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Definitions of globalization abound, as they are the product of ideological and political leanings. The subject of globalization has been addressed by philosophers, social scientists, and policymakers, but their views range from enthusiastic advocates to those who reprimand it as an effect of an odious cause. The goal of this paper is to address this phenomenon and its ramifications for the Muslim world. We will attempt to provide an explanation of why we should not expect that Muslims would simply want to emulate the modern industrial West. In the process we will demonstrate how globalization leads to the worsening of relations between the West and the world of Islam, not to mention other areas of less developed Asia, Africa, and South America. Moreover, we will analyze the social, economic, and political impact of globalization, particularly on Muslim countries, a process which has unfortunately led to an adversarial image of the West in the minds of many Muslims. Finally, we shall analyze the challenges to modernity, and the assumption that the modern world is the best option among all options of social, economic, and political organization.

The earliest origins of globalization coincide with the beginning of modernity, which emerged with the secular humanism of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, ushering in a gradual decline of religion and morality. The eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries in European civilization were a period for the incubation and growth of modernism in the West, a time when Christianity was removed from the public square and yet Christian morality was still alive. This period can be classified as the early modern period, while the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represent the celebration of modernity with programs of modernization as prescriptive advice for the rest of the globe. This period may be called the high modern period. Finally, the post-War period may be classified as the late modern period, which, according to Oswald Spengler, is pregnant with the visible signs of the decline of the modern world.
The Muslim World and Globalization

The proposal of political reforms—which purportedly lead to such an outcome—are often suggested by governments or through non-government agencies. In much of the social science literature, the latter have often been identified as the propellants of globalization.

The analytical shortcoming of Fukuyama's thesis is that he employs two elusive concepts with multiple meanings—"liberal" and "democracy"—to produce a single ideological meaning. But both "democracy" and "liberal" have a wide spectrum of meanings. A person of liberal social disposition may be politically and economically conservative or non-liberal, while a politically liberal person may be conservative and religious in his private life. When we speak of "liberal" in a democratic sense, it is important to realize that the liberal democracies of the Western world became liberal first and democratic later.

It may not be possible for the whole world to become liberal, let alone the West, given the antagonistic relationship between liberalism and religion. Ghazi bin Muhammad argues that the Fukuyaman perspective is purely a "worldly perspective" on what constitutes the perfect form of human organization. Those sections of humanity that uphold religious worldviews do not regard the achievement of liberal democracy as the ideological moment in man's history. Even in Western societies, several social and political segments seem ambivalent about both liberalism and democracy, as is apparent from the Western World's recent shift to the right.

To expect the non-Western world to liberalize may be too naive, however, prospects for a democratic form of rule are a different question. In his End of History, Fukuyama argues that Islamic fundamentalism bears resemblance to European fascism, and therefore it constitutes a threat to liberal democracy.

Islam... is very hard to reconcile with liberalism and the recognition of universal rights, particularly freedom of conscience and religion. It is perhaps not surprising that the only liberal democracy in the contemporary Muslim world is Turkey, which was the only country to have stuck with an explicit rejection of its Islamic heritage in favor of a secular society early in the twentieth century.

Such misleading generalizations about Islam percolate widely in the pro-globalization policy circles where scholars such as Fukuyama are taken seriously. Although several governments of the modern Islamic world have displayed tyrannical tendencies, such governments derive no legitimacy from their past and are not representative of their people. Islam and a vast majority of Muslims recognize universal rights, particularly freedom of conscience and religion. In contrast, the Kemalist state of Turkey, which rejected its Islamic heritage in favor of a secular society, continues to impede human rights and subjugate the freedom of conscience and religion of its own citizens. Moreover, modern Turkey cannot be classified as liberal.
in any sense of the term, whether social, political, or economic. Socially, Turkey is a religious society, where an overwhelming majority of people are observant Muslims. Politically, its state ideology suppresses its Islamic heritage and persecutes its own people if they choose to use religious dress or symbols in the public arena. This does not qualify Turkey as a tolerant and liberal state. In the quest of economic protectionism from the liberal economics of globalization, Turkey aspires to enter the European Union and is a member of two other regional organizations, D-8 and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). Thus the only example chosen by Fukuyama from the Muslim world as a model to be emulated by Muslims through the process of globalization is seriously flawed. If democracy means distributive justice, consensus, and the collective rule of people in order to safeguard their own interests (be they political, cultural, or spiritual), it remains very much the ideal of contemporary Muslim societies.

There are, however, obstacles to the attainment of democracy in this sense, which cannot be explained away merely on the basis of the incompatibility of democracy with Islam, as is done by Fukuyama. We shall take up the problem of Islam and democracy in the section that deals with the political aspects of globalization. But it is important to determine how the views of the pro-globalization forces, characterized by the thought of Francis Fukuyama, have important ramifications for the Muslim world. This mode of thought has arisen only lately because between 1945 and 1989 we lived in a bipolar system in which the Soviet Union was a serious challenger to the world system. After 1989, however, many pro-globalization policymakers in the West began to perceive that the Muslim world presented a similar challenge to the world system. To counter the normative challenges of Islam to modernism, modernization was prescribed via globalization, a process that increased its pace in the 1990s.

II. Homogeneity and Hegemony of Globalization

The agents of globalization, who are the beneficiaries of this development, are ever ready to present their ideas and the cultural forms they assume as universal, through all the technological means at their disposal. Helena Norberg-Hodge, in her article, “The Pressure to Modernize and Globalize” has cautioned that today’s economic development models have deleterious effects on traditional societies and local cultures. Norberg-Hodge, a Swedish philosopher and activist, has analyzed the effects of globalization on non-Western cultures by scrutinizing the negative aspects of tourism, media images, Western-style education, and the global economy’s eclipse of local markets. She demonstrates how it has divided the local people, created artificial needs, broken down the bonds between the old and the young, and led to violence. Henry Munson argues that in order to stop this violence, anger, and resentment against the West, the West must take the necessary steps to dilute that rage. This would entail the removal of discriminatory trade barriers, cessation of the suppression of true democracy, and most of all a just and equitable solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict along the lines discussed by Wael El-Ansary in his article in this volume entitled, “The Economics of Terrorism: How bin Laden is Changing the Rules of the Game.”

The movement of people, ideas, and goods has been a universal process, and has always taken place historically across civilizations. Because of this, some people assume that “globalization” as we understand it in its current context has always existed. This is hardly true, because what we currently understand as “globalization” is not universal, but particular. Victor Segesvary argues that the recent form of globalization that was born out of the womb of modernity is not universal because it is a “drift toward conquering other cultural worlds by the worldview, forms of life, and styles of reasoning developed within Western civilization.” Segesvary views the current form of globalization in contradistinction to the “universal” type of contact between Islam and the West, citing how the European mind opened for the first time toward other civilizations as a consequence of the first Latin translation of the Qur’an in 1543. The “globalization” of the modern world, however, is particular because its foundational principles lie embedded in a constellation of historical events restricted to European history alone. Globalization is the intensification of the human condition we identify as modernity, which came about due to a gradual weakening of religion in Europe along with a concomitant disdain for tradition. Ali Mazrui has demonstrated that globalization is a serious obstacle to such inter-civilizational understanding, because it aims at homogenizing different cultures and traditions around the world by establishing its own homogeneity over them. For much of the non-European world, globalization started with colonialism. Many parts of the Muslim lands were also directly or indirectly colonized, which was accompanied by a systematic destruction of the traditional institutions of earning, learning, and governing. If one looks at colonial India, one sees how the madrasas (religious institutions of learning), spiritual guilds of artisans, and the system of panchayat (grassroots democracy at the village level) were systematically broken down by British colonial policies. Later waves of globalization entailed a less direct but equally coercive relationship with the Muslim world. Even at the present time, despite formal independence, much of the third world is enmeshed in a net of financial and diplomatic dependency. Many Muslims see the current form of globalization as a new process of colonialism which will increase their dependence on the West. Arnold Toynbee argues in “The World and the West” that as a consequence of
Western civilization's assaults on the non-West ... we saw that, on the first occasion, the West tried to induce the Far Eastern peoples to adopt the Western way of life in its entirety, including its religion as well as its technology, and that this attempt did not succeed. And then we saw that, in the second act of the play, the West offered to the same Far Eastern peoples a secularized excerpt from the Western civilization in which religion had been left out and technology, instead of religion, had been the central feature; and we observed that this technological splinter, which had been flaked off from the religious core of our civilization towards the end of the seventeenth century, did succeed in pushing its way into the life of a Far Eastern society that had previously repulsed an attempt to introduce the Western way of life en bloc—technology and all, including religion.26

The debate over whether the conditions of modernity are good or bad for the human predicament aside, Toynbee demonstrates how ferociously modernity reached the non-West. The first contact of the non-Western traditional world with the modern industrial West was coercive in nature because it started with the subjugation of traditional societies. Since the beginning of modernity's arrival in the non-West, it has disturbed the balance of the non-West, particularly the Muslim world. Mark Levine argues, in "Muslim Responses to Globalization," that the Muslim world is ambivalent and suspicious about globalization. Globalization has created a fear of an "invasion" of American culture to Muslim societies that will "hollow us out from the inside and domesticate our identity." 27 Levine corroborates Toynbee's position, arguing:

The consensus seems to be that globalization marks a continuation of the basic dynamic of Western domination and hegemony dating back hundreds of years, in which today America is utilizing globalization to overthrow existing political, economic, and cultural norms. In this context, globalization's cultural/ideological foundations provide it with the 'fire power' to realize its imperialist aims without causing classic revolutionary reactions to it, as did Western imperialism before it. 28

The imperialist aspect of globalization is not only responsible for upsetting the non-West, but the West as well. Most experts of globalization agree that many of its effects on local economies, income distribution, and environment are essentially negative.29 The welfare state is still functional in the advanced industrial societies, which has offset its effects for the time being. However, its harmful effects on the Third World are more discernible. Non-sustainability of agricultural practices, depletion of fisheries, export of hazardous materials from the West to the Third World, and detrimental impact of the applications of biotechnology are some of the negative aspects to which Martin Khor has drawn attention.30

In this brief essay, it is not possible to give an exhaustive account of all the adverse effects of globalization. Here we shall discuss the most obvious social, economic, and political consequences of globalization in relation to the Muslim world. In the socio-cultural domains, modernity entails a secularization of attitudes. This in turn results in the rejection of religious principles concerning the maintenance of the social order, which are then viewed as a backward form of human consciousness, impeding the march of "progress." It presupposes that literacy is an absolute good that creates enlightened masses capable of choosing the right people to run the state of affairs. In the economic arena, no matter which form of modernization is pursued, it is invariably aimed at breaking the small organizational unit, like the village, in favor of larger economic units that are directed from a remote center. Its economic practices are based on the logic of excessive production and consumption, which leads to waste and environmental degradation. In the political arena modernism requires that allegiance to spiritual or religious principles be set aside, and in their place adherence to historically European concepts such as the "nation" be created to define a political organization. To achieve this type of world, programs of modernization are directed to the underdeveloped world via epistemic authorities such as the IBRD, IMF, and multinational corporations, which have become the envoys of globalization.

The political, economic, and socio-religious aspects are discussed below to see how the globalization of modernism affects the Third World in general and the Muslim world in particular. Political aspects are most visible, economic aspects are intermediate, while those social aspects that have arisen due to the rupture of the religious core are properly causal in nature.

Political Aspects of Modernity and Globalization

Political aspects of globalization relate to the destruction of traditional forms of political organization and the fragmentation of the umma (Islamic community), the desacralization and amorization of the political process, the evolution of the nation-state and its threat to the security of the Muslim world, and the problem of democracy in the Muslim world.

I. The Political Fragmentation of the Umma

In most pre-modern societies, the matrix of god-king-country was a way of connecting the tribe, the nation, or the empire with a higher and permanent reality in an ever-changing world, which was gradually replaced by state-citizen conditions. In the modern political landscape the belief in the absolute power of the Divinity was jettisoned and the idea of an absolute terrestrial power was cast upon the earthly king or parliament.31
Spiritual authority in empires and traditional states protected subjects against disruptive and immoral changes that may have been introduced by the king or a comparable political authority. The God-king-Country milieu was embedded in the political culture of most medieval civilizations. According to certain interpretations of Islam, its justification can be found in the Muslim shari‘a, or the sacred law of Islam, even though these interpretations are refused by some in the modern Islamic world who favor a democratic form of rule. Given the sweeping social, cultural, and technological changes throughout the world, a resurrection of the old political arrangement is not possible. The Muslim world is rapidly transforming into mass societies which necessitates the creation of new forms of political arrangement that may be suitable for them. It must also be noted that most contemporary Muslim political scientists agree that the nation-state model, as represented by the status quo, is an inadequate form of governance for Muslim societies. Since the onset of modernity in the Muslim world, many Muslims feel that the dissolution of empires and the fragmentation of the Muslim world in various nation states—whose ideologies are often alien to Islamic consciousness—has led to a loss of spiritual unity among them.

According to Muslim teachings, unity resides in its perfection in the Divine, but its realization remains an ideal for Muslims in all walks of life. Whether realizable or not, the spirit of economic and political accord among the umma still exists in the hearts and minds of many Muslims. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, in his “Islamic Unity: The Ideal and Obstacles in the Way of its Realization,” has argued that Western colonialism is often seen by Muslims as the biggest obstacle to the realization of such unity because its policy prescriptions are often antagonistic to the shari‘a and to the institutions inspired by it. This has foiled the spirit of mutual cooperation among Muslims, insuring that most geographically contiguous Islamic lands of not able to integrate. This political accord for which traditional Muslims yearn is not possible so long as the nation-state remains strongly entrenched in the Muslim world, for the foundations of its legitimacy remain aspiritual and anti-religious, deriving support from human ideologies rather than transcendent realities.

II. The Desacralization of the Political Process

Muslims fear the desacralization of their way of life. In Europe this process occurred with society first and then the polity, but the Muslim world is threatened by it in reverse. The polity is more easily corruptible than the society, because the shari‘a places prohibitions against the endorsement of desacralized behavior that is not cognizant of a higher reality. Practicing Muslims remain indispensible to the process of desacralized politics as evident from the fate of Christianity. As Emil Brunner laments: “Christianity destroyed ancient religion and mythogy; then modern idealistic humanism grew out of the Christian tradition; but humanism following its rational tendency finally detached itself from its Christian foundation.” It is that detachment from the root which resulted in the emergence of the modern world from which Christian morality itself now suffers.

The desacralized view of political power is the result of a modern, secular view of the world, which is radically different from the traditional and sacred one, wherein all rule derives from the Supreme Ruler. The idea of popular sovereignty and democratic representation intensifies this fragmentation because the principle of legitimation derives from man and not from God. Thomas Molnar has argued that even though the modern political systems have presumably shed the burden of religion as “superstition,” they have also undertaken a radical demythologization whose burden on their political systems is greater than that of the discarded sacred.

III. The Nation-State and its Threat to Peace

The loss of the sacred in the realm of society and politics has led directly to a cycle of violence. Champions of modernism pose it as a pacifist and civilized ideology, which they juxtapose with traditional civilizations, seen as cruel and uncivilized. A cursory glance at the history of industrialism will reveal its relation to organized violence and gradual productivity toward war among modern polities. War in conjunction with “economic progress” is also increasing rapidly in both frequency and destructive power. The birth of modern science and its technological application by modern industry and the modern polity in waging violence is unprecedented in history.

The history of the modern nation-state is replete with cases where a state wages a war either for profit or to stimulate its industry. War has thus become a profitable industry and an instrument for further economic gains at the expense of human life and dignity. The militarized and industrialized nation-state has a special mission to accomplish and establish its particular economic system as well as its particular form of government through a coercive armed establishment. It is the same state that has contributed to the decline of the human mind by devoting all its energy to empowering itself internally and externally.

Despite the fact that the modern nation-state vies to offset such ills by talking of welfare, its pursuit of internal and external “security” has led to a situation where the attainment of enlightened life has rapidly faded. The concept of “security” in such a milieu has become absolute rather than remaining in its properly relative domain. Modern nations, particularly the industrial Western ones, have come a long and mistaken way in defining their security. The mainstream statesmen have ended up with a conception of security that has metamorphosed from military or external security of the
state alone, to a blurred distinction of external and internal security of the state, precisely because globalization has enabled them to do so. However, internal security, which was heretofore the job of internal security agencies, police, civic patrols, and ministries of home affairs, is now being done by agencies whose level of militarization is no different than that of army regulars. The pretext of this militarization is that the “enemy” is now more sophisticated than the police. Ironically it is also legal to sell guns to these “enemies” for the sake of running the economy! It is equally ironic that the states that are militarily securest of all, talk of the erosion of security. It is beyond the understanding of such statesmen that there is no such thing as absolute security in this world. Life presents insecurity and adversity to all humanity, which is an inescapable “social fact” in the Durkheimian sense. Absolute security would mean the evasion of death and acquisition of eternal happiness, which is not a possibility for earthly humans. The statesmen of the contemporary world then proceed on yet another path of confusion to equate security with welfare. The latter is not approached from a relative perspective either, but with a certain imaginary and absolute standard. This standard of welfare informs the citizens and routinizes a culture of welfareism domestically that is totally blind to the needs of poorer societies, which more or less continue to provide for the welfare of these few. Justification for war in industrial societies thus comes around to defending such a culture and its material comfort. It is a war that is non-defensive and aims to destroy other cultures and traditional societies for the sake of its worldly luxuries.

To situate this process historically, John Nef’s periodization of Western civilization since the Renaissance is quite instructive. In understanding the incipient link between industrialism and war in his book Western Civilization Since the Renaissance: Peace, War, Industry, and the Arts, Nef locates the connection between the new type of warfare at the birth of Industrialism between 1494–1640. This degenerative process continued for another century in its second phase between 1640–1740, and finally entered its most destructive and bloody phase, in which industrialism is related to total war, between 1740 and the present. According to Nef’s periodization we now live in the last phase of industrialism in which the Industrial Revolution has enabled the Enlightenment’s dark side to prevail. This triumph is primarily responsible for the gradual transformation of a subject of an empire into a citizen soldier whose worldview is evolutionist and who has a mechanical conception of nature. It is the triumph of scientific materialism that has contributed to the destructive power of arms, the growth in the destructive powers of society, the gradual weakening of moral and aesthetic values, a decline of intellectuality, and a cult of violence leading eventually to a state of total war.

Nef was not alone in pointing out that modern scientific progress and war have mutually reinforced each other. In the same vein, Martin Lings has pointed out how deviance from the middle path has led to the formation of opposite and opposing ideological extremes, which have given rise to more extremism. Lings’ description of the total extremes leading to a self-destructive end corroborates Nef’s views. The future of industrialism in Nef’s thought depends less on the success of industrialism inside the states and more upon the eventual integration of industrialism in the global arena with its concomitant control of the world’s resources. For the world industry and economy to integrate, several states must join hands, confer legitimacy through the auspices of their own consensus-making bodies (such as the UN and WTO), and declare all those who rise to protect what is legitimately theirs a security threat. War in traditional civilizations was a separate problem resulting from a political, economic, or religious clash, and which had only to come to an end for a return to normalcy. In the modern world, however, war is a total problem because it may stimulate economic growth and lead to more industrialism, while the latter may lead to more of the former. Nef has argued that this vicious circle is a result of national concerns that are immediate and particular, and not concerns that are far-reaching and universal. The same modern tendency is an unnatural move “toward the special, toward the prosaic, toward the measurable and matter-of-fact, toward material quantity, toward fear, hatred, and division.”

Although much of the Western world is moving toward overcoming the nineteenth-century fragmentation of nation states (as in the case of the European Union), most of its influential security pundits remain opposed to such movements of integration within the Muslim world. The theorists of integration in the European world uphold that certain conditions are necessary for any integration to occur. Most of such conditions stipulated by them are present in the geographically and historically contiguous regions of Muslims, yet there is no such integration. Those who champion such logical geographical arrangement are de-legitimized and declared political adversaries, while arch-nationalist/arch-secularist dictators, such as Saddam Hussein and the Shah of Iran, who try to rewrite the history and geography of their own civilizations, have been supported by many Western states. The Western critics of Muslim regimes have often stated that tensions within the Muslim world are indigenous in nature, and that modernization or westernization would lead to less friction. James Piscatori, in his Islam in the World of Nation States, argues that there is no essential contention between Shi’ite and Sunni Muslims or between Arabs and non-Arab Muslims and that most Muslims agree that Islam’s decline is chiefly due to the adoption of Western ideas and culture. This, according to Piscatori, necessitates a political restructuring of their world order. The political disorganization
and dictatorship in the Muslim world is to a significant extent attributable to the existence of nation states. Since the nation-state is an outgrowth of secular European ideologies it has no referent in Muslim history. The imposition of nation states upon the Islamic world thus contributes to the cultural disorientation, social destrucuring, and negative impact of Western influence on the Muslim world.50

Although the political life that the colonial West imposed upon the Muslim world started during the early modern period, its current form represents the politics introduced during half a century of power rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. During the early modern period, Europeans divided Muslim lands according to their own interests and thus stifled an organic and true global set of relations that had existed among and outside Muslim lands. The nation-state model, which even today remains alien to the Islamic political consciousness, locked the Muslim lands into economic and political units too small to be of any significance on a systemic level. More somber was the choice of regimes that was offered via reigning ideologies of modernism: Muslims were pressured either to accept the irreligious communist system, or embrace the “free world” on the other side of the Iron Curtain. The former system denied the existence of God outright, while the latter still belonged to the formerly Christian but now fully secular world. In the post-independence history of Muslim states, militarily powerful Western states have constantly dictated the type of regime they would like to see in many parts of the Muslim world. The latest American involvement in South Asia demonstrates this fact. Leaders such as the Egyptian and Pakistani presidents, Hossni Mubarak and Pervez Musharraff, are time and again reminded that their countries must become secular states like Turkey, rather than states with strong Islamic identities.51 Such directives are more than mere suggestions. They carry with them a credible military threat that forces Muslim societies to bring about changes that are totally alien to their nature, and thus to accept cultural alienation and political humiliation. As yet, Muslims have neither had the option to select a form of political organization (nation-state, city states, confederation etc.), nor have they had the option to select what type of government they want (democracy, theocracy, monarchy etc.).

IV. The Problem of Democracy and the Islamic World

Martin Ling’s exposition of the Platonic conception of types of rule is instructive here. According to Lings, aristocracy, i.e. rule by the best, was ideal for Plato (this would correspond in traditional Frienca terms to the rule of the brahmans, the priests), followed by timocracy (or rule by the kshatriya, the warriors), then plutocracy (or rule by the ratsiyas, the merchants) and finally democracy (or rule by the shuira, the plebian).52

Beyond democracy lie tyranny and the breakup of political order after which society needs principled re-structuring once again. This traditional typology of regimes is distinctively different from the modern conception and its rules of legitimation. It has happened in the pre-modern era that types of rule have fallen from the ideal brahmantic (philosopher-kings), to kshatriytic (warrior-kings), to vaishyas (merchant rulers), but the brahmantic principles were nevertheless still revered. In contrast, the modern world is distinct in celebrating a form of rule which, according to Plato, constitutes a decidedly lower form. It is also considered the only legitimate form of rule, even though “true democracy” as it is commonly understood may not exist in a real sense in the modern Western world.

One of the seminal works on the current state of democracy in the West is Chas Ryn’s The New Jacobinism: Can Democracy Survive? He argues that democracy in the Western states is on the decline due to the recession of moral and spiritual values that was once of central importance for the West. Ryn argues that the changes brought about by modernity have led to grave moral decline:

the gradual disappearance from Western society of the type of moral self-control and discrimination on which constitutional democracy depends has produced increasingly blatant partisanship and general socio-political fragmentation.53

The general lack of the old system of ethics has led to a loss of critical detachment that was responsible for the democratic spirit.54 Self-interest and re-election takes precedence over the risk of political unpopularity, which can be a consequence of stating uncomfortable truths. Ryn asserts that “successful politicians tend to be individuals lacking in deeper insight and conviction. The need to appeal to the great mass of people on virtually all issues pushes political discussion to ever lower levels of sloganeering and pandering.”55 This turns elections into “embarrassing displays of simplistic demagoguery in which advertising and media consultants play central roles.”56 Further, if one judges election candidates based on appeals they make to the voters, “the public is assumed to have a simplistic, almost infantile view of the world.”57 Another reason why democratic justice is receding from the Western world is because of the way issues are framed. Issues of immediate relevance are pushed aside in favor of distant political issues that often have little relevance in voters’ day-to-day lives. According to Plato, the general loss of morality in a democratic form of government can bring society to the brink of tyranny.58 Ryn has identified how the loss of traditional Christian values has led to the loss of democracy. Culture plays a crucial role in this development. He argues that “entertainment forms an increasingly prominent part of Western culture and plays a central role in breaking down lingering traditional tastes and inhibitions.”59
Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition

Ryn ascribes the fragmentation of today’s democracies to relativism, nihilism, and a Fukuyama type of liberal pluralism. The reason democratic governance is leading to social fragmentation is because of the “self-assertion of groups and individuals that recognize no obligation beyond their partisan causes and are therefore approaching each other as belligerents.” According to him, moral universality does not abolish particularity, but it is important for the public of a democratic state to transcend their merely private interests and find common ground with the rest of society. Since globalization is accelerating the effects of modernity, today’s democracies are more likely to precipitate anarchy precisely because of a gradual loss of moral principles. With the ethical fetters gone and technological means enhanced, the state becomes more controlling and intrusive, thereby eroding its citizen’s rights. Because of this, some of the prominent features of today’s industrialized Western societies are conformity and thought-control, which is dispensed through government propaganda, mass media, education, and forms of entertainment. As Ryn observes, “De Tocqueville comes close to Plato in capturing this feature of modern democracy in his warnings about ‘soft’ democratic despotism. Unlike older, non-democratic despotism, de Tocqueville writes, the new despotism ‘would degrade without tormenting them’.”

In the light of the contemporary experience of Western states with democracy and their selective appeal to disenfranchised masses of the global economic order, the global democratization of the world order has its problems. As the famous international relations theoretician E. H. Carr argues, any sound political thought is based upon elements that are not only real but also Utopian, which sheds light on the problem of the globalization of democracy. Even though the realization of democracy is possible in the Muslim world, this democracy is of a different type. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, in his Ideals and Realities of Islam, conceptualizes this possibility in the Muslim world as a “democracy of married monks, that is, a society in which equality exists in the religious sense in that all men are priests and stand equally before God as vice-gerents on earth.” Experimentation with the concept of “Islamic democracy,” however, has been a rough ride for Muslims. The demand for democracy is evident throughout much of the Muslim world, but commitment to Westernization is no guarantee of democracy. In their Book Islam and Democracy, John L. Esposito and John O. Voll present the following argument:

The policy failures evident in American and European responses toward the subversion of the electoral process and indiscriminate repression of the FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) in Algeria and of the Renaissance party in Tunisia, like their impotence in the face of the genocide of Muslims in Bosnia or seeming indifference to the plight of Muslims in Chechnya and Kashmir, discredit in the eyes of Islamists and many other Muslims, the democratic commitment of the West. They reinforce the perception and charge that the U.S. and European governments are guilty of employing a “double standard,” a democratic one for the West and selected allies and another for the Middle East and Islamist movements. Respect and support of the democratic process and human rights must be seen as truly universal and consistent.

As this indicates, the cognitive elite in the West has several sets of double standards that especially ridicule the Muslim world. It champions democracy overseas, yet this ruling elite is ambivalent about democracy as good government for themselves in the long run. Within the Western world, due to changing demographics, it is now realized that if democracy truly reigned, the predominantly Caucasian establishment and the vanguards of the secular political system might lose power to those who do not share their values. In the United States, for example, non-whites may outnumber the white ruling elite in another generation. If the country is truly democratic, will heroes of the country still be white slave owners, like Washington and Jefferson, or will they be replaced by non-white national heroes such as Martin Luther King Jr. or Malcolm X? Europe has similar concerns. There are right-wing movements in such nations that want to revise the existing “liberal” political arrangement. Between 1999 and 2002, governments of Austria, Italy, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, the Netherlands, France, and Germany have all experienced a political and ideological shift to the right, which has also threatened European Union elections and its enlargement prospects.

The connection between money and politics, which the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 has sought to remedy, has plagued even the democratic system of the United States. It is a well-known feature of contemporary democratic politics that success in elections is more or less tied to the financial resources of political parties and their candidates. As Ryn has demonstrated, this is a problem even in institutionally more advanced countries whose democratic institutions provide some checks and balances against money’s impact on electoral success. In the case of developing states with weak institutions of democratic representation, or with none at all, it is even easier to influence the electoral outcome with money. Desired changes can be made in small countries’ political systems by strengthening one’s favorite candidate’s campaign through the infusion of money from the outside. Therefore, those states whose political process becomes a democratic one without a strong domestic system of checks and balances can easily be swayed from the outside, at the cost of national sovereignty.

When prescribing democracy overseas, a power like the United States does so only selectively and whenever it suits its own interests. First, many states and agencies in the modern Western world cherish and give legiti-
nation to the democratic form of rule over other types of rule. Secondly, the same groups are becoming domestically ambivalent about democracy for themselves, given the sweeping demographic changes. Thirdly, these groups champion alien political forms to the Third World through globalization of political reforms; and finally, they deny them this type of rule at the same time, as is evident from the Algerian case. This is just a glimpse of the double standards of Western policymaking groups when it comes to suggesting "reform" to the Muslim world. Anti-Western resentment in the minds of many Muslims is precisely due to such Western foreign policies.

Lings' critique of the Platonic ideal government is also a traditional Islamic critique of the modern mindset when it comes to the question of ideal government. According to him, since all that is brought into existence is doomed to decay, even the best will eventually deteriorate, but they will at least realize this condition of the fall. Even if the form of rule degenerates from plutocracy to anarchy, it is important that it be replaced by traditional principles or a principled autocracy for the sake of a residual link with an independent but accountable spiritual authority. The form of government in question, he states, "is clearly less principled than the highest form of government, it nonetheless belongs to the 'old order of things' and is definitely on the side of tradition, though it is liable to end by bringing tradition into disrepute." In the eyes of many Muslims, a system of democracy without spiritual ethics seems unacceptable, because it is not aware of the fall—it even celebrates the conditions of the fall.

According to Lings, at a historical juncture like this, a principled autocracy does not come to the rescue of a society, it will be at risk of falling into unprincipled demagogy. Democratic rule may, therefore, signify the beginning of the decline of a principled rule. But it is still better than anarchy, which is the lack of rule. Lings argues:

The French revolution in this sense was democratic in its original intention—witness the slogan Libéral, Égalité, Fraternité... but in fact it was too precipitous to stop at democracy, so that the change from principled autocracy to unprincipled demagogy was almost direct only to be superseded by Napoleon's relatively principled autocracy.... It is not, however, a lower form of government which inaugurates rejection of principles. To pave the way for unprincipled dictatorship, the principles have first of all to be rejected by democracy in the name of liberty.

Since degeneration takes place in all that is created, it is inevitable that any system of human governance, whether modern or traditional, will face that process. However, the process of renewal also exists within the spiritual center of mankind, which arrests the degenerative process for some time to come, thus preserving momentarily man's primordial heritage. Lings asserts that most religious communities, especially the traditional Islamic ones, see the modern world as an "organized system of subversion and degeneration" that has no inborn capacity for renewal because it is bereft of its transcendental core. Along the same lines, Ryn states that "the evidence of decline in today's Western democracies could be balanced against more encouraging signs, but these cannot remove the impression that a civilization is disintegrating, and not just at the periphery—but at its moral core." A form of rule that accommodates spiritual principles is a strong possibility in the Muslim world where religious ideals are still cherished. This, according to the Islamic spiritual perspective, can halt the degenerative process for some time to come. However, due to political weakness, the Muslim world at this point is not strong enough to choose this type of rule. This is compounded by Western influence on most political and economic matters in the Muslim world. Lings states that the impact of the West on the Islamic world is "to accelerate greatly a process of degeneration which was already taking place, and to give them as it were, a side way push to ensure that they went downhill by a steeper and somewhat different course from the one they were following." The reason that a vast majority of Muslims in the Muslim world are still governable by spiritual principles is because the process of desacralization of power has been only partial and unsuccessful.

Finally, there is an interesting question that is seldom asked among the scholars and practitioners of politics: why is there so much political theory in the history of the modern West and not in other civilizations such as Islam? Apparently, the modernist's answer is usually linear and simplistic: political theory could not develop in other places as much as it did in the West. If this be true, has all that development led us any closer to an ideal form of government? Perhaps traditional civilizations, including Islamic civilization, do not have as much political theory because they did not need it as much. If abuse of power and violation of citizens' rights become a norm as a result of a general loss of ethics, one cannot help but think more and more of how to achieve a suitable form of government that is free of power abuse. This has been the raison d'être of political theory. The reason it mushroomed so much in secular Europe and not in other civilizations is precisely the loss of religious ethics in the West, which led to the decline of morality in the public square. Since the question of who has the ultimate power was resolved in principle in the traditional world, there was no need for superfluous guesses as to who did, and who should, wield power. If power was abused, it was difficult for the king to provide a legitimate cover for it because society, as well as the body politic, knew that he was in violation, even though he still continued to hold the reigned of power. The choice between a "secular but free world" or a "secular but communist" world could never become a basis from which suitable political theory could be expounded in a religious world such as the Islamic one.
Economic Aspects of Modernity and Globalization

Modernism has transformed the way we look at economy. The conception of modern economics has been divorced from ethics due to its faulty philosophical assumptions. Further, modern economics has changed because of the transformation in the notion of modern systems of law; the replacement of the shari’a based laws in favor of secular laws has led to a state of economic disequilibrium in the Muslim world. This disequilibrium is manifesting itself in a demand for excessive economic growth and development, which has an inverse relationship with a livable environment.

1. The Problem of Modern Economics

In the world of mass media and journalism, globalization is employed as a euphemistic term to hide those aspects that have affected our life adversely in the economic arena. In the "nomenclature" of globalization, "economic efficiency" means replacing workers with machines; the notion of "competitiveness" implies lowering of wages in the industrial states to match low wage foreign competitors; and "flattening the corporate structure" is another name for eliminating middle managers. The mainstream media does little to address the malefici aspects of globalization, which threaten the economic well-being of society. Instead economic globalization is looked upon favorably, as if it will bring jobs and create more prosperity. When its negative aspects are acknowledged, this is often tempered with portrayals of anti-globalizationists as extremists and ne'er-do-wells. Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith have made a case against the global economy by arguing that people in the advanced industrial societies are trained to believe that our economic system operates on a "rational basis," and that the people who are in charge have benevolent motives. Mander ascribes a host of problems to pro-globalization economic policies. He argues that the problems of overcrowded cities, unusual new weather patterns, the growth of global poverty, the lowering of wages while the stock prices soar, the elimination of local social services, the destruction of wilderness, even the disappearance of songbirds—are the products of same global policies. They are all but one piece, a fabric of connections that are ecological, social, and political in nature. They are reactions to the world's economic-political restructuring in the name of accelerated global development. This restructuring has been designed by economists and corporations and encouraged by subservient governments.

The root of many of these problematic policies lies in the modern conception of economics. Modern economics is based upon the philosophy of scarcity of resources. It presents a situation in which the needs and wants of an individual or a group exceed the resources available to satisfy them. Such a definition does not suppose a fundamental analytical difference between needs and wants. Everything is supposedly scarce and difficult to get, not because humanity's needs have exceeded the resources, but due to our unlimited wants and expectations. Items of daily need, services, and even human relations, have become commodified in a consumerist world. A value is put on them that is often understood in quantitative terms alone, and corresponds to either time or money, and eventually only money, because time, too, is reduced to potential money. There often comes a time when wage workers of the industrial society must decide whether it would be "profitable" to see their loved ones because it will "cost," at least in terms of time, if not money.

The quantification of time and its perceived scarcity has led to a general deterioration of human relations. This consciousness of scarcity is new, not comparable to the economic parsimony of traditional civilizations. Ibn Khaldun, the fourteenth century Muslim philosopher, notes in his Muqaddimah how nature has unevenly distributed resources to humanity. Some live in abundance, some in scarcity. However, he argues that abundance is not in and of itself good; those who live in conditions of scarcity not only live longer but they are spiritually better off than those who live in abundance and luxury. Compared to the traditional world, the modern world, which has actually led to more quantitative production than ever before, has more of everything. It is ironic that despite the fact that we have more of everything, we perceive that we live in conditions of scarcity. It is also interesting to note that the perceived scarcity is more in the rich industrial countries than in rural agrarian ones. It is equally ironic to note the increase in contemporary people's patterns of consumption, particularly food. The people in advanced industrial societies consume much more, proportionately, than the other societies. This is paradoxical, because if things are truly scarce, we should consume parsimoniously, but evidence indicates otherwise. In this sense the modern world is the exact opposite of the Khaldunian world. Ibn Khaldun argues that even if resources are plenty, one must consume parsimoniously for reasons that are spiritual and physiological. In the modern world, however, we perceive that things are scarce but we consume more and more! The comparative scarcity of resources in the Third World, on the other hand, has recently turned into destitution. Martin Khor has argued that globalization has led to economic colonialism, which is the cause of this destitution. As he writes: "... the countries whose economies have fallen under the control of foreign corporations, [their] resources are raided and shipped north to the wealthiest industrial nations." As a consequence of this, argues Irfan Ul Haq, "mass poverty [that] has developed in the recent years is also being witnessed today, [which] is by and
large a modern phenomenon and [is] persisting in spite of the availability of tremendous resources.86

The Islamic understanding of economics, in contrast to the prevalent secularist paradigm of economics, is not based upon "scarcity" but "plenty." According to this logic, if things have become too dear for some individuals despite their best efforts and intentions, then there must be a profound disequilibrium in the economy. This disequilibrium is most likely to be the result of a deviation from spiritual principles of justice that involves someone else consuming more than their fair share. Islam is a rival to the modern world system because of the opposition of its economic philosophy to that of the prevalent paradigms of economics. Steve Keen has shown that arguments by the neo-classical economists on the subject of market equilibrium rest on shaky ground because of their erroneous assumptions.87 The neoclassical theory of economics excludes the spiritual values that constitute a necessary starting point of equilibrium analysis.88 From an Islamic point of view, Keen's critique of neo-classical economics is consistent with the metaphysical assertion that the only way to achieve equilibrium in any domain on any level of reality is through conformity to the Truth. In the case of Islamic economics therefore, it means a shari'a-compliant economy.

Islamic economic values challenge the lack of economic values in the modern world. An economic system whose practices are devoid of ethics will continue to clash with the ideals that Muslims hold important. Economic aspects of modernity and globalization related to the modern world are still linked to the Muslim world in a colonial pattern. In this pattern, now called post-colonialism or neo-colonialism, the Muslim world is not subjugated directly through military means as it was during the nineteenth century. However, the Muslim world, like much of the underdeveloped world, is ruled indirectly but constantly subjugated economically and often militarily by the neo-colonial powers. Muslims gained relative independence from the West after World War II, but the nationalist ideologies that rallied the Muslim nations against colonialism also divided Muslim lands into economic units too weak to bring about welfare and security in their new regional environments. This lack of welfare is often ascribed to traditionalism and backwardness rather than modernity.88 As Norberg-Hodge argues:

It is easy to understand why people lay the blame at the feet of tradition rather than modernity. Certainly, ethnic friction is a phenomenon that predates colonialism, modernization, and globalization. But after nearly two decades of firsthand experience on the Indian subcontinent, I am convinced that "development" not only exacerbates tensions but actually creates them. As I have pointed out, development causes artificial scarcity, which inevitably leads to greater competition.89

During European colonialism, many Muslim institutions that were part and parcel of Islamic civilization were destroyed. Economic institutions such as the guilds, had a spiritual master who was au fait with things at the work place, such as conscience, ethics, and morality, which were jettisoned to accommodate a supposedly "free" market environment.90 The free market is not really "free" from structural constraints imposed by governments and regional unions, and it no longer has a link with the transcendental system of ethics. The free market is theoretically silent on normative and political issues, but in reality, the free market is quite political. As James Caporaso and David Levine have noted, it is difficult to isolate the political aspect of economies, because to study them in isolation from politics can lead to economic determinism,91 which is a poor way of understanding the free market. Similarly, Mairder argues that the free market is only free "about the freedom it provides (to the) corporate players to deprive everyone of their freedoms, including the freedom hitherto enjoyed by democratic nations to protect their domestic economies, their communities, their culture, and their natural environment."92 Claus Ryn's analysis of the free market and ethics is central to understanding the evolution of the free market. He points out how concepts such as the "free market," "capitalism," and "democracy" have multiple and often contradictory meanings. The evolution of the "free market" is indeed interesting according to Ryn's account:

It should not be forgotten that among the impulses behind the French Revolution was a desire among the middle classes to get rid of various old restrictions on commerce. In today's Western society, the wish for economic freedom has been taken to an extreme by various radical "libertarians." It should be carefully noted that there is a sense in which a free market would become really free only when movement of goods and services is wholly unrestricted, unfettered not only by "external," legal, or institutional checks but by the inhibitions and tastes of civilized persons. A Rousseauistic, Jacobin desire to destroy traditional ethical and cultural restraints and socio-political structures can thus be said to aid in the creation of a truly free market.93

The entities that sponsor this type of "free market ethics" are not concerned with how income is generated but remain interested in how it is distributed:

[The U.S.] economy is marked by a very uneven distribution of wealth and income.... It is estimated that 28% of the total net wealth is held by the richest 2% of families in the U.S. The top 10% holds 57% of the net wealth. If homes and other real estate are excluded, the concentration of ownership of financial wealth is even more glaring. In 1983, 54% of the total net financial assets were held by 2% of all families, those whose annual income is over $125,000. Eighty-six percent of these assets were held by the top 10% of all families.94

As implied by such statistics, the proponents of globalization and free trade control the global political economy by allowing its beneficiaries to acquire more and more, while the poor become poorer.
II. Law and Economics

The medieval Christian Church once had an active say in the economic affairs of Christians. The observations of theologians such as Thomas Aquinas held sway in matters related to work, work ethic, profit, usury, alms, and exploitation on both a micro and macro level. Now the Church and theologians play no central role in the public economic life of the West. The modern economy in this sense is free of ethical fetters of a transcendental nature when it comes to engaging in any type of commercial activity. As Ryn observes, this type of economy only recognizes external constraints, such as law, until a way is found to circumvent even these. 95

Law is fundamental to understanding how the modern economic system and the traditional Islamic economic system are incompatible. Islam accommodates the idea of positive laws, or man-made laws to run a country, as long as these do not breach the sacred law. 96 Generally, law is understood in Islam as Divine Nomos, i.e., law by an Authority that is above all creation. However, in Islam most man-made laws can be judged from the point of view of Supreme law, the word of God, which according to Muslim belief has not changed and never will change. In the modern West, however, some aspects of religious law remain, but they have become disconnected from their transcendental source. In contemporary legal theory, the concept of law has shifted towards interpreting law as a command backed up by a set of relevant sanctions mandated by the coercive apparatus of the state. The legitimacy of such laws does not reside in their moral content but in their procedural aspects and enforceability by the state. This leaves no room for a standard in relation to which these laws can be judged. When it comes to the laws of property, property rights, transmission of property etc., Anglo-Saxon law is at loggerheads with the religious systems of law. Such a form of law is unacceptable to many Muslims both because it is completely divorced from immutable principles and because of the over-formalization and secularization of the legal process in the West.

To know the type of law that is responsible for the legitimacy of any system is crucial. The modern system has devolved from a religious to a secular understanding of law. If the secular political system runs into crisis, the economic system which receives legitimacy from this law will also encounter a legitimation crisis. To establish universal legitimacy the proponents of modern economics must therefore claim that there are universal principles deriving from the ineluctable laws of nature upon which economics is based. This is a great paradox. First they deny transcendent and universal principles in order to clear the ground for secular-humanist systems. Then they re-establish some claim to universality in order to establish the legitimacy of the systems they wish to impose. This attempt to replace vertical principles deriving from revelation with horizontal universals, which in fact derive from the whims of human beings is the hallmark of secularism. Islam and other religious traditions do not deny natural laws, but they are always seen as being secondary in relation to their divine source.

It is not our intention to compare the ideals of Islam with the realities of the modern world, with ideals as realized in Muslim history. Their continued practice even today in many parts of the Muslim world provides substantial evidence that for Muslims business was closely tied to Islamic ethics. This can be said not only of Islamic civilization but of other traditional civilizations which followed a transcendental system of ethics. In the Muslim world, occupational associations had a religious character that communicated the skills of a trade by means of formal apprenticeship that involved character as much as it involved skill. These bodies were either fraternal or corporate, but their occupational activities could not violate the law of shari'a that is held sacred by all Muslims. Occupations such as selling alcohol or running industries of fornication (such as pornography and prostitution), which are permissible in many parts of the modern world, cannot be a legitimate option for Muslims, even though they remain lucrative businesses.

III. The Limits of Economic Growth

Since the interpellation of the ideology of modern economics 97 takes place as a social process through the coercive arm of globalization, it gives people a certain identity that is distinct from their primordial identity because it is reductionist. What one does for work may impact one’s consciousness. But escaping or resisting this ideological interpellation becomes difficult for the average person dwelling in the modern condition.

The ideological economism of the modern world can only be globalized through coercion because there is no room for mutual accommodation between it and Islamic economics. Since political independence is not viable without economic independence, suggestions of economic independence through more modernization are always made to the Muslim world. This process does not lead to more independence, but more independence because of surmounting foreign debt, stringent conditions on loans, lack of an industrial base and lack of Import Substitution and Industrialization policies. 98 Economic modernization brings about technological development and a culture of technicalism promoted by globalization. However, it is important to realize that technology in and of itself is not neutral. Technology does not simply give rise to the conditions of modernity and its globalist ideology; it is simultaneously the servant and the master of hegemonic power interests, and therefore in and of itself disruptive and hegemonic. 99

Even during the incipient stages of technological production, its physical organization necessitates disruption in the traditional social setup, iden-
tity, and socio-economic ethos. In testing the waters of new technological developments, they find themselves engulfed in the sea of modernity. Norberg-Hodge has emphasized that this technological gap is much wider between the industrial West and the global South, which has a severe psychological impact on the latter. But to attempt to reduce this gap has equally devastating long-term consequences.

Since globalization is not universal in its spirit or form, it can never give humanity what it needs. That which is universal can only be universal after transcending the particular. The origin of the capitalist economic system, which is the precursor of economic modernity, is embedded in certain particular historical circumstances, the exact replication of which is neither possible nor desirable for other societies. The East Asian world has managed to produce economic modernity in terms of production and consumption, but it too remains an experiment in process which is already proving costly in environmental terms. The predicament for prospective development for the undeveloped world is truly dismal. Edward Goldsmith has summed up the effect of global trade on the environment:

Expanded economic growth and global development cannot be achieved without an immense overuse of resources, a fierce assault on remaining species of flora and fauna, the creation of toxic wastelands (and seas), and the degradation of the planet’s natural ability to function in a healthy way. The idea, promoted in the corporate circles, that first we must make countries wealthy through development and then take care of the environment is high cynicism, since development does not produce wealth, save for a few people; the wealth that is produced is rarely spent on environmental programs; and anyway, by the time the theoretical wealth is generated, life will be unlivable.

Take the example of China: during the initial stages of its industrialization process it was somewhat harmonious and livable. People bicycled to work and could breathe clean air, even in the larger cities. Today, as China has managed to industrialize to the extent of becoming a world economic power, it is becoming increasingly unlivable. Bicycles have rapidly disappeared from the streets of Beijing, thanks to the newly found wealth, and the automobiles have increased the noise and air pollution. Environmental degradation is the highest in the Western world, followed only by the East Asian Giants, while the non-industrial world (which includes most of the Muslim world and parts of Africa) is arguably least dangerous to the environment. If the Muslim world were to follow the same path of modernization as the East Asians did, this planet would race toward destruction much faster. Thus, from an environmental perspective, the sensible thing to do would be the exact opposite of modernization. As Segesvary argues:

... globalization and the coexistence of different civilizations is antithetical. Our future will be determined by this antithesis because globalization represents

nothing but the worldwide domination of certain ways of life and certain ways of Western civilization ... worldwide conquest of consumerism, of the perpetual quest for always more of everything, and a certain lifestyle prioritizing material goods at the expense of spirituality and intellectual enrichment.

To sum up: in the economic arena, globalization is a process that offers a "value free" and non-political system of economics but which does not accommodate transcendent laws, in contrast to Muslim economic ideals and practices which are grounded in religion. To ask Muslims to live by Western economic standards is not simply to ask them to adopt a different economic system; it is to ask them to adopt a different value system, one which contradicts several fundamental teachings of Islam.

Social Aspects of Modernity and Globalization

Segesvary argues that globalization is the ideological vehicle for a secular conception of the world, with a disappearance of genuine morality, an atomized conception of human relations, social dissent, an idolization of democracy, and destructive carelessness towards the environment. He has identified some of the aspects that extend the social logic of the modern world to the rest of the non-Western world, which, he argues, "are nothing but extensions of principal features of late modern Western civilization to the whole world." In this section we discuss some of the most obvious aspects of globalization. Among many such aspects of globalization, we isolate those that have an almost subliminal effect due to their omnipresence in the modern mass media: the gospel of equality (among people and between sexes); the substitution of the secular for the religious worldview; the myth of evolutionism, leading to an "ever-evolving" story of human origin; and the myth of progress whose utopian elements continue to shape the modern worldview.

I. The Modern Dream of Equality

The type of social change that is sought in the Muslim world by the pro-globalization governmental and non-governmental agencies frequently tends to be in conflict with the norms and ethics of Islam. Even if Islam does not negate those ideas or policy proposals made by the Western agencies, the latter do little to corroborate those principles from within the Islamic tradition, thereby alienating Muslim societies and also hurting their own cause. Take, for example, the overarching fixation of the West with "gender equality" in the Muslim world while ignoring the egregious violence against women in their own society. Agencies like the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), for instance, have done little to commission an inquiry
into how Islam promises justice and fairness for women, but works with an *a priori* assumption that women belonging to religious communities are treated worse than women in secular societies. Since their bureaucratic version of reality is contingent upon statistics, and upon the inclusion of a certain number of females in the work force, they simply assume that the liberation of women has come about in the West, even though through this practice the institution of family as a whole may suffer more. Quantitative statistical data are not only a poor reflection of women’s emancipation, they also lead to insecurity for women. Norberg-Hodge has evaluated the conditions of Ladakhi women of India as a consequence of state modernization programs, as well as the effect of globalization from overseas. She argues:

...women have become invisible shadows. They do not earn money for their work, so they are no longer seen as “productive.” Their work is not included as part of the Gross National Product. In government statistics, the 10 percent or so Ladakhi who work in the modern sector are listed according to their occupation; the other 90 percent—housewives and traditional farmers—are lumped together as non-workers. Farmers and women are coming to be viewed as inferior, and they themselves are developing feelings of insecurity and inadequacy.

In modern industrial societies equality-driven rhetoric has eclipsed the discourse of social justice because the modernist discourse is more concerned about the “dream of equality” than achieving justice. The social effects of the ideology of development and the harm it has done to the institution of the family are quite obvious, as documented by Germaine Greer, author of *The Female Eunuch*:

The sexual liberation that accompanied the gender revolution has in most cases harmed women more than men. “The sexuality that has been freed...is male sexuality.” Promiscuity harms women more than men; women continue to experience the momentous consequences of pregnancy, while the male body is unaffected. When the USS *Acoela* returned from the Gulf War, a tenth of her female crewmembers had already been returned to America because of pregnancy aboard what became known as the *Love Boat.* The number of men returned was zero.

The sexual revolution has not emancipated women in any meaningful sense. On the contrary, it has led to their subjugation in the name of freedom. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, it is estimated that over 80,000 women became prostitutes on the streets of London while one third of children born were illegitimate. As things have progressed along a similar social direction, and despite the intervention of the welfare state to create laws to protect women from abuse, there is no significant improvement in the condition of women in the West:

In 1971, one in twelve British families was headed by a single parent, in 1986 one in seven, and by 1992 one in five. Another consequence has been the pain of solitude. By the year 2020 a third of all British households will be occupied by a single individual, and the majority of those individuals will be female. One of the most persistent legends of the sexual revolution, that “testing the waters” before marriage helps to determine compatibility, seems to have been definitively refuted. Some of the briefest marriages are those that follow a long period of cohabitation.

Despite such evidence, the industrial nations and their development agencies ask Muslims societies to adopt a path similar to that which has led Western societies to the breakdown of the family and the loss of meaning in life. In the modern imagination patriarchy is considered unequal, oppressive, and backwards, whereas a family’s chances of survival diminish significantly due to the absence of a judicious and caring patriarch. The late Ivan Illich, one of the foremost Catholic philosophers of the late twentieth century, argues that open traditional patriarchy was much more benign than the covert economic sexism of the modern world. In his critique of modern sexism in *Gender,* he says:

The literature dealing with this economic sexism has recently turned into a flood. It documents sexist exploitation, denounces it as an injustice, usually describes it as a new version of an age-old evil, and proposes explanatory theories with remedial strategies built in... The industrial society creates two myths: one about the sexual ancestry of this society and the other about its movement toward equality... I know of no industrial society where women are the economic equals of men.

Illich argues that modern industrial mass society cannot logically exist unless it imposes the assumption that both of the sexes are made for the same type of work, have the same needs, or perceive reality in a similar way. Some of the cardinal pieces of advice given out by the development and globalization experts are economic growth, social and sexual equality, and equal female representation in the workforce. Illich's work on development has demonstrated that both economic growth and gender equality ideologies are attendant. He argues that economic growth will logically lead to more inequity and distributive injustice, which renders the gospel of equality complete nonsense. Because modern economics is the economics of scarcity, modern institutions from family to school to courtroom incorporate this assumption of scarcity. Similarly education itself first became a commodity and then a scarce commodity. Now it has become a commodity without which one cannot grow up and be mature:

In traditional societies men and women matured without the conditions for growth being perceived as scarce. Now, educational institutions teach them that desirable competence and learning are scarce goods for which men and
women must compete... modern education therefore assumes the scarcity of a genderless value; it teaches that he or she who experiences its process is primarily a human being in need of genderless education... and economic institutions cannot exist without the abolition of gender and the social construction of sex. 115

A supposedly neuter work force for the modern workplace is intrinsically gender destructive and sexist, and as such this phenomenon can only become exaggerated by more economic growth. According to Illich’s judgment, to recover from this malady we should economically shrink and not expand, or else it will enhance the sexist exploitation, which has become a social characteristic of industrial society. 116 In the quest for good social relations, the subsistence economy as opposed to a growth-based economy is more likely to be sustainable and peaceful. While comparing traditional with modern cultures from a social and ecological point of view, Norberg-Hodge argues that “the old culture reflected fundamental human needs while respecting the natural limits. And it worked. It worked for nature and it worked for people.” 117

A vast majority of social activists subscribe to the view that gender is socially constructed. This position arises out of a belief in the “progress” and evolution of the human species, which itself is based on the assumption that religion is a backward form of human consciousness. From such a perspective, sex is a biologically determined phenomenon whereas gender is socially constructed. Further, it is a reaction to the nineteenth century medical view that a woman’s personality is a function of her anatomy and reproductive function. In other words, we have moved from one reductionist position to another. Along similar lines, social psychologists would argue that gender construction is purely a process of child development, while Marxist feminists would define the place of women entirely in relation to the means of production. Such studies of gender were criticized during the high modern period by anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, who demonstrated the differentiation of gender roles across societies and the lack of a singular pattern of gender development upon which the modern philosophy of gender is usually built. The globalization experts consider “gender-equality policies” as necessary for the Muslim world, caring little how gender and sex are perceived in traditional religious societies.

From Islamic philosophers to illiterate Muslims, anyone who professes the religion of Islam agrees that human beings are, first and foremost, spiritual beings. 118 Therefore, that which precedes the “form,” identified with the female body, must have its spiritual essence above and beyond its material reality. Also, if the source of all life is God then the spiritual nature of both the male and female must issue from the Divine Reality itself. Muslims do not negate societal effects or biological realities, but they view them as realities contingent upon a higher reality. They can only be real insofar as they are integrated into the Real. 119 Social constructivist views of society—with or without evolutionist ideology—conflict with the Muslim conception of the human being and of gender. For a vast majority of Muslims, the nature, needs, and functions of the sexes are understood via the law of Islam, not through humanistic ideologies. If the inequalities and abuses which persist in several Muslim countries are to be ameliorated, they must be neutralized on the basis of Islamic principles, not through transient modern ideologies imported, or worse, imposed from outside.

Sachiko Murata has criticized mainstream feminism for its Eurocentricity and naiveté when it comes to understanding the predicament of the feminine. She remarks:

It seems to me that feminists who have criticized various aspects of Islam or Islamic society base their positions upon a worldview radically alien to the Islamic worldview. Their critique typically takes a moral stance. They ask for reform, whether explicitly or implicitly. The reform they have in view is of the standard modern Western type. 120

For Murata the conception of the role of women in Islam has a deep-seated prejudice in the West. 121 She argues that just as in Chinese cosmology, which views male and female principles of existence in yang and yin (or active and receptive), Islamic cosmology is based upon the complementarity or polarity of active and receptive principles. 122 This principle of duality can only make sense in relation to the principle of unity, whose perfect expression in the Islamic tradition is God Himself. Looking at female and male as inner and outer leads to a view that considers them as a single and interwoven unit in the light of unity. This view of women is only accepted by those who show preference for a spiritual over a material worldview. Modern ideas of women stand in contrast to views of women as outlined by Murata. The modern view of women, which has reached the Muslim world through the process of globalization, has created confusion of gender roles and made Muslim women unsure about themselves. The “fundamentalist” policies of several Muslim countries further aggravate the problem, but these are not so different from those of the West. For them too are based upon a denial of the spiritual and a reduction to the material. The continuing effort to impose “solutions” which deny the complimentary that Islam sees between men and women will only serve to foment the reactionary policies of puritanical literalists.

II. Secularism and the Muslim World

Another socio-cultural aspect of globalization is the spread of secularism to the Muslim world. Secularism is a social condition in which religion, its
institutions, and its worldview stop being of central significance to society. Such changes often accompany what Tonnies called a shift from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft, or when a community loses its primordial association and becomes a modern mass society. Ironically, despite the fact that many Muslim societies are rapidly transforming into mass societies due to the pressures of modernization and globalization, they are becoming not less but more religious. Lamin Sanneh has argued that modernity is not imperious to the challenges of the “sacred.” In his thought-provoking article “Sacred and Secular in Islam,” he demonstrates how sacred and secular are one for the Muslims, only because the latter is viewed in the shadow of the former. In the context of the surge in religious fundamentalism around the world, he argues that the West has reduced religion to individual piety and subjective dispositions by

... giving the sacred little or no public merit. The Enlightenment and the inter-religious wars of Europe led its people to establish the state on a non-religious basis. Religion survived as personal habit and subjective preference, framed by emotions, feelings, and states of mind appropriate to the phenomenon, as Rudolph Otto describes in his classic work, The Idea of the Holy. This point expresses well the spirit of individualism. From the fundamentalist point of view, however, this notion of religion is offensive because religion is the revealed will of God for the public order, and for the individual as a member of the community.

In the context of September 11, Sanneh argues that a secular West reacted with stunned surprise. After all, how could anyone want to harm people of a secular order that represent social progress? Given the long history of Muslims’ grievances against the West, he asks, “is not the West’s surprise itself surprising?” He argues:

The events of 11 September have breached the walls of secular invincibility, and also the logic of secular claims as neutral and normative. The modern religious resurgence has revealed the dogma of secular primacy to be vulnerable to rude surprises, making it imperative that we recognize the role of religion in people’s lives for what it is.

With regards to secularism, Sanneh’s remedial advice for the affairs of the state is that “religion is too important for the state to ignore, and equally too important for the state to co-opt.” Western military adventures and the promotion of secular values will only fan more fundamentalism in the Muslim world, because most Muslims find few benefits in secularism to win their confidence.

According to Islamic doctrine, the idea of God is built into human nature. From the Islamic perspective, therefore, it seems that modern man’s soul is forever in search of the Divine. However, if humans are not open to the idea of the Divine, their soul can and must find objects of worship at a lower plane, hence the emergence of pseudo-spiritual cults that sometimes parade as authentic religious traditions. According to the spiritual principles of Islam, in the absence of human submission to the Divine Will, the nostalgia of the human soul for worship can manifest itself in other ways. This nostalgia’s referent may be religious, but if it discounts the rituals of religion, it discounts the spirit of the entire religion. This symptom of the secularist condition amounts to the total denial of religion. The religious fanaticism exhibited by India’s Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Sangh Parivar, for example, have a religious referent, but their violent behavior with regards to the non-Hindus in India has demonstrated that the sacrosanct nature of other religious forms is not a consideration anymore. Similarly, Israeli Zionism has a religious referent, but it has been reduced to a secular state ideology. As noted earlier, pressures of secularism have also produced reactionary movements within the Muslim world. Muslim extremists are preoccupied more with the militant combat of the West than with preserving and presenting the spiritual message of Islam.

Mircea Eliade’s The Sacred and the Profane is a great tool for understanding the nature of the sacred in opposition to the secular. He argues that “the modern Occidental experiences a certain uneasiness before many manifestations of the sacred,” and this uneasiness is a result of the West’s transition to a secular domain. Eliade argues that if we compare the men of modern societies with the religious men who lived in a sacralized cosmos, we find that the former dwell in a desacralized cosmos.

The profusion of pseudo-spiritual religious cults gives evidence that religion in the modern world has become reduced to the “shopping mall approach,” where one “shops” and “practices” a suitable religion, which is only a matter of personal choice (like a hobby). And as pointed out by Sanneh, it has nothing to do with one’s life in public. Although the process of modernization and its concatenation with secularism is itself variable, it is certain that the globalization of the modern value system has produced exogenous pressures for secularism in the Muslim world. Muslim law does not classify life into two unconnected halves, one sacred and the other profane; the sacred law influences all walks of life, leaving none to a realm that is not cognizant of the transcendental reality. Suggestions for the secularization of the Muslim world can only be expected to produce more violent reactions against modernism and globalization. As noted by Levine, what perpetuates the exacerbation of hostilities between the West and the Muslim world is the secularizing effect of globalization on the Muslim world. Moreover, the social effects of secularism in the modern Western world are too well known to ignore. Scholars such as Fritjof Schuon, René Guénon, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr have pointed out that it is imperative for the mod-
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destruction of that which is the quintessential archetype, indispensable for
maintaining the moral standards of society.

Traditional writers such as Ananda Coomaraswamy, Rene Guénon,
Frithjof Schuon, Martin Lings, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Titus Burckhardt,
and Wolfgang Smith have repeatedly admonished the attentive academic
elite of the world that the theory of evolution is pseudo-scientific, anti-spiritual,
and dangerous for the future of humanity. As the renowned economist
E. F. Schumacher has observed in his Guide to the Perplexed:

Evolutionism is not a science; it is science fiction, even a kind of hoax. It is far
better to believe that the earth is a disc supported by a tortoise and flanked
by four elephants than to believe in the name of “evolutionism” in the coming
of some “superhuman” monster.

Nasr has pointed out that those Muslims who are the products of educational
systems of those states that have had the longest Western colonial rule
(such as the Muslim states of the Indian Subcontinent) subscribe to the
theory of evolution more than those Muslim lands where colonial education
has made less impact. Modernism and globalization continue to
threaten educational institutions of non-Western societies, and the theory
of evolution plays an important part in that process. It continues to mislead
more people, only to be challenged by those who understand its social
implications. It leads to changes in social attitudes toward religion, and as
Norberg-Hodge has pointed out, the new system of education leads to the
alienation of the youth from the older generation. Moreover, this theory
does not only reside in books and print media, but continues to impact the
worldview of even those who are illiterate. It constantly affects average
people’s thinking on the origin of life, and the “nature” of human beings
in that it presents human “nature” as essentially animal. Television stations
such as the National Geographic, Discovery, and The Learning Channel
constantly propagate the evolutionist perspective. The assumption of
evolutionary thought is present in most media that deal with the “nature”
of living things, especially humans and animals. More than just entertainment,
these programs constitute the “gospel hours” of globalization whose impact
is anti-spiritual and destructive for the world.

The social science counterpart of the theory of evolution is called social
Darwinism. This theory claims that the law of “natural forces” (without
defining either “nature” or “force”) determines survival in human beings,
analogous to the “laws of nature” in the animal kingdom. This theory has
produced a view of the world where “might is right” because only the strong
survive. Its economic counterpart was conceived in laissez-faire terms as in
the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, while other Social Darwinists such as
Glumpowicz and Sumner have argued that some races (i.e., the Europeans)
are innately superior to others. According to them, the superior races have the “natural right” to dominate the inferior races. Decades later we find the communists, who argue from the opposite extreme, and insist on a utopian equality of opportunity and conditions. Both of these world systems are at opposite extremes from the spiritual center, which, according to Muslims, is the source of balance in the world. The capitalist free market system is extreme because the winner can take all and there is no real compassion for the weak and the poor; in the socialist extreme, for the sake of the poor, one must have no choice but to submit to the supreme will of the state in its quest for achieving equality. But the social aspects that give rise to these ideologies, I argue, have failed to take root in the Muslim consciousness during the high-modern period. Islam remains a way of life for Muslims, their need and also their world system, in theory and practice.

Just as the theory of evolution is linear and simplistic, so is the ideology of progress. The idea of progress is essentially materialist and utopian. It rests upon the logic of “today being better than yesterday, therefore tomorrow will be better than today,” and hence a justification for a linear cumulative progress of humanity. Lord Northbourne has asserted that:

...the ideology of progress envisages the perfectibility of man in terms of his terrestrial development, and relegates it to a hypothetical future, whereas tradition envisages the perfectibility of man in terms of salvation or sanctification, and proclaims that it is realizable here and now.137

As early as the First and Second World Wars, people had developed a pessimistic view of the ideology of progress; they sensed that these wars were just a foreshadowing of the path of destruction that the modern world was taking. The idea of civilization, which was equated with social progress, the rise of rationalism over religion, the decline of local customs and social diversity, the advent of scientism and greater cultural uniformity among nations, all now seem highly suspect. To ask Muslims to conform to this chimerical view could thus be nothing but hubris.

Nineteenth-century science was based on the assumption that progress was contingent upon industrialism, while industry itself was technology-dependent. This technological advancement, according to the new view, gave birth to material welfare, better life standards, and growth in the rights of citizens due to high literacy. These were grand assumptions. Serious setbacks to these notions, however, came about with the rise of fascism in Europe where technology was primarily responsible for a vast number of deaths, while the citizens' rights swiftly vanished in Germany and Italy, despite education and high literacy rates. Gradually, confidence in the progressive nature of industrial society has disappeared, and there are intellectual groups inside the West as well as the Muslim world that are beginning to be aware of the social contradictions of modernity. As Levine has stated, globalization of such ideas has led to a general fear in Muslim societies of being culturally invaded by the forces of modernism.138

On the social level, therefore, the process of globalization has given birth to attitudes that have led to a new consciousness. The new social mooring and its concomitant loss of social ethics is due to the ideological impact of secularism, evolutionism, and a misleading view of human nature.

Conclusion

Globalization represents at once a certain condition, a process, as well as an ideology. As a condition, it is responsible for the impoverishment of a large number of people in the world. As a process, it has enabled us to shorten distance and time, which superficially seems fascinating, but its concomitant price is high in socio-economic terms. As an ideology, it continues to delude the masses into giving in to more control, and undermines the democratic spirit.

Nasr has argued that the loss of the traditional religious worldview and the introduction of the ideological worldview has confined man’s intellectual potential to humanism and dragged him down to the level of the infra-human.139 Ideologies are by their very nature ephemeral and transient. Recent history has demonstrated that ideologies are the work of ideologues and marginal intellectuals, and are based upon the reduction of truth to whim, conjecture, and passionable proclivities. Ideologies purport to have knowledge about science and religion but they are actually based on a distorted view of human nature. Since ideologies are evanescent, they have no answer to the existential dilemmas of humankind and cannot deliver the spiritual nourishment that is absolutely vital for a healthy human life. In contrast, religion is universal and it is the primordial tradition of humanity. Due to the perennial nature of the revealed religious teachings, they are the logical opponents of ideologies. So long as people who truly identify with any revealed faith, such as Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and all the other divine dispensations that live in this world, they will not give up religion for an ephemeral ideology.

Inasmuch as globalization is an ideology of development, it threatens to overrun the sustainability of the planet.140 Its origins lie in the early modern period, which intensified in Europe with the gradual relegation of religion to a backward element in human history. This relegation of man to a mere terrestrial being and the absolutization of the human state has led humanity on the course of environmental degradation.141 Modernity seeks to destroy the power of religion over the human soul and questions the categories of sin and evil, whereas religions have always taught humanity to cultivate
The roots of modernity lie in rebellion against nature whereas in traditional civilizations, nature is understood as a reflection of the Divine, and is therefore sacred. But the fruits of modernity are seductive and in the quest for their acquisition the world is edging toward the brink of ecological and human disaster. From antiquity until the dawn of modern history, man lived harmoniously with nature; since then modern man has attempted to dominate and control it. It is not at all fortuitous that the historical origins of the domination and the rape of nature coincide with the historical rebellion of modern man against God. For a long period in world history the traditional world could not threaten the environment as compared to the threat posed by the modern world to the biosphere.

The poisoning of water, air, and soil by industry, the expansive system of urban growth, and the proliferation of an unnatural and mechanistic way of life is rapidly making the planet uninhabitable. Natural beauty in the pre-modern world reminded humanity of the splendor and majesty of the Heavens. Whatever is left is at risk of being destroyed by the military marvels of modern science such as atomic bombs. Peace and rationality have estimated that ninety percent of all scientists employed today are employed by the defense industry. The scientific community of the modern world seems to be doing little to avert this danger because it suffers from over-quantification, while it consistently ignores the qualitative aspects of human life due to its passioned silence on ethical issues. The worldview modern science impacts on its adherents is based upon unexamined assumptions that are believed to be highly normative in nature and which govern the system of "truth" in modern society. Modern ideologies often corrobore their views from such "truths" of modern science.

The tribulations of the modern world, which are responsible for bringing the world to the brink of ecological disaster, are being coercively imposed upon the Muslim world and other parts of the traditional world with little regard for potential moral and environmental deterioration. "It might be said that the environmental crisis, as well as the psychological imbalance of so many men and women in the West, the ugliness of the urban environment and the like are the result of the attempt of man to live by bread alone, to 'kill all gods' and announce his independence of Heaven. But he cannot escape the effect of his actions, which are themselves the fruit of his present state of being." The foundations of the modern world are built upon inherently contradictory aspects which have led humanity into a condition of ecological and social adversity. Religious ethics offers a viable alternative for re-infusing transcendental ethics and morality into human society, and this is essential for the resuscitation of a life grounded in principles.

Notes

1 I wish to thank Dr. Mohammad Faghboory, whose meticulous comments have always been insightful and instructive in projects I have recently undertaken.

2 The West can be defined as the formerly Christian (but now secular) societies of Western Europe and its geographical extension to North America, South Africa, and Australasia. But the modern West, besides still being a geographical entity, is an indigenous, ideological entity that dwells at the outposts of the geographical and ideological West in the geographical non-West. In this sense modernization and westernization are interchangeable.

3 From amongst the several groups that are critical of modernity, the challenge of the traditionalist scholars is analytically most sound, precisely because tradition opposes modernism from its roots to its shoots. The traditional viewpoint appears menacing to modernity because it implicates the breakdown of the organizational principle of the modern world.

4 Those changes, which started with the Reformation, leading on to the Enlightenment, and which shaped European attitudes toward religion as a backward form of human consciousness, are here referred to as "modernity." The triumph of reason over revelation, seventeenth-century scientism, evolution, intellectual relativism, secularism, and devaluation of religion are some of the traits that characterize modernity.


7 http://www.guardian.co.uk.

8 Ibid.

9 See Joseph E. B. Lumbard, "The Decline of Knowledge and the Rise of Ideology in the Modern Islamic World.”

10 The label of "Islamic fundamentalism" is itself problematic because its direct counterpart in Arabic language, nuskhah the "fundamentals of religion" denotes a positive element in the Muslim imagination. However, what makes the fundamentalists distinctively modernist is, among other things, their instrumental use of secular science and technology for their political ends that have a religious referent. As noted above (footnote 2), the terms "tradition" and "tradiational" reject those elements of modernism that portray revealed religious traditions as inherently cruel and backward, and whose loss has rendered the modern world morally and spiritually bankrupt.


14 Fukuyama, End of History and the Last Man, p. 236.

15 Ibid., p. 217.

16 World system theory rests upon the observation that the economic organization of the modern world is based globally and not nationally. The system is composed of
core regions which are the industrialized centers, and the periphery, the raw material-supplying underdeveloped world. The later is in a state of perpetual impoverishment. This system has its origin in a capitalist agriculture that coincides with the beginning of secular morality. In traditional societies there was one political-bureaucratic system, i.e., the empire and several diverse economic structures which preserved the diversity of cultures, whereas in the modern world, there is one economic world system and several political-bureaucratic systems. The singularity of economic system imposed upon the world through processes of modernization and globalization and their ideologies of modernism and globalization threaten to overrun diversity and make the world uniform.


Ibid., pp. 33-47.


Ibid., p. xxiv.

For an understanding of the term ‘tradition’ see Joseph E. B. Lumbard’s introduction to this volume.


Ibid., p. 296.


Ibid., p. 1.

See for example the works of E. F. Schumacher, Small is Beautiful and This I Believe.


Power conferred upon a human free from Divine constraints is referred to here as absolute power, because of an intentional dislocation of the Divine from the understanding of what constitutes power.

By “political accord” I do not mean a large “nation-state” comprised of all historical Muslim lands; but instead, a regional order with representative states. This is to be distinguished from the haphazard demarcation of territories as they were carved up by the European colonial powers with the subsequent installment of corrupt puppet regimes by their neo-colonial successors.
50 Segesvray, p. 36.
52 Martin Lings, The Eleventh Hour, p. 47.
54 Ibid., p. 56.
55 Ibid., p. 57.
56 Ibid., p. 57.
57 Ibid., p. 57.
58 Ibid., p. 58.
59 Ibid., p. 59.
60 Ibid., p. 62.
61 Ibid., p. 62.
62 Ibid., p. 63.
63 Ibid., p. 65.
64 Ibid., p. 66.
68 Ibid., p. 201.
70 For a balanced account of the Algerian situation see, Algeria, Revolution Revisited (Islamic World Report, 1997).
72 Ibid., p. 48.
73 Ibid., p. 48.
74 Ibid., p. 54.
75 Ryn, The New Jacobinism, p. 60.
76 Lings, The Eleventh Hour, p. 55.
78 Ibid., p. 11.
79 Ibid., pp. 10-11.
80 Modern economics in its variant forms works with the assumption that available resources must be rationed rather through price regulation or some central system of distribution. This assumption implies that resources are scarce or else they would not need to be rationed. In the absence of scarcity, no difficult choices would need to be made and no prices should be affixed on things that are abundant anyway. The idea of abundance would render the study of modern economics totally unnecessary. See Graham Bannock, R.E. Baxter, and Evan Davis, Penguin Dictionary of Economics (Auckland: Penguin, 1998), p. 371.
81 Ibid., p. 371.
83 Ibid., p. 65.
84 Martin Khor, “Global Economy and the Third World,” p. 47.
87 For further elaboration on this aspect of the neo-classical theory of economics, see Waheed El-Assassy’s “The Economics of Terrorism,” in this volume.
89 Ibid., p. 45.
93 Ryn, The New Jacobinism, p. 79.
95 Ryn, The New Jacobinism, p. 79.
96 Sometimes certain special laws can be made that seemingly go against one of the aspects of Islamic tradition, but these are very special instances in which a decision has been made to promulgate a law because of pressing circumstances.
97 The concept of economism is used to denote the ideological reduction of all walks of life—social, cultural, religious, and political—to a single economic base which serves
as a causal reservoir ready to supply materialist explanations for the symbolic and non-material.

98 Import Substitution and Industrialization (ISI) policies can only protect the economy if the nascent industrial sector becomes internationally competitive and nationally self-sufficient. In some states which used ISI, like those in Latin America and India, economic conditions remain distressed.

99 Segesvary, From Illusion to Delusion, p. 31.

100 Norberg-Hodge, "The Pressure to Modernize and Globalize," p. 45.


103 Segesvary, From Illusion to Delusion, pp. 305-307.

104 Segesvary, From Illusion to Delusion, pp. 11-12.

105 Ibid., p. 12.


107 Ibid., p. 42.


110 Abdul Hakim Murad, Boys Will Be Boys.

111 Ivan Illich, Gender (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), p. 3.

112 Ibid., pp. 3-4.

113 Ibid., p. 9.

114 Ibid., p. 11.

115 Ibid., pp. 11, 13.

116 Ibid., p. 16.


118 Qur'ān: 51:58.

119 For a further explanation of this idea, see Joseph E. B. Lumbard, "The Decline of Knowledge and the Rise of Ideology in the Modern Islamic World," in this volume.


121 Ibid., p. 6.

122 Ibid., pp. 6-7.


124 Ibid., p. 6.