As a member of the ruling family, Asma'u was in a position to be a leader of women in her community. She was educated at home by her father and by scholarly women. Fluent in Arabic, Fulfide, Hausa, and Tamachek, she committed the Qur'an to memory. Asma'u was a scholar who wrote praise songs, often in the local language, to educate the masses on the spiritual and moral characteristics that made a person noteworthy. Although occasionally these instructions are directed to all without regard for gender, Asmau's poems often target women's activities and encourage women to seek knowledge of God. In fact, Asma'u mobilized women to exercise their right to religious education, to seek the truth.

In her early thirties, Asma'u organized a group of itinerant women teachers *(jajis)* who carried the message of her poems and prose throughout the caliphate to other women in the privacy of their homes. She trained many students, both women and girls, known as *'yan-taru* (women disciples), who would accompany the *jajis* and instruct less-educated women in the rural areas. The lessons would consist of Asma'u's writings on the chapters of the Qur'an, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad, as well as the history of prominent Sufi women, reports of battle victories, and elegies for pious individuals. Asma'u became known as *Uwar*

Gari (Mother of All) on account of these activities.

Religious education would be the path to all things positive in society. The emphasis was on recitation of the written word. Memorization and subsequent copying of the text could also lead to general literacy as the pupils began to read the word and not merely recite it. The religious principles disseminated by these women under the tutelage of Asma'u emphasized the obligation to practice generous social welfare and to educate everyone regardless of gender or social position. Many of Asma'u's descendants became famous scholars, and her home became known as the "home of a family where scholarship is at the center of things."

The authors argue that Asma'u played an important role in the establishment of an Islamic community through her jihad. Asmau's works are interpreted as stressing the idea of *jihad an-naf* (struggle against self-will). Her teachings were aimed at changing the behavior of individuals along the lines of the *Sunnah*. All of her poems were about the exemplary behavior of the Prophet Muhammad or of those, like the Sufi saints, who follow in his footsteps. She praised many women, but she also praised her father, the Shehu, and her brother Bello. Her writings defended the activities of the male military exercises that were carried out for the explicit purposes of purifying the culture and restoring Islamic practices in the community.

Asma'u recognized that all the women of the community had an active role to play in this restoration. She sought to provide an Islamic substitute for the *bori* possession cult that was maintained by non-Muslim women. Asma'u gave each of her *jajis*, the leaders of her education movement, a large *malfa* hat. These distinctive balloon-shaped hats were usually worn by men but were also worn by the chiefs of women devotees of the *bori* cult. By appropriating their symbol, she transformed its significance. The *malfa* became an emblem of Islam when it was worn with a red strip of cloth ceremoniously given to each new

jaji as she set out on her mission to spread the word. Asma'u's network of women teachers and students would disseminate the principles of a reformed Islamic culture and organize other women to pass on their newfound knowledge. The fact that the *'yan-taru* movement continues to exist up to the present day prompts Boyd and Mack to rightfully declare that Nana Asma'u has had a lasting impact on Muslim women in West Africa.

The authors offer the story of Nana Asma'u as proof that, throughout history, Muslim women have played significant roles in the consolidation of Islamic communities and that they should not be viewed as inferior, subservient, peripheral actors in movements dominated by men. Their book, however, offers readers only the briefest encounter with this important West African Muslim woman. The authors needed to provide more information about Sufi philosophy, the Sokoto Jihad, and more details of Asmau'u's life in order for the reader to fully appreciate her significance. The notes and works cited suggest that there are other materials for those whose appetite has been whetted by this short introduction. The reader must set out on his/her own journey to "find" Nana Asma'u. Hopefully, this book will be the first of many such journeys to unearth the voices of other women from the past so that they might speak for themselves.

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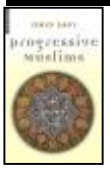

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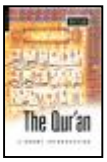

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